

**NORÐURLJÓS
ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF EDMONTON**



June 2020



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear members,

It is now three months since Covid-19 has affected the whole world, limiting everyone's opportunities to gather together. However, being very determined Icelanders, we will continue to celebrate our Icelandic heritage! As so many are doing, a number of events

will be held as virtual events, with the great advantage that it becomes simple for anyone with a computer, or access to a friend with a computer, to attend. See this newsletter issue (*Mark Your Calendars*) for more information on upcoming virtual events – starting with our very own club's Icelandic Independence Day celebrations.

Our June 17, 2020, Icelandic Independence Day gathering has been cancelled. In its place we will have a virtual celebration. We are encouraging everyone to celebrate the day with traditional foods, wearing Icelandic clothing and singing Icelandic songs. We will post some links to Icelandic songs on our Facebook page. Please share your pictures of your celebrations with us at info@iccedm.org and these will be posted on our Facebook page as well as a selection in our next newsletter. We look forward to seeing your creative at home celebrations!

The economic impact of Covid-19 precautions is being felt by small clubs and organizations. The inability to hold events means a serious income deficit for non-profits such as the Stephan G. Stephansson Icelandic Society. Operating several sites at Historic Markerville, it is unable to host any of the events that it counts on to raise funds to maintain and operate its buildings and programs. As we were fortunate with a casino this year, the Icelandic Canadian Club of Edmonton has been pleased to be able to donate money to help them get through this year and to continue to protect important aspects of Icelandic-Canadian history in Alberta.

Not unexpectedly, this year's Snorri program has been cancelled. However, persons accepted to this year's Snorri gathering will be automatically accepted into next year's program. Our club's support for the program and participants remains unchanged.

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Undoubtedly some club members were planning travel to Iceland this year. Iceland will be opening to tourists outside the Shengen Zone as of July 1st, with precautions in place including a mandatory Covid-19 test or quarantine for all visitors. However at this time of writing, international travel out of Canada is still officially under a travel advisory, with travel out of the country not advised. Organizers of some large events planned for Iceland for this fall such as Iceland AirWaves are still hopeful their events will take place.

In other articles in this newsletter, we include an article from a young writer who attended the first Iceland Writers Retreat in 2014, about the creativity she met with in Iceland. We will use that creativity to continue to celebrate our shared heritage! We are all looking forward to the time, whenever it may be, that we can begin to gather again safely. Meanwhile, Icelanders have weathered many hard times throughout our long history by supporting one another. Take care and please remember that your club is here for you. If you have ideas on how we can use virtual media to keep in touch, celebrate, and mark the year's milestones please get in touch. Stay safe.

- Jón Bjarni Baldursson

We can't get together in person – but we can still celebrate together.

Icelandic National Day on June 17

Send us photos or videos showing you and your friends and family engaging in these activities on June 17, or of something you own that relates to these activities. These are some ideas. Create your own!

- Learn the colours and dimensions of the Icelandic flag. Fly the Icelandic flag if you have one. Make your own hand-held flags with straws or wooden skewers as flag poles and by colouring the design on paper. Wave your flag and shout this chorus Hæ hó jibbí jei og jibbí-í jei - Það er kominn sautjándi júní (Watch on [Youtube](#)).
- Learn about the [Icelandic national outfits](#). Wear your Icelandic national outfit if you have one. Hopefully it won't be too hot of a day to wear wool and all those layers.
- Learn about Icelandic harðfiskur (dried fish). Buy it direct from members of ICCE at the [Salties](#) online store. Learn about the Icelandic pylsa (hot dog) and how it is traditionally eaten. Eat hard fish (with butter spread on it) or hot dogs (add fried onions, mustard, and ketchup).
- Play Icelandic music. Find a song on YouTube or on Spotify. Or download an app that plays Icelandic radio (TuneIn).
- Create a dance routine to the song "Think about Things" by [Daði](#) (Look up "Dadi Freyr").
- Watch a scary or otherwise Icelandic show or movie on Netflix ("Trapped", "And Breathe Normally", "The Valhalla Murders", "Out of Thin Air")
- Watch news from Iceland online at <https://www.ruv.is/english>
- Learn about [Icelandic National Day](#).
- Learn about the Icelandic fjallkona ([woman of the mountain](#)).





