



Newsletter

February 2009

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To send regular mail:
P.O. Box 874, Spanish Fork, UT 84660

To visit our Web site:
www.utahicelanders.com

To contact us by e-mail:
utahicelanders@gmail.com

From the President

We are starting fresh into a new year and we are very excited about this year's upcoming events.



To kick the year off, of course, we have our celebration of the end-of-winter solstice, Thorrablót. This event is celebrated by Icelandic communities world wide. We hope you will make

this event a regular part of your annual family calendar.

This year will be a great event in the evolving of the Icelandic Association of Utah. We have come a long way--from a small group of western Icelanders enjoying imported Icelandic traditional food to a group of 150-plus enjoying a menu of lamb, haddock, and traditional Icelandic foods. This is an event that Icelanders look forward to yearly because it puts them in touch with those things that make them uniquely Icelandic.

Each year, Thorrablót is a time to present our honorees for the year, honorees who have contributed to the Icelandic community. This year's honorees are Kregge Christensen,

Norma Jones, and Lynette Reynolds. We are excited as an Association board to highlight these Icelanders and their contribution to the Icelandic community.

We hope you all can come and join us for an evening of fun, laughter, seeing old friends, and making new friends. Bring your friends, neighbors and relatives and let them join in the festivities that will make them feel just a little bit Icelandic.

We are also kicking off our recording of oral histories of the Utah Icelanders. Thorrablót will be great place to kick off this event. Many of those who have history stories and traditions to share will attend Thorrablót. We want to include as comprehensive a history as possible. If you have some history or know someone who should share their story with the Association, let us know about it so we can pass it on. This information will be put into DVD form and will be priceless for ourselves and generations to come.

We thank all those who give of their time and talents to the Association. We look forward to a wonderful 2009 and being able to be a little more Icelandic at the end of the year.

DeVon Koyle

Mark Your 2009 Calendar

T	Febrúar 28	Thorrablót, Spanish Fork, Utah
í	Maí 22-23	Scandinavian Heritage Festival, in Ephraim, Utah
m	Júní 26	Iceland Days Workshops, in Spanish Fork, Utah
a	Júní 27	Iceland Days Family Festival, in Spanish Fork, Utah
t	Júní 28	Icelandic Heritage Fireside, in Spanish Fork, Utah
a	Júlí 24	Fiesta Days Parade, in Spanish Fork, Utah
l		

Coming to Thorrablót 2009?

by Tyler Shepherd

Will you join us at Thorrablót 2009? This annual event is on Saturday, February 28, 2009 at the Veterans Memorial Building (400 North Main Street) in Spanish Fork.

Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. so that you can visit, view displays, and sample traditional Viking food.

We have imported the following Viking foods from Iceland especially for Thorrablót: harðfiskur (dried fish with butter, hákarl (cured shark), hangikjöt (smoked lamb, super tasty), flatbrauð (flat bread, a treat when eaten with hangikjöt), hrutspungur (pickled lamb parts), and lifrapylsur (liver pudding).

These food items helped the Vikings survive Iceland's long, hard winters. The various foods represent methods that Icelanders preserved foods (dry, pickle, smoke....)

Our Icelandic board member, Thelma Marínosdóttir-Moreland, will be at the Viking Deli to explain how these food items fit into the Icelandic culture and traditions.

Shortly after 6:30 p.m., Marvellous Catering will begin serving shredded lamb, breaded haddock, sweetened rutabagas, pickled red cabbage, glazed potatoes, rolls, and Scandinavian cake. Nammi! (Yummy!)

For the children (eleven years old or younger), we will provide lasagna and hot dogs. These items were popular last year. In fact, several adults found themselves wandering over to this "Emergency Food Station" booth.

During the evening, we get to welcome and recognize this year's Icelandic Association Honorees. You might want to



come just to honor these three gems. Or to listen to the Barnakor (Children's Choir). Or for the door prizes. Or to sing some Icelandic folk songs.

