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The Intriguing Island of Iceland

(Ed. Note: This is the final article on the 1965 Scandinavian Study Mission of the National Newspaper Association. Mrs. Marie Bolles, editor and publisher of the Eustis Lake Region News, and Mrs. W. C. Daniells of Eustis, took part in this Study Mission. This story on Iceland completes the 12-article series.)

by Marie Bolles

We grumbled as we looked at the itinerary.

"Four days in Iceland! Have they lost their minds," thought many members of the National Newspaper Association participating in the 1965 Study Mission in the Scandinavian countries.

Which all went to prove we had a lot to learn.

For we fell in love with this austere land... with its fierce pride of country and family... its rich history as the "grandmother" of Parliaments to its most recent training of simulated moon landings by Astronauts.

One of the world's oldest countries, as years go, Iceland is also one of the youngest as governments are counted.

Possessed with strong family feeling and great national pride, Icelanders are also gifted with considerable curiosity concerning the world around them.

They are isolated only geographically.

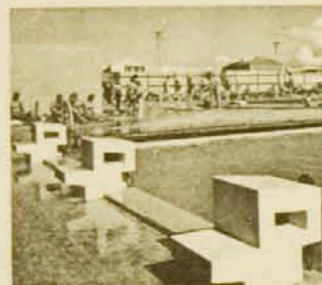
We were surprised that citizens we met were so well versed on politics in the United States.

As Icelanders have gone out into the world to satisfy their curiosity, they have had to change a time honored custom of their society. Icelanders have no family names... like Jones, Smith, Black or Brown.

If Einar Ingvarsson has a

ers swim every day in the year. It is common practice for the working man to swim an hour before breakfast.

Reykjavik has several outdoor swim pools. We drove past one where President Asgiar takes a swim each morning at 8 o'clock.



AN OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOL... with natural hot water from underground hot springs, provides year around swimming for residents of Iceland.

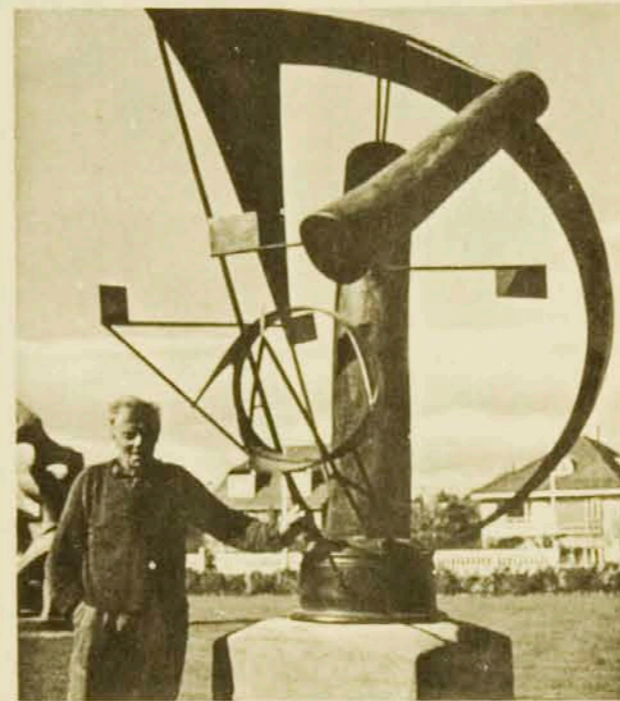
It isn't that the weather is so warm... it's the water that's warm. Hot, in fact.

Winters are mild but stormy and humid. Summers are quite cool. The Gulf Stream moderates the weather in Iceland.

January has an average temperature of 33. Summer temperatures range from 52 to 60. Iceland has 200 days of rain annually. Hot springs and snow capped mountains may be seen side by side.

The airport at Keflavik is almost never closed. Iceland has all kinds of weather except fog.

Underneath the ground, hot springs abound and the Reykjavik housewife finds this practical and helpful. With the turn of a switch when she gets up in the morning, the central heating supplied from the hot springs, spreads through the entire house. This is something of which



ASMUNDER SVEINSSON is the best known modern Icelandic sculptor. Now nearly 70 years of age, he is a pioneer of modern art. His figures are created from such varied materials as clay, stone, metals and wood. Asmunder has insisted on keeping his sculptures in Iceland and has resisted several offers to sell the originals to other countries. Some of his works adorn the parks in Reykjavik. He is pictured by one of his works, "Thor."



THE ARBAER MUSEUM at Iceland preserves the characteristic multigabled style seen in many rural areas of

Iceland does not devote any income to national defense. They think opposition is just a normal situation and hope the time will come when defense will not be necessary. They also know it will be quite some time before this happens, if ever.

Iceland's value as a weather station was demonstrated during World War II and it is considered a strategic point.

Keflavik is the airport for all commercial flights as well as military.

Boy from "home"

Following a briefing at Keflavik, NNA members were privileged to meet personnel from their areas.

We met a young man from Florida, James C. Sutton.

James spent some time in Astor when he was assigned to the Bombing Range. He is a native of Toledo, Ohio and joined the Navy in 1955.

