

LÖGBERG HEIMSKRINGLA

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Karen Botting announced as Íslendingadagurinn's Fjallkona



Karen Botting (centre) with 1988 Fjallkona Helga Sigurdson (left) and
retiring Fjallkona Linda Sigurdson Collette (right).
Below: Previous Fjallkonur at the announcement brunch.



Karen with Anna and Hjalmar W.
Hannesson. Below: Karen Erla Wankling
(left), Erla's daughter (far left), and Jo
Wilson (right).



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE JON SIGURDSSON CHAPTER IODE

Karen with Vi Bjarnason Hilton

Karen Botting was named as the Fjallkona for this year's Íslendingadagurinn at the annual Fjallkona announcement brunch on Sunday, April 17, 2016. A full house was on hand for the much-anticipated announcement at Gimli's Lakeview Resort.

The tradition of the Fjallkona began in 1924, after much discussion by the festival committee of the time, which sought a unique symbol to express of the Icelandic heritage at its annual festival. The Fjallkona, or Maid of the Mountain, was chosen as the most fitting personification of Icelandic traditions and ideals, inspired by an 1832 poem by Eggert Ólafsson. The annual announcement and crowning of Íslendingadagurinn's Fjallkona has remained an exciting and significant event

since this tradition began in 1924.

Describing Karen as a "well-deserving lady" who is "seen all over the Icelandic Canadian community," Íslendingadagurinn president Robbie Rousseau noted that, "a strong sense of heritage, culture, and self-identity are fundamental to one's ability to navigate an ever-changing world. The 2016 Fjallkona shares her Icelandic identity with her children and grandchildren, while at the same time respecting the heritage and culture of their partners."

About Karen Thora Borgford Botting

Karen was born in Montreal to parents Skapti (Scotty) Josef Borgford and Hrefna (Edna) Asgeirson Borgford, moving back to Winnipeg as an infant. She grew up in the West End of Winnipeg, often referred to as Little Iceland. It was in this community,

surrounded by many people of Icelandic origin and living close to her maternal grandparents, who immigrated from Iceland, that Karen became attached to her Icelandic roots. All her life she has spent time each summer at the family property, Arnastaðir at Arnes, where her paternal great-grandfather had once lived.

She attended Daniel McIntyre Collegiate and the University of Manitoba, playing an active role in student life and ultimately being elected Lady Stick of Arts.

In 1968, Karen married Dwight Botting, as they were beginning their careers as teachers. Together they have two daughters, Carla and Ingrid, son-in-law Rick, grandsons Charlie and Joe, and step-granddaughter Marianne, of whom they are extremely proud. ... *Continued on page 10*



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Friends of Iceland annual meeting an informative affair

Paul Park
Ottawa, ON

The annual general meeting of the Friends of Iceland group on Sunday, April 3, 2016, was a lively affair with an update on life on the island and a tribute to a retiring member of the executive. There was a packed house in the clubroom of the group, located in the residence of Ambassador Sturla Sigurjónsson. Members were eager to hear what had transpired in the last year.

Ambassador Sigurjónsson opened the proceedings by giving a lengthy overview of life in Iceland. He said that Iceland, like many western countries, was experiencing “political disaffections.” That does not make it unique, he noted. “Just look south of the border,” he stated.

The ambassador said voters were turning away from traditional parties and candidates. He cited the example of the Pirate Party, which won only three of 63 seats in the last election, but now commands about one-third of the support in political polls. (He did not address the current political upheaval in Iceland because the Panama Papers were not released until later that day.)

The ambassador noted that President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson is not standing for re-election in the presidential balloting this June. At least 20 people have expressed a desire for the top job, although nominations have not yet closed. A candidate must be an Icelandic citizen, at least 35 years old, and have the support of 1,500 people. The new president will be inaugurated on August 1.



Left: Ambassador Sturla Sigurjónsson discusses the situation in Iceland as FoI president Wendy Wynne-Jones and secretary-treasurer Roger Eyvindson look on. Right: Past president Jack Ives presents outgoing president Wendy Wynne-Jones with her medallion.



PHOTOS: PAUL PARK

The economic situation is very good. The gross domestic product equals US\$43,000 per person and growth is at four percent, as is unemployment. The country has a budget surplus of C\$180 million, low by North American standards, but quite significant for Iceland. Public debt has fallen to 16 percent of GDP.

Ambassador Sigurjónsson noted that tourism continues to grow. It is expected that 1.5 million people will visit Iceland this year, increasing to 2 million in 2017. Keflavík Airport is expanding its terminal. Icelandair and WOW Airlines will be initiating flights from Montreal to Iceland beginning in May. “This is happening much more rapidly than we expected,” the ambassador stated.

On a personal note, Sigurjónsson said he will be visiting Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia soon. He recently took part in a symposium at Toronto’s York University and will

address the Canadian Nordic Society in Ottawa later this month. He hinted there will be a high-level visit to Canada from Iceland in the coming months, but could not give any details yet.

In her report, outgoing FoI president Wendy Wynne-Jones said that, in addition to regular activities such as the Þorablót, Jólaglög, and the summer picnic, the group helped at the Governor-General’s Winterfest, co-

sponsored a lecture on Icelandic settlements by Teva Vidal, and was treated to a concert by Svavur Knútur. She thanked the group for its support and the opportunity to serve on the board. Her retirement was heralded as past president Jack Ives presented Wynne-Jones with a medallion.

Secretary-treasurer Roger Eyvindson joked that despite a deficit in 2015 of \$2.71, other investments kept the group

solvent. The Friends of Iceland has close to \$7000 in assets.

Membership secretary Judith Hoyer reported that the group has 24 family members, 10 seniors, and two individual members. She noted that membership dues have not increased since the club was founded. A slate of 12 directors was elected by acclamation. The dozen will choose who will serve in what leadership roles at its first executive meeting in May.

Iceland’s mid-highlands being considered for UNESCO designation

Frettablaðið—Members of Alþingi, Iceland’s parliament, have introduced a parliamentary resolution charging the government with putting Iceland’s mid-highlands on UNESCO’s World Heritage List. The resolution also charges the Icelandic World Heritage Committee with preparing an application for this purpose. The resolution’s sponsors come from five of the six parliamentary groups in Alþingi: the Social Democratic Alliance, Independence Party, Pirates, Bright Future, and Progressive Party. Currently, Þingvellir and Surtsey are the only places in Iceland on the World Heritage List.

The announcement of this resolution states that the trend has increased toward designating large land areas and entire landscapes instead of individual delimited areas, stating it is “normal for Iceland’s summary register to take this international trend into account, and this is the reason for introducing the parliamentary resolution.”

The report accompanying the resolution states that the highland’s untouched expanses entail diverse and unique natural features and the geology of the region is unique in the world. “One finds few human-made structures in the mid-highlands, which increases the value of untouched expanses. This entails qualities of life becoming more sought after in modern society – i.e., the experience of nature, uncontaminated by society’s industrialization and expanding technology. However, the structures there, such as roads and power stations, ought not block the area’s registration, and its registration would not itself block further construction there, work to reclaim land qualities, nor people’s utilization of the area for travel and fishing, but would call for planning and plans on how Iceland intends to protect and nurture the unique treasure of the mid-highlands.”

