



MUSIC EVENING

On March 16th the ICCT will be hosting an evening of musical entertainment provided by some of our younger members. **Tristin Tergesen** will sing three Icelandic folk songs. Tristin has done a lot of performing for the Icelandic community and has studied voice with Helga Anderson in Winnipeg (and has also received a scholarship from the University of Iceland). **Iain Stuart** from Oakville will be performing on classical guitar. **Lindsey Innes** will demonstrate her dancing ability with jazz and interpretive dance. 15 year old Lindsey is in Grade 10 and attends the R.H. King Academy. She is involved in sports, drama, modelling, dancing and we hear that she is a great Icelandic granddaughter!

Date: Tuesday, March 16th
Time: 8:00 p.m.
Place: Unitarian Hall, 175 St. Clair West at Avenue Road
Cost: \$4 members, \$5 non-members

ICELANDIC FILM-MAKER WINS THREE GENIE AWARDS

Sturla Gunnarsson's new film "Such a Long Journey" won 3 awards for the best in Canadian movies at the annual Genie Awards on February 4th. Categories included Best Actor, Editing, and Sound Editing. The film, based on the Rohinton Mistry novel and set in India, will open in theatres shortly.

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

After the success of our Literary Event in February, we are very pleased that Lorna Jackson has agreed to help us out as Assistant Librarian. If you want to borrow a book between meetings, you can contact Lorna at: (416) 484-3768.

1999 INL CONVENTION AND THORRABLÓT

at the Bond Place Hotel on April 30, May 1 & 2

The program includes a variety of events -- a Friday night reception, celebration of honorary members, guest speakers such as film director Sturla Gunnarsson and fashion designer Linda Lundström, a fashion show, play adaptation of children's book THOR, a silent auction, sales items and an Icelandic feast. Once again, we will have a beautiful blanket box built by honorary member Ben Einarson and painted by Becky Clements which will be auctioned off to the highest bidder

Also, just before the start of the convention a guided road trip will be made to Kinmount retracing the journey made by Icelandic pioneers hoping to make their new home in Canada in 1874. Cost for this trip is in addition to the convention registration cost.

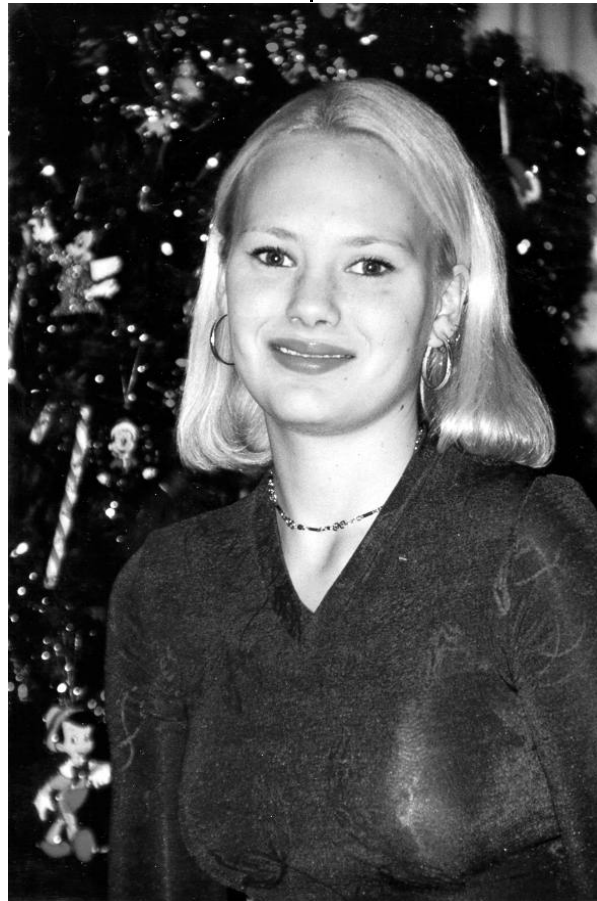
You are invited to register and meet other Icelandic Canadians from across Canada.

Details including dates and costs for these events are found on the enclosed Registration and Order forms.

Space is limited at all events, so be sure to book early!

If you can help with billeting during the convention, please contact Gail (416) 762-8627.

