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SUMMER 1971

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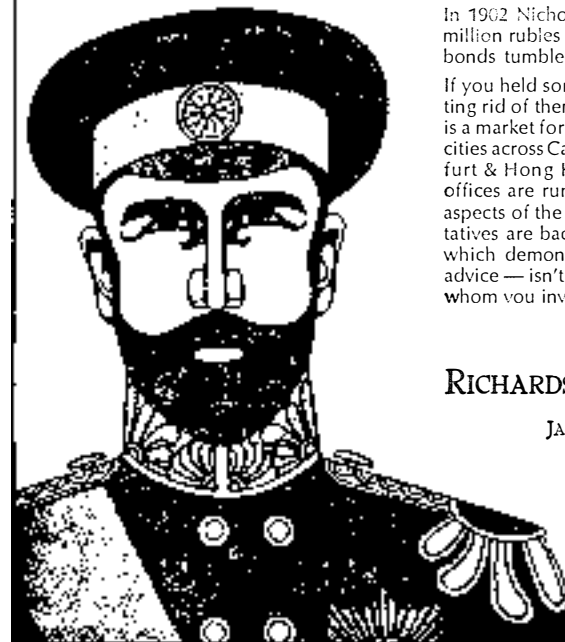
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# The Icelandic Canadian

Vol. XXIX No. 4

Winnipeg, Canada

Summer 1971

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## THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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**EDITORIAL****The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba**

It was launched as "Íslendingadagurinn" 82 years ago, when the Icelandic immigrants were new to this continent and the majority had less than a passing knowledge of its language.

Later this term was translated and became the "Icelandic Celebration", to explain what it was all about to people who had already surmised that this was the day the Icelanders had set apart to be themselves, to wave the old pennant with the white falcon; and to hold forth on the speakers' platform, in poetry and prose, about the flag that soon would be. They sang the old songs, recalled old scenes, extolled the glories of a historic past and fervently voiced their hopes for the future of their old country.

For a day they lived in another country and another time.

But before long the Day of the Icelanders lost some of its purism, as a strong new note made its way into the

medley of tributes. A toast to the New World had been a courtesy feature from the start. Soon the toasts to Canada became eloquent and as much too long as the toasts to Iceland and those to the pioneers. The poets lauded this virgin land as a beautiful maiden, rich with promises, holding out golden sheaves of wheat while all the world sought her favor.

Iceland has its own flag now, and so has Canada. The first weekend in August, this year, the two flags will fly side by side in Gimli Park over the festivities which in this young country may be called ancient.

The old terms "Icelandic Celebration" has now given way to a new one, "The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba" but the term "Íslendingadagurinn" remains. The tradition remains. It is rooted in the history of Manitoba, and has become a permanent contribution to the North American culture.

Caroline Gunnarsson

**AT THE EDITOR'S DESK****AN ICELANDIC FESTIVAL COMMITTEE DONATION**

The Icelandic Canadian magazine has received a donation of \$100 from the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba Committee. This gesture of support is appreciated.

The Festival Committee has for many years past, annually or at one time or another, made donations to Icelandic Canadian cultural and benevolent organizations, including Lögberg-Heimskringla, the Gimli Hospital, the Shrine Hospital, the Gimli Recreation Centre and the Gimli Band, as well as maintaining its own scholarship awards.

The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba is one of the prominently featured events of the summer season, and the Festival Committee is doing important work; it is an important community organization.

★

**ADULT EDUCATION-INTEREST COURSES**

Icelandic people are education-minded.

The Extension Division of the University of Manitoba has sent the Icelandic Canadian a calendar of its evening Institute courses. These courses are too numerous to mention, but included are: Canada in International Affairs, Chinese Philosophy, Creative Writing, Historical Background to French-Canadian Nationalism, Hu-

man Relations, and Investments in Securities. The only requirement for enrolling is interest in the subject. There are no examinations and no previous experience or academic record is stipulated.

Similarly, the Central Y.M.C.A. Adult Education Committee, Vaughan Street, Winnipeg, offers a variety of interest courses in fall, winter, and spring. Without a doubt, interest courses for adults are available in cities and towns in the country, generally.

★

**COL. J. F. DUNLOP POSTED TO C.F.B. COLD LAKE, ALBERTA**

To say that Col. J. F. Dunlop, Commanding Officer at Canadian Forces Base, Gimli, has been posted to CFB, Cold Lake, Alberta, is to say that he has been posted away from Gimli. This is a distinct loss to Gimli and the New Iceland community in general. We take the liberty of quoting from the Icelandic Canadian, Spring 1970 issue (page 10) an excerpt from a letter written by Col. Dunlop:

"Since moving to Gimli in June this year I have become interested and fascinated by the history of this area and by the descendants of the original Icelanders. As I continue to gather material I realize what a tiger I have by the tail. I no sooner get interested in one facet when another shows up."

A year and some months later, Ethel Howard, Free Press correspondent at

Gimli, writes to **Framfari**, with Col. Dunlop's impending departure in mind:

"I close with a tribute to Col. Dunlop, whose interest made the new **Framfari** possible, and who has endeared himself to every citizen of Gimli during his brief stay here. He will have a lasting place in our history, because he has made himself part of it in two short years. It is with genuine regret that we learn that he will be leaving us . . . We know little about the history of Cold Lake, Alberta, but we venture to predict that the world will know a lot more about it after Col. Dunlop has had time to look around! Our loss is their gain . . . and we extend our warmest thanks and good wishes to Col. and Mrs. Dunlop and their boys as they prepare to leave us."

The **Icelandic Canadian** regrets Col. Dunlop's departure from the C.F.B. Gimli and wishes him well in his new posting..

★

#### AMBASSADOR BRENDAN SEES IRISH TRAITS IN THE ICELANDIC PEOPLE

The newly appointed ambassador from Eire to Iceland, Denmark, and Norway, Mr. Brendan Dillon, visited Iceland last March. In an interview with a **Morgunblað** reporter, Mr. Dillon said that his appointment as ambassador to Iceland gave him special pleasure. There are so many ties between the Irish and the Icelandic people from ancient times, he said. "I am aware that the Irish consider themselves more closely kin to the Icelandic people than to most others. There are Celtic traits evident in the appearance of the Icelandic people; every third person here could be of Irish descent."

#### BAFFIN ISLAND AND KENYA DISPLAYS AT UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG GRADUATES DINNER

Displays from Baffin Land and Kenya provided by two graduates of United College were featured at the annual dinner of the University of Winnipeg Graduate Association, on April 15. The Baffin Land display was provided by Dr. John Matthiasson, United College 1959, and the Kenya display, by Evelyn (nee Kristjanson) Downey, United College 1950. Dr. Matthiasson spent a year 1963-64 at Pond Inlet, Baffin Land; his exhibit included an Eskimo drum, sled, camuks, a carving of a seal hunter and photographs from Baffin Land. Evelyn Downey and her husband, James W. Downey (U.C. 1950), spent the year 1964-65 at the Teachers' College at Kagumo, Nyeri, Kenya; her exhibit included a large rug made by native inmates of a prison, drums, a gourd, a tray, a basket, an elaborately carved cane, hand-carved book ends, a tray and a carved wood Kikuyu woman figure.

★

Ronald T. Skaftfeld, University of Manitoba, B.Sc./61, B.Ed./65, and Mrs. Skaftfeld are presently in St. Vincent, in the West Indies, where Mr. Skaftfeld is teaching under the auspices of Canadian External Aid.

★

Richard D. Vopni, University of Manitoba B.Sc. C.E./55, is presently employed in Pretoria, South Africa.

★

Dr. Eysteinn Tryggvas, formerly of the meteorology bureau in Reykjavik, Iceland, is a professor at the University at Tulsa, Oklahoma. He is engaged in the study of the continental drift theory.

#### A TRUE STORY

## The Tragedy at Sandy River

Kristine Benson Kristofferson

The winter of 1876-77 was the winter of the smallpox in the settlement of New Iceland on the west shores of Lake Winnipeg. It broke out first at Lundi (now Riverton) in a log cabin where some 19 persons were housed. The first victim was a young man who had been left behind in Quebec when the rest of the group he had been travelling with proceeded to New Iceland. It was thought that the coat he had bought there had been contaminated, and in this manner the disease had been carried to the Icelandic colony.

The weather that fall was sunny and mild and people travelled extensively up and down the colony, unknowingly spreading the disease so that eventually half the population became infected. There were Indians living at Sandy Bar, one of the communities in New Iceland, and they too had travelled to other Indian villages carrying the deadly germs.

After the New Year when the disease began to abate in the colony itself, the doctors travelled further afield. Dr. Young had gone home to Little Britain where he lay ill from smallpox, never having bothered being vaccinated as he considered it useless. Dr. Baldwin and Dr. Lynch were left to carry on in the colony.

Dr. Baldwin, accompanied by an Icelandic interpreter named Magnus Stefansson and the Indian guide John Ramsay, went north to Norway House

where the doctor vaccinated the 196 persons living there. On the return journey, he decided to investigate the Indian village on the east shore of the Lake.

They travelled by dog-carriole, a long narrow sled with canvas sides, curved up at the front like a canoe. The musher or driver stood at the back on a small platform-like projection and clung to the posts on either side of the high, slanting back. The gaily-coloured woollen pompoms on the dog-collars bobbed up and down, the bells tinkled merrily as the huskies trotted over the snow-packed surface of the lake. The doctor was bundled to the ears in a rabbit-robe, with only his eyes showing. Ramsay stood on the back projection directing the team, while Magnus dog-trotted beside him.

It was early February. There had been no communication with the east-shore dwellers since the fall before. No word as to their welfare had reached the Icelandic settlement all winter.

