

INLNA Newsletter – Frettabréf

SUMAR – SUMMER 2020

President's Message Stefan Jonasson

Whenever the history of the Icelandic National League of North America is told, one of the facts that is almost always left out is that the INLNA was organized in the midst of the flu pandemic that gripped the world around the end of the First World War. Who could have imagined that, having successfully celebrated the centennial of the INLNA last year with a memorable anniversary convention, we would now find ourselves in the grips of another global pandemic? As a modern proverb says, “History never repeats itself but it rhymes.”



For now, we must do business differently, seeking to fulfill our obligations and remain faithful to the mission and vision of the INLNA. Fortunately, we have tools at our disposal that the founders of this organization couldn't have even imagined to be possible. Our annual general meeting, which was held virtually this year, was the first step in doing things differently, but becoming president at this time felt strange, since it occurred without the usual fanfare that an annual convention would have provided.

As the year progresses, we will use social media to do things we used to do face to face. Some of our programs have been necessarily paused for this year, but it would be a mistake not to use this time to review them, consider their effectiveness, and bring them back more strongly than ever next year. Our clubs, chapters, and associate member organizations are experimenting with new ways to stay connected and it's important for the INLNA to support them, as possible, and learn new ways of doing things ourselves.

I would like to thank past president Bev Arason-Gaudet for her indefatigable service as president over the past two years. Her leadership has been energetic, devoted, and inspiring. Thanks are also due to Marlene Linneberg, who has served as both second vice president and treasurer, Andrea Mowry, who stepped into the role of secretary, and the rest of the INLNA board. We

welcome Ashley Thorvaldson back to the board as first vice president along with three new board members: Robert Baker, Matt Gaudet, and Blair Lockhart.

Our work will begin again in earnest in September, when board meetings resume and programs get away. As we prepare for the coming year, may everyone stay healthy and remain focused on our common endeavours.

INLNA Holds Its First Ever “Virtual” Annual General Meeting May 30, 2020

The necessary cancellation of the 2020 Convention due to the Covid-19 pandemic required some innovative measures by the INLNA Board as the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act requires that the Annual General Meeting needed to be convened by June 30, 2020. The Board currently holds its Board meetings and Presidents meetings on the Zoom platform and so the decision was made to host a few practice sessions for our members and hold the 101st Annual General Meeting of the INLNA primarily on line. On Saturday, May 30, 2020, representatives of our Member Clubs, Affiliates, Associates and our Individual Members were invited to join the INLNA Board online to discuss the prior year’s activities, to review the 2019 Financial Statements, to discuss several motions that were brought to the floor and to review the 2020 slate. The meeting was productive and well received; some attendees commented that it was the first AGM they had attended as they had not been to a Convention in the past. The new 2020 Board is presented further in this newsletter.



2020 INLNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President - Stefan Jonasson*

1st VP - Ashley Thorvaldson*

2nd VP - Marlene Linneberg

Treasurer - Marlene Linneberg

Secretary - Andrea Mowry*

Past President - Bev Arason-Gaudet*



OFFICERS

Jody Arman-Jones

Robert Baker*

Maria Bear

Matt Gaudet*

John Hofteig

Blair Lockhart*

Dennis Oleson

Erna Pomrenke

Lisa Sigurgeirson-Maxx

Bettyjane Wylie



*represents a new position for a prior board member or a new board member

INLNA Award Recipients 2020

STRONG IS THE BOND/RÖMM ER TAUG AWARD

Gail Einarson McCleery

Gail's devotion to her Icelandic heritage and Icelandic culture is evident in her long standing and continuous service to the Icelandic community through her tireless work within the Icelandic Canadian Club of Toronto, the Icelandic National League of North America and as the Honorary Consul of Iceland in Toronto. She created the Snorri West program, International Visits program, and the INLNA Film Screening program. She helped create the Kinmount Memorial, co-chaired 3 INLNA conventions in Toronto, originated the Nordic Nights Film series, and distributed 30 boxed sets of The Sagas of Icelanders to local libraries.

