



# NORÐURLJÓS

Icelandic Canadian Club of Edmonton

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*Horse trekking in Iceland*

*Photo: W. Hutchison*

## President's Report - Allison Boychuk

Dear Members:

ICCE has had an eventful summer! I hope you all have enjoyed the summer making memories with family and friends.

On June 17, Markerville hosted Icelandic National Day. Helene Goodman was chosen by the Leif Eiríksson Icelandic Club of Calgary as the 2023 Fjallkona. ICCE members contributed food for the dinner and enjoyed the great summer day.

From August 5-7, ICCE participated in the 50<sup>th</sup> annual Heritage Festival, as part of the Scandinavian Heritage Society Edmonton. SHSE has also participated for all 50 years. Once again, Lorraine Ilnicki (Food) and I (Culture), were part of the committee and enjoyed the event. It was at a new location, Borden Park, this year which was easy to access. Great weather, large crowds combined with tasty food and cultural performances made this festival the most successful to date.





## Mark Your Calendars!

### **Leifur Eiríksson Day and Luncheon**

Saturday, Sept. 23  
1-4 p.m.  
Nordic Room DCC

### **ICCE AGM Date TBD**

### **Board Meetings**

*7:30 p.m. on the second  
Tuesday*

*No meetings: July, August,  
December*

2023 Board meeting  
dates:

September 12  
October 10<sup>th</sup>  
November 8th  
December 10th

Meetings are open to members and held by Zoom videoconference. To attend, email

[info@iccedm.org](mailto:info@iccedm.org) and we will send you an invitation.

*\* Call Gloria to attend by phone. \**

This will be our last event at the Dutch Canadian Centre. The building has a pending sale to be finalized. After many years at DCC we will be looking for new venues to host our events. ICCE will be removing its belongings from DCC storage space and renting a storage unit in the short term. We will be organizing work bees to get our stored items moved in October.

Volunteers are needed for Leifur Eiríksson Day and for moving. Please email if you can help out:  
[info@iccedm.org](mailto:info@iccedm.org)

Our Club sponsored two Snorri candidates, Georgia Hladysh and Emma Kaliei, for their trip to Iceland. We are proud to be able to support these continued connections between Canadian and Icelandic heritage.

ICCE has also awarded four bursaries to post secondary students. Congratulations to the recipients and best of luck with your studies!

Please mark September 23, 2023 from 1-4 pm on your calendar and come out to the Leifur Eiríksson Fall Luncheon, and enjoy Pylsa, an Icelandic hot dog with all the fixings! We will have some presentations from members visits to Iceland and a fantastic time to visit and catch up with friends.

Our AGM will take place in October or early November. We will send a notice out with details for that event once dates and venue are confirmed.

Hope to see you out soon! — Allison

## **Leifur Eiríksson Fall Luncheon**

**Date: Saturday, September 23rd  
1:00 - 4 p.m.**

**Nordic Room, Dutch Canadian Centre**

**Come and try an authentic Icelandic Hot Dog (Pylsa) with all the fixings! (remoulade, crunchy onions, and more!)**

**Please bring a potluck dessert to share.**

## HERITAGE DAYS 2023

*Contributed by Lorraine Ilnicki*

This year was one of our best years. Our location at Borden Park was one of the best locations of the Heritage Festival. We had grass around us and because the weather cooperated by not raining until late Monday, there were a great number of people who visited our pavilion and tasted our food. We ran out of food at 2:00 on Monday afternoon. Everyone seemed to enjoy it. Many times we could not see the end of the

line for food purchasing as it was so long. Always wonderful when Festival goes love to come and taste our traditional Scandinavian foods!

We had many volunteers this year which always helps to keep things moving in the food tent. Special thank you to everyone who came out. Great job everyone.

Our culture tent was also a success displaying our five countries' cultures. A special hit was the few small tables and chairs set up for children to sit and play with blocks or colour pictures given out so they could colour and take home. Another thing visitors enjoyed were the tables and chairs provided inside the culture tent for visitors to sit and watch their children at the small children's tables or sit and enjoy food purchased next door at our food tent. They also enjoyed taking pictures beside the Viking boat and our small figures they can poke their heads through and take pictures. Great memories were made for all!

***(More photos on last page of newsletter)***



## Icelandic National Day in Markerville, June 17th



*Donna Crozier, 2022 Fjallkona, brought greetings from ICCE and assisted in the crowning of the 2023 Fjallkona, Helene Goodman.*

*Lorraine Ilnicki and Donna Crozier attended Icelandic National Day, bringing greetings from ICCE.*

The skies were ominous as Lorraine Ilnicki and I drove towards Markerville, AB for the annual June 17 Icelandic Independence Day, but, as in past years, the weather held out until all the events had concluded.