Tickets for the catered buffet are \$13.50 (if prepaid by February 20) or \$16.00 (at the door). Children's tickets (lasagna and hot dogs) are \$4.00 if prepaid or \$5.00 at the door.

The cost for the imported Viking food will be an additional \$5.00 to sample all six imported items, or \$1.00 to sample an individual item. We're sorry for the additional expense, but happy that we can bring some traditional foods to you.

We are limited to 200 guests. To get tickets, send a check to the Association's post office box, or call a board member.

Our goals for Thorrablót 2009 are to KISMIF (keep it simple, make it fun) and to have guests leave a bit more Icelandic than when they arrived.

Come, and bring a friend!

Culture Corner: Hallgerður of Bláfell

Every winter season, Ólafur went south from Eyjafjörður to Stafnes to work as a fisherman. One winter, as Ólafur traveled across the mountains, he lost his way in a snowstorm. He continued traveling, though, totally lost.

Suddenly, he recognized a landmark, the mountain Bláfell.



He also saw an enormous, menacing trollwife, who was not far away. The trollwife cajoled:

Ólafur Annoying! It's south you're going?
With a well-groomed mare you'll do well there.
But listen, twit. Go back, not forth.
Heed this tip: Return to the north..
I don't accept your present wish

To row Stafnes waters and haul in fish.”

The trollwife's words did not intimidate Ólafur. Nevertheless, he did not want to engage in a fight. He replied, “Hello to you, and hearty greetings, Hallgerður of Bláfell.”

Hallgerður answered,

“A sweet reply! You are one of few.
You touch my heart. Peace be with you.”

Ólafur continued on. He followed the trollwife. Noticing a trail of blood in her tracks, Ólafur invited the trollwife to ride on his packhorse's rump. To ride, however, she had to agree not to harm the packhorse.

The trollwife agreed. She said, “Pain touches all, even the troll.” She rode until Ólafur was again on the correct course to Stafnes. When the two parted, the trollwife told Ólafur to let the horses go as soon as he arrived in the southern region. She told Ólafur not to worry about them.

Ólafur had little trouble the rest of his journey. Upon reaching the southern region, he turned the horses loose. They soon disappeared.

In the spring, after the fishing season ended, the horses returned. They were fat. Someone had taken good care of them. Ólafur returned to the north. We have no other stories about him.

Adapted from *Hallgerður of Bláfell in Icelandic Folk and Fairy Tales*, by May and Hallberg Hallmundsson, published in 2006 by Iceland Review.

229 Members Already!

by Jack Tobiasson

Thank you for supporting the 2009 Membership Drive. We already have 223 members for this calendar year!

In January, we mailed 660 letters, inviting you and former members and their friends to renew memberships or join the Association. So far this year, one hundred and thirty-three households have responded by sending in membership dues. As a result, we now have

- 62 individual members
- 167 family members (A family includes those 18 years old or older, living under the same roof.)

These members live in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Indiana, New Mexico, Oregon, Nevada, Virginia, Washington, Africa (AE), and 40 cities in Utah. And memberships continue to arrive in our post office box daily. Takk fyrir! (Thank you!)

To share information with interested western Icelanders and friends, we e-mail newsletters to those who have shared their e-mail address. We also mail hard-copy newsletters to those who have paid dues or who have requested to receive newsletters (even if no dues were paid).

If a member of your family or a friend did not receive a newsletter but would like to, please let us know. Send an e-mail (utahicelanders@gmail.com) or send a letter (P.O. Box 874, Spanish Fork, UT 84660).

Thanks to David Ashby's work as Director of Memberships last year, the Association had a record number of members for a year—367 members in 2008.

If you have not yet paid your dues for 2009, you can do so by sending in your membership dues, or pay your membership dues at Thorablót or Iceland Days. Please join us this year as we continue to make the Icelandic Association of Utah successful.

Your membership dues make a decided difference. Your 2009 membership in the Association continues through the

calendar year, ending this year on December 31, 2009.
Thanks for supporting the Icelandic Association of Utah.