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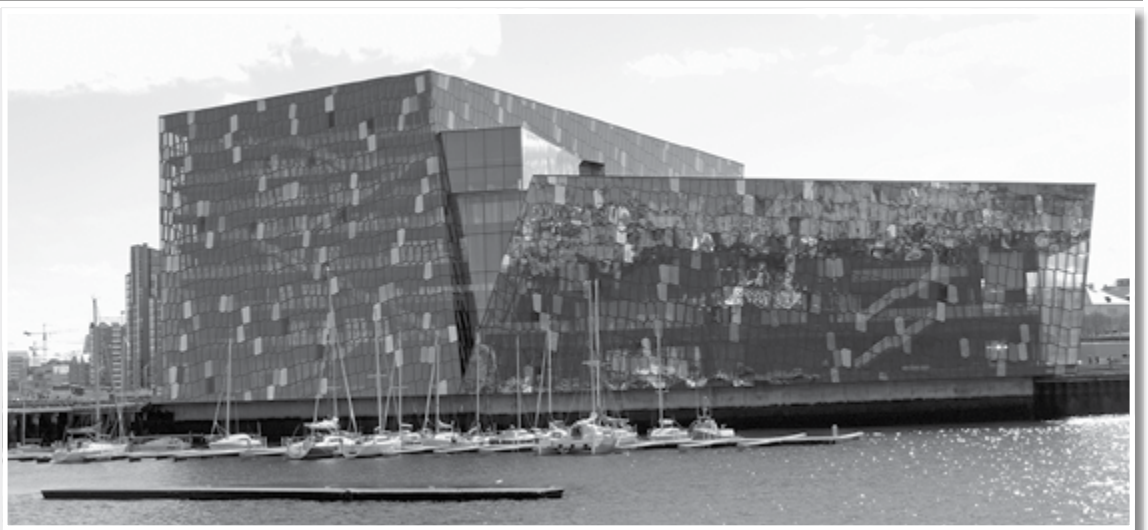


PHOTO: STEFAN JONASSON

Harpa Concert Hall

Paul Park
Ottawa, ON

Call it the Rhode Island red-faced. Tourism officials in the American state were embarrassed when a video promoting travel to the area was discovered to be using footage of Iceland.

At one point in the video, issued in late March, a skateboarder zooms past a glass building as a narrator intones, “Imagine a place that feels like home but holds enough uniqueness that you’re never bored.”

But Greg Nemes, a designer living in Providence, noticed something was amiss. He had been to Reykjavik last October

and recognized the glass building as the Harpa concert hall in the Icelandic capital. “It was pretty unmistakable to me, so I did some digging around and posted on Facebook about it,” he told the Associated Press.

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation blamed the editing company for the error. “As the Commerce Corporation put this presentation video together, explicit instructions were given to the local firm that helped with the editing to use only Rhode Island footage,” spokesperson Kayla Rosen wrote to AP. “A mistake was made. Once the mistake was identified, the video was removed.”

On April 1, Betsy Wall resigned as chief marketing

officer for the state. The Harpa footage was just the most recent of a series of missteps in the current tourism campaign.

Kelowna Chamber of Commerce will “Discover Iceland” in October

The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a trip to Iceland from September 30 to October 7, 2016, as part of its Travel and Learn Program. Launched in 2013, the Travel and Learn Program has provided enriched travel and educational experiences that are open to both members and non-members. Past adventures have taken participants to China, Italy, New Orleans, Japan, Vietnam, and Haida Gwaii. This will be the program’s first tour of Iceland.

By visiting during the first week of October, the “Discover Iceland” tour is counting on what it calls “Iceland’s benevolent climate,” which is milder than many expect, while taking advantage of lower prices and avoiding the heavier tourist traffic of the summer season. This time of year still offers ten hours of daylight with the added prospect of enjoying the Northern Lights after the sun goes down – something that summer visitors don’t get to experience.

“Discover Iceland” will include several day trips from Reykjavik featuring many of the country’s staples: the classic Golden Circle tour, the south coast (including the Skógar Folk Museum), and the majestic glaciers of the southeast. *Game of Thrones* fans will visit “Beyond the Wall” film sites at the glacier Vatnajökull. Not surprisingly, a visit to the Blue Lagoon is included, but what would a chamber of commerce tour be without at least one business twist? So the tour will stop at Iceland’s Chamber of Commerce for a presentation by its chief economist, Björn Björnsson.

Departure is from Kelowna, but you needn’t be from Kelowna to join this tour. For more information about this unique tour and a detailed itinerary, visit www.kelownachamber.org/iceland or contact Caroline Miller at the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce (250-469-7358).



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Stefan's Saga ICELANDIC FAMILY LIFE COMPLICATED BUT STRONG



Stefan Jonasson
Editor

According to an old family story, my great-grandmother Jóhanna danced the night away on the day of her wedding while my great-grandfather Þorkell watched their infant son upstairs. For a child immersed in the cultural norms of North American society, with its almost Victorian assumptions about love and marriage, there was something sweetly naughty about this story in my mind. Amma – she wouldn’t let us call her langamma because she said it made her feel old – was a loving and devoted mother to her children. The family she raised, which grew to include three sons and two step-children, was mostly happy, sound, and well cared for.

When Amma was a young woman, Icelanders couldn’t legally marry until they had reached the age of 20, so many a child was born before its parents were married, if only because love doesn’t wait for the law to catch up with it. This seems to have been the case with my great-grandparents, since Amma’s oldest son was born when she was 18 and she married my great-grandfather shortly after she turned 20.

Although unmarried, she wasn’t a single mother. Not every unmarried mother, then or now, has all the resources and support that would be helpful when bringing a child into the world, but Amma was not alone. My great-grandparents’ circumstances were hardly unusual in Iceland at the time and I doubt that very many people there gave the matter a second thought.

So, when an Arizona pastor recently preached a sermon

entitled, “Iceland: A Nation of Bastards,” I was incensed. I couldn’t escape thinking of Amma, who was very much a proper and dignified woman. Speaking of the “wickedness of Iceland,” this pastor characterized the country as a “feminist hell” in which children were not being born into what he considered a “normal family situation.” He was especially critical of Icelanders’ acceptance of unwed parents and mocked an Icelandic woman who had criticized the notion of “broken families” during a recent CNN documentary on Iceland. The reaction in Iceland ranged from amused disbelief to vigorous indignation.

In reality, this pastor created a straw image of Icelandic family life, which he then proceeded to condemn based upon his own unexamined prejudices about how society should be ordered. He showed no real understanding of the complexity and depth of Icelandic family life, which is far stronger than he seems capable of appreciating. He used what little he knew of Icelandic society to coin a provocative sermon title and managed to insult an entire nation in doing so.

Many North Americans are puzzled by Icelandic sexual mores and family life. CNN described the country as “moving beyond marriage” while largely ignoring the real strength of couples’ relationships. The media generally emphasizes the large percentage of children born to unmarried mothers while neglecting to mention that “unmarried” doesn’t necessarily

Langamma Jóhanna and langafi Þorkell with their sons



mean unpartnered, nor does it mean that the children aren’t born into supportive families who welcome their arrival. Those who lapse into assuming that fluid family structures lead to social decline fail to appreciate that they also offer flexibility and adaptability in making family life work.

Icelandic sexual mores may be more relaxed than some people may find comfortable, but that doesn’t warrant the suggestion that Icelanders are somehow more promiscuous than the people of other societies. They are more open

and transparent about sexuality and relationships – and, as far as I’m concerned, that’s a healthy thing overall. Icelandic families may be unconventional by North American standards, but they are nevertheless strong and wholesome. So Icelanders don’t need any unsolicited advice from preachers, or anyone else, about how to make their families and relationships work.

