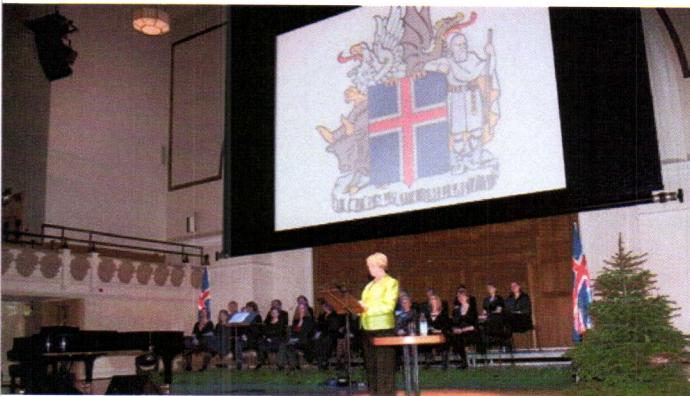


90th Anniversary of the Independence of Iceland 1 DECEMBER 1918 – 2008



Over 500 people attended a cultural evening celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Independence of Iceland on Monday, 1 December at Cadogan Hall. The Embassy of Iceland, the Icelandic Church and the Icelandic Society in London hosted the event. This is the largest gathering ever of Icelanders and their friends in the UK.

Rev. Sigurður Arnarson led the celebration with a prayer and after words of welcome from Ambassador Gunnlaugsson he introduced the Guest of Honour and Keynote Speaker Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, former President of Iceland. The speech can be found on the Embassy's website: www.iceland.org/uk.

Performers were Ólafur Kjartan Sigurðarson, baritone and Vovka Stefán Ashkenazy, piano; the Icelandic Choir in London, conductor Þóra Hallgrímsdóttir; Lay Low and the Faroese singer Eivör Pálsdóttir; contributions were from two young Icelanders Kristine Erwin and Hlynur Sveinbjörnsson and Gunnar Cauthery and Ragnheiður Guðmundsdóttir read Icelandic poetry. Master of Ceremonies was Felix Bergsson. A large group of volunteers from the Icelandic community and the Embassy staff organised this successful event.

25th Anniversary of the Icelandic Church in London

The The Parish Council of the Icelandic Church in London held a Church Service and Reception, on 2 November at the Swedish Church, to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Icelandic Church in London. The Icelandic choir of London performed.

Annual Christmas Festival

The annual Icelandic Christmas Festival was held at the Swedish Church in London on 7 December. Over 300 people were in attendance and Santa Claus made an appearance, much to the joy of children of all ages.

Ambassador in the Netherlands

The Ambassador visited the Netherlands in October and December where he had discussions with officials, the Icelandic consuls as well as meetings with CEO's of Icelandic companies.

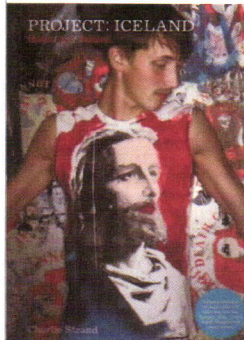
"Ice on the Tyne" - Newcastle

Ambassador Gunnlaugsson hosted a reception on 26 November in Newcastle marking the opening of "Ice on the Tyne" Icelandic Design and Art Exhibition which was a part of the "Nordic Festival and Frost Fair" held in Newcastle/Gateshead on 26 – 30 November.

The works of 18 Icelandic designers and artists were on display and the Icelandic Choir in London, conducted by Þóra Hallgrímsdóttir, performed in the presence of the Mayor of Gateshead, Councillor Maureen Chaplin. Dagmar Þorsteinsdóttir from Design Center Knightsbridge organised the Icelandic contribution which was sponsored by the Trade Council of Iceland, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Icelandic Tourist Board. Over 1000 people attended the Icelandic Design and Art Exhibition.

"Project: Iceland" Promotion Party

The English-Icelandic photographer Charlie Strand held a promotion party for his book "Project: Iceland" on 11 November in Punk in Soho Square, London, showcasing the best of Icelandic Art, Fashion and Music.



The entertainment on the night included a live performance from Icelandic band "Ultra Mega Techno Bandid Stefan" and a DJ set by "gusgus DJ President Bongo". Artworks from Jón Sæmundur, Hrafnhildur Arnardóttir and photographs by the author were on display and recent graduate from The Icelandic Academy of The Arts, Arna Sigrún, presented her graduation collection.

World Travel Market Presentation

The Ambassador hosted a travel presentation at his residence on 10 November in the presence of Ms Svanhildur Konráðsdóttir, chairman of the Icelandic Tourist Board, marking the participation of Iceland at the World Travel Market 2008. Over 60 travel representatives were in attendance.

"Iceland Get – the – Idea" Presentation

The Ambassador, in association with Iceland Convention & Incentive Bureau, Iceland Naturally and The Iceland Tourist Board, hosted a presentation at his residence on 20 November promoting tourism opportunities in Iceland. 60 people were in attendance.

Icelandair 2009 Presentation

Ambassador Gunnlaugsson hosted a presentation at his residence in association with Icelandair and Iceland Naturally on 3 December giving an exclusive look at what's new at Icelandair for 2009 including a new cabin class, new fare structure, new leather seats with interactive entertainment systems and new services. 85 people were in attendance.