Baking will also be needed for Thorrablót. More information on how you can help will be in the next issue of Fálkinn.



Lindsey Innes

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 5 - Viking Movie Night

March 16 - Musical Evening, Unitarian Hall

April 30-May 2, 1999- INL Annual

Convention, Bond Place Hotel

May 1, 1999 - ICCT Thorrablót, Bond Place Hotel

May 18 - ICCT Annual General Meeting

June 12 - Picnic at Gimli Farm (raindate June 13)

IN THE NEWS❖ **Hilary Clinton Coming to Iceland***(from ICC of BC Newsletter)*

The government announced recently that Hilary Clinton will be coming to Iceland in October to chair a conference on the role of women and democracy in the new millennium. Prime Minister David Oddsson said at the press conference that Iceland's chairmanship of the Nordic Council this year, as well as its special ties with the Baltic states, made it a good location to host such an event. Between 300 and 400 people from the Nordic and Baltic countries, as well as Russia and the US, are expected to attend. The conference is being organized by the US and Icelandic governments. Professor Sigridur Duna Kristmundsdóttir is leading the preparations on Iceland's behalf. She emphasized that the conference itself will be the culmination of a process which has already started. The goal is to gather and disseminate information on the role of women in the participating countries and suggest ways in which their rights can be secured. Kristmundsdóttir expressed her satisfaction with the participation of the US First Lady as lending weight to the conference: "When Hilary Clinton speaks the world listens." Apparently Hilary Clinton has expressed an interest in getting to know the country and people during her visit. The upcoming millennium celebrations will also be on the agenda.

- ❖ A recent development in Iceland is that outgoing parliamentarian Svavar Gestsson (the leftist People's Alliance) will take on special duties in Canada this summer, probably with residence in Winnipeg. His work will center on plans for the upcoming millennium celebrations and Leifur Eiríksson's discovery of North America in the year 1000. He is then likely to become Iceland's first Ambassador to Canada next year, when the Ministry opens an Embassy there with special emphasis on trade.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

We had an e-mail from **Kristjan Ahronson**, who won our ICCT scholarship a couple of years ago, and is in Iceland now on a scholarship from the University of Iceland:

"In case I haven't mentioned it, feel free to give out my email address if anyone has any questions about Iceland or anything like that. People can contact me at: ka@rhi.hi.is"

Our former Icelandic teacher, **Katrín**, is herself now a student, taking French in Reykjavik. She and Quincy both found jobs right away and have now moved into their own apartment. She sends greetings to everyone.

Our former Vice-President, **Chris Morden**, writes from Winnipeg, where he is enrolled in Icelandic classes at the University of Manitoba:

Good news - I won the Heidmar Bjornson Scholarship at Christmas (\$500 for achievement in Icelandic studies). It was encouraging and came in handy. People in the department continue to be thrilled that someone actually moved here solely for the purpose of studying Icelandic! I don't think I am starting a trend - more's the pity. In order to continue my studies, I have applied to Haskoli Islands in Reykjavik and hope to be in the

second year program beginning in September.

Well, the grammar just keeps piling up! We're just dealing with weak adjectives now, and the prof. has hinted that the middle voice and the dreaded subjunctive lie ahead. Eg held afram! (That's supposed to mean, "I press ahead". Would make a good motto on a family crest or a T-Shirt from a hiking club!)

NOTE FROM EMBASSY CONCERNING BOOKS ON TAPE

We received a letter from the Embassy in Washington, which Guðrun Sigursteinsdóttir Girgis and her Icelandic class had fun translating! The gist of it was that the program called Orð í Eyra (literally "words in the ear") run by the Library for the Blind is now offering audio books in Icelandic for sale. The list of books and more information is available on their home page at: <http://rvik.ismennt.is/~ordieyra>

DANISH HERITAGE SEMINAR IN THE CANADIAN ROCKIES

May 31 to June 5 at Canmore, Alberta Total cost \$595 for accommodation, meals and lectures including Danish films, workshops on authors, culture, songs and heroes and much more. Contact Esther Machacynski, 16 Campbell Crescent, Kingston, Ontario K7M 1Z5 (tel. 613-542-8876) to register before April 30th.