Corrections – Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra

Our article “Stefán S. Stefánsson to headline Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra season finale” (April 15, 2016) incorrectly identified the Winnipeg Jazz Orchesta as “the only community-based professional jazz orchestra in Canada,” which used to be true, but now it’s “the first and one of only a few community-based professional jazz orchestras in Canada.” The WJO’s success undoubtedly inspired others to follow its example.

The same article indicated that the WJO would perform *Blue Spanish Eyes*, but this has since been changed *Spanish Harlem*.

It’s not too late to take in the Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra’s concert with Icelandic saxophonist Stefán S. Stefánsson. The concert will take place on Sunday, May 8, 2016, at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, with performances at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

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Friðrika and daughter Gytte called Elín, courtesy of As it Happened Productions. King Frederick VI. The grave at Árskógur courtesy of As it Happened Productions. Pétur Árnason and Friðrika Björnsdóttir courtesy of Salín Guttormsson.

The regal saga of Árskógur

A forgotten legend enriches the cultural heritage of New Iceland

Joel Friðfinnsson

Geysir, MB

Dotted across the New Iceland settlement are numerous sites rich with the heritage our forefathers bestowed upon us. Whether it be crumbling and neglected houses of the pioneers or the remnants of former yard sites, which mournfully echo a happier and livelier time, each site and artifact has its own unique place in the New Iceland saga. Remaining most poignant, however, is the physical evidence of the people who settled here and lived off this land, their final resting places, the cemeteries and home burials throughout the settlement. Not uncommon in the early years of settlement in the Icelandic reserve, home burials became a necessity in the event of a death of a loved one if there was a great distance to the nearest cemetery or a district cemetery in the area not having yet been established. Of all the forgotten home burials in New Iceland's history, one remains utterly fascinating for the legend behind the woman buried there: the grave of Friðrika Björnsdóttir on the homestead Árskógur.

Árskógur is located approximately one mile north of the present-day village center of Riverton. The first settler of the property was Jóhannes Sigurðsson, who named the homestead after his native district of Árskógsströnd in Eyjafjörður, in northern Iceland. A charming and picturesque property, Árskógur is characterized by unique hills with looming evergreens in the backdrop towards the west, and a steady drop in elevation

into marshland towards the Icelandic River in the east. On the higher ground of the property, on a lonesome hill, sits a white picket fence and tree, the grave of Friðrika Björnsdóttir.

This story becomes more and more intriguing when we learn that Friðrika could be descended from the King of Denmark, Frederick VI. Friðrika was born in the captivatingly beautiful east fjords of Iceland on the farmstead Seljarteigshjáleiga in Reyðarfjörður, the daughter of Björn Jónsson and Lovísa Samúelsdóttir. Evidence suggesting a family connection to the Danish royal family can be found in the lineage of Friðrika's mother Lovísa. Lovísa was the daughter of the carpenter Samúel Friðriksson and Jórunn Tómasdóttir, both of the east fjords of Iceland. Samúel was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1793, and raised at royal expense. Legend states he was the son of then Crown Prince of Denmark and soon-to-be-crowned King Frederick VI of Denmark and Norway. Though there remains no definitive proof of this direct link to royal blood, the story has persisted.

Frederick VI was the King of Denmark from 1808 to 1839 and of Norway from 1808 to 1814. As the son of King Christian VII and Queen Caroline Matilda, Frederick was reared primarily by his father's stepmother due to his father's growing mental incompetency. King Frederick VI ascended to the throne upon his father's passing on March 13, 1808. Known for his social and economic reforms in Denmark, he supported Napoleon after the English

attack on Copenhagen during the Napoleonic wars in 1807. Frederick was considered by his subjects as a well-meaning, just, and responsible leader and history tends to reflect him in a positive light.

Friðrika grew up at the place of her birth until the age of ten years old, when she left to work in the homes of Jónas Þorsteinsson and Dr. Bjarni Thorlacíus. It is there at the home of Dr. Thorlacíus where she would meet her husband, Pétur Árnason, with whom she would emigrate to North America in 1876. Pétur, like his wife Friðrika, was from the east of Iceland. Born at Ketilsstaðir in the Hjaltastaðapinghá district of Norður Múlasýsla, Pétur lived in numerous places in the east prior to emigration.

Leaving the port at Lambeyrarhóll in Eskifjörður in 1876, with three children, Pétur and Friðrika spent their first winter in New Iceland at Sandy Bar in a cold and confined cabin, which was tragically struck by the horrific plague of smallpox. This sickness, which decimated the New Iceland settlement and aboriginal population, would claim all three of Pétur and Friðrika's children. After such a tumultuous first season in their new homeland, Pétur moved his family to his new homestead, which he would call Hof. It is here where he and Friðrika would expand their family, remaining positive for the future and forgetting the deep sadness of their past.

Following four years at Hof, Pétur and Friðrika moved in 1881 to their permanent home at Árskógur, where Friðrika would pass away on August 8, 1884, only twenty days after the birth of her daughter Friðrika. As the community cemetery on the homestead of Nes on the east side of Íslendingafljótið (the Icelandic River) was no longer in use at the time of Friðrika's death, it was decided to have her buried at Árskógur.

Pétur and Friðrika were blessed with many children during their life time together,

only five of whom survived to adulthood. The children of Pétur Árnason and Friðrika Björnsdóttir were: Gytte Elín Pétursdóttir, who married Grímur Magnússon of the Árnes district of New Iceland; Vilborg Pétursdóttir, who married Vigfús Guttormsson of Víðivellir, the brother of illustrious poet Guttormur J. Guttormsson; Lovísa Pétursdóttir, who passed away at the age of 22 years; Guðrún Pétursdóttir, who married Stefán Jónsson (Johnson); and Friðrika, who married Páll Friðriksson Vídalín. To this day there are hundreds of descendants from this couple living across North America.

This story of a simple Icelandic pioneering woman, who suffered such an arduous life in Canada, is one of the most interesting the northern districts of New Iceland has to offer. Is Friðrika Björnsdóttir the great-granddaughter of King Frederick VI of Denmark? Or is she descended from more humble beginnings? Perhaps this question can be answered through a quote attributed to a woman known only as Soffía María, who is alleged to have been the birth mother to the "royal baby" Samúel Friðriksson: "It was no bit of trash with whom I had Samúel." The genealogical link behind this compelling legend may never be proven, but Friðrika's

story and forlorn grave should never be forgotten. *Blessuð sé minning Friðriku.*

Attention to the gravesite at Árskógur and its history was rekindled several years ago at a meeting of the *Icelandic River Heritage Sites Inc.* committee that works at preserving historic sites in the Icelandic River districts of New Iceland. Noting the importance of maintaining Friðrika's grave, it was decided upon to contact her family, the descendants of Vilborg Guttormsson, the daughter of Pétur and Friðrika, to form a subcommittee dedicated to the restoration and refurbishment of the gravesite. After a few years in the planning and work stages, this project is drawing near completion and the committee is planning an unveiling ceremony for July of 2016. The "Royal Grave" committee has also hired a film company, *As it Happened Productions*, owned by Angela Chalmers and Sheryl Peters, to document the grave restoration process and tell this unique and enthralling story. A website dedicated to the project of the "Royal Grave" can be visited at <http://tindratales.wix.com/fridrika>, where a PayPal account has been set up for donations. There is a link on this website where you can view the family tree and find out if you are also descended from Friðrika Björnsdóttir.



Greetings from

Gordon J. Reykdal

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STUMBLING UPON HÓLAHÓLAR

Stefan Jonasson

What could be better than having your own family folktale? Now, truth be told, many of the stories

families tell about themselves are more fanciful than factual, the stuff of legends more than history. They evolve and grow over time, if they're passed on in the first place.