Click [here](#) for the history and dimensions of the Icelandic flag. Make your own for Icelandic National Day!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Icelandic National Day June 17, 2020

Celebrate and share your celebrations online!

Take a photo of you and your family celebrating your Icelandic heritage on this day and send it to info@iccedm.org. We will post them on Facebook to share the fun.

Gimli Film Festival
ONLINE July 22 – 26
Gimlifilm.com

Íslendingadagurinn
ONLINE August Long Weekend
and other dates TBD
Icelandicfestival.com

Annual Post-Secondary Bursary
DEADLINE to apply: August 15, 2020

ICCE Board meetings:
Second Tuesdays of most months
6:30 p.m.
Next meeting: April 14, 2020

Meetings are open to all members. At this time, meetings are being held by Zoom videoconference. If you wish to attend please contact a board member for details (see last page of newsletter for board contact information).

Bursary Deadline

The club awards up to 10 bursaries of \$2,000 each, to post-secondary students whose families are members of the club. To apply, students need to fill out an application form, available from the website or from Tanya. Applicants must provide two letters of reference, their latest transcripts, and proof of enrolment to the post secondary institution. Documents must be emailed to Tanya (tanm77@hotmail.com or info@iccedm.org) to meet the **August 15, 2020** deadline. We would also appreciate a photo as we would like to feature successful applicants in the newsletter. **Please be sure to get your application form in on time** even if you anticipate a short delay in any of the other documentation.

Scandinavian Heritage Society

The 2020 Edmonton Heritage Festival will be offered in a virtual version of the Festival. Due to logistical challenges with this approach, the Scandinavian Heritage Society will not be participating in the virtual event.

Check the Heritage Festival website at heritagefest.ca for details on the 2020 event, where food for purchase from the cultural societies will be offered online. We look forward to participating again in 2021.

Historic Markerville

Icelandic National Day and other celebrations at Markerville have all been cancelled. As this means that Historic Markerville has lost much of its income for this year, the Icelandic Canadian Club of Edmonton donated \$15,000 towards the annual costs of this important centre of Icelandic heritage and history in Alberta.

The Markerville Kaffistofa opened in May and will be open 5 days a week starting June 9th. Stephansson House will remain closed until further notice.

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.



The Snorri Program

As with so many other events, the 2020 Snorri Program has been cancelled. However, those who have been accepted into the 2020 program will be offered the same opportunity to participate in 2021. The club's commitment to supporting the Snorri Program and local participants remains unchanged.

To celebrate 20 Years of Snorri, the program's anniversary in 2019, visit the program website, www.snorri.is, to read a magazine produced commemorating this significant anniversary. Scroll down the home page to find the link; it is a wonderful tribute to the many years of Snorri visits and to the life-altering experiences it has offered participants.

Virtual Events: Íslendingadagurinn

The first Icelandic Festival of Manitoba – Íslendingadagurinn - was held in 1890. While the in-person festival is cancelled for this year, virtual events are in the works to ensure we can celebrate this heritage event once again this year. The year's theme is Icelandic at Home/Heima er Best (Home is Best). You can check their website, icelandicfestival.com, Facebook page or Instagram for updates on these events as they unfold. A full weekend schedule will be released by June 17th and will be published in Lögberg-Heimskringla in July.

The traditional fun run event will still be held - but at a distance! Racers can choose any course of the appropriate distance and will record their course on a GPS timer or smartphone and submit it electronically.

