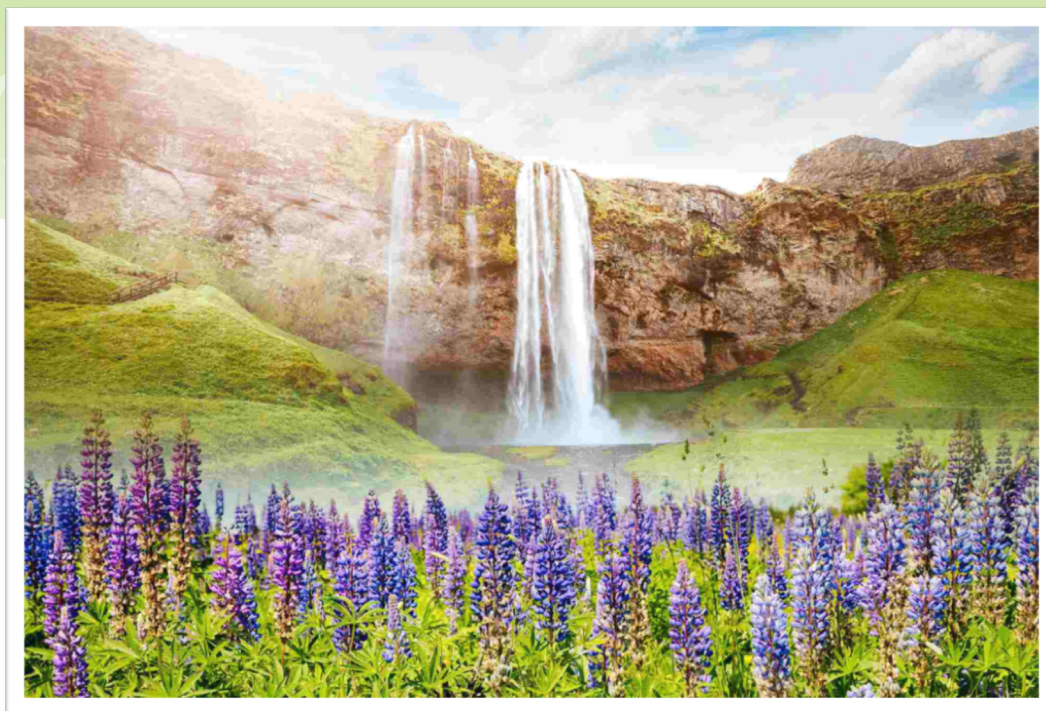




V E R N A L E Q U I N O X
V O R P U N K T U R 2 0 2 1

the
INLNA Newsletter
Fréttabréf



SPRING IN ICELAND

Fire, the sight of the sun,
Good health with the gift to keep it,
And a life that avoids vice.

Hávamál

INLNA Newsletter is published four times a year!

Submission Deadlines

- The 20th of...
- ✓ March
 - ✓ June
 - ✓ August
 - ✓ November

Next Edition

July 1, 2021

Send stories, events & inquiries to:

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President's Message

Stefan Jonasson

Sjaldan er ein báran stök, says an old Icelandic proverb – seldom is a single wave alone. Or we might simply state the obvious: waves come in waves. That's their nature.

For more than a year, now, we've collectively endured a series of waves in the coronavirus pandemic that has disrupted our lives by keeping us at home, slowing the economy, and shutting down international travel. Even worse have been the number of lives lost and the possible long-term impact on people's health. I only recently read an essay from a year ago that quarreled with the wave metaphor in describing how pandemics unfold, arguing the phases we see (or think we see) lack the rhythmic nature and physical predictability of waves. We don't adequately understand the complex factors involved to be able to make predictions. This can make it difficult to live day by day, let alone plan ahead.

Still, most of us have *experienced* the pandemic as a series of waves and, just when things let up somewhat, we brace for the next one. Last year at this time, I was still planning to visit Iceland in the latter part of the summer. That didn't happen, of course, so I began planning to visit *twice* this year – once in June and again in late August. Over the winter, I have alternated between mapping out an itinerary and setting it aside – all in an almost wavelike fashion. Hope and disappointment have visited me like waves crashing on the shore.

With all of their access to information and expertise, governments seem no better at it. Iceland, which has a rather exemplary record of managing this pandemic compared to other nations, developed a strategy for reopening the country to tourists. It would have eliminated the need for had testing and quarantine for those visitors who could document that they been vaccinated. In anticipation of Icelandair resuming flights sometime this summer, at least to Toronto, I began planning again. Then, boom – another wave! Iceland announced the tightening of restrictions on the same day that Manitoba announced a bottleneck in vaccinations. Being a “pre-senior,” I've reconciled myself to the likelihood that I won't be vaccinated in time to travel outside of Canada this year.