Back in 2010, I stumbled upon a story about my great-great-grandfather, Elías Kjærnested, which had been collected by Sigurður Nordal and Þorbergur Þorvaldsson.

It told of Elías's purported encounter with the huldafólk at the farmstead Hólahólar on the western tip of Snæfellsnes. Now, I'm a self-confessed huldafólk skeptic, but the even bigger problem with this story was that Elías never lived at Hólahólar. Or so we thought.

Further research led me to a volume of historical vignettes from Snæfellsnes. I had a eureka moment when I came upon a reference to Elías farming at Hólahólar from 1856 to 1860. That explained things – he had lived there in between censuses, and not very successfully, which is why the place had been lost to my family's memory.

In 2012, my daughter Brandis and I visited Hólahólar and walked along the 2.5-kilometer path that meanders through the old farm there. Little more than a well-worn sheep trail, we saw some of the roughest lava-strewn terrain imaginable and wondered why Elías ever thought he could carve out a living there.

Upon returning home, I found satellite images that

showed the remains of the old turf farmhouse, which was abandoned in 1878. So my wife Cindy and I returned in 2014, searching for the house, but all we found were a couple of outbuildings. Later, I consulted the satellite images once again and realized that the main dwelling-place had been the "hill" that we had walked right past.

So this April, we returned again – this time with my brother Chuck and sister-in-law Shell – and we found the farmhouse ruins and winter pasture of the folktale. We also learned that, notwithstanding the bleak landscape, Hólahólar was once a prosperous farm that held the landing rights at Dritvík, which granted a portion of every fisherman's catch to the farmer there. We weren't bothered by huldafólk, but perhaps they were simply watching and laughing from afar. Still, there was something magical about standing on this ancestral ground and imagining what life must have been like for our ancestors there.

Brandis Jonasson's assessment of the quality of the farmland at Hólahólar. Hólahólar's home field carved out of the surrounding lava.



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The defeat of Elías Kjærnested



PHOTOS: STEFAN JONASSON

Clockwise from above: Coastline at Hólahólar. Snæfellsjökull as seen from Hólahólar. Looking towards Snæfellsjökull from the crater at Hólahólar. Stefan and Chuck Jonasson standing in what remains of the entryway to the turf house at Hólahólar.



PHOTO: CINDY JONASSON

Near the middle of the nineteenth century lived a man at Hólahólar under the glacier who was named Elías Kjærnested. He had gone there from Munaðarhóll at Hellissandur. The farm Hólahólar stood west under the hill of the same name. Northeast of the hill goes Berudalur. Legend says that it takes its name from Bera, who had settled the land in Beruvík. She had requested to be buried where the sun did not shine.

To the right of the entrance into the valley is craggy rock up the slopes and Elías took charge there of a night pasture. Then he dreamed that a woman came to him and asked him to stop breaking up the rock. He saw his wife in the dream and she asked him to stop, but he did not. The woman then came to him a few nights and asked him more enthusiastically to

stop, but Elías let her prayers rush by the ear as the wind. Then the dream-woman visited Elías's wife in her sleep and asked her to get Elías to stop this vandalism. But the woman could not charm Elías. On the last night the dream-woman came to her, she was very angry and said that her husband was now to blame for the consequences of his acts.

After that Elías's livestock collapsed. When it became clear their collapse was not a trick, then he stopped building the night pasture. But it was too late. The horses cried out until killed along the cliff, though this had not happened, for instance, to people who had previously been to Hólar's pasture. Below the farm was a crevasse, which was called Dimmugjóta. Below that was a shoreline pasture and absolutely harmless. There

Elías lost 70 sheep in one night. This sheep death continued until Elías was driven away from Hólahólar an impoverished man. Elías later lived at Borg in Miklaholtshreppur. From there he moved to North America.

This tale was recorded by Sigurður Nordal and Þórbergur Þórvaldsson. They heard the story from Kristján N. Pétursson, who learned it from Elías Kristjánsson of Kjalvegur in Neshreppur, when Kristján was living at the neighbouring farm Ingjaldshóll between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. Kjalvegur was the birthplace of Elías Kjærnested's wife, Ólöf Þorsteinsdóttir, and the church at Ingjaldshóll was the parish in which both Elías Kjærnested and Ólöf were raised. The tale has been translated by Stefan Jonasson.

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Friends of the Árni Magnússon Institute founded in Reykjavík

A new association, Friends of the Árni Magnússon Institute (Vinir Árnastofnunar), was founded on April 20, 2016, at the Nordic House in Reykjavík. Its purpose is to support and promote the importance of the Árni Magnússon Institute's research, preservation, and scholarly achievements. The founding date was chosen to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the return of the first ancient Icelandic manuscripts from Denmark to Iceland.

A new website to support the organization's work was launched at the founding meeting: www.vinirarnastofnunar.is. It states that "members believe that the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies is one of the pillars of Icelandic culture. It is therefore necessary that the agency is able to foster individual databases and enhance public access to them. Members also consider it important that manuscripts which are

on the UNESCO Memory of the World list are made available and visible to the public."

Founded as the Icelandic Manuscript Institute in 1962, in response to the Danish government's agreement to repatriate Icelandic artifacts held by the Árni Magnússon Collection at the University of Copenhagen and the Danish Royal Library, the Institute was housed in the National Library on Hverfisgata in Reykjavík, now the Culture House. It was renamed the Árni Magnússon Institute in Iceland ten years later. In 2006, the new Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies was established, incorporating the Icelandic Language Institute, the University of Iceland Institute of Lexicography, the Árni Magnússon Institute, the Sigurður Nordal Institute, and the Place-Name Institute of Iceland.

The institute is named for Árni Magnússon (1663-1730), who went to study in Copenhagen, and later he

became a professor at the University of Copenhagen. He collected an immense number of books, including vellum manuscripts. The majority of his manuscripts were Icelandic, from all periods of Icelandic literary history, some dating to the 12th century. Although many of his printed books and manuscripts were destroyed in the great fire in Copenhagen in 1728, his initiative to collect Icelandic manuscripts saved many invaluable documents for posterity. On his deathbed, Árni Magnússon willed all of his possessions to the University of Copenhagen, which was the only university in the Danish realms at the time.

Those interested in being members of the association can fill in a simple form and add themselves to the list of Friends the Árni Magnússon Institute. You can join by clicking on the "gerast félagi" tab at the website and entering your name and email. There is no fee to join.

"A Few Thoughts"

Recorded by Margrét Bjarnason (1902-1999)
Geysir, MB

Translated by Sigrún Borga Jakobson
Winnipeg, MB

People had been coming to "New Iceland" for 25 years when I first remember and when I was first interested in what was going on, and by this time a few years of the twentieth century had gone by.

I remember that the summers were very wet and the mosquitoes were very troublesome. When the housewives went to visit each other they took their children

with them. They walked in home-made shoes and they carried their "good shoes" with them, and clean stockings, so that they would not bring mud onto the neighbour's floors.

People allowed themselves time to chat. In spite of various problems, I think that people were just as pleased with their circumstances as people are today. That was because people believed in the future. They believed that things

would improve when people took the right attitude and helped each other.

At that time there was no radio and no television. Instead, families arranged to come together and someone would read for the gathering. Soon libraries were built up in one home in every neighbourhood. In this way, although people were poor, they still had access to books.

