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# The Icelandic Canadian

Volume XXXV, No. 4

Winnipeg, Canada

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A quarterly published by The Icelandic Canadian, Winnipeg, Manitoba

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REPRESENTATIVE IN ICELAND: Bjorn Sigurdsson, Longuhlid 25, Reykjavik.

Subscription Rate: \$5.00 per year. Single Copies \$1.50.

Second Class Mail Registration No. 1909, Post Office Department, Ottawa

## EDITORIAL

### THE SILVER JUBILEE OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Canadians of Icelandic descent, together with others, not only in the Commonwealth, but also in other countries, extend felicitations to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on her Silver Jubilee. She has served with distinction, a steadying influence in times of social and political stress and change.

The Queen publicly embodies tradition, which is a buttress of stability. There are Canadians living today who have personal memories of Queen Victoria, of her sixty-year reign, featuring prominently tradition, duty, and authority; also her personal interest in people. Her Diamond Jubilee was celebrated in the two Icelandic settlements well established in Manitoba at that time.

Queen Victoria's son, Edward VII, is remembered as Edward the Peacemaker, who promoted friendship with France, to dispel centuries-old enmity.

George V served in the British Navy, that helped to maintain peace and order in a far-flung empire.

In World War I, Canadians, including some of Icelandic descent, formed one-fourth of the R.A.F. Honorary Commander was Albert, Duke of York, later and better known as George VI, father of our present Queen.

The Empire evolved peacefully into a Commonwealth, a miniature United Nations, with a much greater potential for family association than can be hoped for from any universal organization.

Emblematic of the personal links of the Commonwealth, was the visit to Canada in 1939 of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, a happy event just before the outbreak of the catastrophic World War II.

The Christmas broadcasts of King George VI enhanced the family closeness of the Commonwealth, as have the Christmas broadcasts of his daughter, Queen Elizabeth II.

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited Canada in 1951. At their public appearances in Winnipeg, the service men and veterans who formed the cordon of honor along the procession route on Portage Avenue and Main Street, were within handshake distance of the royal couple, in their low, open-window automobile.

A relationship, admittedly somewhat remote, of Canadians of Icelandic descent to Queen Elizabeth is gleaned from the pages of the Sagas. When Rolf the Ganger, or Rollo (Göngu-Hrólfr) established himself as Duke of Normandy, a brother of his (Hrollaugr) settled in Iceland. This kinship, traced through William the Conqueror, is on the Queen's paternal side. An association on her mother's side is the descent of the Queen Mother Elizabeth from a prominent Norse family, some of whom carved out a realm in Scotland and some of whom settled in Iceland (Audun Shaft).

The Crown is a personal symbol of the unity of the Commonwealth. The viability of this association is indicated in the words of Prime Minister Lee Kuam Yew of Singapore, when he speaks of the value of continuity provided by throne and sovereign 'above the heat and dust of politics'. On her 1973 visit, speaking in Toronto, the Queen explained her role in our affairs.

"It is as the Queen of Canada that I am here. Queen of Canada and all

Canadians, not just of one or two ancestral strains.

"I want the Crown to be as a symbol of national sovereignty belonging to all. It is not only a link between Commonwealth nations, but between Canadian citizens of every national origin and ancestry."

The character and personality of the Queen as head of twelve democratic nation states is of great importance. R. A. Butler, former Home Secretary, has told a story to a British journalist, Henry Fairlie, now living in the United States, that illustrates her courage and devotion to duty.

"You remember when the Queen was meant to be going to Ghana, and the opposition to Dr. Nkrumah there was threatening to assassinate her if she went? Well, that became a cabinet matter, and we decided that she should not go.

"So the prime minister and I went to her with our advice" — which the Queen is constitutionally bound to accept — "and when we had offered it, she paused and then said simply: 'I thank you for your advice. But if I have not courage, what am I? I ask you to return to my ministers, and ask them to reconsider their advice to me.'

"So we went back, changed our advice, and as you know she went to Ghana and her visit was a stunning success. She had seen to the core of the question, and she often does that."

The Queen's courage, devotion to duty, strong will and steadfastness, together with her sense of humor and personal interest in people, have given stature to her role as head of a 36 country Commonwealth.

May her influence for good continue for many years to come.

W. Kristjanson

## TWO CHOIRS JOIN FORCES FOR CONCERTS IN ICELAND

Thirty-six young Manitoba musicians are making a goodwill concert tour of Iceland this summer.

The tour, to run from Aug. 24 to Sept. 6, will encompass most of Iceland, as well as a side trip to the Westman Islands.

Three groups of choral ambassadors are undertaking the trip: The Bass Clef Chorus of Winnipeg, The Better Half, and The B.C.B.H. Chorus, Inc.

The Bass Clef Chorus is a male voice choir of 20 members, founded in 1974 by graduates of the Winnipeg Boys' Choir.

A counterpart women's group, The Better Half, formed two years ago, has enjoyed considerable popularity.

These two groups have joined forces

as a mixed choir, The B.C.B.H. Chorus, Inc., for the purpose of their concert tour.

All three choirs are under the direction of Helga Anderson.

The majority of choir members are students, and many are active in the "internationals", C.B.C.'s Hymn Sing chorus, and as church soloists and theatre performers.

The choirs have performed for, among others, the International Lions' Convention, the Canadian Club, the Registered Music Teachers' Association, and the Canadian Bar Association.

In the recent Manitoba Music Festival, The Better Half won the Birks' Shield; The Bass Clef Chorus won the Lord Tweedsmuir Memorial Trophy.

-Winnipeg Tribune

## WATSON KIRKCONNELL (1895-1977)

By W. Kristjanson



Watson Kirkconnell received his M.A. degree in 1916, from Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, where he majored in Greek and Latin.

His studies were interrupted by war service — active service as a commissioned officer in Canada, for he was medically unfit for overseas service.

After the war, he received an I.O.D.E. overseas scholarship, which took him to Lincoln College, Oxford, for the academic year 1921-22. He specialized in economics but benefitted also from the other riches of Oxford life.

On his return from Oxford, he accepted an invitation to join the English department at Wesley College (later United College). In 1933 he was appointed to the Chair of the Classics department, a position he filled till 1940, at which time he received an appointment at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, as Professor of English and Head of the Department. In 1948 he was appointed President of Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, a position he filled with credit till his retirement, following a severe coronary in 1964.

He was a good teacher and an able administrator. After his final retirement, he immersed himself in literary research and writing. The amount and variety of Watson Kirkconnell's writings almost staggers the imagination. The list includes 170 books and over 1,000 articles. In 1967 his original verse ran to some 1,000 pages and his translated verse to some 5,000 pages. Subject matter of prose writings included literature, history, teaching, the cause of peace, social conditions, politics, religion, and the

Watson Kirkconnell was a distinguished man of letters, scholar, teacher, historian, linguist, humanitarian, interpreter of the various ethnic elements in our Canadian population, leader and promoter of worthwhile causes, a good Canadian and a good world citizen. His wide range of interests and accomplishments was truly remarkable.

In widespread recognition of his work in many fields, he had received in 1967 twelve honorary doctorates from universities in Canada, the United States, Hungary and Germany; knighthoods from Iceland and Poland, and a large number of decorations, medals, and other awards, at home and abroad. He was an Officer of the Order of Canada.

A fourth generation Canadian, he was born in Port Hope, Ontario, in 1895.

various racial and ethnic elements in Canada.

He had a consuming interest in foreign literature. "My master passion has been the interpreting of foreign literatures in thousands of pages of my own verse and translations, and this has become not unimportant in the blending of many traditions in the Canadian nation." (Preface to *A Slice of Canada*)

"I have already explored (and translated from) all the languages of Europe, and have found in that study a progressive enlargement of delight whose margin fades forever and forever as I move."

Implicit in his accomplishment in translating is mastery of languages. Kirkconnell was without a peer in Canada and internationally eminent in the language arts. He regarded language as a medium through which the spirit of man has been able to express itself in power and beauty.

His industry was amazing; his power of concentration and speed of achievement remarkable. In the late thirties, when his work schedule was filled as usual, he was requested to translate Guttormur J. Guttormsson's ten-stanza poem *Sandy Bar*. He did this, in three hours on a Sunday afternoon, and he retained the clustering rhyme scheme of the original in his translation. Understandably, this was not his best translation.

His work was organized. When writing his book of poetry *The Tide of Life* (1930), he rationed his time for newspapers to five minutes a day.

In addition to his University work and voluminous writings, he was active in other fields, including the humanitarian and social.

At the time of his studies in England, he travelled extensively on the Continent and saw the deplorable post-war con-

ditions of many peoples there. He became an enthusiastic supporter of the League of Nations and was President of the Manitoba branch of the League of Nations Society, and Secretary of the Manitoba Branch of The Canadian Institute of International Affairs for nearly ten years.

He was alarmed by the threat of Russian Communism in the 1940's and he studied the Russian press closely. "*Seven Pillars of Freedom* (1949) was a book-length study of Communism, with its carefully organized drive for power, systematic elimination of whole strata of population in every country taken over." He was vindicated in his concern by Igor Gouzenko's revelations.

He was a staunch member of the Baptist Church. He preached on occasion as a layman and was President of the Baptist Federation of Canada, 1953-56.

He was responsive to the ideals of Masonry, and in 1967 had been a member of the craft for 47 years. He valued "a fellowship that can rise above nation, race, and creed in its brotherly love, religious faith, and fundamental morality."

He was actively concerned with the improvement of conditions in prisons and the rehabilitation of discharged prisoners. He was a member of a committee that visited Headingly Gaol, near Winnipeg, twice a month for five years and as secretary he helped to draft a comprehensive list of recommendations for improvement. In 1932, he was one of the founders of the Prisoners' Aid Society in Winnipeg, which in 1937, became the John Howard and Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba. This humanitarian service he continued at Hamilton.

He was a leader in the formation of various cultural and civic organizations,

a joint organizer of the Citizenship Branch, Ottawa; a charter member of the Canadian Author's Association and National President, 1944-46; Chairman of the Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1944-47. Among his memorable achievements as President of Acadia University was his leadership in securing support for the Nova Scotia Universities through the University grant system.

With all his industry, he was a very human person. "The basic values in life are human values", he said. He had had a happy family life and he had many good friends.

He was musical; in 1921 he studied briefly to become an opera singer and he was a member of the bass section of the Winnipeg Philharmonic Choir. More recently, he composed a light opera *The Mod of Grand Pre*, including one of the musical hits in this production.

He had a sense of humor and was a teller of tall tales, as in his book *The Flying Bull*. When his twins were born, he sent a postcard picture of them to a friend, inscribed "Far thu og gjör hid sama" (Go thou and do likewise).

The readers of *The Icelandic Canadian* will be especially interested in Watson Kirkconnell's Icelandic associations, which began with his arrival at Wesley College. A new vista was opened to him.

"When I settled in Winnipeg in 1922, no one in Canada seemed to have heard of any literatures except those in English and French. Historians and critics of Canadian letters mentioned no others. At Wesley College, however, I found Icelandic colleagues and students, and a section of the library was given over to Icelandic literature, written both in Iceland and in Canada. Two Icelandic weeklies, both published in Winnipeg,

were spangled with lyrics by Canadian Icelanders, and the *Timarit* of the local Icelandic National League was rich in creative literature." (*A Slice of Canada*, p. 75) He was much impressed with Icelandic and Icelandic Canadian literature. "The Icelanders are certainly one of the most articulate and culturally minded of all the nationality groups in Canada." (*A Slice of Canada*, p. 264) and the Icelandic people "are among the most active poetic people in the world." For his annual reviews of New Canadian letters in the *University of Toronto Quarterly*, he read carefully all current Icelandic Canadian publications.