The carriole headed toward the thriving Indian village of Sandy River on the east shore of the lake, directly opposite the southern-most tip of Big Island. Here lived some 200 people. The sky was dark and overcast, with sudden little gusts of whirling snow that heralded a storm.

"Mush! Mush!" Ramsay urged his dogs onward. He was anxious to reach the village where he had relatives and

friends whom he had not seen or heard from since the fall before. He had sad news to relate. His wife Betsey and his two small sons were dead from smallpox. Only Mary survived, scarred and pitted for life. The dark eyes of the Indian clouded. They would be grieved at his news. Some of them were her own people.

Over the frozen expanse of the lake they travelled, mile after mile. Magnus and Ramsay exchanged places. The doctor dozed, warm and comfortable in his snug nest, lulled to sleep by the silky swish of the runners as they glided over the hard-packed snow, startled into momentary wakefulness by the sharp crack of the ice or the ominous rumbling under foot.

Ramsay peered ahead. There in the distance a faint outline of trees showed darkly against the horizon. They were nearing the Sandy River Point. The wind was increasing in strength and he was anxious to reach the safety of the village, as soon as possible. The trees grew clearer, took shape. They rounded the point. There was the dock, deserted and wind-swept, not a fisherman in sight.

They reached the river and raced inland to the sheltering forest. There was no sign of sled tracks on the surface. No one had gone this way since the last snow fall. Magnus was floundering in the soft drifts so Ramsay called a halt. Both men unstrapped their snowshoes and tied them on. Ramsay seized the harness of the lead dog. He would lighten the load by pulling the sled while Magnus went ahead to break trail. Ramsay glanced skyward, a frown on his lean weather-beaten face. The whip cracked and Ramsay shouted "Mush! Mush!", his voice strangely sharp. He scanned the ragged tree tops where threads of smoke should have been drifting sky-

ward from the many chimneys at Sandy River. They reached the small dock below the village proper. "Gee, Gee," Ramsay commanded and the team stopped in its tracks, barking, snapping and snarling at each other. The dogs lay down panting from the long trip, tired from the unexpected haste of the last few miles. It was not like their master to drive them. Ramsay stood still, listening intently. The doctor and Magnus watched, sharing his anxiety without knowing its cause.

"Why are we stopping here?" asked the doctor.

"The dogs of the village —" Ramsay said slowly "they bark when some one come. There is no bark, there is no smoke at Sandy River". The three men stood aghast, listening to the ominous silence that enclosed them.

"Mush", Ramsay ordered and the dogs scrambled to their feet. Down the trail they floundered, the carriage swaying drunkenly as they lurched down a trail that was a trail no longer, its surface unmarred by any sign of men, dogs or sled tracks.

They reached the bank and struggled to the ground above. There was a clearing where the village of 30 cabins huddled together, ringed by tall sheltering pines. Their eyes swept over the cabins and tents half-buried in the snow, the ground between them smooth and unmarked by a single footprint. The tin chimneys protruding from the snow-covered roofs, showing no sign of smoke.

No dog barked to announce their arrival; no door opened to welcome the travellers; the village was deserted.

"There doesn't seem to be anyone living here, Ramsay", the doctor said looking all around. "There is nothing stirring."

Ramsay's keen eyes searched the scene before him. There was something

wrong here. A whole village did not leave its winter quarters.

He stared at the mounds of snow under the nearby trees, struck by a sudden thought. He ran to the nearest tree and clawed at the mound. His hand uncovered a scrap of fur—an ear — a dog — frozen to death, still tied by its rope to the tree trunk. He ran to the next tree and uncovered another, then he straightened and pointed to the mounds all around them.

"Dogs", he said tersely. "Frozen dogs. Indians do not leave their dogs behind when they go".

The huskies whined uneasily. The doctor threw off his warm cover and stood up. He was beginning to understand.

The three men ran to the nearest cabin where the window was completely obliterated by a snowdrift. No foot had crossed that threshold for a long time judging by the snow banked against it. Ramsay pushed the door open. The hinges gave with a protesting squeak that was echoed by the horde of rats that scampered into the dim corners. There were people lying in the bunks — a man, a woman and several children, all stiff in death. On the floor at their feet lay the emaciated corpse of an old crone wrapped in a tattered quilt, a few sticks of firewood still clutched in her frozen fingers. The doctor looked at the distorted faces. "Smallpox", he said and walked out of the cabin. Ramsay followed and closed the door gently behind him. He had known them all well.

He raced to the nearest cabin where Betsey's people lived and broke the door open. Here too were people lying in their beds, all dead, most of them covered with smallpox papules. He looked at the empty woodbox, the cupboard that was bare of food and turned away with a shudder.

"Come away", the doctor ordered sharply. "We can do nothing for these poor unfortunate people. We have come too late."

Ramsay went out into the grey winter afternoon like a man grown suddenly old. They had not all died from smallpox. Those who had escaped the disease had either frozen to death or perished from hunger..

Doggedly they went from cabin to cabin and tent to tent knowing beforehand what awaited them, — the grisly sight of the frozen dead of Sandy River. They stood together in the centre of the village too numb to grasp the full horror of what they had just witnessed. It couldn't be true — 200 people dead — a whole village wiped out to the last man. They tried not to think of the little children who could not find food, of the old who could not cut wood, of the last survivor of the village surrounded by the dead.

The warehouse stood at the end of the village, full of the winter's catch of furs, thousands of dollars worth, intended for trade with the Hudson's Bay Company. The brigade had never gone to Stone Fort.

The doctor mopped his sweating brow. "May I never live to see such a sight again", he said.

Magnus looked with deep compassion at his Indian brother, for such they had become. "We cannot bury so many," he said gently. "There is nothing to do but burn the whole village and everything in it."

For a moment the dark eyes of the Indian blazed. Burn his people? That was not the way the Indian showed his respect for the dead. He looked at the silent village where every cabin and tent had become a coffin. It was the only way. Three men could not bury 200 people in the frozen earth.



They must burn the village of Sandy River.

"We will throw the furs into the cabins, pour coal-oil over them and set them afire. The pelts will burn well. The furs are contaminated as everything else here is and must be destroyed anyway", said the doctor.

Swiftly they set to work at their grim task. They ran with bundles of furs and threw them into the cabins and tents until the warehouse was almost empty. They poured oil over the pelts, the floors, the bodies and set it all ablaze. From cabin to cabin, from tent to tent and on to the big warehouse last of all they raced, leaving a roaring trail of fire behind them.

The huskies, crouched on the edge of the village, whimpering as the flames rose higher and higher. The three men watched until they were sure that nothing would be left standing of the ill-fated village of Sandy River. Then they ran to the carriole and fled from the horror of what they had witnessed.

"Mush!" Ramsay commanded harshly and the dogs obeyed, eager to leave this place of death. The roar of the rising fire spurred them on down the trail, down the bank toward the open lake. The men looked back at the black cloud that billowed over the tree-tops, the funeral pyre of 200 people. Sandy River was gone forever.

## THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB DINNER AND DANCE

The Icelandic Canadian Club's dinner and dance at the Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg, was surprisingly well attended, when it is considered that it shared a weekend with two other major events competing for attendance from the same groups within the community.

But if the attendance was slightly down from former years, the evening turned out well and the program was enjoyable under the graceful chairmanship of Tim Samson, president of the club. The main feature was a talk by Vilhjalmur Bjarnar, curator of the Icelandic collection in the Fiske library at Cornell University, Ithaca, N. York. He outlined the history of the collection, sprinkling the narration with anecdotes of its famous founder.

Professor Haraldur Bessason, head

of the Icelandic department at the University of Manitoba, introduced the speaker, and he was thanked by Dr. John Matthiasson, also of the University of Manitoba.

Grettir L. Johannson, Consul-General of Iceland in Winnipeg, spoke briefly of an index he has prepared covering Icelandic journals published in Canada since the beginning of Icelandic settlement in the country. These, he said, are now being micro-filmed.

Reg Frederickson sang several selections from modern musicals, accompanied at the piano by Snjolaug Sigurdson. The lively dance, MC'd by Ted Arnason, went on as far into the night as the law allowed.

**Caroline Gunnarson**

## Icelanders Gave Sargent Avenue character of its own

by Vince Leah

Some sociologist remarked the other day that a city is merely a collection of smaller cities all huddled together.

I am not sure if Winnipeg qualifies or not but it has a history of particular streets, busy, off-the-track thoroughfares with character all their own.

Osborne, Selkirk, Sargent and McGregor streets are just a few. There is a hint that Osborne may become another Yorkville. This would give it a flavor all of its own.

West End folks for years called Sargent Avenue "Goolie Crescent", in recognition of the strong Icelandic neighborhood that clung to it.

I am not sure where the name "Goolie" comes from — it somehow was not as nasty as "bohunk" or "polack" or "yid" and I am not sure whether those solid expatriates from the little island of the North really appreciated it or not.

They were fine people. Their sons were exceptional hockey players, and all were extremely cultured as evinced by the printing shops and book stores which once lined Sargent Avenue.

Sargent Avenue begins at Edmonton Street and now stretches all the way to the International Airport. But, in the old days, you did not meet the Icelanders until you reached McGee St., with its Icelandic Good Templars hall and Skuli Bjarnason's barber shop.

Fridfinnson and Gislason ran a billiards hall and Oscar Sigurdson had an

electrician's shop, all the time sharing space on the avenue with the Hong Sing laundry and the Wonderland Theatre. Mr. Johannson had a shoemaker's shop in the shadow of No. 10 fire station.

As a youngster with ambitions to become a writer, I once applied for a job at The Viking Press but, not having the slightest idea of what Icelandic was all about, I never got past the front door.

