

Icelandic Special Collections and Swedish Archives

Presented for the Swedish Cultural
Association of Manitoba March 24 2022



Good evening! I am so happy to be here, virtually, tonight! My name is Katrin Nielsdottir and I moved to Manitoba just last year to take the position for the Icelandic Special Collections and Rarebooks librarian here at the University of Manitoba



TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES == ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ==

The University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.

We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

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I would also just like to take a moment to acknowledge that the University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands

Outline

- Short history of the Icelandic Collection
- The physical space
- Current size and collection inclusions
- The Scandinavian Immigrant Library
- Archival Collections
- Rare Books
- How to access the collection

Tonight, I would like to give you short history of the collection because while people know about the collection here, the details of how it was created are becoming part of a forgotten history

The Iceland Room is one of the most sought after places to study, relax and research and I will show you why

I will go over the current size and inclusions in the collections as well as potential uses for different types of materials

The Scandinavian Immigrant Library history and inclusions.

Our extensive archival collections for research purposes

Our Rare Books Collections

And last but not least, how you can access the collection

History of the Icelandic Collection

How did we get all these books?

Including but not limited to:

- 1930 The Jón Bjarnason Academy 2500
- 1936 Arnljótur B. Olson 1700 titles
- 1952 Reverend Einar Sturluson of Patriksfjörður - 4000 volumes or 870 periodical titles

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So how did this collection come into being? Mostly from the generous donations from the community. Here in Canada and abroad.

In 1930 The Jon Bjarnason Academy (also known as Wesley College and what is now the University of Winnipeg) closed its doors and donated their collection of 2500 titles to the University of Manitoba. Each of these books are now identified by a name plate on the inside cover with the name and photo of Jon Bjarnason.

But how did the Jon Bjarnason Academy end up with so many titles? Well their collection was made up primarily of the collection from the Icelandic Lutheran Synod of

America who had purchased the personal library of Brain Leim in 1893 as well as the incorporation of the personal library of Jon Bjarnason upon his death in 1914.

As you can see these books have lived exciting lives!

In 1936 Arnljótur B. Olson donated a very large and valuable collection to the University. This collection contained around 17000 books, many of which were rare. The value at that time was estimated to be at around 3500. Each of these books are now identified by a name plate on the inside cover with the name Arnljótur B. Olson and a picture of Snorri Sturluson.

In 1952 Reverend Einar Sturluson of Patriksfjordur gifted his personal collection of Icelandic Periodicals, which he had been collecting since 1931. The collection numbered 4000 volumes of 870 periodical titles.

Inside the Iceland room we also hold the personal libraries of Stephan G Stephanson – The so-called Rocky Mountain Poet who my middle son is actually named after, and Guttormur Guttormsson, a more famous to Manitoba poet.

Contributions from Iceland

- 1939 Jonas Jonsson introduced a bill in the legislature providing the University of Manitoba be supplied with all the books and periodicals published in Iceland.
- 1940 to 1949 had a copy of nearly everything published in Iceland sent to the University of Manitoba

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In 1939 Jonas Jonsson, who at the time was the foreign minister of Iceland returned from a visit from Winnipeg so impressed with the efforts within the Western Icelandic Community to build up the Icelandic Collection that when he returned to Iceland he introduced a bill into legislation that that the university of Manitoba be supplied with a copy of every book and periodical published in Iceland. This meant that between 1940 and 1949 a copy of nearly everything published in Iceland was sent to the university of Manitoba. This was a huge fleet at the time, considering that during world war 2 Iceland was shipping pallets of books to New York and the University of Manitoba had to send someone down to pick them up and work with customs. After a while it was decided that this was far to much work and that Iceland was going to split the parcels down into several small boxes that could be managed by Canada Post.

In 1949 a change of government and policy meant that the number of titles being sent was greatly reduced and only those considered to be of value to the forming Icelandic department were sent over.

