



**THE ICELANDIC SWIMMING CULTURE FOR
UNESCO'S REPRESENTATIVE LIST
OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Declaration of support by
President of Iceland
Guðni Th. Jóhannesson**

29 January 2024

I love the swimming pools in Iceland. From dawn to dusk, they serve as community and fitness centres, a place to meet people or seek solitude, to exercise by doing a number of laps and revitalize with a cold plunge, or just relax in the “hot pot”.

All year round, people of all ages begin or end their daily routine by having a swim and then a chat with friends or newcomers. It is there and then that the problems of this world are discussed and sometimes solved, at least in the minds of the most diligent “pottverji” (hot tub inhabitant). During the school year, the pools are also busy with pupils taking swimming lessons and in the afternoon the families show up, with toddlers and teenagers alike. As for myself, I always enjoy the chance to meet friends and strangers, either at my local swimming pool or elsewhere in the capital region and the country at large.

Here in Iceland, we are blessed by abundant geothermal sources – an endless supply of hot water to heat our homes, generate energy and fill our hot tubs and swimming pools. Our ancient stories contain tales of this aspect of life on this rugged island. Chieftains had warm pools in their homes, and we have stories of heathen warriors who would only be baptized if the ceremony would take place in a hot spring.

Today, pool culture is an integral part of Icelandic society, a sure candidate for UNESCO'S Representative List of Intangible Heritage. Come rain or shine, the weather is always nice in our pools and hot tubs. And in the water, we are all equal.

Guðni Th. Jóhannesson

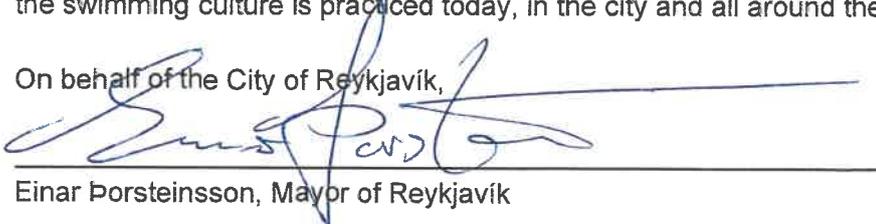
The City of Reykjavík collaborates with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs on the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and supports the nomination.

The City of Reykjavík is the largest operator of public pools in Iceland and plays an important role in maintaining and nurturing the Icelandic swimming culture. There are eight city-run swimming pools, in addition to bathing facilities for ocean swimming and hot tubs in Nauthólsvík. The ninth pool is in the works and more are on the agenda. Admission to the pools in Reykjavík is free for senior citizens and children under the age of fifteen and the entrance fee for other groups is kept to a minimum to try to ensure accessibility for all.

The city is proud to offer its citizens and guests the opportunity to literally soak up this unique and important part of Icelandic culture. The pools are vital in supporting public health, physically and mentally, and nurturing social life, and they offer a wide range of services, including lanes for swimming, children's pools and playing areas, hot tubs of many kinds, saunas and steam rooms, water slides and, the newest addition, infra-red sauna. The swimming culture is particularly rich in Reykjavík and dates back centuries. This long history is kept alive and thriving through constant improvements and additions to the pools, benefitting all users. Swimming and bathing in naturally heated pools has been practiced in Reykjavík throughout the ages where swimming lessons began in 1824. All children in Reykjavík are required to take swimming lessons in the city's pools. The public pools are also often used as a venue for a variety of cultural events as well as health courses and sports competitions.

The City of Reykjavík takes pride in its part maintaining the Icelandic swimming culture and will continue to do so, by building, maintaining and promoting the pools and supporting the tradition by all available means. To have the nomination be accepted would be a great recognition of this unique and indelible part of Icelandic culture that is as true for the present day as it has been throughout its history since the early days of settlement. The City of Reykjavík proudly takes part in the nomination process, for example by providing a video to give a little insight into how the swimming culture is practiced today, in the city and all around the country.

On behalf of the City of Reykjavík,



Einar Þorsteinsson, Mayor of Reykjavík



Vesturbyggð

Aðalstræti 75, 450 Patreksfirði, kt. 510694-2369, sími 450-2300.

The municipality of Vesturbyggð supports the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Cultural Heritage.

Vesturbyggð manages two public swimming pools and another three public pools are situated within the municipality. The inhabitants of Vesturbyggð frequent all these pools, some daily, and all children are required to take swimming lessons. Every once in a while, local events are held in the pools.

The municipality sees the management and further development of its public swimming pools as vital in supporting public health and nurturing social life in the remote Westfjords. Icelanders are used to frequenting swimming pools to nurture body and soul and Vesturbyggð is proud to be able to give its inhabitants the chance to do so.

It would be an honour to all Icelanders were the nomination to be accepted, and further encouragement for Vesturbyggð and all municipalities in Iceland to continue supporting the tradition for all to enjoy.

On behalf of the municipality of Vesturbyggð,

Valgerður María Þorsteinsdóttir, Culture and Tourism Representative



Hafnarfjörður

Hafnarfjörður 12.03.2024

Declaration of support for the Icelandic swimming pool culture towards UNESCO's Representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Municipality of Hafnarfjörður highly supports the nomination of Icelandic Swimming Cultures towards UNESCO's Representative List of Cultural Heritage.

The Municipality of Hafnarfjörður owns and runs three public swimmingpools that are open from early in the morning till late in the evening all weekdays and during the weekends. The swimming pools in Hafnarfjörður are located in different parts and are well suited to meet the needs of all social groups and all inhabitants as they vary and have their own uniqueness and charm. This is how Hafnarfjörður's Sundhöll is characterized by its old history and quiet atmosphere, Ásvallalaug's family-friendly environment and a warm hall for the younger children, and Suðurbæjarlaug's beautiful and nice outdoor area and outdoor pool. The swimmingpool though have that in common that they welcome children from all the nine elementary schools in Hafnarfjörður to required swimming lessons because all Icelandic children must learn how to swim.

Hafnarfjörður focuses highly on health and wellbeing (both physical and mental) of its inhabitants and operation of the swimmingpools is a vital part of this focus and effort. In the pools people come together to socialize, meet up, exercise and enjoy the lively and active surrounding of the community life. Families of all age use the opportunity to unite in the pool and enjoy the togetherness without all stimuli from f. ex. contemporary technology and use the steam rooms and sauna to relax after a long day or to begin the day even more relaxed. Running groups use the pools after running practices, infants take their first moves in warmth pools under the construction of specialized trainers, elderly do swimming gymnastics and two swimming clubs maintain intensive training sessions that have brought swimmers born and raised in Hafnarfjörður onto the podium at world championships. Just to mention few.

The swimming pools are one of Iceland's treasure and peculiarities and the Municipality of Hafnarfjörður is proud to be able to give its inhabitants and tourists access to these three pools. The access is free of charge for all children younger than eighteen and people older than 67. It would be an honor to the Municipality of Hafnarfjörður and to all Icelanders to accept the nomination and continue to support this Icelandic speciality and welcome even more guests from all around.

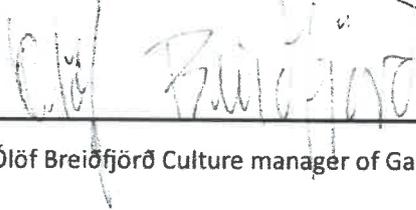
On behalf of the Municipality of Hafnarfjörður

Rósa Guðbjartsdóttir, Mayor of Hafnarfjörður

The Committee of Culture and Museums of the municipality of Garðabær supports the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Cultural Heritage.

The members of the Committee realize the value of having access to hot water, pools and hot tubs for the people of Garðabær and all of Iceland. By providing public swimming pools, physical and no less mental health is supported as the guests get the chance to meet people and have conversation about almost anything, sitting almost naked in the hot water where everyone is equal. This habit is highly important for the Icelandic nation.

On behalf of the Committee of Culture and Museum of Garðabær,



Ólöf Breiðfjörð Culture manager of Garðabær



Hrunamannahreppur

18th of January 2024

To whom it may concern!

It is our pleasure to inform you that on the 7th of December 2023 the following was accepted by the Local council of Hrunamannahreppur:

The municipality of Hrunamannahreppur supports the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The local council of Hrunamannahreppur declares it's strong support for the ministry's application for the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture and strongly agrees with the point of view that Icelanders' swimming pool/outdoor bathing culture is unique and so are the country's swimming pools. In our municipality, Hrunamannahreppur, we have a rich and very old tradition of swimming culture, as the oldest swimming pool in the country was built here in 1891 „the Secret Lagoon“ in in Flúðir, which is still a very popular attraction today both among local residents and tourists.

It would be an honour to the Icelandic nation if this nomination would be accepted.

It would support our long traditon of swimming and pool visiting. For our municipality it would be an acknowledgement of our long traditon of utilising the abundant hot water which can be found in our area for relaxation in our numerous hot springs and not the least, in our local swimming pool, which along with The secret lagoon and the Hidden lagoon are very popular spots of relaxation and enjoyment.

On behalf of the Municipality of Hrunamannahreppur


 Sveitarstjórnin í
Hrunamannahreppi
Aldis Hafsteinsdóttir, mayor



ÍSAFJARÐARBÆR

12.3.2024

The municipality of Ísafjarðarbær supports the nomination of Icelandic swimming cultures towards UNESCO's Representative List of Cultural Heritage.

Ísafjarðarbær manages 4 public swimming pools which are situated within the municipality. The inhabitants of Ísafjarðarbær use all these pools, some daily, and all children are required to take swimming lessons all through elementary school.

The municipality puts a lot of effort into operating swimming pools in all residential areas. Swimming pools encourages people to come together to meet and socialize, forming connections and enjoying a vibrant community life. Additionally, swimming is excellent exercise and it's beneficial to relax in a steam room or sauna afterward. Swimming is good for both body and soul. Ísafjarðarbær is proud to be able to give its inhabitants the chance to do so.

Tourists are drawn to the swimming pools in Iceland and during the summer months swimming pools are especially popular. Ísafjarðarbær puts a lot of effort into providing excellent service to tourists.

It would be an honor to all Icelanders to accept the nomination and further encouragement for Ísafjarðarbær and all municipalities in Iceland to continue supporting the tradition for all to enjoy.

On behalf of the the department of education and sports in Ísafjarðarbær

Hafdís Gunnarsdóttir, sviðsstjóri skóla- og tómstundasviðs



Egilsstaðir 1.2. 2024

The municipality of Múlaþing supports the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Cultural Heritage.

Múlaþing manages three public swimming pools but there are also a few indoor and outdoor spas, situated within the municipality, where people can gather and enjoy being in water. The inhabitants of Múlaþing frequently use these pools and all children are required to take swimming lessons during their elementary school. Every once in a while local events are held in the pools.