Majority of the neighbors were good Lutherans but the Baptists were at the corner of Furby Street for many moons. Glancing through an old city directory the merchants on the street had such names as Gunnl. Johannson, grocer; Olafur Thorgeirson (and for years a chap named Thorgeirson owned a book shop and printing establishment. I wonder if he still is there); and Mrs. Lily Halldorson, a barber no less, among others.

The Icelanders were great competitors. They discovered hockey early and, by the First World War, were in active competition with the rest of the town.

The Young Lutherans' Club became the Falcons, who brought a world championship to Winnipeg with that matchless array of such good Icelandic names as Benson, Johannesson, Goodman, Fredrickson et al.

The youngsters in the community were not far behind. Who remembers the Falcon juniors of 1921, our first

national junior champions? A tolerant crowd, the Falcon juniors included such non-Icelandic names as goalkeeper "Scotty" Comfort, who qualified because he grew up in the neighborhood.

Fellows such as Sammy McCallum and Harry Neil qualified on ability. Both were north-enders, sworn foes of the west end in everything that could be played on ice or grass.

Not many of the famous Falcons of yesteryear remain. You do not see an Icelandic name in the hockey rosters nowadays. It wasn't until I had the pleasure of helping present the prizes to the John M. King school playground kids at No. 1 Legion Hall that I caught up with a fine-looking, flaxen-thatched lad named Hallgrimson, Frank Fredrickson would have been delighted.

History reveals the first Icelanders came to Winnipeg in 1875, undoubtedly on their way to what was called New Iceland, the beginnings of the Icelandic settlement on the western shore of Lake Winnipeg.

By 1878 they had an Icelandic Society here to help retain old customs and cultures and their first church. The first arrivals lived on the river flats but, eventually, began to buy lots and build in the area around William Ave.

This was the beginnings of a drift towards the western district of the struggling young city for the original Icelandic Investment Company began to build on Nena Street, now Sherbrook, and obviously moved further west.

Icelanders form one of Canada's smaller ethnic groups and a good portion of them can be found in Manitoba. You still come across a lot of

good Icelandic names around Glenboro in the southwestern corner of the province.

I have often written about the one Icelandic family in our old neighborhood, the remarkable Thorgeirsons. The family appears to be scattered now, although one of the sons still lives in the old family home on Cathedral Avenue. I remember him as an exceptional ball player in his youth. Another son is my next-door neighbor.

My old friend Skuli Anderson, the jewelry engraver and a lacrosse buff of long standing, recalls his youth on "Goolie Crescent" and lacrosse battles at Greenway school on Banning St. The Greenway students were always tough with the gutted stick as the scamps at Grosvenor school discovered one Saturday morning long ago. Greenway won 33-0 . . . this was the 12-man field game, remember, and gentle Skuli says he and his Greenway chums slunk home embarrassed for scoring so many goals.

The old Icelandic flavor is leaving Sargent Avenue. The Icelandic Good Templars hall now belongs to the Foresters and the German Baptists have a handsome church on the corner of Simcoe.

Only the memories remain, delicious recollections of the day Falcons defeated the United States in Antwerp to become the world's finest amateur hockey team, the strong neighborliness which held these people together in good times and bad.

It won't be long before the Icelanders mark their own centenary in Manitoba and, I trust, they'll have a parade down the middle of "Goolie Crescent".

—Tribune

## JOHANN THORVALDUR BECK

"I cannot make the world better or brighter but I can at least light a candle and keep the darkness from my small corner."

The author of this little sentence is unknown but I feel that it could have been written by Joe Beck, as he is known by his host of friends.

Mr. Beck has given generously of his time and talents to many projects with dedication, whatever the cause.

Joe came to Canada at an early age with the hope that he would be able to further his studies. In 1919 he and his uncle, Sigurdur Vigfusson, sailed from Iceland on the steamer "Lagarfoss", arriving in New York after a long and tedious journey of fifteen days. It was extremely hot in the city at that time and Joe suffered sunstroke, and was ill for the rest of the year. During his illness he was cared for by his relatives, the Vigfussons and Palssons, who nursed him back to health.

At the time Joe came to Canada he spoke Icelandic, Danish and English. He was anxious to attend night school in preparation for obtaining employment. He was fortunate in being hired by The Columbia Press Company as a printer and was in their employ until it was sold to The Wallingford Press, with whom he is working now. From 1942 to 1956 he was manager of The Columbia Press.

Mr. Beck is very fond of music and he studied piano for some years. He attained the intermediate piano with The Toronto Conservatory of Music. He has been a valuable member of The First Lutheran Church choir for a long time and currently is president. He and his family are faithful members

of the church and attend the service regularly.

Joe joined the I.O.G.T. chapter "Skuld" in the early 1920's and was Chief Templar periodically from 1930 until the Lodge was disbanded. During the time the Lodges were in operation the Good Templar Hall was built, in 1905, and they maintained it until it was sold in 1950. When they were paying off the mortgage Mr. Beck had the responsibility of promoting projects to pay the debt. It was a happy day when the mortgage was burned and the Lodge could enjoy the fruits of their toil. The Icelandic Good Templars have supported many worthwhile projects, mostly in the Icelandic community.

The Icelandic Canadian Club, of which he was president one year, The Icelandic National League, The Icelandic Male Voice Choir, The Viking Club have been aided in their endeavours by Mr. and Mrs. (Svana) Beck. Without the support of his good wife Joe could hardly have been active in so many clubs and societies. Imagine the number of meetings this entails!

The Becks have four sons and one daughter. Joe and Svana were very anxious to give their family a good education and in that they have succeeded, likely with some sacrifice. The sons have good positions and are well respected; their daughter was a nurse and until her marriage she followed that profession.

No one knows the countless number of unselfish kind deeds this dedicated couple have performed, in their concern for their fellow man. They are indeed a fine example of the true Christian way of life.

Mattie Halldorson

## ISLENDINGADAGURINN

## The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba

The 1971 Icelandic Festival of Manitoba will be held at Gimli, Sunday and Monday, August 1 and 2. Associated events may be held on the preceding Saturday, but at the time of writing definite information is not to hand.

The Icelandic Festival (Íslendingadagurinn/The Icelandic Celebration) has an impressive record and the coming Festival will assuredly maintain this standard or enhance it.

The ten-mile Western Canadian Championship road race, run from Winnipeg Beach to Gimli on Sunday morning will be the highlight of the sports events.

The Fjallkona will be Mrs. Christine Johnson of Winnipeg and the princesses will be the Misses Christine Arnason and Joyce Kristjansson, of Winnipeg.

The toast to Canada will be delivered by Dr. Hugh Saunderson, retired last year from his position as President of the University of Manitoba, and the toast to Iceland will be delivered by Mr. Gisli Guðmundsson, well and favorably known to members of group flights to Iceland from North America as conductor of guided tours on the island.

The Saga Singers from Edmonton will provide the vocal music. Included in the group will be Mrs. Roland DeCosse, who will be remembered by many as Margaret Helgason, a brilliant soloist. Mr. Gus Kristjanson will lead the community singing in the evening.

In addition to the above, there will be a display, a hootenany, dances, and other items. The Monday morning parade will feature several Khartum Temple contingents. —W.K.

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**CANADA ICELAND FOUNDATION AND ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB SCHOLARSHIP**

The Canada-Iceland Foundation and the Icelandic Canadian Club of Winnipeg are offering scholarships of from \$100.00 to \$200.00 for the academic year 1971-1972, to students of Icelandic descent or other students showing an interest in Icelandic language and literature who have completed grade XII in one of the high schools of Manitoba and are attending one of the Universities in Manitoba.

Qualifications will be based primarily on the results of the Departmental or Board examinations but consideration will also be given to qualities of

leadership and need for financial assistance.

Candidates are hereby invited to send their applications together with a statement of examination results and testimonials from two leaders in the community before September 20, 1971 to:

**W. J. LINDAL,**  
**Icel. Scholarship Com. Sec.,**  
**536 Central Park Lodge**  
**70 Poseidon Bay,**  
**Winnipeg 9, Man.**

## CONTINUATION

## The Icelanders On Vancouver Island

### A HISTORICAL SKETCH

by Dr. Richard Beck

Another organization which was of a lasting and commensurate cultural and social importance in the life of the Icelandic settlers in Victoria, was "The Icelandic Literary Society of Victoria, B.C., to use its official English name.

In the Victoria Colonist articles on the "Industrious Icelanders", referred to above, it was stated that they receive "frequent importations of standard works direct from Reykjavik." These works were, of course, ordered by the Icelandic Reading Society (Lestrarfélag) in Victoria, which had already been established when the article in question was written.

Thanks to the courtesy of Victor Lindal, who, as already noted, is a resident of Victoria, the writer has had access to the minutes of the Society from the beginning of 1893 until mid-summer 1900. Mr. Lindal had discovered the book containing the minutes among the papers of his father J. Ásgeir J. Lindal preserved by his mother, Steinunn Lindal, who survived her husband by many years.