FÁLKINN - THE FALCON

Fálkinn is the newsletter of the Icelandic Canadian Club of Toronto and is published approximately 6 times a year.

Editor: Darla E. McKay, Ph: (416) 423-0493
e-mail: demckay@hotmail.com

Viking Chatters Editor: Leah Salt (905) 820-2611
Assistant Editor: Evelyn Trites

ICCT EXECUTIVE

President: Gail Einarson-McCleery
Ph: (416) 762-8627 Fax: (416) 762-7107
84 Morningside Avenue
Toronto ON M6S 1C9
e-mail: 76161.422@compuserve.com

Vice-President: Ellen (Sigurdson) Gilmore
Past President/Programs: Garry Oddleifson (416) 463-1324
Secretary: Jim Gibson (416) 293-2324
Treasurer: John Gilmore

Ph & Fax: (905) 889-9937
INL Ont. Representative: Eric Einarson-McCleery
Membership Outreach: Don Gislason (416) 489-7737

Membership information: Single: \$20, Family \$25, Senior Couple \$20,
Senior Single \$15.

Webpage: <http://web.idirect.com/~icct/>

CLUB NEWS

Thank you to the following members for donations:
Kinmount: Robert & Merle Oddson, Clifford Nordal, Eugene & Winona Finkbeiner, Grace Olafson, Mrs. Gytha Hurst, William & Karen Hurst. Sheila Chick (library book), Donna Henrickson, Silvia Sanders (library book), Brian Eyford (Icelandic classes), Mrs. J. Ragnar Johnson and Sigga Moore ("In Appreciation").

WELCOME to new members:

Joanne Collins (Kitchener).

DEATHS

Johanna Gudrun (Thorgeirson) Snydal – Died peacefully in Toronto, Ontario on January 31, 1999 at the age of 96. She was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba on August 5, 1902, the eldest child of J.W. Thorgeirsson and Kristin Gudrun Kjernested, both of whom had immigrated from Iceland. She was predeceased by her husband Jack in 1946 and one son Steini in 1988 and four brothers and one sister. She leaves to mourn five sons, Dave Eyolfur (Dorothy) of Brandon, Manitoba, Karl (Carol) of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Bill (Dorothy) of Vancouver, B.C., Jack (Marge) of Lloydminster, Alberta, Frank (Bev) of Winnipeg, Manitoba and one daughter Marlene Mintz of Toronto, Ontario, twenty-seven grandchildren, thirty-two great-grandchildren, sisters Lillian (Bob) Page of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Mabel (Dudley) Dorsett of Ottawa, Ontario.



She was very proud of her Icelandic heritage, and although she only visited Iceland once, she went to the Íslingadagurinn in Gimli every year. In 1920 she was one of the princesses; that was where her future husband, Jack Snydal, met and fell in love with her. They were married in 1925 and later they moved to Brandon, Manitoba where they raised their family of seven. Mother moved to Toronto, Ontario to be with her daughter Marlene in 1958 and had resided there until her passing.

Johanna was a member of the Canadian Legion, the United Commercial Travellers for 68 years and was very active in the Lutheran and United Churches. She was a member of the Toronto Icelandic Club and a member of the Eastern Star for over 40 years. She was a most loving and devoted mother. She remained active in the community, and with her quilt making. Her daughter Marlene and family organized a marvelous birthday party for her 95th birthday and on display were her huge collection of dolls, many of which she had dressed herself, scrapbooks from the communities in which she had lived and many of the quilts she had made. She was buried in the Brandon Cemetery in Manitoba.

Magnus Einarsson (Thjódháttafraedingur) Peacefully and after a short illness on December 7, 1998. Born in 1941, Magnus was the beloved adopted son of Ragnheidur Magnusdottir Mullarky and the late Armand Mullarky, and brother of Margaret and John Mullarky. He was a longtime and prolific folklorist at the National

Museum of Man and retired only recently from the Canadian Museum of Civilization. His published works covered Canadian Icelanders, Germans and other far-reaching folklore topics.

BIRCHS

David Alexander Foreman Willms, born July 20, 1998, to Clarence & Lexa Foreman Willms of Kingston, Ontario. David is the first grandchild for Leslie & Beverly Foreman of Kingston and great grandson of David & Rannveig Foreman of Sudbury, Ontario.