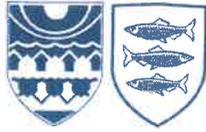
Múlaþing sees the management and further development of its public swimming pools as vital in supporting public health and nurturing social life in east Iceland. Icelanders are used to frequenting swimming pools to nurture body and soul and Múlaþing is proud to be able to give its inhabitants the chance to do so.

It would be an honour to all Icelanders were the nomination to be accepted, and further encouragement for Múlaþing and all municipalities in Iceland to continue supporting the tradition for all to enjoy.

On behalf of the municipality of Múlaþing

Björn Ingimarsson, mayor

Fjallabyggð



The municipality of Fjallabyggð supports the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Cultural Heritage.

Fjallabyggð manages two swimming pools situated within the municipality. The inhabitants of Fjallabyggð frequent both these pools, some daily, and all children are required to take swimming lessons. Occasionally, local events are held in the pools.

The municipality sees the management and further development of its public swimming pools as vital in supporting public health and nurturing social life in the remote area. Icelanders are used to frequenting swimming pools to nurture body and soul and Fjallabyggð is proud to be able to give its inhabitants the chance to do so.

It would be an honor to all Icelanders were the nomination to be accepted, and further encouragement for Fjallabyggð and all municipalities in Iceland to continue supporting the traditional for all to enjoy.

Fjallabyggð February 16th, 2024

On behalf of the municipality of Fjallabyggð


Linda Lea Bogadóttir,
Culture, marketing, and tourism Representative



SVEITARFÉLAGIÐ SKAGASTRÖND

Stuðningsfirlýsing – Sundlaugarmenning

Nú stendur yfir vinna við tilnefningu sundlaugarmenningar á skrá UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns.

Um er að ræða fyrstu sjálfstæðu tilnefningu Íslands á skrána.

Skrár UNESCO á sviði menningararfs hafa reynst mjög áhrifamiklar og felst í slíkri skrásetningu ákveðinn heiður og viðurkenning á viðkomandi hefð og sérstöðu hennar fyrir land og þjóð. Því er um að ræða stórt og mikilvægt skref að Ísland standi nú að tilnefningu á sundlaugarmenningu.

Sundlaugarmenning á Íslandi er sannarlega útbreidd hefð sem mikill meirihluti landsmanna stundar. Nýjar kannanir sýna að 79% fullorðinna landsmanna fer í sund og þar af fer um 40% reglulega í sund. Þá er ótalin sundiðkun barna og ungmenna. Flest sveitarfélög landsins reka almenningsundlaugar. Að auki reka þau grunnskóla þar sem sundkennsla barna fer fram.

Eftirfarandi stuðningsfirlýsing var samþykkt á fundi sveitarstjórnar 25. janúar 2024

Sveitarfélagið Skagaströnd styður tilnefningu íslenskrar sundmenningar á skrá UNESCO yfir menningararf.

Á Skagaströnd er rekin ein almenningsundlaug. Íbúar Skagastrandar heimsækja þessa laug oft, sumir daglega, og öllum börnum er skylt að fara í sundkennslu.

Sveitarfélagið lítur svo á að rekstur og frekari uppbygging almenningsundlaugar sinnar sé mikilvæg til að styðja við lýðheilsu og hlúa að félagslífi á Skagaströnd. Íslendingar eru vanir því að fara í sundlaugar til að hlúa að líkama og sál og Sveitarfélagið Skagaströnd er stolt af því að geta gefið íbúum sínum tækifæri til þess.

Það væri heiður fyrir alla Íslendinga ef tilnefningin yrði samþykkt og enn frekari hvatning fyrir Skagaströnd og öll sveitarfélög landsins að halda áfram að styðja við hefðina sem allir fá að njóta.

The municipality of Skagaströnd supports the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Cultural Heritage.

Skagaströnd manages one public swimming pool. The inhabitants of Skagaströnd frequent visit this pool, some daily, and all children are required to take swimming lessons.

The municipality sees the management and further development of its public swimming pool as vital in supporting public health as well as nurturing social life in the Skagaströnd. Icelanders are used to frequenting swimming pools to nurture body and soul and Skagaströnd is proud to be able to give its inhabitants the chance to do so.

It would be an honour to all Icelanders were the nomination to be accepted, and further encouragement for Skagaströnd and all municipalities in Iceland to continue supporting the tradition for all to enjoy.



On behalf of municipality of Skagaströnd

Ólafur Þór Ólafsson
Mayor



Sundsamband Íslands, skammstafað SSÍ, og starfar innan vébanda Íþróttá- og Ólympíusambands Íslands, ÍSÍ, og fer með sérgreinamálefni sundíþróttá á Íslandi. SSÍ er ólympískt samband og er aðili að Alþjóðasundsambandinu, World Aquatics. Sundsambandið var stofnað árið 1951 og er því 73 ára í ár.

SSÍ er samband sundráða, héraðssambanda og íþróttabandalaga. Öll félög innan ÍSÍ sem iðka og keppa í sundíþróttum samkvæmt skilgreiningu World Aquatics geta átt aðild að SSÍ, enda eru lög þeirra í samræmi við lög SSÍ og ÍSÍ.

Tilgangur og markmið SSÍ er:

- Að hafa yfirstjórn allra sérgreinamálefna sundíþróttá á Íslandi.
- Að vinna að stofnun og starfsemi sundráða og efla á allan hátt sundíþróttir Íslandi.
- Að setja og fylgja eftir nauðsynlegum reglum, uppfræða og löggilda dómara, staðsetja og framkvæma mót SSÍ og staðfesta íslensk met.
- Að efla, samræma og skipuleggja málefni og verkefni landsliða og undirbúningshópa landsliða.
- Að vera fulltrúi íslensku sundhreyfingarinnar gagnvart erlendum aðilum og gæta þess að gildandi reglur um sundíþróttir á Íslandi séu í samræmi við alþjóðlegar reglur.

Auk þessa styður SSÍ við og hvetur til sundiðkunar almennings með ýmsum verkefnum til heilsubótar og til að efla lýðheilsu á Íslandi. Sem dæmi má nefna landsátakið „Syndum“ þar sem markmiðið er að hvetja almenning til þess að hreyfa sig oft og meira í sínu daglega lífi og nota meðal annars sund til þess. Þeir metrar sem landsmenn synda, á meðan á áttakinu stendur, safnast saman og á forsíðu www.syndum.is er hægt að sjá hversu marga hringi í kringum Ísland landsmenn hafa synt. Einnig má nefna verkefnið „Syndum saman“ þar sem nemendur í grunnskólum landsins voru hvattir til að setja sér markmið um að synda (táknrænt) til Parísar í tilefni Ólympíuleikanna 2024. Að auki má nefna grunnskólakeppni þar sem allir grunnskólar eru hvattir til að taka þátt í stórrí sundkeppni. Keppnin hefur verið haldin nokkrum sinnum við mikla ánægju og góða þátttöku. Þessi verkefni og starfsemi SSÍ hafa það að leiðarljósi að skapa jákvæða ímynd af sundíþróttinni og þar með auka vitund almennings um kosti sunds til heilsubótar og eflingu lýðheilsu til framtíðar.

Í stefnu SSÍ kemur fram að stóra verkefnið á komandi árum sé efling á barna- og ungmennastarfi sem og uppbygging félaga um allt land. Í þessu samhengi telur SSÍ nauðsynlegt að vera í góðum tengslum við sveitarfélög sem bera ábyrgð á uppbyggingu mannvirkja því annars er hætt við að við drögumst aftur úr í þróun sem er mjög hröð í sundheiminum. SSÍ stuðlar einnig í starfsemi sinni að eflingu garpasunds (sem eru sundhópar fólks sem hætt er keppnissundi), víðavatnssunds og sundknattleiks. Allt er þetta hluti af sundlaugamenningu landsins og felst í starfseminni mikilvæg fræðsla, ekki hvað síst til barna og ungmenna, um að læra að synda,

kynnast íþróttinni og læra að þekkja sundlaugar, umgengisreglur og þá vellíðan og heilsubót sem felst í ástundun sunds.

Fjöldi fólks stundar sundíþróttir sér til ánægju og yndisauka. Það er ekki síður lífsstíll sem er til eftirbreytni. Þess vegna er nauðsynlegt fyrir SSÍ að eiga sér stefnu í öllum sundíþróttum og sérstaklega iðkun almennings.

SSÍ styður tilnefningu um að skrá sundlaugamenningu á Íslandi á skrá UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns. SSÍ telur að iðkun sunds séu almannagæði sem efli lýðheilsu, jafnt líkamlega, andlega og félagslega. Fólk getur stundað sund á öllum aldri, óháð kyni. Sund ýtir undir leiki og afslöppun og er stór partur af uppeldisstarfi á Íslandi. Skráningin verður án efa afar jákvæð fyrir sundhreyfinguna, sveitarfélögin og Ísland í heild sinni. Við teljum að með skráningunni felist viðurkenning á mikilvægi sunds og sundlaugamenningar á Íslandi. Slík viðurkenning er mikilvæg sundhreyfingunni á Íslandi svo við getum haldið áfram að auka veg sundíþróttarinnar í því augnamiði að efla lífsgæði og lýðheilsu landsmanna og komandi kynslóða.

Fullgild rafræn undirskrift

GUÐRÚN RÓSA ÞÓRSTEINSDÓTTIR

Kennitala: 270370-4039
2024-03-01 09:18:09 GMT
Ástæða: Undirskrift

Fullgild rafræn undirskrift

BJARNEY GUÐBJÖRNSDÓTTIR

Kennitala: 210974-5989
2024-03-01 19:32:33 GMT
Ástæða: Undirskrift

Fullgild rafræn undirskrift

ÁRNI STEFÁNSSON

Kennitala: 191164-3429
2024-03-04 13:51:18 GMT
Ástæða: Undirskrift

Fullgild rafræn undirskrift

GUÐRÚN PÁLSDÓTTIR

Kennitala: 020975-4749
2024-03-04 13:52:32 GMT
Ástæða: Undirskrift

Fullgild rafræn undirskrift

JÚLÍA ÞORVALDSDÓTTIR

Kennitala: 150775-5239
2024-02-29 19:25:16 GMT
Ástæða: Undirskrift

Fullgild rafræn undirskrift

VIKTORÍA GÍSLADÓTTIR

Kennitala: 050565-4759
2024-02-29 19:47:38 GMT
Ástæða: Undirskrift

Fullgild rafræn undirskrift

LEIFUR GUÐNI GRÉTARSSON

Kennitala: 070290-2949
2024-02-29 19:48:03 GMT
Ástæða: Undirskrift

Fullgild rafræn undirskrift

BJÖRN SIGURDSSON

Kennitala: 110768-3709
2024-02-29 20:55:43 GMT
Ástæða: Undirskrift

SSÍ ISL

The Icelandic Swimming Association, abbreviated SSÍ, works inside the bounds of The Icelandic Sport and Olympic association in Iceland, ÍSÍ, and takes care of all matters concerning swimming sports in Iceland. SSÍ is an Olympic association and a part of the international swimming association, World Aquatics. The Icelandic Swimming Association was founded in 1951 and is therefore 73 years old this year.