There will also be a poetry and prose contest. The festival will include live-streaming and pre-recorded videos that will be released at set times during the weekend. The videos include Icelandic wool knitting demonstrations as well as Icelandic cooking demonstrations. People will be able to hear messages from special guests, watch different educational videos and learn more about the history of Icelandic culture. For those who live at a distance from Gimli, as we do, this is a great opportunity to participate in an important Icelandic festival, even if it is remotely.



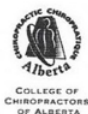
Virtual Events: The Gimli Film Festival

The Gimli Film Festival will take place July 22 – 26th in an online rather than in-person format. Two types of availability will be offered during these five days: on-demand films, Netflix-style, to passholders and ticket buyers; and free livestreamed films, interviews and more through their website. For more information, visit their website at gimlifilm.com.

Coping with COVID Restrictions: Can we help?

This is a challenging time for many of us. Please be assured that, as a club, we are here for one another. If you would like to receive a call, to chat, to have someone check in on you or just to say hello, please contact us. If you know another member we encourage you to reach out to them. Or, contact a board member either by phone (see contact list page 8) or send an email to info@iccedm.org and we will respond. Please include your phone contact information in any email.

YOU are an important and integral member of our community and you are not alone. Icelanders have weathered many crises and are a tough people who have survived because we support one another. Please let us know if you need to talk and/or are in need of some support. Take care and stay safe!



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2020 INLNA Convention

The annual Icelandic League of North America (INLNA) convention, scheduled to have been held in Gimli, proceeded as a web-based meeting in April 2020. Jón Bjarni Baldursson and Erla Anderson attended as voting representatives for the ICCE. New officers were elected: Stefan Jonasson as President, and Ashley Thorvaldson as first VP and Marlene Linneberg as second VP/ treasurer. Beverly Arason-Gaudet remains as Past President.

As many know, at the convention in 2019 the American clubs confirmed their intent to split from the INLNA to form a separate entity, the Icelandic National League of the United States (INLUS). The two organizations will continue to work together on areas of mutual interest. At the 2020 AGM, INLNA passed a motion for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), for the two parties to “work cooperatively on programs and initiatives in areas of mutual interest, where the opportunity exists for working together, and where doing so benefits each organization”. INLNA looks forward to continued cooperative endeavours with INLUS.



Icelanders like to run! The foot race above took place on Icelandic National Day at Hnaua in 1948. This year's fun run at Íslendingadagurinn will be virtual – a first! You can get more information and sign up at icelandicfestival.com.

Iceland and Covid-19

Iceland began preparing for a pandemic well before its first coronavirus arrived with Icelanders returning from Italian ski resorts. It mounted a quick response which included strict quarantining of returned travellers and rigorous contact tracing. It also began aggressive testing for the virus and achieved the highest rate of testing on a per capita basis in the world.

A key partner for this work was DeCODE Genetics, a biotech firm that turned its state-of-the-art facilities over to screening. DeCODE began free large-scale testing of volunteers whether or not they had symptoms, leading to better understanding of the virus' spread.

Iceland is also participating in research to develop a vaccine; recently, white blood cells from six Icelanders with high levels of COVID-19 antibodies were flown to Canada for use in a project developing a treatment for the coronavirus. Restrictions are now easing in Iceland and businesses are opening again, with some conditions and restrictions.

Only essential travellers and nationals from the Schengen Area countries (EU/EEA, EFTA, UK) are currently able to come to Iceland, with conditions. As of July 1st, foreign nationals from areas outside of the Shengen area will be able to come to Iceland.

Upon arrival in Iceland, a visitor has the choice between a screening test for Covid-19 or two weeks' quarantine. Travellers are also asked to download Rakning, a contact-tracing app for Covid-19. Airlines are beginning to ramp up flights to Iceland beginning June 15th. Check covid.is for further updates.

Update on the Scandinavian Library

As our members know, there is a collection of books both in Icelandic and English that is held at the Scandinavian Library at 15212-117th Ave. The books include fiction by Icelandic and Icelandic-Canadian authors, history, poetry, non-fiction, and genealogical references. It is a small but excellent collection and of value to anyone seeking written works on Icelandic and Icelandic-Canadian themes in both languages.

