



FÁLKINN

May 2000

ICCT FÁLKINN 40th Year, Number 7

PUPPETEER & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The reviews are coming in for "The World's smallest Giant". Don't miss your chance to see Iceland's leading puppeteer!

This production has been selected by the Leifur Eiriksson Millennium Commission of Iceland to introduce Icelandic folklore to American and Canadian audiences (performances are in English). It will be performed in schools and libraries all over the continent in the year 2000 to remind of another visit from Iceland a thousand years earlier, when Leifur Eiriksson discovered America, and to recall the fact that the first European child to be born there was actually Icelandic.

When Hallveig comes flying in from Iceland on her umbrella with her story-apron neatly packed in a basket, she

Date:	Sunday, May 28
Time:	2:30 p.m.
Location:	Thornhill Country Club 7994 Yonge Street
Cost:	\$5 adults, \$2 children

gets a big surprise because all the stories in the pockets of her apron have fallen out on the way. What to do now? By chance she discovers a little mouse, named Leif the Lucky, hiding in one of the pockets of her apron, and that's when the trouble starts!

Comments from audiences:

"I was watching closely for the reaction from the children, and it was immediate. This woman has a real gift for story telling. She captured her audience immediately and held their attention throughout. Children as well as adults were drawn into her storytelling spell, as she introduced us some interesting aspects of Icelandic folklore."

David Gislason, Canada.

"I have the feeling that this ancient Icelandic tale has been waiting for this day, when Hallveig - one of Iceland's greatest storytellers and puppeteers - has made use of it to create this most charming and juicy masterpiece for puppets."

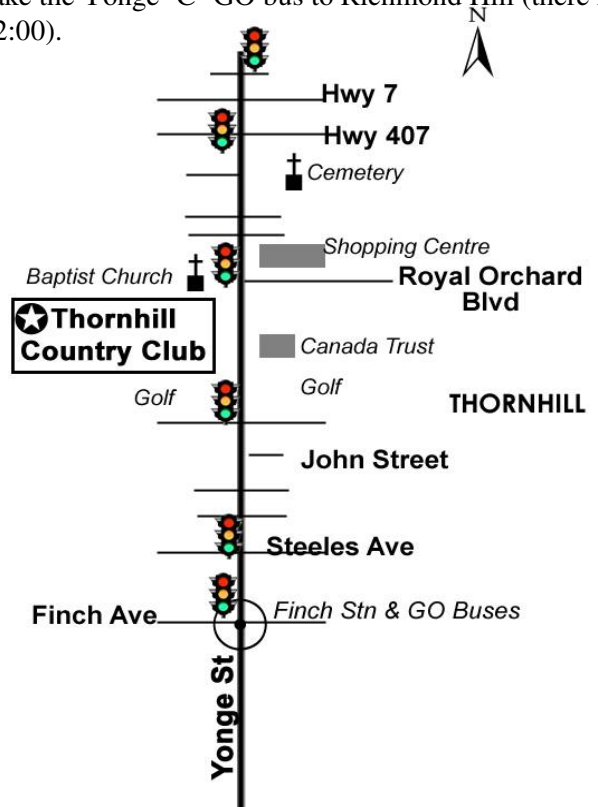
Svetlana Makarovic, Slovenia.

Following the puppet show, there will be a refreshment break and then the Annual General Meeting of the ICCT will commence.

Please reserve by May 19th by return mail, with your cheque to: Evelyn Trites, Treasurer, 7 Wax Myrtleway, Don Mills, ON M3B 3K6. For more information contact Ellen Gilmore at (905) 889-9937.

Getting there

By car: Yonge Street north, about 10 minutes drive from Finch. **By bus:** From Finch subway station (on the Yonge line), take the Yonge 'C' GO bus to Richmond Hill (there is one at 2:00).



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- May 28** ICCT Annual General Meeting and Puppet Theatre presentation for Club members
- May 29,30,31** Puppet Theatre (in schools)
- June 17** Iceland National Day Picnic, Location TBA
- July 28** Arrival of Viking Flotilla led by "Islendingur" at L'Anse aux Meadows
- July 28 - Aug. 7** "Celebrating our Heritage Through the Arts" - Kinmount Arts Festival
- July 31** Kinmount Dedication Ceremony
- August 1** Vikings in Canada Gala - Glenn Gould Studio, CBC Building, Toronto
- Sept. 19 to October 5** Viking Film Festival Jackman Hall, Art Gallery of Ontario
- Oct. 6 to Dec. 3** London, ON Arni Haraldsson - a solo exhibition of his photo-based work

News

Have you seen the recent editions of Time, Newsweek and National Geographic? Features on Vikings and the landing of Leif Eiriksson in L'Anse Aux Meadows are popping up all over!