SSÍ is an association of swimming councils, youth associations and sport associations. All associations within ÍSÍ which practice or compete in swimming sports according to the definition by World Aquatics, can be a member of SSÍ, and their laws are in accordance with the rules/laws of SSÍ and ÍSÍ.

The purpose and aim of SSÍ is to:

- Have oversight in all matters concerning swimming sports in Iceland.
- To found and support swimming councils and in all ways enhance swimming sports in Iceland.
- To decide and press necessary rules, educate, and accredit judges, place and execute the SSÍ swimming tournament and verify Icelandic swimming records.
- To support, coordinate and schedule all matters and projects of national teams and preparations of national teams.
- To be a delegate for the Icelandic swimming association in communication with foreign parties and ensure that set rules in swimming sports in Iceland are in accordance with international rules.

Furthermore, SSÍ supports and encourages public swimming with all kinds of projects that are beneficial for everyone's health and enhances public health in Iceland. For example, it supports the national campaign "Lets Swim" where the aim is to encourage the public to exercise more in their daily lives and go swimming to do so. The meters that people swim while the campaign is going on are calculated together and can be seen on the webpage www.syndum.is and there you can see how many circles people have swum around Iceland. The campaign "Swimming together" can also be mentioned where elementary school children were encouraged to set the goal to swim (symbolically) to Paris in celebration of the Olympics in 2024. There has also been a big elementary school competition where all the elementary schools are encouraged to take part. This competition has now been held several times with great success and participation. These projects and the operation of SSÍ all have the aim to create a positive picture of swimming sports and therefore

enhance the public's awareness of the benefits of swimming in advancement of health and public health towards the future.

In the official policy of SSÍ it is said that the most important project in the coming years is enhancing children and youth work and the strengthening of associations all over Iceland. Regarding this, SSÍ considers it necessary to be in good connection to the municipalities that are responsible for the upkeep of facilities, otherwise there is a risk that we don't keep up with the fast changes that happen in the swimming community worldwide. SSÍ also works to support the enhancement of "garpasund" (which are swim groups for people who have stopped competing), swimming in the wild and water polo. All of this is a part of the swimming pool culture, and this work provides important education, especially for children and youths, about learning how to swim, knowing the sport, learning how to be in the swimming pool, how to behave and the wellness and health benefits that swimming brings.

Many people practise swim sports for their pleasure and joy. It is a way of life which should be followed. That is the reason it is necessary for SSÍ to have policies regarding all swim sports and especially regarding the public practice of swimming.

SSÍ supports the nomination of listing swimming pool culture in Iceland on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humankind. SSÍ believes that swimming is a public good that enhances public health, physically, mentally, and socially. People can swim during all stages of their lives, regardless of their age and gender. Swimming supports playfulness and relaxation and is an important part in the upbringing of children in Iceland. The nomination acceptance would be a recognition of the importance of swimming and swimming pool culture in Iceland. This kind of acknowledgement is important for the swimming association in Iceland so we can continue enhancing swimming sport culture with the aim of strengthening the wellbeing and public health of all people living in Iceland and future generations.

(sign)

Guðrún Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir, Bjarney Guðbjörnsdóttir, Árni Stefánsson, Guðrún Pálsdóttir, Júlía Þorvaldsdóttir, Viktoría Gísladóttir, Leifur Guðni Grétarsson, Björn Sigurðsson.



UNGMENNAFÉLAG ÍSLANDS
Engjavegur 6, 104 Reykjavík
568 2929, umfi@umfi.is

Reykjavík, january 9th 2024

NOMINATION OF ICELANDIC SWIMMING CULTURE

Ungmennafélags Íslands (short: UMFÍ. E. The Icelandic Youth Association) supports the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. UMFÍ is the national youth association in Iceland. It was founded in Thingvellir in Iceland the beginning of august 1907. UMFÍ is a service and coordinating agent for affiliates and member clubs. There are about 500 clubs, mostly sports clubs, and about 300 thousand members from about 6 years old to very old age that are members at the organisation.

UMFÍ and its member clubs around the country, were a key factor in building swimming pools in Iceland since well before 1907 and well into modern times. Member clubs of UMFÍ in rural areas built swimming pools in places which had hot natural water in the countryside, promoted swimming and made it a natural part of every day life. By establishing swimming as a daily routine UMFÍ and the sports clubs promoted healthy living of people. Many members of the sports clubs started their life in sports in the swimming pool.

One of the crown jewels of UMFÍ throughout history has been its national competition, the Landsmót. The first one was held in 1909. Swimming has been a key factor in every competition of UMFÍ and is still a big part of decision making for families when it comes to decide where to live and study. A close access to a swimming pool is for Icelanders a natural thing, one that we sometimes take for granted. Many Icelanders meet every day in the pools, both to practice and also to socially interact in hot tubs. That said, swimming pools and swimming have been a great part of Icelandic sports culture and will hopefully be in the future.

Með ungmennafélagskveðju,

Auður Inga Þorsteinsdóttir

CEO of UMFÍ



SUNDFÉLAG HAFNARFJARÐAR

STOFNAÐ 1945

Ásvellir 2 - 221 Hafnarfjörður - Ísland
<http://www.sh.is> - sh@sh.is - sími 555 6830

Hafnarfirði, 12. mars 2024

Sundfélag Hafnarfjarðar, skammstafað SH, var stofnað þann 19. júní 1945 og er félagið aðili að Sundsambandi Íslands, SSÍ.

SH er eitt af stærstu sundfélögum Íslands og er eitt öflugasta og sigursælasta sundfélag landsins í dag. SH á fjölmarga sundmenn sem keppa með landsliðinu í sundi, unglingslandslíði Íslands eða eru í framtíðarhópi SSÍ. Þá hefur SH átt marga sundmenn sem hafa tryggt sér keppnisrétt á Ólympíuleikum. SH er með starfsemi í öllum þremur sundlaugum Hafnarfjarðar með sundkennslu, sumarnámskeið og skipulagða æfingahópa fyrir alla aldurshópa frá tveggja ára aldri til eldri borgara.

SH er nútímalegt og vel skipulagt sundfélag á Íslandi með 4 sundþjálfara í fullu starfi og aðra 2 þjálfara í hlutastarfi. Skrifstofa félagsins er í Ásvallalaug og sér yfirþjálfari og framkvæmdastjóri um reksturinn. Stjórn félagsins er mynduð af sjálfboðaliðum sem kosnir eru á aðalfundi félagsins. Kringum 60 sjálfboðaliðar eru boðnir og búnir að aðstoða við starf félagsins og sinna störfum eins og foreldrastarfi, dómgæslu á sundmótum, sinna tæknilátum á sundmótum auk annarra tilfallandi starfa.

Markmið félagsins er að stuðla að eflingu sundíþróttarinnar og útbreiðslu hennar. Þetta gerir félagið með því að halda úti sundæfingum og sundkennslu, fræðslu um sundmál og heldur sundmót. Þá stuðlar félagið að innbyrðis kynnum félagsmanna með ýmsu félagsstarfi, t.d. með ferðalögum og keppnisferðum innanlands og erlendis.

Mjög mikilvægt er að læra að synda og má geta þess að öll börn í Hafnarfirði læra að synda í sundlaugum Hafnarfjarðar. Frá árinu 2010 hafa 5.650 börn verið á sundnámskeiðum og/eða sundæfingum á vegum Sundfélags Hafnarfjarðar.

Félagið álitur að öflugt íþrótt- og unglingsstarf, þ.m.t. iðkun sundíþróttarinnar, sé ein allra besta forvörn gegn misnotkun ávana- og fíkniefna. Þannig vinnur félagið markvisst að útbreiðslu heilbrigðari lífshátta og jákvæðri sýn á lífið og tilveruna. Félagið hefur öfluga forvarnastefnu þar sem m.a. er lögð áhersla á öflugt foreldrastarfi sem og innra félagsstarfi iðkenda. Félagið leggur áherslu á jafnrétti og að allir hafi jafnan rétt á að stunda sundíþróttina hjá félaginu óháð kyni, fötlun, uppruna eða efnahag. Allir þjálfarar SH eru með hátt menntunarstig og gerðar eru sömu hæfniskröfur til þjálfara allra kynja.

Í dag æfa hjá félaginu 270 börn og ungmenni á aldrinum 2 – 25 ára. Æfingahóparnir eru aldurskiptir og getuskiptir og æfa kynin saman sem stuðlar að heilbrigðari samskiptum á milli þeirra. Einnig stendur félagið fyrir sundkennslu og sundæfingum fyrir fullorðna og eins er stundaður sundknattleikur (Water polo) á vegum félagsins.

Félagið mun halda áfram að gera iðkendum kleift að stunda sundíþróttina og stuðla þannig að jákvæðri áhrifum sunds bæði til heilsubótar og til að efla lýðheilsu til framtíðar.

SH styður tilnefningu um að skrá sundlaugamenningu á Íslandi á skrá UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns. Félagið álitur að skrásetning og tilnefning á sundlaugamenningu sé jákvæð og feli í sér viðurkenningu á mikilvægi sundíþróttarinnar og sundlaugarmenningar á Íslandi.

f.h. stjórnar Sundfélags Hafnarfjarðar

Karl Georg Kleim, formaður

Sundfélag Hafnarfjarðar – Swimming Association of Hafnarfjörður
Founded in 1945

Ásvellir 2 – 221 Hafnarfjörður – Iceland
<http://www.sh.is> – sh@sh.is -Telephone 5556830
Hafnarfirði, 12th March 2024

The Swimming Association of Hafnarfjörður, abbreviated SH, was founded on 19th of June in 1945 and it is a member of the Swimming Association of Iceland, SSÍ.

SH is one of the largest swimming associations in Iceland and is also one of the most dynamic and successful associations in Iceland. SH is the association representing many of the team members of the national swimming team, the national youth team in swimming and those that are a part of the future team of SSÍ. Also, SH has been the home team for many swimmers that have gained the right to compete in the Olympics. SH has its base in all three swimming pools in Hafnarfjörður, where it offers swimming lessons, summer courses in swimming, and scheduled training sessions for groups from the age of two to senior citizen.