Iceland Reading Room



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The Iceland room, often called the Icelandic Reading Room, is well known as the best place to study at Dafoe library. Thanks to the generous contributions from the communities and the fund-raising efforts of the valuing Icelandic Presence Committee and Icelandic government this space was redone in the year 2000 to be a well lit and furnished area for students, visitors and researchers.

You can see the large bright tables for students as well as comfortable chairs for relaxing and looking at artifacts such as the Stephan G Stephansson personal library and Guttormur Guttormsson personal library seen here.

Iceland Reading Room

Media Room



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The Media Room is a closed room where people can meet and work together on projects.

Iceland Reading Room

Study carrels and office space

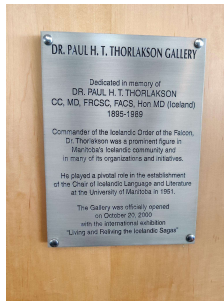


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Private offices and study Carrels are available to anyone who is using the collections, including the archival collections for research purposes.

Iceland Reading Room Board Room



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The Board room is popular for reading clubs to meet and language instruction

Iceland Reading Room

Dr. Paul H.T. Thorlakson Gallery and [Liv Valmestad](#)



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Paul Henrik Thorbjorn Thorlakson, CC (October 5, 1895 – October 19, 1989) was a Canadian physician and Chancellor of the University of Winnipeg.[1]

Paul Thorlakson was born in Park River, North Dakota and grew up in Selkirk, Manitoba. He was the third child of the Reverend Neils Steingrimur Thorlákson (1857-1943), who was an immigrant from Iceland and Erika Christopha Rynning (1860-1947), who was born in Norway. His father was a minister in the Lutheran Church who served the congregations in Minnesota, North Dakota, and Manitoba.

The art gallery in the Iceland Reading Room is dedicated to him and has regular art exhibitions including the one shown here with paintings by Liv Valmestad who is a Norwegian-Canadian artist who lives in Winnipeg. She did these paintings during an art residency in Iceland.

Current physical collection

Located at Dafoe

- Currently a total of 28,229 items catalogued, not including eBooks or other electronic resources
- Languages included are Icelandic, English, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish
- 2350 titles added in 2021

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We currently have 28229 catalogued items in the collection, and this does not include eBooks or electronic resources. This number includes titles in English, Icelandic, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish. Our collection is always growing and we added 2350 new titles in 2021 alone. This collection is second only in North America to the Cornell Fiske Collection which has about 40000 titles

Children and Youth Books

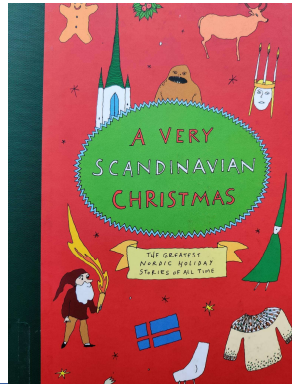
- Nearly 3000 titles, available to borrow
- Materials in Icelandic, English, German, French and Danish
- Many titles available in more than one language
- Publication dates spanning 150 years

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Our youth and children's collection includes nearly 3000 titles in various languages. This collection is specifically unique in not just the variety of languages but the publication span of 150 years. This collection, in my opinion provides the most opportunity to connect the generations with their roots. Immigrants have the opportunity to borrow books in their first language to read to their children – always an important experience in every family. With many classics being translated to English, generations who are either not fluent in the language or are not as comfortable reading it out loud, can continue to share the same stories and traditions of their childhood with their children. This might include holiday traditions in children's literature – as an example the Christmas Cat in Iceland

Children and Youth Books



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Includes the Swedish stories of The Fur Coat, The Emporors Vision, The Stronger, The legend of the Christmas Rose and A Christmas Guest

Regular Collection

- Nearly 23000 titles available to borrow
- Materials available in Icelandic, English, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish
- Both fiction and nonfiction
- Something for everyone