✂-----
IAU 2009 Annual Membership *Family \$15.00 Individual \$10.00
* Family members must reside at the same address.

Name/Names _____

Others over 18 years old at the same address _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell _____


E-mail Address _____

Volunteers are vital to the success of the events of the Icelandic Association. Would you like to help? If so, how would you like to be involved? _____

Mail to:
Icelandic Association of Utah
P.O. Box 874
Spanish Fork, UT 84660

Sharing Notes before You Go

Are you going on Jonas Thor's tour to Iceland in June 2009? If so, will you exchange information with Gwen Johnson, who lives in Terre Haute, Indiana?

 Gwen plans to go on the tour to Iceland that Jonas is putting together. She has already sent in her deposit. To make the most of the tour, she wants to become acquainted with tour members before the tour leaves for Iceland. Gwen asked that we include her request in our newsletter.

Gwen's grandfather was Jon Thorgeirsson. He married Gudrun Jonson, but they divorced. Gudrun lived in Thistle, Utah.

Gwen is a 69-year-old retired teacher whose paternal grandparents all emigrated from Iceland. She has much genealogy from her Grandmother Johnson's side, but very little from Grandfather Thorgeirson's side. Gwen's

grandparents, it seems, placed more hope in the new land than in preserving their customs.

For example, Gwen, her cousins, and her siblings do not know of traditional Icelandic food, songs, or customs because none were passed on. Even the names were anglicized.

A nephew, Pat Johnson, took his father (Gwen's brother), Roger Johnson, on tour to Iceland 4 or 5 years ago and was delighted to know that Gwen is going this summer.

Gwen has looked forward to making this trip for years. She hopes to make friends with those on the tour as well as some in Iceland. Gwen does not speak Icelandic, but understands a little from genealogy. However, Gwen speaks German and has studied Old English, which is similar to Icelandic. She plans to learn more.

To contact Gwen, send her a letter:
Gwen Johnson
1800 Hendricks
Terre Haute, IN 47804

Participating in Snorri 2009

Three candidates for our Association's community have sent in their applications for the Snorri 2009 program. That's exciting, indeed! We do hope that one or more will be fortunate enough to participate in Snorri 2009.

Last year, Lyle Christensen participated in Snorri 2008. At our December board meeting and social, he shared some experiences from his six-week Snorri stay. We were pleased

to hear Lyle's report. However, some of us became lonesome for our family and friends in Iceland.

Project Manager Ásta mentioned that the Snorri committee will soon select the 2009 candidates. We'll keep you posted!

It's not too soon to think about Snorri 2010. For information on the Snorri program, go to <http://www.snorri.is/>.

Signing Up for Snorri Plus 2009

by Ásta Sól Kristjánsdóttir

Snorri Plus 2009 is a fantastic opportunity for people over 30. We meet the needs of both those who want to go for the first time and people who have been to Iceland many times.



The program consists of the same components as the Snorri Program: nature, culture, genealogy and lectures. Sixty-eight individuals have participated since 2003.

It has never been as reasonable to travel with Snorri Plus! The program fee and Icelandair flight quote are lower than ever seen before. Anyone living in Canada or the United States can apply for the program. As long as you are over 30 (no age limit) and healthy, you are eligible to participate.

For more information and prices, go to www.snorri.is/snorri-plus.htm or send an e-mail to info@snorri.is.

2009 Dates:

- Arrival: August 20, 2009 (Departure Aug 19)
- Departure: September 2, 2009
- Application deadline: February 26, 2009

Bestu kveðjur frá Íslandi!
Ásta Sól Kristjánsdóttir
Project Manager

From Kanosh to Iceland

by Sue Koyle

Let us introduce ourselves. We are Stan and Sue Koyle from Kanosh, Utah, and are serving a two-year senior-couple mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Iceland.

Stan grew up in Spanish Fork, Utah, the son of LeRoy and Norma Koyle. His father passed away in 1968 and his mother remarried Martin Reynolds, an Icelandic descendant. Stan's mother still lives in Spanish Fork as Norma Reynolds.