Whether or not the wave is a good metaphor to describe the changing circumstances we are contending with, we need to continue planning so that we can move quickly when the storm subsides and still waters return, whether we're talking about personal travel or club activities. If we wait until the pandemic seems to be over, we will have squandered the time we had available to plan for greeting its end with a wave of enthusiasm and a dramatic return to normal activities. In the meantime, let us continue to meet online and find other innovative ways to stay connected and promote Icelandic culture. Eventually, the waves that have kept us adrift will be followed by a wave that carries us home.



Second Century Statement

By John Hofteig

After considerable discussion and revisions, the INLNA Board approved the foregoing “Refreshed” Statement at its 8-March-2021 Board Meeting and will recommend its approval by the General Membership at the 2021 INLNA virtual Annual General Meeting, 15-May-2021.

History: Founded in 1919, in Winnipeg, by visionary Icelandic immigrants to Canada and the United States, the not-for-profit Icelandic National League of North America (INLNA) serves member-clubs, individual members, Icelandic immigrants, Icelanders, and friends of Iceland. Member-clubs manage their own local activities, with some assistance from the INLNA. Further archival historical details are found on the website: <https://inlofna.org/history>. Current INLNA programs are also listed in detail on the website: www.INLofNA.org

Mission: The INLNA sustains the kinship between: its Canadian, American, and Icelandic members; North Americans interested in Iceland and matters Icelandic; and Icelanders implicit in its motto, **Strong is the Bond/Römm er sú taug**, through activities which celebrate, share, preserve, and transmit the breadth of Icelandic culture, literature, customs, and heritage.

Vision: Regardless of Icelandic-descent, all who are interested in Iceland and matters Icelandic are welcome to join INLNA’s second century of serving its members and communities. INLNA’s goal is to: celebrate, share, preserve, and honour its Icelandic legacy in its Second

INLNA Launches *All Things Icelandic*

By Stefan Jonasson

All Things Icelandic, the Icelandic National League of North America’s new webinar program, was launched on February 20 with an appearance by Ambassador Pétur Ásgeirsson in conversation with INLNA president Stefan Jonasson while past president Bev Arason-Gaudet facilitated the question-and-answer period. People joined the event online from 59 different places and it is estimated that more than 75 people watched it live. The feedback since then has been overwhelmingly positive and the video has now been posted to the new INLNA Media – *All Things Icelandic* channel on YouTube, where it continues to be enjoyed by those who missed the original event, or who simply want to watch it again.



All Things Icelandic is a new initiative to better serve members and friends of the league through online means. It will feature occasional presentations or interviews on a variety of topics – travel and tourism, literature and music, history and geography, food and art, cinema and sagas, business and public affairs. We'll explore all things Icelandic, whether here in North America, over in Iceland, or anywhere else in the world.

Announcements of future episodes will appear on the INLNA website (inlofna.org) and its Facebook page, as well as appear on the new YouTube channel: INLNA

2021 Islendingadagurinn Theme & New Website

The Festival Committee

At our AGM in January 2021 we announced the theme for the 132nd Islendingadagurinn, “*Icelandic at Heart / Íslenskt Innst Inní*”.

We are hopeful that we will be able to safely celebrate an in-person festival this year and more details will be revealed, as we know more about public health restrictions.

Festival dates for 2021: July 30th, July 31st, August 1st, and August 2nd.

We are excited to announce that together with our partners, *Visual Lizard* and *Honest Agency*, we launched a **new website** in March 2021

<https://www.icelandicfestival.com>

Thanks to *Honest Agency* for the design of our beautiful theme this year.

Watch the website for the 2021 Event Schedule and the Poetry and Prose Contest.



NEWS FROM THE MEMBERS

In the absence of face-to-face physical meetings, we plan to round up news from the clubs, chapters, associates and even from our huldurfolk (four maverick members who don't live close enough to belong to a club, chapter or association) who are welcome in our midst. We want to know what's going on with everyone in these parlous times and to share any ideas you may have to find ways to cement our relationships.



ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF TORONTO

Our first *online auction* took a lot of organizing and a number of hard-working volunteers, but we managed to raise about \$2000. (Peter Norman, Treasurer)

SAGA CONNECTIONS

By Gwen Morgan

Story telling is deeply embedded in Icelandic culture. We can imagine families huddled around the hearth on a cold winter evening enraptured by the escapades of Thor and Loki. The Icelandic people also told stories of everyday courage and hope, weaving them into a rich cultural tapestry of poetry, literature, art and music. Every generation added to this tapestry. Our Icelandic ancestors brought this rich cultural heritage to this wild land, and over the years have added colourful threads, unique and emblematic, of being Icelandic-Canadians. These are our 'saga connections'.