He was well versed in the saga literature. "The Sagas, taken as a whole, constitute the most important contribution to European literature in the twelve centuries between Virgil and Dante."

He translated extensively from Icelandic and Icelandic Canadian poetry. His *North American Book of Icelandic Verse* (1930), published to coincide with the Millennial of Althing, included in its 228 pages Icelandic poetry, ancient, mediaeval and modern.

"My anthology proved to be a key to the hearts of the Canadian Icelanders. Their doors swung open even wider in 1935, when my *Canadian Overtones* included my renderings of thirty-six poems from fifteen Icelandic Canadian poets, together with a biographical note on each."

He wrote at considerable length about Icelandic literature in publications in Canada and in England. He contributed frequently to *The Icelandic Canadian*, "an excellent quarterly issued in English by the community since 1942." (*A Slice of Canada*, p. 264) His address delivered in Iceland when honored there, a survey of Icelandic Canadian literature, ran

10½ pages in the *Icelandic Canadian* (1963). He also spoke on Icelandic occasions as at an Icelandic Celebration at Gimli and at Riverton and Lundar.

His work in the field of Icelandic literature was recognized by honorary memberships in the Icelandic National League of America and the Viking Club of Winnipeg; an honorary fellowship in the Bokmenntafelag (Icelandic Society of Letters) in Reykjavik (1937) and being made Knight Commander of the Order of the Falcon (Icelandic), in 1963.

His most recent contribution to Icelandic Canadian literature was as one of four consultants in reading a mass of Icelandic Canadian literature, prose and poetry, to sift out suitable selections for a 300-page anthology, a project yet to be completed. He read with meticulous care and discernment.

Watson Kirkconnell was married twice. His first wife, Isabel Peel, died in childbirth after a year of marriage. His second wife, Hope Kitchener, was his life partner for 47 years. There were six children, three sons and three daughters.

What is the total impression of Watson Kirkconnell? One marvels at his literary achievement, volume and scope of subject matter, erudition, craftsmanship, word mastery and descriptive ability, sweep of imagination, and fineness of feeling. His translations as a whole have literary merit and they are a valuable contribution to the self-knowledge of the Canadian people. One marvels, too, at his other manifold achievements; his fullness of life.

The Icelandic people have had many good friends; Watson Kirkconnell was a very good friend.



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## THE ARBORG FEDERATED LADIES' AID FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

By Vordis Oddleifson



Five of the original fifteen charter members of the Arborg Federated Ladies' Aid who were present at the fiftieth birthday celebration of the organization were: (back row) Gudrun Palsson, Adalbjorg Sigvaldason and Elin Einarson; (front row) Gudbjorg Einarson and Valgerdur Nordal. Missing of the eight living charter members were Kristin Bjarnason, Winnipeg, Johanna Nordal, Betel Home, Selkirk, and Thora Kurtz, Beausejour.

Historical highlights presented at a birthday party held Nov. 27, 1976, at the Arborg Unitarian Church to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Arborg Federated Ladies' Aid.

\* \* \*

When members of the Arborg Federated (Unitarian) Church conceived the idea of celebrating the golden anniversary of their organization they did so with more than one thought in mind.

Of course we felt it would be fun to gather with friends and have a happy

time together. This alone would have been reason enough for a birthday party. Secondly, we thought it would be a good opportunity to express our thanks to the many women who are not members but have assisted us for years with our projects — women who have served on church cleaning committees, have cooked and sewed for our bazaars, donated to tombolas and fishponds, baked and helped serve at social functions, worked in the Church School and donated to our coffers. Surely our efforts would have been much poorer without this generous support. We thank them all.

Thirdly, and foremost in our minds, we wished to pay tribute to the women who founded this organization, who gave so much of their time and energy, often under trying circumstances, to make it flourish. And finally, perhaps unconsciously, I think we felt that if we delved into the past, explored the old records, we might recapture some of the enthusiasm and zeal that launched the ship fifty years ago — for surely much remains to be done, many fields are left to conquer and added inspiration could be only to the good.

In our attempt to capture the history of the past fifty years what we didn't realize was that putting the whole story together would be a monumental task. Although somewhat dimmed by the passage of time, all of the original minute books are still in existence except for one covering a brief period of one to two years, which we believe was lost in a fire.

Three of our members — Hulda Bjornson, Lauga Einarsson and Maria Nordal — have read through most of the minutes. They have compiled a complete membership list for the fifty-year period and made note of much interesting information. What I will attempt to do here today is merely mention a few of the highlights.

The first minutes are recorded in Icelandic until March 1958 when the original name 'Kvennfelag Sambandssafnadar i Arborg' was changed to 'Arborg Federated Ladies Aid' and English became the language of business at all meetings.

The first meeting was held on June 12, 1926, at the home of Mrs. Kristin Bjarnason, in Arborg. The first group consisted of fifteen women, fourteen of whom attended the first meeting:

Ingibjorg (Emma) von Renesse  
Marja Bjornsson  
Kristin Bjarnason  
Maria G. Bjornsson  
Adalbjorg Saemundson  
Gudbjorg Einarsson  
Sveinbjorg Halldorson  
Gudlaug Jakobson  
Kristin Schram  
Thora Schram  
Valgerdur Nordal  
Thora Saemundson  
Gudrun Palsson  
Johanna Nordal  
Elin Einarsson

Officers elected at the first meeting were:

President . . . . . Ingibjorg von Renesse  
Vice-Pres. . . . . Maria G. Bjornsson  
Secretary . . . . . Gudbjorg Einarsson  
Treasurer . . . . . Kristin Bjarnason

Of the original fifteen women, eight are still living and we are very happy to have five of them with us here today — Elin Einarsson, Valgerdur Nordal, Gud-

bjorg Einarsson, Gudrun Palsson, and Adalbjorg Saemundson (now Sigvaldason).

The aims of the organization as stated in the Constitution were:

- 1) to aid the congregation,
- 2) to promote liberal religious views in the community,
- 3) to help the needy.

The third article of the Constitution states that all women supporting these aims may belong even though they are not members of the congregation, while the fourth article states that girls who have reached the age of fifteen may join although they must be eighteen years of age before holding office.

A motion was made at this first meeting that the Secretary apply for membership for the new organization in what was then called 'Samband Islenzkra Frjalstruar Kvennfelaga i Nordur Ameriku', an alliance of Icelandic Ladies Aids within the liberal church movement. (This organization later adopted the English name 'Alliance of Icelandic Liberal Christian Women') That month two women attended a meeting of the Samband held in conjunction with the Church Conference at Gimli.

During this first year two meetings were held plus an annual meeting the following June. Reports showed that the ladies had served lunch at the Icelandic celebration at Hnusa in August and had planned a concert for October. They donated \$20.00 to the congregation and gave \$3.00 for ice cream and fruit for a pleasure trip for children organized by the congregation. They also contributed \$25.00 toward expenses for a Miss Petursson for Sunday School work. A request had been made to the T. Eaton Company for donation of remnants for making articles for a bazaar. The

treasury at the end of the year showed an income of \$218.15, expenses of \$130.99, a balance of \$87.16. At this first annual meeting the ladies pledged an additional \$100.00 towards the congregation's work for the year ahead.

And so the trend was established. In minutes of the early meetings note is made of various fund-raising projects — bazaars, old time dances, whist drives, concerts, plays, tombolas, raffles, and serving of lunches at innumerable functions (in 1928 refreshments were served following a play brought to Arborg by a group from the Winnipeg Federated Church, and a lunch of ice cream, pie and lemonade was served at a baseball game — to name a couple). And there is evidence throughout the records of donations to aid individuals and of gifts to the congregation (an altar cloth is given, chairs for the choir, a carpet) Minutes from the early 1930's record a discussion on beautifying the church grounds and a later meeting reports \$61.83 spent on church fence and planting.

It appears that monetary donations to the congregation and beautification and care of the church building were high priorities. But throughout the records of meetings, time and again we come upon evidence of concern for the welfare of youth. Several contributions were made to support the work of Miss Petursson who was presumably hired to promote Sunday School work. In 1931 it was reported by the secretary and I quote, 'that the minister be asked to get the young people to gather at the church to sing and have some entertainment to try to rouse their interest and make them feel at home in the church'.

In October 1938 two members, Mrs. Bjornsson and Mrs. von Renesse, attended a municipal meeting suggesting

enforcement of a regulation that all children up to fourteen years of age must be at home no later than 9:00 p.m. — and a curfew law was passed and enforced.

Concern was also evident regarding the environment for youth in the community and indeed in community welfare as a whole. At the July 1945 meeting a motion was made to send two women to visit other organizations and ask that they send delegates to the municipal meetings to see if anything could be done about having barn dances and other dances close at an early hour. At the following meeting it was reported that all the other Ladies Aids in Arborg agreed that all dances should close at 1:00 a.m. and it was suggested that written requests be sent by all groups to the municipal meeting. The following year, 1946, a motion was made to circulate a petition in the community to have all barn dances banned.

Some time before the law was passed to allow mixed drinking in beer parlors, it is recorded that the Ladies Aid wrote to Dr. S. O. Thompson, M.L.A., stating their strong opposition to the passing of this law.

In April 1957 a motion was passed that the Alliance (Kvennasamband) write to the Federal government requesting an increase of \$6.00 a month in the old-age pension and the following meeting recommended another \$6.00 from the Provincial government.

Interest in affairs of the community by the Ladies Aid has continued throughout the years and has been translated into action by supporting many of its projects such as dental clinics for school children, Collegiate Yearbook, Blood donor Clinics, Sunrise Lodge for senior citizens and the Hospital.

In 1957 several years had elapsed without a Sunday School in the Church



and there was no longer a permanent minister serving after Rev. Melan left. Interest had been re-kindled following two summers of service by a young student minister Allen Myrick. The Ladies Aid took the initiative in organizing and supporting the Church School in its early stages. Fourteen children were present on the opening Sunday, May 2, 1957. By June twenty-eight were attending, reaching a high point of thirty-six later on. This project continued for some thirteen to fourteen years, by which time the number of young children in the congregation had greatly declined. Interest and support was also given at this time to a young people's group, the LRY (Liberal Religious Youth) that was active.

In later years the Ladies Aid took part in repaying the church debt, incurred at the time of re-modelling. It has taken care of church cleaning, served coffee at various church functions and has committees to bring Christmas cheer and visit the sick.

Any account, however brief, would be amiss if no special mention was made of our outside affiliations and how these have enriched our experiences as Ladies Aid members. From the first, as referred to previously, we have been members of the Samband or Alliance of Icelandic Liberal Christian Women, now known as the Western Alliance of Unitarian Women. Through this organization we have kept in touch with other groups by way of an annual conference. In 1936 plans were made to build the Hnaua Fresh Air Camp. Our aid along with others in the Alliance made contributions in funds and equipment to this cause over a number of years.

In 1948 representatives from our group attended a dinner hosted by the Gimli Ladies Aid with Dr. Lotta Hitsch-

manova as honored guest. We have taken keen interest in her work, participating in the Unitarian Service Committee clothing drives and contributing annually to the U.S.C. Fund.

In June 1939 the Ladies Aid affiliated with the General Women's Alliance representing American and Canadian groups within the liberal religious movement with the headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts. Because of the great distances involved, our participation in their conferences has been minimal, but we have had contact through publications and program materials, and on occasion have had personal contact with some of its leaders. I will mention a few of these occasions.