The birthday party for Snorri, "Snorri Day", was held in Ottawa on April 6th. In addition to the unveiling of the statue of Guðríður and Snorri, there was a lot happening at the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

350 students from the Ottawa area have been learning about Iceland and the Snorri story and were there to sing and to participate in the party.

Icelanders from other areas all over North America were also in attendance.

Sylvie Morel opened the formal ceremonies as director of exhibitions and programming for the



Iceland's Prime Minister Davíð Oddson and Canada's, Jean Chretien shake hands in front of the new statue.

Museum, and Icelandic opera singer Diddú, accompanied by pianist Anna Guðný Guðmundsdóttir, sang the national anthems of Iceland and Canada. Senator Janis Johnson introduced Prime Minister Davíð Oddson, who spoke eloquently, as he explained the story of this remarkable woman, and his hopes for new and stronger ties between Iceland and Canada. These are ties that go back a thousand years. He announced formally that Iceland would open an embassy in Ottawa in March of 2001.

John Harvard introduced Prime Minister Jean Chretien who added much to the moment, as he spoke of the special relationship that has existed between our two countries. He spoke sincerely of his willingness to further develop the air routes between Iceland and Canada and his support for Canada's entry into EFTA, a European Free Trade Association consisting of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. He also welcomed the development of closer diplomatic ties between Iceland and Canada.

Bjarni Tryggvasson, Canadian astronaut of Icelandic birth, descended the escalator in a cloud of vapour, and spoke to the assembled. He talked of his experience as an astronaut, evidence that the spirit of exploration and adventure so rich in the Icelandic saga, lives on in modern times. Diddú, in her charming way, led the audience in the singing of the birthday song in Icelandic, a song in which the children were well versed. "Hann á afmæli í dag," rang out through the great hall, as 600 voices joined in a rousing tribute to Snorri, the first child of European ancestry born in this Western World.

David Gislason, chairman of the Millennium-125

Commission, closed the formal portion of the program, thanking those who had worked so hard to make it happen, in particular the Friends of Iceland, under the leadership of Kathy Arnason and Gerry Einarsson. Thanks also went to Consul General Svavar Gestsson who, along with his wife Guðrún, added tremendous support to the effort. The support of the Millennium Bureau of Canada was also acknowledged for its financial contribution.

Following the formal ceremonies, it was time for the children to enjoy the party! There was singing and dancing with the Huldafolk, and a chance to ask questions of Bjarni Tryggvasson. The children were entranced and never took their eyes off him, as they got their questions about space travel answered (including the inevitable "how do you go to the bathroom in space?").

Another thing that happened in Ottawa was the launching of a new Icelandic website, Iceland Naturally. Check it out at: <http://www.icelandnaturally.com> - it has a lot of good information!



Diddú performing

FÁLKINN - THE FALCON

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

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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: August Johnson, Dr. Lyle Hillman (Brainerd, MN), Bjorn Helgason; Gala: Kathleen McDermott, Harold Olafson

welcome to new members:

Peter & Kari Norman (Toronto), Gudrun & Elia Gallo (Mississauga), Elizabeth Tripp (Kinburn), Graham & Denise Watt + Jacqueline, Sarah & Alexander (Mississauga).

The **Slate of Nominees** for the coming year is listed below:

- Ellen Gilmore, President
- Darla E. McKay, Vice President, Falkinn Editor
- Gail Einarson-McCleery, Past President, Chair, Millennium Committee
- Barbara Doherty, Secretary
- Evelyn Trites, Treasurer
- Don Gislason, Membership Outreach
- John Briem, Membership Records
- Holly Garrett, Marketing
- Merle Oddson, Social Convenor
- Vern Austman, Director
- John Blondal, Director
- Carol McGirr, Director
- Leah Salt, Director
- Garry Oddleifson, INL Representative

If you would like to serve on the Board of Directors, or would like to nominate someone, please let us know. Call Ellen at (905) 889-9937.

THORRABLÓT 2000

by Jim Gibson

As in past years Thorrablót was celebrated in the Burgundy room of the North York Memorial Hall, on Yonge Street in North Toronto. With an attendance of 154, there seemed to be just enough space for everything that took place on that Saturday, April 8th, from the cash bar to the appetizer table to the sales tables, the silent auction, choral group entertainment, dinner buffet and dancing to music provided by a deejay throughout the evening.