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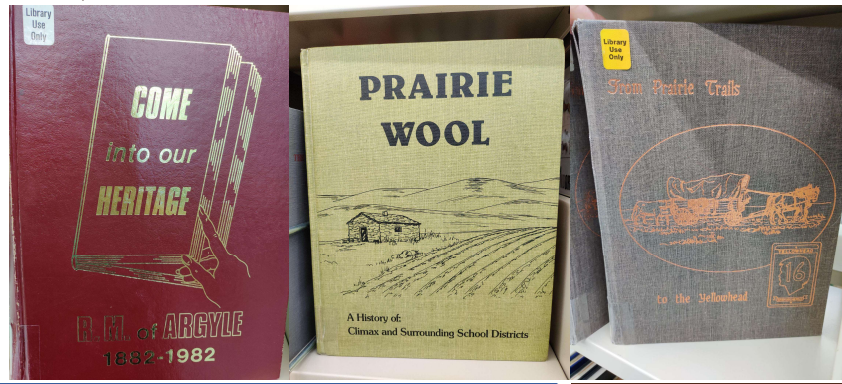


Our main collection is amazing in that it has something for everyone, with nearly 23 thousand titles to browse, fiction and non fiction in various languages. English translations of many Nordic bestsellers are available, we have DVDs and our non fiction collection can give you the resources you need to knit a traditional sweater and recipes to remake your most memorable meals

Regular Collection



Quick Reference



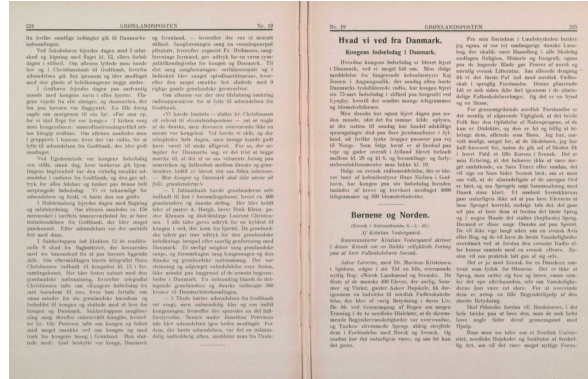
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University
of Manitoba

The quick reference section is more a focus on local history. It is a much smaller collection and only available to use onsite as many of these books are more rare and difficult to replace. In some cases it acts as a preview to the main collection with a loanable version of the same book in the stacks.

Periodicals



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Our Periodicals currently have 3700 volumes available to borrow with a strong focus on materials printed in Canada. We also have access to large collections of digital collections and if there is something you are looking for, I am sure I can help you find it

Periodicals

- Aflstöðin 1907-1907 Winnipeg
- Breiðablik 1906-1914 Winnipeg
- Gimlungur 1910-1911 Gimli
- Skuggsjá 1916-1918 Wynyard
- Almanak Ólafs S. Thorgeirssonar 1895-1954 Winnipeg
- Börnin 1905 Winnipeg
- Heimilisvinurinn 1910 Gimli
- Sólöld 1918-1919 Winnipeg
- Dagsbrún 1893-1896
- Heimir 1904-1914 Winnipeg
- Stjarnan 1897-1898 Winnipeg
- Alþýðuvínurinn 1914-1914 Winnipeg
- Dagskrá II 1901-1903 Winnipeg
- Heimskringla 1886-1958 Winnipeg
- Stjarnan 1919-1956 Lundur
- Áramót 1905-1909 Winnipeg
- Dvergur 1929-1929 Winnipeg
- Leifur 1883-1886 Winnipeg
- Svava 1895-1904 Gimli,
- Sýrpa 1911-1922 Winnipeg
- Árdís 1933-1966 Winnipeg
- Fönnið 1921-present Lundur
- Lísing 1898-1899 Winnipeg
- Tímarit Þjóðræknisfélags Íslendinga 1919-1968 Winnipeg
- Ársrit Jóns Bjarnasonar skóla 1921-1922 Winnipeg
- Framfarir 1877-1880 Lundur
- Lögberg 1888-1959 Winnipeg
- Lögberg-Heimskringla 1959-
- Baldur 1903-1910 Gimli
- Framtíðin 1908-1910 Winnipeg
- Ný dagsbrún 1904-1906 Gimli
- Selkirkingur 1900-1902 Selkirk
- Bergmálið 1897-1901 Gimli
- Freyja 1898-1910 Selkirk
- Freyr 1924-1925 Winnipeg
- Fróði 1911-1914 Winnipeg

