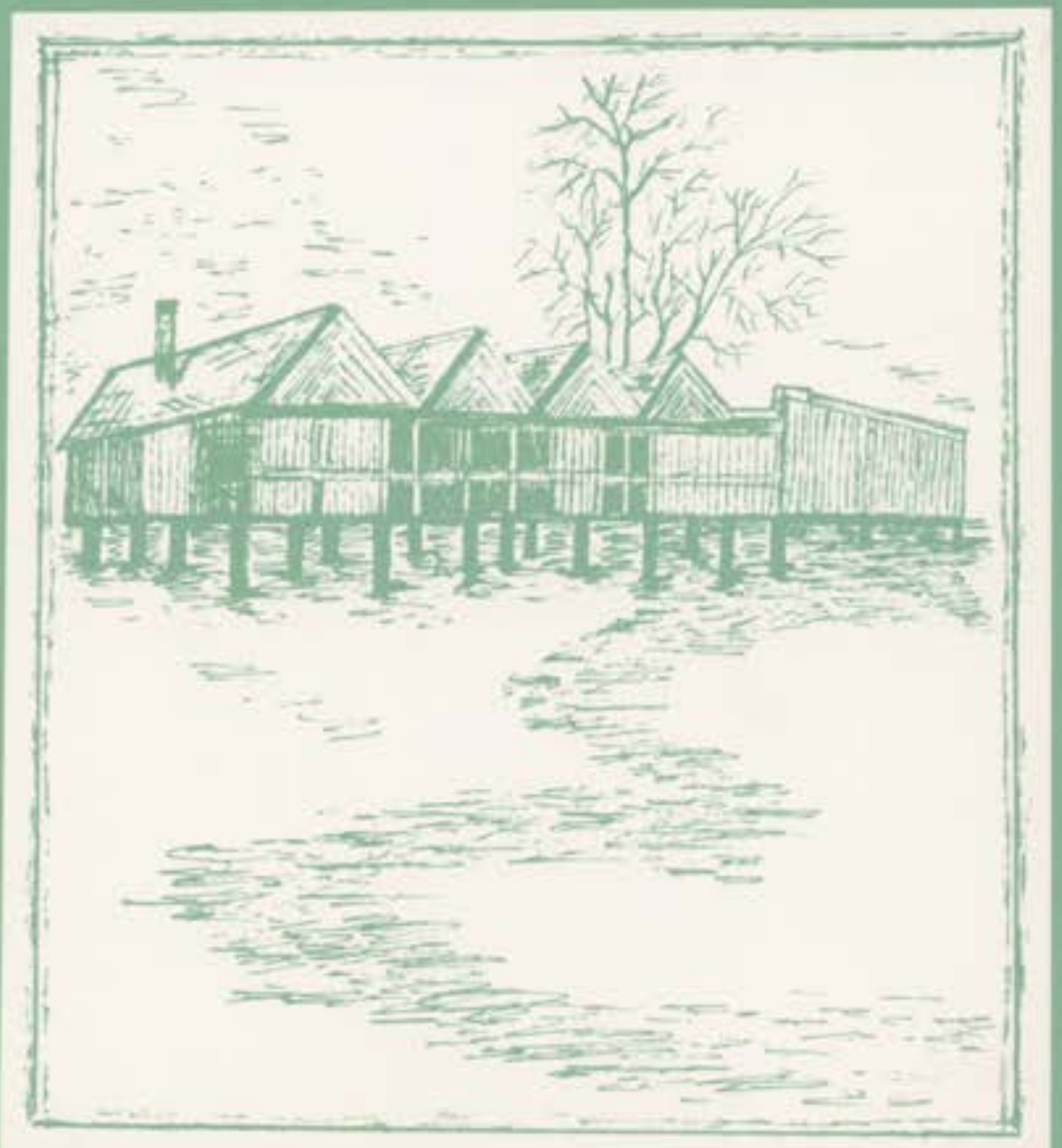
ISSN 0046 - 8452

SPRING, [APRIL], 1984

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN



Gimli Harbor Park
(Designed by Thura Bjarnason)

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN, SECOND CLASS MAIL—REGISTRATION
No. 1909 — PRINTED AT 358 ROSS AVE., WINNIPEG, MAN. R3A 0L4

The Icelandic Canadian

Volume XLII, No. 3 **Winnipeg, Canada** **Spring, 1984**

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

A North American quarterly published in Winnipeg, Canada, dedicated to the preservation of the Icelandic heritage.

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Second Class Mail — Registration No. 1909

Printed at 358 Ross Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A 0L4

EDITORIAL

A GUEST EDITORIAL

by Roy St. George Stubbs

The Icelandic Canadian Magazine is the lengthened shadow of the Icelandic Canadian Club. This club was founded in Winnipeg, in 1938. In general terms, its main purpose was to preserve for Canadians and Americans of Icelandic descent a knowledge of their ancestral past. On a lower level, it was to promote good-fellowship, to report the comings and goings, and the doings, of Icelandic Canadians and Americans, and to serve as a medium for keeping them in touch with each other, and with their homeland.

The main avenue for the promotion of these purposes was to be a magazine. This magazine was to be published in English, for the good reason that most members of the club were able to express themselves more fluently in English than in Icelandic.

Among the older generation, though they had taken firm root in Canada, there were some whose ancestral strain was still strong. They objected to the use of the English language. That sturdy individualist, Dr. Sig. Jul. Johannesson was not of their number. With his graceful pen, in his own charming manner, he wrote a poem of welcome for the magazine. This poem was a feature of the magazine's first issue which came from the press in the fall of 1942. Dr. Johannesson gave his poem the appropriate title of 'Hello'.

Hello! If you hear I am knocking,
I hope you will open the door:
''Who are you?'' — I knew you would
ask me.
You never have seen me before.
Who am I? — As yet I am no one
To somebody hoping to grow.
Today is my very first birthday,
I'm starting by saying hello.
''Oh! What is your mission?'' you
ask me,
I'll tell you with juvenile pride,
For I am not timid nor bashful;
Why should I? There's nothing to hide.
Believe me: I am coming to serve you
As nobody served you before,
By adding some life to your living —
I hope you will open the door.

How well has the Icelandic Canadian fulfilled its mission. The man whose poem welcomed its birth always maintained that it was measuring up to the highest hopes of its founders. Speaking some ten years after its first issue had appeared, Dr. Johannesson said that the Icelandic Chair at the University of Manitoba and the Icelandic Canadian Magazine constitute two life insurance policies for the preservation of Icelandic culture on this continent. It is forty-two years since the Icelandic Canadian Club launched its magazine upon the stormy waters of a world at war. It now may be asserted confidently that it has become a model among magazines of its kind.

It is of interest to take a look at the first number of the Icelandic Canadian. It contained an excellent editorial by its editor-in-chief, Laura Goodman Salverson. Savour the rare bouquet of this editorial: ''It is right that we should cherish (our) inheritance, and should remember with humility rather than pride that we are the repositors of a humane tradition; that we are the sons and daughters of heroic men and women whom neither tyranny nor indescribable hardships could make to falter from their steadfast faith in the cardinal virtues of justice and liberty and the dignity of human life. But sentimental fondness is not

enough. It is not enough that we should be proud of our ancestors. We must waken to the inexhorable fact that the past lives in us and dies in us.''

To the first number, Judge Walter J. Lindal contributed an article on the timely topic 'Where Do We Stand', and Professor Skuli Johnson a scholarly essay entitled 'A Roman Elegy on Rural Life.' There were a story 'Broken Shackles' by Ragnihildur Guttormsson; an article 'Pioneer Days on Big Island' which had been written in Icelandic and translated into English by Val. S. Sigurdson. Helen Sigurdson edited a book page, and Sigrun Lindal a section called Achievements, which contained pictures of Icelandic Canadians who had achieved distinction in various walks of life. Another feature entitled Icelandic Canadian's War Effort was illustrated by pictures of Canadians of Icelandic descent who had answered the call of their adopted country. In addition to Dr. Johannesson's poem of welcome, there were two poems — one by Margaret Bjornson Adamson, the other by Mrs. Salverson — and a translation of a poem of Dr. Johannesson's entitled 'Iceland', by Paul Bjarnason. Here are two of the eleven stanzas of this translation:

I know thy sons their swords at one time rattled.
The saga much about their valour prattled.
But now they stand for better things embattled.

No race or clan on earth our own transcended.
Some innate law our sturdy growth attended.
From kings and slaves our blood was truly blended.

The first number was altogether a most worthy maiden effort. That it aroused great interest is amply attested by the second number which published extracts from letters of congratulations from Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King (then Prime Minister of Canada); Professor Watson Kirkconnell (one of the best friends Icelandic Canadians have ever had); Eric F. Gaskell (National Secretary of the Canadian Author's Association); Hon. Ivan Schultz (Minister of Education in the Manitoba government); Hon. R. F. McWilliams (then Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba); Dr. Sidney Smith (President of the University of Manitoba); James S. Thomson (General Manager of the C.B.C.); and R. S. Lambert (Education Advisor of the C.B.C.).

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Business and Advertising Correspondence to:
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Phone 885-5792

Editorial Correspondence to:
AXEL VOPNFJORD
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Phone 284-3079, Winnipeg, Canada R3M 2M9

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Hon. Ivan Schultz's letter contained a warm tribute to Icelandic Canadians. ''Without in any way sacrificing the magnificent traditions of their race,'' he wrote, ''they have made it abundantly clear that they are first and foremost Canadians not in any nationalistic sense but rather in the broader sense that implies hope and belief in Canadian ideals.''

Another feature of the second number was a tribute from Nellie L. McClung. ''I fully endorse,'' she wrote, from her retreat at Lantern Lane, ''the sentiment expressed in the editorial of Volume 1, No. 1. It is not enough that we should be proud of our ancestors. What we owe to them now is not worship but work. We are all Canadians now, and part of the free people of the world, with a colossal struggle on our hands.''

Four times a year, for forty-two years, the Icelandic Canadian has given Canadians and Americans of Icelandic descent an opportunity to cherish the values of their national heritage. Over the years, many memorable articles, dedicated to this purpose, have appeared in its pages. May I make reference to half-a-dozen which have made a special appeal to me: 'Icelandic Settlers in Canada,' by Dr. W. Kristjanson; 'The Literature of Iceland', by Dr. Tryggvi Oleson; 'Our Icelandic Culture', by Dr. Thorkell Johannesson; 'America in the Making', by Valdimar Bjornson; 'Volcano with a Heart (a tribute to Dr. Sig. Jul. Johannesson), by Art Reykdal, and, finally, 'The First Permanent Settlement of Icelanders in America', by John Y. Bearnson.

My choice of these articles has been a subjective one, but they are a representative sample of the good things that the magazine has to offer. There are many, many more, articles of equal merit which offer to second, third and fourth generations of Icelandic Canadians an opportunity to drink from the springs of their ancestral heritage.

Not least of the magazine's useful services has been the publication of translations into English or poems written in Icelandic — particularly the work of the two giants whom Canada may claim as her own, Stephan G. Stephansson and Guttormur J. Guttormsson, several of whose poems have been dressed in appropriate English garb by excellent translators.

Translation is held in low repute by some who are forgetful of an important fact. One of the pillars on which the civilization of English-speaking countries rests is the King James Version of the Bible, which is a translation of a translation. For better or for worse, Christianity has largely determined the form and the character of the civilization of the Western World.

During its life's span, the Icelandic Canadian has had five dedicated editors-in-chief: Laura Goodman Salverson, Judge Walter J. Lindal (for two periods), Holm-

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fridur Danielson, Wilhelm Kristjansson and Axel Vopnfjord (for two periods) — who have invested a great deal of time and energy, and patience, in guiding the fortunes of the magazine on the path which its founders had charted for it. These five have not worked for hire. They served not Mammon, but the worthy cause of adding some life to the living of Icelandic Canadians.

Mr. Vopnfjord, the present editor, has asked me to write this guest editorial and he has suggested its general theme. I have been happy to respond to his request. I take my leave, not in my own words, but in the words of Watson Kirkconnell, who speaks with a far greater authority than I do: "The Icelanders are certainly one of the most articulate and culturally minded of all the nationality groups in Canada."

AT THE EDITOR'S DESK

COVER DESIGN

Thura, Mrs. Herbert Bjarnason, is the daughter of the late Oddfridur and Jon Johannsson (the first Icelandic child born in 1875 at Gimli). As a member of the Gimli Art Club, Thura has enjoyed her hobby for the past ten years.

* * *

GIMLI HARBOUR PARK
The Changing Scene at Gimli
by Harald Goodmanson

Gimli Harbour Park

When the Air Force Base at Gimli closed in 1971, a "make-work" grant was awarded to the Rural Municipality and Town of Gimli Development Corporation resulting in the construction of a Marine Building, located adjacent to and south of the Gimli Museum on the Lake Winnipeg waterfront.