Sue was raised in Kanosh, Utah, the daughter of Bill and Arlene Turner.

After we were married, we lived in several locations: Logan, Spanish Fork, and Sandy, Utah; Lincoln, Nebraska; Woodbridge, Virginia; and finally Kanosh, Utah, where we have spent the last 28 years. We have seven children and

twenty-two grandchildren. Stan just retired from Intermountain Power Agency one week before leaving on our mission. Sue retired at the same time as a school bus driver for the Millard School District.

At the time we left for our mission, Stan was serving as the Executive Secretary in the Stake Presidency and Sue was the Adult Gospel Doctrine Teacher in Sunday School. Also, Stan has served in various other positions such as bishoprics, high councils, Scouting positions, teacher, and nursery leader. Sue has served as Stake and Ward Relief Society President, Ward Young Women President, Ward Primary President, Cub Scouts, Stake and Ward Young Womens Camp Director, Relief Society Compassionate Service Coordinator, teacher, and nursery leader.

We just arrived in Iceland on January 13, 2009. We had never been to Iceland before coming on this mission, which is too bad because we believe Iceland might be the most

beautiful place in the world. It is still winter here and it has been very dark during the day, cold, and snowy.

However, the ice, snow, sunsets, ocean, scenery, and the people are just great! The people—not just the Church members but people at the stores and on the streets—have been very kind and helpful to us. All are very friendly. They are a very loving people.

Our tasks here in Iceland include teaching and testifying about our Heavenly Father's gospel plan, helping the branch here in Reykjavik, helping the Missionary Elders that are serving here, and anything else that comes along. There are six Elders and two senior couples here in Iceland. There are two branches of the Church, one in Reykjavik with about 40-50 members attending, and a branch in Selfoss with about 30 active members.

Everything about Iceland is fascinating: its history, the beautiful land masses and mountains, the glaciers, the waterfalls, the geysers, the rivers, lakes, and ocean, and even the darling little horses. However, the people are the most remarkable. They are suffering hard times economically, but they are still a happy, positive, loving people. Many of them don't have much, compared to what we have in America, but they are happy. There has been a lot of political unrest lately with Parliament stepping down, and as time goes on it will be interesting to see how this all works out.

The newsletter editor asked us to share an anecdote that represents the Icelandic people. At first, we didn't know exactly how to answer, but then we thought about Aesop's fable "The Race between the Hare and Tortoise."

Now the Hare is much like most of the world. He thinks he has won the race before it even began. Because things are easy for the Hare, he is lulled into a false sense of security. He even takes a nap because he is so sure that he will win the race.

Now, the Icelanders have much against them, like the Tortoise had against him. They have lost the value of their money, they have lost their government, things are hard here, things are tough here, all alone out on an island in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean. It is dark and cold, but it is very beautiful!

Much like the Tortoise, these Icelanders are determined to win and to finish. They know things are hard and tough, but they don't give up. They just keep pushing ahead. In the end, they will win because of their great determination and their pioneer spirit. "All is Well!"

We are very happy to be here in Iceland and serving a mission. Thank you for your interest in us and Iceland.

Three Honorees

by Lil Shepherd

The Icelandic Association of Utah is pleased to honor three precious people in 2009.



Lynette Reynolds is the daughter of John Karl Johnson. She treasures memories of going to Iceland Days as a youth with her father and other family members. A former board member, Lynette was particularly helpful in organizing the first Children's Choir and other programs

and events for Iceland Days.



We honor Norma Jones for her continuous, unflagging support of the Association and the Icelandic community. As a youth, her favorite holiday was Iceland Days. Norma typifies the "steady soldier" members who continue to make the Association successful.

In 1997, Krege Christensen volunteered his legal expertise to help the Association become a corporation, complete with

bylaws and other legal documents. He continued on the Association's Board of Directors through 2007, serving as Treasurer, Director of Memberships, Vice President, and legal consultant.