The minutes for the period are prefaced by a historical sketch describing the founding and the first years of the society, which Sigurður Mýrdal, one of its founders and its first President, had undertaken to write pursuant to a resolution passed at a meeting of the Society on July 8, 1893, in as much as

some of the earlier minutes had been lost. At a meeting on August 13, of that year S. Mýrdal read the historical sketch which he had prepared, and it was accepted with thanks. Needless to say, although its pages are by now a bit mutilated, this historical sketch is an invaluable document pertaining to the founding and the first years of the Society. S. Mýrdal's account of the founding, here translated from the Icelandic, is as follows:

"In the month of January, 1889, a few Icelanders in Victoria B. C., held a meeting to discuss the founding of a Reading Society (Lestrarfélag), for the support of the Icelandic language and literature. After a thorough consideration of this matter, a committee was elected to draw up a constitution for the Society, which was approved and the Society formally founded on January 18, 1889. The Society was formally founded on January 19, 1889. The Society was then named "Hið upprunalega bókmenntafélag Íslendinga í Victoria, B.C." (The Original Literature Society of the Icelanders in Victoria, B.C.). In accordance with the constitution adopted, officers of the Society were then elected for a year or until the next general meeting of the Society, which was to be held in January annually. S. Mýrdal was elected president, E. Brandson secretary, H. Thorsteinsson treasurer and S. Mýr-

dal librarian. Then the members paid their entrance fee, which in accordance with the constitution was to be \$1.00. But the annual dues, also set at \$1.00, were to be paid before Sept. 15 annually. The Society was originally formed by eight men, who, in addition to the officers elected, were S. Pálsson, Árni Mýrdal, P. Thorsteinsson and Jóhann Breiðfjörð.

The meeting also decided that books for the Society should be ordered from Sigurður Kristjánsson, book-seller in Reykjavik. In the spring of 1889 the first book order was sent to Iceland, with the result, that on August 3, that year the Society received its first consignment of Icelandic books, which as S. Mýrdal notes exultantly: "was most welcome to the Society, as it consisted of 13 volumes of Icelandic books, which as can be seen, all at once could satisfy the most immediate desire for reading on the part of the members. Since then the Society has, in accordance with annual orders, received from its representative quite a number of old and new historical and instructive books (sögu- og fræðibókum), so that at the annual meeting in January 1893, the Society possessed a total of 63 volumes, valued at \$35.20."

S. Mýrdal further observes that during these early years the Society had primarily been concerned with the buying of Icelandic books, but in spite of its small membership, been, as he puts it, "able to buy all Icelandic books, which have been published during the period, that is to say, those which the Society knew about and desired to possess, and, in addition, all that it had been able to get of old sagas and instructive books."

Beginning with the annual meeting on January 10, 1893, the minutes of the Society, which had previously been written on loose paper, were entered

in a special book purchased for that purpose. This book has, as far as it goes, formed the basis for the story of the Society outlined here. The preserved part of the book of minutes (a total of 112 pages) ends, however, with a partial account of the meeting on August 5, 1900. The remainder of the book, unfortunately, appears to be lost.

The minutes for the year 1893-1900 reveal that a large number of the Icelandic settlers referred to earlier were active and long-time members of the Society, along with some others whose membership was of a shorter duration because they left Victoria.

Of the first officers of the Society, listed above, Einar Brandson and Helgi Thorsteinsson, respectively secretary and treasurer, served until the end of the year 1893, when both declined re-election. H. Thorsteinsson left in the summer of 1894 for Point Roberts, but E. Brandson, who made his permanent home in Victoria, continued to serve as an assistant librarian and later as librarian. Sigurður Mýrdal served as president until in July 1894, when he left for Point Roberts a little later.

He was succeeded by Einar Brynjólfsson, who later served as secretary for several years. Other presidents during these years were Jón Sigurðsson and Hinrik Eiríksson. Thorólfur Sivertz was treasurer for a number of years, a post which was also occupied for a time by Jóhann Breiðfjörð and Páll Thorsteinsson. Sveinbjörn Friðbjörnsson (otherwise unknown to the writer of this article) also served as secretary for some time, and Christian Sivertz as a Trustee for several years. Björn Póstur, whose surname the present writer has not been able to ascertain, was, during the latter part of the period in question, in charge of ordering the books for the Society, as instructed,

and these were now, for the most part ordered from Winnipeg. He was evidently a man of an adventurous bent of mind, for I have been reliably informed that, under the name of Barney Post, he enlisted in the United States Marines, and after being stationed in Honolulu, and probably elsewhere, he ended his days as a recluse in the woods of Hawaii.

The Society held regular meetings during this period twice a month, aside from special meetings, the meeting place being designated in the minutes as "í húsi safnaðarins" or "safnaðarhúsinu" (the house belonging to the congregation), which, as I am informed by those in the knowing, can only refer to the Icelandic church building, as the congregation owned no other assembly hall. During the earlier part of the period, the Society rented the hall for its meetings and for keeping its library there, which was open for loans of books at a set time once a week.

However, at the meeting of the Society on July 22, 1893, a letter was read from the Icelandic congregation offering to transfer the ownership and management of its assembly hall (samkomuhús) with all its belongings, as well as outstanding debts, to the Society. At a special meeting the following day the offer was gratefully accepted, and a resolution passed to the effect, that an invitation to join the Society should be extended to those members of the congregation who did not already belong to the Society. After further negotiations, the Society also acquired the lot on which the hall was located. In the meantime, however, it had its library and held its meetings there, as well as its Christmas programs and other public programs, which it sponsored from time to time. For income purposes, the Society also rented

the hall to other organizations for holding their meetings there. This may account for the fact that, especially during the latter part of the period in question, regular meetings of the Society were held in the homes of members and its books kept in some of them as well. At any rate, the hall remained in the possession of the Society at the end of the period here considered (mid-August 1900). It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that this was also the case, when this venerable Icelandic church building was sold to the congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Victoria in 1904, as referred to above.

During these years (1893-1900) additional books were regularly ordered annually, commensurately increasing the library of the Society, along with Icelandic newspapers and periodicals. As no record as to the number of books in the library at the end of the period appears to be in existence, one can merely guess at their number, but estimating them at a few hundred in number, would probably not be far amiss.

In that connection, it may be of interest to note that at a meeting of the Society on February 12, 1896, it was voted to buy a stamp to signify the ownership of the books belonging to the Society. This had been done before the next monthly meeting. The stamp bore the official English name of the Society, namely: "The Icelandic Literary Society of Victoria, B.C.". This is attested by the book of minutes here considered, which is thus stamped.

Regrettably, as mentioned above, the minutes of the Society from mid-summer of 1900 and on, appear to be lost completely. However, from other sources, it is clear that this first Icelandic Literature Society on the West Coast continued its activity for many

years to come, and on a broader basis. I have affirmation of that fact from the sons of two of the men, who, as already indicated, played a continuous and prominent part in the history of the Society from its earliest years, Einar Brynjólfson and Christian Siverts.

Both Walter Brynjólfson and Bent G. Sivertz informed me in personal communications that they recalled vividly the impressive performance of Bjarni Björnsson, the gifted actor and mimic, when he appeared in Victoria, under the auspices of the Society, at the Brynjólfson home there; they also recalled the memorable occasion in the history of the Society, when Dr. Vilhjálmur Stefánsson, appearing under its sponsorship, gave, at the same home, a lecture before his departure on the ill-fated "Karluk".

During the period when the events mentioned above took place, the Society held its meeting in the homes of members, as it had frequently done in its early years.

A particularly significant event in the history and the cultural life of the Icelanders in Victoria was the visit of the poet Stephan G. Stephansson, in 1913, a first-hand account of which, written by J. Ásgeir J. Lindal, appeared in *Heimskringla* (April 10, 1913), and will here be summarized.

Rightly, Lindal points out that it had been thanks to the successful efforts of the leaders of "Kveldúlfur", the Icelandic Society in Vancouver, that the great poet visited the West Coast, which, in turn, enabled the Icelanders in Victoria to invite him to visit them at the same time. He arrived in the evening of February 9, accompanied by Arngrímur Johnson, who had gone to Vancouver to meet him, and at whose home he stayed during his Victoria visit; but as Lindal observes: "One may say, that his coun-

trymen here vied with one another in inviting Stephan to their homes."

He was also the special guest at a dinner-meeting of the Icelandic Literature Society at the Arngrímur Johnson home, where many of the members paid tribute to him. A public program was likewise arranged in the poet's honor, so that the Icelanders in the city could have an opportunity to see him and hear him read from his poetry. At the conclusion of the program he was presented with a purse of money and a cane of ebony, ornamented with gold, and with an inscription saying it was a gift to him from the Icelanders in Victoria.

In a letter to his wife Helga, written from Victoria, February 15, 1913, and published in the collection of his letters and articles (*Bréf og ritgerðir*, III, 1947), Stephan described, with deep-felt gratitude, the hospitality and magnificent reception extended to him by his countrymen in Victoria, which was repeated elsewhere among them on his visit to the West Coast, as referred to in several of his letters.

This triumphant visit of his is also, as might be expected, reflected in a memorable fashion in his poetry. Of special relevance to this article are his splendid poems, written in grateful memory of two of the earliest Icelandic settlers in Victoria, Jón B. Jónsson (John B. Johnson) and Jón Hrafnald, with whom he had become acquainted in the course of his visit.

Like their fellow-countrymen elsewhere in Canada and the United States, the Icelanders in Victoria commemorated for many years Iceland's Constitution Day, the 2nd of August, with fitting programs. Here, as indicated in its preserved minutes from the earlier years, it was apparently the Ice-

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## THE GIMLI CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE FIRST DAY OF SUMMER CONCERT

The Gimli Chapter of the National League First Day of Summer Concert, at Gimli, May 14, was a successful and pleasant occasion. The spacious lower auditorium of the Lutheran church was filled to capacity.

The program included many varied and interesting items, but the central feature of the evening was the presentation of Honorary Membership in the National League to Col. James F. Dunlop, former Officer Commanding, Canadian Forces Base at Gimli, posted earlier in the month to the C.F.B. at Cold Lake, Alberta. The presentation was made by Holmfrídur Danielson, secretary of the League. In his brief address, Col. Dunlop showed clear knowledge of the early history of the New Iceland settlement, and he concluded with a quotation from Lord Dufferin's speech at Gimli in September, 1877, an exhortation to the colonists, which reads: "to cherish for all time, the heart-stirring literature of your nation, and that from generation to generation your little ones will continue to learn in your ancient sagas that industry, fortitude, perseverance and stubborn endurance have ever been the characteristic of the noble Icelandic race".