The facilities of the Harbour Hobbies Building were unavailable for the 1981 Icelandic Festival's Pancake Breakfasts. As an alternate location, the Marine Building and an adjacent area were offered by the Development Corporation. With the loan of a sink and the water, sewer and power facilities made operative, the Pancake Breakfasts were a success.

Realizing the potential that the Marine Building offered with its prime location on the lakefront, and with a paved approach area, and with room to expand, the Icelandic Festival Committee forwarded a letter to the Rural Municipality and Town of Gimli Development Corporation inquiring as to its availability. Subsequently the building was made available to the Icelandic Festival Committee and plans were drawn up to suit their requirements, keeping in mind their Icelandic Heritage in the exterior design of the building.

At the time of the Icelandic Festival's inquiry, it became known that other projects were being considered for implementation, The Gimli Rotary Club, (the Icelandic Festival's Longboat storage and display facility — improvement to the Fountain Area located between the north side of the Gimli Museum and the Main Pier), The Town of Gimli (waterfront improvements, park improvements and beautifying Centre Street), The Rural Municipality of Gimli (Tourist Building or Information Centre), The Gimli Development Corporation (restoration of the Dock Area to the East of the Museum), The Gimli Icelandic/Ukrainian Museum and at a later date, the Gimli Art Club.

Relative to the matter of funding the projects, it became apparent that all interested parties or groups should co-ordinate their efforts under a common administrative authority, and subsequently a non-profit company, The Gimli Harbour Park Development Corporation, was created in the form of an agreement between the following: The Town of Gimli, The Rural Municipality of Gimli, The Rural Municipality and Town of Gimli Development Corporation, The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, The Gimli Chamber of Commerce, The Gimli Rotary Club, The Icelandic Cultural Corporation, The Interlake Tourist Association.

Start of construction was in March, 1983 when the piles for the Icelandic Headquarters Building were installed. Subsequently work started on the Gimli Art Club, the Harbour Park grounds at the main pier, the Storage and Display Facility for the Viking Longboat and the Catering Facility adjacent to the Pavilion in the main park grounds. All projects were substantially completed except for the Catering Facility which will be completed in the Spring of 1984.

The next phase of construction (subject to funding) includes a Tourist Information Building which will serve the whole Interlake area and which will be located on the existing site of the old C.P.R. Station, Improvements to the Stage, the Pavilion and the grounds in the main park, improvements to the grounds and area encompassing the Viking Statue, improvements to the Gimli Museum and the adjacent dock facilities.

DONATIONS TO THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

Sigurbjorg Stefansson, Gimli, Manitoba	$100
In memory of **Disa Einarson** from her daughter Gail and son-in-law Eric (McLeery), Toronto, Ontario	75
Magnus T. Paulson, Islington, Ontario	200
Total	$375

The members of our Board are, indeed, grateful for the foregoing donations from our good friends, also for approximately 24 gift subscriptions donated by our faithful supporters. Their contributions are helpful in maintaining the somewhat marginal solvency of our quarterly.

* * *

ERRATA IN OUR PREVIOUS ISSUES

In our autumn issue, 1983, Sveinbjörn Sveinbjornsson was born in 1847, not as stated in 1874.

In our winter issue, 1983. Regarding the article about Dr. George Houser, page 11, 20th and 21st line from the top, 'Iceland' should be 'Icelandic', 'mass' should be 'manuscript'.

* * *

APOLOGY TO ELMA GISLASON

The article A LIFETIME OF LOVE, Winter, 1983 was edited by Elma Gislason as well as Paul Sigurdson.

READERS' FORUM

In a letter from Margaret S. Bearnson, Salt Lake City, Utah. We have enjoyed reading *The Icelandic Canadian*. It is beautifully put together and the cover is most artistic. Mr. Eric Crone did a fine job.

* * *

My daughter, Dorothy (Mrs. Bearnson's daughter), said that she looked more like a blond Icelander than the Icelanders she met in Winnipeg about five years ago.

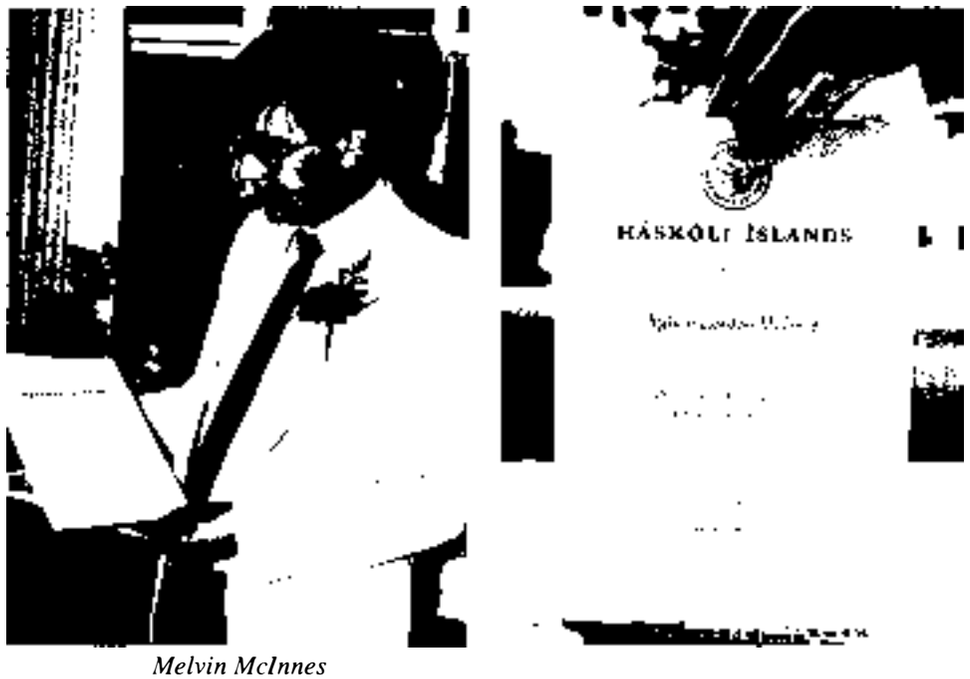
N.B. Mrs. Bearnson was born in Alabama. Her husband, Julius, was Icelandic. See the article A REMARKABLE TEACHER in the Autumn issue, 1983, of THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN.

* * *

In a letter from Arnetta Moncrief, Dewitt, Arkansas. You and your staff are making an outstanding contribution to this worthy magazine.

PEOPLE

GRADUATES IN MEDICINE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND



Melvin McInnes

Melvin Gordon McInnes, M.D. received his degree from the Faculty of Medicine at the June 25, 1983 Convocation of Haskoli Islands, Reykjavik, Iceland.

Melvin is the son of Gordon and Gudrun McInnis of Brandon, Manitoba and the grandson of Victoria Valdimarson of Brandon and Hrund Skulason of Winnipeg.

He received his primary schooling at Langruth and Virden and graduated in 1974 from Virden Collegiate. Melvin spent almost a year in Iceland working on a farm in order to learn the language. After two years at the University of Manitoba he went to Iceland to study medicine.

Melvin married Svava Simundson of Geysir, Manitoba. They have two daughters, Sigrun Thora and Signy Hrund. He is presently at Borgarspitali, Reykjavik, Iceland.

* * *

FJALLKONAN, 1983

Sveinbjörg Björnson, Fjallkonan, 1983. Gimli, Manitoba, 1983.

Sveinbjörg received all her education in Manitoba: Grades I - X at Hnausa, Grade XI at Arborg, Grade XII at the Teulon Collegiate, her teacher training at the Winnipeg Normal School. Afterwards she enrolled at the University of Winnipeg, taking evening and summer courses. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1976, and the Bachelor of Education degree in 1981.

She teaches the trainable mentally handicapped children at the Daerwood School in Selkirk, Manitoba.

* * *

The photographs of the principal participants in the Icelandic Festival at Gimli in 1983 were published in our autumn issue, 1983. It is regrettable that the name of the FJALLKONAN was inadvertantly omitted. Hence we are re-publishing her photograph.

* * *

GEOLOGIST

Harvey Thorleifson

At the fall convocation, 1983 of the University of Manitoba Harvey Thorleifson received his Master of Science degree. His thesis dealt with the eastern outlets of Lake Agassiz — rivers that drained a 150 metre deep glacier-drammed lake in the Red River Valey to Lake Nipigon between 11,000 and 8,000 years ago.

Harvey will enroll at the University of Colorado for the Ph.D. program. He will continue in the field of Quaternary geology, the natural history of the past two million years.

FIVE GENERATIONS

Salome (Salla) Baldwinson; her son, Franklin; her granddaughter, Bonnie Brasel; her great-granddaughter, Diana; her great, great grandson. Taken August 1983 in Vancouver.

* * *

DR. BJORN HONORED

Dr. Bjorn Jonsson

The well-known physician at Swan River, Manitoba, Dr. Bjorn Jonsson, has received a grant from The Canada Council Exploration Program. This grant is for writing and preparing an illustrated manuscript for a book on *"Astral Aspect of the Eddas"*.

The Eddas, compiled and written in the Middle Ages, deal with the mythology of the Norse and Germanic peoples.

He was invited to give a paper on the subject at the Ethnoastronomy Conference in Washington, D.C. in September, 1983, at the Smithsonian Institute.

* * *

SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED

Tani Bjornson

On the 28th of December, 1983, Tani Bjornson (Jonatan D) celebrated his seventieth birthday.

Tani is well-known in the Scandinavian community for his many years of dedication to various organizations which promote Scandinavian culture and heritage. He has been on the Board of Directors at "Stafholt", the Icelandic Old Folks' Home, Blaine, WA; the First President of the Icelandic Club of Greater Seattle; President of the Nordic Festival; President of the Seattle Civic Opera Guild; and numerous other positions. He is presently on the Board of Trustees of the Nordic Heritage Museum and Icelandic Club Treasurer.

That which Tani is most noted for throughout North American Scandinavian Communities is his lovely baritone voice. He has sung leading roles in the Operas "Madame Butterfly", "Gypsy Baron", "H.M.S. Pinafore" and "Faust".

May we continue to enjoy entertainment by this favorite son of the Icelandic Community and the pride of Mountain, North Dakota, for many years to come.

— Gidda Wilson

* * *

AN ICELANDIC ASTRONAUT

Bjarni Tryggvason

Recently Canada's Science Minister, Donald Johnston, announced the names of six Canadians chosen to join the crews of U.S. space shuttle missions in late 1985 and early 1986. One of the six is Bjarni Tryggvason, age 38, of Ottawa, who is at present a Research Officer with the National Research Council. Bjarni was born in Reykjavik, Iceland. His father, Svavar Tryggvason, was from Dalvik in northern Iceland while his mother, Sveinbjörg Haraldsdottir, came from Isafjördur. In 1952, when Bjarni was seven years old, the family migrated to Canada. They lived first in Nova Scotia, then later in Kitimat, B.C. and finally in 1959, the family moved to Vancouver. While studying at the University of B.C. for his degree in Applied Science and Engineering Physics, Bjarni was awarded an Icelandic Canadian Club of B.C. Scholarship in 1970.

The six would-be astronauts have been divided into two teams with Bjarni's team working on a refinement to the Space Arm which Canada donated to NASA's space program. Their project is to develop an imaging system to be placed at the end of the Arm that will allow astronauts to more easily and accurately manipulate and retrieve objects in space.

At a late-December coffee party in Vancouver, Herman Eyford, on behalf of the Club and its Scholarship Committee, wished Bjarni every success in his future endeavours.

—Courtesy of the Icelandic Canadian Club of British Columbia

GRAD, 89, PURSUED STUDIES FOR 20 YEARS

Sun photo by JON THORDARSON

Margaret Perry, a fixture at both universities since '65.

—Courtesy of The Winnipeg Sun

The Concert Hall rang with applause yesterday afternoon as Margaret Perry, 89, took the stage.

It was the finale to a remarkable performance that had taken nearly 20 years.

Perry, who will be 90 years old in December, was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Winnipeg's Spring Convocation.

About 200 of Perry's fellow graduates in arts, science, education and theology broke into applause as their white-haired doyenne crossed the stage.

The degree marks the end of an era for Perry, a well-known figure at both Winnipeg universities since 1965.

She began her studies in Icelandic, her first language, at the University of Manitoba. From there, she transferred to the downtown University of Winnipeg, where she majored in English.

By the fall of 1981, she had completed all but five courses. For the last two years, she has attended university year round, taking one course per session to arrive at her goal.

Her studies spanned so many topics and so many professors that today she has difficulty describing her degree.

"I think I took everything!" she says, laughing.

As the oldest student working for credit at the university, Perry was a natural leader of the institution's growing senior citizen population.