People established their own newspaper, so that those who did not understand English could still know what was going on around them further afield. Then it turned out that it was not enough to have just one newspaper. They wanted people to discuss issues. Often one neighbour would buy *Lögberg* and the next neighbour would buy *Heimskringla* and they would share the papers and discuss the pros and cons.

People looked forward to Fridays because the mail

usually came on Fridays. People enjoyed the papers and the discussions. They debated the attitudes about politics and religion.

Because people understood Icelandic they had the opportunity to enjoy the poetry of Stephan G. and many other excellent writers. Hopefully Western Icelanders will still continue to speak both languages.

It is better to read a good book in peace and quiet rather than watch TV, which keeps on going before you have a chance to think about it in order to remember it.

* * *


Margrét and her twin brother, Björn, were born January 16, 1902, to Bjarni Bjarnason and Aðalbjörg Jónsdóttir. Her mother died when the twins were 13 years old and they worked together on the farm Bjarkaland with their father and after his death. Margrét lived in Betel Home

in Gimli the last years of her life. She died on February 7, 1999.

At the time of her death, her obituary stated, "Margrét had little formal schooling and worked hard all the years that she lived on the farm. However, she loved books – both English and Icelandic literatures. Both Margrét and Björn were generally well-informed and interested in current affairs."

Margrét endowed the annual Canada Iceland Foundation - Margrét Bjarnason Scholarships of \$500 each for students pursuing a post-secondary education, who graduate from a high school in Evergreen School Division in Manitoba and who demonstrate scholastic ability.

She also endowed three annual Evergreen School Division – Margret Bjarnason Memorial Scholarships, valued at \$1,000, which are given out to one student in each of Arborg, Riverton, and Gimli.



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Milwaukee Art Museum

David Franklin
Montreal, QC

On a recent business trip to Milwaukee, I took the opportunity to visit the spectacular Milwaukee Art Museum, which has over 35,000 works of art and is one of the largest museums in United States.

The museum itself is a work of art, as it has a wingspan that fold overnight. There is a Nordic connection, as one of the pavilions is designed by the Finnish American architect Saarinen (1957).

Currently, and running until May 22nd, there is an outstanding exhibition of masterpieces,

organized by the New York Historical Society, entitled "Nature and the American Vision." This exhibition features landscape paintings by artists of the Hudson River School, who were active in the 180s and painted the wilderness of Upper New York State, including Niagara Falls, mountains, lakes, and forests.

Further research indicates that there is an Icelandic connection to Wisconsin, namely Washington Island, which is situated about a four hours' drive north of Milwaukee. In 1870, four Icelanders settled on this island and it still has family names like Gislason, Gudmundsen, Einarson, and Johnson. There is even a Norwegian stave church to admire.



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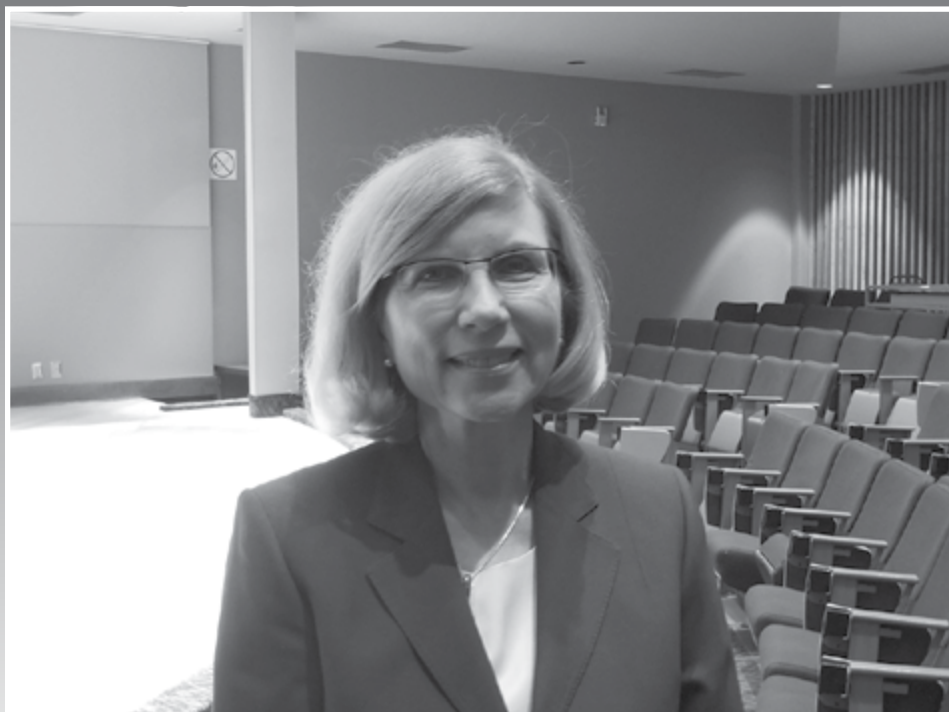
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Professor Irena Makaryk of the University of Ottawa. Right: Agnes Eva Volundardóttir.

PHOTOS: PAUL PARK

Hamlet in 35 languages – including Icelandic

Paul Park
Ottawa, ON

“Neither a borrower nor a lender be.” These are the timeless words of William Shakespeare – and pretty good advice if you’re the prime minister of Iceland. Those two worlds met on April 8 as the University of Ottawa presented a multilingual marathon reading of *Hamlet*. This year marks the 400th anniversary of the death of the playwright. The organizers saved the best for second last by having a section of the play recited in Icelandic.

Professor Irena Makaryk of the department of English said the presentation was a way to honour the multilingual aspect of the school and of Canada itself. Most of the polyglot players came from the university, either professors or students, but many private citizens volunteered as well. Professor Makaryk lauded the work of Tim Mark of the Canadian Nordic Society in getting readers lined up. One alumna of the University of Ottawa drove from Toronto to the capital especially to offer her reading in Jamaican patois.

Agnes Eva Volundardóttir of the Friends of Iceland in Ottawa read the king’s death segment in Icelandic from Act 5, Scene 2 of the Danish classic. Her role was the second-last of the afternoon. She was one of 61 people delivering the bard’s words in 35 languages. The entire staging took four and a half hours.

In her opening remarks, Professor Makaryk said *Hamlet* is the most translated play, with over 76 versions

available. “Shakespeare hasn’t been an English writer for many, many years,” she stated.

The first two acts were presented in various European languages. Things changed with the advent of Act 3. Trekkies were delighted when Hamlet’s famous soliloquy (“To be or not to be”) was recited in Klingon. (This portion of the play was broadcast live on CBC Radio in Ottawa.)

The organizers searched

high and low for translations. Some were available in libraries while others were found online. The Russian version had been written by the great novelist Boris Pasternak; Nini Pal wrote her own Bengali version before presenting it on stage. Professor Makaryk contacted a fellow Shakespeare scholar in Japan in order to get a proper Japanese translation.

The professor, who is project coordinator for the university’s Shakespeare 400

program, noted that many new friendships developed due to the staging. People with a fluency in one language were teamed up with fellow native speakers they did not know before. Even professors who worked in different faculties met and became friends.

Shakespeare’s influence

continues to this day. During the protests in Reykjavik, over then-prime minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson’s involvement with the Wintris company, one demonstrator paraphrased *Richard III* by waving a sign that said: “Now is the Wintris of Our Discontent.”

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Karen Botting: Fjallkona ... page 1

Left: Former Fjallkonur with Robbie Rousseau and Tim Arnason. Right: Karen with Linda Sigurdson Collette.

