

NORÐURLJÓS
ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF EDMONTON



January/February 2020

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Icelandic Club members,

We are now in the winter month of Þorri and planning for our traditional midwinter feast Þorablót (Þorrablot) for February 29th. Icelanders and people of Icelandic descent will be celebrating Þorablót wherever we live. The ancient month of Þorri began on January 23rd with Husbands' Day (Bóndadagur) and will end on February 23rd with Woman's Day (Konudagur).

The club has been busy since the last newsletter and our successful Christmas event in December. The club was also represented at Concordia University's annual International Day, where four members set up a display to promote the club and Icelandic culture.

We had our biennial opportunity to volunteer at a casino on January 25 and 26. Many club members volunteered along with family members for two days of casino shifts that go into the wee hours of the night. This is a critical source of revenue for the club and allows us to take on many cultural projects and host cultural events. It is also the source of funds for our annual bursaries and Snorri youth sponsorships to maintain and strengthen ties with Iceland. Thank you to everyone who came out and made this possible!

Please do read down in the newsletter to find out more about Porrablót, including information on purchasing tickets and activities that will be part of the program. All activities are undertaken by volunteers so if there is an activity that is especially dear to you, please consider volunteering to help! Contact information for all board members is given on the last page of the newsletter.

Featured in this newsletter is an article about an Icelandic-Canadian author who is a member of our club. Iceland publishes more books per capita than any other country in the world and many descendents of Icelanders in other countries are also writers. I am sure you will enjoy Wade's insights into how his Icelandic background contributes to his writing.

Hope to see you at Porrablót!

- Jón Bjarni Baldursson

Christmas Gathering/Litlu Jól



The Jólaveinar troupe delivered an entertaining skit accompanied by a poem reading from Erla and Jón Bjarni.

The treats were plentiful and outstanding! Activities included children's Christmas crafts, traditional songs with actions and dances, and a book exchange to remind us of the Icelandic love of literature.. We also had a visit from the Yule Lads, as several young folk worked with Erla Anderson to put together a skit illustrating the pranks of the Yule Lads (Jólaveinar). Cheryl and Vic Laxdal provided the finishing touch of great music to bring it all together. Many thanks to all all the helpers! And thanks to everyone who came out to help celebrate and brought desserts and books to exchange!



Cheryl and Vic Laxdal provided the perfect musical accompaniment.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Þorrablót

(Thorrablót)

**Saturday, February 29th
International Room,
Dutch Canadian Centre
5:00 p.m.**

- 5:00 p.m. Icelandic appetizers and Cash Bar
6:00 p.m. Welcome and Introductions
6:30 p.m. Buffet Dinner (roast beef, chicken)

Program to follow with dancing

To buy tickets: ONLINE - at the website
(www.iccedm.org/thorrablót)

BY MAIL – Mail a cheque made out to the
Icelandic Canadian Club
of Edmonton to:

ICCE, Attn: E. Anderson
13312 – 142 Street
Edmonton, AB
T8N 3T5

TICKETS: Adults \$35
Students (13-24) \$20
Youth (6-12) \$10
Children (0-5) \$5

ICCE Board meetings:

Second Tuesdays of most months
6:30 p.m.

Dutch Canadian Centre Boardroom
Next meeting: March 10, 2020

*Meetings are open to all members.
Contact a board member if you plan to
come in case there has been a change
to the meeting date or location.*

Successful Casino!

The Icelandic Canadian Club of Edmonton was scheduled for a casino on **January 25th and 26th**. The funds that we receive each time we volunteer at a casino are considerable and are the mainstay of our special programming such as supporting the Snorri Program, providing bursaries, and many cultural activities. Thank you to all the volunteers who came out and made this possible!

Scandinavian Heritage Society

The Scandinavian Heritage Society of Edmonton meets monthly, usually the last Tuesday of the month, except for the January meeting in 2020. All are welcome to join us for any of these meetings.

We are beginning to plan for the 2020 Heritage Festival and have already booked some dates for work bees to prepare for the festival. Work bees are scheduled for baking vinarterta (June 24th), piirakka (July 15th) and riskrem (July 29th).

Thanks again to our Icelandic Members who agreed to serve on the SHSE Board again this year: Brian Sveinbjornson, Allison Boychuk, Ken and Carolyn Yu, Coleen Taylor.

Library

The Icelandic library is a part of the Scandinavian Library in Edmonton and is located at 15212 – 117 Avenue.