In October 1950 Mrs. Pickson from St. Louis, then president of the General Alliance, visited the Winnipeg Icelandic Ladies Aid and the English Ladies Aid. Members from Winnipeg, Arnes, Arborg, Riverton, and Oak Point attended a dinner meeting in Winnipeg where Mrs. Pickson spoke on the work of the Alliance. According to the faithfully kept minute books of the Arborg Federated Ladies Aid, her greeting was one sentence spoken in Icelandic — 'Boston bidur ad heilsa', probably the only Icelandic she knew.

Three years later our group was visited by Mrs. J. Farmer of Winnipeg, who then served as the General Alliance's regional director for the Mid-West region (including Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Minnesota). She reported that 22,000 women were members of the General Alliance and she spoke of their work.

In 1954 we were very pleased and honored to have one of our own members, Stefania Sigurdson, serve as Director of the Mid-West Region. The October 1954 minutes state that 'Ste-

fania reported on her trip to Putnam, California, and meetings she attended there as Director'.

The name General Alliance has now been dropped in favor of Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation or U.U.W.F.

Mrs. Connie Burgess, the Executive Director of the U.U.W.F., visited Arborg in 1967. On this occasion members of the Riverton and Gimli Ladies Aids were invited. A dinner was held in her honor, followed by a meeting in the Church. At this meeting Mrs. Burgess presented a card of recognition to one of our members, Mrs. Olof Oddleifson, whose name was placed on the Unitarian Universalist Roll of Recognition, a list of living women who have given outstanding service to their denomination. At this meeting Mrs. Burgess also presented Unitarian Universalist pins to the following honorary members in our Ladies Aid — Thorbjorg Sigurdsson, Valgerdur Nordal, Elin Einarsson, Gudbjorg Einarsson, Gudrun Palsson, and Olof Oddleifson.

This has been but a fleeting glimpse of some highlights of a story. The record contains much more and there is much that cannot be recorded. No tally has been kept of friendships made and cemented, of humorous incidents that brought forth laughter, of sadness shared by understanding friends, of confidences exchanged, and of those delightful moments spent in conversation over cups of coffee. All these the pen of the historian can never capture.

On this day when we pause to look back we do so with feelings of appreciation and thankfulness to those who kindled the flame that has burned for fifty years. Someone once said, 'It is better to light a little candle than to

curse the darkness'. Perhaps we can pay tribute to our founders in no better way than by keeping our candles burning brightly, adding our own small lights to those of others who strive to banish darkness — in our groups, in our community and indeed throughout the land.

For the Arborg Federated Ladies Aid on its fiftieth birthday my wish is this — may you grow and flourish for many years, may you meet the challenge of new days with new ideas, new goals, new members and new friends.

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## FRANK THOROLFSON, A.T.C.M., L.A.B., MUS.M., F.R.H.C.M.

By Ingibjorg S. Goodridge



"The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom and before honour is humility." Proverbs 15:33.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Wisdom is knowledge and is not easily attained. It demands hard work, steadfastness and much personal discipline.

Humility is a rare gift given to few. Humility works quietly, unobtrusively and never flaunts itself. It is aware that talent is not to be taken lightly, but is to be used to the utmost ability of the possessor.

Honour, the reward of hard work and dedication, comes to a select few who have been faithful and diligent and who

have reached their goal despite obstacles, trials and oft-times ill health.

These traits were part of Frank Thorolfson's personality. Only those who knew him intimately — his family and co-workers — were cognizant of this fact.

Frank Thorolfson was born on February 5, 1914, in Winnipeg, Canada. His parents were Halldor Thorolfson and Fridrikka Frederickson. His father was born at Litla Gröf, Borgarfirdi, Iceland and came at an early age to Winnipeg with his adoptive parents. His mother was the first girl child born of Icelandic parents in Winnipeg. Her parents met on shipboard en route from Iceland to Canada and were married by Rev. Pall Thorlaksson, upon reaching their destination. Their elder child was the first boy to be born in Winnipeg to this group of immigrants.

It might be said that Frank Thorolfson was brought up in a typical Canadian Icelandic home of the era. Certain standards were expected of the young; respect for the Church and its teachings; respect for learning and respect for their elders. Along with these principles, children were taught to be law-abiding, truthful, honest and to do whatever was required of them to the best of their ability and never to shirk a duty.

The Thorolfson home had a feature which was quite unique. It was a home where music was of utmost importance. The love of music was shared by the whole family and permeated all the family activities. The father was a baritone who sang in several churches as

soloist and as a choir member. The mother early became a member and supporter of numerous musical organizations. Both the sisters studied piano from an early age. Their home was a veritable mecca for budding Icelandic musicians, both vocal and instrumental. It was a warm, musical, happy home.

Frank began his formal musical instruction at an early age. It soon became evident that he showed considerable promise. He continued his studies and in due time received the degrees of A.T.C.M. and L.A.B. Music was to become his life, his work and his prime interest.

During his early years, he was actively involved in the musical life of Winnipeg. For a time he led the University of Manitoba Orchestra, founded and conducted the Winnipeg Chamber Orchestra and Choir, served as choir director of Crescent Fort Rouge United Church and also as director and organist of Greenwood United and First Lutheran Churches.

After returning from active service overseas during World War II with the Canadian Forces, he resumed his studies. He now turned to mastering other types of music — pipe organ, conducting both choral and instrumental, adding composing to his list of interests.

He then entered the Faculty of Music, University of Chicago, to pursue these studies and remained in Chicago until he had completed his studies and attained the degree of Mus. M.

Professor Thorolfson, upon returning to Canada, accepted the position as Head of the School of Music University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus, where he was a most successful teacher. He also was organist at a church in Regina for some time.

He was commissioned by the Government of Saskatchewan to compose a

musical work commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of that province's entry into the Dominion of Canada. He trained and conducted a choir and orchestra which presented his composition as part of the official celebration. The performance received high praise.

His next move was to McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, as Professor of Music and head of that Faculty. In addition to his teaching duties, he founded and conducted a student choir which became known as the McMaster University Choir. This group became increasingly popular as time went on and gained a high degree of excellence. He also found time to compose music and to write papers and articles.

In 1972 McMaster University, in recognition of his outstanding contributions, conferred on him the honour of appointing him Chancellor of the Royal Hamilton College of Music, a position he held until his death.

At the very height of his career, he was stricken with a kidney disease which he fought valiantly for many years. During his many hospital stays he continued working and planning — ignoring the fact that his illness had a dire prognosis. When he was released from hospital, he returned as soon as possible to his duties at the University. This pattern was to be repeated many times over. He chose to carry on as though there was nothing wrong. By having a dialysis machine installed in his home he was able to take treatments without being hospitalized. His wife soon became very proficient in administering treatments.

Professor and Mrs. Thorolfson founded the Hamilton Chapter, Kidney Foundation, at St. Joseph's Hospital. The widow continues to support and work for this very worthwhile project.

In October 1976 Frank Thorolfson entered hospital where he remained until his death on March 26, 1977. During all this time he kept up his interests and with the help of his wife, continued with his research and writing. He maintained his cheerful, optimistic outlook to the end. This speaks volumes for his deep faith.

Besides his wife Elinor Cannon, he is survived by his daughter Mrs. G. Salhany (Frances), Montreal, Quebec, his stepson David R. Carr, Owen Sound, Ontario, his sisters, Mrs. Lincoln Johnson (Pearl) and Mrs. Walter Allison (Furby), both of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and three granddaughters.

A private family service was followed

the next day by a Memorial Service at James Street Baptist Church, Hamilton, Ontario. The large attendance there testified to the esteem in which he was held.

Frank Thorolfson rarely mentioned any of his accomplishments or successes — these came to light after his death, in the form of tributes from friends and co-workers who came from near and far to pay last respects.

Besides his musical compositions and written works, he leaves a legacy of courage, optimism and faith. His warm, kindly manner will be long remembered by all who knew him and his self-discipline and humility will be an inspiration to many a young student.

## NEWS

The Viking Club of Winnipeg held its annual meeting April 21, at the Scandinavian Centre, 360 Young Street, Winnipeg. President is Mr. Chris Schubert. Elected to the executive for the coming year for the Icelanders were Magnus Eliasson, Svein Sveinson, and John Borgfjord.

+ + +

### ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF B.C.

#### Folk Festival Display

The Icelandic Canadian Club of B.C. plans to feature a display of fine quality Icelandic artifacts — woollens, ceramics, silver work, etc. — at the Canadian Folk Society Folk Festival '77 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Vancouver, on May 14th and 15th. Members are asked to contribute items for display.

Singing and dancing groups from a wide variety of ethnic cultures will be featured at the concerts.

(Based on a news item, April 1977)

### GEORGE HANSON AWARDED A \$3,500 FELLOWSHIP

George Hanson, of Chicago, has been Awarded \$3,500 Fellowship from Loyola University, in Chicago, for research on his doctoral degree. The title of his dissertation is "Icelandic Educational Tradition And Modernization in a Cultural Perspective". The research for this dissertation will take him to Cornell University, where he will be able to use the resources of the Fiske Icelandic collection, and then to Iceland in August.

George Hanson has been to Iceland five times already and Iceland was his home for a year when he was a teacher at the U.S. Naval Station at Keflavik. At that time he did research for his Master's thesis (University of Chicago) on the history of the National Library of Iceland during the twentieth century.

His roots on his mother's side go back to Iceland via Manitoba (Arborg). His father was born in Sweden.

## ERIC STEFANSON (1913 - 1977)

By W. Kristjanson



Eric Stefanson was a dedicated community worker, member of Parliament, and General Manager of the (Manitoba) Interlake Development Corporation.

Eric was born in Winnipeg in 1913. The family lived for some years at Vestfold, in the western part of the Interlake district.

His secondary education he received at the Daniel McIntyre Collegiate, in Winnipeg. Education was always important to him and over the period of years he continued to attend seminars and conferences to widen his field of knowledge and vision.

As a student, and later, he took an active part in sports, especially track and field. He excelled in the short distances; he was a 10-second man in the hundred yard dash. He was an active member of the Y.M.C.A. and played basketball with the famed Winnipeg Toilers. At the

Icelandic Celebration (Manitoba) he won the Skuli Hanson Individual Championship Trophy twice.

His first career-venture was on a dairy farm at Oak Point, on Lake Manitoba, from 1935 to 1949. He then moved to Gimli, where he operated a general store for ten years and a general insurance business from 1956 to 1969. In 1970 he became General Manager of the (Manitoba) Interlake Development Corporation, a position he held with credit until his death.

At Gimli, he was very active in community affairs. He served as municipal councillor for the town for eight years and for four years as Deputy Mayor. He was president of the Gimli Curling Club, the Gimli Recreation Centre, Gimli Kinsmen Club, the Gimli Chamber of Commerce, and the Gimli Progressive Conservative Association. In a wider field, he was president of the Icelandic Celebration Committee (Manitoba) and a director of the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce. In Masonry, he was Past Master of the Lisgar Lodge in Selkirk, a member of the Viking Lodge, Gimli, and a member of the Khartum Shrine Temple in Winnipeg.

Launched into politics, he was elected to the House of Commons, representing the Selkirk constituency, in 1958, and was re-elected three times, to complete a ten-year term. He served on many standing committees, including Agriculture, A.R.D.A., Marine and Fisheries, and National Defence. He also had an outstanding record of community service.

Eric had a remarkable memory for people's names and events and could

quote almost verbatim speeches he had heard. This gift he would find very useful in political life.