BIRTHDAYS

Reaching their 75th birthdays were Anna (Bjarnason) O'Brien of Ajax on February 1st and Eugene Finkbeiner of Thornton on February 3rd. Jean McCorkle of Toronto will be 80 years old on March 26th. Congratulations to all of you!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

The next eighteen months are going to be very exciting for those of us with an interest in Iceland. I wanted to mention three things coming up which are of particular interest.

The first one is the Icelandic National League Convention April 30th, May 1st and 2nd. This is a unique opportunity for those of us in Toronto to find out what's happening in the rest of the country, to renew acquaintances and to make new friends. Our Thorrablót (Icelandic Food Night) is being rolled into the Convention weekend, so we can all celebrate together. We also have a chance to investigate the site of the original settlement in Kinmount.

I'm sure you'll find the whole convention interesting, but if you can't make it to everything, you can come to the Opening Reception (silver collection), featuring a key-note speech by film-maker Sturla Gunnarsson, or to the Luncheon - a chance to see a dramatization of W.D. Valgardson's "Thor", or to our Thorrablót, and see the eye-popping fashions of Linda Lundström. But book early - space is limited!

This fall, we're pleased that Páll Stefansson, noted Icelandic photographer, will be visiting as part of INL's International Visits program. He opens the season for the prestigious Toronto Camera Club with a slide/lecture on October 7th.

And then comes the Millennium, and all sorts of fun - plays for adults and children, visiting Viking exhibits, dedication of our Kinmount memorial, a celebration of our best in the cultural field, and more. How much more depends on how many of you get involved. We need help with organizing all those events and the ideal way to start is to become part of our new Executive in May. If you like to be part of the solution, call our Nominating Chairman, Evelyn Trites, at 444-7355 NOW! If you live too far away and would still like to help, call me at (416) 762-8627 to see what else you can do.

Gail Einarson-McCleery

THORRABLÓT IS COMING!!!

Silent Auction

We will have a Silent Auction. Some of the featured items will be:

- Two nights at the Grandview Inn Resort in Huntsville in a luxury two bedroom self-contained suite - recreational/sports package included (value \$700) (donated by John & Ellen Gilmore and Grandview Inn Resort)
- A beautiful soapstone Inuit carving (donated by Joan and George Albert)
- A painting by noted artist Tom Bjarnason
- And many other things including books on Iceland, best sellers, and some special items for the children.



Linda Lundström Fashion Show:

Icelandic-Canadian designer Linda Lundström will be showing her beautiful designs - modeled by our own club members. She also has a special door prize for us.

MODELS NEEDED:

We still need a few more models for the fashion show, so if you are planning to come to Thorrablót and would like to be one of them or would like to help on the hair and make-up crew, call Leah Salt at (905) 820-2611.



Buffet Luncheon and special presentation of "Thor" - an adaptation by its author, W.D. Valgardson

Kinmount Trip April 30

On Friday, April 30, 1999 the ICCT will run a guided tour to Kinmount, retracing the steps of the relatively large group of Icelanders who settled there in 1874. They were to work on the railway.

These early Icelandic immigrants were caught up in difficult economic and personal circumstances in Ontario, which eventually led to the founding of "New Iceland" in 1875 on the shores of Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Researcher Don Gislason and historian Guy Scott of Kinmount will retell the story of the hopes and hardships of these brave souls. They arrived in Canada in the autumn and found themselves on the edge of the Precambrian Shield, facing a bitter winter and an uncertain future.

The chartered bus will leave Toronto at 7:45 a.m. and return at 3:00 p.m. The cost of the tour is \$36.00 which includes transportation, lunch, the guided tour and a visit to the town railway station museum. You will also visit the site where the memorial cairn to the Icelanders will be erected in the year 2000!

Please fill in the attached form to secure your space on the bus.
First come, first served.