The library is usually open on Saturday mornings, hosted by either the Danes or ICCE. You are welcome to come and explore and borrow some of our collection

of books by Icelandic authors both in English and Icelandic. Please contact Donna Crozier at donnagc@datacardalberta.com if you would like to access the library at a time other than Saturdays.

The library liaison board position is currently vacant. If this interests you, please contact any board member for more information.



Snorri Program 2020

Deadlines have now passed for both the Snorri program and Snorri Plus for 2020. Good luck to all the applicants! For more information on the program check the Snorri website at <http://www.snorri.is>. We ask that once you are accepted into the Snorri program, please email Tanya at info@iccedm.org, who coordinates the club's support of Snorri.

MEMBERSHIPS

- Individual membership is \$15 per year.
- Couple / Family is \$30 per year. Children under age 18 are included with your family membership.

Pay via Paypal at:
<http://iccedm.org/category/membership/>

Or mail a cheque payable to "Icelandic Canadian Club of Edmonton" to:

Gloria Krenbrenk
#515, 10160 – 114 Street NW
Edmonton AB T5K 2L2

Any questions contact Gloria at 780-668-9166 or gkrenbrenk@gmail.com.

Dorramatur

(food for Dorrablót)

Hákarl, fermented shark.

Hrútspungar, the testicles of rams pressed in blocks, boiled and cured in lactic acid.

Svið, singed and boiled sheep heads, sometimes cured in lactic acid.

Sviðasulta, head cheese or brawn made from *svið*, sometimes cured in lactic acid.

Rullupýlsa – cured lamb flank

Lifrarpylsa (liver sausage), a pudding made from liver and suet of sheep kneaded with rye flour and oats.

Blóðmör (blood-suet; also known as *slátur* lit. 'slaughter'), a type of blood pudding made from lamb's blood and suet kneaded with rye flour

Harðfiskur - dried fish (often cod, haddock or sea wolf), served with butter.

Rúgbrauð (rye bread), traditional Icelandic rye bread.

Hangikjöt, (hung meat), smoked and boiled lamb or mutton, sometimes also eaten raw.

Selshreifar, seal's flippers cured in lactic acid.

Hvalur, whale blubber pickled in sour milk.

Rófustappa, mashed turnips



Donna and Lorraine
with a rullupýlsa ready
to be cured.

A few 2019 highlights

And we are looking forward to the adventures and highlights of 2020!



THE TRADITION OF THORRABLÓT (ÞORRABLÓT)

Þorrablót is an Icelandic midwinter festival, named for the month of *Þorri* of the historical Icelandic calendar (for 2020, January 23 to February 23). The old pagan festival was revived in the second half of the 19th century by societies active in the Icelandic independence movement of the time.

Þorrablót gained wide publicity starting in 1958, when a *Reykjavík* restaurant, called *Naustið*, began offering a platter of once-typical country foods that had now become rare. The food was arranged in slices on a wood trough replicating the wood troughs once used in every home for plates. The restaurant advertised this platter as *Þorramatur*. The serving of *Þorramatur* has now become a defining feature of *Þorrablót*.

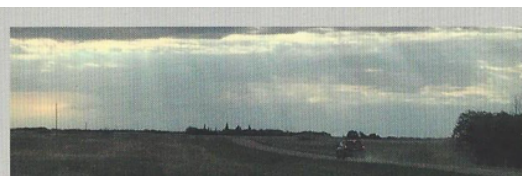
Þorrablót is an evening with dinner where participants give speeches and recite poems, originally to honour the Norse god *Þórr* (Thor), whose name is associated with *Þorri*. Traditional dances such as the *viki vaki* circle dance are featured. Calling the feast a *blót* (a feast held in honor of a god in Norse paganism) makes a link to pagan times. Today *Þorrablót* is common among Icelanders everywhere and can be anything from an informal dinner with friends and family to large organised events with stage performances and an after-dinner dance.

Þorramatur (food of Þorri) is a selection of traditional Icelandic food, consisting mainly of meat and fish products cured in a traditional manner, sliced and served with *rúgbrauð* (dense and dark rye bread), butter and *brennivín* (an Icelandic akvavit). It is eaten during the month of Þorri (Thorri), in January and February, as well as at the mid-winter feast of *Þorrablót* (Þorrablot) as a tribute to old culture. We will have some traditional Þorrablót dishes to try as well as Icelandic beers available for participants to try at the ICCE dinner on February 29th. **Skál!**



Jón Bjarni Baldursson
Alrún Nordic Design

EMAIL: info@alrun.is
INSTAGRAM: [@alrun.nordic.design](https://www.instagram.com/alrun.nordic.design)
WEBSITE: www.alrun.is



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Feature: Wade Harold Johnson: Icelandic-Canadian author

One of our club's members, Wade Harold Johnson, is a published author who has mined his genealogical background as a rich source of stories. Here is his story.



