

LEIF EIRIKSSON ICELANDIC CLUB OF CALGARY NEWSLETTER



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We are in for a treat when “Sporið” from Iceland come to show us their *steps* in October. The Icelandic folk dance group “Sporið” (English = the step) has its main residence in Borgarfjorður, Iceland, but members also come from various places in South West Iceland. Besides performing in Iceland it has introduced Icelandic tradition and culture to audiences in several other countries abroad (U.S.A., Canada, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Faroe Islands, France, Romania and China). The dancers perform in the traditional Icelandic costumes, accompanied by the accordion. They performed in Gimli and Winnipeg a few years ago, and this year they will also be delighting audiences in Calgary and Edmonton. (photo credit: <http://sporid.is>)

Thursday, October 6, 2016
Scandinavian Centre, Viking Hall
7:00 p.m.

“HAUSTRÉTTIR OG TÖDUGJÖLD”
‘Round up’ your friends and family for
the Fall Roundup Feast
Scandinavian Centre, Viking hall
Saturday, October 22nd, 2016



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THANKSGIVING TRADITION IN CANADA

Most families in Canada celebrate Thanksgiving with a special dinner for family and friends. The dinner usually includes a roasted turkey and pumpkin pie. Thanksgiving provides an opportunity to look at pioneer life, and it is an ideal time to celebrate the importance of Canadian farmers for all Canadians.

Many families have a special meal and go around the table expressing their thankfulness for the past year. It is a special day for children to spend time with their Canadian grandparents, and to appreciate the abundance in everyone's lives. Many friends and family members get together to convey their thankfulness for the past year.

FALL TRADITIONS IN ICELAND “HAUSTRÉTTIR OG TÖDUGJÖLD”

For those who do not know what this means, Haustréttir is the fall roundup and Töðugjöld is the feast that the farmers would serve as payment to the workers when the harvest of the hay was finished.

RÉTTIR – THE ANNUAL SHEEP ROUND-UP!

During the month of September both Icelanders and a fair number of tourists head-off to the countryside to take part in Réttir - the annual sheep round-up. This activity is one of the country's oldest cultural traditions where Icelandic sheep farmers invite family, friends and anyone who's interested, to help out with rounding –up the sheep from their summer grazing period in the mountains and valleys.

ROUNDUP YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY AND COME AND SUPPORT YOUR LATEST SNORRI'S AS THEY PRESENT THEIR EXPERIENCES IN ICELAND THIS PAST SUMMER.

LEIC FALL FEAST

WHEN: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2016

WHERE: VIKING HALL, SCANDINAVIAN CENTRE

TIME: DOORS OPEN AT 5:30, DINNER AT 6:30

PROGRAM: SNORRI PRESENTATIONS AND ICELANDIC SWEATER FASHION SHOW

TICKETS: \$25.00 ADULTS, YOUTH AND SENIORS

\$15.00 CHILDREN UNDER 12 AND UNDER 2 FREE

CASH BAR

MENU: CHICKEN CORDON BLEU, BABY POTATOES, RICE, CAULIFLOWER, BROCCOLI, CARROT MIX, SPRING SALAD, APPLE STRUDEL, BUNS, COFFEE, AND TEA

ICELANDIC SWEATER FASHION SHOW: *Are you the proud owner of an Icelandic Sweater, old or new? If so, please contact Christine at christine.mueller@shaw.ca or call (403) 284-1991 to take part in a special presentation at the Fall Feast in October which will require very little of your time.*

Please send your cheque to LEIC c/o Marg Finnson at 4312 Chapel Road N.W. Calgary, T2L 1A4 by **Oct. 18th**. If you have any questions or dietary concerns you may call Marg at (403) 289-9827 or email margfinnson@shaw.ca



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DETAILS OF PRESENTATIONS AT THE 97TH CONVENTION OF THE ICELANDIC NATIONAL LEAGUE OF NORTH AMERICA STRANDARSAGA- A COAST STORY, VANCOUVER, BC

APRIL 29, 2016:

SESSION # 1- VICTORIA / POINT ROBERTS/ GOLDEN

Fred Bjarnason told the story of Icelandic settlers in Victoria, B.C., a city he described as something of “an awkward teenager” when the first Icelanders arrived. A master chef who is passionate about his Icelandic heritage, in addition to Victoria, Fred shared stories and pictures of Icelanders as they lived and worked decades ago in Point Roberts, Washington, and in Golden, B.C.