The library space is generously donated and is shared with other Scandinavian clubs. We need to be thinking long-term about the objectives of this library and how it can best serve our members and contribute to our heritage both now and in the future.

We would like to form a small working group to discuss the library and determine some options for its usage and its future. If this interests you, please contact Donna Crozier at info@iccedm.org. As options are developed, members will be advised and consulted for input and feedback. This is a medium- to long-term project and any decisions will be made at a club AGM.



Crowning the Fjallkona, Gimli Íslendingadagurinn, 1944

Feature: The Icelandic Writers' Festival, Creativity, and Iceland

Contributed by Arielle Demchuk

Arielle participated in the first Iceland Writers' Retreat (IWR) in 2014. IWR was founded by Eliza Reid, now the First Lady of Iceland, and Erica Jacobs Green, of the US. It has been held annually since 2014 in Reykjavík.

Iceland is a country of stunning landscapes, a backdrop for Hollywood films and television shows, and an inspiration for prose and poetry. Maybe it's the inspirational landscapes that cause this, but Icelanders are highly creative people. Music shows are hosted nightly, 10% of Icelanders will publish a book in their lifetime, and art galleries and museums abound on every corner.



Arielle at Jökulsárlón

As a country long civilized by artists, Iceland is an ideal host for a major international writers retreat. The retreat I attended in 2014 was staffed by an impressive roster of internationally famous authors. Workshop leaders included Randy Boyagada, Geraldine Brooks, and several other noted writers from various genres including Icelandic authors Ragna Sigurdardóttir and Sjón among others. It was a fantastic experience. But it was on a Friday night out that I was given an insight into how Iceland has produced so many creative people.

Reykjavík's quiet and peaceful during the day, but sometime in the period between evening and night, the nightlife becomes as colourful as the rooftops of its buildings. My relative, María, took me on a *rúntur*, which is the local term for a pub crawl. I thought I had partying down to an art back home, but in Reykjavík, I was an amateur.

Perhaps I just have a permanent look of helplessness, but María decided that she couldn't simply leave me alone in a bar whenever she had to leave the table. When

such an occasion arose, she would turn to the nearest bystander and explain to them in Icelandic that I was her Canadian relative that needed someone to talk to her in English.

María was also telling these strangers that I was an aspiring writer, here in Iceland for a writers' retreat. The first man that talked to me asked if I was here to have an Eat Pray Love experience and "find myself." I laughed. Perhaps, but eating rotten shark instead of spaghetti carbonara. The next time María left me, she introduced me to

another bystander. She gave him her sales pitch as I looked on in miscomprehension. As she left, he turned to face me; I expected another dry remark on all my "worldly dreams." "So you are a writer?" he asked.

I shrugged and shook my head. "Well, no, not really. Trying to be, I guess."

The man sighed, and said, "You know, we spend so much of our lives trying to *be* something. We set goals, that we're going to 'try to do this' or 'try to be that.' Why can't we just, be? Life is not about trying to be something. Just live. Make art. Embrace the lightness. Paint the darkness. If you write, then you're a writer. It's as simple as that."

I had expected to hear (and did hear) writerly wisdom at IWR, not in a dark crowded bar in Reykjavík. While the knowledge gained from the Iceland Writers Retreat will stay with me for a lifetime, I will also never forget the people of Iceland that harbour this perfect community for the creatively inclined. And they were well represented by this casual Icelandic acquaintance, who reminded me that the most important thing we should do in life is, simply, to just be.

-- Arielle is a communications professional and travel blogger at thetypeatraveller.com.

2019-2020 ICCE EXECUTIVE

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Vice-President	Erla Anderson	info@iccedm.org
Past President	Donna Crozier	info@iccedm.org
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Library (Vacant)	(Donna Crozier)	info@iccedm.org
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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)



Farm on Snæfellsnes