SH is a modern and well-organized swimming association here in Iceland, with four coaches fully employed and two other coaches part time. Its offices are based at the swimming pool Ásvallalaug and the head coach and managing director oversee its operation. The board of the association is composed of volunteers that are elected at each annual meeting. Around 60 volunteers are always pleased to help with the associations work and take care of things like volunteering as parents, as referees at swimming tournaments, dealing with technical issues during tournaments and other jobs involving the association.

The aim of the association is to enhance swimming sports and their outreach. The association does this by giving swimming lessons and training, by educating others about swimming and holding swimming tournaments. The association also supports the social relations of its members by , for example, hosting group excursions and supporting competition travel within Iceland and abroad.

It's very important that children learn to swim, and should be mentioned that all kids in the municipality of Hafnarfjörður learn to swim in the municipal swimming pools. Since 2010, 5600 kids have taken swimming courses or taken part in swimming training offered by The Swimming Association of Hafnarfjörður.

The association holds the view that involvement in strong sport and youth programs, such as swimming sports, is one of the best preventive measures against the misuse of drugs and other addictive substances. In this way the association works to support a healthier lifestyle and give a more positive view on life and the world. The association aims for a strong prevention programme, which entails the participation of parents in the association's work and in the social life of its members. The association emphasises equality so that everyone has the right to take part in swimming with the association,

regardless of gender, disabilities, background, or financial status. All our coaches have a high education, and the same demands are made towards coaches of all genders. The association will continue to support all its members to enjoy swimming sports and thereby reinforce the positive affect swimming has on health and the enhancement of public health towards the future.

SH supports the nomination of the swimming pool culture in Iceland towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Heritage. The Association feels that the inventorying and nomination of the swimming pool culture is a good thing and will be an acknowledgement of the importance of swimming sports and swimming pool culture in Iceland.

On behalf of the board of The Swimming Association of Hafnarfjörður

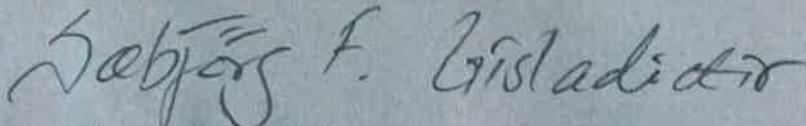
(sign)

Karl Georg Klein, director

Letter of support

Íþróttafélagið Grettir á Flateyri lýsir hér með yfir stuðningi sínum við að sundhefð Íslendinga fari á lista UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Ástæða þess er sú að sund er afar mikilvægt fyrir litla íþróttafélagið okkar og hefur alla tíð verið. Í þorpínu okkar er sundlaug en ekki mikið um að vera. Börnin í Íþróttafélaginu Gretti alast upp við það frá unga aldri að fara í sundlauginna, bæði til að æfa sig að synda en líka til að æfa sig í félagslegum samskiptum þar sem sundlaugin gegnir hlutverki samkomustaðar í þorpínu okkar. Á laugardögum er íþróttaskóli fyrir yngstu börnin í þorpínu og algengt er að börn og foreldrar fari í sund eftir það. Þannig heldur samvera hópsins áfram en á öðrum forsendum, og vatnið fær hlutverk sem samfélagslíf, við erum þar af því okkur finnst gott að vera saman.

Fyrir hönd íþróttafélagsins Grettis, Flateyri, 22.2. 2024.



Sæbjörg Freyja Gísladóttir

Formaður

Letter of support

The Sports Association Grettir in the town of Flateyri hereby declares its support of the nomination of Iceland's swimming pool culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The reasons behind this are that swimming is, and has always been, very important for our small sports association. There is usually not much going on in our village, but we always have the swimming pool. The children in the sports association grow up going to the pool, to practice both their swimming and their social skills as the pool is a vital social venue for our village. On Saturdays there is a gymnastics program for the youngest children and children and their parents often go swimming afterwards. At the pool the group continues socialising, in a different setting, where the water becomes social glue and space where we enjoy being together.

On behalf of the Sport Association Grettir in Flateyri 22. 2. 2024

(sign)

Sæbjörg Freyja Gísladóttir

Chairwoman

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

It is with a pleasure to participate the Unesco nomination.

I practiced swimming as a child, taught swimming for 13 years and have been in charge of the swimmingpool in Seltjarnarnes for 27 years.

In fact pool culture is not that old. Apart from the natural pools around Iceland the first concrete swimming pool was opened in Laugardalur in 1908. The first hot tubs came in Vesturbæjarlaug in 1961 and then in Laugardalslaug in 1968. In my opinion the actual pool culture begins with organized swimming lessons for children in the beginning of 1900 and later with the hot tubs.

After that, public swimming increased and people realized that it was possible to go to the swimming pools without just swimming. Softening stiff muscles and joints in hot tubs, chatting with other pool guests, getting news and generally satisfying the social need in a healthy way.

The development was such that swimming and hot pots became such a big part of Icelanders that the local authorities all around realized that swimmingpools attracted people, which led to the fact that there is a swimming pool in almost every municipality around the country and more than one in some.

The development of swimming pool culture continues and spreads abroad. Tourists visiting the country are gradually discovering these health paradises which the swimming pools and lagoons are and the development of Icelandic pool culture will never end.

Haukur Geirmundsson
Director of Seltjarnarnes swimming pool.



Haukur Geirmundsson.

Stuðningsfyrirlýsing við tilnefningu sundlaugamenningar á Íslandi inná lista UNESCO um óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns (UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage)

07. mars 2024
Sundfélag Akraness - UNESCO tilnefning, lifandi hefðir
Að fara í sund

Við undirrituð störfum eða höfum starfað með Sundfélagi Akraness. Við styðjum viðurkenningu UNESCO á íslensku hefðinni á „að fara í sund“, enda teljum við sundstaði, sundiðkun og heilsubót sem felst í því að dvelja í vatni, vera mikilvæg í lifandi samfélagi á Íslandi.

Við stundum sund og heita potta. Við þekkjum oft fólkið sem þar er og fáum okkur kaffi saman í pottinum. Samveran einkennist af léttleika og vilja til að taka þátt.

Sundlaugarmenning á Íslandi er mikilvæg því við vitum að hún er einstök á heimsvísu, íslensku sundlaugarnar eru samkomustaðir okkar.

Ef íslenska sundlaugarhefðin kemst inn á lista UNESCO eru það sterk rök fyrir ennþá meiri uppbyggingu sundaðstöðu, sem hefur of oft þurft að víkja fyrir öðrum íþróttamannvirkjum.

Með virðingu, félagar Sundfélag Akraness á aðalfundi félagsins.

Valelinnar Ingi Brynjásson

Ágúst Júlíusson

Eva Hauksdóttir

Þórhellur Bj. Guðmundsdóttir.

Guðni Guðbjarnardóttir

Jónna Margrét Sigmundsd.

Antónína Jónsd.

~~Guðni Guðbjarnardóttir~~

~~Guðni Guðbjarnardóttir~~

Declaration of support for the nomination of swimming pool culture in Iceland towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humankind.

07. March 2024.

The Swimming Association of Akranes – UNESCO nomination, living tradition,
To go swimming

We, the undersigned, have worked or work with The Swimming Association of Akranes. We support the nomination the Icelandic tradition of "going swimming" towards UNESCO for we believe that places of swimming, swimming practises and the health benefits that are gained by being in the water, are important aspects of our dynamic society here in Iceland.

We all go swimming and to the hot tubs. We often know the people there and have a coffee together in the hot tub. The feeling of being together is characterised by playfulness and the willingness to participate.

Swimming pool culture in Iceland is important because we know it's unique in this world, the Icelandic swimming pools are our meeting- places.

If the swimming pool tradition in Iceland is accepted to UNESCO's Representative List it is a strong argument for the upkeep of our swimming facilities, which often are ousted for the upkeep of other kinds of sports facilities.

With regards, members of The Swimming Association of Akranes at their annual general meeting.

(sign)

Valdimar Ingi Brynjarsson

Ágúst Júlíusson

Eva Hauksdóttir

Þórdís Bj. Guðmundsdóttir

Guðrún Guðbjarnadóttir

Jónína Margrét Sæmundsdóttir

Arnfinnur Jónsson

Eymar Eymarsson

Hjördís Garðarsdóttir

To

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

We, the undersigned, are members of a water-gymnastics group in the Árbæjar-swimming pool in Reykjavík, led by the sports teacher Sandra Rán Garðarsdóttir. We practice twice a week for three quarters of an hour and most of us attend swimming pools regularly at other times of the week as well.

The availability of natural hot water provides the luxury of warm pools and hot tubs in most towns and villages in Iceland. Swimming is therefore an important and very popular recreation in Iceland to people of all ages and all children learn swimming when young.

To us, water gymnastics and swimming provide an important and very pleasant way of maintaining good health and good spirits and we appreciate/value the importance of the Icelandic swimming tradition. We therefore ask for the Icelandic tradition of swimming to be acknowledged as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

Til

Lista UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf

Við undirrituð, tilheyrum hópi vatnsleikfímisiðkenda í Árbæjarlaug í Reykjavík og íþróttakennari okkar er Sandra Rán Garðarsdóttir. Við æfum tvisvar í viku í þrjú kortér og flest okkar sækja sundlaugar reglulega aðra daga vikunnar.

Gnótt af náttúrlega heitu vatni veitir okkur þann munað að volgar sundlaugar og heitir pottar finnast í flestum bæjum og þorpum á Íslandi. Sund er þess vegna mikilvæg og mjög vinsæl afþreying á Íslandi hjá fólki á öllum aldri og öll börn læra að synda.

Fyrir okkur er vatnsleikfimi og sund mikilvæg og mjög ánægjuleg leið til að viðhalda góðri heilsu og góðri líðan og við metum mikils sundmenningu Íslendinga. Þess vegna leggjum við áherslu á og förum fram á að sundlaugamenningin á Íslandi verði sett á lista UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf.