Karen loved her career as a teacher, school principal, and school division administrator. She took on leadership roles within the educational community and continued after retirement to co-create a summer learning program for inner-city children in Winnipeg, which now spans 15 schools with over 1,000 children participating each year. She has sat on many boards and committees, including the United Nations Association, UNICEF, and the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, and he is currently vice-chair of the Public Utilities Board. She received the YM-YWCA Woman of Distinction Award for Education, Training and Mentorship in 2012.

Having been to Iceland in the early 1990s, and wanting to learn more about her heritage, Karen took part in the Snorri Plus program in 2007. This inspired her to become more active in the Icelandic community.

Since 2007, Karen has been active in the Icelandic Canadian Frón, currently as vice president; the Jon Sigurdsson Chapter IODE, as president and scholarship chair; and writing (and recruiting the odd writer) for *Lögberg-Heimskringla*. She has also been an active volunteer in the Viking School, which re-



PHOTOS: ÍSLENDINGADAGURINN

enacts a day in the life of a Viking for children between grades 3 and 5 at the Scandinavian Centre. It is through these connections that she has been able to contribute to her heritage and also derive much pleasure from having met and connected with a strong, interesting, and wonderful Icelandic community.

Karen realizes the strength of understanding one's culture and heritage, especially for young people, so, this year, she and Dwight will be taking their two grandsons to Iceland at the end of the summer. In preparation for this experience, they are going to go to Icelandic Camp.

"Celebrate New Iceland" is this year's theme

Noting that this was his first public event as president of the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, Robbie Rousseau said, "I'm excited to be here and starting on this path. We have so much to look forward to over this year and the next. This past winter we have been busy working on new branding and a new website,

which will be launched soon. The 125 legacy project of Viking Park is forging ahead and we will be going to tender shortly and breaking ground this summer."

Robbie also announced that this year's festival theme is "Celebrate New Iceland." He said, "I'm going to celebrate New Iceland by trying to shine a light on some of the great accomplishments that the younger *Vestur-Íslendingar*, some of the accomplishments of contemporary Iceland and contemporary *Vestur-Íslendingar*. That said, I won't turn my back on the history and tradition of those I follow. So let us all celebrate New Iceland however you wish – just celebrate."

Thanks to the outgoing Fjallkona: Linda Sigurdson Collette

Robbie Rousseau recognized the outgoing Fjallkona, Linda Sigurdson Collette, and her many accomplishments. "What a year it has been," he said, "thank you so much for honouring the *Íslendingadagurinn* as our Fjallkona for the 126th festival."

"Your support of the celebration has been steadfast over the decades," he continued. "From your plays with your family, the Centenary Committee, Thingvellir, *Íslendingadags Skáld*, and the runestone as part of the 125th festival. For me, it was so special to see you and your mother Helga, our Fjallkona in 1988,

enjoy your year as Fjallkona at events throughout the year. Your passion for all things Icelandic is a powerful example for all of us here today. As you said in your remarks at the Traditional Program – 'it will work itself out' and to 'always do your best' – Linda you did great."

Robbie then asked those gathered to recognize all the past Fjallkonur in the room with a hearty round of applause.

Recognizing Anna and Hjalmar Hannesson

Finally, Robbie Rousseau acknowledged the presence of retiring Consul General Hjalmar Hannesson and Anna Birgis. "Your dedication to

the *Vestur-Íslendingar* and to *Íslendingadagurinn* over the years is greatly appreciated," Robbie said. "Íslendingadagurinn has been lucky enough to host you nine times, in many different capacities, and the last few with Coco. We are lucky to call you friends of the festival. Your collective guidance to the community as a whole and to myself personally is something we and I are forever grateful for." Robbie then presented them with small gifts of appreciation, saying, "I know the packing is already underway and the boxes are full," and then asked those present to rise and cheer our friends, Anna and Hjalmar.

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENT

Obituary

Borg Pjetursson 1946 – 2016

Borg was born Gail Mitchell, the daughter of Alex Mitchell, a Scotsman, and Pauline Palson. Gail grew up as part of the Icelandic Society of Edmonton. The club was dormant during World War II, but in 1951, Gail's mother, Pauline Mitchell, was instrumental in calling every Icelandic name in the phone book and the organization was revived. Gail had a remarkable memory and enjoyed recalling the Icelandic events of her youth. As an adult, she was a member of the club for many years and with great pride accepted the Life Membership awarded to her parents who were retired to Vancouver Island. She was

proud to possess her mother's Iceland costume. She travelled to Iceland and valued her connections there. In later life, Gail felt it was time for a major life change, and she took the new name of Borg Pjetursson, the Pjetursson name taken from the tombstone of an ancestor in Manitoba. Borg valued her friends in the Icelandic club and the Anglican church and dearly loved her doggy family, Bjorn and Sven. Borg will be remembered for her Christmas and birthday open houses which often featured Icelandic food. Her life had its up and downs, but the generous side of her nature shone through. She passed away very suddenly of heart failure in early March. A service took place on March 31, 2016 at All Saints Anglican Church with Rev. Neil Gordon officiating.

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WINNIPEG JAZZ ORCHESTRA

2015-2016
SEASON

All concerts are at the Winnipeg Art Gallery
2 pm & 7:30 pm



Sunday, May 8, 2016

BESAME MUCHO

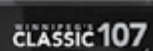
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TICKETS \$36 (adult) / \$16 (under 30) • WJO Box Office 204.632.5299

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWW.LH-INC.CA

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Send information to appear in the Calendar of Events to catherine@lh-inc.ca.
Please include date, place, time and other particulars. For more listings, visit our website at www.lh-inc.ca
Follow us on facebook and twitter

Events

1ST AND 3RD THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH
Winnipeg, MB: Knitting group. Scandinavian Centre, 764 Erin St. 7 - 9 p.m. Bring yarn and needles. Drop in \$5. All levels of experience welcome.

SUNDAY 1 MAY
Winnipeg, MB: The Icelandic Canadian Frón will be hosting the Sunday Brunch at the Scandinavian Cultural Centre 674 Erin St. 10:30 - 1 p.m. \$15 adults, \$7.50 children 7-12, 6 and under free. Reservations recommended 204-774-8047 or sccreservations@shaw.ca

2 TO 6 MAY
Winnipeg, MB: Viking Program. Once again, the Scandinavian Centre will transform itself into a Viking "settlement." The program, "Everybody Wants to be a Viking," offers students in Grade 3 and 5 a chance to learn about the cultural traditions of Vikings, circa 800 AD, both in North America and in northern Europe. 9:30 a.m. to noon. The children meet re-enactors who explain about their lives and jobs, from being a blacksmith to a farmer, a weaver or a rune master. The students get to feel the weight of helmet, eat some flatbread and write their names in runic characters. For more information, contact everyonewantstobeaviking@shaw.ca or www.scandinaviancentre.ca

SATURDAY 14 MAY
Winnipeg, MB: IODE plans Heritage Fashion Review as part of their 100th anniversary celebrations. The Jon Sigurdsson Chapter, IODE is hosting a Heritage Fashion Review and Tea, 2 p.m. at Neil Bardal Funeral Centre, 3030 Notre Dame Avenue. Presented by the Costume Museum of Canada, approximately 150

years of clothing and accessories will be on review. Help the Chapter celebrate their 100th at this fundraiser in support of their work. Tickets, limited in number, are \$45. They can be ordered at: jonsigurdssoniode@gmail.com

SATURDAY 14 MAY
Riverton, MB: The Unified Veterans of Manitoba, Inc. invite you to join them at the Old Boat Works on Front Street to preview the new memorial stone and plaque for the Aboriginal Veterans Memorial, which will be formally placed at the memorial site later this year after the Canada Day parade. The Riverton and District Friendship Centre, Inc. will host a tea and bannock lunch for all who attend. People of Icelandic ancestry will be interested in the fact that the memorial's sentry in the falcon, which represents visionary power, wisdom, and guardianship. The falcon carries with it a message of transition and change. For more information, contact Randi at 204-794-1133.

