

Looking back in time....News from 55 years ago....

Susan (Sigurdson) Powers

*Large Icelandic Choir Presents Concerts at **Gardar** and Mountain*

The combined children's choirs of Mountain, **Gardar** and Hallson, under the direction of Mrs. H.F. Danielson presented a choral concert at the **Gardar** Hall on Wednesday, July 11 and at the Mountain Hall on Thursday, July 12, sponsored by the Icelandic organization 'Baran'. Mrs. Danielson has been in the community for the past six weeks training the choir, giving instruction in dramatics and conducting Icelandic language classes.

The choir of seventy voices sang three groups comprising ten Icelandic songs which the members had learned during the six-weeks' course. Three short plays were presented, one of them being an elaborate costume play (Cinderella). There was an Icelandic folk dance in which 24 of the smallest children took part, performing with delightful precision and spontaneous gaiety.

At both concerts the overflow audience, which had arrived from all over the community, some from as far as Edinburg, Cavalier and Langdon, was impressed with the sparkling quality of the performance. The children's artistic interpretation of the music and their sensitive response to the conductor's every gesture won the admiration of the audience at once. At the close of the program, the choir, in response to thunderous and continued applause, gave several encores.

The plays were done with technical skill and artistic handling of voice and movement on stage, worthy of much more seasoned performers. The tempo was brisk and never a cue missed or any fumbling of lines or action.

An added attraction at the Mountain concert were vocal solos by Rev. E. H. Sigmar and Mrs. Sigmar, who were visiting the community, on their way to Rev. Sigmar's new position as pastor at the Icelandic Lutheran church in Seattle. They were accompanied by Mrs. Harald S. Sigmar.

Brief addresses were given by the local pastor, Rev. E. H. Fafnis, by Mrs. John Hillman, and by M. F. Bjornson, the major of Mountain. Rev. H. Sigmar, D.D., former pastor in the district, greeted the audience and expressed his pleasure at being present on this occasion. All the speakers stressed their delight and amazement at the outstanding performance of the children.

Reverend Fafnis explained why the 'Baran' considered it worthwhile to sponsor these classes. "not only is it valuable for the children", he said, "to become conversant with the Icelandic language, which is a living classical tongue, containing a great wealth of literary treasures, but we also feel that by participating in these summer courses the young people have the opportunity of getting competent training in choral singing and dramatic work. These concerts show amply what rich rewards may be reaped through highly efficient leadership, combined with the fine cooperation of the class teachers, and the enthusiasm of the children".

H. B. Grimson, secretary of the organization, presented all the children with suitably inscribed cards to commemorate the occasions. The teachers, Mrs. S.F. (Maggie) Steinolfson, Mrs. Leo (Esther) Hillman, Mrs. J. Sigurdson, Mrs. P. (Kristine) Hannesson, Mrs. M.S. (Gunna) Gudmundson, Mrs. H.B. (Anna) Grimson, Mrs. H. (Stina) Bjornson and Mrs. K.D. (Thora) Dinusson, together with the accompanists, Mrs. J. (Margaret) Goodman, Marvel Kristjanson, and Mrs. Wm. (Esther) Olgeirson, were presented with tokens of appreciation. The president, G.J. Jonasson, presented Mrs. Danielson with a huge basket of flowers and a handsome gift, a present from the choir members.

Mrs. Danielson, who was wearing a corsage, a gift from Mrs. (Maggie) Steinolfson (who also did the decorations for the stage sets) spoke briefly, expressing her thanks.

The choir members and community as whole showed such enthusiasm for this educational and cultural effort that the organization has every hope of being able to continue the work next summer.

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