Undirskriftir:

To

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Guðna Ágma Gólaðs 020641-3639
Sandra Rán Garðard. 101078-5279
Guðbjörg Lífa Ingólf. 010143-3069
Rudur Þórunn Þórunn 040852-3449
Minnis K. Þórunn Þórunn 2612525899
J. Jakobína Vilhelmsdóttir 0706553229
Sigrún Sigrún Svörtur 060751 4989
Ragnhildur 191353 2249
Katrín Finnbogadóttir 130649-4839
Sigrbjörg Þorbjörnsd 020657-7749
Oddur Eiríksson 050346-7499
Ragnhildur Þjórnisd. 201151 3929
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Rosa Guðrún Þórunn
Þórunn Guðmundsdóttir 130949-2239

Birna Halldorsdóttir 280951-4989
Halldóra Andrésdóttir 200952-2279

SKARÞÓR VICTORIA ÞEYRARSÓTTIR 250751-3629

Emilía Guðrún Þórunn 081151-7099

ELISABETI INGVARSDÓTTIR 230251 ~~1011~~

Erna Sigrún Erlendsdóttir 021149-

Ayngj Lyttanarstú. 230750-2549

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Þórunn Jóna Oddadóttir 240373-5999

Þórunn
Ólafur

Ólafur Jónsdóttir 170353-2189

Daldría Dalgeirsdóttir 2808423899

Þórunn Þórunn 170143-13889

Þórunn Valborgsdóttir 0410250-2209

Þórunn Cecílija 050454-3599

Guðrún Einarsdóttir 230452-4909

Elisabet Þjórk Snorradóttir 030245-2459

Vilborg Keldu Þórunn 131246-7819

Þórunn Sigrúnardóttir 090654-5864

Kilja Þórunn 070850-4869

Sigurður Eiríksdóttir 110846-3479
Krislín Anna Sigrímsdóttir 071043 9359
Gríthinn Eiríksdóttir 091047 3437

Ana María - Vinnsteinsdóttir 160460-3189
Sigrímsdóttir 301056-0019

Guðrún Þ. Ólafsdóttir 050345-2469
Þórunn Elfa Ólafsdóttir 080752-2299

Ísleifur Bjarnadóttir 031156-5670

Sigríður Hjörleifsdóttir 080558-5629

Vigdís A. Gunnlaugsdóttir 110257-4229

Jurídur V. Lárusdóttir 051246-3499

Kristín Þragadóttir 260656-4579

Grípa Jónsdóttir 091145-4219

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Valgerður Tomasdóttir 010560-3149

Órta M. Frederiksson 110642-4749

Janney Helgadóttir 040144-4209

Þórunn Anna Eiríksdóttir 081045-4359

Emma Axelsdóttir 260756-4869

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Málfríður S. Gísladóttir 040757-7249

Margrét Arnjótadóttir 150254-5079

Þórunn Guðrún 110956 4799

Þóca Guðjónsdóttir 010852-3159

Reinir Gríty 2107514599

Elín Þórsdóttir 050674-4649

Þrudís Albertsdóttir 2905554119

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Þhanna Júlíusdóttir 251151-4669

Þiggyó Pálsson 240236-3119

Þórunn Áróor 1203483539

Þórunn Guðadóttir 230244-2449

Þórunn Gunnarsdóttir - 230456-5939

Þaldróna Sveinsson 020623-5749

Þeja Þórsdóttir 011149-4569

Þórunn Þórsdóttir 500550-4449

Þórunn Guðadóttir 210249-7969

Þórunn Kristínsson 130952-2329

Þórunn Helga 280257-3039

Þórunn Helgadóttir 210952-3499

(Anna María Unnsteinsdóttir)

skrifna álfredsdekkis 2310496819

Guttang Guttmann 288961-2509

Kristjana Mjallar 090451-2009

Jónína Halldóttir 280352 3659

Margrét Guðmund 051145-4109

Bauer Guðmundsdóttir 170546-3930

Sönnv Jónsdóttir 3301080-4339

Margrét Ólga Halldóttir 140239-2599

Solveig Ríisdóttir 180141-4131

Þóris T. Þórisson dtt 091047-4899

Frédgerður Þ. Benediktóttir 161146-3079

Ragnheiður Ólafsdóttir 070752-3879

Anna Guðrún Valdimarsd. 051256-5069

UNESCO's Representative List Of Intangible Cultural Heritage

28.02.2024

Við erum 7 sundvinkonur sem að köllum okkur bara Sundhóp, syndum flestar daglega í Grafarvogslaug frá 400 mtr til 1000 mtr.

Við erum á aldrinum 72 ára til 88 ára – og lítum á sundið sem okkar andlegu – félagslegu og heilsusamlegu allra meina bót.

Að sundinu loknu setjumst við svo í kaffi og ræðum við um daginn og veginn og leysum allan vanda.

Allar höfum við synt mikið frá unga aldri, og teljum við að þannig hafi sundið haft mikla þýðingu fyrir okkur og haldi okkur í góðri líkamlegri og andlegri þjálfun og munum við halda því áfram að meðan við getum.

Þess vegna hefði það mikla þýðingu fyrir okkur allar að þessi hefð okkar Íslendinga verði í skráð í yfirlitsskrá hjá UNESCO.

Fh. Sundhópsins

Sigrún Haraldardóttir

Bjarney V. Tryggvadóttir

Guðmunda Þorleifsdóttir

Björg Þórhallsdóttir

Guðbjörg M. Guðbjörnsdóttir

Bergdís H. Kristjánsdóttir

Olga Herbertsdóttir

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

28. 02. 2024

We are seven girlfriends, which call ourselves the „Swimming group,“ that swim between 400 and 1000 meters almost daily in the swimming pool in Grafarvogur,

We are all between 72 and 88 years old – and look upon our swimming as our mental- social_ and physical elixir.

After the swim we sit down for a coffee and talk about all kinds of things and solve all kinds of problems.

We have all been swimming since we were young and because of that we believe that swimming has great value for us and has kept us physically and mentally in good condition and we will continue it as long as we can.

This is why it would mean a great deal to us if this Icelandic tradition will be put on the representative list of UNESCO.

On behalf of the „Swimming group “

(sign)

Sigrún Haraldsdóttir
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Sundhópurinn Vinir Dóra í

Sundlaug Vesturbæjar.

Upphaf sundhópsins Vín Dóra má rekja aftur til apríl ársins 1982. Það ár féll stofnandinn Halldór Bergmann Þorvaldsson niður af vinnupalli. Hann skaddaðist nokkuð við fallið. Á þessum tíma var hann við járnabindingar vestast í Vesturbæ Reykjavíkur. Liður í endurhæfingu eftir fallið var að fara í Sundlaug Vesturbæjar. Auk þess að synda stundaði hann æfingar á laugarbakkanum. Þetta þótti eftirtektarvert á þessum tíma. Mál þróuðust á þann veg að fleiri slógust í hópinn. Um 30 manns eru virkir þátttakendur í sundhópnum Vín Dóra þegar best lætur. Öllum er heimil þáttaka en félagar greiða árgjald sem notað er til að standa straum af sameiginlegum uppþækjum hans.

Vinir Dóra koma saman í Sundlaug Vesturbæjar daglega kl. 07.00. Hópurinn byrjar á því að synda. Hver og einn velur sér sundaðferð sem hentar og sama gildir um vegalengdina. Eftir sunnið er farið í heitu pottana og tekið þátt í spjalli sundlaugagesta. Nákvæmlega kl. 07:30 er blásið til æfinga. Hópurinn tekur þátt í æfingum sem kenndar eru við I. P. Müller. Þessar æfingar eru stundaðar með hrópum og köllum í um 10 mínútur. Eftir æfingarnar eru heitu pottarnir heimsóttir að nýju. Þar er dvalið í um 10 mínútur þar til karlar og konur halda til búningaklefa. Í búningaklefa karla fer fram svonefnt lykklakast. Það felst í því að freista þess að kasta lykli að fataskáp í lítið box. Það kallar á sérstaka hæfileika að hitta í boxið. Á fimmtudögum er karlpeningurinn veginn eftir kúnstarinnar reglum. Niðurstaðan er skjalfærð. Hinir vikuðu fá árlega útprentað graf sem sýnir þróun mála.

Vinir Dóra koma árlega saman og halda hátíðleg svonefnd litlu jól. Eftir er til svonefndra vorferða á hverju hausti og oft er farið í haustferð á vorin. Hópurinn hefur þrívægis farið saman til útlanda. Á föstudögum tekur hluti hópsins sig upp eftir sunnið og fer á kaffihúsið Kaffivagninn í vestasta hluta Reykjavíkur. Á síðustu árum hefur þessi hópur gert það sama á miðvikudögum og kallar ferðina ígildi. Annar hluti Vín Dóra á sér daglega gæðastund með spjalli um daginn og veginn á þeim stað í Sundlaug Vesturbæjar sem nefndur er Sölgangurinn.

Árið 2022 urðu viss tímamót í sögu hópsins. Það ár var Vín Dóra falið ákveðið hlutverk á evrópsku kvikmyndahátíðinni sem haldin var í Reykjavík. Þar gerðu nokkrir úr hópnum grein fyrir þeim 5 stuttmyndum sem kepptu um titilinn: Besta evrópska stuttmynd ársins. Umræða um myndirnar sem kepptu um titilinn fór fram í stóra pottinum í Sundlaug Vesturbæjar. Hún var tekin upp og sýnd á hátíðinni. Þegar dómnefnd hafði valið bestu stuttmyndina tilkynntu fulltrúar hópsins niðurstöðuna og afhentu sigurvegurinum verðlaunin. "Dóri Group" var vinnuheitíð á þessum þætti hátíðarinnar.

Þess má að lokum geta að hróður hópsins hefur borist víða um heim. Þannig hafa sjónvarpstökumenn m.a. frá Frakklandi og Þýskalandi heimsótt Sundlaug Vesturbæjar og tekið upp æfingar hópsins og sýnt í heimalöndunum. Framlag hans til kvikmynda Jóns Karls Helgasonar Sundlaugasögur vakti mikla athygli sem náði langt út fyrir landsteinana.

Sundhópurinn Vinir Dóra í Sundlaug Vesturbæjar styður eindregið umsókn um að sundlaugamenning á Íslandi verði sett á skrá UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns. Stuðningurinn helgast af þeirri góðu fyrirmynd sem það skapar varðandi bættu andlega og líkamlega heilsu. Einnig aukin félagsleg og persónuleg samskipti einstaklinga.

Reykjavík, 28. febrúar 2024.

fyrir hönd sundhópsins Vín Dóra,



Halldór Bergmann Þorvaldsson,

Bollatanga 9, 270 Mosfellsbæ.

The swimming group “Friends of Dóri” in the Swimming Pool in Vesturbær.

The beginning of this group “Friends of Dóri” can be traced back to April in the year 1982. That year the group’s founder Halldór Bergmann Þorvaldsson fell from a scaffolding and was badly injured by the fall. Part of his rehabilitation was to go the Swimming Pool in the West Side of Reykjavík. Besides swimming he did some exercises on the side of the pool. That was thought to be quite special at that time. Over time people started to join him. Today there are about thirty active members in the swimming group “Friends of Dóri” when most are gathered. Everyone is welcomed but official members pay an annual membership fee used for all the fun things the group does.

