



Connect

September 2021

Inside this issue:

President's Message	2
Around the Country...	2
Congratulations Lögberg-Heimskringla	2
Learning Icelandic with the INLUS	3
INLUS Membership	3
Connecting to Sagas Through Mjóður (Mead)	4
Point Roberts Preservation Effort: Help Save an Icelandic Landmark	5
<i>Lundi the Lost Puffin</i> Book Wins Award	6

Connect newsletter
welcomes your
submissions!

Send your news, ideas,
photos, and articles to:

info@inlus.org

Connect newsletter is
published quarterly.

Author Nancy Marie Brown Re-examining Viking History

Scholar, historian, and author Nancy Marie Brown joined INLUS for an Author's Corner event September 1 to discuss her newly released book *The Real Valkyrie: The Hidden History of Viking Warrior Women*. INLUS Volunteer Carrie Kozubal moderated the event. When asked what was the inspiration for the book, Brown replied that the inspiration came from asking the question, "How does history change if we change our assumptions?" After reading the opening statements of the new book she explained that when she set out to write the book, she thought the book would be about bones. Instead, she stated, "It turned out it is a book about bias."

Archaeological digs are interpretations of history. The Viking warrior grave at Birka, Sweden labeled by archaeologists as Bj. 581, is at the center of her book. In 2017 scholars published an article about the great professional warrior buried at Bj. 581 with numerous Viking weapons. DNA testing indicated this mighty warrior was a woman. Brown re-read texts, researched an additional 300 studies, and re-examined evidence through



Author Nancy Marie Brown

a new viewpoint. She considered what the Viking world would look like if ambition, ability, family ties, and wealth were the main considerations in defining roles of women and men instead of Victorian-era stereotypes. The result of Brown's efforts is the life story of Hervor, based on the real woman warrior buried at Bj. 581.

Brown fielded questions from webinar participants and from Kozubal, including topics such as things Brown found surprising in her research of sagas and what the author is working on next. Brown also had a few book recommendations to share for those who would enjoy reading even more about Viking warrior women:

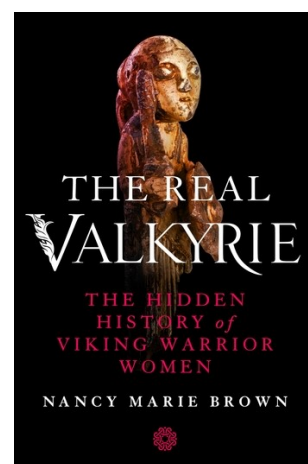
A History of the Vikings by Neil Price

Valkyrie: The Women of the Viking World

by Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir

Women & Weapons in the Viking World by Leszek Gardela

The full Author's Corner event recording is available on the [INLUS website](https://www.inlus.org).



Congratulations

Lögberg-Heimskringla
on a successful
September 17
golf tournament!



The Lögberg-Heimskringla has been published since 1886 and is the only remaining Icelandic newspaper in North America.

Paper and electronic subscriptions are available. Visit the website at www.IH-inc.ca to subscribe, donate, or shop at the Puffin Shop.

President's Message: Fall Programs



INLUS President Dianne O'Konski

Summer is passing by and September is already upon us! On July 31, I attended the 122nd annual Deuce of August Icelandic Celebration in Mountain, North Dakota; a village of less than 100 people that swells to a few thousand during the celebration. A great parade, Icelandic treats, and a wonderful heritage program made the day complete. I also met several INLUS members there, old friends and new. Thank you for a great time!

The INLUS Board is busy planning for the fall and beyond. Hopefully you were able to attend the excellent introduction by Nancy Marie Brown of her new book *The Real Valkyrie: The Hidden History of Viking Warrior Women*. You will see more in this newsletter about the Icelandic language classes that will be offered October through November. There are also several webinars in the works. We are eagerly awaiting the rescheduling of an update from Bergdís Ellertsdóttir, Iceland's Ambassador to the USA. November will feature a presentation on the full suite of Snorri programs, as applications are due in January for the Snorri and Snorri Plus programs. Also in the works is an interview with Jewells, who has the popular *All Things Iceland* podcast and can be found on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. How about creating your own chocolate Icelandic Easter egg? Stay tuned for an early 2022 cooking demonstration on chocolate and the treasured Easter egg by Íris Björk Óskarsdóttir Vail. She and her husband run Vail Custom Cakes bakery in Maine and Íris has taught over 40 classes on chocolate.