She was a founding member of the Senior Citizens' Advisory Committee, which has established a wide variety of special non-credit courses for seniors.

"It's given a lot of happiness to a lot of people who have nowhere to go," she says of the program.

"We all go for coffee together and that social contact is a very important part of it."

Perry, however, has always said she prefers the challenge of essays and exams to non-credit courses.

Through the years, as she travelled alone on the bus to school, she has had only one major complaint:

The university wouldn't let her pay for the courses, which are free to all senior citizens.

BRANDSON ROY THORNSON

Brandson Roy Thornson

Another enterprising Icelander who has attracted attention is Brandson Roy Thornson. He is credited with E.Z.K.L., a device which converts energy into a new form of propulsion, differing in principle from all other forms of propulsion presently being used. It might be described as energy zoned kinetic lift.

His technical education was obtained largely through night school classes at Manitoba Technical Institute, University of Winnipeg, and University of Manitoba. For ten years he was employed with the Manitoba Telephone Service as senior draftsman. His primary professional activity, however, has been in the field of real estate. He owned and operated Alice Realty Ltd. for twenty-five years as a real estate and mortgage broker and developer. In 1979 he was awarded the citation of "Top salesman for Canada" by the Permanent. At present he is employed with Adrian Stevens Realty, Ltd.

Mr. Thornson is a valued member of his community — an ordained member and elder of the Westwood Presbyterian Church, member of the Winnipeg Real Estate Board, and an active member of A.N.A.F. Branch 141. His interests range to football, golf, reading and, as indicated above, problem solving and invention.

He is the son of Gudbrandur Sigurdarson Thorarinson (later changed to Barney Thorson) and his wife, Karin Alice. Barney started the first auto garage in St. James. Roy's grandfather, incidentally, started the first dairy in St. James.

Roy and his wife, Joan, have two sons, two daughters, and four grandchildren.

We wish this enterprising businessman and his family the utmost success.

1. See the article "City Man's Invention Is Really Taking Off", Winnipeg Sun, January 22, 1984, page 3, also the article "Inventor Feels Light-Headed", Winnipeg Sun, February 12, 1984.

THE AUTHOR OF
THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE

DONALD E. GISLASON

Donald's parents are Gunnlaugur and Dagmar Gislason, currently of Yarrow, B.C. His paternal grandparents, Valdimar and Gudridur, were among the turn-of-the-century settlers at Vallar/Gerald, District of Assiniboia, N.W.T. (Saskatchewan). They came to Canada from Pembina Co., North Dakota where the family had been established since the early 1880's. His maternal grandparents, Stefan and Una Nicholson, came from Minnesota to the Wynyard, Saskatchewan district in 1917. Don spent his early childhood in Saskatchewan and subsequently lived in Vancouver. He attended the Universities of Windsor and Toronto, majoring in Geography and Education, and is presently the Head of the Geography Department at Northern Secondary School in Toronto. He is married to Leona Wiebe of Coaldale, Alberta and they have two children, Eric David and Neil Briem.

FROM GLASGOW TO QUEBEC CITY, 1880

by Donald E. Gislason

Introduction

This article outlines the 1872-1880 emigration from Iceland to various destinations in North America and describes the Atlantic crossing with specific reference to the shipping line. It then focuses on the Icelandic immigrants on board the S.S. Phoenician[9] which landed at Quebec City July 18, 1880 and finally comments on problems for the historian or genealogist in reading and interpreting the ship's passenger record.

Systematic and continuous group emigration from Iceland to the U.S. and Canada effectively began in 1872. Apart from a few earlier arrivals and the religiously motivated Utah-bound migration of 1855-56, the latter part of the nineteenth century witnessed, in relative terms, the dislocation and transfer of a significant portion of the Icelandic population to various settlements in North America. The reason for leaving was mainly economic and taking new lands held the promise of opportunities that were hard to come by at that time in Iceland. Economic and political hardships were compounded by a series of natural volcanic disasters as well as a deterioration of the climate which reduced and shortened the growing and pasturing season beyond the tolerance level of livestock. For many the agricultural sector, especially throughout the northern and eastern fjordlands, suffered repeated drawbacks and diminishing results. Farmers began to look outside the country for a

reasonable future and just returns for their efforts.

Some historians have suggested that 'emigration fever' spread vigorously throughout Iceland also because of 'ut-thra' or the historic longing to go abroad. There may well have been an element of adventure to this movement but the overriding concern for most in leaving their beloved island was simple economic necessity.

New World Destinations

Almost all the migrants travelled in steerage across the Atlantic from Glasgow, Scotland on Allan Line steamers. With the exception of Halifax bound passengers, most Icelanders disembarked at Quebec City. From there they continued the inland journey westward by train to Toronto where they usually stopped before pro ceeding to largely temporary locations in Ontario or continuing on via the Great Lakes to various destinations on the Canadian and American prairies. In general, these immigrants were poor, but they brought with them their book-filled travelling chests, a few other personal items and a determination to relocate and hopefully prosper in North America.

At first, migration was primarily directed towards Wisconsin and to a lesser degree Ontario and Nova Scotia. People did not always fix their destinations beyond the port of entry and subsequently, upon arrival, they were open to persuasion by agents who acted on behalf of the Dominion Government. It is because of this tactic of 'inducement upon arrival' at Quebec City that the tide of Icelandic immigration was diverted from the U.S. to Canada. For example, all of the 375 Icelandic immigrants who landed at Quebec City on September 23, 1874 were encouraged by agents representing the Canadian Federal government and the Government of Nova Scotia to remain in Canada. ''From there on, Canada received the large majority of the immigrants and Milwaukee ceased to be the centre which was transferred to Manitoba.''[1]

During the 1870's the Canadian Department of Immigration published 20,000 pamphlets in Icelandic which were distributed to various agents both in Iceland and Canada with the express objective of gathering prospective settlers for the 'North West' and Manitoba. Similarly, steamship companies and individual agents themselves published attractive reports on new or homestead lands . . . ''in order to facilitate business.''[2]

However, in spite of this migration trend, smaller but significant numbers of Icelanders continued to join their compatroits in the U.S., mainly in Lyon and Lincoln counties of southwestern Minnesota and Pembina county in northeastern Dakota Territory. The Minnesota and Dakota settlements had been established in 1876 and 1878 respectively and they grew rapidly due to an influx of population directly from Iceland and also from Wisconsin. In addition, Pembina received a sizeable number of people from the economically unstable 'New Iceland' communities along the shores of Lake Winnipeg.

Port of Entry and Dispersal

The main thrust of this article is to discuss the movement from Iceland to the Western States in *1880* and specifically those immigrants who arrived at Quebec City and continued on, more or less as a single unit, to American destinations. It is likely that most of this group went to either Minnesota or Dakota Territory and certainly, the latter had become well known in Iceland. In short, ''the hopes of a better and fuller life that centered in the settlements in the Red River Valley of the Dakota Territory travelled across the Atlantic to Iceland where the movement to

emigrate became nation-wide. By 1880 a large number of settlers . . . (had) arrived on the Dakota prairie.''[3]

Passenger manifest lists for ships disembarking at Quebec City in 1880 show a total of 70 entries from Iceland via Glasgow, all heading for the Western States. Even though the majority of Icelanders coming to North America went through this port of entry there undoubtedly were numbers that also arrived via Halifax or New York City. The unique aspect of the Quebec manifests is that, in contrast to earlier years, the entire 1880 consignment was enroute to the U.S. and did not include stop-overs or destinations for Nova Scotia, Ontario or Manitoba. However, it is likely that several individuals and families from this group did move later on to communities across the Canadian prairies. This movement accelerated as land in Minnesota and North Dakota became increasingly expensive and the agricultural frontier expanded northwestward.

In 1879 Customs at Quebec had reported at least twice as many Icelanders destined for the U.S.A. as were reported later in 1880, with the bulk going to Minnesota, and in 1878 a total of 122 people from Iceland had been enroute to the western States.[4] The majority for these two years, of course, remained in Canada.

The following list shows the number of people from Iceland that disembarked at Quebec City for the years 1873 to 1880 and clearly displays yearly fluctuations. It does not include a breakdown of final destinations.

Year	Souls
1873	157
1874	358*
1875	268
1876	1,168
1877	52
1878	418
1879	252
1880	70

* *Lindal* states the total as 375 for 1874.

Interestingly, 84% of those who came via Quebec City in 1873 were thirteen years or older and classified as adults and by 1880 the number dropped to around 70% of that year's total.[5] This may suggest that emigration had become more regularized and 'leave-taking' had increased for families willing to accept the risk of moving to established and tried settlements throughout Canada and the U.S. In short, as time went on, a greater percentage of children, most likely within family clusters, made the onerous journey across the Atlantic.

The majority of people did not arrive with much cash but expected to homestead or become temporary farm or day labourers until workable sums could be saved. For example, according to Canadian Immigration records for the year 1878, Icelandic immigrants averaged only $24.00 per person whereas Mennonites from South Russia that were destined for homesteads south of Winnipeg came to Canada with an average of $94.00 per person.[6] Clearly, most of those who came from Iceland did not possess much disposable wealth.

Glasgow to Quebec City Via Allan Line

By 1880, weather permitting, the ocean crossing between Scotland and Canada usually did not exceed twelve to fourteen days. The main carrier throughout the years was the Allan Line of Montreal and Glasgow. As previously stated most immigrant-class passengers travelled in steerage and, at best, conditions would have been crowded and the journey exhausting. In 1853 Sir Hugh Allan of Montreal, successful merchant and contractor, obtained ship building and mail carrying contracts from the Canadian government and subsequently the Allan Line became the main carrier between Britain and Canada.

One can only assume that travelling in steerage left much to be desired. Interestingly, around 1880 the ''Montreal Witness'' newspaper arraigned the Allan Line for its questionable treatment of steerage passengers. Although the Line sued the ''Montreal Witness'' $50,000 for libel, the court decision ruled in favour of the newspaper. The point of the ''Witness'' accusations against the shipping company was that . . . ''while drawing large subsidies from the Canadian government . . . (they were) proved guilty of flagrant mistreatment of the most helpless class of its passengers crowded under the most pitiful, inhuman conditions down in steerage . . .''[7]

The *S.S. Phoenician* which landed at Quebec City on *July 18, 1880* carried a total of 142 passengers of which 70 were Icelandic and the remainder Scottish. This ship had a maximum carrying capacity of 200 and, therefore, conditions would appear not to have been overly crowded. She was built at Whitechurch, Co. Lanark, Scotland in 1864 and at that time had three decks, two masts, schooner rigging, round stern and measured 334'9 x 34'3 x 28'6. The ship underwent modifications in 1873 and the name disappeared from the registry of British vessels in 1904. On the other hand, and more in place with the accusations made by the ''Montreal Witness'', the Allan Line's *S.S. Waldensian* which brought many to Quebec City for the two previous years, was smaller than the S.S. Phoenician and carried well over double the number of passengers per trip. In comparison, the S.S. Waldensian measured only 260'9 x 33'7 x 22'1 and disembarked at Quebec City on August 1, 1878 with 480 people aboard and on July 19, 1879 with 305 passengers, most of whom were from Iceland. In terms of travelling conditions in steerage these figures speak for themselves.[8]

1880 — Passenger Manifest, Comments and Analysis

The original hand written manifests have been placed on micro-film and can be obtained from the Research and Inquiries Service of the Public Archives in Ottawa. Micro-film copies of ship's passenger lists can be borrowed for personal use through any institution which possesses a micro-film reader and participates in the inter-library loan arrangements.

Each film presents individual reading problems and in terms of the 'original' July 18, 1880 S.S. Phoenician list of entries, the information was difficult to read. It seems that the ship's purser recorded names as he thought fit and he was not familiar with the Icelandic system of name taking. The writing was in an unclear script as well in a style common over a century ago. Some of the entries were impossible to decipher whereas others were clearly in error because of ignorance on the part of the ship's secretary.

Children were sometimes incorrectly listed under their mother's patronym and not always given the correct gender. Examples of this can be seen with family group numbers 10-14, 24-28, and 58-60, whereas 65-70 are in order. There were also several spelling errors and other

irregularities on the original list which have been identified here by a question mark, and have hopefully been corrected as shown in parenthesis.

For the family historian entries on ship's passenger lists can sometimes be misleading and need to be checked against other research information such as obituaries or vital statistic documents in order to establish accuracy. For example, from the author's personal knowledge No's 58-60 consisted of Eyjolfur Bjornsson, his wife Gudrun Gudmundsdottir and his young half-brother Pjetur Bjornsson who was $1^1/_2$ years old at the time and not the age indicated on the list. Due to his age and travel risks the child was left for a year in Iceland by his parents Bjorn Gislason and Adalbjorg Jonsdottir who had settled near Minnesota, Lyon county in 1879. As can be noted, the child was incorrectly listed as Peter Gudmundsdottir. Unfortunately, he did not survive long after arriving in Minnesota and was buried in an unmarked plot on his parents' farm, and thus Bjorn gave the rural settlement of 'Westerheim' an acre of his land for a cemetery.