Contributing to the success of the evening were the Gimli Band; the Children' Choir, under the direction of Mrs. Hedy Björnson and Mrs. Gunnar Isfeld; vocal selections by Rev. Ingthor Isfeld, including the mediaeval Icelandic Ballad, "Ólafur reið



Col. James F. Dunlop

með björgum fram", with the audience taking part; a short address by Rev. P. M. Petursson; vocal selections by Miss Mary Peterson, a flawless recital by Alderman Magnus Eliason of lengthy passages from the poetry of Guttormur J. Guttormsson, and an address by Miss Mary Elizabeth Bayer, Director of Cultural Affairs for the Province of Manitoba, who exhorted her hearers to maintain the traditional custom of the Icelandic people to record their history and to preserve their cultural heritage.

Refreshments were served at the conclusion of the program.

Chairman of the evening was the President of the local chapter of the National League, Mrs. Laura Tergeson.

— W.K.

## A Canadian Social Worker in Denmark

by Jo-Ann Stefansson

You asked me how I came to live in Denmark and about my work here.

How many of us dream about what it would be like to live in another country? In all my wildest imaginings, I had never given that idea a thought, so it was a great surprise to me when I decided to live in Denmark for awhile. It all happened accidentally in August, 1968. At that time, I had registered for a conference on "Human Rights" in Helsinki, Finland, and I was to be at the conference for one week. Prior to that time, I was allowed free time to travel in Denmark or Sweden. I chose the "wonderful Copenhagen" so widely praised by Danny Kaye, partly because of curiosity over this fairy tale land.

As a tourist, I was enthralled by the picturesque city with its cobblestone streets, and colorful red roofs, plus the festival-like atmosphere that masks the city in the summertime. After my trip to Finland to the conference, I decided to invoke a pioneer spirit, and try life in another country.

That decision made, I began to feel the anxiety of the unknown, which I imagine my Icelandic forefathers felt when they made the trip from Iceland to Canada. I had imagined life in a modern city should run parallel to what I was used to in Winnipeg, but I had seen only the surface of Copenhagen life in my tourist days, and closer investigation revealed that there were many barriers to overcome—language, apartment, work. Lacking skill in the Danish language, I was unable to get a job in my profession—social work, and therefore, my first step was

to enroll in a Danish class at the University of Copenhagen. To supplement my dwindling pocket money, I parked myself on Hertz rent-a-car's doorstep until they gave me a job to get rid of me. Thus the first year went, with learning Danish at the university, working at Hertz, and seeking a place to live. The last is a serious problem for a newcomer in Denmark. The housing problem became a daily scourge for me, since the small rooms in other family's apartments were very unsatisfying to one who was used to one's own apartment and one's own car. The constant search for an apartment, and turndowns from social agencies bred discouragement in me at the end of the first year, and I returned home to my family in Canada at Christmas, 1969.

However, the pioneer spirit revived after a six week rest period, and I was encouraged to return to Copenhagen, and try my luck again. This time I had more skills at my command, fluent Danish, and a group of Danish friends who helped me through the rough spots. The employment problem still existed even though I had fluent Danish to recommend me. My social work training and experience was not acceptable in Denmark, because I was not trained in the Danish social system. I responded to this challenge by reading avidly all I could find on the Danish laws and social system. Armed with this knowledge I once again approached the various agencies and asked for work. By this time the Danish police were getting anxious over the fact that I had "no visible means of support".

and they were threatening to deport me. That spurred me to extra effort, and with the help of one of my friends' fathers, I came in to an interview at the employment agency, and was offered a job as a secretary at the Children's Aid Society of Copenhagen. I grasped at the chance, and began work as a secretary in the beginning of May, 1970. With my foot in the door of this social agency, I then asked if there was a possibility that I could eventually obtain employment there as a social worker. The employees and employers at the Children's Aid were very helpful and understanding, and in July, 1970 I was offered employment as a social worker in the Family Guidance section of the Children's Aid.

The new position brought with it many new responsibilities and worries over my ability to handle the problems that arose. However, after four months' experience in the Family Guidance area, I feel there is a pattern to it. My job now is to do intake reports on the families that come to us for help. I am one of nine social workers, who sit in the intake section and interview people with economic problems, marriage problems, child raising problems, and give them guidance on which social laws cover their special

request. For the most, it is a short term contract, but sometimes after our referrals to the workers who make home visits, we still see our clients if a pressing problem can't be solved by the home visitor because he or she is occupied with somebody else's problem.

My surprise was not great when I discovered that the problems people present here in Denmark are nearly identical to problems of people in Canada. The only difference is that Denmark is rumored to have an extensive social security system where all Danes are protected against all problems. To some extent I will say this is true, since there are laws which cover all incidents. There is however, a lack of quantity of coverage, in that the housing problem and high cost of living combine to weigh heavily on a large majority of the Danish people. If these two problems could be tackled, Denmark would have an ideal social system.

Of my experience in Copenhagen as a social worker, I will say that I learned a great deal about another land's methods of tackling their domestic problems, and my experience as a foreigner, and as a social worker will be of benefit whether abroad or back home in Canada.

### THE ICELANDIC FESTIVAL COMMITTEE SCHOLARSHIP

The Icelandic Festival Committee of Manitoba (formerly the Icelandic Celebration Committee) is offering a \$100.00 scholarship and a \$50.00 scholarship, tenable at one of the universities in Manitoba: the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg, and Brandon University.

The following is the basis for selection:

- Icelandic or part Icelandic descent.
- A first class academic standing is

desirable; a "B" standing is the minimum.

- Participation in extra-curricular activities.

Applications for these scholarships, with relevant supporting information, including age, school or college attended, and transcript of marks, are to be forwarded by September 20, to the Executive Secretary of the Festival Committee.

**Miss Mattie Halldorson,  
748 Ingersoll St.,  
Winnipeg 10, Man.**

## AUTUMN SAILING

by David Stefansson

Summer is passing, summer is waning,  
The autumn chill's at hand;  
The billows seethe on the pilings,  
And roar from the strand.  
The leaves forsake their branches;  
Children change their ways;  
The birds say good-bye; and restless ship hulls  
Strain at their mooring-stays.  
I feel of that mighty power,  
That guides with a hidden hand;  
And oh, how the sea keeps calling;  
I must break every band!  
I fly like the bird that journeys;  
And I sail with the winds that blow;  
My poems are my farewells;  
I come, and I go.

The storm blows ever seaward;  
The billows break and call;  
I came from the south this summer,  
And sail this fall.  
Prayers no more can hold me;  
I break the holiest bands;  
I must forsake my loved ones,  
My haunts and childhood lands.  
I pray from shipboard, "Father,  
Forgive me what I owe."  
My poems are my farewells;  
I come, and I go.

I envy, how I envy,  
All that defies time's will;  
The sun which shines to nourish  
The land serene and still;  
The peaks of shade and glory;  
Quiet in heaven's haze;  
The Sphinx who has been sleeping  
Six thousand years of days.

The stormy ocean bears me  
From land unto land;  
I ask not the praise of people,  
Nor a laural wreath band;  
But I am ever lonely,  
And yearn to be with my kin,  
In every place I'm a stranger,  
And no one takes me in.  
My poems are my farewells.  
The billows break and call.  
I came from the south this summer;  
And sail this fall.

translated from the Icelandic  
by Paul A. Sigurdson

### THE ICELANDIC FESTIVAL EXHIBITION

An exhibit of paintings, pottery, ceramics, and sculpture, by artists of Icelandic descent will be featured at the Icelandic Festival at Gimli, August 1 and 2, 1971.

Purchase prizes amounting to \$250, of which \$150 is donated by the Investors Syndicate, Limited, will be awarded for the best work in each

class. All work submitted must be the original and unaided work of the Artist and not previously exhibited at the Icelandic Festival.

For particulars, apply to

Mrs. Lorna Tergeson,  
Box 154,  
Gimli, Manitoba

## MANITOBA INTERLAKE DEVELOPMENTS

The Manitoba Interlake district, which includes the long-established Icelandic settlements on the West shore of Lake Manitoba and the east shore of Lake Winnipeg and the Lundar-Shoal Lake district in between, is undoubtedly of interest or concern to people of Icelandic descent on the continent, generally.

The Interlake District has long been known for its abundant fish production in Lakes Winnipeg, Manitoba and Winnipegosis and its high class butter which has repeatedly won top-rank prizes at National and provincial exhibitions, but the land is of a very uneven quality, with much of it being marginal or submarginal.

Apart from the contemporary critical situation because of mercury pollution in Lake Winnipeg the Interlake land region has long been unhappily associated with a widespread marginal existence. Recent crises have intensified the problems of the Region. Fishing has been banned in Lake Winnipeg.

"A crisis was facing the creameries of the Interlake. They were holding tens of thousands of dollars in N.S.F. cheques to a brokerage firm selling their butter . . . Some action has been taken but the marketing is far from satisfactory", says the president of the Interlake Development Corporation, Ken Reid, in his first annual report. A serious blow was dealt to the economy of the Gimli region with the announcement of the closing down of the Canadian Forces Base at Gimli, a process now well under way.