A large part of the Manitoba Interlake has had a long story of economic stringency. For the last ten years the federal F.R.E.D. project has helped to improve conditions somewhat. Beyond that Eric devoted himself since 1970 as General Manager of the Interlake Development Corporation to improve conditions. Realizing the potential damage to the Interlake from the Garrison project, if fully implemented, he campaigned vigorously against this project.

He realized that federal help alone was not the answer for the problems of the Interlake. In the Corporation's 1975 annual report, he wrote, "The key to development lies in the people themselves and their strong feeling for their communities and region."

As his annual reports show, he strove "to build a future for coming generations which offer a wide choice of occupation and life style."

"The Interlake was his kingdom", says Mayor Ken Reid, of Arborg, "the Interlake Development Corporation was his pride. He was respected and admired by all those with whom he worked or had contact. Everything he did, he did well."

Eric was married in 1935 to Sigrun Sigurdson. There are four sons who have all done well professionally and carry on the family tradition of good citizenship.

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## VALDIMAR BJORNSON

By Björn Björnson



Valdimar Björnson, who retired from the post of Minnesota State Treasurer two years ago after a lifetime devoted to politics and journalism, recently returned to his home in Minneapolis from Iceland, where he had been invited to address the Icelandic-American Society of Reykjavik. Though he rarely travels so far to make a speech, public speaking is daily bread for Valdimar who earned the name of 'boy orator' when he won a multiregional high school oratorical contest in 1924.

Valdimar is half Canadian, wholly Icelandic, and unmistakably American. Both his parents were born in Iceland. His father, Gunnar B. Björnson, was born at Massel In Jökulsarhlid in Nordurmulasysla and his mother, Ingibjörg Augustine Hurdal Björnson at Hol in Hördudal in Dalasysla. Gunnar came to the Minneota, Minnesota, com-

munity with his mother in 1876 when he was nearly four years old. Ingibjörg, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jon Hurdal, came with her family to Winnipeg in 1883 when she was approaching five.

She grew up in the Churchbridge, Saskatchewan, and Winnipeg areas. When she was only about 12 her mother died, leaving a family of seven children, two sons and five daughters. One of the sons, Jon, won wide renown as a champion long-distance runner. Another well-known member of the Hurdal family was Sigridur (Mrs. S. K. Hall) an operatic singer who was for a long time soloist at the First Lutheran Church in Winnipeg.

Ingibjörg, known to childhood friends as 'Emma', and to English-speaking as Augustine, began to support herself when barely a teen-ager, working most of the time in and around Winnipeg. On a visit to Minneota, Minnesota, she accepted employment with an Icelandic firm that operated a large mercantile establishment there. It was there that she met Gunnar B. Björnson and they were married in 1903. Gunnar was editor of a weekly newspaper, the **Minneota Mascot**, and was also publisher of **Vinland**, the only Icelandic-language newspaper ever published in the United States, a venture that lasted from 1902 to 1907.

Valdimar, born August 29, 1906, grew up in his father's newspaper office, starting work handsetting type when only 12 years old. He was graduated from the Minneota high school in 1924 and a year later took over management of the newspaper when his father was appointed to the Minnesota Tax Com-

mission and moved to St. Paul with most of the other members of his family.

In the fall of 1927 Valdimar entered the University of Minnesota and was graduated in the spring of 1930 with a Bachelor of Arts degree, summa cum laude, with a major in political science. During this time his brother, the late Hjalmar Björnson, was editor of the **Minneota Mascot**. When Hjalmar became an editorial writer for the **Minneapolis Tribune**, Valdimar returned to management of the **Mascot**.

In the summer of 1934 Valdimar took a brief vacation from his publishing chores and visited Europe, spending a number of weeks in Iceland. His journey to Iceland was virtually a pilgrimage to a Holy Land, a land called home (heim) in the lexicon of every Icelander, including the western. There he became acquainted with the historic sagasteads and the humble steads that had been home to Minneota Icelanders.

He sharpened his knowledge of Icelandic and broadened his knowledge of Icelanders. From his paternal grandmother he had acquired a facility in that favorite indoor sport of the Icelander, genealogy. Where once he could trace someone's ancestry unto the third and fourth generation, he was now prepared to go back to the Reformation. On occasion his conversations and his correspondence took on the aspect of a begat chapter in the Bible.

Valdimar returned to Minneota in the fall of 1934 and resumed his functions as editor and publisher. Early in 1935 he launched a new career as commentator for radio station KSTP in St. Paul. He made daily news broadcasts and covered sessions of the Minnesota legislature. He was also an editorial writer for the **Minneapolis Journal** in 1935 and 1936 and for the **Minneapolis Tribune** from

1937 to 1941. For the benefit of radio listeners who prefer monosyllables, Valdimar's name was abbreviated to Val — a name by which he is known to most Minnesotans.

To the United States Navy, however, he is known as Kristjan V. Björnson. The armed services make no deviation from their rule — first names come first. Valdimar disappeared into the U.S. Navy when he volunteered in 1942 and Kristjan V. emerged as a Lieutenant Commander j.g. With unaccustomed perspicacity, the Navy sent Commander Björnson to Iceland where his knowledge of the language and people was put to good use.

Valdimar remained on naval duty in Iceland for nearly four years. He was discharged from the service late in 1946 after having participated in negotiations that permitted the Americans to remain at the Keflavik airbase in times of peace.

Naval service in Iceland was not all duty for Valdimar. He found time to woo and win his wife, Gudrun Jonsdottir, a native of Isafjordur and they first set up housekeeping in one of the many Nissen huts that dotted the landscape around Reykjavik during the war years. They now have five grown children, Helga, Jon, Kristin, Valdimar and Maria (Maja). Helga, now Mrs. Pieter Visscher, presented them with their first grandchild, a girl, given the name Kristin.

Returning to the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Valdimar became Associate Editor of the **St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch** in 1947. He also continued making radio and television broadcasts.

Valdimar's consuming interest has always been politics — he took part in his father's campaign for Congress in 1924 before he was old enough to vote and has been active in every campaign

since. A Republican by birth and conviction, Valdimar was chairman of the party organization in his native county in 1932 and 1934.

Frequently urged to run for state office, Valdimar agreed to run for State Treasurer in 1950 and won handily. He was re-elected in 1952 and two years later he agreed to take on Hubert Humphrey, then seeking his second term in the U.S. Senate. Senator Humphrey was re-elected but he experienced the closest race in any of his campaigns for the Senate.

Valdimar returned to work on the St. Paul newspapers and in 1956 was again elected State Treasurer. He was re-elected in every campaign he entered, frequently out-polling every office-seeker on the Republican ticket and in some campaigns, was the lone Republican elected. The growing majorities by which he was re-elected earned him the name 'Mr. Republican' among Minnesotans. He served as Minnesota's State Treasurer for 22 years, retiring in January, 1975.

Valdimar has been busy in retirement

with writing and speech-making. He has long had an interest in things historical, chiefly about his native state and the Scandinavian countries. He is the author of a two-volume **History of Minnesota**, and of numerous booklets about Icelandic and pioneer history.

He is a member of the Minnesota Historical Society and of the national board of trustees of the American-Scandinavian Foundation. He is also a member of the national board of the American Council for Nationalities Service. He was long president of the International Institute in St. Paul and twice general chairman of its 'Festival of Nations'.

Valdimar has been decorated by the Republic of Iceland as Commander of the Order of the Falcon and by King Haakon of Norway as Knight, First Class, of the Order of St. Olav. Among honor societies to which he has been elected are Phi Beta Kappa, Delta Sigma Rho, and Sigma Delta Chi. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of Grace University Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, and the Reykjavik Chapter of the Masonic Order.

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## STEFAN AGUST BJARNASON 1886-1922

By Thorvaldur Johnson



10th of August, 1886. Four years later his family moved to Mary Hill, near Lake Manitoba, where his father took up farming. He was already 13 years old when a school was established there, but he had the good fortune of having for a teacher Thorvaldur Thorvaldson, an outstanding scholar who died in 1904, while attending Harvard University. Stefan's public school attendance occupied only 20 months during the four years of his schooling.

Stefan entered Wesley College in Winnipeg at the age of 17 and graduated with a B.A. degree in 1910. While at Wesley he distinguished himself as a scholar and as an athlete. His athletic prowess won him three gold medals and he set a new college record for the one-mile race.

As a B.A. degree was no key to worldly success. Stefan entered the Manitoba Agricultural College in 1912, graduating with distinction as a B.S.A. in 1915. In the same year he became Assistant Superintendent of the Brandon Experimental Farm, where he took special interest in horticulture and forestry. In the spring of 1916 he was transferred to the Morden Experimental Farm, where he took charge of research in horticulture.

At this time much of Canada's young manhood was overseas in the midst of the first World War. Late in 1917 Stefan resigned his position at Morden and joined the Canadian Army Medical Corps. But owing to some illness he experienced at that time he was found medically unfit for overseas service. Nevertheless he was able to work in

At the turn of the century Icelanders in Canada and the United States were engaged in the struggle of finding a satisfactory place for themselves, socially and economically. Fortunately there were many young men of great ability and high character present at that time who helped to make this struggle a success. One of these was Stefan Agust Bjarnason, whose promising career was cut short at the age of 36. Short though it was it is worth recording now, 55 years after his death. The present account of his life is based largely on the excellent obituary by his friend Hjalmur F. Danielson in the Icelandic weekly **Logberg** of the 15th of February 1923 but is supplemented by personal recollection of Stefan in the last 14 years of his life.

Stefan was born in Winnipeg on the

military hospitals in Canada to the end of the war in 1918.

It had long been Stefan's ambition to study natural science and agriculture at the famous University of California at Berkeley. There, in the fall of 1919, he entered on studies in his favorite field of horticulture. He obtained his M.S. degree in December, 1920, and was awarded the James Rosenberg Memorial Scholarship in agriculture for further studies leading to a Ph.D. degree. But it was not to be. The disease that was to set term to his existence was already at work. The doctors diagnosed cancer, and there was no cure. He was brought home to his relatives in Manitoba and passed away on the 18th of November, 1922.

All the foregoing is merely a recital of the chief incidents in a short life, for he was only 36 when he died. It tells little about the make-up of the man. He was possessed of a keen intellect and a broad range of interests. If he thought something ought to be done he took action to do it or to see to it that it was done. At Wesley College he wrote for the student publication. He gave agricultural advice, in Icelandic, to Icelandic farmers in the weekly publication **Heimskringla**, because at that time many Icelandic farmers could not read English. He was one of the leaders in the Icelandic Student Society in Winnipeg, and he took an active part in Unitarian church affairs. When he arrived in California he found that there was a Scandinavian Club at the university in Berkeley. He immediately joined it and was soon elected as its president. The Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian students who made up this club were interested in expanding the Department of Germanic Studies to include the Scandinavian languages,

but without any thought of the Icelandic language. When Stefan was elected president he recommended strongly that attention should be given to Icelandic literature, both ancient and modern. It is a question how successful this effort was, but at any rate it did gain the support of the departmental head.

The writer of these lines was privileged to have Stefan as a teacher for one year in public school and well remembers the quality of his teaching and the strictness of his discipline, and also remembers the intimacy of his friendship in later years.

I recall an incident that illustrates Stefan's attitude to life. A group of friends was gathered to bid him farewell when he left for California. Optimistic as always, he was looking forward to his venture. Someone raised the question of the nature of 'genius'. Stefan approvingly quoted Thomas A. Edison's definition — "genius is 99 per cent perspiration and one per cent inspiration."