Nevertheless, with careful and comparative analysis a fair amount about various family members and the entire consignment may be gleaned from the list. In conclusion, although there are unavoidable and numerous errors or omissions on passenger lists, they can provide much useful information for the historian or genealogist.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Lindal, W. J.* "Icelanders in Canada", p. 102.
2. *Ontario Sessional Papers*, 1876 Appendix No. 8, 39 Victoria, p. 18.
3. *Walters, Thorstina,* "Modern Sagas", p. 64-5.
4. *Quebec Passenger Manifest Lists*, 1878, 1879.
5. *Ontario Sessional Papers*, 1874-1879 and *Quebec Passenger Manifest Lists* — Calculations.
6. *Ontario Sessional Papers*, 1879, No. 6.
7. *Myers, G.* "A History of Canadian Wealth, p. 221-1.
8. *Mercantile Navy List and Maritime Directory*, National Archives, Ottawa.
9. See the passengers on the S.S. Phoenician in the Winter Issue, 1983 of *The Icelandic Canadian*.

EDITOR'S NOTE

We regret that the S.S. PHOENICIAN passenger list was inadvertently published in the winter issue, 1983 of THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN. Since then Mr. Gislason has made a few corrections in it, e.g. passenger No. 12 should be Sigurdur Vigfusson; No. 13, Lilja Vigfusdottir; No. 14, Oddur Vigfusson; No. 18, Gudny Josefsdottir (stated that she was a "wife" and died at sea); No. 45, G. H. Julius? (Jonsson); No. 51, Kristin Ryansdottir (Bjornsdottir); No. 53, Maria Nedmundsdottir (Gudmundsdottir); No. 60, Peter Gudmundsson (called "dottir" on the list).

* * *

REVISED SUMMARY
for Icelanders only

1. No. of Females 38, No. of Males 32.
2. No. of Married passengers 21, Unmarried 49.
3. No. of passengers 12 years or over 53, under 12 — 17.

Reel No. 11, C-4530,
Manifest No. 55, 1880.
National Archives, Ottawa.

Sayings by Abraham Lincoln

Anxiety never overcomes peril.

Nothing is beautiful from every point of view.

The greater the difficulty, the more glory in surmounting it.

We walk by faith, not by sight.

They who never climbed, never fell.

* * *

QUOTE

"It is equally true, I should add, that if some countries have too much history, we have too much geography . . ."

W. L. MACKENZIE KING,
Prime Minister in the House of Commons, June 18, 1936.

THE GRAVE OF BETSEY RAMSAY

(A Tale Of Old Manitoba)

by Kristine Benson Kristofferson

On a lonely wind-swept meadow bordering Lake Winnipeg lies a solitary grave enclosed by a crumbling picket fence silvered by the storms of many years. A marble tombstone — once white, now blackened by age — marks the resting place of Betsey Ramsay.

It was a sweltering day last August when we walked across the stubbled field toward the grave. Our guide, Gestur Vidal, farms at Hnausa, only three miles from Sandy Bar, the ill-fated town where Mrs. Ramsay lived many years ago.

At last we were to see it, this grave we had heard so much about — the lone reminder of a town that once had been but was no more; the last link with a tragic past.

It looked so small in that wide expanse of meadow. The pickets leaned drunkenly inward, many of them loose, weakened by a grass fire that had gnawed at their bases. The grave faced north and south, instead of east and west as is the general custom, perhaps so it would not face the sun. Someone had covered the mound with a pile of rocks, probably in an attempt to discourage the growth of weeds. Between the stones, tall stalks of couch grass swayed in the breeze.

The Stone

I knelt down and pushes aside the weeds that swayed across the face of the stone. It was the stone John Ramsay had brought by dogteam from Stone Fort, the first tombstone in the settlement then known as New Iceland. I read the inscription, a strange mixture of writing and printing:

In
Memory of
BETSEY
Beloved wife of
JOHN RUMSAY
WHO DIED
September 1876
Aged 35 years.

That year, the settlement was only a year old. Icelanders had come that summer, 1,200 strong, seeking for their children a better life than the one they had known in the old country.

Up and down the shores of the lake they landed with their bundles of bedding, their precious boxes of books and their dying infants. Some settled at Gimli, the nucleus of the colony, some at Arnes, Hnausa, Lundi (later Riverton) and Sandy Bar, where the Cree Indians had put up several warm, well-built winter cabins. In one such cabin lived John Ramsay, a Cree, with his wife Betsey, his daughter Mary and his two small sons.

Betsey was a slender woman of dark beauty. John, a handsome man himself, stood tall and proud with shoulder-length hair, a small moustache and a tuft of beard on his chin.

He had sympathy for the Icelanders, shabby, poor and woefully ignorant of how to live in the forest. He befriended and helped them, teaching them how to make a cabin wind-proof, how to make a boat leak-proof, how to hunt and fish, how to shoot with a bow and arrow. When he knew their larders were low, he invited them to his cabin for a feast of moose meat, venison bannock, syrup, raisins and tea. They learned to eat lightly, for as soon as a plate was empty, their smiling hostess was at their elbows with more.

The cabins of the Icelanders at Sandy Bar were hastily built, limited in number to the stoves that had been provided, making it necessary for several families to crowd together in a single dwelling. There was similar crowding throughout the settlement, for not nearly enough stoves had been brought.

In a cabin at Lundi, north of Sandy Bar, 19 people were living together. A young man fell ill, and for weeks kept the others awake as fever made him delirious. Sores finally broke out on his face, then he began to recover. It was thought he had had a bad case of chicken pox.

A few weeks later, other cases of fever were reported in the settlement, but the patients were quick to recover.

Then a woman from Lundi went to Gimli to visit some friends. She hadn't felt well when she left, and grew worse through the day. Twenty-four hours later she was dead.

The settlers became uneasy. But there was no doctor to consult, and one death didn't seem to indicate anything serious. But the fever spread as winter set in and brought icy gales that blew through the drafty little cabins, chilling the inhabitants, endangering the sick. Soon more deaths were reported.

The fever came to Sandy Bar, where Indians and Icelanders alike fell ill. Like a thief in the night, it entered the cabin of John Ramsay, striking down his wife and three children. The cabin was filled with cries of pain. Ugly sores appeared on Betsey's face, now swollen beyond recognition. Ramsay backed away from the bed, filled with horror. He knew the truth now: smallpox.

The frightening news flew up and down the settlement. Smallpox. The very word was filled with horror.

The news reached Winnipeg, stunning the population. Soldiers were sent to Netley Creek to put up a barrier, quarantining the entire settlement. Three doctors were rushed in to vaccinate the settlers but their lymph vaccine proved to be useless.

John Ramsay tried to save his family, but Betsey died, then his two small sons. Only Mary, her face pitted and scarred, was left.

He buried Betsey south of the town, near the lake and the sounds she had loved — waves beating against the shore, the cries of seagulls wheeling overhead, the haunting call of wild geese winging their way northward.

He went to Stone Fort, where he traded his furs, and ordered a tombstone to mark her grave. The clerk who took the order misunderstood and Ramsay became "Rumsay" on the stone. It didn't matter; he couldn't read.

He brought the little white slab in his sled and placed it lovingly at the head of the grave. Around the grave he built a stout fence.

Then he left the cabin he couldn't bear to live in and fled north to Matheson Island with his daughter.

When spring came, the remaining residents of Sandy Bar moved away, leaving behind their deserted cabins and their many graves.

The years rolled by. Sandy Bar became a farm and the fence around Betsey's grave was broken and trampled by the heavy hoofs of farm animals.

Far north at Matheson Island, John Ramsay, now grown old, worried about the grave. Fishermen reported the fence had disappeared, leaving the little marble slab exposed and vulnerable. He wanted to get someone to replace the fence so Betsey's resting place wouldn't be forgotten. He sent word to the settlement, but no one paid heed. And so he died, his plea unanswered.

The century ended. New settlers arrived to open new districts — Geysir, Arborg, Vidir.

In 1910, a young man named Trausti Vigfusson took a homestead in Geysir and built himself a cabin. Shortly after his cabin was completed he had a strange dream. He seemed to be standing near his cabin when a tall, handsome Indian strode out of the forest and held up his hand in greeting.

"Long ago I hunted moose on your land," he said. "I am John Ramsay."

Trausti put out his hand. "I have heard of you. You helped the settlers who first lived here. Your name is still remembered and honored among us."

The Indian bowed his head in acknowledgement. "I have come to ask my brother a boon. I want you to build me a fence."

"A fence?" Trausti asked, mystified. "Where?"

"At Sandy Bar," the Indian said softly. "Many moons ago I lived at Sandy Bar with my people until the Big Death came and took my wife. I buried her there and marked her resting place with a stone enclosed by a fence. The fence is gone and the stone lies flat on the grave. It will break and there will be nothing left. I ask you, my white brother, to rebuild the fence."

Help

"I am a poor man with neither time nor money to spare," replied Trausti with reluctance. "Many of your old friends are still alive. You helped them once. They would be pleased to help you now in return."

The Indian shook his head. "Their ears are grown deaf. Long I have searched to find someone who will listen to my request. At last I have found such a man. You must not fail me. In life I loved her more than a heart can say; in death I do not love her less. Her resting place must not be lost and forgotten."

Trausti was silent. He had heard about the suffering at Sandy Bar in the winter of 1876. It was a small request. He couldn't refuse.

"Very well. I shall build a fence for you as soon as I have time," he promised. "I shall not forget," said Ramsay. "Somehow I shall find a way to repay you."

In the days that followed, Trausti thought often of the dream he had had and the fence he had promised to build. But as time passed, the promise faded from his memory.

Months went by, then one night Trausti dreamed he was standing near his cabin when Ramsay walked toward him from the forest.

"My brother has a short memory," said Ramsay in gentle reproach. "You have forgotten your promise."

Trausti was filled with remorse. He took the Indian's hand in both his own and looked earnestly at him. "It's true, and I'm sorry. I will build your fence in payment for the kindness you showed the Icelanders long ago."

The dark eyes kindled. "That is good. You will not forget. Ramsay will not forget either." Then he walked toward the forest, raised his hand in farewell and disappeared.

Trausti lost no more time. The following day he set to work carving the pickets. But he ran out of wood and put the pickets away in a shed and waited for better days.

All winter the unfinished fence lay in the shed, but Trausti didn't forget his promise and the following summer he finished the pickets.

When the haying season was over, he piled the pickets and the lumber for the framework on a wagon and set off for Sandy Bar.

His spirits were low. He hadn't a cent in his pockets and he was almost out of food. Never before had he been in such circumstances. His only hope lay in getting groceries on credit from the store at Hnausa.

On the way, he met two farmers returning from the lake. He asked if they had any fish to spare, but they had traded all their fish for food at Hnausa because the storkeeper wasn't extending credit to anyone. Sorely disappointed, Trausti turned northward toward Gestur Gudmundsson's farm at Sandy Bar.

The Gudmundssons didn't think his errand a strange one. They would show him Betsey Ramsay's grave.

He found the grave just as Ramsay had described it, the fence gone and the stone lying face downward.

The nest morning he set to work putting up the fence. It was well made and looked like it would last for years. He had restored Betsey Ramsay's grave. He had kept his promise.

When Trausti was ready to set off for home, Gestur Gudmundsson put two huge bags of fish on his wagon, cutting Trausti's stammered thanks short. "One good turn deserves another," he said. "This is for Ramsay."

Never again was Trausti's lot as hard as it had been that day. He became the master builder of the community: The houses and churches he built still stand there, mute testimony to his craftsmanship. John Ramsay kept his word.

THOUGH YOU TRAVEL AFAR

by Stephan G. Stephansson
(Translated by Paul Bjarnason)

To the uttermost outlands
Of the earth you may roam,
In the mind every moment
Are the mem'ries of home,
Friend of glacier and glenside,
Kin of geyser and mount,
Niece of long-ness and ling-heath,
son of land-ice and fount.

O'er the world and the welkin
Though you wander in thought,
With their high-falls and hillsides
All your hope-lands are wrought.
In life's everness-ocean
Your dear Isle-land abides,
Where the sun knows no setting
On the shimmering tides.

It's your ever-dear Iceland
In the image you love,
With each fellside enflowered
And no frost-caps above,
Friend of glacier and glenside,
Kin of geyser and mount,
Niece of long-ness and ling-heath,
Son of land-ice and fount.