“Friends of Dóri” gather in the Swimming Pool in Vesturbær everyday at seven o’clock. The group starts by swimming. Each person chooses their own way of swimming and how far they swim. After the swim everyone goes to the hot pots and people participate in the discussions going on there with other pool guests. Precisely at 7:30 there is a call to exercise. The group takes part in exercises originating from I.P. Müller. These exercises are practised with calling and loud speaking for about ten minutes. After that hot pots are visited again. After being there for 10 minutes both men and women go to their shower rooms. In the men’s shower room a practise called “key throwing” takes place. That involves throwing a key from a shower room closet into a little box. It demands a special talent to be able to hit the box. On Thursdays the men are weighed by special order. Their weight is documented. Those who are weighed get a yearly graph showing their results.

“Friends of Dóri” gather once a year to celebrate “Little Christmas”. Spring trips are organized every fall and fall trips every spring. The group has gone abroad together on three occasions. On Fridays a part of the group goes together to the coffee shop Kaffivagninn at the furthest west side of Reykjavík. In recent years, this part of the group has also done this on Wednesdays and calls that activity “equivalent “. Another group within “Friends of Dóri” enjoys a daily quality time discussing everyday matters in a place called the „Sun Corridor“, located in the Swimming Pool in Vesturbær.

The year 2022 marked a watershed moment in the group’s history. That year “Friends of Dóri” were given a special job in connection to the European Film festival that was held in Reykjavík. Some group members were given the task to talk about five short films competing for the title of: The best short film of the year. The discussion about these competing films took place in the hot pot in the Swimming pool in Vesturbær. This discussion was filmed and shown during the film festival. Once the judges had chosen the best short film the members of the group announced the decision and gave the winner his price. “Dóri’s Group” was the working title for this part of the film festival.

It can also be said that reputation of the group has travelled all over the world. French and German television crews have visited the Swimming Pool in Vesturbær, recorded the exercises of the group and exhibiting them in their home countries. The group also played an important role in the documentary film „Swimming Pool Stories“ by Jón Karl Helgason which was noticed well beyond the borders of Iceland.

The swimming group "Friends of Dóri" fully support the nomination of the swimming pool culture in Iceland towards UNESCO's Intangible Heritage List of Humanity. The support is based on the good example this culture provides regarding improved mental and physical health, as well as enhancing social and personal interaction between individuals.

Reykjavík 28th of February
2024

On behalf of "Friends of Dóri"
(sign)

Halldór Bergmann Þorvaldsson
Bollatanga 9, 270 Mosfellsbæ.

19. febrúar 2024
Sundgarpar á Akranesi - UNESCO tilnefning, lífandi hefðir
Að fara í sund

Að fara í sund er meira en lífsstill, það er lífsbjörg

Sundlaugar eru lífæð mannlífs, þar sem fólk kemur saman og hittist, hvort sem það býr eitt eða með öðrum. Bretar fara á pöbbinn, íbúar suður Evrópu setjast á torg, en Íslendingar fara í sund.

Sundlaugar eru mikilvægar fyrir lýðheilsu samfélagsins, fyrir fólk á öllum aldri. Að fara í sund léttir á verkjum og bætir andlega heilsu. Sund er heilsuþætandi, hvort sem fólk fer í sund til að synda, fljóta, gera léttar æfingar eða bara vera úti í hvernig veðri sem er. Þar hittir maður fólk, sem minnkar einangrun. Í sundi sjáum við alls konar líkama, og það normaliserar fólk í alls konar stærðum og gerðum. Allir eru jafnir.

Sund sem líkamsrækt

Sund er auðveld og góð leið til að halda líkamlegu formi í sem bestu lagi, eftir því hvernig ævin þróast. Það getur boðið upp á mjúka hreyfingu fyrir barnshafandi konur, eldri borgara og öryrkja og hægt er að breyta hreyfingunni, eftir þörfum á hverju lífsskeiði. Og svo er alltaf gott að fara bara í pottinn. Í sundi eru það súrefnið, sólin og náttúruöflin auk félagsskaparins.

Sund til að minnka einangrun

Maður fer út heima hjá sér með markmið, að fara í sund. Þar getur maður hitt fólk, eins og gamla vini foreldranna, og tengingin er dýpri en sú þegar einfaldlega er hist úti í búð. Einnig er hægt að spjalla við ókunnuga í sundi, sem maður fengi jafnvel ekki færi á annars staðar.

Sumar laugar bjóða uppá kaffibolla í pottinum, það er notalegt að sötra á kaffi og spjalla um málefni líðandi stundar við þá sem maður hittir í pottinum þann daginn. Jafnvel hittir maður frægt fólk í lauginni en þar sem allir eru á sundfötunum þá eru einhvern veginn allir jafnir.

Sunds getur maður notið með öllum. Að fara í sund er gæðastund. Þar er ekki sími sem truflar. Að fara í sund hefur að nokkru leyti tekið við af því að mæta í kirkju og þegar við ræðum saman sjáum við marga fleti sem eru sameiginlegir með því að fara í sund og mæta í messu.

Krakkar hitta vini sína í sundi og foreldrar fara með börn sín í sund til að þreyta þau seinnipartinn og baða fyrir kvöldið. Svokölluðum úlfatíma, rétt fyrir kvöldmat, er vel varið með börnin í sundi. Sundlaugar eru yfirleitt vel búnar með heitum pottum, saunu eða gufu og rennibrautum. Þannig dreyfist fólk á milli staða og velur sér að þjálfa, leika eða spjalla, allt eftir þörf.

Mikilvægi sundkennslu

Við Íslendingar lærum sund á grunnskóla aldri, í upphituum laugum. Það hefur ekki alltaf verið svo gott þar sem sjómenn voru ósyndir um aldaraðir. Hér á Akranesi var Bjarnalaug byggð í kjölfar hörmulegs sjóslyss þar sem fjórir drukknðu nánast í fjöruborðinu þegar alda reið yfir bát þeirra. Við höfum notið góðs af þeirri laug, enda lærðum við flestar að synda þar.

Sundgarpar

Þegar við tölum um sjálfar okkur sem hóp, þá sameinumst við í sundi, okkar leiðir myndu ekki endilega liggja saman ef við hefðum sund ekki sameiginlegt. Við æfum sund með sundgörpum á Akranesi. Þjálfari er á bakkanum einu sinni í viku og við syndum svo tvisvar í viku án þjálfara, með sundæfingu frá honum. Við höfum farið í æfingabúðir á Íslandi og á Tenerife. Við höfum keppt á sundmótum fyrir garpa á Íslandi, Færeyjum, Portúgal og Ítalíu. Við stefnum á að synda á fleiri sundmótum um heiminn allan. Við däumst eiginlega jafn mikið að ungu fólki sem er á hátindi sundferils síns og háöldruðu fólki sem stingur sér til sunds og keppir á alþjóðlegum mótum.

Við erum aldar upp í sundi og það að ganga nakin fyrir framan fólk af sama kyni í búningasklefanum, er ekkert mál og styrkir sjálfsmyndina.

Við höfum saknað sundlauga þegar við höfum búið erlendis. Það hefur ekki verið eins og hér heima á Íslandi. Þar hefur það gjarnan verið innilaug, ekki með heitum pottum og því eru allir í einni kós. Ekki synt eftir brautum eins og við erum vanar. Það er greinilega mikill munur á milli landa.

Segja má að sund, sundlaugar, sundstaðir, sundfatnaður, æfingar og keppni sé ástríða okkar, af mismiklum mæli þó. Við getum sagt að klórlykt sé ilmvatnið okkar. Sumar gefa gjafir sín á milli sem tengjast sundi og sundlaugum, sumar hanna flíkur með sund og sundlaugar sem innblástur og sumar safna sundlaugum sem þær hafa ekki heimsótt áður. Við höfum: sofnað í sundi, synt undir norðurljósum, stolist í sund, orðið ástfangnar í sundi og heyrt kjaftasögur í sundi. Við höfum skipulagt sumarfrí út frá sundi, farið á þjálfara- og dómaramámskeið, tekið okkur frí frá sundi og komið aftur. Við stundum sjósund og hittumst stundum eftir æfingar í bakariinu til að spjalla. Svo að sund er miklu meira en einfaldur og lítil partur af okkar lífi.

Sundhetjur til framtíðar

Framtíðarsýn okkar er að stunda sund alla ævina. Okkur dreymir um enn betri aðstöðu í heimabæ okkar, þar sem stækkandi samfélag kallar eftir fjölbreyttari notum á aðstöðunni. Afreksfólk, börn í skólasundi, barnafólk, fólk í endurhæfingu og eldri borgarar hafa ekki sömu þarfir. Plássleysi má ekki hamla því að við getum öll notið þess að fara í sund. Viðurkenning UNESCO á íslensku hefðinni á „að fara í sund“ er mikilvæg til framtíðar, til að réttlæta fjármagnið sem fer í viðhald sundlauga og uppbyggingu nýrra.

Virðingarfyllt
Sundgarpar á Akranesi

Þóra Björg Elísdóttir

ARMHEIDUR HJÓRLEIFSDÓTTIR
Aulubj.

Anna Loft Audar Elísdóttir
Anna Loft

SILVIA LORENS IZAGUIRRE
Silvia Lorens Izaguirre

KARITAS JÓNSDÓTTIR
Karítas Jónsdóttir
Kristjánu Þorvaldsdóttir

HALLBERA JÓHANNESD.
Hallbera Jóhannsdóttir
Sigurlaug Karen Guðmundsd.

Sigríður Ragnarsdóttir
Sigríður Ragnarsdóttir
Tóki Worm

To go swimming is more than a lifestyle, it's lifesaving.

The swimming pools are the lifeblood of human living, where people come together and meet, no matter if they live alone or with others. The British go to the local pub, people living in southern Europe go to the square, but Icelanders go swimming. Swimming pools are important for the public health of the community, for all age groups. Swimming reduces pain and improves mental health. Swimming is health improving, no matter if people are going swimming to meet others, float, do easy exercises or just to be outdoors in all kinds of weather. There you meet other people which prevents isolation. While swimming we see all kinds of bodies and it normalises all kinds of people, of all sizes and shapes. Everyone is equal.

Swimming as exercise

Swimming is an easy and good way to keep your physical condition in the best shape throughout your lifetime. It can offer a soft way to exercise for pregnant women, senior citizens, and people with disabilities according to the needs of each period of your lifetime. Then it is always good to just go to the hot tub. Swimming provides oxygen, sunlight, and the forces of nature, as well as company.

Swimming to decrease isolation.

You leave your home with a goal in mind, to go swimming. There you can meet people, like old friends of your parents, and it deepens your connection when you then run into one another at the store. You can also talk to strangers at the swimming pool which you maybe wouldn't do elsewhere.

Some swimming pools offer a cup of coffee in the hot tub, it's cosy to sip your coffee and talk about all kinds of matters with the ones you meet there that day. You can even meet famous people at the pool, but in their swimsuits, everyone is somehow more equal.

You can enjoy swimming with everyone. To go swimming is quality time. There is no cell phone distraction. Going swimming has in some ways taken over from going to church and when we talk about it there are many things that we see are similar between going swimming and going to church.