In an attempt to deal with the chronic depressed economy of the region, the Federal government some

years ago allocated \$85,000,000 and the ARDA and FRED agencies were established. Now, a year ago, the Provincial government has established an Interlake Development Corporation. President of this agency is Mr. Ken Reid, of Arborg; a member of the Board of Directors is Mr. Norman Bergman, of the provincial Department of Industry and Commerce; First Vice-President is Mr. J. S. Sigurdson, of Lundar; Treasurer is Mr. Norman Valgardson, of Gimli, and General Manager is Mr. Eric Stefanson, formerly M.P. for the Gimli constituency.

The main purpose of the I.D.C. is to promote economic development of the region. Emphasis for the 1971 program is to encourage the development of agriculture, tourism, and industry.

Tourism and recreation development is under way at Hecla Island and Grindstone Point on Lake Winnipeg, and other projects have been announced. Jordan Wines of Toronto will build a winery near Gimli. Calvert, a subsidiary of the House of Seagram, plan further expansion with the construction of a bottling plant. Saunders Aircraft Corporation will begin producing jet aircraft at Gimli Air Base, a 24-passenger plane. Alwest Marine will build house cruisers at the Gimli Air Base. A Metis Industrial Corporation is to produce indoor furniture and process wood products at St. Laurent, on Lake Manitoba.

But basically the Interlake has a mixed farming economy, with the largest increase taking place in beef cattle production. Thus it was in the beginning and thus it is today.

—W. Kristjanson

## Speech by Bjorn Bjornson, Minneapolis

An excerpt from an address delivered at a Hekla Club, Minneapolis, annual samkoma, 1969.

At the outset, let me pay my respects to convention and state that I am glad to be here. I'm not quite sure why I'm glad to be here, but I know that tradition dictates that every speaker express his pleasure at being at the scene of his suffering. I am sure that the Lutheran Brotherhood is preferable to the Methodist Hospital and a speaking assignment is more to be preferred than an appendectomy. And so, as you will quickly deduce I am relatively happy about making this speech.

Let me assure you that I enjoy coming to—should one make it an English word and say Samkomas, or keep it Icelandic—and say Samkomur? Whatever you choose to call it, I always enjoy these annual get-togethers and I am grateful to those who make them possible. It is fun to meet old friends and to strengthen the bond that unites us, our common heritage. The annual Samkoma provides an occasion for us to revel in the fact that we are Icelandic.

We belong to that little band of people whom almost no one knows. Most people aren't even aware of the existence of the Icelandic nation, or if they are, they think Icelanders are some offshoot band of Eskimos so God-forsaken that not even missionaries have bothered to seek them out. And Iceland, they think, is some island Siberia where polar bears hail

passing icebergs in hopes of hitch-hiking to a warmer clime.

I think one of the reasons Icelanders obviously enjoy getting together with one another is that then, at least, they don't have to explain that, yes, it thaws once in a while in Iceland; yes, the people actually have houses and don't live in igloos; yes, the natives wear ordinary garments made of wool and cotton, not furs; and they even have a language of their own and it's called Icelandic. Some of you may think I jest, but those of you who have encountered people both obtuse and uninformed know that I do not exaggerate.

We who are from Iceland's mountains hewn—as the familiar Icelandic phrase puts it—are often on the defensive. We are constantly combating the world's ignorance about us and—equally maddening—its indifference toward us. This perhaps accounts for the fact that we are such untiring and unending braggarts. We pounce upon every statistic that puts us in a good light and gloss over any that may not. For instance—on a per capita basis—the Icelanders catch more fish, write more books, support more periodicals, use more telephones, and drink more coffee than anybody you can think of. This is the kind of numbers game the Icelander likes to play. Per capita, of course, Iceland's 200,000 people must lead the world in a great many things



—more airlines, more ambassadors, more medical doctors, more artists, and more poets than any other country.

Those of us who are classified as “western Icelanders,” are no different from the home-grown products. We glory in every Ph.D. that arises among us, every professor, every politician, ever person who makes a name for himself. We are quick to claim as ours Stephán G. Stephánsson, Hjörtur Thórdarsson, Judge Grímsson, Vilhjálmur Stefánsson, and a host of other outstanding persons. Let it be said for the western Icelanders, however, that they have always been ready to put their money where their mouth is. I am sure that many of you have contributed money to support deserving Icelandic scholars, or needy Icelandic families. There have been many students, particularly, for whom fellow Icelanders have chipped in to help finance schooling. This may not be as common today as it was a generation ago when Icelanders were more closely knit and scholarships harder to come by. In those days we contributed to the education and the welfare of composers, poets, artists, and assorted scholars. We even contributed to Icelanders in whom we felt no pride. The largest collection ever gathered among western Icelanders was for the defense of a man accused of murder. The object of this record outpouring of money sat serenely in a Canadian jail, unconcerned about his fate because, as he said, he had read that it was unlawful to hang an Icelanders. A famous Icelandic lawyer was hired to plead his case and eventually the accused was committed to a mental institution. The amount collected for his defense was more even than his attorney would accept as a fee.

I have cited instances where Icelanders have been able to work together. When Icelanders feel that their good name is in jeopardy, when countrymen stand in need, when advancement is possible through help for an individual or group, then you will find all Icelanders pulling together. They even supported a consumers' co-operative in Minnesota—Verzlunarfélag Íslendinga (the Icelandic Mercantile Association)—for a number of years before the turn of the century. But difference of opinion is more typical of the Icelanders than co-operation. They had no sooner left the security of the state church in Iceland—which they had supported by rendering unto Caesar—than they began to disagree loudly about the proper pathway to salvation. Little Icelandic communities in the U.S. and Canada were riven by religious controversy and two churches were built in some communities that could scarcely fill one. Two weekly newspapers—in the mother tongue, of course—provided forums for debate and avenues for the exchange of invective. Even such an occasion as the thousandth anniversary of Iceland's parliament, in 1930, was not free from vitriolic debate as western Icelanders chose up sides on the question of how to travel back to Iceland. In separate ships the two factions made the trip to the old land where they were greeted by hosts who understood full well the value of a little dissension in keeping the blood flowing freely.

Icelanders will freely admit to being outnumbered, but never to being outclassed. There is no denying that Icelanders are a minority among nations or in any setting in this hemisphere. They are a tight little minority. In some respects, being an Icelanders is not unlike belonging to some secret society with a whole language

of esoteric passwords. Most members are born into this society, although a few achieve membership by marriage or by suffering a hardship only slightly less trying—that of learning the language. An ability to speak Icelandic unlocks most doors and admits one to the society, though it may not always confer voting privileges.

The Icelanders in this hemisphere are a fortunate minority. To begin with, they have a truly noble heritage of which they have just reason to be proud. And they are proud—even those who aren't particularly familiar with their heritage are inordinately proud of it. Numerically, Icelanders are scarcely worthy of attention, they are so few. We who number fewer than a quarter million people when you include Icelanders and their descendants in all parts of the world, find it odd that some 20 million black Americans constitute a minority or that more than a million American Indians can be a minority. But we sympathize with the black in his search for a pre-American heritage and with the Indian in his effort to resurrect and preserve his own heritage.

The Icelanders is fortunate in knowing who he is, and what he is, and whence he came. With a little digging, most Icelanders can trace their ancestry back a thousand years or more. Icelanders have no need to petition college administrations to teach things Icelandic since many of them already do, although they may label their courses Old Norse. What was at one time the language of the Norse people, the Scandinavians and some British, long ago became Icelandic when it faded out in other countries and was preserved in Iceland. If by some miracle Leifur Eiriksson were to attend Iceland's parliament today he would have little difficulty making himself

understood. Would this tenth century explorer be speaking Old Norse or Icelandic? I know one thing for certain—he would not be speaking Norwegian. And he would be able, once and for all, to establish the fact that he was an Icelanders born and bred. His father, Eirik the Red, was born in Norway but came to Iceland as a young man, married a native of Iceland, and all their children were, of course, Icelandic.

I have been a long time in arriving at the subject assigned to me this evening—the twenty-fifth anniversary of Iceland's independence. The rebirth of the Icelandic Republic took place on June 17, 1944. In the national election that determined the establishment of the new republic, 98.6 per cent of all persons eligible to vote cast ballots and 99.5 per cent of them voted for complete independence from Denmark. Never before or since in the history of all Icelanders anywhere in the world has there been such unanimity.

It is hard to believe that a nation of independent people such as the Icelanders have always been should ever have been anything but an independent nation. One has to know something of the history of the people in order to understand why they submitted to foreign domination for some six centuries.

As if mistreatment by her Christian leaders and maltreatment by her Scandinavian brethren weren't enough, Iceland suffered an incredible series of natural disasters during these same six centuries. In 1300 the sixth recorded eruption of the volcano Hekla took place with violent earthquakes, followed by cattle diseases, famine, and epidemics. Volcanoes erupted in other parts of the country, accompanied by earthquakes, at this time. Again in

1341 Hekla erupted, killing large numbers of domestic animals and vegetation over a large area. In 1402 the Black Death came to Iceland, killing about two-thirds of the population — and leaving only about 20,000 survivors.

Adding variety to the disasters that beset the Icelandic people, pirates harassed the coastal settlements during the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1627 Turkish pirates attacked the Westman Islands, off the south coast of Iceland, killing the old and the very young, and taking 300 of the young and strong whom they sold into slavery in Algiers. In 1618 volcanic outbreaks and earthquakes again damaged many districts. In 1636 the fifteenth eruption of Hekla lasted from May until the following winter. Again in 1693 a violent eruption of the same volcano scattered ashes all over Iceland and as far away as Scotland and Norway.