My first taste of authorship came to me out of necessity when I was about eleven. I had a school assignment to write a story and was bitten by the writing bug: I was captured by the idea that I could actually create a piece of real fiction. That effort began a long apprenticeship in writing and now, since retiring about 5 years ago, I am able to pursue my passion as a writer.

I became quite interested in our family genealogy. I was fortunate to connect with three genealogists in Iceland, who were able to connect many dots for me in my research and furnished me with a mountain of material. Today I have a genealogy database of well over eight thousand individuals, almost all related to me by blood or marriage. You can imagine that among all that material lives a host of many fascinating stories. It was from these stories that I became inspired to embark on my first novel.

My plan was to marry actual ancestors with actual historical events and create a 'mostly' fictional tale in which to recreate a life story for that ancestor.

I planned out a chronological series of nineteen books, with the main character being actual ancestors in almost all of the books. Although they are mostly from my French side there is a point where French and Icelandic merge. The first book I wrote is the 4th book in the chronology, set near Paris around the year 1500. Book 5 and Book 10 are complete and were published as well. Book 2, *Gillet of Azincourt*, is centered around a fictional ancestor and the real Battle of Agincourt, with King Henry V. Book 3, *Girl in Fire* is in progress, again with a fictional protagonist, centered around the Joan of Arc story. Books 15 and 19 are also in progress.

Did you know...?

- Iceland publishes more books per capita than any other nation on earth
- Iceland has a near universal literacy rate
- Reykjavik is the world's first non-native-English speaking UNESCO City of Literature
- Iceland's only (so far!) Nobel Prize was for literature, awarded to Halldór Laxness in 1955 for *Independent People*

Our Icelandic folks may be interested in Book 1, tentatively titled *Pagan*. This story features our Norse ancestor, Göngu-Hrólfr Rögnvaldsson, better known in history as Rollo, the Viking that became a Duke of France, father of Normandy. This story takes place around 985CE. Our ancestor takes a break from his siege of Paris, encounters Alis, a young Frankish peasant woman, and they create the ancestor that links my French and Icelandic/Norse sides (fictional of course, but stranger things have happened).

I am working on my 8th, 9th and 10th books, with several others already outlined. The next book I expect to publish is titled *The Last King of Iceland*, a story about a centenarian history professor, in modern day, and Snorri Sturluson, our most famous Icelandic ancestor.

I write because I am interested. There are so many stories to tell and so little time. I write because I want to know about those thousands of people that made me and about the thousands that I will be the progenitor of. – *Wade's books are available in paperback and Kindle from Amazon and other sites. See more at www.whjohnson.ca.*

2018 - 2019 ICCE EXECUTIVE

President	Jón Bjarni Baldursson		president@iccedm.org
Vice-President	Erla Anderson		info@iccedm.org
Past President	Donna Crozier		info@iccedm.org
Secretary	Pat Dunn		info@iccedm.org
Treasurer	Martin Anderson		info@iccedm.org
Casino	Elliott Tanti		info@iccedm.org
Heritage Society	Lorraine Ilnicki	780-454-1710	info@iccedm.org
Keeping in Touch	Joedy Englesby	780-905-3000	info@iccedm.org
Library Vacant	(Donna Crozier)		info@iccedm.org
Membership	Gloria Krenbrenk	780-668-9166	gkrenbrenk@gmail.com
Newsletter	Vacant (Pat Dunn)	780-922-5061	info@iccedm.org
Phones	Barb Beirnes	780-424-2690	n/a
Snorri & Bursaries	Tanya Hofforth		info@iccedm.org
Social Events	Elizabeth Tanti		info@iccedm.org
Social Media	Elliott Tanti		info@iccedm.org
Casino	Elliott Tanti		info@iccedm.org
Director at Large	Jodine Chase		info@iccedm.org
Director at Large	Susan Hallett	780-471-0082	info@iccedm.org
Auditors	Del Sveinsson		
	Bev Arason-Gaudet		

DUTCH CANADIAN CENTRE
Is located at 13212 – 142 Street EDMONTON AB

PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE
AT [HTTP://ICCEDM.ORG](http://iccedm.org) FOR MORE NEWS AND UPDATES AND FOLLOW US ON
FACEBOOK

 [Icelandic Canadian Club of Edmonton](https://www.facebook.com/IcelandicCanadianClubofEdmonton)