SESSION #2- OSLAND/ HUNTER ISLAND/SUNNYBROOK

Signy Wilson, a professionally trained coach, spoke about the Icelandic communities at Osland, Hunter Island, and Sunnybrook. Her talk was illustrated with pictures. A unique aspect of her account of these B.C. communities was her reference to the relationships between the Icelanders and Japanese at Osland before the 2nd World War.

Additionally, Gerri McDonald, former President of the Icelandic League of North America, spoke about the Icelandic community in Vancouver which is scattered throughout the metropolitan area.

SESSION #3- SNORRI, SNORRI PLUS, AND SNORRI WEST

(Concurrent lunch time Presentation) “Snorri Program” spokespersons: Gail Einarson-McCleery (honorary Icelandic Consul in Toronto) and Ásta Sol Kristjánsdóttir (of Iceland’s Snorri Foundation) as well as two prospective Snorri participants, including Chris Cote of Lethbridge, Alberta, talked about the success of these three educational travel programs which are made possible due to the collaborative efforts of the Icelandic League of North America, the Snorri Foundation in Iceland, and Icelandic Clubs in Canada and the United States. These programs give participants of all ages the opportunity to learn about the culture, language, and history of Iceland and North America through travel initiatives and support.

SESSION #4- SURVIVAL ON THE EDGE, SEAWOMEN OF ICELAND

Anthropologist Margaret Willson painted a compelling picture of the countless women in Iceland who have braved the sea for centuries in surprising numbers. The speaker, who is the author of a newly published book, “Seawomen of Iceland,” revealed that Icelandic women’s involvement in work on the seaways far more extensive than most people realize. Her talk was illustrated with rare photos of women who took on seafaring roles on ships from captains to deckhands.

We have this book in our library, come visit, we have many interesting books, most in English!

SESSION #5- THE ARTIST, JOHANNES KJARVAL

Hafpor Yngvason, Director of the Western Gallery and Sculpture Collection at Western Washington University and former Director of the Reykjavik Art Museum, spoke about the artist, Johannes Kjarval during a slide presentation with powerful images of the artist’s work. Kjarval is known as the “best artist that Iceland has produced.” His work can be seen at “Kjarvalstadir,” an art museum run by the City of Reykjavik.

SESSION #6 - STILL CREEK CROWS

Friday afternoon ended with musical entertainment, a duet of Lisa Sigurgeirsson Maxx and Michael Darragh performing several of Lisa’s songs including some in the Icelandic language.

APRIL 30, 2016:

SESSION # 7- BIRD LIFE ICELAND

This was a slide presentation by Edward Rickson, a Manchester, U.K. native, whose interest in wild landscapes and Nordic culture took him to Iceland twenty years ago where he became active in Bird Life Iceland, a 1,300 member wildlife organization which is involved in the preservation of birds. In this presentation participants learned that 392 species of birds have been recorded in Iceland and that 80 species are regular breeders there.

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SESSION # 8- FOUR PLAYS BY GUTTORMUR J. GUTTORMSSON

These four short plays were translated from Icelandic to English and were performed as readings by 7 players who were members of the Icelandic Canadian Club of B.C. The plays were entitled as follows: “The Mirror,” “The Shadow,” “The Ring,” and “Immortality.” Each of the plays presented different lessons in morality that ended with an unexpected “twist” to the story. Heather Alda Ireland, the granddaughter of the playwright, produced and narrated the four plays.

CONCURRENT PRESENTATION: “COMING WEST” (Concurrent with lunch)

Author and University of Victoria Professor Emeritus, W.D. (Bill) Valgardson chronicled the Icelandic immigrants’ westward journey from their Icelandic homeland, through prairie provinces to the West Coast in the past hundred years and earlier, made possible by the advent of rail travel in the late 1800’s. Valgardson’s talk was illustrated with historic photos and tales of the struggles, hardships, and successes of the settlers as they made their way west and developed Icelandic communities in Vancouver, Port Roberts, Blaine, Bellingham, Seattle, and elsewhere in B.C. and Washington. According to Valgardson, although many Icelanders ended their journeys in the prairies, others went on to the Coast to seek a better life for themselves and their families, above all, stressing the importance of schools to educate their children.

SESSION # 9- THE ICELANDIC LANGUAGE THROUGH TIME AND SPACE

The speaker, Gunnar Olafur Hannson, was born in Reykjavik and educated in Iceland and California. He is an associate professor of Linguistics at U.B.C. Quote from the Lögberg/ Heimskringla Community Newspaper May 15th edition- “Examining the regional variations of the Icelandic language, he observed that, while variations exist, they do not reflect different dialects as we usually understand the concept. He attributes the minimal variation in spoken Icelandic to the fact that Iceland was historically a single administrative unit, maintaining a strong literary tradition.”