Perhaps the most intimate of Stefan's friends was Thorbergur Thorvaldson, the brilliant scholar who was to become one of Canada's foremost chemists and a world authority on the chemistry of cement. When his older brother Thorvaldur left to pursue his studies at Harvard University. Thorbergur followed in his footsteps as a teacher at Mary Hill. Stefan became an intimate friend and a correspondence grew up between the two. This correspondence was initiated by a letter from Stefan to Thorbergur in which he pays a tribute to his former teacher, Thorvaldur, who died in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on the 9th of February, 1904. Stefan's letter, dated the 26th of February, was a highly emotional tribute written in Icelandic which was then a more famil-

iar means of expression than English. Two letters from this correspondence throw such a clear light on Stefan's character that I am tempted to quote from them.

The first letter deals with his first experiences as a school teacher. "Last night we had a debate at school but only five of the crowd were willing to take part. Four of these are in the highest grade, so I hope the younger ones will come around and do their best the next time. At least they all promised to do so after staying in and receiving a very hearty scolding. I don't scold them very often but when I do . . . Well, there are tears shed . . . I think they have been hardened and made altogether shameless by my predecessors." In fact, the children had taken over the school and dominated the teachers. Stefan reversed the process. Then he expressed at some length his philosophy of teaching. It should be directed at helping the intelligent and the industrious who would benefit from it rather than the dull or the lazy who would not.

Another letter describes a clash with

the formidable Professor A. H. Reginald Buller, a great botanist and teacher but a strict disciplinarian. It appears that while waiting for Buller to come around to him in a laboratory class to show him how best to use the microscope, Stefan was chewing a grain of wheat. To Buller this was *lese-majeste* and for this he ejected him from the class room. Stefan comments: "But wait, I'll settle the score with him before I attend that class again. I am going to tell him that there are lots of Kindergarten institutions in the city without starting one in any department of the University." This he did; and Buller apologized. Later he said that, "I gracefully accepted his apology. And now we can start on even terms again."

I hope that what has been said here about Stefan Agust Bjarnason has sufficiently indicated what manner of man he was. To him, I think, may be applied the famous words that the poet Laurence Binyon wrote for those of Stefan's generation that fell in the first World War. "They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn."

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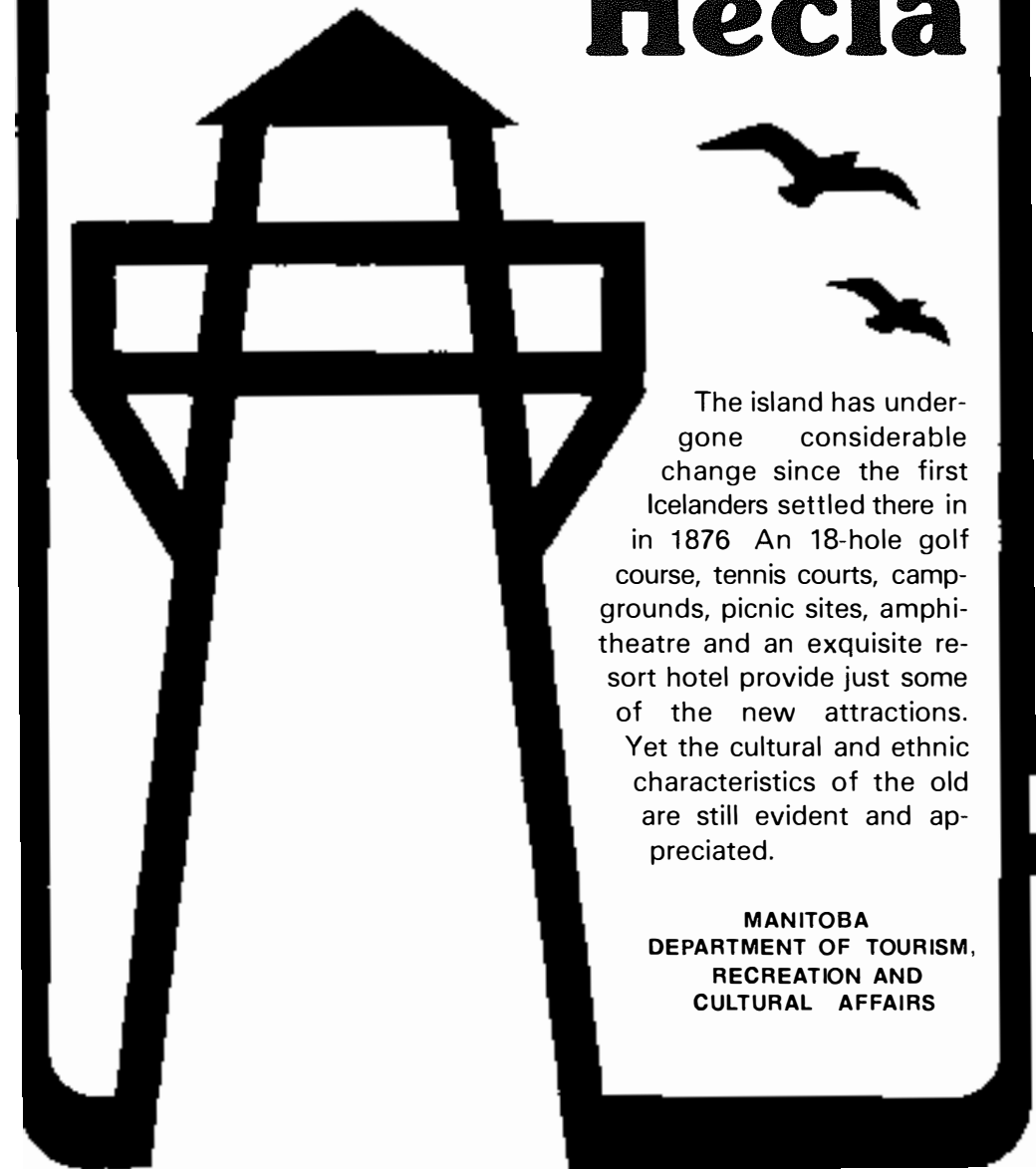
Phone 642-5418

MEATS VEGETABLES  
GROCERIES

JOEY, BRIAN AND KEN ARNASON, PROPS.

Traditionally Icelandic  
Historically Romantic

# Hecla



The island has undergone considerable change since the first Icelanders settled there in 1876. An 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, campgrounds, picnic sites, amphitheatre and an exquisite resort hotel provide just some of the new attractions. Yet the cultural and ethnic characteristics of the old are still evident and appreciated.

MANITOBA  
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM,  
RECREATION AND  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

## KRISTVIN (CHRIS) HELGASON, OF CHICAGO RECEIVES RECOGNITION



Kristvin (Chris) Swain Helgason, of Chicago, has been chosen by the Department of Mental Health, his employer, to be listed in *Who's Who of the Midwest*.

Biographical details include the following.

Son of Eric and Helga Helgason, farmers in the Kandahar district in Saskatchewan, in the 1920's.

Born in Selkirk, Manitoba in 1905.

Attended high school in Wynyard, Saskatchewan.

Went to the United States in 1928, secured further education and went on to achieve a career of note in the teaching and mental health fields.

Served with the U.S. Airborne Troops in World War II.

Student at DePaul University 1960-64.

Bachelor of Science degree, Gov-

ernors State University, Park Forest, Illinois, 1976.

Teacher, therapist, 20 years, Department of Mental Health, Chicago.

President, State Hospital Employees, Illinois 1960-63.

Secretary-Treasurer, Icelandic Association of Chicago, 1967-72.

Currently working on his M.A. in Literature.

"The emphasis of my training program was on the rehabilitation and the re-occupational goals for patient trainees to return to their jobs or occupations, which they held in today's modern office skills. The results were often very rewarding. I hear from many of my ex-trainees, who now cope with the real world. Some have married and some have children. Others have returned to their previous jobs and families. This activity and training was at the Chicago Read Mental Health Center operated by the Department of Mental Health, State of Illinois." (Kristvin Helgason) — W.K.

\* \* \*

### FROM B.C.

The Icelandic Canadian Club of B.C. Thorrablot, February 19, was attended by 172 people. Herman and Olof Eyford, dedicated community workers, were presented with honorary life memberships.

Solskin Ladies Aid has purchased a projector for "Hofn", the Icelandic home, Vancouver, and hopes to hold film showings for the residents regularly.

## L. LEMOINE FITZGERALD EXHIBITION MARCH 7 - 29, 1977

A Centennial Event of the  
University of Manitoba

By Gissur Eliasson

The presentation of this address was part of a Colloquium 'FitzGerald as teacher and colleague'. This series of lectures was arranged to coincide with his retrospective exhibition in Gallery III at the School of Art.

LeMoine FitzGerald (1890-1956) the last member of the famous Canadian Group of Seven, was the principal of the Winnipeg School of Art from 1929 to 1946. During ten of those years the author of this article was privileged to have been associated with this great man — first as a student and then upon graduation as a member of his staff.

It is interesting to note here that the Winnipeg School of Art was established in 1913 and that the first student to register was of Icelandic origin, Sophia Vigfusson, better known as Mrs. Sophia Wathne.

\* \* \*

"O fearful lapse of time pregnant with strange mutability."

These words from the pen of an unknown author accompany my thoughts this evening as we embark on this sentimental journey back to the FitzGerald era. It is a trail that is almost filled in by the erosion of time and the sweeping winds of change. It is a trail that leads over the tenuous bridge between two worlds, traditional and modern, past and present. Finally it is a trail that will find its way back to an institution which was for two decades the lengthened shadow of one man.

I have no doubts about the ability of the members of this panel to revive vivid recollections of the late Dr. FitzGerald, for our memories of him will remain forever green, but doubts about our collective ability to draw back the curtain of time so that those who were not associated with him personally can glimpse the private world in which he moved, laboured and had his being is another matter.

We all know that it is possible to appreciate the fragrance and bloom of a flowering plant without much knowledge of the elements involved in its growth, but the botanist insists on the importance of examining its roots for a fuller understanding of its genetic origin, chance of survival etc. So it is also with art and artists — the art historian appraises the work of art in relation to the economic, social and cultural period that produced it. Metaphorically speaking then the intervening years — the fearful lapse of time — makes it difficult to recapture an age when locally produced art sprang from a single traditional root in isolation. The present milieu with its very complicated and complex root-system that feeds upon the living and dead cultures of the entire universe is far removed from the placid plateau where time moved at a snail's pace if it moved at all. The sudden shifts and rapid changes since have blurred the scene and threatened traditional art values from time to time, but the roots are permanently anchored, for as long as



man lives and breathes he will produce an art that reflects his environment.

The scope of this paper is Mr. FitzGerald's fame as artist, but I must touch on his financial circumstances, for there always seemed to be some talk about how hard up he was financially and how a few philanthropists had helped him stave off starvation and keep the wolf from the door. These reports of poverty have come to me as recently as a couple of years ago and as far back as I can remember. Truthfully I know nothing of these rumors for I don't recall him ever mentioning money or the lack of it — I do recall him saying to a well-meaning art dealer who suggested that he change his style of painting to a more palatable taste for public consumption so that his work would sell better, that he would rather starve than compromise his art. This reply is probably the most revealing statement about the character of the man as an artist and as a teacher for his aesthetic passion was the essence of his nature. He was an artist by birth and not by choice or training. I feel he was a rich man spiritually and he gave generously of his wealth.