— 1955

- There are 75,000 glaciers in the country.
- Each year 8,000,000 tons of water falls on Canada in the form of either rain or snow.
- There are probably more lakes in Canada than in any other country in the world.
- The Mackenzie River, one of the longest in the world, travels 2,635 miles from beginning to end.

CONSIDERING THE TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH OF HALLGRIMUR PÉTURSSON'S PASSION PSALMS

by Dr. C. F. Scott, Surrey, England

Investigating the history and culture of Iceland, one does not proceed far without becoming aware of the *Passion Psalms* of Hallgrimur Pétursson and their tremendous influence on the thought and life of its people since their appearance in the 17th century. Forty-seven years ago, as a ten-year-old boy in Canada, my interest in Iceland had been captured by Holmfridur Arnadottir's *When I was a girl in Iceland*, in itself a book of some remark, published in Boston in 1919. She, of course, mentions Hallgrimur Pétursson.[1] A few years later, Sir Andrew MacPhail of Montreal left me a copy of *The North American Book of Icelandic Verse* by Professor Watson Kirkconnell which I devoured. I Was particularly interested by his brief summary of Hallgrimur's career and impressed by the translations given from the 50th Psalm and the Funeral Hymn.[2] With a revived interest in Iceland after 1960 and taking up the language more seriously, I was attracted to looking at the *Passion Psalms* in greater detail.

Though not a poet, poetry and the poetic have always drawn me. From a religious standpoint, the subject and the approach also interested me. A Scottish Presbyterian background meant that I had been brought up on the metrical Psalms, the purpose of which had been really that of the bishops and leaders of the Church of Iceland after the Reformation — to find a way of familiarizing the people with the Bible. Iceland, like Britain with its King James Version, had received a fine translation of the Bible. So, consciously and/or unconsciously came forth this marvellous individual expression in the *Passion Psalms*. They were part of a movement in Iceland which in turn was part of a movement in Europe, but in a way more importantly they came through Hallgrimur's intense individual human experience to speak to and to go on speaking to the individual thought of others. But I am not a Lutheran nor a Presbyterian and while looking at these psalms from a religiously sympathetic viewpoint, wished to read impartially what was there, to find out exactly what Hallgrimur had said and presumably meant. This desire has become the stronger as I have realized that, with the popularity of the *Passion Psalms* over the centuries, what might be described as a mythology of criticism, appreciation, etc., has grown up surrounding them, as happens with any great literary work. Naturally I turned to the translations of these psalms into English. The two principal translators into English have been Charles Venn Pilcher and Arthur C. Gook, both notable men in their own right. Pilcher studied at Oxford, was a professor in Toronto, Bishop Co-adjutor of Sydney, Australia. He translated a number of the psalms in part, putting them into the correct metres and these were published between 1913 and 1950.[3] Gook at the close of a life given principally to 50 years' evengelical work based at Akureyri devoted himself to completing the metrical translation of the entire work and this first appeared in 1966.[4] To both men, their labours were obviously of love. Then there is the already mentioned translation by Watson Kirkconnell. An article by Snaebjörn[5] has directed my attention to the all too few but excellent translations of William Charles Green who died in 1914.[6] I

am sure that there must have been other serious attempts to put these psalms into English, printed or unprinted, though I have not been able to trace any others except incidental or fragmentary ones.

However, it was not long before I became not entirely happy with what was being presented in these translations. Bishop Sigurbjörn Einarsson's introduction to the Gook translation suggests that translation itself into a foreign language is not only a formidable but may be an impossible task so far as managing to fully convey the skill of the original master.[7] Almost certainly, I would add, when one attempts to translate poetry into poetry. More specifically to our subject, how could one ever translate into poetry that wonderful brief alliterative word picture with its Biblical and Icelandic aptness in verse 9 of the 12th, the *idrunarsalmur*, concerning Peter's remorse —

> Faer hann sig frjalsan sizt,
> tho finnist hrelldur,
> sem fugl vid snuning snyst,
> sem snaran heldur

— even with two related languages like Icelandic and English? My father, a minister, used to heave with laughter at the Scottish metrical version of verse 66 of Psalm 78 from the Bible:—

> Upon his en'mies hinder parts
> he made his stroke to fall;
> And so upon them he did put
> a shame perpetual.[8]

Many portions of these metrical psalms nonetheless arouse genuine respect, as for example Psalm 23, which version is now pretty well 'common property'. I heard it sung recently in a Roman Catholic church, as it's also sung regularly at British royal weddings. But, in such an enormous task, the result must be uneven. This must apply to any metrical translation of the *Passion Psalms*. And the Scottish metrical psalms were only translations from Bible prose into poetry. There was also no limit to the metre which could be employed. In other words, there were two hurdles less to surmount than those taken on by Pilcher and Gook.[9] It is fair to say that both have kept close to the rhythms of the original and, abetted probably by being English themselves, have turned out acceptable English in both translation and poetry. Here lies the key question of this article — is it necessary to have these psalms, hymns, translated into poetry, into the metres of the original? While we know that they have been sung for centuries, they have also been read aloud as they still are over the Icelandic radio during Lent. It is highly unlikely that they will be sung in translation, at least in any quantity in any English-speaking country, or even be used as devotional material.[10] What is wanted fundamentally is the exact original meaning and structure of each verse of the *Passion Psalms* without losing their unifying and poetic spirit. The translations into English thus far have often emerged as Victorian hymnody rather than even 17th century Icelandic hymnody. But, again, why either? Over the past seventy to eighty years our understanding of poetry has been expanding to include blank verse, free verse, poetic prose. A prose translation need not be like those fearsome results one sometimes encounters with those of operatic arias. Indeed there is good support for this freer view of translation. Finnbogi Gudmundsson, Iceland's National Librarian, in discussing this recently, reminded me of Jakobina Johnson and pointed out her free verse translation from Icelandic into English, particularly of David Stefansson's poetry, as being generally accepted as ranking among the best.[11] Paul B. Taylor in his foreword to W. H. Auden's and his volume *Norse Poems* writes "When he (Auden) felt English verse forms could not adequately represent the rhythm of the

Icelandic line, he turned his source into a syncopated prose".[12] And both Jakobina Johnson and Auden can be rated as not merely translators, but poets. This freedom would allow a translation more faithful to the exact meaning and order of the original while preserving sensitively its poetic and religious feeling. The drama and simplicity of the gospel narratives and Hallgrimur's presentation possess a poetry in themselves. Those who want the sound of the original metres can go to the original itself or to Pilcher's and Gook's translations or others of the same kind. To my mind, any translation into poetry, especially from metred poetry, must at its best involve convolutions, alternatives and adjustments in which it is extremely easy to lose the original and at times to inject, albeit mostly unknowingly, the flavour of the translator, no matter how sympathetic he may be, thus separating us from the original author and his expression. And with this particular author and particular work, it is so important not to be separated from these, for the shining qualities of Hallgrimur's presentation are the remarkable structure of each psalm and every verse within it, how he builds up its message, the importance and clarity of the individual thought, the choice of word, the simple, almost conversational directness of expression.

To illustrate, let us now turn to the particular. Not very far into the very first psalm we come to those wonderful two short verses 13 and 14 where Jesus and the disciples sing the hymn before going forth together and Hallgrimur points out how

they did not go out before singing it and then brings out the lesson never to go to our daily work without a prayer. This thought is of course not unique and it immediately recalls to me the 19th century author Thomas Gill's hymn "O walk with God along the road" with its verse:—

Ye shall not to your daily task
Without your God repair,
But on your work His blessing ask
And prove His glory there.[13]

But how Hallgrimur draws the lesson out of this particular incident and also expresses it so directly in eight short lines is something notable. Indeed the first six short words that make up the first line of verse 13 — Eftir thann söng, en ekki fyr, — hold the nub of the matter. Literally, not necessarily poetically, translated, the verses mean this:—

After that song, but not before,
Out went Jesus by the house's door.
As his custom had been, so it took place,
To the Mount of Olives he directed his steps.

The Redeemer's custom, learn and hold,
To praise thy God and worship thou shalt,
Prayerless never may a departure
Be begun from thy home.

Now what do Pilcher and Gook do with these verses?

(Pilcher)

The Master, 'neath night's curtain dim,
With His disciples sang an hymn;
Then, going forth, His face He set
Toward the slopes of Olivet.

Learn from the Lord, my soul, to pray
And glorify Thy God alway:
Step forth abroad beyond thy door
Thankless and prayerless nevermore.[14]

(Gook)

When they had sung the Paschal hymn
He made His way in darkness dim
To the Olive Mount, a blest retreat
Where oft He sought refreshment sweet.

Learn from our Lord's example here
To praise thy God, His Name revere,
And never from thy home to fare
Without sincere and humble prayer.[15]

As for Pilcher's version, he admits in this instance to having fused verses 9 and 13 which is perhaps admissible if one is presenting only two verses from the psalm, though it seems to me unnecessary. I do not like "night's curtain dim" being brought in. Gook has introduced more extraneous elements into the translation. Why does the simple "song" have to become "the Paschal hymn"? Where is there any mention of "darkness dim", "blest retreat" or "refreshment sweet"? In verse 14, Hallgrimur selects the word "Lausnar(i)" for Jesus. One of the practices common to both Pilcher and Gook is to use any accepted term for Jesus which fits the versification irrespective of what Hallgrimur has chosen. This, to my mind, often drains away meaning. Hallgrimur just uses the word "prayer": Gook embroiders it with "sincere and humble". But let's turn back to verse 9 which Pilcher fused into verse 13. The literal translation is:—

At the close of the meal
My Jesus raised a song of praise to His Father,
Late on that last evening,
The disciples singing with Him.

Gook translates this as follows:—

The supper o'er, with heart and tongue
Their song of praise to God was sung,—
Their last, sad song that fatal night,—
And thus they closed the sacred rite.[16]

By way of comment, quite a lot has been added — a sad song, a fatal night and a sacred rite — but something has been lost along the way, Hallgrimur's personal Jesus simply lifting up that song of praise to his Father, one not qualified as sad or anything else, in which those (very literally) "Learning lads" *(laerisveinar)*, the disciples, joined.

In tackling this particular examination, I have concentrated principally on those sections translated by both Pilcher and Gook, especially the 1st, the 12th *(idrunarsalmurinn)* and the 50th, the last, also because part of it has been so well translated by Kirkconnell.

Now to some final remarks on the work of Pilcher and Gook.

To return to Pilcher's fusing of verses already noted in the 1st psalm, another instance is in the 50th when verses 12 and 13 are combined into one stanza without acknowledgment.[17] To my mind, the practice upsets the balance, particularly when the psalm is to be translated and considered as a whole. It is worth noting an evolution in Pilcher's translation between 1913 and 1950. There is obviously an effort to improve it, as Richard Beck also notes.[18]. The translation of the 29th, the last, verse of the 12th, the *idrunarsalmur*, appears in his three books:—

Passion-Hymns of Iceland, (1931), p.24:—

Until with weeping eyes
I gaze toward Thy heaven:
Then, Saviour, speak the word, "Arise!
Arise, restored, forgiven!"

Icelandic Meditations, (1923), p.27:—

Oft, oft with contrite eyes
I gaze to heaven;
Then, at Thy look, arise
In tears forgiven.

Icelandic Christian Classics, (1950), p.50:—

Oft, oft with weeping eyes
I gaze to heaven;
Then, at Thy look, arise
Restored, forgiven.

Literally translated, this can be:—

Oft look I up to thee
With eyes weeping,
Then look thou with mercy on me
So sin unloosing.

While Gook never fuses verses, he brings into his translations extraneous similes and other elements not in the original. This has already been noted. English has a wonderfully rich vocabulary and flexibility of construction for translation into it, far greater than Icelandic, due to its stage of development, and I am not against the use of these. But I cannot in a great many cases defend Gook's practices in this respect. More seriously, his own evangelical theology with an emphasis on condemnation rather than forgiveness quite often shows through. This is not in or implicit with the original words of Hallgrimur or in line with the Lutheran tradition of Hallgrimur. The Anglican tradition and his translations give a greater sense of mercy

and forgiveness. The Gook version is full of these free translations and one can judge in each case whether or not they fit in with what Hallgrimur is actually saying and the general drift of his theology. Let us look at the 2nd verse of the 2nd psalm which, literally translated, is:—

In an orchard first Adam fell,
Then Jesus had to make amends for that
The orchard oak (i.e. the tree of knowledge of good and evil) gave fruit forth:
Distress, sin and death came thereof (*or* as a result);
In an orchard the dear tree of life
Could bestow the fruit of revivification.

Gook translated this as:—

'Twas in a garden Adam fell,
There first was tolled God's judgment-knell.
But here came forth the Son of Man,
Claimed as his own that awful ban,
Made once more ours the Tree of Life
And weeded out the seeds of strife.[19]

Before closing this brief analysis of the translations of Pilcher and Gook, the spirit of both translators cannot be faulted and one must appreciate their great and loving work.