The evening began with an open cash bar and a selection of appetizers including rullapylsa, hangikjot, herring, hardfisk, Icelandic brown bread, myosuotr, lyfrarpylsa,

flatbrauth, skyr, etc, etc. Merle Oddson along with six family members and several others, prepared and served the appetizers and the buffet. Many of the food items were provided by members.

On stage was a selection of 15 or so silent auction items. Bidding for these was closed at 10:30 when the highest bids were announced and the raffle for the trip for two to Iceland was held. This raffle prize has been donated by Icelandair for several years and was won this year by Eric McCleery. Second prize of \$300 was won by Rose Danesewish. Third prize was an afghan donated by Sigga Moore and won by Jon and Pat Johnson. Major prizes in the silent auction, organized by Garry Oddleifson, were two (male & female) outfits comprising top and slacks donated by Jewell Apparel and a weekend at Grandview Lodge donated by John and Ellen Gilmore. The clothing items were bought by John and Ellen Gilmore. The weekend was bought by Mike and Evelyn Trites.



Jim and Holly Garrett were dancing up a storm!



More dancing action!

The bar was again handled by our professional bartender David Hansen.



Following the main course of the buffet, the Vinaterta Chorus and a group of younger singers, led by Brenda Bjarnason gave forth with "A Sprengisandi", a catchy tune sung in Icelandic. A second piece, titled "Vinaterta", was sung

to the music of the Hallelujah Chorus (with apologies to Handel) by a mixed (up?) group of adults in aprons complete with wooden spoons and rolling pins. Dessert was served

Following dinner was dancing. Darryl Palmer led the children in a limbo and a balloon dance. All together there were 28 youths and children at the party.

Sales tables were run by Holly/Jim Garrett and by Hildegard/Thorstein Helf. A prototype of a new cookbook by Margaret Simmons was on display. Don Gislason sold several copies of his booklet "The Icelanders of Kinmount" now in its seventh printing



Four of our honorary members were present: Esther Broughton, Gigi Fridriksson, Birgitta Gillis and Erla Macaulay.

Financially, the evening netted about \$500 after expenses. In addition, the silent

auction raised \$1687. and the raffle \$1451.

Thorrablot 2000 was a great success and thanks goes to all who made it so, including:

- this year's committee: Merle Oddson, Garry Oddleifson, Gigi Fridriksson, Darla McKay and Gail McCleery.

- all those who contributed and prepared food

- Merle's family

and kitchen helpers

- Brenda Bjarnason

for the first

appearance of the

children's choir and

the infamous

Vinaterta song

- Jill Mitchell who

organized activities

for the children

- Darryl Palmer, the DJ

- all those who contibuted to and bid on the silent auction

- the many people who helped in numerous ways

- and, last but not least, to all the people who came to enjoy

the Icelandic food, and to socialize with old and new friends.

If you missed it this year, why not be there in 2001?



The kitchen crew

INL CONVENTION IN GIMLI APRIL 28, 29,30

by Gail Einarson-McCleery

"If it's spring, it must be time for an INL Convention", and this year to my delight, it was back to my home town of Gimli. The Ontario delegation brought together Ellen and John Gilmore, Darla McKay, Garry Oddleifson, Don

Gislason, myself, and an observer from Elliot Lake, Helen Piitala. The big surprise for us all on arrival in Gimli was that the ice had gone out of the lake early, and the weather was delightful.

These conventions are always a pleasure to attend - a chance to renew acquaintances with delegates from across the country, hear what is new in the Icelandic community, and partake of some good Icelandic food. This one did not disappoint on any of those counts. We learned so much that I can't begin to report on it all in this forum (see my longer report on our web page), but some of the highlights included:

INL ICELAND BECOMES MORE ACTIVE

The new Chairman of INL Iceland is Markús 'Örn Antonsson, CEO of Icelandic State Radio and TV. He informed us that 500 sets of the Sagas are being given to Canada, that his group plans a hospitality project for visiting Icelandic-Canadians, an office will be opened in May, and they have a number of projects underway. He has been through the TV archives and found a number of programs which have been produced about the North American settlements - they have been subtitled in English and copies will be sent to all chapters. A website on emigration is being set up also.

BETEL WATERFRONT CENTRE NEARS COMPLETION

July 1st is the date for residents to move in; public spaces will be completed shortly afterwards. We had a tour of the building, which will contain offices for all the Icelandic organizations, the New Iceland Heritage Museum, a public dining room, and a large top floor public space with spectacular views - sure to become a focal point for Gimli gatherings. Fundraising continues by the United Icelandic Appeal.