From the day that he felt the pull of the prairieland on the outskirts of the city as a boy of fourteen he heard the beat of a different drum. When he walked from the classroom down the long corridor of the Winnipeg School of Art with measured unhurried steps to the privacy of his office-studio as a grown man of mature wisdom and experience, his measured unhurried steps were in tune with the same drum. The sounds he was now hearing were finding visual expression in the compositions of tiny pen and pencil strokes which as far as I know were his own invention for I have never seen them elsewhere; or these inner impulses were being translated

into those deft touches of brush and palette knife on paper and canvas. His works speak for the man. They are eloquent accomplishments of a superb craftsman transmitting his concepts of beauty into an idealized form that fuses the quiet contemplation of nature into a uniquely elegant and poetic visual composition.

William Hazlitt has written the following words about one of the great men of his time and because I find them so applicable to Mr. FitzGerald I quote them here: "He comprehended the whole of his subject at a single glance — everything was riveted in its place; there was no feebleness, no forgetfulness, no pause, no distraction — the ardour of his mind overcame every obstacle. His imagination was of the same quality as his understanding and was under the same guidance. It was not given to emotion but went straightforward like an arrow to its mark with unerring aim. It was his servant not his master."

To emphasize further this genuine singleness of purpose I would like to include here the lines of Robert Henri ascribed to Thomas Eakins. "His vision was not touched by fashion. He cared nothing for prettiness or cleverness in life or in art. He struggled to apprehend the constructive force in nature and to employ in his works the principles found. His quality was honesty. Integrity is the word that best fits him."

During Mr. FitzGerald's tenure at the Winnipeg School of Art I believe he strove to maintain the tradition established by his predecessors Alex Musgrove, Frans Johnston and C. K. Gebhardt. There was no need to change. The imported plaster casts were standing up well and the assortment of classical antiquity was much in evidence as objects for admiration and study. These also

served when strewn about as silent reminders of "The glory that was Greece and the splendor that was Rome" or was it the other way around? By today's standards of art education I'm not certain how the courses of the day would compare with ours, nor do I think it matters for they were useful and relevant to their needs and each day decrees its own standards. I do know that the teaching stressed the thorough groundwork and practical training required for successful commercial art careers, which for the majority of the students was the sole reason for being there. The recognized purpose of the art school was to provide a vocation of applied art for making a living. This was the only justification for going to any school in the depression years. The courses as I remember them were weighted heavily in favor of technical training and skill, in fact skill and art were synonymous — a concept that is now being revived by the recent vogue set by photo-realism.

The significance of the role of the teacher within the framework of the old art school is almost beyond the pale of our comprehension. All he could offer, all he could give was himself, his ability and experience. Books of art he had but few — slides, prints or reproductions in authentic colours he had none — art journals, films and filmstrips were unknown. Without these modern day resources he had to inspire, motivate and instruct. His work load consisted of five and a half full days and three nights weekly during the school term.

Mr. FitzGerald taught the Life classes, an appropriate title for figure drawing and painting. His students will all agree that he taught more by example than by precept or timetabled courses. He taught quality. He taught the values that cannot be taught — only learned.

He stressed the importance of having something to say but in his own work he demonstrated that what you have to say cannot be separated from how it is said. He felt that an art that could not properly synthesize content with form would necessarily fall short of true greatness.

After twenty-three years of service at the Winnipeg School of Art, 18 of these at the helm as its principal, Mr. FitzGerald quietly slipped away in 1947 and called it a day. The old order had by then begun to change yielding in place to the new, and while no one missed him more than I did I am now glad that he retired when he did. I have the strange feeling that while he may have left the art school, that the art school never left him, for right up his sudden death in 1956 he was very concerned about the welfare of the school.

"Integrity is the word that fits him best."

Greetings

from

A Friend

## SUMMER AT LAKE WINNIPEG

By Kristiana Magnusson

i remember . . .  
 a silver summer trailer  
 perched high  
 above the sandy beach.  
 inside . . .  
 coffee mugs in a row  
 beside a cheery window,  
 a red canteen of water  
 by a cooler  
 stacked with food,  
 stacks of books  
 to read on rainy days,  
 a summer haven  
 of happiness.  
 outside . . .  
 the sweeping stretch of sand  
 by the sparkling  
 waters of the bay,  
 the chug-chug of a boat  
 bringing in  
 the catch of the day  
 as sea-gulls swoop  
 then soar again  
 in graceful line.  
 at day's end . . .  
 a blazing campfire  
 weiners roasting  
 marshmallows sizzling  
 over burning coals,  
 children shouting  
 with joy of life,  
 the swish of waves  
 lapping the sandy shores,  
 the soft glow of embers  
 a quiet time  
 a happy time.  
 i remember . . .  
 happy people  
 building memories  
 for the future.

## SCIENCE AND FINANCE

Paul Bjarnason

Translated by Thorvaldur Johnson

I know that education brings  
 Much cognizance of little things.  
 The scientist, with age grown hoar,  
 Of fewer things knows more and more.  
 At last his tired mind knows all  
 Of something infinitely small.

But one who of finance has learned,  
 With matters great is unconcerned.  
 Of this and that and other thing  
 The passing days less knowledge bring,  
 Until of matters great or small  
 There is no knowledge left at all.

\* \* \*

## PRIMEVAL

By Paul Sigurdson

I remember the hours,  
 Each a life-span;  
 My world was long prairie,  
 And dizzying sky:  
 The sun loved my head  
 With mother-softness.  
 While I played tag  
 With the rascal wind.

With glee I pulled  
 — To prove my maleness —  
 The slimy brown gut  
 From a grasshopper,  
 Severed nicely  
 With my child-fingers.

But inward I squirmed,  
 And grated my jaw-teeth.  
 Self-known and self-repelled  
 By my childish butchery;  
 As if each hop-creature  
 Were a Christ,  
 And I a monster  
 Too prone to crucify.

## R. S. "RON" HAFLIDSON, WILLROY MINES DEVELOPER

"THUNDER BAY — The announcement of the closure of Willroy Mines almost coincides with the death of Ron Hafliidson, the man who was responsible more than anyone else for the success of Willroy.

R. S. "Ron" Hafliidson, died suddenly in North Bay where he was buried Jan. 15.

It was he who took charge of the mine back in 1955, when it was little more than a good drill prospect.

He supervised the sinking of the shaft and built a 1,000 ton mill in near-record time.

With a minimum of cash with which to work, he succeeded, paying off the substantial debt that was incurred and, as president, saw it become a dividend payer.

Mr. Hafliidson graduated from Queen's University in 1944 as a mining engineer. Upon his graduation, he joined the Royal Canadian Engineers. R. T. Birk, vice-president of Willroy hired Mr. Hafliidson from his position as general superintendent at East Malartic Mine to develop the Willroy Mines.

Mr. Hafliidson later left the top post at Willroy to work for Consolidated Rambler in Newfoundland, where he established another mine.

Subsequently he became a consulting mining engineer with offices in North Bay and Toronto, until his death."

—Gerry Poling.

Ron Hafliidson was born in Langruth, on the west shore of Lake Manitoba, and grew up in Winnipeg. He attended the traditional West End schools, Principal

Sparling, General Wolfe, and Daniel McIntyre Collegiate.

In the 1930's the family moved to the mining town of Bissett, Manitoba. There he was awarded a mining scholarship, which aided him in proceeding to a university.

Shortly after 1950, Ron Hafliidson prospected in an area about 160 miles north-east of Thunder Bay. A potential zinc strike had been indicated in that locality in 1932, but the area had remained a "geological orphan", 400 miles from the nearest similar deposit at Sudbury. He possessed little more than the tent he had with him.

A second mine, the Greco, was developed in the same locality at the same time.

The Willroy mine produced lead, zinc, copper, and silver. By 1969, the Willroy mill was producing 1700 tons a day, and by 1975 the mines had produced a total of some 8,324,000 tons of ore, valued at nearly \$143 million.

The parents of Ron Hafliidson were Jon and Gudrun Hafliidson. Jon Hafliidson will be remembered as a wrestler of some local fame. Ron was married to Marian Armstrong, of the North Bay district.

\* \* \*

## ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF MONTREAL

The new president, 1977, of the Icelandic Canadian Club of Montreal is Irvine Christjanson, of Pierrefonds, Quebec. He is the son of Valla Christjanson and the late Valdi Christjanson of Winnipeg.

## THE ICELANDIC SETTLEMENT IN SUNNYBROOK, B.C.

By Magnus Eliasson

The Icelandic settlement in Northern British Columbia known as Sunnybrook is in Township 77 and mainly in Range 17 west of the 6th Meridian, although it stretches west into Range 18. This is in the so-called Peace River Block. The Peace River Block is an area measuring 66 miles each way, lying immediately west of the Alberta-British Columbia border and including Townships 77 to 87. While B.C. always possessed its own natural resources, the resources in the Peace River Block were under the federal government as a result of an early agreement in connection with the building of the railway into the Peace River country. On October 1st, 1930, the natural resources in the Peace River Block reverted to the government of B.C.

The Sunnybrook district is approximately 400 miles north-west of Edmonton and about 40 miles south of the Peace River. It lies immediately west of the Cutbank (Kiskatinaw) River. The Cutbank runs somewhat from the southwest and empties into the Peace River just east of the Alberta-B.C. border. The terrain here is quite rolling. The valleys along the creeks are possibly 200 feet lower than the hilltops. The soil is generally richer in the valleys, but the lower land is more subject to night frosts in the summer. In the winter, there is often up to a 20 degrees (Fahrenheit) difference between the higher land and the valleys.

The first Icelanders to settle in the area were Oli Johannsson from Elfros, Saskatchewan; Asbjorn Palsson and his son Franklin. This was the summer of 1929. They first stopped in the Icelandic

settlement between Clairmont and Sexsmith in Alberta, about 100 miles east of Sunnybrook. No land was available there, as it was an older settlement, so they pushed on further west to the settlements that were opening up in the Peace River Block. This was during the big rush for land in the Peace River country, both on the Alberta side of the border and in British Columbia. In 1930, the population of the Peace River Block doubled, from just over 5,000 to nearly 11,000 people.

Just over 20 homesteads were taken by the small group of Icelanders, although only 12 Icelandic homes were established, as some of the settlers combined to set up buildings and establish homes. The settlement began to dwindle, as some of the people moved out in search of work, prior to World War II. By the end of the war, very few Icelandic homes were left. As far as is known, the only settler who still owns his homestead there is Magnus Eliason, who now lives in Winnipeg.

When the settlement began, the closest railway was in Hythe, Alberta, about 70 miles away, but within two years the railway was extended to Dawson Creek in British Columbia, bringing it within 20 miles of the settlement. The first passenger train rolled into Dawson Creek on January 15th, 1931. Today the nearest railway station is only about 10 miles from Sunnybrook, on what is now somewhat of a mainline to the Coast, the so-called British Columbia Railway, built from North Vancouver by way of Prince George and connecting with the Northern Alberta Railways at Dawson

Creek. Dawson Creek was an original hamlet dating back to the settlement established around the time of World War One. The railway had to follow the Dawson valley and the railway station was built about two miles from the hamlet. The hamlet moved towards the railway. Most of the buildings were moved by old fashioned stump pullers, and businesses carried on in the stores while they were on the move. Today, this is a city of some 15,000 people. Being the southern terminus of the Alaska Highway, it is often referred to as "Mile Zero City".

Even though the Icelanders were in the minority in the new community, it was commonly referred to as "The Icelandic Community Beyond the Cutbank". People over a large area spoke about what they called "Sunnybrook hospitality". The Icelanders built good homes and barns of logs. The log schoolhouse at Sunnybrook was often regarded as an example of good workmanship. Forty-six years later, it is now a private home. The community soon blossomed with a shingle mill and the turf and slab roofs quickly disappeared. One ingenious settler made a large horse-drawn planer for hewing logs. This was a lot faster and easier than using the traditional broad axe.