These tragedies were but a prelude to what the 18th century had in store for Iceland. In 1727 the eruption of Öraefa jökull began in August and lasted until the following May. Katla was active in 1755 and one of the most destructive outbreaks in the history of Iceland was the eruption of Skaptárjökull in 1783. Two parishes were rendered uninhabitable and the loss of animals in 1783-1784 totalled more than 11,000 cattle, 190,000 sheep, and 28,000 horses. In an earthquake in southern Iceland in 1784 more than 500 farms were destroyed or badly damaged. In 1707 a small-pox epidemic killed 18,000 people, a third of the population. In 1757 2500 people starved to death in the Skálholt diocese alone. These are only the major disasters and don't take into account such things as floods, icebergs coming to rest in fjords and chilling the surrounding

countryside, and the unrelenting poverty that was the lot of every Icelander.

In spite of the centuries of unbroken calamities, Iceland remained a cultured country. Most of her schools were forced to close but the love of learning lived on, the sagas, the Eddas, and a wealth of poetry were preserved. Significant additions were also made to the nation's store of literature. The best known major poetic work in Iceland, Hallgrímur Pétursson's Passion Hymns, were produced in the mid 17th century.

Iceland — a nation of Jobs and a Job among nations — survived her long night of darkness. A new day has dawned in which affluence has replaced poverty, hunger is unknown, and life is not an unending struggle against cruel odds. Iceland is not without her problems today, but they are a different set of problems. The not-quite splendid isolation of another era has been replaced by close international co-operation. Foreign forces are still on Icelandic soil, but they are there by invitation. The nation's principal problems now are sophisticated ones such as inflation, balance of payments, and a place to park.

This glimpse of Iceland's history will give you some idea of the joy with which Icelanders greeted Independence Day, June 17, 25 years ago. We are all happy to see Iceland prosper and hope that her people may never again know the disasters that dogged their forebears. We would remind them that, though Iceland may be weak, there are those who would give her strength. Though Iceland may be poor, there are those who would give her help. Though Iceland may be small, there are those who love her.

## SCANDINAVIAN OF THE MONTH

Dr. Richard Beck was named "The Scandinavian of the Month" for December 1970. The following is the substantial part of an article on Dr. Beck in the Scandinavian-American Bulletin of December 1970.

Fewer in number than their other Scandinavian brethren, the Icelanders settled mostly in North Dakota and in Manitoba, both of which count Icelandic-Americans among their very distinguished citizens. One of these distinguished citizens is our "Scandinavian of the Month" for December, Professor Richard Beck, an Icelander by birth, who through his teaching and writing has made a very significant contribution to Scandinavian studies in the U.S. and to the furtherance of knowledge about Iceland and her culture among Americans and Canadians.

Richard Beck was born in Eastern Iceland, where he graduated with honors from the Reykjavik College in 1920. In 1921 he came to Winnipeg and a year later went to Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., for graduate work in English and Scandinavian languages and literature. He received his Master of Arts degree in 1924 and his Ph.D. in 1926.

Always having wanted to be a teacher, he embarked on such a career with a position at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., and later transferred to Thiel College, Greenville, Pa. Only a few years later, however, he came to the university where almost his entire career would be spent, namely, the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, North Dakota. From the fall



Dr. Richard Beck

of 1929 until his retirement in 1967 he served as Professor of Scandinavian languages and literatures, and numerous are the students who have been inspired by him and have gone on to important research and writing in the Scandinavian field. From 1954 to 1963 he served as chairman of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, and in 1965 the University recognized his great contribution to teaching and to scholarship by bestowing upon him the honorary title of "University Professor". His distinguished service to the university and his academic achievements were further recognized in 1969 when the University of North Dakota awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature at the University's summer commencement.

Dr. Beck is the author of one of

the standard works in English on Icelandic literature, entitled **History of Icelandic Poets 1800-1940**, and is the author of numerous articles on Icelandic literature and culture. He is also a first-rate poet, having published lyrics in both Icelandic and English.

Dr. Beck, who gave one of the addresses at the founding of the Icelandic Republic on June 17, 1944, is prominent in Scandinavian-American and Icelandic-American cultural activities. He is a past president of the Icelandic National League of North America and of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study. He has also been active in the Sons of Norway and as representative of the Norsemen's Federation.

For twenty-five years, until his retirement from the University of North Dakota, he was Honorary Consul of Iceland for North Dakota, and in that capacity represented the Icelandic government on many significant occasions.

As might be expected, Dr. Beck is the recipient of many academic and other honors. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Icelandic Literary Society and a corresponding member of the Icelandic Academy of Science. At the time of its fiftieth anniversary in 1961 the University of Iceland conferred on him an Honorary Doctorate. Three Scandinavian governments have also honored him for his work. He is a

Knight Commander of the Icelandic Order of the Falcon, and has been awarded the Gold Medal of the Founding of the Icelandic Republic; he is a Knight First Class of the Royal Norwegian Order of St. Olav; and is the holder of the Danish Freedom Medal.

Dr. Beck, who retired in 1967, can look back upon a long career encompassing teaching, research, and both scholarly and creative writing. He has also served with distinction as ambassador extraordinary of his native land and the other Scandinavian countries. The measure of his activity may be indicated by the fact that he over the years has been much in demand as a public speaker and lecturer and has delivered no less than 1,200 addresses, primarily on Scandinavian subjects, in English, Icelandic and Norwegian, in this country, in Canada, Norway, and Iceland. When he and Mrs. Beck moved to Victoria, British Columbia, following his retirement in 1967, it must be admitted that no one expected him to slow down in his scholarly pursuits. That articles still flow from his pen, that he still takes an active part in Scandinavian-American affairs will hopefully redound for many years to come to the benefit of our Scandinavian heritage.

E. J. F., in the Scandinavian-American Bulletin

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## New Iceland Pioneer Farms Honored

The Manitoba Centennial Corporation, as a part of its centennial program last year, honored 128 of the oldest farms in the Province. Two of the farms honored were the Thomas Jonasson farm in the Riverton district and the Jon Arason farm at Husavick. The following account of these two well-nigh century old farms still family owned and operated is from the Lake Centre News.

### THOMAS JONASSON FARM

Designated a Manitoba Centennial farm is the land in the Rural Municipality of Bifrost and farmed since 1877 by the forebears of Thomas Jonasson III."

Thomas Jonasson I came from Iceland in 1876 and after spending the winter at Hecla took up his homestead and established the first stopping place or inn, in April 1877 at Riverton, then known as Lundi. Two of his brothers had already come to this area, Sigtryggur Jonasson, editor and Jonas-

Jonasson, printer, of the first Icelandic newspaper in America, "Framfari" and not to be confused with the paper of that name now being circulated in the Gimli area.

The stopping place on the homestead, catered to travellers from all walks of life, those who were gathering together in an official capacity met there when the first councils and such for this part of Manitoba, known then as Keewatin, was being organized. The dog team drivers were the usual lodgers in winter, especially ones who carried the Royal mail to Norway House. Among the treasures still on the farm from that era is an old plow used to turn the fertile furrows on the homestead and a stove-lid lifter, worn from use in that busy kitchen of the stopping place. One can almost visualize one of those early pioneer scenes, the freshly baked bread cooling on the kitchen cupboard and the plowman or perhaps the hunter returning to



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the home, while overhead could be heard the call of the geese at sunset.

The farm and stopping place was later taken over by a son Tomas Jonasson II in 1912 and although the stopping place was discontinued after a time, farming was still carried on as well as carrying the mail and express from the train when it began coming to Riverton in 1914. In 1927 the first truck in this area was purchased and in 1930 he established the Riverton transfer but the farm was always the main occupation, and is now retained by Thomas Jonasson III, ardently interested in farming, a member of the Canadian Shorthorn Association of Manitoba, and other interests include music and geographical topics. The geographical marker in the Riverton Centennial Park stems from a unique fact brought to the attention of the Riverton Village Council and the 51st parallel of latitude also passes through the farm. The Thomas Jonasson Scholarship Award has been a centennial project in memory of Father and Grandfather Jonasson.

### JON ARASON FARM

Benedikt Arason was one of the original group of settlers who came to New Iceland in 1875. He had spent a year, or part of it, at Parry Sound prior to coming here, and his first location was on the site of what is now the Sandy Hook Golf Course. Not long after, he homesteaded the farm along the lake, which he called Kjalvik because he found a keel of a boat along the shore. This farm is operated by the third generation of Arasons now, and it contains part of three quarter sections, partly on both sides of the No. 9 highway and the railway. Mr. Arason's brother, meanwhile had settled at Glenboro. The farm was later divided among the family and two members sold their portions to Sunrise Lutheran Camp and the Benevolent Workers' Association Camp. The highway and railway further reduced it in size.

Benedikt Arason's farm passed to his wife Sigurveig, and then to his son Skapti, whose son Jon now operates the farm.

## Hon. J. T. Thorson Speaks On A Single Canada

Hon. J. T. Thorson, President of the Single Canada League, came to Winnipeg May 7, last on a mission. This mission was to promote the concept of a single Canadian nation as opposed to the concept of two Canadas from coast to coast, one a French Canada and the other all the rest. The terms now in use are a Francophone Canada and an Anglophone Canada.

"A campaign is now being waged based on two demands, Mr. Thorson said. One is for the widest possible autonomy for Quebec, which was perfectly allright so long as the national interest was not harmed. The other was for the equality of Quebec with the rest of Canada in determining national policies". He flatly rejected the idea of such equality, saying "French Canadians are not entitled to the equality claimed by their leaders either as a matter of law or by constitutional right, nor can they show that they have earned such equality in peace or in war".

"The French Canadians have no more rights in law than specified in the British North America Act, section 133 and 92. The B.N.A. sets out language equality in Parliament, the Quebec legislature, and federal courts such as the Supreme Court of Canada. The term of Confederation were glad

ly accepted by Cartier and if more had been intended Brown and Tilley would have withdrawn from the Confederation project."