Markerville, AB: Opening day at the Markerville Creamery, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

THURSDAY 26 MAY
Calgary, AB: The Leif Eiriksson Club of Calgary holds its Seniors' Lunch. Vahalla Room, Scandinavian Centre. Free Event.

FRIDAY 17 JUNE
Burnaby, BC: Icelandic Canadian Club of British Columbia celebrates Icelandic National Day, evening, Scandinavian Centre. 6540 Thomas St.

FRIDAY 17 JUNE TO SUNDAY 19 JUNE
Burnaby, BC: Midsummer Celebration. Scandinavian Centre. 6540 Thomas St.

SATURDAY 18 JUNE
Markerville, AB: Celebration of Iceland's National Independence Day, featuring

childrens' activities and the crowning of Alberta's Fjallkona (this year from Calgary's Club) as well as a potluck supper.

24 AND 25 JUNE
Fargo, ND: *Save the date.* Iceland will be the host country for next year's Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival. www.nordiccultureclubs.org.

24 TO 26 JUNE
Spanish Fork, UT: *Save the date.* Iceland Days, Spanish Fork City Park.

22 TO 29 JULY
Camp Veselka, near Gimli, MB: Icelandic Camp *Íslenskur Sumarbuðir*. For more info on how to light this spark in your kids please visit www.icelandiccamp.com; e: Brad Hirst at icelandiccamp@gmail.com. Twitter @IcelandicCamp. Campers are immersed in all things Icelandic. From language lessons to viking crafts to writing their own saga the campers start to develop a love of their Icelandic ancestry.

28 SEPTEMBER TO 1 OCTOBER
Minot, ND: The 39th annual Norsk Høstfest has announced its main stage entertainment lineup for the 2016 edition of North America's largest Scandinavian festival at the North Dakota State Fairgrounds. Besides great entertainment, Norsk Høstfest will spotlight Scandinavian culture, artisan crafts, Nordic shopping, nightly dances, and of course, great authentic Scandinavian cuisine. More info visit www.hostfest.com or call Norsk Høstfest at (701) 852-2368.

Exhibit

UNTIL SATURDAY 4 JUNE
Brandon, MB: Artist lone Thorkelsson – *Synthia's Closet Reassembly* glass show exhibit. Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba, 710 Rosser Ave. Unit 2. 204-727-1036. Gallery hours: Sun, Mon – closed. Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat – 10-5. Thu 10-9.

UNTIL APRIL 2017
Washington, DC: Exhibit – *Primordial Landscapes: Iceland Revealed*. National History Museum, 1st Floor, Special Exhibits Hall (near the Mammals Hall). Photographer Feodor Pitcairn and poet Ari Trausti Guðmundsson reveal a land of fire, ice, hardy life, and natural beauty. Experience the remote beauty of Iceland, a land sculpted by the elements and forged by active geologic activity. 10th St. and Constitution Ave., NW Washington, DC. naturalhistory.si.edu/

Icelandic Classes

MONDAYS
Toronto, ON: The Icelandic Canadian Club of Toronto Spring session of Icelandic Classes (*Íslenskukennsla*) – begins March 21. The Beginner class will be from 6:30 - 8 p.m and Intermediate will be from 8:15 - 9:45 p.m. with a Kaffi Break between the classes. Classes are \$80 for members and \$95 for non-members. The eight class session will be offered for March 21 to May 16, 2016 (no class on April 18). For more information, please contact Holly at classes@icct.info.

WEDNESDAYS
Gimli, MB: Gimli's Wednesday afternoon Icelandic Kaffitími sessions are suspended for the time being due to the closure of Amma's Tea Room at the Gimli Waterfront Centre. Notice of resumption of sessions will be posted in this space.

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH
Arborg, MB: Meet to speak Icelandic, 3 p.m. *Molasopi* at the Arborg Legion. No pressure.

THIRD THURSDAY
Arborg, MB: Arborg Hotel lounge, 8 p.m. *Kaffitími* for those who want to learn words or phrases. No pressure.

Music

2 TO 8 MAY
Toronto, ON: Canadian Music Week. Axel Flóvent, Mise En Scene. cmw.net.

SUNDAY 8 MAY

Winnipeg, MB: The final concert of the Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra's 2015/16 season will feature Icelandic saxophonist and composer Stefan Stefansson. www.stefanstefansson.net. *Besame Mucho*, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Doors open 30 mins. prior to show time. Winnipeg Art Gallery, 300 Memorial Blvd, Winnipeg, MB. The season closes on a Spanish note with music referencing Spain, Mexico and Latin America, but with a nod to cultures further north such as Iceland, the homeland of guest composer/saxophonist Stefan Stefansson. We'll waltz the classic Blue Spanish Eyes, slow dance the bolero of *Besame Mucho* and we'll call on Winnipeg's favorite anthem singer Stacey Natrass to guide us through the sensual pleasures of this season ending concert. Tickets: <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=61017>.

OF MONSTERS AND MEN

Taste of Iceland Reykjavik Calling alumni, Of Monsters and Men are one of the biggest bands to come out of Iceland. The five-member indie folk-pop band from Reykjavik formed in 2010. www.ofmonstersandmen.com
6/8: Montreal, QC
6/10: Toronto, ON
6/11: Clarkston, MI
6/12: Tinley Park, IL

KALEO

Taste of Iceland Reykjavik Calling alumni, the four-piece band Kaleo is bringing its "gorgeous blend of folk, blues, country, and rock to a wider mainstream audience in America." Kaleo signed with Atlantic Records and now lives in Austin, Texas, and will begin recording new material with producer Mike Crossey (Arctic Monkeys, Jake Bugg) in London for an EP due this year. www.officialkaleo.com
5/13: Atlanta, GA
5/15: Houston, TX
5/21: Gulf Shores, AL
5/27: Napa, CA
5/29: George, WA
5/30: Portland, OR
6/17: Dover, DE
7/29 - 7/31: Montreal, QC

SIGUR RÓS TOUR

The Icelandic post-rock band formed in 1994, but it wasn't until 2000 when the band achieved worldwide success with their second album, *Ágætis byrjun*. For the first time in ten years, the band will be touring theaters around the world, with 17 shows in North America. Tickets: sigur-ros.co.uk/tour/
9/19: Vancouver, BC – Queen Elizabeth Theatre
9/20: Seattle, WA – Paramount Theatre
9/21: Portland, OR – Keller Auditorium
9/23: San Diego, CA – Copley Hall
9/24: Los Angeles, CA – Hollywood Bowl (* with support act, TBA)
9/26: Salt Lake City, UT – Kingsbury Hall
9/27: Denver, CO – Paramount Theatre
9/29: Minneapolis, MN – Orpheum Theatre
9/30: Chicago, IL – Chicago Theatre
10/1: Detroit, MI – Fox Theater
10/3: Toronto, ON – Massey Hall
10/5: New York, NY – Radio City Music Hall
10/6: Brooklyn, NY – Kings Theatre
10/8: Philadelphia, PA – Academy of Music
10/10: Asheville, NC – Thomas Wolfe Auditorium
10/12: Kansas City, MO – Midland Theatre
10/14: Phoenix, AZ – Orpheum Theatre
Tickets on sale: sigur-ros.co.uk/tour/