But, still, where does this leave us? My desire is to see a worthy, accurate, poetic translation of the Passion Psalms in their entirety into English, in free verse or poetic prose, if possible presented together with those beautiful illustrations by Barbara Arnason which first appeared in the Menningarsjodur edition of the psalms in 1961.[20] Barbara Amason was an Englishwoman whose art is too little known in her own country. Surely, particularly among the *Vestur-islendingar*, there must be individuals brought up on or in the tradition of the Passion Psalms, with an almost perfect knowledge of both languages, who have attempted to translate them into English. I for one would like to know of any who have done or are doing this work and would also welcome any views on the subject.

(Dr. Charles F. Scott, 12, Albany Crescent, Claygate, Surrey, KT10 OPF, England, October, 1983.)

FOOTNOTES

1. Published by Lothrop, Lee and Shepherd as one of a series of similar monographs, P. 185.
2. N.Y. & Montreal: Louis Carrier & Alan Isles Inc., 1930, pp. 107-109.
3. The *Passion-Hymns of Iceland:* being translations from the Passion-Hymns of Hallgrimur Petursson and from the hymns of the Modern Icelandic Hymn Book; together with an introduction by C. Venn Pilcher, B.D.; foreword by the Right Rev. H. C. G. Moule, D.D., Bishop of Durham. London: Robert Scott, 1913.
   Meditations on the Cross from Iceland's poet of the Passion: translated by Rev. Professor C. Venn Pilcher, M.A., B.D., Wycliffe College, Toronto. Reprinted from the Canadian Churchman. Toronto: Upper Canada Tract. Soc., (1921).
   Icelandic Meditations on the Passion: being selections from the Passion-Hymns of Hallgrim Petursson; translated from the Icelandic and arranged as a series of meditations for each day of the month by Charles Venn Pilcher, D.D., Hertford College, Oxford; Professor of Old Testament Literature at Wycliffe College, Toronto. N.Y. etc.: Longmans, Green, 1923.
   Icelandic Christian Classics: The Lay of the Sun, The Lily, The Passion Hymns, The Millennial Hymn; translated in whole or part with introductions by Charles Venn Pilcher, D.D. (Oxon.), Hon. D. D., Wycliffe College, Toronto, Honorary Fellow of the National Icelandic League of America, Bishop Coadjutor of Sydney. Melbourne: O.U.P., 1950.
4. *Hymns of the Passion:* meditations on the passion of Christ by Hallgrimur Petursson; translated from the Icelandic by Arthur Charles Gook. Reykjavik: Hallgrims Church, 1978 (2nd printing). Originally published in 1966.
5. "Passiusalmarnir a ensku" in Lesbok, Morgunbladid, 1959, pp. 24-27.
6. *Translations from the Icelandic*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1908. (The King's Classics).
7. *Hymns of the Passion*. pp. xxi.
8. The Psalms of David in metre according to the version approved by the Church of Scotland and appointed to be used in worship. London: O.U.P., n.d.
9. Richard Beck in his article "Bishop C. Venn Pilcher and his Translations from the Icelandic" in The Icelandic Canadian, Vol. 7, No. 2, Winter, 1948, pp. 10-17, says that some of Pilcher's translations have found their way into hymn books (p. 12). I do not wholeheartedly support Professor Beck's, to me overly adulatory comments, on Pilcher's and also Gook's work (see his review of the Gook translation in Scandinavian Studies, Vol. 40, No. 4, 1968, pp. 336-338).
11. Snaebjörn Jonsson also commends the translating powers of Jakobina Johnson in his article, ibid, p. 27.
12. Auden, W. H. & Taylor, Paul B., *Norse Poems*. London: Athlone Press, 1981, p. ix.
13. The hymns of Thomas Hornblower Gill, the English theological writer, first appeared in his *Golden Chain of Praise* in 1869. Another volume of his hymns was entitled *Luther's Birthday*. (Refl: Hymnal Notes. Boston: Christian Science Publishing Co., 1933, etc.; also notes in and on various other Non-conformist hymnaries).
14. *Icelandic Meditations, on the Passion*, p. 15.
15. *Hymns of the Passion*. p. 3.
16. ibid, p. 2.
17. *Icelandic Meditations on the Passion*, p. 63.
18. See Beck's above-mentioned article on Pilcher, p. 13.
19. *Hymns of the Passion*. p. 6.
20. Passiusalmar Hallgrims Peturssonar. Reykjavik: Menningarsjodur, 1961, etc.

GUNNAR SIMUNDSSON, A TRIBUTE

by his good friend, Siggi Wopnford

With the passing of Gunnar Simundsson, the Arborg community has lost one of its foremost citizens. Gunnar was born on his parents' homestead, near Arborg on July 28, 1908 and he lived there until October, 1980, when he was taken to Winnipeg for an operation from which he never recovered. He died on February 18, 1983.

Because of the distance to school, his education was sporadic: some tutoring in his home from time to time and only one term in a regular school. He passed handily the required subjects out of elementary school. That was the extent of his formal education. By reading and studying diligently at home he became one of the best informed of his contemporaries. He read widely and avidly, modern authors as well as the classics, English as well as Icelandic authors. He was particularly well posted in the history and the literature of the Icelandic people. He also kept himself well informed on current issues and events in his community, his country and the world.

However, in spite of the scholarly attitude and community interests, the farm from which he derived his livelihood and where he and his wife, Margaret, raised their family was the focal point of his attention. From the time Gunnar was a young man he worked with his parents on the farm. They expanded their holdings, cleared the land, mechanized their farm, and in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture they experimented with better methods of improving varieties of grains and forage.

In 1947 Gunnar married Margaret Halldorsson of Siglunes, Manitoba. They were blessed with a family of seven children: Erla, married to Unvald Jonasson of Arborg; Elva, married to Jerry Jonasson of Gimli; Omar, who helps his brother Bragi in the operation of the family farm; Svava, married to Melvin McInnis in Iceland, and Kari, in Calgary. Their son, Sivar, died in a tragic farm accident in 1971. They adopted a child in India whom they supported from infancy through college and university. Upon maturity, the young man chose the name of his adopted father, Gunnar Madhavan to add to his own.

Gunnar's involvement and work for his community is legendary. From the time he was a boy right to the time of his fatal illness he took an active part in most community affairs. At the early age of 24 he was elected to the Board of Directors of the North Star Co-op creamery, which position he held until its last meeting in 1974. He had been the secretary of the board since 1955. He was a charter member, the first secretary and a driving force in organizing, against great odds, and building the first pool elevator in Arborg. He was, from the time of its inception, a member and sometimes chairman of the Evergreen Regional Library Board until he could no longer serve because of illness. His last important contribution was his participation in the excellent published history of the Geysir district: *Faith and Fortitude*.

During all the thirty-five years that Gunnar and Margaret made a home for themselves and their children their hospitality was renowned. It became a haven for many who were handicapped, lonely, or who for other reasons were forced on the ragged edges of society. Their warm and cheerful generosity attracted people from far and near. With the tremendous amount of work involved in raising a large family, operating a large farm and attending innumerable meetings, there was always time, food and shelter for their guests, everyone being made welcome. They both had the gift of making people feel comfortable and wanted.

Gunnar's pastime was a penchant for Icelandic literature, particularly poetry. He amassed a large library which he used whenever time permitted. His greatest joy was to read or recite a well written prose passage or poem in the Icelandic language. He was captivated by the expressiveness, strength, and beauty of the first language he learned. He was endowed with a phenomenal memory and would recall long passages of well written prose without the benefit of book or script. He could recite from memory scores of poems, mostly by modern poets. His great store of anecdotes, humorous stories, generally the history of the Icelandic people in America, was truly amazing.

Although he was the acknowledged leader of the Icelandic ethnic group in his community and did everything in his power to perpetuate the language and history of his forebears, he had no illusions in these matters. He knew that Icelandic would eventually die as a spoken language among Icelandic-Canadians, but he was determined that the cultural heritage the pioneers brought with them would become an integral part of the great Canadian mosaic. To this end he donated a large sum of money to the University of Manitoba, thus becoming a founding member of the chair in Icelandic studies at that institution. His efforts have not been in vain.

Now his voice is stilled. No longer will his physical strength and endurance be bent to mundane tasks of the practical farmer. Others will assume the community work and benefit from the example he set, but the Icelandic community is not likely to see another Gunnar. He was an extraordinary character: a curious mixture of the practical and the aesthetic although these distinctive qualities were clearly separated. The scholar did not interfere with the farmer. He never aspired to greatness, but he left his mark on the community in which he lived and died. He firmly believed that in spite of all the setbacks of war, poverty and privation, mankind was slowly progressing to a better and fuller life for all.

- The southernmost part of Canada is Middle Island in Lake Erie at 41 degrees 41'N.
- The northernmost point in the country is at Cape Columbia on Ellesmere island 2,875 miles away from Middle Island at 83 degrees 07'N.

DR. GISSUR PETURSSON

A Distinguished Ophthalmologist, Surgeon and Scientist

by Arnetta Moncrief

Stella Boyle Smith and Dr. Gissur Petursson

Dr. Petursson was born in Akureyri, Iceland, where he completed his early schooling, which included grade school, high school and junior college, from which he graduated. His decision was to enter the medical field like his father and others before him.

He was one of six sons of Dr. and Mrs. Petur Jonsson, four of whom are living. All have been successful in their chosen fields. Two of the younger sons met tragic deaths through accidents.

The late Dr. Petur Jonsson was a well known and successful doctor in his area. His great grandfather, Dr. Natan Ketilsson, had the distinction of being the first physician of his country to use the medication known as digitalis.

Dr. Petursson's mother, Mrs. Asta Jonsson, was the daughter of Sigvaldi Valentinusson from Snaefell's County. She has visited Little Rock and other parts of the United States several times. Her late brother, Rev. Fridrik A. Fridriksson, was a well known minister in Canada. He spent some time in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Dr. Petursson became interested in medical science early in his life, especially in the field of Ophthalmology. He entered the School of Medicine at the University of Iceland in Reykjavik where he graduated in the required time of seven years. His thirteen month rotating internship was in various university-affiliated hospitals in the capital city, which were the National, Saint Joseph and the City Hospital. He also interned in the District Hospital in Akureyri.

Following his internship he went to Vopnafjordur and practiced medicine as a government-appointed doctor.

About this time the Little Rock Rotary Club in Arkansas was sponsoring outstanding foreign interns in the medical field. Dr. Petursson passed the required test given by the Education Council for Foreign Medical graduates and had the distinction to be selected. His superior mind and his decision to specialize in ophthalmology, as well as his fine background in medicine, played a role in him being sponsored by a Rotary member, Mr. Allen Weintraub, who was an administrator of St. Vincent's Infirmary, Little Rock from 1962 to 1963. Here he met his attractive wife, a head nurse in her ward.

His plans had been to return to his home in Akureyri. Due to the requirement of all doctors to have a background in neurology, who become ophtahlmologists in Iceland, he entered the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Department of Neurology, where he spent six months of residency. Next he enrolled in the University of Arkansas' Department of Ophthalmology where he remained for thirteen months. He transferred in 1965 to the University of Missouri, School of Medicine, at Columbia. Here he completed two years majoring in his chosen field.

He finally moved back to Iceland where he opened his practice in Akureyri as an eye specialist. He remained there at the university-affiliated district hospital for seven years.

Perhaps due to the fact that his wife was from Arkansas and also that he was offered an assistant membership on the medical faculty of the Ophthalmology Department at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, he returned.

He is at present an Associate Professor in his department. Other academic appointments are Chief of Ophthalmology Service, Arkansas Children's Hospital and Ophthalmology consultant for the Veteran's Administration Hospital of Little Rock, Arkansas. He was also acting chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, one year — 1978-79.

Dr. Petursson has served on a number of committees such as Council for Academic Affairs and its sub-committees.

This active doctor serves in specific teaching and instructional activities. He supervises Senior Medical Students Teaching Program of their Elective Ophthalmology. He also supervises Junior Medical students, Sophomores and Freshmen, Instruction and Physical Diagnosis and teaches Ophthalmology residents.

He is an active member of the professional societies of medicine, as well as service and community activities such as the Lions, Arkansas Eye and Kidney Bank, of which he serves as medical director. He has been an active member of the Rotary Club.

Dr. Petursson has gained prominence as an outstanding doctor and surgeon in his field. It is common for him to lose his lunch hour due to his crowded schedule. Judging from the many complimentary remarks made by his many patients who come to his office, his patience and kindness are greatly appreciated.

He has been presented on television several times.

Dr. Petursson is a recognized research scientist in his medical field, whose name may be found in at least a dozen scientific publications.