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This is a list of periodicals published in Canada in Icelandic, as you can see the list is extensive for such a small Language

Electronic Resources

- Snara.is
- Hlusta.is



Hlusta.is

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Our collection also offers electronic resources including audiobooks in Icelandic and English by Scandinavian authors through Hlusta.is and Snara.is is a multilingual dictionary that is also available to library card holders and is much more reliable than Google!

Scandinavian Immigrant Library



Cabinet
handcrafted by
Ture Ögren in 1929

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Here we can see Canada's only surviving Scandinavian immigrant library. The cabinet itself was handcrafted by Ture Ögren in 1929. This library was founded by the members of the Scandinavian Home Society in Port Arthur, Ontario. The books were read by the members in the upstairs clubrooms of the original building that was constructed in 1926. The collection consists of 521 books published between 1874-1978. Of these books 352 were published in Sweden and 30 are Swedish Language conversational dictionaries. This is a closed archival collection, and an appointment needs to be booked to look inside it but the shelves and books themselves are now located within the stacks of the Icelandic collection, right outside the door to the Iceland Reading Room.

Rare Books



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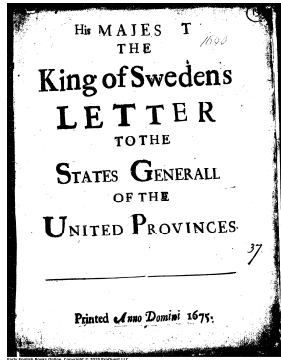


The Rare Books and Manuscripts Collection is housed in the Archives' Rare Book Vault and contains, among many fine bibles, religious, and missionary texts, one of only five known copies of Tudeschi's ca. 1438 manuscript *Lectura in Decretales*.

The Rare Book collection is focused on early Canadian printing and may be the largest collection of its type in Canada

Pictured above is a cover from a Swedish Calendar which the University have the full set for.

Archival Collections



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While I could not find an example in time of a Swedish family's person archives being donated to the University I would encourage anyone with manuscripts at home to consider placing them in our care for future generations. This could include letters written home to and from family in Sweden, journals or personal documentation. We have several collections of this type in the Icelandic fonds, and they are of great interest to their families and researchers.

UM Digital Collections

ACCESSIBLE, HISTORICAL AND UNIQUELY MANITOBA

UM Digital Collections
Your home to the University of Manitoba's unique digital material.
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What's New

- Lord Selkirk's Land Grant
Feb 22, 2022
- Trees-Springs Building
Dec 3, 2021
- 2010_11_20 Board of...
Jul 7, 2021
- 2010_09_25 Board of...
Jul 7, 2021

Collections

[a](#) [b](#) [c](#) [d](#) [e](#) [f](#) [g](#) [h](#) [i](#) [j](#) [k](#) [l](#) [m](#) [n](#) [o](#) [p](#) [q](#) [r](#) [s](#) [t](#) [u](#) [v](#) [w](#) [x](#) [y](#) [z](#)