Kids meet their friends in the pool and parents take their children swimming in the afternoon to get them tired and bathed before bedtime. The so-called wolf hour, right before dinnertime is well spent with your children at the pool. Swimming pools are usually well equipped and offer hot tubs, saunas or steam baths, and water slides. This enables people to spread all over the area of the pool, all dependent on what you are doing, exercising, playing or talking.

The importance of swimming lessons

All of us here in Iceland, learn to swim during our elementary education, in heated pools. It was not always like that, for centuries fishermen were not able to swim. Here in Akranes the swimming pool Bjarnalaug was built after a terrible accident where four people drowned by the shoreline when their boat was capsized by a wave. We have enjoyed the benefits of that pool since many of us learned how to swim in it.

Master Swimmers

When we talk about ourselves as a group it is the swimming that binds us, our paths would not necessarily cross if we didn't have swimming in common. We train our swimming with Master Swimmers in Akranes. We have a trainer on the pool side once a week and then we swim two times each week without a trainer. We have gone for training camps in Iceland and to Tenerife. We have competed in swimming tournaments for Master Swimmers in Iceland, The Faroe Islands, Portugal and in Italy. We aim for competing in many tournaments worldwide. We equally admire young people who are at the height of their swimming careers and very old people who swim and compete in international competitions.

We all grew up swimming and walking naked in front of people of the same gender in the shower room is no problem and it makes you more confident.

We have missed the swimming pools when we have lived abroad. It has not been the same as here in Iceland. There is often an indoor pool, no hot tubs and everyone is in each other's way. There is no lane swimming like we are used to. There are differences between countries.

You could say that swimming, swimming pools, swimming places, swimming clothes, training and competing is our passion, though it differs how much. We can say that the smell of chlorine is our perfume. Some of us have given gifts between us that are connected to swimming and swimming pools, some of us design clothes that are inspired by swimming and swimming pools and some collect swimming pool experiences by visiting those they have not visited before. We have: fallen asleep in the swimming pool, swam under the northern lights, sneaked into a swimming pool, fallen in love in the swimming pool and heard gossip. We have planned our holidays with swimming in mind, gone to a swimming sport trainer- and referee course, taken ourselves a break from swimming and come back. We go sea swimming and meet after training at the bakery to talk. So swimming is much more than a simple and small part of our life.

Swimming heroes of the future

Our future goal is to keep swimming throughout our life. We dream about better facilities in our hometown where the growing community calls for a better equipped facility. People who are training, kids taking their elementary swimming lessons, people in rehabilitation and senior citizens don't all have the same needs. That there isn't enough space should not prevent us from going swimming. The

acknowledgement of UNESCO regarding the Icelandic tradition of swimming is important for the future, to justify the capital that goes towards the upkeep of swimming pools and the building of new ones.

With respect
Master swimmers in Akranes
(sign)

Póra Björg Elísdóttir
Arnheiður Hjörleifsdóttir
Anna Leif AuðarElísdóttir
Silvía Llorens Izaguirre
Karítas Jónsdóttir
Kristjana Þorvaldsdóttir
Hallbera Jóhannesdóttir
Sigurlaug Karen Guðmundsdóttir
Sigríður Ragnarsdóttir
Kjell Wormdal

Reykjavík, 20. febrúar 2024

Stuðningsyfirlýsing við tilnefningu sundlaugamenningar á Íslandi inn á lista UNESCO um óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns

Hlaupasamtök Lýðveldisins eru elsti og virðulegasti hlaupahópur landsins, en jafnframt sá hógværaasti. Við erum vinalausir aumingjar sem alltaf gerum allt eins og líður best illa.

Í tæpa fjóra áratugi höfum við safnast saman við Vesturbæjarlaug og hlaupið þaðan vítt og breitt um velli Reykjavíkur, skrafað og skeggrætt, ástundað persónufræði og bílnúmerafræði, auk þess að mynda ríkisstjórnir eða fella eftir atvikum.

Að hlaupi loknu hefur verið safnast til potts í laug og haldið áfram umfjöllun. Mikilvægt er að hafa aðgang að heitu vatni og sápu eftir langhlaup, hvað þá heldur að komast í heitan pott til að liðka stirða vöðva. Þar höfum við legið langtímum saman og látið líða úr okkur. Talað saman af hispursleysi og alvöruleysi og fara þá saman upplýsing, fræðsla og skemmtun.

Hlaup eru nauðsynleg þeim sem annt er um geðheilsuna, þau losa um andlega spennu og veita líkamanum þjálfun, en geta jafnframt verið vettvangur fyrir trúnaðarsamtöl um hvaðeina. Menn endurnýja kraftana og fylla á orkubirgðirnar á hlaupunum og líður jafnan eins og nýhreinsuðum hundum á eftir. Hlaup og sundlaug eru nátengd og verða ekki skilin að.

Hápunktur vikunnar er á fimmtudagsmorgnum þegar karlmenn í Vesturbæ eru vigtaðir í Vesturbæjarlaug. Er þá leitt í ljós hver árangur hlaupa hefur verið, áfangasigrum fagnað, bakslagi tekið með nýjum heitstrengingum.

Hlaup og sund eru hin íslenska aðferð og ætti að verða sýnileg umheiminum til eftirbreytni með upptöku á lista UNESCO um óáþreifanlegan menningararf.

Virðingarfyllst,

f.h. Hlaupasamtaka Lýðveldisins



Ólafur Grétar Kristjánsson

Skrifari

English

Reykjavik, 20 February 2024.

Statement of support for the inclusion of pool culture in Iceland on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Runners of the Republic is the oldest and most prestigious group of runners in Iceland, but also the most modest. We are lonely buggers who always do things in the same manner and feeling bad is our optimal way of being.

For over four decades we have gathered outside Vesturbæjarlaug Pool and ran from there through various locations in Reykjavik, discussing and debating, sharing our information about celebrities and knowledge of car registration numbers, besides forming governments or disbanding some.

After running we have assembled in the hot tubs and continued with our deliberations. It is important to have access to hot water and soap after having run long distances, not to mention being able to enter a hot tub to relieve stiff muscles. We have lain there for long periods and relaxed. We have spoken without timidity and without much seriousness, and mixed our talks with information, education and entertainment.

Running is important for people who care about their mental health. It relieves spiritual stress, provides exercise for the body, but it also offers a venue for intimate discussions about the things that occupy our minds and souls. You renew your strength during exercise and refill your energy supplies and always feel like a freshly cleansed dog afterwards. Running goes hand in glove with swimming and the two can not be separated.

We reach the summit Thursday mornings when the male population of Western Reykjavik steps on the scale in Vesturbæjarlaug pool. It is here that we get the results from running, some can celebrate having lost weight, others need to make new pledges to lose weight.

Running and swimming is the Icelandic way of life and should become visible to the world to see and learn – and thus be admitted to the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Ólafur Grétar Kristjánsson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Ólafur' being the most prominent.

Ólafur Grétar Kristjánsson
Secretary

Support for the nomination of swimming culture in Iceland for UNESCO's
Representative List of Intangible Heritage

My first memory of going swimming is since I was six years old, learning how to swim in the old indoor swimming pool at my home in rural Iceland. The pool was built sometime in the 1920's inside the high school. I was in the last class to learn how to swim in that pool in 2003 and 2004, since the community got a new outdoor pool in 2006. In the new pool I competed in swim tournaments in the winter, spent hours in the pool and hot tub with friends as a teenager in the summer and swam every day before work as a grown up.

I used to take swimming and the pools in Iceland as granted, since there were so many all over and I go to them all the time, but after weaving the progress of getting Icelandic swimming culture on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, I realised how fortunate I've been to experience the swimming culture in Iceland. It is such a unique culture where communities come together to chat on an equal basis, kids can play and ofcourse it's extremely good for your body. For people with disability's and the elderly swimming pools can and do improve their lives in so many way's.

I have so many fond memories of going to the swimming pools here in Iceland, both alone and with friends and I would be so proud to see it on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Sincerely

Anna Karen Unnsteins, 26 year old

Anna Karen Unnsteins

January 2024

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Sundmenning og sund fyrir mig

Stundum þegar stormur geysar úti og myrkrið liggur þungt yfir hvarflar það að manni að eina ástæðan fyrir því að það er líft í þessu landi sé heita vatnið. Heita vatnið sem færir okkur hita í húsin og aðgang að útisundlaugum og heitum pottum allt árið um kring.

Ég er alin upp í næsta nágrenni við eina elstu laug landsins, laug miðaldaríthöfundarins og höfðingjans Snorra Sturlusonar í Reykholti. Það má ímynda sér að hann hafi baðað sig þar til að hvíla sig eftir langan dag við skriftir og sest með vinum og jafnvel stundum óvinum til að ræða málin – fjarri öllum vopnum.

Í dag veita laugarnar okkur enn hvíld frá amstri hversdagsins og oft kærkomna hvíld frá símanum. Í lauginni sestu við hlið ókunnugra á baðfötunum einum, ferð nakin í sturtuna og treystir því að enginn brjóti á þér í varnarleysi þínu. Í sundlaugum ríkir traust, það að fara í sund í almenningslaug er eins og að staðfesta samfélagssáttmálann – við erum öll í þessu saman og getum meira að segja baðað okkur saman.

Ég hef farið í sund frá því ég man fyrst eftir mér; í ferðamannalaugina í Húsafelli, í skólalaugar á Kleppjárnsreykjum, í Reykholti og í Árbæjarskóla og svo alltaf í laugarnar næst heimilinu hverju sinni. Þegar fjölskyldan vill gera sér dagamun förum við út fyrir hverfið og heimsækjum áhugaverðar sundlaugar. Einu sinni voru það þær með stærstu rennibrautinni en nú þegar börnin eru vaxin úr grasi eru það meira pottarnir, saunan eða áfasta líkamsræktin sem heilla. Laugaskarði í Hveragerði er í upphaldi.

Í dag fer ég mest ein í sund eftir ferð í ræktina, syndi 2-300 metra, sest svo í pottinn eða gufubaðið. Best finnst mér að fara í laugar þar sem ég þekki fáa og vil sitja ein og hlusta á skvaldrið í hinum án þess að taka þátt. Að stinga sér til sunds á föstudagseftirmiðdegi, eftir vinnuvíkuna, er eitthvað það besta sem ég geri, láta vatnið hreinsa allt amstrið burt og endurfæðast.