DON JOHNSON CONTRIBUTES TO PAULINE JOHNSON LIBRARY

Long time ICCT member, Don Johnson, has left a big mark on his native town of Lundar, Manitoba. He has been instrumental in the establishment of the Pauline Johnson Library, named in honour of a popular grade school teacher who spent years working with the children of Lundar. Plans to build a library in the town had been lagging for almost 15 years. In 1996, Don flew back to Lundar for Pauline's 100th birthday celebration, and to commemorate the occasion, he generously donated \$25,000 to the fund in order that the community could build a public library bearing her name. This sparked renewed interest in the project and work began in earnest on the new building. In 1997 Don donated an additional \$15,000, which was matched by the municipality. With the land being donated by the local bank, the library was fully paid for by the time it opened on July 11, 1998.

At the opening ceremonies, Don assisted Pauline (who was then 102 years, 8 months) with the ribbon cutting. At that time, he pledged an additional \$10,000, to go toward computers and furnishings, if the provincial and municipal governments would raise their annual support from the minimum to the maximum allowable under Manitoba law. Early in 1999, Don honoured that commitment, having confirmed that the municipality had provided funding of \$10,000, which was matched by the province.

Don left Lundar at the age of 16 to move to Winnipeg, and then moved on to Toronto, spent some time in the Arctic, received his MBA from the University of Western Ontario, and returned to Toronto. He was President of Burns Fry and is now Vice Chairman of Nesbitt Burns.

In helping to establish this library honouring Pauline Johnson (who is still very much alive and well) Don feels that his family was "very grateful to have the opportunity to give something back to our community and recognize an outstanding teacher who touched all of our lives."

FROM NORTH DAKOTA...

Fellow Icelanders,

Greetings from Mountain ND. We would like to start this article with a special thank you to your club for allowing us to put this article in your newsletter. We appreciate it very much.

Our 99th August 2nd celebration is now over and turned out to be very successful, so now our efforts are directed to making the 100th a remarkable event in our communities history.

Next year's celebration will be held from July 30th to Aug 2nd. We have lots of activities planned. Some of these plans are nailed down, others are tentative, some are just being hatched, some we haven't thought of yet- but we will! We have dances planned for Friday and Saturday nights. For Saturday night's dance, a band from Minneapolis called Memphis will be performing. The North Dakota National Guard will march in the parade Saturday morning, their dance band will perform early Saturday evening for a possible street dance. We are hoping to get a carnival for a couple of days to add to the festivities, while our food committee is arranging to have Icelandic and American stands. Another committee is working to put on a dramatic play written by Lauga Geir depicting the hearty life of the Icelandic pioneers who settled in ND in the 1800s.

The Borg Memorial Home (a retirement home in Mountain) will be holding its 50th anniversary also at this time. We have also been working hard to secure funds for the restoration of the K.N. Julius monument at the Thingvalla cemetery. It is our hope to hold a dedication of this memorial on Monday. K.N. was a local poet whose humorous poems became published in two books and became fairly well known in

Iceland.

We were very pleased and excited to learn that the President of Iceland is planning to join our celebration! There will also be several other dignitaries as well as a tour group from Iceland.

Again, we would like to extend to you an invitation to come and join possibly the largest gathering of Icelanders in the United States. For those who have access to the internet we invite you to check out our web page at www.August2nd.com and send us your comments, suggestions, or any questions you might have. Our mailing address is Icelandic Celebration, P.O.Box 063, Mountain ND.58262, Our phone number is (701) 993-8268, fax: (701) 993-8261.

THE ICELANDERS OF KINMOUNT, ONTARIO

Funeral processions coming out of Hayford were becoming a familiar sight to the local people - tragic events, ending up in unmarked graves along the river bank. Conditions rose to such a magnitude that a doctor was called in from Lindsay by the railway company and government to assess the situation and treat the sick. His report of November 2, 1874 appeared in *The Canadian Post* of Lindsay:

"...I proceeded on Thursday last to visit the Icelandic emigrants, taking with me a quantity of medicine. I found a large number of them sick with chronic diarrhea - I was told sixty - some had been suffering from the disease ever since they left their native land, and not being properly attended to, the disease had become contagious, and of the young children, sixteen had died. During the night I was there two more died and there were two or three who were too far gone to recover..."

(J. Fidler, M.D.)