The INLUS has a lot coming up and we like to stay busy, so send me your ideas for webinars, Authors Corner events, cooking demonstrations, or anything else that would be of interest! I'm at dianne@inlus.org!

Around the Country...

Icelandic clubs and organizations are busy!

Icelandic Association of Chicago

Has a golf tournament **September 19**. For details <https://icelandchicago.org/>

Icelandic Club of Greater Seattle

Just had their annual picnic. For highlights <https://www.icelandseattle.com/>

Icelandic Communities Association of Northeast North Dakota

Held their annual August the Deuce celebration. For highlights <http://thedeuce.org/>

Icelandic Association of Utah

Held a breakfast info meeting. To connect <https://www.facebook.com/groups/58628172017/>

Learning Icelandic with the INLUS

We've been proud of the online, live Icelandic classes offered in the past two years and look forward to launching another set of classes this October. If you've ever wanted a good introduction and basic Icelandic class, we have one for you. Or if you're more advanced and would like to practice speaking, we are offering a new conversational Icelandic class.



Icelandic Instructor
Birna Sigurbjörnsdóttir

The conversational Icelandic class will start on Tuesday, October 5th. The facilitator/teacher is Birna Sigurbjörnsdóttir who was born in Iceland but lived much of her childhood and some of her adult life in the USA. She has traveled and lived around the world, and owned her own school teaching English as a foreign language in Switzerland. She moved home to Iceland 3 and a half years ago.

She'll be introducing different conversation starters each class where students will be chal-

lenged to speak Icelandic extemporaneously and naturally in facilitated conversations. In order to provide an effective learning environment, this class will be strictly limited to eight individuals, and the conversational class is already full.

David Johnson will facilitate our basic/introductory class again on Thursday evenings, starting October 7th and running for six weeks as well. This class will introduce the Icelandic alphabet and the sounds letters and letter combinations make. It will also introduce nouns, noun genders, nominative, particular, singular and plural forms of nouns, and pronouns – a lot of vocabulary building. And with an introduction of some verbs and verb conjugation, we'll begin developing and reading simple sentences.

Both classes will be invited to also participate in an informal Sunday evening study group where we'll continue our reading and comprehension building by reading Icelandic short stories.

Six one-hour classes will cost \$60 for members of the INLUS.

You can register online at https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/QnwJMa518G50dbsqnN6vlg. If you have any questions about these classes, please send an email to david@inlus.org.



Icelandic Instructor
David Johnson

INLUS

Membership

Do you know someone who thinks all things Icelandic are cool?

Encourage them to join INLUS!

Encourage your friends and family to join! Give membership as a gift! To join, simply go to:

<https://www.inlus.org/about-us/membership/>

There are four types of membership:

- Individual \$25 annual
- Family \$50 annual
- Icelandic Organization \$100 annual
- Business (Iceland/Nordic related) \$100 annual

To learn more about our community, business, and Icelandic organization members, check out the community area of the INLUS website at:

<https://www.inlus.org/community/>

Connecting to Sagas Through Mjödúr (Mead)

Recorded in the sagas, mead is the drink with a direct cultural connection to the Vikings. To carry on tradition Chef Brent Skarðaborg taught how to craft mead in a July 7 INLUS webinar. His company, Texas Nordic, is dedicated to continuing culinary heritage and educating others in successfully crafting their own dishes.



Chef Brent Skarðaborg

Chef Skarðaborg has uniquely combined his training at a Japanese culinary school, his global experiences, and his keen interest in teaching about his own family's history and culture. He shared about mead's historical details. Versions of mead have been created in many parts of the world for thousands of years adding to the rich cultural history of the drink. With that rich history, Skarðaborg explained the details about why he plays music while the yeast pitches for each mead recipe he makes. And the yeast itself has

history—the strain he uses is over 1000 years old!

For anyone who has an interest in attempting to make the recipe, Chef Skarðaborg made the recipe straightforward with easily accessible ingredients, equipment, and techniques. With a lot of trial and error, he has developed a recipe that takes three to five days to craft. He provided several helpful hints and ideas for experimenting with different flavor combinations and stated,

"I just hope that everybody has a good time trying this out at home."

In addition to the [webinar recording](#), Chef Skarðaborg's [mead recipe and helpful hints](#) can be found on the INLUS website.

Point Roberts Preservation Effort: Help Save an Icelandic Landmark

By Margot Griffiths, Point Roberts, WA

In the early 1890s the first Icelandic settlers arrived in Point Roberts, Washington. Though few in number, their resilient spirits fueled a steadily growing population and founded a lasting heritage in this tiny exclave of the United States. Separated from mainland USA by Canada, Point Roberts presents numerous challenges for its residents today. How much more so when those resourceful Icelandic settlers arrived here nearly 130 years ago?