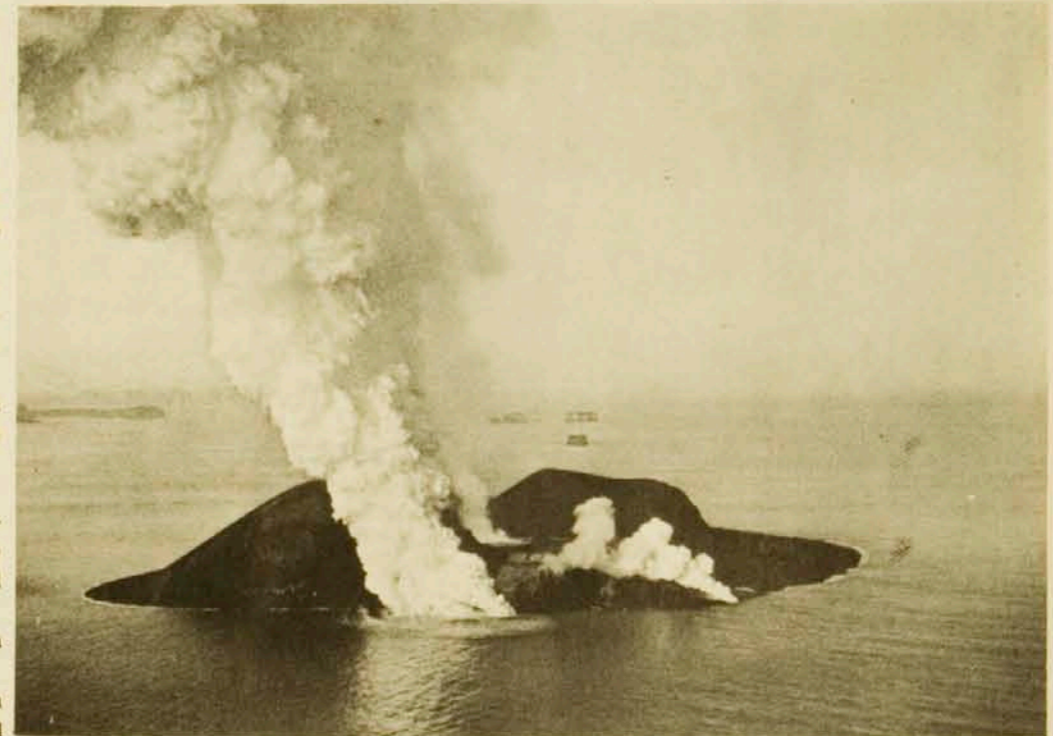
We were delighted to find we shared so many mutual friends. James knows the Tippins family in Eustis... Bill Martin is his insurance man. Other good friends are Otis Lee in Astor and Howard Henry in Umatilla. His wife, the former Carol Ann Johnson, attended Umatilla High School in 1963. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Johnson of Astor.

It's a small world.

Here at the top of the world on the volcanic island of Iceland we found a boy so homesick for Lake County and his wife and young son that he was only counting the minutes until he came back home.

James evidently missed any of the "fascination" we found in Iceland. He's only waiting for the time he can retire and live in Florida on the St. Johns River.

And who can blame him for



SURTSEY, the volcanic island southwest of the Vestman Islands, off the south coast of Iceland, suddenly emerged from the sea in November 1963. A crew aboard a fishing boat observed 50-60 meter high jet black columns of ash and vapour rising from the surface of the sea. The depth of the sea before the eruption was about 130 meters. Surtsey is now almost three years old and it appears it may continue to exist for a long time. It is now two miles long and one mile wide with a mountain beach of coal black sand. Scientists are watching the island to see if life will develop here. If birds drop fertilizer and seed vegetation may start. Then perhaps man will come. Who knows? Surtsey is about 40 miles from Iceland.



son named Jon, this son will be known as Jon Einarsson. If Jon has a son named Bjor, this son will be known as Bjor Johnson. If Bjor has a son named Carl, this son will be known as Carl Bjornsson.

If Einar Ingvarsson has a daughter, Anna, her name will be Anna Ingvardotter. If Anna married Carl Johnson, she would still be known as Anna Ingvardotter.

While all of this may be easily understood by Icelanders, it did lead to some complications while travelling abroad. Hotel clerks were known to raise an eyebrow and perhaps refuse lodging to Anna Ingvardotter and Carl Johnson who wanted to share the same bedroom.

The Parliament of Iceland handled the situation by passing a special act of legislation that allows the wife to use her husband's name when she is travelling. But when she comes back to Iceland, she reverts to Icelandic customs and uses only her name.

Swim every day

It came as a great surprise to us to discover that Iceland-

Icelanders are justifiably proud.

The main center of this is the Hot Water Supply System in Reykjavik which began on a modest scale in 1928. By 1943 there were 32,000 homes supplied with hot water and it is estimated by 1970 the entire city will enjoy these facilities.