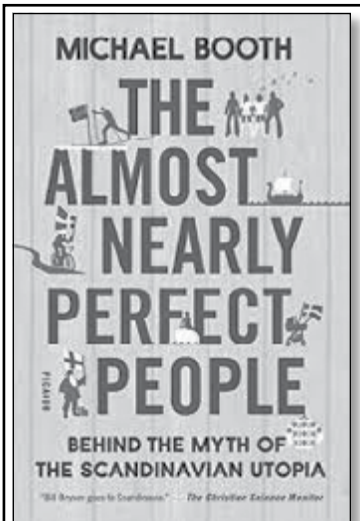
Literature

New York, NY: The Halldór Laxness Library at Scandinavia House: The Nordic

Center in America. Open Tue – Fri, 12 - 5 pm. Free for ASF Members and by special appointment. To make an appointment, call 212-779-3587. Visitors to the Halldór Laxness Library, named in honour of the 1955 Icelandic Nobel Laureate, can browse through novels by Scandinavian writers, research travel destinations, and catch up on Nordic news and cultural events with a variety of newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals. 58 Park Avenue at 38th St. 10016. 212-779-3587. scandinaviahouse.org or amscan.org

THURSDAYS

Lestrarfélagið Gleym-mér-ei, (Est'd 1996, celebrating 20 years.)
Winnipeg, MB: Icelandic Collection University of Manitoba. Elizabeth Dafeo Library. 7 p.m. (except May which is 6:30 p.m.) Everyone welcome to any evening. Contact: Linda F. Sigurdson Collette – silverflash@shaw.ca
May 26: Michael Booth – *The Almost Nearly Perfect People*. 6:30 p.m.



*The Almost Nearly Perfect People
(Behind the myth of the
Scandinavian Utopia)*

Journalist Michael Booth has lived among the Scandinavians for more than 10 years, and has grown increasingly frustrated with the rose-tinted view of this part of the world offered up by the Western media. He explains who the Scandinavians are, How they differ and why, and what their quirks and foibles are, and he explores why these societies have become so successful and models for the world. They may very well be almost nearly perfect, but it isn't easy being Scandinavian. He poses these questions: Why are the Danes so happy, despite having the highest taxes? Do the Finns really have the best education system? Are the Icelanders as feral as they sometimes appear? How are the Norwegians spending their fantastic oil wealth? And why do all of them hate the Swedes Possible answers should provide for a lively discussion.

Sports

FRIDAY 29 JULY

Gimli, MB: The Icelandic Open, in support of *Lögberg-Heimskringla*. Links at the Lake Golf Course. Cocktails and dinner at Johnson Hall (limited seating). Additional dinner tickets available at \$50. Early bird is \$150 until June 15th. Those who register early bird are eligible for a draw to get the 2017 registration free. Regular registration \$175. For sponsorship and registration contact us: 204-284-5686, 1-866-564-237. email: LHicelandicOpen@lh-inc.ca, or at www.lh-inc.ca.

núna (now)

26 MAY – 6 JUNE

núna (now) 2016 kicks off with the delightful musical play *Mission Potluck*, produced by One Trunk Theatre, touring Winnipeg, Gimli, Riverton, and Arborg from May 26 to June 6.



MISSION POTLUCK TOURS 26 MAY TO 4 JUNE

núna (now) and One Trunk Theatre present an all-female comedy drama featuring strongly Icelandic themes and cake. *Mission Potluck* brings to the stage the true story of a Lutheran Ladies League's ill-fated fundraising efforts in Gimli in the 1920s. Collectively created and performed by comediennes Claire Therese Friesen, Gwendolyn Collins, Andraea Sartison, Jacqueline Harding and Anna-Laure Koop the group ingeniously flips history on its head. Mission Potluck tours at the following venues:
Winnipeg, MB: Thu 26 May, First Lutheran Church, 8 p.m.
Gimli, MB: Fri 27 May, Aspire Theatre, 7:30 p.m.
Sat 28 May, Aspire Theatre, 7:30 p.m.
Sun 29 May, Aspire Theatre, 2 p.m.
Riverton, MB: Fri 3 June, Community Centre 7:30 p.m.
Arborg, MB: Sat 4 June, Community Centre, a fundraising event for the Arborg Personal Care Home, 7:30 p.m.
For tickets: www.brownpapertickets.com
For more information on One Trunk Theatre and Mission Potluck visit onetrunktheatre.com.

One Trunk Theatre is a non-profit, Winnipeg based company established in 2009. Under the artistic direction of founder Andraea Sartison One Trunk is dedicated to producing new work that is interdisciplinary and collaboratively created. Through process and plays One Trunk seeks to find the root of where all art forms begin and branch out to create new, innovative performances. Each production integrates a new combination of media into our theatre process be it ballet, rap, hip hop dance, silent movie or graphic novel. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram via @OneTrunkTheatre!
For ten years, núna (now) has been bringing Icelandic and Icelandic-background artists of all disciplines to Manitoba, as a way of maintaining the cultural bridge between the two places. Thousands of Manitobans have been exposed to artists from Iceland, Canada and the United States whom they otherwise might never have heard of, and an important international bond of long standing has annually been reinforced. Such is the magic of núna (now). Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram via @nuna_now!

Chicago Porrablót draws record attendance



Lena Hallgrímsdóttir
Chicago, IL

The Icelandic Association of Chicago held its annual Porrablót on March 19th at the Swedish American Museum in Andersonville. Traditionally we celebrate Porri in February but this year we wanted to take advantage of the direct flight and booked the musician and chef on the first Icelandair plane to land in our city in 30 years. People and Porri food arrived safely and we were all excited and ready for an extra special celebration and to welcome our ambassador to the United States, Geir H. Haarde, and his wife, Inga Jóna Þórðardóttir, to enjoy the night with us.

We had a record attendance and sold out weeks before the event. Everyone had a fantastic time savouring Icelandic goodies, cherishing old friends, and making new ones in the spirit of Porrablót's motto: *maður er manns gaman* (men enjoy the company of other men), as it says in *Hávamál*. We pride ourselves to throw an authentic Icelandic Porrablót, where all generations come together and where sheared sheep heads, pickled rams' testicles, blood and liver pudding, and many other treasured delicacies take center place on the dinner table.

Our Icelandic chef this year, Ari Hallgrímsson, educated adventurous first-comers about what they were putting on their



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ICELANDIC ASSOCIATION OF CHICAGO

plate, and our president, Einar Steinsson, stepped on stage and demonstrated how to eat a sheep's head – eye ball and all. Per tradition, we started the party off with rotten shark and brennivín (a classic), homemade gravlax, and a twice-smoked leg of lamb from Mývatnssveit. Other homemade food was the rúgbrauð (rye bread) and desserts: kleinur, ástarpungar,

sörur, lakkristoppar (licorice), meringue cream tarts, skyr, and, of course, pönnukökur.

Thanks to Hemmi Ara, our Icelandic musician, we did a lot of singing and no one was exempt when it came to the competing of the men's and women's choirs. Anna Kárdal decorated the room and this year's theme was *svarfuglsegg* (guillemot eggs).



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July 29, 2016
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Gimli, Manitoba

Cocktails & Dinner at the Johnson Hall (limited Seating)
Additional tickets available at \$50

REGISTER TODAY! Early bird is \$150 until June 15th
Regular registration \$175

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