The ICCT decided to host a series of seminars for us to learn about and have seminar presentations from writers, artists and other professionals on topics of interest and the other is to collect and share our personal family memories. We all have stories to share. Tickets are \$8.00 and Free for ICCT members in good standing.

Our first Zoom event was on December 3, 2020 and featured the saga of the first Icelanders who came to settle in Ontario in 1874. The **Kinmount: An Experiment in Settlement** involved hardship, tragedy and endurance. It's a thought-provoking story and a great place to launch our Saga Connections seminars –with the beginning of our Icelandic-Canadian roots.

The second event March 3, 2021 was the sequel to the Kinmount story. It reports the Millennial celebration and the unveiling of the memorial sculpture, “In the Presence of Soul” by Icelandic artist Guþrun Girgis, plus more family stories.



The third event was a lively assessment by Bill Thorvaldson of our Icelandic Canadian writers, inspiring and very informative. The fourth, coming up April 7, will be an interview by Joe Martin of Donald K. Johnson, business man and Icelandic Canadian philanthropist, about his recently published book, **Lessons Learned on Bay Street: The Sale Begins When the Customer Says No**. Both men have years of experience in business and offer sage advice and inspiration, on business and finding balance in life.

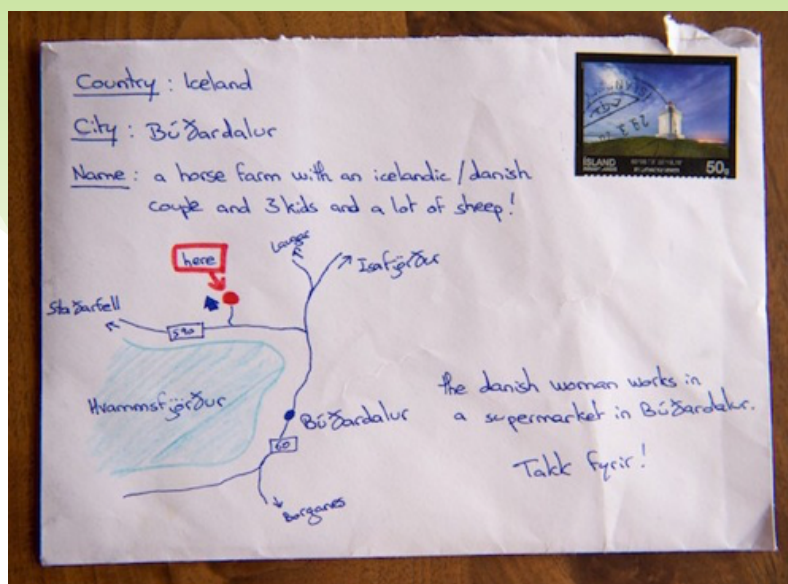


THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The B.C. newsletter offers profiles, histories, obituaries, root-stories, details re different levels of Icelandic classes, Icelandic news, and an announcement of a five-week screening program presented in February and March, stories of 5 outstanding Nordic Women.

Here's a piece of human interest:

Letter Sent to Iceland with Hand-Drawn Map Instead of Address Actually Arrives at Destination (mymodernmet.com)



The map itself gave as much description of the location as possible, such as town and road names with a red dot marking “here.” The letter was mailed in Reykjavik by a tourist who had visited the Holar farm earlier in the year, but couldn’t seem to find an exact address, according to West Iceland news service Skessuhornið.

The farm is considered a small tourist attraction in the area as it boasts a “mini zoo” where the owners encourage visitors to pet their horses, goats, sheep, pigs, and other animals. It does have an address, but when you search for the one listed on its Facebook page, you're placed smack dab in the middle of a lake.

According to a local Icelandic news service, the letter was mailed by a group of tourists in Reykjavik who had visited the farm, owned by the Holar family, earlier in the year. Conde Nast Traveler reveals that the farm attracts a small amount of travelers, as it boasts a “mini zoo.” Unsure of the farm's address, the tourists made use of their drawing skills and left the best clues they could for the postman to solve. And they did—thus proving that perhaps “anything is possible in Iceland.”

The 8-page B.C. newsletter is published at the beginning of each month, ten months of the year. A newsletter is not printed in July or August. Editor & Publisher: Margret Bjarnason Amirault.



LEIF EIRIKSSON ICELANDIC CLUB OF CALGARY

A year ago a letter came in from Professor Kirsten Wolf, UW-Madison, inviting participation in research on the influence of Icelandic heritage on communities in North America. LEIC's newsletter ran the letter but we have not had news of any results. We have asked for more information and will let you know.