SNORRI PROGRAM OPEN TO MORE PARTICIPANTS

Ásta Sól Kristjánsdóttir, organizer of this program for 18 to 23 year olds who would like to rediscover their heritage, said that this year's program still has some spaces available. Participants will spend six weeks in Iceland this summer.

MILLENNIUM EVENTS ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Earlier, Svavar Gestsson promised us 100 events, but now told us that this initiative has been so successful that there will be more than 200 in all! Included are visits by puppeteer Hallveig Thorlacius, productions of the play "Gudridur", film festivals, and much more.

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

The Icelandic Collection at the University of Manitoba is expanding in order to properly house its collection of 27,000 books, periodicals and multimedia materials (2nd largest in North America). It will reopen in October with an exhibition from Iceland which they helped organize "Living and Reliving the Icelandic Sagas". Sigrid Johnson, head of the collection, emphasized that all this material is available from your local library via inter-library loan. David Arnason, Acting Head of the Department of Icelandic reported on many new initiatives. A campaign to raise \$1.6 million for this expansion and to fund a second teaching position is underway now.

HALLA'S TRAVELS VERY ENTERTAINING



We were given a very special gift from the city of Reykjavik, through the auspices of Guðrun Ágústsdóttir - it consisted of Egill Ólafsson and the Björns Thoroddsen Trio presenting a show called "Halla's Travels". Their inventiveness, musicality and sense of fun was a joy to behold, and undoubtedly the highlight of the whole convention!



Svavar Gestsson and Guðrun Ágústsdóttir

2000 EXECUTIVE

Sigrid Johnson is the new President, with Paul Westdahl from Winnipeg as 1st Vice President and Walter Sopher from Edmonton as 2nd Vice President, the first time someone from outside the Interlake has held this position.

All in all, a very successful convention, thanks to all the organizers, including Elva Jonasson, Kristine Sigurdson, Laura Sigmundson and many others.

SEEKING EXEMPTION!

by: Don Gislason

Parliamentary exemption - Kinmount - and the flag! What do these things have to do with each other?

It all started with the Icelandic National League's (INL) memorial project to commemorate the first large group of Icelanders who arrived in Canada in 1874 on the SS St. Patrick, ending up at Kinmount, Ontario. A monument, which as been sculpted from Indiana limestone by Gudrun S. Girgis of

Toronto, will stand centrally in the town Heritage Park in honour of those early immigrants who survived or perished there. Due to special circumstances, this group became the founders of Gimli, Manitoba.

An Icelandic flag to grace the area around the statue became an issue. As result of fund raising, SAELPLAST, an Icelandic company operating out of New Brunswick pledged \$1500 for a flagpole. With this offer in hand, the Planning & Economic Development committee in Kinmount was approached for permission to erect a pole and an Icelandic flag in the town park. This was received with overwhelming enthusiasm by committee chairperson, Diane Austin.

The next step was to explore 'flag protocol' of Canada. There were several rules to follow, although not entirely binding. Canadian and foreign flags may be placed together and be flown by night as well as by day. Alongside another flag, the Canadian flag should be on the left of the observer and both should be at the same height. The national state symbol always takes precedence over all other flags when flown in Canada, and it should be raised first and lowered last.

The existing pole in the Kinmount Heritage Park is about 25 ft. high, and its flag measures 43" x 86" in size. A donation offer of an authentic Icelandic flag was made by Valgeir Thorvaldsson of the Icelandic Emigration Centre at Hofsos. His company is the official flag manufacturer in Iceland, where sizes are regulated by law. However, state regulations prevent him from accommodating Canadian measurements without parliamentary exemption at the Althing in Reykjavik! We are now waiting for this to be granted, and will publish the results.

The dedication and unveiling will take place July 31, 2000 at 7:00 p.m. in the Kinmount Heritage Park. It will be attended by the general public, Icelandic dignitaries, provincial authorities such as the local MPP, the regional Warden and township reeves. A chartered bus tour is planned from Toronto to the event. Details such as the place & time of departure and cost are listed on the enclosed millennium brochure. Everyone is welcome.

NEWS FLASH!

Required flag size from Iceland not possible; however, a usable flag has been donated and received from Hofsos.

More Good News! The Ontario Heritage Foundation has honoured our Kinmount project as a Provincial Historic site. This includes official highway and monument plaques. Out of 25 Millennium Project applications, only 6 were chosen, and ours was one of them.