The hall was abuzz with activity related to food preparation and the upcoming meeting. Outside, across the road was the much-anticipated grand opening of the Buttermaker's house. The newly renovated building complete with white siding and sky blue trim beckoned visitors in for a look. This quaint house was furnished with period antique furniture and dishes and it was also sporting a new indoor bathroom and a renovated kitchen. The hope for the newly renovated home is for it to become an artist's retreat where artists can come and stay for a time and create art, using the wonderful backdrop that Markerville and the surrounding area have to offer.

As usual there were mounds of food to share and great company with whom to share it. It is always great to gather with fellow Icelanders and share a meal and chat. Lorraine and I had the pleasure of sitting with Dr Hallgrimur Benediktsson - Honorary Consul, Calgary. This was another wonderful gathering with great friends.

— Donna Crozier



*Thanks to Alberta Historic Resources, Red Deer County, generous private donors, and countless volunteer hours of work the house has been completely renovated and restored. The Buttermaker's House is now opening its doors as an Artists in Residence venue. Residencies of up to three months are available for a small fee to writers, musicians, painters, performers and more. For more information go to:*

**[historicmarkerville.com](http://historicmarkerville.com)**

## 2023 Fjallkona: Helene Goodman

*Introduction given by Gwen Mann*

Helene Goodman's ancestors came to Nova Scotia from France in 1638. Born in Moncton, Helene attended the University of New Brunswick and taught school for 6 years. In 1973, she came to Calgary where she met Ron. After doing translation work for 7 years, she later started to work for Ron doing proofreading and many other activities.

The Goodmans joined the Leif Eiriksson Icelandic Club of Calgary shortly after it was formed and have been involved in many activities, including hosting events and guests at their home; organizing bus trips to Christmas in Markerville; assisting with the 2008 Convention; and many other events that are too numerous to mention.

It gives us great pleasure to have Helene Goodman as our Fjallkona for Alberta.



The Fjallkona - Lady of the Mountain - is a personification of Iceland. A Fjallkona is chosen to represent the Icelandic spirit and culture in her community. Among Vestur-Íslendingar the first Fjallkona appeared at a gathering at Iceland Days in Winnipeg in 1924.

The three Alberta Icelandic clubs take turns appointing a Fjallkona. The 2023 Fjallkona was chosen by the Calgary club.

Wood engraving of the Lady of the Mountain, by Johann Baptist Zwecker, published in Icelandic Legends (1866).

## The Worst Week and the Best Day: A Snorri in Iceland

*By Emma Kalief*



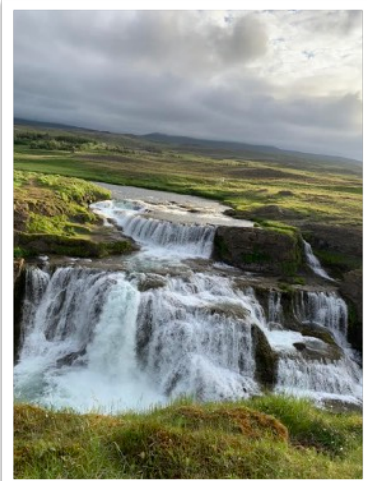
I had two goals for the Snorri Program: the first was to learn more of my family history to bring it back and tell my Langamma more about her heritage, and the second was to ride an Icelandic horse. Both of these would be possible during my homestay, as my host and third cousin twice removed, Gunnar Rögnvaldsson, had told me that he has lots of horses!

Two weeks of my summer were spent in the country outside of Varmahlíð, where Gunnar runs a retreat center owned by the church. My stay started out strong with lots of traditional Icelandic fare and travelling around the northern peninsulas. Gunnar is very knowledgeable about the area, history, and people, so after just one

road trip with him, I was brimming with stories and facts. I could have listened to him talk for hours about anything and everything, he has the natural air of a talented storyteller.

From Gunnar as well as Dagný throughout the trip, I learned that our ancestors were perseverant and hard working (which was easy to believe when taking into account that both of our families are still in the farming industry). I can also attribute a portion of my stubbornness to my Icelandic blood, but also the good natured and kind hearted side of my family too. The Icelanders needed to be stubborn and persistent to survive the harsh winter climate, but they had faith that everything will work out in the end (þetta reddast!) which takes an incredible amount of positive thinking. I still see these qualities every day in myself and my family, and I am proud of it.

Alas, not all my wishes would come true so easily! Halfway through my stay, I caught the cold that had been travelling around the country and was miserably couch ridden for days. I felt incredibly guilty that I could not help out at the center as much as I wanted to, but since both of my cousins had experienced what I was going through, they were adamant that I shouldn't push myself until I was back in full health. So, without going into too much detail, this was the Worst Week.