Dr. and Mrs. Petursson are the proud parents of a son, Patrick Stephen, and a daughter, Lisa Marie. Their bright son will enter high school this fall and the gifted daughter has won honors three times in the piano competition.

Those of his identity take pride in this distinguished doctor and his fine family.

FOOTNOTE

Stella Boyle Smith, the Little Rock philanthropist, signed a document called a "unitrust" on behalf of the ophthalmology department of the University of Arkansas for Medical Research. On her death, the department will receive the $100,000 trust fund with the right to spend the interest it earns. The trust honors Dr. Gissur Petursson (right), UAMS professor of ophthalmology and Dr. Harry P. Ward, UAMS chancellor.

- There are 292,000 square miles of lakes in the country representing 7.6 percent of the total area.
- The international boundary between Canada and the United States, including Alaska, is 5,525 miles in length.

EGILL SKALLAGRIMSSON

by Paul Bjarnason

Their nerves were a product of winter's weaving.
The vaulted sky the brow was heaving.
The fathers grew sturdier son after son,
Beside the ocean, 'mid forests dun.
For ages the nights of the north were keeping
Their Norn-like vigils amongst the rigors
And hardened the scions, one by one,
That warm in their cribs were sleeping.

Their tongue was born of the brine-washed mountains,
The blue of the sky and the gushing fountains.
Its tones fall hard as a hammer-blow
Or whirring swords swished to and fro.
At times they roll with a rippling motion
Or rise on high like an echo flying,
As clear as the drops of the dews below
And deep as the vasty ocean.

Where Death with Life had so long contended
A loftier aim their strife attended.
The fire of emotion was burning bright,
Above the sea and the eagle's flight.
At the hustings all passion was hidden truly
And hearts, though scathed, unto death were faithful;
For wisdom and dash in their wondrous might
Grew well in the suns of Thule.

Thus Fate had equipped our Egil early,
Artful of tongue, yet fierce and burly.
Strong of resolve, with foe or friend
His faith was whole to the bitter end.
He brought to the combat and courtly places
The keenest lance and the brightest answers.
When history's gleams on the great descend
A glow on his hillock blazes.

By the light of his reason he loved and hated.
His lays were all to a plan created.
On the wicks of power his passion burned.
His pals could scarcely know if he yearned.
Wilful and firm on his freedom he rested,
Yet faithful and just unto those whom he trusted.
He valued each friend by the worth he earned,
But warred on the man he detested.

Reserved in manner to pain or pleasure,
His patient heart beat a steady measure;
And if he sorrowed and sought relief,
His soul was dumb as a midnight thief.
And yet at the bier of his boys, so clever,
His bosom tore through the mail-sark gory;
And the Muse re-echoed his manly grief
And made it our own forever.

He loved the power of land and money,
The longest sword and an arm that's brawny,
That takes advantage with strength, not stealth,
And stirs each value to life and health.
He read in the glint of life's golden pages
That giants lead on the way to freedom;
That thousands must pay for one man's wealth,
As welding a gem needs ages.

His viking spirit, the older spurning,
To speed away to the new was yearning.
In the land of his fathers he felt no call
To fill the role of a silent thrall.
Like Grimur, he saw no satisfaction
In the sunny June of Norway's union.
In the Thulean wilds it was fight or fall,
And freedom — with room for action.

And graved on the landscape he left his image,
As liege at the feast or a victor in scrimmage,
From breaker to fell, where the breezes stayed
Their burning thirst with the fountain's aid.
For a home by the firth, with its falls and willows
And fragrant vines, his heart was pining,
Where the highland crest of his "Mountain-maid"
Looked mauve in the hazy billows.

Our tongue found its art in his odes and verses:
The embers on which our life still nurses.
The seas of our spirit sink and rise,
A sacred fire beneath the ice.
Our wavering hearts still hope for a token.
O when will the strings again be ringing?
The haughty Muse on the hassock lies.
The Harp of the North is broken.

His odes were Liberty's loud dictation.
The laws he knew were his own creation.
His wholesome rhymes, for a restless age,
Were wrought with skill to a perfect gauge.

Away from the minions of maudlin cities,
His Muse denied what his breast was hiding.
O if he could re-write, page for page,
Our pithless and vapid ditties!

King Bloodaxe, unnerved, had to kneel and cower,
So new was the art of his captive's power.
That pagan fire shall infuse again
The faith that burns in each denizen.
To fame with his Ransom-rhymes, so merry,
He raised our isle from the death of silence,
— This fiery poet and master of men,
Our Muse's contemporary.

— 1930

POLAR EXPLORER AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

by Nancy Sodeman

Since early in his career, Dr. Bob Rutford has advanced simultaneously in two professions — higher education and polar exploration. He has taught at several midwest universities, held chairmanships, and served as vice-chancellor and chancellor at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln before becoming president at the University of Texas at Dallas. Despite his significant academic career, his polar expeditions must distinguish Rutford from the typical.

A friend and colleague, Dr. Paul Schack, an expert translator of the sagas of Iceland, compares this modern Viking, Dr. Bob Rutford, with his illustrious Nordic forefathers. One, the ninth century explorer, Floki Vilgerdason, a Norwegian, discovered Iceland. Later, another ancestor of Rutford's, Ingolf Arnarson, became the first settler of that land. Similar to his Viking forebears, Rutford is an adventurer. A scientist and explorer, he has made discoveries in Antarctica, the last geographic frontier of modern times. A glacier, the Rutford Ice Stream, is named for him.

Rutford has been preparing for his polar career since childhood. He grew up in the Arrowhead Country of Minnesota where the terrain is made up of volcanic formations and rocky promontories, once mountains eroded by melting glaciers. Here, on the northern shores of Lake Superior, he camped out with his brothers, even in mid-winter, under the guidance of his grandfather, Hoxie. He learned teamwork, self-reliance, and basic survival in a spirit of fun. He later spent four years fishing commercially on Lake Superior to help pay for his education. That background predicted his future.

After earning a bachelor's degree in geography and several athletic awards from the University of Minnesota, Rutford joined the army, assigned to testing over-snow vehicles in Greenland. Later, while working on his doctoral degree in geology, he launched his career in the Antarctic, conducting field work during the Austral summers of 1959-60 and 1960-61.

"My first impression was that I had landed on Mars," he said. "I expected

snow. But I also saw Dry Valleys, snowless ravines, rimmed by craggy peaks. I walked where no one else had yet set foot. A breathtaking experience!"

In 1963-64 Dr. Rutford led University of Minnesota associates into the Antarctic and explored geological formations in the Ellsworth Mountains.

In 1972 at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, he was appointed director of the Ross Ice Shelf Project. He hired the personnel, wrote the proposals, dealt with the National Science Foundation (associated with the project), and assembled 14 university scientists from seven countries to share in the effort.

"This was a labor of love," he said. "We explored an ice slab as big as Texas, 1,500 feet thick. We eventually drilled through the ice shelf to analyze the sea water and the ocean floor below. Our chief concerns were the history of the glaciers and the climate. And we did this out in the field, in tents and huts. Not like at McMurdo (the main American base in the Antarctic) where they have barracks."

All this he says, not boasting, but in the Viking spirit of having met a challenge.

The National Science Foundation was pleased with his accomplishments and hired him to lead its Division of Polar Programs. As director he was responsible for all procedures including complying with the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty of 1961 and cooperating with the nations involved. Since the National Science Foundation is a part of the executive branch of the United States Government, he also prepared annual reports and $50 million budgets. These were presented to both houses of congress and the officers of the cabinet.

For his administrative and research work in the Antarctic, Rutford has received the Distinguished Service Award (the highest award given by the National Science Foundation), a commendation from the National Science Board, the Antarctic Service Medal and the Bellingshausen Medal presented by the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences' Institute of Glaciology.

"All those years I spent in the Antarctic, the fourteen concerned nations, such as the U.S.S.R., Chile, Japan, and France, researched together the geology, glaciers, penguins, seals and Arctic sealife. We studied together the magnetic fields of the earth, kept track of the weather, and examined the showers of cosmic rays from the sun and outer space. It was exciting but oh so peaceful. Only our boots crunching through the snow disturbed the silence. But some day," he adds, his face growing sober, "bulldozers, oil rigs, fishing fleets, and boundary lines could change all that."

Dr. Rutford continues to advise and head various Antarctic projects. He remains committed to Antarctic Treaty meetings, especially regarding exploration and utilization of the vast polar mineral deposits. Not least, he heads an international committee devoted to studying what might happen to the environment if natural resources are exploited in Antarctica.

Excelling in both his professions, as polar explorer and university president, Rutford still keeps close to his Viking roots. At home he chops wood to relax, bakes bread to meditate and he hasn't forgotten the thrill of learning. Endurance and an almost religious zeal for excellence have stayed with him all these years.

Does Dr. Bob Rutford miss the excitement of his years in the Antarctic?

"All research is exploration," he concludes. "It is important to have the tools of investigation. Higher education provides these tools. The academic challenge here in the sunbelt is every bit as strong as the lure of the snowlands of the Antarctic."

SALOME BALDWINSON: A EULOGY

by her son, Chris Baldwinson

Through the efforts of her older sister, Bertha, who had emigrated from Iceland to Canada, my mother and her twin sister, Kristin, received passage money to emigrate from Iceland. My mother, Salla, as she was known to her many friends, often spoke of the journey, the seasickness, the need for staying below the decks during bad weather, which was most of the time. The voyage consisted of taking a small boat to Glasgow, from there a liner to Canada.

It was the first time she had been from home, a mere seventeen year-old girl having no knowledge of English and in a strange country. What a great deal of courage it must have taken! Her determination and courage were the trademarks of her life. I can never remember seeing her afraid. Even during the great depression she always wore a smile and had words of encouragement for all.

In a short time after her arrival in Canada, she obtained a position in the home of the President of the Canadian National Railway. She stayed there until she was able to speak English well enough. Then she took employment with the T. Eaton Company in Winnipeg where her sister, Bertha, worked. The three girls were all employed there. By being frugal they were able to rent a nice home on Victor Street. They then sent for their mother and brother. On their arrival mother looked after the home. They lived there happily for many years.

It was during this time that she met her husband-to-be, Vigfus Baldwinson. Because of a mutual love of music, they became good friends. It wasn't until after the war, when Vigfus returned from overseas that they realized they were in love. At this time she promised to be his wife and helpmate for the rest of her life. She was that, and much, much more. She was his inspiration and his strength whenever he was troubled. She worked side by side with him in order to put his business on its feet.

Vigfus loved sports, was the local bandmaster, also played piano for a dance band. This kept him away from home from time to time, yet she never complained but encouraged him in all his endeavours. Quite often she would have a thirty piece band practicing in the living room. After the practice she would invite them into the dining room for coffee and refreshments. At times after an important game, with little or no notice, Vigfus would invite two hockey teams to his house for a lunch. She managed ably, and was pleased to do it.

Her home was the centre of many things. In her piano room piled high were saxophone, clarinets, and drums, enough instruments to equip and entire band. In her closet under the stairs there was enough baseball and hockey equipment to outfit two teams.

She was a true Christian in helping so many people in difficulty, but she never over-emphasized her religious beliefs. She merely did God's work on earth without thought of thanks or repayment.

Salla encouraged her husband during his considerable contribution to the construction of the Icelandic Lutheran Church at 41st and Gamble in Vancouver, which stands as a monument as possibly the last church built entirely by Icelanders in North America.

For all who knew her I am sure it is not necessary to mention all her sterling qualities. I, for one, am a better person because of her influence, as I am sure we all are.

ICELANDIC COLLECTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA: A SOURCE FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

by Sigrid Johnson

"There was a man called Ulf Bjalfason. His mother was Hallbera, daughter of Ulf the Fearless, and she was the sister of Hallbjorn Half-Troll of Hrafnistra, father of Ketil Trout[1]".

Throughout their nation's history, the people of Iceland have maintained excellent genealogical records. This has been fortunate for the people of Icelandic origin here in Canada, because like Canadians of other backgrounds, they have taken up the popular pastime of searching for their roots — and many have been successful in tracing their family tree back to saga times. In their search, many have made their way to the Icelandic Collection in the Elizabeth Dafoe Library at the University of Manitoba.

The Icelandic Collection is unique amongst special collections in Canadian libraries. It contains 20,500 volumes. Its size makes it the largest collection of Icelandic materials in Canada.

The Icelandic Collection has been in existence for over forty years. The core of the collection was presented to the University by the Icelandic-Canadian community in 1936. In 1939, the Government of Iceland designated the Icelandic Collection as an official depository of all Icelandic publications. This designation however, has since changed. In 1978, the Collection was redesignated as a selective depository and now it receives only the most important publications to come out of Iceland. each year.

Included in the Collection are books, periodicals, newspapers and materials of an audio-visual, archival and microformal nature.