Mr. Thorson made it clear that he recognized the right of the French to be different from other peoples if they wish to do so, but all Canadians should be on a basis of absolute equality. Many Canadians are neither British nor French and these should not be pressed in any common mold, but allowed to develop in their own way.

Mr. Thorson, a noted jurist and a former President of the Exchequer Court of Canada, believes the Official Languages Bill passed in Parliament to be unconstitutional, and has sought to have the Bill referred to the Supreme Court of Canada for its opinion. He has met with obstacles and delaying tactics, but is persisting in his attempt.

Mr. Thorson's appeal was for a single Canadian nationality with all peoples on a basis of absolute equality and no preference shown for any one element.

Mr. Thorson spoke to a large audience in the Skyview Room of the Marlborough Hotel and received repeated applause in the course of his vigorous address.

—W.K.

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## UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG HONORS W. J. LINDAL

The University of Winnipeg presented four honorary law doctorates at the 1971 (Centennial) convocation, May 1971. One of the four recipients of this distinction was Hon. Walter J. Lindal, Q.C., former Judge of the County Court of Manitoba.

Judge Lindal received his B.A. from Wesley College in 1911. His citation on this occasion includes:

"A prolific writer, he is the author

of several books . . . spearheaded the foundation of the Canadian Ethnic Press Club and the Canada Ethnic Press Federation . . . he is a former member of United College Board of Regents and an active supporter of University Alumni activities".

Some of the other of Judge Lindal's numerous achievements are mentioned in the Summer 1970 issue of the **Icelandic Canadian**.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

## ICELANDERS ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

landic Literature Society, which annually sponsored such celebrations. While I do not have at hand any reports of these, I have found striking evidence of the span of years, which they covered.

In the collection of the poems **Hagalagðar** (Winnipeg, 1916) by the Icelandic-Canadian poetess Júlíana Jónsdóttir there is a poem entitled "Ávarp til Íslands" (A Toast to Iceland), with the explanation that it was written for the Icelanders in Victoria, August 2, 1896. And among the manuscripts of J. Ásgeir J. Lindal, placed at my disposal by his son Victor, I have also found a poem entitled "Til ættjarðarinnar (To the Ancestral Land), where it is specially stated that it was read at the Icelandic Celebration ("Íslendingadagurinn") in Victoria, B. C., August 2, 1914. Probably, these Icelandic celebrations in Victoria, in some form or another, began even earlier and lasted longer than indicated in the poems referred to above.

This first part of the projected historical sketch of the Icelanders on Vancouver Island, has, as previously indicated, primarily dealt with the Icelandic pioneers in Victoria and their cultural activities during the early years there, based, within its limits, on various written sources available to the writer, as well as on personal communications, written and oral. Nevertheless, because of the scanty material existing, the names of some of the pioneers in question may not have been included, which the author greatly regrets. He has followed the rule of referring by name to the sons and daughters of the Icelandic pioneers, who, according to his best

knowledge, still reside in Victoria. Many of these have also furnished him with basic and highly illuminating information, which will be duly acknowledged with the bibliography at the end of the completed article.

Down through the years since the pioneer days, a number of Icelanders and their families have, of course, come to Victoria, and resided there for shorter or longer periods, or permanently. Among these have been many, in common with thousands of others from various parts of Canada, as well as from the United States, who have chosen to spend the sunset years of their life in Victoria, attracted by its



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mild climate, its scenic beauty, and its cultural atmosphere.

At the present time a considerable number of people of Icelandic origin reside in Victoria and its environs, engaged in a wide variety of activities. No estimate of their actual number will, however, be attempted, in as much as statistical information on the subject is not available.

The only Icelandic organization in Victoria in recent years is "The Victoria Icelandic Women's Club", which has been active for over 20 years. It holds regular meetings monthly in the homes of members, except for two of the summer months, when a picnic is held, usually in the beautiful Beacon Hill Park, and a short program presented. The Christmas program of the Club is also an annual affair, still hav-

ing some Icelandic traditional and cultural flavor, as do the regular meetings and the annual picnic. The Club has also sponsored some special programs on Iceland. It regularly supports financially The Icelandic Old People's Home "Höfn" in Vancouver, as well as the Icelandic weekly **Lögberg-Heimskringla**.

The visit in 1961 to Victoria of President Asgeir Asgeirsson of Iceland, and Mrs. Asgeirsson, was an especially important and memorable event in the history of the Icelanders in Victoria. The Presidential Couple were, of course, given a worthy reception, including a festive banquet at the historic Empress Hotel.

In his address on that occasion President Asgeirsson brought official greetings from Iceland to those assembled and paid tribute to the Icelandic pioneers in Victoria and their descendants for their notable contributions in many fields to the life and culture of the City of Victoria, and, thereby directly and indirectly, to the development of the Province of British Columbia as a whole.

This visit to Victoria of the President and the First Lady of Iceland, a part of their official visit to Canada, was in itself, on the one hand, an official expression of thanks on behalf of the Government of Iceland, and, on the other hand, a warm-hearted and respectful greeting from the Icelandic nation to their kinsmen, recognizing both the fact that they had long since earned a general reputation as splendid Canadian citizens, and, at the same time, retained a deep and fruitful attachment to the ancestral land.

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- The importance of the Icelandic heritage in America.
- The contribution of Canadians of Icelandic origin in a specific field, such as public life, science and invention, education, literature, and industry.

The length of the essay is to be limited to 1500-2000 words.

The following rules apply:

- Original research is important.
- Entries must not have been published previously.
- Manuscripts must be typed or legibly written and on one side of the paper only.

- The writer's pen-name only is to appear on the manuscript. The writer's name and address is to be given in a sealed envelope accompanying the essay and on the outside of this envelope the pen-name and the name of the article to be shown.

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**Greetings**

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## IN THE NEWS

### SKAPTI BORGFORD APPOINTED TO REVIEW RENTS IN NORTHERN MANITOBA



Skapti (Scotty) Borgford, a Winnipeg civil engineer, was appointed by the Manitoba Government last April to analyze and compare the rental situation in the northern Manitoba towns of Thompson, Flin Flon, Lynn Lake, The Pas and Dauphin. This one-man board was set up under the Landlord and Tenant Act. Bob Mayer of Thompson has been appointed as legal counsel for the board. The board will have the full power of commission of inquiry, including the power to call witnesses, take testimony under oath and hold public and private meetings at the Commission's discretion.

The terms of reference call for the board to make inquiries into:

- The condition of housing in the north.
- The costs of housing, including construction, maintenance and operating costs.

- The availability of rented accommodation.
  - The present circumstances in landlord-tenant relationships.
  - The possibility and desirability of rent control methods.
  - An exploration of alternative solutions to rental problems.
- Local municipal bylaws and regulations governing the type and construction of living accommodation allowed.
- The availability of tradesmen in the north to build and maintain accommodation.

Mr. Borgford is a University of Manitoba civil engineering graduate and was an assistant professor in the faculty of engineering for 10 years. He also did consulting work for a number of years.

He is now general manager of the Co-op Housing Association of Manitoba Limited and director of the Willow Park Housing Co-op Limited. He is a past president of the Co-op Housing Association and the Association of Professional Engineers of Manitoba and past chairman of the Indian Metis Congress.

★

### WINS ROSE BOWL AT NEEPAWA

Irene Jakobson, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. B. B. Jakobson of Neepawa, was the winner of the Rose Bowl trophy and the \$100 scholarship which goes with it when she placed first in the senior vocal solo class at the Neepawa Fine Arts Festival. The scholarship was provided by Neepawa Barbershop Singers chapter.

★

## TWO PROMISING SPEED SKATERS



JoAnn and Gillian Johnson

The Johnson sisters, JoAnn and Gillian, are both promising speedskaters and could well advance to the Olympic level of competition.

JoAnne, 14 has been skating for 5 years with the River Heights Speedskating Club. She has been a member of The Canadian Indoor and Outdoor Speedskating Teams eleven times, collecting 25 medals and is a Manitoba Record holder in the 200 metre event. As a member of these teams, she has skated in other provinces and in the United States. In February of this year, JoAnn participated in The Canada Winter Games in Saskatoon, having won a position on the B-member Manitoba team. The team placed a strong overall first, defeating skaters from across Canada, and securing Manitoba's position in the field of speedskating. JoAnn topped off her year by winning the "Most Promising Skater Award",

given annually by the River Heights Speedskating Club.

JoAnn is also completing her bronze cross in swimming. She is a Grade 10 student at Kelvin High School.

Gillian, 8, began skating last year for the River Heights Speedskating Club. She has won many honours in the Pee Wee Class, including the Manitoba Indoor and Outdoor trophies, and in Moose Jaw this year the Canadian Pee Wee Championship. Gillian holds Manitoba records in her class in the 200 and 300 metre events, and due to her performance at meets throughout this past winter, she was awarded the Maureen Johnstone Memorial Trophy by her club. This trophy is given annually to the skater who wins the most points for the club during the year's competitions.

Gillian also skated in the Winnipeg School Speedskating races this year,

the youngest ever to participate in this event. She is in Grade 2 at Robert H. Smith school.

JoAnn and Gillian are the daughters of Dr. and Mrs. George Johnson of Winnipeg.

★

## DR. P. H. T. THORLAKSON RECEIVES SIGNAL HONOR

Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, of Winnipeg, was among thirteen prominent Canadians recently made Companion of the Order of Canada. Dr. Thorlakson is widely known as surgeon, Chancellor of the University of Winnipeg, founder of and Director of the Winnipeg Clinic, and author of more than 70 publications.

★

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