*Fosslaug*

On my last day, however, I was finally able to breathe through my nose again and only with the occasional snuffle! Time with my cousins was running out and I wanted to make the most of it before I had to say goodbye. Not to mention that this was one of the rare sunny days in Iceland too!

As Gunnar and Dagný were busy at the center, I spent the majority of the day packing my suitcase and preparing for the last leg of the trip. After supper, Dagný drove us about 20 minutes away to a natural geothermal pool, named Fosslaug for the nearby waterfall. We spent a good chunk of time there, relaxing in the hot water and soaking in the last of the sun before it “set” (went behind the mountains).

When we got back to the house it was nearly 11 PM but Gunnar knew how much I wanted to go riding during my trip and he was determined to fulfill that goal. Despite the late hour, we drove over to where he keeps his horses and set out for a midnight hack. One of my favourite aspects of Iceland is that it never gets dark during the summer, and my night owl self was gleeful at the prospect of my favourite pastime at night! My horse’s name was Gosi, which is the Icelandic version of Pinocchio, and the nickname for a very unreliable person too. Contrary to his name, Gosi’s tölt was smooth and steady and he had a very warm temperament. So between Fosslaug and Gosi, this was undoubtedly the Best Day.



*Varmahlið sketch*



I am so incredibly grateful to Gunnar and Dagný for opening their home and life to me, I cannot wait to go back! One day I would love to reciprocate and show them around the family farm, as well as introduce them to the dozens of excited cousins living in the area. I would also like to thank the Icelandic Canadian Club of Edmonton for their support and generosity, it was truly a lifechanging experience.

## Horse Trekking in Iceland

*Contributed by Wendy Hutchison*

The first time I rode an Icelandic horse it was bouncy and I have to admit I was a little unstable. This was about six years ago. Fast forward to 2023 ... I started wanting a horseback adventure. I own two horses and have been riding now for about 20 years but I wanted something exciting, something different. Since my first ride in Iceland, which was about 2 hours long, I have been getting notifications from various horse tour companies and thought "Bingo!", this is exactly the adventure I want. I started researching and chose the company and the tour - Íslandshestar.



I chose a six day ride in August 2023 that brought us past Mount Hekla and up to Landmannalaugar and then back. An unforgettable experience in an amazing country. The Icelandic horses I rode captured my heart and I couldn't help but notice how they truly reflect the country. They are tough and they never gave up no matter how difficult the terrain or speed was. I quickly realized my own horse is a pampered princess compared to these Icelandics.

The ride was about 150 km in total, each day we would ride two or three different horses. All the spare horses were brought with us. It was quite amazing to be riding with a herd of about 80 horses in front of us. You know you are in horse country when a herd of horses and riders this size can go alongside a highway and this is considered normal.



Each horse has their own personality, we quickly realized the horses we got could make or break our day. And I learned that they do not all "tolt" - a smooth gait they are known for. There were a few that were incredibly bouncy and difficult to ride at the quick pace set by the herd. I found myself praying to the Viking gods for good horses that day and for the most part they listened. On the last day we rode at a very quick pace to beat the coming rain. I didn't mind, I think I had actually learned to ride over the week. I was in my happy place and that feeling is now tucked away inside me to bring to mind when I look at my photos or tell people about my little adventure.

*Wendy is the daughter of Svala Arnason Dunn and this was her second trip to Iceland. On her first trip she ran the half marathon in the annual Reykjavík Marabon/Culture Festival so she can truly say she has experienced different ways to cover ground in Iceland.*



*Old stone corral*

Riding along while herding free-running horses is the traditional way of travelling in Iceland. Horses are changed at least once a day on longer tours. Riders get to ride a variety of horses. The Icelandic horse is known for its four-beat smooth gait, the "tölt", in North America called the "singlefoot", which is very comfortable for the rider, especially on a longer tour. Horse treks in Iceland follow ancient roads and trails, making this one of the most authentic ways to experience Iceland.

## 2023 ICCE Bursaries Awarded

The Icelandic Canadian Club is very pleased to announce its bursary recipients for 2023. Each year, depending on available funds and applications, the club awards up to 10 bursaries to students attending post-secondary institutions in the fall. This year's recipients of bursaries of \$2000 each are:

- 1) **Brayden Crozier** Red Deer Polytechnic - 1st year Electrician
- 2) **Liv Sveinsson** UofA -Augustana Campus - 3rd year Computing Sciences
- 3) **Flynn Anderson** UofA - 3rd year Sciences
- 4) **Sophie Olsen** City University- Edmonton Campus, 2nd year Masters in Counselling

Congratulations to the recipients, and we wish you the very best in your studies.



***HERITAGE DAYS 2023 - a good time had by all!***