To date, well over 600 copies of The Icelanders of Kinmount have been sold as a fundraiser, realizing approximately \$3,500 towards the project. Thanks to all of you! The booklet is still available through the ICCT at a cost of \$16.00 per copy. To order, make cheques payable to the Icelandic Canadian Club of Toronto and send to: Evelyn Trites, Treasurer, 7 Wax Myrtleway, Don Mills, Ont. M3B 3K6



VIKINGS IN CANADA GALA - TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2000

MP John Harvard and broadcaster Lorna Jackson to Co-host Vikings in Canada Gala Tuesday, August 1st

Former broadcaster John Harvard, who represents a Winnipeg riding in Parliament, has agreed to be our co-host for the Gala on August 1st. Following his successful "emceeing" of the ceremonies surrounding the presentation of an Icelandic statue to Prime Minister Jean Chretien in Ottawa on April 6th, he seemed a logical choice for the job when Dan Bjarnason found he was unable to do it due to work commitments. Lorna Jackson, our co-host, was very pleased at the prospect of working with John.

Interest has been building in the Gala, and tickets went on sale at the Glenn Gould Box Office on May 1st. Plans are going well ... Thorsteinn Helf has almost finished building our replica Viking boat, and Lisa Gibson is working on costumes for the Viking serving girls.

In previous newsletters, we've told you about the musicians and writers we'll be featuring - this time, we'll give you some background on the film-makers, whose works we will show excerpts from. Those who are not in the midst of practising their craft will be present for a panel discussion.

NORMA BAILEY grew up in Gimli and always felt supported by that creative environment. Among her better known works are the critically acclaimed series "Daughters of the Country", TV movies, "For Those Who Hunt the Wounded Down" and "Nights Below Station Street", and "The Sheldon Kennedy Story". Her many awards include Best Documentary at the 1992 Vancouver Film Festival, Genie Awards and the Special Jury Award at Cannes.

ANDY BLICQ is a CBC-TV field producer on "Country Canada" who has a cottage at Gimli and whose involvement with the Icelandic community includes directing "Tied by Blood", an international co-production between Icelandic TV and Canada's History Channel as well as documentaries such as "Gimli Waltz" and "Hecla Island". He has won more than 20 local, national and international awards.

LEIF BRISTOW is the Chief Executive Officer and Director of the newly created Knightscove Entertainment, a Toronto-based producer/financier of live action children's films. He directed TV movies for three HBO series, one of the best known being "Beethoven Lived Upstairs", which won numerous awards. His background includes spending childhood times in Gimli, Manitoba and later professional acting and singing.

STURLA GUNNARSSON moved to Vancouver from Iceland as a young boy. His highly dramatic documentaries for the NFB, such as "Final Offer" and "After the Axe" won many awards and earned an Oscar nomination. In his first feature film, "Diplomatic Immunity", he established himself as a director who told personal stories of ordinary people caught in the whirlpool of historic events. Many television films followed and then his second acclaimed feature, "Such a Long Journey". He and his

wife and family make their home in Toronto.

JON EINARS GUSTAFSSON moved to Winnipeg from Iceland a few years ago. In his film "The Importance of Being Icelandic", he explored the theme of the fascination which Iceland holds for modern day Icelandic Canadians. His photographs are often seen in Logberg-Heimskringla. He is currently working on a new feature film.

GUY MADDIN is a rather unusual film-maker. His body of work has been described "as beautiful as it is confounding and delirious. He combines the language of pat cinema, with which he is most intimately familiar from his countless hours of film viewing, with a pre-cinematic sensibility learned from the books he voraciously devours." His films include "Tales from the Gimli Hospital", "Archangel", "Twilight of the Ice Nymphs" and "Careful". He continues to live and work in Winnipeg.

All of our performers are listed in the enclosed brochure - this is a real "star studded event" - be sure to book your tickets early to get the best seat selection! Call the Glenn Gould Box Office at 205-5555 or go to the CBC Broadcast Centre at John and Front Streets, or order by mail at Box 500, Station A, Toronto M5W 1E6. Adults \$40, Seniors and Students \$25 For more information, call Gail at (416) 762-8627.

REMINDER: CHARITABLE STATUS FOR MILLENNIUM EVENTS

Any donations to any of our millennium events, including Kinmount, Vikings in Canada Gala, Viking Film Festival, or the Puppet Show can get a charitable receipt. Simply make your cheque out to Millennium-125 Commission Inc. with a note making it clear it is for an ICCT Millennium event and mail it to us: Evelyn Trites, Treasurer, 7 Wax Myrtleway, Don Mills, ON M3B 3K6 A receipt will be mailed to you.



Even the Huldafolk made an appearance in Ottawa!