In 1913, when the Icelandic Synod in Winnipeg sent the Reverend H. Leo to Point Roberts, over 35 adults and their children formed the first mission congregation. Services, held in the school house, were conducted in Icelandic for several years before English was adopted. The same energy, strength and faithfulness they brought to homesteading, farming and fishing, the Icelanders brought to building their new church. In 1921 a group of volunteers completed the sanctuary that has stood these 100 years, a symbol of Icelandic love of church and community. Trinity Community Lutheran Church stands on land donated by the Solomon family. Rough lumber was cut from Point Roberts' forests at the Largaud's mill.

And now that iconic church, the oldest structure in Point Roberts, is in danger of collapsing. The situation is dire and the sanctuary has been condemned. Without a firm foundation, the west wall is bowing outward, the result of the gravity load of the roof above. The restoration to stabilize the church and retrofit a foundation is underway and money is urgently needed to meet the costs. With our borders closed due to Covid-19, the many Canadians who once regularly visited Point Roberts, are not here to sustain our economy. Businesses are shuttered and fundraising in our diminished local community is very difficult.

This historic building is more than a church. It is the oldest landmark in Point Roberts and has developed an ecumenical membership that has flourished for over 100 years. **It is the only concert hall, an emergency shelter for the Red Cross, a partner with both the Food Bank and Point Roberts Emergency Preparedness.**

A testament to Icelandic faith and tenacity, Trinity Community Lutheran Church is loved, indeed cherished, by the community of Point Roberts. And in spite of isolation due to the pandemic, a group of volunteers has raised over \$50,000 toward its restoration. However, with an ultimate need of \$200,000, we are very much hoping that Icelandic communities of today will join us in honoring and preserving the legacy of the past. Please help us save this historic Icelandic landmark.

For more information and to make a donation please visit our website, pointrobertschurch.com.



Photo by Runa Thordarson, 1940's

Lundi the Lost Puffin Book Wins Award

Lundi the Lost Puffin has won the Nautilus Book Awards Silver Medal. Author Eric Newman joined INLUS for an Author's Corner event to talk about the creation of the book in 2020, and the recording can be found [on the INLUS website](#).

Autographed copies of *Lundi the Lost Puffin* can be purchased at:

<https://icelandwithkids.com/puffinbook/>

It can also be purchased at:

<https://www.amazon.com/Lundi-Lost-Puffin-Heroes-Iceland/dp/0960074538>



NAUTILUS BOOK AWARDS

Better Books for a Better World

Silver Medal

Best Children's Picture Book-Fiction Story



May 10, 2021: Eric Newman's book, *Lundi the Lost Puffin*, won a silver medal at the 2020 Nautilus Children's Book Awards. The book, geared for children ages 4-8, won in the Best Children's Picture Book (Fiction) category.

"This book was a Covid quarantine project for me," said Newman. "I became a travel writer who wasn't traveling, and so I decided to share one of my favorite stories about Iceland."

Every year, children living on Iceland's Westman Islands rescue thousands of lost baby puffins (pufflings). The baby birds have an instinct to fly toward the moon to find the ocean. But many of them are confused by the lights of the small town, and they end up lost and lonely on land.

"Children have been rescuing pufflings on the Westman Islands for generations. Children get to stay up late to find the pufflings, and they bring them to the aquarium the next day to be weighed. If the birds are healthy enough, the child who found the puffling is allowed to carefully throw it into the ocean!"

The pufflings leave the safety of their burrows in the fall, and so the puffling rescuing season typically starts in late August. "I hope to make it to the Westman Islands some September so my kids and I can try to rescue a puffling or two!" says Newman.

Eric is the founder of Iceland With Kids, a company that helps families plan amazing vacations to Iceland. He offers a travel guide book called *Iceland With Kids*, as well as itinerary planning and custom tours.

"Iceland is a perfect destination for families looking for an amazing and safe vacation, now that travel is opening up again. And the Westman Islands are a perfect place to visit. A 35-minute ferry ride gets you to this island full of interesting history. That history includes a massive volcanic eruption in 1973. And of course, there are puffins! The Westman Islands is home to fewer than 5,000 people, but an estimated 4 million puffins!"

Book details:
ISBN 978-0-9600745-3-2
\$9.99 (paperback)
ISBN 978-0-9600745-4-9
\$4.99 (eBook)
July 2020. Age range: 4-8



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