(.....continued from last issue)

The same article goes on to describe a visit, a day before the doctor's, to the shanties by government and railway authorities. The company president, George Laidlaw, had special concerns about the business at hand. They observed that out of ninety able-bodied men, only fifty were at work. Moreover, the people seemed to be..."neglecting the ordinary means of preserving health, that the shanties were too thickly populated and that the women and children exhibited an aversion for out-door exercise." Clearly, an overwhelming malaise had developed in the community due to the many grievous deaths, overcrowding, improper ventilation and sanitation, unbalanced diet, encroaching winter and uncertainty for the future.

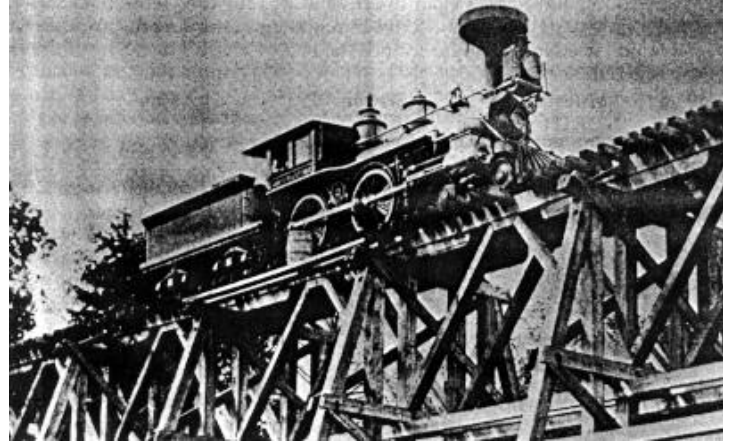
In quick measure, Hay and Laidlaw gathered the Icelanders together, with Jonasson as interpreter. The Immigration Agent charged them to be more industrious, take greater advantage of the opportunity to work and save money. He promised that an official would soon arrive to help select lots in the area, allowing for preparation for moving to their land while working part time on the railway. Hay also promised that two additional shanties would be built to alleviate the pressure, and lofts would be added to the existing ones by increasing the pitch of the roofs. Lastly, he conceded that a school

would be established, and that medical help would continue in order to bring an end to their distress.

After this, the railway president spoke. Scanning the crowd, he complained about the number of men "hanging around the shanties doing nothing", pointing out that if they wanted to prosper..."the loafing about would not do". Laidlaw made no



allowance for their weakened condition, but reminded them how fortunate they were to be there. The article goes on to say:



"As a body of immigrants they [the Icelanders] had been treated as no other immigrants had been before. The Government had conveyed them to the present quarters, had built them comfortable shanties and would give them a hundred acres of land each. The Railway Company gave them work, and not only paid them the same wages as experienced navvies, but even kept that section of the road, and a very easy one it was, expressly for them in order that they should have work all winter."

Laidlaw's parting shot was that since a great deal was being done for them, he expected all capable men to work steadily and obey company rules. And they must not for a moment think that the company would pay men who would not work! In closing, he pointed out that..."their credit would depend upon their individual character and each person would give credit to the extent he was industrious and sober..."

The local people were intrigued by these newcomers. According to an early report, when news spread that they had arrived on the sandy flats of the Burnt River, shopkeepers closed their stores, townsfolk left their homes and rivermen lurched from the three bars in town to "ogle the fair-haired blue-eyed people." It was noted that they didn't in any way resemble Esquimos. Even so, they were glibly, or perhaps affectionately, referred to for years as "white Esquimos" by some in the community. At the end of October, 1874 with no mention of infant deaths, a correspondent for *The Canadian Post* wrote:

"The Icelanders are getting on very favourably, and are much liked by the old settlers, as they are genial and accommodating. They thoroughly appreciate our meat and bread. As to the first I may mention that one day last week they consumed 640 pounds of beef. They average three pounds a day each, and as a consequence of this enormous meat consumption are suffering very severely from diarrhea. Bread is also much relished by them, for in Iceland bread is rather a luxury, no wheat being grown, and the only grain they use is rye. They are now asking for rye meal with a most touching earnestness..."