In 2000, she was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Icelandic Order of the Falcon, in recognition of her work in the Icelandic communities in North America and in strengthening the relationships with Iceland. In 2018 she received the Laurence S. G. Johnson Lifetime Achievement award from the INLNA. Gail is a remarkable woman, deeply proud of her Icelandic heritage, respected by all who have worked with her.

LAURENCE S.G. JOHNSON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Rögnavaldur Svnein Lyle Hillman

Rögnavaldur Sveinn Lyle Hillman, M.D., retired with his wife, Diane McLean Hillman, to Brainerd, MN. They have supported the Icelandic Memorial Society of Nova Scotia since 1998. He celebrates, shares, and interprets Icelandic-heritage from the perspective of: Nova Scotia, Ontario, North Dakota, and Minnesota, with relevance far beyond.

A lifelong member of the Icelandic Communities of Mountain, ND, he served the Lögberg-Heimskringla Board; belonged to IAAMN [Icelandic American Association of Minnesota]; represented the INLNA Board at an INL of Iceland Convention and has attended nearly twenty INLNA Conventions.

JOAN INGA EYOLFSON CADHAM AWARD

Ruth Christie

Ruth Christie, a member of The Selkirk Bruin Chapter, Selkirk, Manitoba in 2001- 2004, was chosen as The International Visits (or IVP) person for The Icelandic National League of North America and went as a Cultural Exchange Participant to Iceland in 2002. As IVP Ruth spoke about the pivotal role that her grandfather John Ramsey played in our existence. The Icelanders surely would have perished if not for John Ramsay's help. Like Joan Inga Eyolfson Cadham, Ruth is a Professional Storyteller and

often speaks to the public and schools about the Native Culture and The Icelandic Culture.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP RECIPIENTS

Claire Genevieve Eckley

Claire Genevieve Eckley has been active in the Icelandic Hekla Club (29 Years), the Icelandic-American Association of Minnesota(26 years) and the INLNA (25 years) serving on each respective Board and as a President twice having co-chaired an INLNA Convention. She celebrates, shares, and interprets the Icelandic-heritage permeating all of Westerheim Township, Lincoln County, and Minnesota, MN, incubators of all things Icelandic.

Brad Hirst

Brad Hirst has been an active member of The Selkirk Bruin Chapter INLNA for 22 years and of the Icelandic Canadian Frón for 4 years. Brad travelled to Iceland with the Snorri Program in 2002 which he says was life-changing. He was on The Snorri Alumni from 2004- 2006 and has been the Director of the Icelandic Language Camp since 2003.

Elva Simundsson

Elva Simundsson has been an active member of the GICS chapter for 30 years, as communications officer and as chair of the Scholarship committee. She has been a valuable volunteer at the New Iceland Heritage Museum, and now she is the chairperson for the Canada Icelandic Foundation, an organization she has been part of for over 40 years.

Ellen Steinthorson

Ellen Steinthorson has been an active member of the Lundar Chapter since 2000, first as food convener, then Vice President and President. Ellen is of Swedish descent but Icelandic by marriage and is fluent in Icelandic, both written and verbal, serving as an adult learning tutor for several years.

Convention Registration Award Recipient

Aleesha Þórunn

My name is Aleesha Þórunn. I'm Signý's daughter, 13 years old. I have grown up (so far!) in the Icelandic community. I have learned some Icelandic at home with my mom and my Amma. I attended the Icelandic camp for 7 years, and Esjan meetings, and enjoyed Arborg's Thorraþlot for as long as I can remember. I also presented on the jólasveinar at the Gimli club's Christmas party twice. My mom tells me often that I'm the future of the organization!

UPDATED INLNA WEBSITE

Our newly updated Icelandic National League of North America website has launched! Check out the latest on our programs, learn about our history, read the latest news, and find out ways you can get involved: <https://www.inlofna.org/>

We're excited to launch this site and explore new ways to bring our members across North America together! Stay tuned for even more new content in the coming months.



Matt Gaudet
INLNA Webmaster