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION AT THE BANQUET

This year’s 2016 Convention concluded with an annual banquet featuring a presentation by writer, editor, and translator “Donald Garth Gislason,” who entertained everyone with a light-hearted look at Icelandic food and culture, with accompanying pictures and humour.

Summary of the 2016 INLoFNA NA Convention submitted by: Christine Mueller, President of LEIC.

Rationale for attendance at the Icelandic national League Convention Submitted by Tannis Johnson

Canadians take pride in living in a country that is composed of a diverse ethnicity. The Canadian population consists of people that have immigrated to Canada from many countries including the country of Iceland. There are municipalities in Canada, particularly in Manitoba and Alberta that have been heavily influenced by the Icelandic culture. One of the goals of the Icelandic National League is to acquaint and educate fellow Canadians about Icelandic culture and the contributions that Iceland has made to Canadian society.

In going forward, the Society needs to ensure that the culture will continue to be presented in an Educational format to Canadians by the passing on of the Icelandic heritage and traditions not only to this generation but to future generations. One of the means for presenting this information is by welcoming Canadians of Icelandic descent into our organization so that they too may pass on the heritage. Many of the original Icelandic immigrants are now of advanced age and are unable to attend conferences such as this one wherein a wealth of information was presented. The league recognizes that the education needs to be passed on by a younger demographic that is physically able to carry forward and present the culture to Canadians in the future.

Additionally, the league supports cultural exchange through its Snorri program. This is a charitable program wherein young Canadians of Icelandic descent can visit and be immersed in the country that their forefathers originated from. Conversely, Icelandic youth visit and are immersed in Canadian Culture. None of this would be possible without events such as the recent convention and through support of the delegates that attend them. The league is dedicated to the celebration of Iceland, a country that has had a significant influence as a contributor to the ethnic diversity that makes the country of Canada what it is today.

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For membership queries email ldgomann@gmail.com
or call Gwen at 403-242-9714

IN MEMORIAM



*Our Deepest
Sympathy*

Our thoughts and prayers go out to **Lucille Shuhyta** and her family as well as the **Bjarnason family** on the loss of Lucille's son, **Curtis**, aged 53 who passed away in his sleep on August 8.

IT'S VÍNARTERTA TIME

Lois Yasinko

Time to plan for the Bazaar Nov. 13 and our Christmas event. We are looking for Volunteers to host vinarterta bees and to learn how to make "Our" Cake. Last year we were short of Cake so we need to bake more! If you would like to pre-order a cake - Call Lois Yasinko 403 932 8863 \$20.00 for 8x4 Cakes



If you are interested in taking part in a vinarterta bee call Lois.

2017 INL calendars are now available for sale, only \$10.00 "Celebrating our Icelandic Heritage in North America" - Call Lorie Dobson at (403) 912-6869 or thedobsons@telus.net

CHRISTMAS IN MARKERVILLE

Planning has begun to hire a bus to transport seniors from our community to attend the Christmas in Markerville and Cookie Walk which is from November 4 – 6th. Date to be determined by the committee. A VOLUNTEER is required to chair a committee to plan for this very fun and interesting bus trip. **CAN YOU HELP?**

If so please call Gwen at (403) 242-9714

2016 "Celebrating our Seniors"

Gwen Mann

The LEIC of Calgary held a delightful luncheon under the leadership of **Marg Finnson** on Thursday, May 26. After signing the guest book, the guests mingled while enjoying the punch made by **Norma Slattery** and rúllupylsa on brown bread provided by **the Laxdals**. The lunch was egg salad sandwiches made by **Alfreda Duffy**, beef sliders and a selection of salads. Icelandic desserts provided a finale to a most enjoyable gathering. A big "bouquet" goes to **all the volunteers** and the generous donations that make this event such a success. **Pictured at right – Lorie Dobson and Alfreda Duffy making sandwiches.**



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**Charlene Stalker, Marg Finnson and granddaughter
Chantle Stalker Hall, Photo by Karl Torfason**

THREE CLUB ICELANDIC INDEPENDENCE DAY

Gwen Mann

On Saturday, June 18, 2016, the three Alberta Clubs celebrated Iceland's Independence from Denmark. All ages were enthralled with the show put on by the **Sons of Fenrir, Viking** re-enactors who displayed what life was like a thousand years ago, about the time that Iceland was being settled. Children watched in awe, seeing men and women wearing clothing that was handmade displaying ancient means of self-protection. After the main show, the children were invited to take part in a tug o war and a noodle battle. Amazingly, the children won again this year - at this time, ice cream was served.