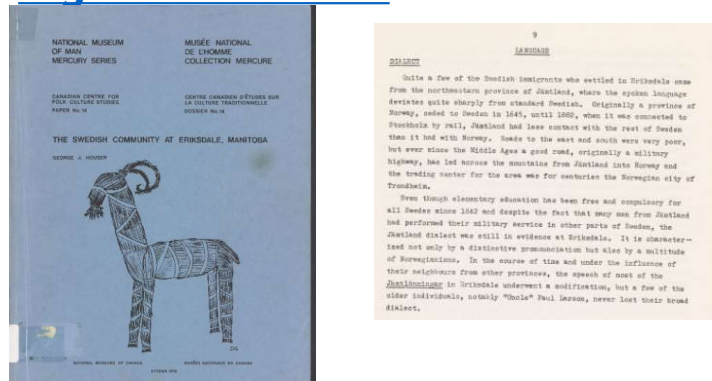
| | |
|---|--|
| A.H. Reginald Butler fonds | A.S. Morton Manuscript Collection |
| Alice Cameron Brown fonds | Alpha Omega Society fonds |
| Andrew Taylor fonds | Angus Shortt fonds |
| Anne Yanchyshyn fonds | Architecture and Fine Arts Library |
| Asklepios: College of Medicine Yearbooks | |
| Bertram Brooker fonds | Bill Lobchuk fonds |
| Brandon Daily Sun | Brandon Sun Weekly |
| Brian Macpherson fonds | Bridgen Family fonds |
| British Medical Association 98th Annual Meeting Winnipeg, 1938 | Brown and Gold Yearbooks |
| C. Winston McQuillan fonds | Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University of |

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digitalcollections.lib.umanitoba.ca

Digital Collections



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The University has been diligent about digitizing history to increase accessibility. As you can see here, as part of the UM digital collections, we have a publication from the Swedish Community in Eriksdale, Manitoba

[Manitoba Local Histories | digitalcollections.lib.umanitoba.ca](http://digitalcollections.lib.umanitoba.ca)

Citizen users

Available to citizens of Manitoba

- Library card for \$50.00 per year
- Ability to borrow library materials
- Access to electronic resources onsite

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Alumni users

Available to Alumni members

- Library card for free
- Ability to borrow library materials
- Access to electronic resources (including Snara.is and Hlusta.is)

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University Students

You already have access!

- Library card for free
- Ability to borrow library materials
- Access to electronic resources (including Snara.is and Hlusta.is)

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LibGuide Resources

News and new additions to the Icelandic Collection



Welcome to the new LibGuide for our Icelandic Special Collections here at the University of Manitoba. Here you can find links to electronic resources for both research and learning Icelandic. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. Below are the most recent additions to our physical book collection, updated daily.

- The guardians of Iceland and other Icelandic folk tales [↗](#) Feb 2,
This collection of Icelandic fairy tales and legends comes from the days of the Vikings. These stories of trolls, magic, Hidden People, and creatures from the were passed down from generation to generation, told on cold winter nights in of the fire before being written down a hundred years ago. The stories together here and updated, so now you can read about trolls that wa throughout Iceland, the race of Hidden People with strong magic po four powerful beings that protect Iceland from all invaders. The mer men, giants, shape-shifting seals, and dragons in disguise are he discover. Available through UM Icelandic Collections.

Quick Links

- The Icelandic Collection
- Department of Icelandic Language and Literature
- Dafoe Library
- From Vinland to Valinor: Resources from the Icelandic Language and Literature Department
- Cornell University Library
- University of Manitoba Icelandic Manuscripts

Language Centre

- University of Manitoba Language Centre
-  Icelandic DVDs Available
-  Icelandic Games Available

News from Iceland

- Identities Of Those Lost To Plane Crash Revealed [↗](#) [i](#) Feb 7, 2022
- COVID Roundup: Hospitalisations Rise, Reduced Isolation Time In Effect, Daily Numbers [↗](#) [i](#)
- Tragic End To Search Feb 7, 2022 For Missing Plane [↗](#) [i](#)
- Stormy Weather Feb 7, 2022 Across The Country Until Tomorrow Evening [↗](#) [i](#)

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Are we missing something?



Recommend purchase

Our Liaison Librarians will consider any request which is in support of the teaching, learning and research needs of the University. However, it will also depend on whether there is sufficient budget available or whether the item is still in print.

Who may recommend a purchase: University of Manitoba students and faculty may request a purchase.

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Takk fyrir mig! Tack så mycket!

Questions, comments or suggestions?

- Email: Katrin.Nielsdottir@umanitoba.ca

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