Johannes Arngrimsson turned up again in their midst, employed as an interpreter for the railway company. He repeated his offer on behalf of the Nova Scotia government, which also included a cookstove, household appliances, provisions for a year and a grant of eleven dollars. Consequently on November 21, 1874 a five man delegation left for Halifax. As a result, about eighty people relocated at various intervals to Nova Scotia. Some went as settlers to a tract of land at Mooseland Heights [Markland], fifty miles northwest of Halifax and others as day labourers to the coastal town of Lockeport.

Pioneers of many faiths had settled in Kinmount. But numbers for each were still relatively small. It was for many years viewed as a mission station, served by a variety of saddle-bag preachers. By one account, there seems to have been flagging enthusiasm for formal religious gatherings. A revealing comment appeared March 12, 1875 in *The Canadian Post*:

"There is no preaching at all here [Kinmount] on Sundays. ...ministers have visited for a long time, and what did they receive for the trouble? The taverns generally have better congregations than the minister; and it also

happens that ministers are not so constituted that they can live on air. I have known a minister to visit this place and preach to only four or five persons, and yet people express surprise that they do not visit the place..."

The writer goes on to bemoan the lack of support given to the ministry here, as well as the dismal attendance at worship. He then sternly warns that..."if they [the preachers] are not supported in one place they will be in another".

Nevertheless, due to the sudden growth in population in the area and the arrival of the Icelanders in 1874, an Anglican rural mission was set up. The first minister was Rev. Phillip Tocque, an eccentric intellectual in swallow tails, who couldn't abide frontier life. As there was no Anglican rectory or church building, services were held in the Presbyterian church in town. The Icelanders appear to have kept pretty much to themselves. Besides, language was a barrier. By all accounts, they drew upon their Lutheran lay ministry for inspiration and burials. Such an event, which happened frequently in the shanties, was recorded by one of the settlers:

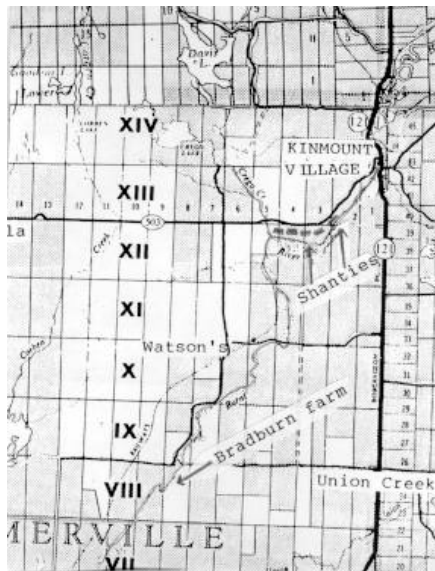
"Most bitter of all, for me, was to see my little Gudrun suffering intensely and to be unable to ease her suffering. She kept nothing down. There was little milk to be had and what little there was, was not good. About nine days from the time Gudrun became ill, God took her to himself, in his merciful embrace. She died at ten o'clock in the evening of Saturday, the eighteenth of October. Jon Ivarsson made the coffin. She was buried on the twentieth in Kinmount cemetery. Jon and Jakob Espolin dug the grave and were pall-bearers. Gudrun was a lovely and pleasant child, well developed for her years, and appeared to be endowed with good intelligence. I shall mourn the loss of my loved one as long as I live..." (Simon Simonson)

Victoria County registries list only one Icelandic marriage, between twenty-eight year old Sigridur Helga Tomasdóttir, known as Sara Thompson, from Dalasysla and Henry Bradburn, a local Canadian farmer. It took place on October 22, 1877 in a Church of England service, possibly by Rev. Tocque. Sigridur probably met her future husband while he was employed at the nearby carding and spinning mill on Crego Creek. Henry also owned a picturesque 100 acre farm to the south, on the west bank of the Burnt River. As agriculture was a precarious business at best, farmers were often forced to earn extra cash by working elsewhere.

"In the 1888 roll, Henry Bradburn is listed as a weaver. No doubt he was employed at one time at this mill...owned by a man named Goodman, who was friendly with the nearby Icelanders. One Icelander even changed his name to Goodman in honour of the help this man gave him in starting a career as a weaver. I would speculate that Henry likely met his future wife while working here. When the Icelanders moved on, Sigrid and Henry stayed in the area..." (Guy Scott)

In fact, the Bradburns lived there until 1890, when they decided to pull up stakes and emigrate to Svold, North Dakota. The couple, who were Methodist, had three children; Henry Kristjan, Margret and Lillian. The farm produced a modest living; twenty-five cleared acres with five in orchard, two cows, five sheep, one hog and a horse. But, news of greener pastures reached their ears.