The Icelanders played a major role in community affairs. They were active in school board matters, the local section of the British Columbia Farmers Institute, the local Livestock Breeding Association, and many other community efforts. They branched out into politics, playing a major role in the election campaign when Peace River was a new constituency in British Columbia. One of the younger men covered the entire constituency, often on foot or by saddlehorse, addressing meetings in school

houses and community halls. He is believed to have been the first man to speak at political meetings in several communities.

Much more could be written about this, the last of Icelandic pioneering in North America, including the hardships of the depression years; daring journeys, sometimes with the temperature 60 degrees below, Fahrenheit; the informative meetings held in schoolhouses, the public encounter between the famed newspaper woman "Ma" Murray and a local person, a source of good entertainment to the audience. The community had its poets and some of their rhymes are still remembered.

The traditional August 2nd Icelandic celebration was staged twice in 1931 and 1932. An event that brought the community publicity was when one of the settlers shot a cougar out in the foothills, measuring nine feet from the tip of the tail to the tip of the nose. It was recorded as the largest cougar brought in up to that time. Few will forget the skyr, the slatur and the misostur which the pioneer women in Sunnybrook made. All in all, it can be truly said that the pioneers of Sunnybrook left their mark on that region of British Columbia; and they are still being reminisced about.

★ ★ ★

### BJORN BJORNSON of MINNEAPOLIS HONORED

Bjorn Bjornson, of Minneapolis, whose biographical account of his brother, Valdimar Bjornson, appears in this issue of *The Icelandic Canadian*, has been Honorary Consul for Iceland in Minnesota for more than 25 years. He has now been "advanced in grade" to the rank of Commander of the Icelandic Order of the Falcon, one of the highest decorations conferred by the Republic of Iceland to anyone living abroad.

## UN SECRETARY—GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM ADDRESSES WINNIPEG AUDIENCE

UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim was the guest speaker at a conference in Winnipeg convened by the Winnipeg chapter of the United Nations Association of Canada, in May. He stressed that one of the greatest challenges facing the world today is the creation of a new international economic order and cooperation for peace. "Interdependence is no longer some faroff utopian idea but a dominant political reality of our time." An excerpt from his address follows.

"Whatever name is eventually given to the period we live in — whether it be the Nuclear Age or the Age of Technology — it is clear that we are already in a process of transition to a time that is going to be vastly different from today.

"The age we are in, and which I believe we already are leaving, started with the invention of the steam engine in 1837. It has given us, in addition, electricity, the telephone, radio, television, the automobile, air transportation, atomic power, space exploration. These and other innovations and applications of scientific principles have profoundly altered human society.

"We are now engaged in trying to come to terms with these changes in our way of life. Thus, where once political influence, military supremacy or economic strength were the main aim of national leadership, the leading concerns of our social and political institutions and of our best thinkers now include topics such as energy, population, food production, greater equity between rich and poor nations, and the integrity and conservation of the natural environment. This shift in priorities heralds an age of

increasing interdependence among peoples and nations in which in addition to wars or threats of war, natural forces and the use of the resources of our planet have assumed great prominence in the efforts now being made — perhaps belatedly — to ensure mankind's survival.

"To put these more recent concerns into perspective, it is well to recall for a moment a few of the major developments that have taken place since 1945 when the United Nations was born. In 1945, the number of people in the world was around two billion: now the number is about four billion. A doubling of world population in little more than three decades is unprecedented in history. In some of the less developed countries the population has quadrupled in this time span. The great colonial empires that then existed have gone, and a billion people have been set free to choose and to take their own courses of action. Along with this growth in numbers, there has been a great redistribution of the population. A massive migration from rural to urban areas has spawned a host of problems which, in too many cases, has resulted in a lowered quality of life. Finding solutions for some of these problems was at the heart of the Habitat Conference which Canada hosted in Vancouver last June.

"Fifty-one nations comprised the original membership of the United Nations. Now there are 147 Member States, and the Organization is close to universality. The jet engine, television and the computer were then in their early stages of development and the coming revolution in communications

was still unpredictable either in its nature or in its consequences. Political, military, economic, scientific and technological developments have taken us very far from the world of 1945.

"Considering the ramifications and the speed of the changes that have taken place it is not surprising that nations, new and old, have trouble adjusting to them. At the same time problems that are legacies of the past or have arisen because of the changing relationships of States are no more susceptible to quick

solutions than they used to be. In other words, Governments have to deal at the same time with the problems of conflict which threaten international peace, security, and in some cases economic balance, and simultaneously come to grips with the new level of global problems."

\* \* \*

"Control of the armaments race which now costs the world \$350 billion a year is in my view certainly one of the highest priorities on the world's agenda," he said.

### Officers and Honorary Members of LOGBERG-HEIMSKRINGLA, 1977

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President . . . . . Ted Arnason  
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Dr. L. A. Sigurdson . . . . Immediate Past  
President  
S. A. Thorarinson . . . . Icelandic Consul  
Haraldur Bessason Professor of  
Icelandic Language and Literature,  
University of Manitoba.

\* \* \*

#### ICELAND NEWS

A bill that would legalize alcoholic beer in Iceland was under debate in Althing last March. Beer containing more than 2.25 per cent alcohol has been banned in Iceland.

\* \* \*

Chess has long been popular in Iceland. Reykjavik was the scene of the memorable chess encounter between American Bobby Fischer and Russian Boris Spassky in 1972, and is now hosting a match between international grandmasters Spassky and V. Hart of Czechoslovakia.

### ICELANDIC CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE CAMP

The Icelandic Cultural and Language Camp is tentatively scheduled to be held from Friday, August 5 to Friday, August 12, 1977, at the Sunrise Lutheran Camp Husavik, Manitoba. Activities will include: drama, music, crafts, painting, environmental studies and field trips. The main emphasis, of course, is on having students participate in a wide variety of activities where the use of the Icelandic language will be encouraged. Further information may be obtained from: Mrs. L. Tergesen, 60 Wildwood Park, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Phone 284-4518.

\* \* \*

#### ICELAND REPORT

Iceland's national handball team has qualified for the World Tournament finals, which are scheduled to take place in Denmark next year. The Icelandic team, which now ranks among the strongest in the world, has been gradually improving over the years but much of the credit for its rapid strides of late is given to its Polish coach, Dr. Janusz Czerwinski. He formerly coached the Polish Olympic team that did so well in Montreal.

## A DAY IN SPRING

By Skapti O. Thorvaldson

What can be so fair as a day in the spring,  
In dawn's early light when the birds start to sing —  
The song of the meadow-lark sounds like a trill  
As he sits on a fence-post just over the hill,  
And a bluebird goes by on the wing.

A tree in the yard hides a chickadee's nest,  
The parents have prospered, by heaven are blest,  
Their nestlings are learning their home is the sky,  
That soon they'll grow strong and away they will fly  
And be gone, at their nature's behest.

We gaze way up high at the gulls flying round,  
When all on a sudden we hear a faint sound —  
We look down and see standing there all alone  
A red-breasted robin, as still as a stone —  
As he listens for worms in the ground.

We listen and watch when the sun's gone from sight —  
We might hear an owl moan whoo - whoo in the night,  
And night-hawks may sometimes be seen gliding by  
Like shadows or spectres against a clear sky,  
When the moon and the stars shed their light.

But all throughout nature no sight is so fair  
As Canada's geese in formations so rare,  
By thousands they pass, every spring, every fall,  
We gaze up in wonder, and hear their wild call:  
They are Canada's Queens of the Air.

All round us these beauties of nature we see,  
They fly in the heavens so joyous and free;  
Preserve them we shall, and must show that we care,  
And keep these fair friends of ours free as the air —  
Just as we would forever be free.

## SONG, TRAVEL, RELIGION FILL VOLUNTEER'S LIFE

by Linda Cooke  
Tribune Staff Writer

Winnipeg's Connie Rogalski lives a life full of travel, song and religion — she's a God's Volunteer.

God's Volunteers consists of 14 young people aged 18 to 25 subdivided into two groups, a music section and a "follow-up" section. They travel from church to church all over Canada and the United States from September to May sponsored by the North American Baptist Conference.

The music section holds evening music programs and the follow-up group gives Bible studies during the day.

"In our travels we visit our various conference churches and hold week-long crusades to try and stimulate the people, to get them excited to share their faith in their community," said 20 year old Miss Rogalski.

"We also look for opportunities to share Jesus Christ in the community wherever we can — in high schools, shopping malls or civic functions."

The group travels separately from city to city in two vans, said Miss Rogalski. There are eight volunteers in the first group and six in the follow-up section.

The music section holds their music programs Wednesday through Sunday and during the day they visit with the church people, going into the community and taking a religious opinion survey.

She said the survey is to find out, "the religious thinking of the community and to see how the church can better minister to the people. We look for a chance to share Jesus Christ with these people if they are interested, if the door is open."

Some of the questions on the survey are: according to your understanding, who is Jesus Christ, what do you think a person has to do to become a Christian, what is a person's greatest inner need. Miss Rogalski said the questions let them know where the people are spiritually, what they think and what they believe in.

Miss Rogalski said that many people they talk with during the week, do make a decision to make a commitment to Jesus Christ. It is then that the follow-up section comes into the church.

"They come on Saturday and we spend the weekend together as a team and on Tuesday we leave for the next church. After we are gone, the follow-up section helps the people who have made a commitment to Christ, they start them on a discipleship program."

Miss Rogalski said what they try to achieve is a total ministry; the singers come in to stimulate the people and then the follow-up section works with the church people.

A director and his wife also travel with the group. All the members join voluntarily and usually serve for one year. Miss Rogalski said she and four other members have re-applied for the next year.

Miss Rogalski said the group trains during the month of September. "We learn our music for the whole year and we take all our evangelism classes. We learn everything we need to know for the year. Starting October 1 we start to travel."

To be eligible for God's Volunteers, Miss Rogalski said it is necessary to be a member of the North American Baptist Conference and to send in an audition by cassette tape to their headquarters in Chicago. On the tape, you are required to sing a solo, a duet and talk for awhile.

"They look for blend, music ability, personality and commitment to the

cause of Christ," said Miss Rogalski.

She said the group records a record every year in Chicago, which they take and sell at the various churches. Next year they will be marketed to the public.

Miss Rogalski said she misses being away from home, but feels that the team is her family away from home.

—Winnipeg Tribune

## THE MORDEN AND DISTRICT MUSEUM

Paul Sigurdson, frequent contributor to **The Icelandic Canadian**, is President of the Morden and District Museum, in Manitoba. Because of his association with the museum and because of the very interesting fossils which have been discovered in the district, some of which have already been housed in the museum, the following account is reproduced here.

Already thousands of items have been collected and catalogued: for example: Indian arrowheads, an organ, a baseball uniform, a wooden potato masher, a crude dentist's instrument for extracting teeth, plates, cups, vases, books and hundreds of other items once commonly used in the pioneer homes.

Of course our fossils will be the most unusual attraction. We are now able to boast that no other museum can offer such rare sights. Only one other place in North America has found fossils of similar species, and that is in Kansas. Between our fossils and our artifacts, we will have a unique and exciting show-place.

For almost 40 years prehistoric fossils have been unearthed in the bentonite pits near Miami and Morden. However, only in the past four years has sufficient interest been generated to encourage the collection and preservation of these old

bones. Although it is a major find in the field of paleontology, as yet only a few are aware of its value to science and to the understanding of the changes in the world aeons ago.