FLASH!

Just as this letter was about to go to press, we received an answer from Kirsten Wolf. She writes:

‘Thank you for your email and for your assistance in terms of spreading the word about the project and the survey. The response to our survey was phenomenal. More than 300 people participated, so we have a lot of interesting data to work with. Laura Moquin (my student) and I are currently putting the finishing touches on an article, in which we present an analysis of the main results of the survey. We plan to submit the article to a book of essays on North American Icelandic. The book is edited by Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, Höskuldur Thráinsson, and Úlfar Bragason and is scheduled to be published by the University of Manitoba Press probably this year. We will keep you posted.

Bestu kvedjur, Kirsten Wolf’

THE SCANDINAVIAN CULTURAL CENTRE of WINNIPEG



Also known as the “Nordic House of Canada”, the S.C.C. is the home of Scandinavian culture in Winnipeg. We are a volunteer-driven organization, with members joining clubs of the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

The Viking Times is a free publication for members of the Scandinavian Cultural Centre (746 Erin Street, Winnipeg MB, R3G 2W4) News covers Danish, Norwegian, Finnish and Icelandic sources.

HOT NEWS FROM ICELAND

Spring is upon us and while you usually wait to cook hot dogs in the summer, Icelandic scientists are grilling theirs on hot lava from the volcano in Fagradalsfall Mountain. The eruption on the Reykjanes peninsula, Southwest Iceland, which began on Friday, March 19th, is a shield volcano eruption.



CHECK OUT the NEW INLNA WEBSITE



Our new Icelandic National League of North America website has launched! Check out the latest on our

programs, learn about our history, read the latest news, and find out ways you can get involved:

<https://www.inlofna.org>

We're excited to launch this site and explore new ways to bring our members across North America together! Stay tuned for even more new content in the coming months.

Majestic Reykjavík 2022 INLNA Calendar

The INLNA is pleased to announce that the theme for the 2022 fundraising calendar is

Majestic Reykjavík and we are looking for your photos! If you would like the *opportunity to have one of your photos of Reykjavík featured* in our 2022 calendar, please email up to two of your favorite photos to INLNA at inlofna@gmail.com by **April 30, 2021**. The best format is a .jpeg with a minimum of 1600x1200 pixel resolution.

We are eager to see your photos, and thank you for participating!



I LOVE ICELANDIC

By Bettyjane Wylie

Maybe it's a race thing but two characteristics of Icelanders and Western Icelanders (the title bestowed on them by their home country forbearers) are either a fierce interest in genealogy or/and an obsession with language.

I'm a word freak. Icelandic is a great language for nuts like me, maddening for its grammar (it still conjugates and declines) fascinating for its poetry and purity. Because the Icelanders have been so isolated over the centuries and therefore not subject to the influences of other languages, Icelandic has remained very pure. That's why Icelanders today can read Old Norse without a translation. They are very proud of this and work at maintaining their language watching out for Anglicisms slipping in and they even eschew the use of Greek and Roman roots to describe modern concepts and inventions.

They don't need English, preferring to seek legitimate Icelandic words with impeccable history. Television is *sjónvarp*, from *sjón*, meaning view, and *varp*, from a verb root meaning cast or throw, thus, a thrown view or picture. . Computer is not *reikna*, a word that sounds like reckon means computer, but that's only accounting or calculating. These roots have an excellent lineage:

tá, meaning finger or digit, and *völva*, meaning sybil. Remember Voluspa ("The Song of the Sybil"), the Völva of all Völvas? Could anything be more fitting than that the Völva, the seer who had a direct line with Oðin, be invoked for a modern miracle? And so Iceland gives us a finger-wizard, a digital sibyl, pointing the way to a future in cyberspace. Icelandic uses kennings in its poetry as well as everyday language.

[(kenning: noun a compound expression in Old English and Old Norse poetry with metaphorical meaning, e.g oar-steed = ship. ORIGIN late 19th C: from Old Norse, from kenna 'know, perceive'; related to ken.]

Geoscience isn't exactly everyday language, but this Icelandic characteristic of naming things with compound phrases results in fascinating and poetic words. Iceland's geothermal system of heat distribution is *hitaveita*, simply hot water. Terminal moraine, the detritus of a glacier, is *jökulgarður* which translates literally into glacier garden - much prettier. And here is a nice one (my favourite): a meteorite is a *loftsteinn*, a sky stone.

I could go on and on; my information comes from research I did when I was writing my book **Letters to Icelanders: Exploring the Northern Soul** (Key Porter Books, 1995). See Chapter Nine for more gems. I am not selling this book; it's long since been remaindered. You might find it in a library or in a bookstore.

Stay Connected with the INLNA

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