For this newsletter article, Krege shared this "favorite photo," when he had the particular honor to stand

alongside President Ólafur Grimsson in 2005.

To find out more about these three wonderful western Icelanders, come to Thorablót on February 28 and to the Iceland Days Family Fair on June 27.

Connecting through Facebook

by Rick Mathews

Did you know that the Icelandic Association of Utah has a group on Facebook?

Facebook is free online social networking Web site. Membership is free and members can create personalized pages. Users can also connect with friends, exchange public or private messages, post photos, leave messages on their friends' pages, and join groups to connect with other friends.

The group's name is Utah Icelanders - Utah Vestur-Íslendingur.

Although the Association started its group in late January 2009, we already have a handful of members. The group

allows people on Facebook to enjoy an online Icelandic experience, stay updated on Icelandic events in Utah, and connect with other Icelanders.

Many Association members do not have a Facebook account but are almost sure to have children, grandchildren, or other relatives and friends who do. This is a great way to help them experience, share, celebrate, and preserve their Icelandic heritage. We urge you to talk to them and encourage them to join our Facebook group.

The online group is free to join and open to anyone on Facebook. Facebook membership is required to join the online group.

Vala's Sculptures and Paintings

If you are looking for artwork, take a peek at Vala Ola's fine, distinctive work.

Vala was born and raised in Iceland but moved to the United States in 1994. She lives in Scottsdale, Arizona, but her bronzes are cast in Utah. Therefore, she frequently visits Utah. The sculptures are all cast in bronze, signed and numbered.

You can review Vala's sculptures and paintings at www.valaola.com.

If you purchase an item, mention the Association's name. Vala will then make a donation to the Association's General Fund.

For a price list, contact Vala:

- vala@valaola.com
- Telephone: 480-688-7445



From the Bookstore

Quantity	Item	Cost	Donation
	<i>Icelanders Gather to Utah</i> , by David Ashby	\$18.00	
	<i>Norse Warfare: Unconventional Battle Strategies of the Ancient Vikings</i>	\$32.00	
	Shipping each book within the US	\$4.00	
	Shipping each book internationally	\$9.00	
	Print: Utah-Icelandic Settlement, by Cal Jolley	\$15.00	
	Key chain (pewter Viking ship, Icelandic Memorial, or puffin)	\$5.00	
	Lapel pin: Icelandic and US flags	\$ 5.00	
	T-shirts (specify the size)	\$10.00	
	"IAU" embroidered golf shirts (medium, large, or X-large)	\$25.00	
	<i>An Icelandic Saga, The Utah Story 1855-2005</i> (a 2 CD set)	\$25.00	
	Total		

Send your order to the Icelandic Association of Utah, Box 874, Spanish Fork, UT 84660.

Current Events



As of February 1, 2009, Iceland has a new Prime Minister, Jóhanna Sigurdardóttir. She is the first female to serve as Prime Minister of Iceland. Jóhanna faces daunting tasks.

As you know, Icelanders are struggling through severe difficulties. They face a

terrible burden of debt. They are struggling with inflation, high unemployment, and high (37%) taxes. Writer Eygló Svala Arnarsdóttir, with the *Iceland Review*, urges all Icelanders to shoulder appropriate shares of the national burden and to follow the nation's motto: "Ord skulu standa"(we shall stand by our words).

Tough times. A tough-minded people.

Remembering Blaine



On December 5, 2008, Blaine Ashby slipped away from us.

Some of us remember our tender-hearted board member for his quiet-but-significant contributions to our board and the community.

Some of us remember Blaine for his careful chairing of the Icelandic

Heritage Firesides during the past two years, devotionals in which the speakers and other participants on the programs touched our hearts and strengthened our ties to our Icelandic heritage.

Some of us best remember Blaine as a calm friend, determinedly squelching his pain and greeting each of us at the December social.

We miss our gentle giant.

Icelandic Association of Utah, Inc.
P.O Box 874
Spanish Fork, Utah 84660 U.S.A.