Following greetings from each of the Clubs, Edmonton, Markerville and Calgary, the high light of this yearly event is the crowning of the **Fjallkona, Marg Finnson** (nee Hoar) accepted this honor from **Carolyn Josephson Yu** (ICCE), attired in an Icelandic Upplutur. Carolyn talked about her year as Alberta Fjallkona and Marg spoke of the significance of her new role and her appreciation of learning Icelandic traditions from her mother in law, the late Inga Finnson.

Also on the program

- Dorothy Murray**, President of the SGSIS Vonin (meaning hope) - they celebrate their 125th Anniversary.
- Bernice Anderson** spoke about the 30th Anniversary of the Creamery Museum,
- **Beverly Arason-Gaudet** (ICCE) newly elected 2nd Vice President gave an overview of the Leagues activities and upcoming events in Alberta.

- **Christine Mueller** presented an honorary membership to **Stephan Vilberg Benediktson** on behalf of the LEIC. See his story in his book *Stephan's Story* or by going to www.inlofna.org/biographies.

The day concluded with a huge Pot Luck dinner including roast turkey, baked ham and meat balls. The trimming included a multitude of salads with wide array of desserts.

www.inlofna.org/biographies.

Photos by Karl Torfason



Come visit our library in the lower level of the Scan Centre in the Saga Room. We have many recent issues of a variety of books. There are 2 DVD copies of "Vestfarer" available for loan about the history of Icelandic settlement in Canada. This library is for your use as a member of the Leif Eiriksson Icelandic Club. Call Christine for office hours - phone (403) 244-1560

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OUR VERY BEST WISHES AND CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR ICELANDIC CONSUL FOR SOUTHERN ALBERTA, HALLGRIMUR BENEDIKTSSON AND HIS WIFE GUÐRUN JÖRUNDSÓTTIR WHO CELEBRATE THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY THIS MONTH OF AUGUST.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SCANDINAVIAN FOLK DANCING? NOW IS YOUR CHANCE!!

Workshop attendees can really look forward to joining in audience participation dances on October 6. See the attached workshop registration form at www.nordicfolkdance.ca or call **Alison Wiigs 403-283-1299**

THE PEOPLE OF ICELAND ELECTED A NEW PRESIDENT ON SATURDAY — A VOTE THAT ALSO USHERED IN A CANADIAN FIRST LADY.



Gudni Johannesson, a history professor with no previous political experience, secured enough votes to be elected as the new head of state for the small Nordic country.

He is married to **Ottawa-born Eliza Reid**, who moved to Iceland more than a decade ago. The couple met while studying in England and have four children together.

Johannesson was widely expected to win the race to replace Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, who had held the office since 1996. The former president announced at the start of the year that he wouldn't be seeking another term. Gudni, an academic expert on the country's political history and its constitution, entered the election in the spring amid public frustration with Iceland's political elite. Eliza Reid grew up on a farm in the Ottawa Valley and now works as a writer and editor. Before the vote, Reid told The Canadian Press she's been "very welcomed" by Icelandic society, adding it would be a "tremendous honour" to serve as first lady. "As a Canadian, my stereotype is a bit that I am grounded and regular and don't try to be something that I'm not," said Reid. "And I think those are things about us that appeal to the electorate, we're just what you see is what you get." Both of their new roles are largely ceremonial; Iceland's president is a role comparable to Canada's Governor General. **Photo/Håkon Broder Lund**



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UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 6TH (Thursday) “ SPORIÐ” – FOLKDANCE GROUP FROM ICELAND- Viking Hall, Scandinavian Centre

OCTOBER 22nd (Saturday's) – FALL FEAST- featuring presentations of the Snorris' trip to Iceland and a Fashion Show of Icelandic sweaters at the Viking Hall at the Scandinavian Centre.

NOVEMBER 4th - 6th Christmas in Markerville – Senior bus trip (tentative)

NOVEMBER 13TH (Sunday) CHRISTMAS BAZAAR at the Scandinavian Centre.

NOVEMBER 26TH (Saturday) YULETIDE EVENT- in the Viking Hall at the Scandinavian Centre.

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