Nowhere else in Canada will a person wishing to trace his Icelandic family tree find a more complete array of information. The holdings of the Collection include nearly all the published works on the history of the Icelandic nation, and on the history of the Icelandic people in North America. These are in the form of books, periodicals and newspapers; and the subject matter ranges from history and biography to census records.

The archival material is comprised largely of gifts and bequeathals made to the Collection by present and past members of the Icelandic-Canadian community. This material contains the otherwise undocumented history of the Icelanders in Canada and the United States; a history which is recorded in letters, diaries, manuscripts, newspapers and photographs. One notable acquisition is a handwritten manuscript covering the genealogy of approximately forty families from 1761 to 1842, a manuscript better known as *Snoksdalin*. It is one of two copies of that manuscript which are known to be in existence.

Materials of a microformal nature include most of the Icelandic-Canadian church records, and an attempt is being made to obtain the remaining existing records. The staff of the Collection is also about to implement a program to acquire from the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Salt Lake City, Utah) copies of their microfilm which were obtained from original records in Iceland.

Despite his knowledge of this wealth of material, the typical genealogical re-

searcher has often been reluctant to use the Icelandic Collection. This reluctance stems not only from the fact that the materials are primarily in Icelandic, but also from the fact that few of the essential works are indexed. However, this reluctance may be allayed if the researcher is aware that the staff of the Collection is fluent in Icelandic, and that they are available for assistance. This assistance includes pointing out the organization of materials which are difficult to interpret.

Plans for the future development of the Icelandic Collection include making genealogical information on Icelanders more easily accessible. One of several improvements being made in this direction includes the indexing of Icelandic-Canadian newspapers and periodicals for biographical information on Icelanders in North America.

The Icelandic Collection is located on the top floor of the Elizabeth Dafoe Library at the University of Manitoba. It is open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, and from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday during the academic year.

Happy hunting!

—*Courtesy of Generations, The Journal of the Manitoba Genealogical Society*

NOTES

1. Hermann Palsson and Paul Edwards (tr.), *Egil's saga*, (Harmondsworth/New York: Penguin, 1976), page 21.

THE GREAT NORTHWEST

by Freda Bjarn

I cannot leave this wonderland
The forest and its glades,
The rugged shore, the wave washed sand,
The varied green-lit shades.

I cannot leave the dogwood tree,
The maple vine, the fir,
The old, old snag, across the lea,
With weathered bent allure.

Can I forget the blue bird's knoll
When woods are turning brown,
The evening song that stirs the soul,
The night hawk swooping down?

Can I forget the midnight moon
Ascending on the hill,
With nature's harmonizing tune
Beside the singing rill?

Along the narrow wooded trail
Upon its stony flight,
To pause beside the rusty rail
And form a pool of light.

I cannot leave old Puget Sound
Its harbor and the bay,
With rolling fog and ships home-bound
On endless waves of grey.

My heart belongs to the Northwest
The Mount Rainier terrain.
And when I ask what I love best:
It's silent falling rain.

- The world's largest lake-within-a-lake is Lake Manitou. Manitoulin Island --- the largest fresh-water island in the world sits at the northern end of Lake Huron; and inside Manitoulin Island sits Lake Manitou (the Indian word means "Great Spirit"), 40.09 square miles of fresh water.

BOOK REVIEW

by Nelson Gerrard

The Geysir Historical Society. **Faith and Fortitude.** Steinbach: Derksen Printers: Geysir Historical Society, 1983.

* * *

Faith and Fortitude, the history of the Geysir District of New Iceland, is a welcome addition to the growing collection of historical works representing Icelandic settlements throughout Manitoba. In these times of rapid change and fading memory, when the cultural policy of our country seems to be moving away from the healthy and equitable concept of Multiculturalism toward a contrived biculturalism, it is reassuring to find that there still remain those who value their heritage and who retain the faith and fortitude of their forefathers. The time and effort they have dedicated to this publication may well be the only enduring link future generations will have with this heritage.

Faith and Fortitude, A History of the Geysir District 1880's - 1980's is a sturdy, large-format volume of 356 pages with endsheet photos of the Geysir Church and Hall, and an historical map showing the settlement's original homesteads. The cover design, depicting the first three settlers of the district on an exploration journey up the Icelandic River, is the work of Bruce Bauernhuber, whose great-grandfather was one of the three.

Begun in December of 1976 by a voluntary committee which adopted the name The Geysir Historical Society, this project gradually grew and evolved over a period of seven years, during which time material was painstakingly collected and assembled despite the busy schedules of the various committee members. The loss of Gunnar Simundsson, one of the area's foremost authorities on early settlers and events, was a severe blow. All meetings were graciously hosted by Hermann and Lillian Skulason of Fögruhlid in Geysir, through whose unstinting hospitality these gatherings were made special occasions for all in attendance.

Faith and Fortitude, like most local histories, begins with an informative overview of the area's settlement, organizations, and outstanding individuals — liberally interspersed with photographs, both old and new. This section is then followed by family histories, complete with photos of the pioneers, their homes, and their descendants, and the closing pages of the book contain a summary list of all lands and landowners since the time of the settlement.

Special pains were taken in compiling **Faith and Fortitude** to retain correct Icelandic spellings, including Icelandic characters where necessary, and although an inconsistency in grammatical cases (nominative and dative) is apparent in the Icelandic placenames, this has been admirably accomplished. A concerted effort was also made to include all residents of the area, from settlement times to the present, and although information was lacking on some of the earliest pioneers who left the district, this work undoubtedly includes a higher percentage of the total than any other history of an Icelandic settlement published to date.

For those associated with Geysir through family ties, past or present, for those of neighbouring districts whose histories are interwoven with that of Geysir, and for all those with an interest in Icelandic settlement in North America, **Faith and Fortitude** is a well worthwhile acquisition.

SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED

CANADA ICELAND FOUNDATION

We invite students of Icelandic or part-Icelandic descent to apply for the following scholarships which are offered or processed by The Canada Iceland Foundation.

Emilia Palmason Student Aid Fund

Two awards of $500.00 each to be given annually. The recipients must be of good moral character, Icelandic descent, college calibre and primarily in need of help to continue their studies in high school, college or at University level. They are asked to sign a pledge that "somewhere along the highway of life" they will try to provide comparable help to another needy student. Closing date for applications **June 30th, 1984.**

Thorvaldson Scholarship

One scholarship of $500.00 to be awarded annually. This annual scholarship will be awarded to a student in University or proceeding into a University in Canada or the United States. The recipient must demonstrate financial need and high scholastic ability. Closing date for applications **September 15, 1984.**

Einar Pall and Ingibjorg Jonsson Memorial Scholarship

One scholarship of $500.00 to be awarded annually. Award to be determined by academic standing and leadership qualities. To be offered to a High School graduate proceeding to a Canadian University or the University of Iceland. Closing date for applications **September 15, 1984.**

The Canadian Iceland Foundation Scholarship

One scholarship of $500.00 to be awarded annually. Award to be determined by academic standing and leadership qualities. To be offered to a University student studying towards a degree in any Canadian University. Closing date for applications **September 15, 1984.**

Students wishing to apply are asked to submit applications with supporting documents indicating which scholarship they wish to apply for. Information and application forms are available by telephoning 475-8064 or contacting:

Canada Iceland Foundation
c/o M. Westdal, Secretary
40 Garnet Bay, Winnipeg Manitoba
R3T 0L6

IN THE NEWS

THE ICELANDIC FESTIVAL OF MANITOBA COUNCIL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba has recently taken the initiative of organizing a Council for the Performing Arts to provide an added support to the cultural and entertainment dimension of the Annual Festival held at Gimli on the August long weekend. People with a keen interest and involvement in the performing arts have been approached, and the council is pleased to announce that included amongst its membership are: Mrs. Hedy Bjornson, Gimli; Mrs. Elma Gislason, Winnipeg; Mrs. Borga Jakobson, Neepawa; Mrs. Kristine Johnson, Arborg; Ms. Jamie Magnusson, Winnipeg; Mrs. Lilja Martin, Brandon; Mrs. Kerrine McIlroy, Winnipeg; Mrs. Helga Sigurdson, Lundar; Mrs. Magnea Sigurdson, Arborg; Mrs. Sylvia Sigurdson, Riverton; Mrs. Lorna Tergesen, Winnipeg.

The Chairperson is Mrs. Sylvia J. Sigurdson (Box 299, Riverton, R0C 2R0 Manitoba) and her associate chairperson is Mrs. Kerrine McIlroy, 99 Ruttan Bay, Fort Garry, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

In addition to support from the Festival, the Council hopes to receive assistance through private and corporate sponsorships, and government grants. Anyone wishing to make a contribution should forward it directly to Mr. Ernest Stefanson, Gimli, Manitoba, Secretary-Treasurer of the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, in trust for the Council.

The Council is anxious to identify a broad range of performers who might have an interest in participating in the Festival weekend.

Accordingly, the Council would very much appreciate receiving information on prospective performers, from the performers themselves.

HERITAGE NEWS

The community received unexpected media exposure in the last few weeks as a result of CBC Television's publicity blitz prior to the showing of their film "The Chautauqua Girl — A Love Story." Mrs. Beatrice Boynton and Mrs. Aldis Wengel, both former Chautauqua Girls, were interviewed on the CBC TV Evening News and on CBC Radio. They recounted some memories of the years 1927 to 1931 when first Aldis and then Beatrice travelled throughout the prairie provinces in advance of Chautauqua shows, setting up advertising, selling tickets and organizing local committees in each town. To many in small towns and isolated areas, it brought their only opportunity for a cultural experience and they flocked to the large brown tents to hear noted lecturers, listen to good music, and see live theatre.

Aldis Wengel (nee Thorlakson) was born in Winnipeg, and, after being hired at age twenty, spent three summers in towns such as Roblin, Manitoba; Lloydminster, Sask.; and Tabor, Alberta, organizing performances and adding to the festive atmosphere by wearing colourful costumes.

Beatrice Boynton (nee Gislason) was born in Greenbush, Minnesota and fondly remembers her Chautauqua summers as being "exciting and challenging with a certain amount of glamour attached to the job." Both have heard from long-lost co-workers and friends since their radio and TV appearances.

—From the Newsletter of the Icelandic Canadian Club of British Columbia

* * *

From the *Newsletter of the Icelandic Association of Chicago* the following people were elected for office in the Association:

President

Lovisa Ruesch ..... (312) 377-1564

1st Vice-President
Hronn Thornton ..... (312) 336-4238
2nd Vice-President
Ronald Tolf ..... (312) 377-7389
Secretary
Leifur Bjornsson .... (312) 334-1445
Treasurer
Howard Thornton ... (312) 336-4238

The nominees were elected unanimously. The new President, Lovisa Ruesch, expressed the thanks and appreciation of the Association to Asa and Ludvik for their outstanding leadership and untiring efforts on behalf of the club. Among the innovations which they had introduced were the Newsletter, which had been well received over the past years. President Lovisa stated that her goals for the organization would remain the same with added emphasis on improving the financial condition.

Two committees were elected: Thorrablot Committee: Thorrablot Committee — Jona McCarthy, Chairman, (312) 827-6032, Joseph McCarthy, Ronald Tolf, and subsequently appointed to the committee by the President: Bjorg Vacchiano; Seventeen-of-June Committee — Aslaug Johnson, Chairman, (312) 864-2346, Svana Ruesch.

* * *

FAMILY RE-UNION IN NORTH DAKOTA

The M. F. Bjornson family of Mountain, N.D. will have a family re-union at the Icelandic State Park near Mountain, N.D. on July 18, 1984 to July 21, 1984. For more information write to D. L. Bjornson, Box 2905, Fargo, N.D. 58108.

* * *

THE WILHELM KRISTJANSON SCHOLARSHIP

Competition is now open, and applications are invited. The $200 scholarship, offered through the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, will be awarded to a student who has completed one year of post-secondary education (university or community college), and is at least partly of Icelandic descent.

Applications are to be submitted before March 15, 1984. For an application form, and further details, write to the following address:

Dr. John S. Matthiasson
806 Southwood Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 1J5

- The only completely occupied province in the nation is Prince Edward Island. There is no permanent settlement in 89 percent of Canada.
- The highest mountain is Mount Logan (19,524 ft.) in the Yukon territory's St. Elias mountains.
- The world's only reversing falls is Saint John, New Brunswick. When the tide goes out, the Saint John river plunges down the falls to the harbour; when the tide comes in, it rushes back up the falls.
- The world's only Inukshooks are pillars of stone encrusted with lichen found on Enuksos Point on the Foxe Peninsula, and on south-west Baffin Island. An Eskimo word meaning "like a person", the Inukshooks, made of piles of loose stones, serve as landmarks, cairns marking the place where explorers cached food or records, and sometimes traps for animals.

Index to Advertisers

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