Due to its volcanic origin, Iceland is extremely rich in natural heat. The total flow from its 700 hot water springs amounts to about 1,700 litres per second. Only a small part of this supply has been utilized, mostly for growing vegetables, flowers and fruit. Its application in domestic heating has become important.

It gives you a strange feeling that you're actually sitting on top of all this boiling water which exists almost everywhere if one drills deep enough.

When walking the streets you can sometimes get closer contact with this weird phenomenon. Now and again you will see a small geyser spouting its steam into the air, giving the impression of a white London fog. However,

Iceland as late as the 1930's. Interested individuals in Scandinavia started collections of old buildings that were in danger of destruction and whose cultural value would be lost forever. The Arbaer museum was established by the City Council as a department of the Reykjavik Municipal Museum in 1957.

the hot water supply underneath Reykjavik is so deep that there is little danger of its erupting unexpectedly without drilling.

Unlike the small town 50 miles away where a few years ago a woman awoke to find a hot spring bursting through the floor of her kitchen. The family had fortunately chosen a better place in the house for the bedroom.

Inhabitants of Reykjavik have become so attached to their way of heating that when they go abroad to other European countries in winter, they often find their accommodations almost too cold to bear.

Clear Atmosphere

The air in Iceland is usually clear and pure. Even distant mountains appear quite near.

We were housed at the Saga Hotel. The dining room was on the top floor windowed all the way around. From here we had a magnificent view of the city and the countryside. One could see clearly for 50 miles or more around. It was almost unbelievable.

Iceland Important

James Penfield, U. S. ambassador to Iceland since 1961, told NNA members he felt Americans should know more about Iceland.

After Hitler invaded Norway and Denmark during World War II, the British were afraid Hitler would take Iceland. So

the British occupied Iceland with little warning.

The Icelanders really wanted to keep out of the war. They didn't want Britain or the United States on their soil. For a time, it seemed there were more foreign soldiers on Iceland's soil than there were Icelanders. If three million foreigners came into New York City at one time it would have the same impact as 4,000 troops in Reykjavik.

But being practical people with no national army, no navy and only a coast guard protecting a fishing fleet, Icelanders have permitted an NATO base with the agreement that the military stay as much as possible on the base. Public relations forces of Iceland and U. S. are working to cement friendships. Base personnel go to Reykjavik at specified times and on USO circuits. A U. S. band went out into Iceland on a good will tour and a series of Icelandic artists appeared on the Base television circuit. Personnel take part in golf matches, Masonic work and clubs.

Keflavik is an NATO base and U. S. forces have been augmented by Canadians and Danes.

Iceland is one of the original members of NATO and hopes NATO will continue after 1969 despite DeGaulle's withdrawal.



... is much like the people of Iceland. He has to be hardy to...



THE HARBOUR . . . from the dawn of Reykjavik's history the harbour has been the pulse of the city. Extensive shipping and fishery industries center from this area.

that?

Since our visit to Iceland, James has returned to the States. He and his wife and family are now in the Azores.

A bit of history . . .

Icelanders have endured almost every calamity you can imagine. Only the toughest have survived. They are highly resilient, tough and proud of their background and history.

Icelanders are mainly descended from the settlers who



MAN FROM MARS? No, just a man from Keflavik Naval Base in Iceland training among the lava rocks.

arrived from Norway in 870-950 with their families and slaves. Celtic Monks found Iceland before the Vikings. About 930 AD the country was evenly settled along the coast

(Continued on Page 7)



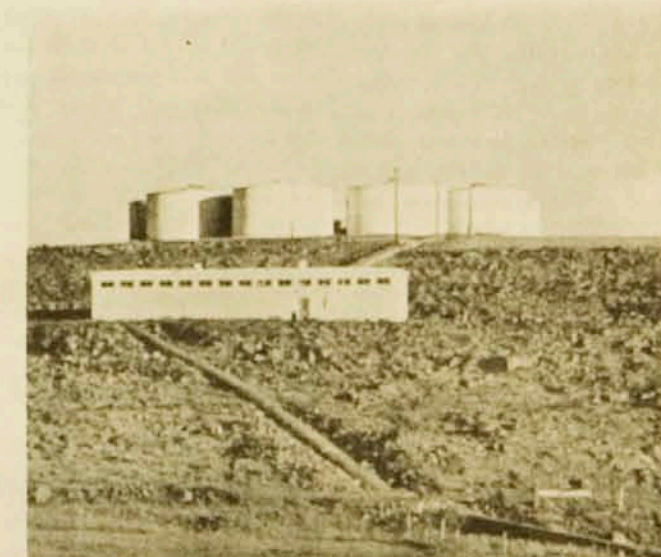
A LAKE in the heart of the City of Reykjavik, often referred to as "the smokeless city."



HOT SPRINGS burst forth from the earth of Iceland. These 700 hot-water springs bring heat to houses of Iceland, continuous hot water and heated swimming pools. Icelanders swim every day of the year.



ABUNDANT BIRDLIFE is found in the lake in the center of the City of Reykjavik.



HOT WATER FOR REYKJAVIK is piped from these tanks bringing water of hot-water springs to homes in Iceland.