Unfortunately, no death records for Icelanders at Kinmount have surfaced. Indeed, vital statistics for the county during the 1870s are scanty or entirely missing for certain townships. To this end, Rev. Phillip Tocque appears to have been remiss. He declined his station in 1878, leaving behind a back stipend and no service records for the township [Somerville] clerk. The



following year, the county clerk reported that..."the minister never made the return and left the parts." Apart from Sigridur, it appears that no other Icelanders were married at Kinmount. But undoubtedly, a few couples simply paired up for mutual support.

Small tragedies were bound to happen in the shanties under such crowded arrangements. On the whole, people were cooperative and trusting of one another. Actually their solidarity was remarkable after the months they'd been together. But one day that trust was breached. Forty-five year old Hannes Hannesson, whose wife had remained in Iceland, arrived in Ontario with a large sum of money secured in a book trunk. Due to his eccentric ways, this became public knowledge:

"...He was in the habit, every evening before going to bed, of kneeling in prayer on the floor and closely examining his money. He was cautioned that he shouldn't be so open about his wealth, but he paid little heed to the warning. It happened that one morning the trunk was nowhere in sight. But it was found a little later, broken open and out by the railway. The books were still in it, but the money had disappeared. The man was so affected by this loss that he found no peace due to great homesickness. So, in the middle of the summer of 1875 he took passage by ship from Halifax en route to Iceland, and it's suspected that due to this [loss], he died on the way." (Gudbrandur Erlendsson)

Those in the group who decided to support themselves rather than rely on the agency kitchen, found provisions exceedingly expensive. As adequate supplies were difficult to obtain in Kinmount, with frequent shortages of goods, Sigtryggur Jonasson with Fridjon Fridriksson as manager, opened a store for the group. However, his prices tended to be higher than some of the other merchants in town. A letter written to Iceland from the shanties explains that:

"Everything is rather expensive here, as can be expected, having landed in the worst spot possible in Ontario. Jonasson brought us here and built his house, where he set up a store, and sells to the Icelanders...he has to fetch products from Toronto which is 100 miles away. He has to price them high to cover his costs. Beef costs 6-7 cents a pound, bacon 10-12 cents, a barrel of flour \$5-6. A barrel of rye flour is \$5-6. A pound of coffee is 30 cents, a pound of sugar 12 cents. Footwear is better priced here than at home..." (Sigurpall Gudlaugsson)

To avoid high costs a few men banded together, purchasing an old ox for \$50, which realized 690 pounds of meat, 62 lbs. of suet and a 135 pound hide. But still, most people patronized Jonasson. He had been instructed by the Ontario Department of Immigration in Toronto to supply all those willing to work, but not to exceed the amount of their earnings. However, that could not be backed by available jobs. By the end of January, several men were destitute due to lack of work for over a month, and were in considerable debt to him. Even so, he continued giving support, hoping that the government would eventually take over. On January 22, 1875 he outlined his plight to David Spence, Secretary for the Department:

"I have to inform you that I cannot see that anything has been done here in regard to providing work for the Icelanders as there at present are over twenty-five men out of work of whom quite a number are married with families. I cannot supply them any longer, so they have either got to get work or starve, or some other measure taken providing for them." (Sigtryggur Jonasson)

He wrote Spence again at the end of the month, reinforcing the issue. Through no fault of their own, the men were unable to provide for their families, and he had felt obliged to help. He hoped that since the government was willing to defer payment for two of the Conquest stoves in use, that it might also reimburse his costs and/or take responsibility for the poor, for he couldn't continue doing so. After all, he was supporting over a hundred souls. Credit and goodwill had to come to an end! The outcome of this is not clear.

(To be continued...)

If you would like to make a donation towards the Kinmount Memorial, please make cheques payable to: Icelandic Canadian Club of Toronto. Mail to: ICCT c/o John Gilmore, 31 Wild Cherry Lane, Thornhill, ON L3T 3T3.