The fossils are about 70,000,000 years old. Often they are badly deteriorated, but usually they are remarkably sound and well preserved. Quite often 90% of a whole animal's bones will be found undisturbed. This is remarkable.

Several species have been mounted for display and thousands of bones and groups of related bones have been sorted and catalogued and filed away in wooden flats.

These huge creatures are most amphibians, which cavorted in the shallows of the great ancient sea which lay along the banks of the Pembina Hills. Although unrelated to the alligator they resembled it — slimy green monsters growing to a length of a nearly one hundred feet! Some were gigantic turtles, sixteen feet in length, others were large awkward birds unable to fly. Their names were as strange as their shapes.

Already we have enough material for an impressive display. We need a fine new location for them, a place for professionals to come and study, for tourists to come and look and for children to browse and learn.

## UNIVERSITY GRADUATES, MAY, 1977

(University records do not state parentage of students, so the following list may be incomplete.)

### UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

#### Master of Arts

Keneva Ann Brandson (B.A. Hons.)  
Baldur Palsson Hafstad (B.A.)

#### Bachelor of Arts [Honours]

Helga Jonina Margaret Stefansson  
(First Class Honours)  
*[highest standing in the Honours program in Economics throughout the course leading to graduation]*

#### Bachelor of Fine Arts [Honours]

Emelia Mary Wilson

#### Bachelor of Arts

Byron Knowles Hallgrimson  
Kathie Lynn Josephson  
Dennis Edward Joseph Peterson

#### Bachelor of Science

Harold Keith Kristofferson

#### Bachelor of Laws

Elizabeth Margaret Branson (B.H.Ec.)  
Bjorn Neil Johannson

#### Bachelor of Social Work

Karen Amy Johanson  
Brenda Gudrun Gail McMahon  
*[Manitoba Association of Social Workers Scholarship]*

#### Bachelor of Education

Karen Thora Botting  
Judy Christine Johanson  
Heather Lynne Westdal

#### Certificate in Education

Larry Hjalmar Henderson  
Nancy Sigrid Oliver (B.P.E.)  
Maureen Perlmutter (B.A.)  
Bjorn Charles Talbot (B.A.)

#### Master of Engineering

Mark Roy Thorsteinnsson (B.Sc. C.E.)

#### Bachelor of Commerce [Honours]

Victor Bergmann  
Warren Keith Einarson  
Robert Norman Leifur Fridfinnson  
Dennis Wayne Kristjanson (B.Sc.)  
Hartley Thorbjorn Richardson

#### Bachelor of Nursing

Linda Joan Kristjanson  
*[Nursing Education Alumni Association Award]*

#### Bachelor of Physical Therapy

Maria Thorsteindottir

#### Bachelor of Home Economics

Kathryn Ann Swanson  
Leslie Kristin Wright

#### Bachelor of Science in Agriculture

Emma Eythorsdottir  
Arnthor Bjorn Jonasson

#### Diploma in Dental Hygiene

Sigurbjorg Helga Maurine Johnson

#### Diploma in Occupational Therapy

Margaret Steinunn Johnson

#### Diploma in Agriculture

Bragi Dunstan Erlingur Simundsson

## UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

**Bachelor of Arts [Honours]**

Sylvia Dianne Johannson  
Michael Keith Johnson

**Bachelor of Arts**

Kristian Sveinn Bjornson  
Karen Gail Eggertson  
Denise Lynn Ann Erickson  
Janet Linda Susan Johnson  
Margery Rose Johnson  
Janine Adele Sigurdson

**Bachelor of Science**

Sherril Lyn Johannesson  
John Sidney William Swanson

**Bachelor of Education**

Kenneth Raymond Johannsson, B.A.  
Angela May Johnson

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Janet Linda Susan Johnson

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**Eating, Drinking Place Planned  
TWENTIES ERA MAY BE RE-CREATED**

By Harry L. Mardon  
Tribune Associate Editor

Twenty-seven-year-old Paul Sveinson is going underground.

No, he's not dodging the Mounties. He's going into business, a few feet under the street level of Portage Ave.

The name of his business establishment is a bit of a mouthful: Fat Sam's Grand Slam Speak-Easy. When the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission gives its approval, the dining room and lounge will be open for business in a half-forgotten place. It's the basement of the 62-year-old Curry Bldg. on the north side of Portage between Garry St. and Notre Dame Ave.

The owners of the property, MEPC Canadian Properties Ltd. of Toronto, recently pushed up the ground floor and second storey of the building.

But down there below, waiting for a person with imagination, was an expansive basement floor.

Along came Winnipegger Sveinson and three other young partners — one a lawyer, one an accountant and the other a fellow-graduate of Red River Community College's hotel and restaurant course.

Mr. Sveinson said in an interview that his group had pledged financing of \$450,000 toward converting the Curry Bldg. basement into a 1920s-style restaurant and lounge. The landlord, MEPC, is expected to spend another \$150,000 or so. An interesting twirl is that there will be an underground corridor space which could link up with the Portage and Main intersection con-

course now being burrowed. It's only one block east of the Curry Bldg.

How did he pick up on his tongue tripping corporate title? Mr. Sveinson grinned wickedly. A straight steal from the Buggy Malone movie about some twenties hood gang, he admitted. It also headed off at the pass a Winnipeg lawyer's wife who had registered the name "speakeasy" for a supposedly planned entertainment spot here.

When Mr. Sveinson inquired, he was told it would cost him \$1,000 or so to acquire the title "Speakeasy." Hence Fat Sam's Grand Slam Speak-Easy Ltd., Paul Sveinson, president.

*continued on page 44*

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The landlord is apparently quite delighted at the idea of a big portion of the basement becoming tenanted. The speakeasy enterprise will rent about 8,500 square feet. The entrance will be on Portage Ave., with car parking available on nearby streets and later in the Trizec development.

What sort of place will Fat . . . etc. . . . be; to whom will it appeal? Mr. Sveinson replied that it will fully compete with the lunchtime eating establishments in that section of downtown, and in the evening will appeal to "people of all ages who'd like to stay downtown in a special atmosphere . . . reflecting the twenties."

There's to be a 295-seat dining room area, which includes semi-private dining booths, as well as a lounge with a dance floor and live orchestra group. To keep out rowdy clientele there will be a cover charge, refundable to patrons who have a meal. Mr. Sveinson said the emphasis will be on roast beef, steaks and shrimp.

He claims the meals won't be of the "fast-food" type.

Mr. Sveinson is a 1972 Red River Community College graduate. From there he went to the Winnipeg Inn for a while, then to the Concord Motor Hotel, and then to the Old Spaghetti Factory as assistant manager. Later he went to Toronto to work in a private club, then to a motor inn at Dryden, and finally back to Winnipeg.

"It's fantastic," Mr. Sveinson said. "We're going to keep the original brick walls. The whole area exactly lends itself to what our group thinks Winnipeggers will want. Within walking distance during the daytime there are something like 40,000 people looking for a good lunch spot or for a drink and snack after work — and our dinners will start at 5.30.

"We're going to have a staff of about 120, full or part time, and our annual payroll will be about \$500,000. We'll be creating another business downtown. We go along with people who think that downtown should be an exciting place, that people shouldn't abandon it in the evening."

—Winnipeg Tribune

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## NEWS

### A New Coastguard Service Vessel For Lake Winnipeg Built at Riverton

A new Canadian Coast Guard Service vessel "Namao" was officially launched for service on Lake Winnipeg in May 1976. The "Namao" sets up and services buoys and warning lights on the lake and is on continuous standby for search and rescue missions.

The 110-foot, 370-ton ship, which cost \$1.5 million to build, was built at Thorsteinson's Riverton Boat Works, Riverton, Manitoba.

### MANITOBA HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF ARTS, NEEPAWA, MAN.

Prominently associated with the Annual Manitoba Festival of Arts at Neepawa, Manitoba, is Mrs. Borga Jakobson. For the Festival participants there is an opportunity for intensive study and practice in their choice of art forms under instructors who are among the top professionals in their field. Course selection includes Pottery, Creative Writing, Creative Weaving, Drama, Painting, Music, Sculpture, Photography and Children's Programs.

The courses are of one month's duration, from June 15 to July 16.

### ARDAL LUTHERAN CHURCH TO CELEBRATE 75th ANNIVERSARY

The Ardal Congregation of the Lutheran Church at Arborg, Manitoba are celebrating their seventy-fifth anniversary on Sunday, August 14th, 1977.

A committee of church members has been established in order to make plans for this occasion. At present committee members would like to contact all of its former members who have moved away from Arborg, who may have photos of

confirmation, weddings, special events or any information as pertaining to the history of the church. The committee would like to borrow these pictures for this occasion and they will be returned safely after the celebration. Please include any identification possible with the photos.

Anyone interested in taking part in the celebrations can forward their donations to Mrs. Kristjon Gudmundson, Box 61, Arborg, Man. ROC 0A0.

—Lake Centre News

### THE ICELANDIC FESTIVAL OF MANITOBA, 1977

The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba will be held at Gimli, July 30 - August 1. The Fjallkona will be Miss Caroline Gunnarsson, of Winnipeg, former editor of Logberg-Heimskringla and former Feature Editor of the Magazine Section of the Winnipeg Free Press Weekly. Olafur Johannsson, Attorney-General of Iceland and former Prime Minister, will be guest speaker and Dr. Frank Scribner of Gimli will deliver the traditional toast to Iceland. The Ladies Choir from Sudernesja, Iceland, will perform on the three days of the Festival.

Ernest Stefanson, of Gimli, is the President of the Festival.

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### MANITOBA'S 1977 EASTER SEAL "TIMMY"



Manitoba's 1977 Easter Seal "Timmy", 13-year old Halldor Bjarnason, is a fighter! Cerebral palsy (spastic quadriplegia) hasn't slowed Halldor down. Using his electric typewriter for notes and homework, he's an excellent grade 7 student and has his eyes set on a career in law. Halldor represents all physically disabled children throughout the province who make use of services provided by The Society for Crippled Children and Adults of Manitoba. He will assist with the month-long Easter Seal Campaign, March 13th to April 10th. Halldor lives at 862 Spruce St. in the West End.

—The Guide

\* \* \*

### SUMARDAGURINN FYRSTI AT STAFHOLT, BLAINE

"On April 21, "Sumardagurinn fyrsti", we did our part to recognize this special Icelandic day. For afternoon coffee we enjoyed pönnukokur and kleinur, washed down with a steaming hot cup of coffee. These Icelandic treats were whipped up by our own cook Mrs. Evalee George. She may not be Icelandic but she did a great job on the baking."

### THE FIRST ICELANDIC CHILD BORN ON HECLA ISLAND

The first Icelandic settlers on Hecla Island (then Big Island or Mikley) arrived in the summer of 1876. Among them were Jon Bjarnason and his wife, Halldora Gudmundsdottir. They had come to Canada in 1875, going first to Kinmount, Ontario, then to Gimli in October of that year.

In the fall of 1876 Jon and Halldora moved their few possessions by boat to Mikley. According to family tradition, it was two hours after their arrival on the island that Halldora gave birth to a son, Gudmundur Jonsson. He was born at Reynistadir, in Mill Cove, on the east shore of the island, September 2, 1876.

\* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. John Indridson of Burnaby, B.C., celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on March 15. They were married in Selkirk, Manitoba, on March 15, 1927.

They moved to B.C. in 1940, and they have resided in Harrison Hot Springs, Vancouver, New Westminster, and Burnaby since that time. Mr. Indridson and son Alvin built the Burnaby Hotel in 1953 and still operate same.

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