Ágústa Kristófersdóttir, f. 1973



UNESCO´s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Swimming and my swimming culture

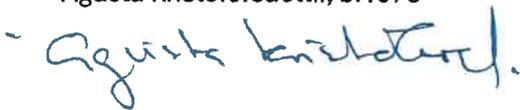
Sometimes when a storm rages outside and darkness hangs heavily, it occurs to a person that the only reason there is life in this land is the geothermal water. The hot water that provides us with warmth in our homes and access to outdoor pools and hot tubs all year round. I was raised in the vicinity of one of the oldest hot tubs in the country, the bath of the medieval author and chieftain Snorri Sturluson in Reykholt. One can imagine that he bathed there to rest after a long day of writing and sat with friends, and sometimes even foes, to discuss matters – far from all weapons.

Today, the baths still offer us a rest from the grind of everyday life and often a welcome break from the phone. In the pool, you sit next to strangers in swimwear, bathe naked in the shower, trusting that no one will violate your privacy. Trust reigns in the pools; going for a swim in a public pool is like reaffirming the social contract – we are all in this together, and, moreover, we can bathe together.

I have been swimming since I can first remember; in the tourist pool in Húsafell, in the school pools at Kleppjárnsreykir, in Reykholt, and in Árbæjarskóli, and then in the pools closest to home each time. When the family wants to make a day of it, we venture out of the neighbourhood and visit interesting pools. Once it was the ones with the big water slides, but now that the children have grown up, it's more about the hot tubs, saunas, or even gym that captivate. Laugaskarð in Hveragerði is a favourite.

Today, I mostly go swimming alone after a workout, swim 2-300 meters, then sit in the hot tub or in the steam bath. I prefer going to pools where I know few people and can sit alone and listen to the chatter without participating. Taking a dip on a Friday afternoon, after a workweek, is the best, letting the water cleanse away all the fatigue and rejuvenate myself.

Ágústa Kristófersdóttir, b.1973



Reykjavík, 31. January 2024

Declaration of support for nominating Icelandic swimming pools for UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

To whom it may concern.

I would like to support the nomination stated above.

Our swimming pools have long had an important role in our culture. You might say since the days of the first settlers when hot springs were used for cooking, bathing, as medicinal treatment and for human meetings of all sorts. Maybe even for animals too, such as feeble newborn lambs in the coldest of springs. In the constant cold of the long winter they must have been such a relief and luxury.

Today the pools are an essential part of the everyday for a big part of the Icelandic community and there's hardly an Icelander of any size, gender or origin that doesn't use the pools at least sporadically.

I've used them since before I can remember with my parents and family and taken my children there since they were just a few months old. Learned to swim there, spent hours playing there. Gone swimming in the pools in the rural communities I visit. It's a part of any vacation. Seen a movie during a film festival in a swimming pool, had a traditional meal there, been in a new mothers meeting there. There are so many aspects of Icelandic life connected to the local swimming pools.

When I use them I always swim for exercise and if there's time, and space, I float to relax, I sit in the hot pots - maybe listening to the conversations around me, maybe partaking in them - feeling the snow or rain on my warmed skin.

In the showers and locker rooms everyone is naked and we grow up used to seeing every kind of body - old and young, healthy and scarred, sagging and/or missing breasts or testicles or limbs.

I want the swimming pools always to be there for us. Were they to be declared a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage it would strengthen their position and enforce our respect for the surroundings, the geothermal water, the traditions and each other that they inspire, in Icelanders and visitors alike.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Asta Hauks Winny". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Declaration of support for the nomination of swimming pool culture in Iceland
to UNESCO'S Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Exercising in the pool keeps me going and helps me maintain my mobility. I do exercises in the pool that I cannot do without the support of the water. I do endurance exercises, strength exercises, flexibility exercises and much more that I cannot do at all on a chair or the floor due to osteoarthritis and other problems in the musculoskeletal system.

I was young when I learned how to swim, and I swam a lot until I had a disc prolaps and then arthritis in the back along with other parts as well as fibromyalgia. Then I started doing endurance and strength training in the pool, which is my swimming today.

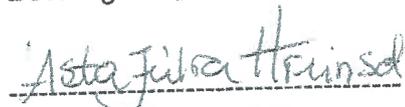
Swimming and good swimming lessons have a life-saving effect on the lives of Icelanders. We live by the sea and many people work at sea and it is necessary for us to know how to swim. It is also a unique experience to be able to move and exercise in water the whole year. Swimming and purposeful movement in water has a strengthening effect on the whole body and the resistance of the water strengthens. My grandparents knew how to swim, also my parents, uncles and aunts.

I have gone swimming with grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren and I think it is very important that families can swim together. Children learn from what they see and adopt it to their knowledge and lifestyle and they learn by doing. It is important that children grow up going swimming and learning to swim so that it becomes a part of their lifestyle in the future. That is how it goes in Iceland, generation after generation.

Icelanders' swimming pool culture is unique. There are heated public swimming pools in most towns and also out in the countryside, and generation after generation of Icelanders go there a lot on weekdays, weekends and holidays. Some people go three or four times a week, others less and some even go every day the whole year through. It is part of our lifestyle and our culture. It is also part of our culture to be together in the pool and have fun. Most Icelanders feel good in the swimming pool and go there to enjoy alone or with others, it is part of our cultural heritage

I would be very proud if our Icelandic swimming tradition made it onto UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage. It would show others that we have something very special on our little island that others may find desirable and worthy of emulation.

Best regards,



Ásta Júlía Hreinsdóttir

Declaration of support for Icelandic swimming pool culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Swimming for me

- so many things all at once: exercise, togetherness and fun

Ever since I was a young girl, I have grown up with regular swimming trips, first in the countryside where I grew up, then in Akureyri and more recently in diverse and different swimming pools in the capital area, and the number of swimming trips has only increased over the years. There is something quite unique about the feeling of jumping into a hot tub or pool after a busy day and unwind your body. Swimming is also a form of recreation and entertainment that you can experience and enjoy with family and friends or simply by yourself. I go swimming both to swim and just to enjoy, play and chat in a good group. I have children of different ages and especially the younger ones love swimming trips and would be willing to go on such trips every day. Swimming pools are also a great place to meet up and often friends or family and I decide to meet for a swim before or after dinner and then put our smaller ones directly in their pajamas after the swim and then everyone is more ready for bed. Simple, sweet and good for everyone. I think it's amazing how long the pools are open in Iceland and how early they open. It opens up possibilities for all and different groups in our societies. I want to see that the swimming pools in Iceland keep their opening hours and that the uniqueness of each pool is used and introduced more. It is so much fun to experience different pools and something new in every place. I would consider it a great victory and would be thankful to see the Icelandic swimming tradition on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage - because it truly belongs there. The swimming culture in Iceland is unique and important to the society as a whole. The swimming culture combines so many things; gathering place and meeting place; a place for exercise, for social connections and experiences, fun and laughter. Possibly in some cases the only place where a certain group gets a chance to talk to others and even create new friendships. Such connections are extremely important to all societies and all individuals.

Hafnarfjörður January 15th 2024



ÁRDÍS ÁRMANNSDÓTTIR

210577-5809

Árni Rúnar Hlööversson
Laugarnesvegur 80
105 Reykjavík
Iceland
arni@fmbelfast.com
31.jan 2024

Dear UNESCO Committee,

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm reaching out to share my support for adding Icelandic local pools to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. These pools aren't just a place to swim; they're a cornerstone of our community and culture.

In Iceland, pools are where we casually meet friends and make new ones. They're unique spots where conversations with people from all walks of life happen naturally, offering a window into diverse thoughts and experiences. They're also a rare break from our tech-heavy lives, a place where we can unplug and relax.

What's great about these pools is that they're accessible to everyone, regardless of the weather or budget. They're a hotspot for families, a place for exercise, and a hub for community interaction. They're like our version of the neighborhood café but with a warm twist.

In short, our local pools are more than just a place to swim; they symbolize our way of life – inclusive, community-focused, and health-conscious. Recognizing them as part of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage would highlight their unique role in our culture and help preserve them for generations to come.

Thank you for considering this. I truly believe these pools are a special part of Iceland's cultural fabric and deserve global recognition.

Best regards,
Árni Rúnar Hlööversson



Pools and Swimming in Iceland

Swimming, for me, is nearly as essential as walking. I learned at a young age and made sure all my children (and grandchildren) did as well.

I live in the Grafarvogur neighborhood in Reykjavik and use the local pool nearly every day all year-round. It is a good one, like a mini water park with all the accoutrements.

I do laps for 30-40 minutes, sit in the hot pot and steam room, do stretches, (occasionally a cold plunge), and I come away feeling clean, invigorated and even somewhat spiritually fulfilled. I am always happy when leaving even after those times when I had to force myself to go.

(Swimming laps in an outdoor heated pool, in winter, at night, during a snowstorm, is a singular experience).

The culture around swimming here is a blessing. Iceland is fortunate to have an abundance of water resources and wisely makes good use of them. A nomination for this tradition to UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage is an honor that has my support.

Chuck Mack 14/02/2024

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Mack" with a stylized flourish underneath.

Bjarnarfjörður, Iceland, 11 February 2024

This is my declaration of support for Icelandic swimming pool culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

For many years I lived with my daughter in one of the most remote and least populated places in Iceland, Árneshreppur. It is a small farming community at the end of the road (literally) with a gravel road for about 100km on the edge of mountains and the shore. In this little community the only three public places during the winter months are the community hall, the shop and the swimming pool. On the shore, there lies a little pool with the most spectacular views, built by local people in 1954. There is a little house next to it and when the children on the farms were learning to swim they would stay at this house with their teacher for a week or two to make the most of their journey. The pool is owned and run by the youth society as it is called. In the winter months the pool is open all day and all night, no employee or official there.

This little pool on the shore, in this remote place is named Krossneslaug. It has become well known in far away places as the pictures of it are spectacular to say the least. I often met foreign tourists in the summer months who said they had made the trip to this place not in the least because they had seen pictures of it and wanted to experience it. In the summer months it's busy and popular and people often spend many hours there chatting and relaxing looking at the sea and the mood is cheerful and festive. On the other side, in the darkest of days, I've been there alone, feeling like the only person in the world, the most fortunate person, floating and swimming, looking at the sky and sea.

Some of my fondest memories of the pool are from the winter months when there are no tourists and the road is verging on being blocked due to snow, maybe there has been a blizzard for a few days and you are getting ill with cabin fever. A couple of farms or a few friends decide to make the trip together to the pool. We might not be sure if we can make it all the way in the car but we have a shovel in the truck and our good mood. Getting to the pool you have to walk down a pretty steep little hill that is often covered in ice in winter but there is a little rail on the side, made of rope, and we would simple hang on to the rope and slide down to the pool side, slowly but surely. In the changing room there is no electricity and in the dark months we would light it with little candles. Getting into the pool in the deep dark of the winter months, with no electric lights, just me and my daughter, or with some friends and neighbours, getting the heat

into our bones from the perfectly warm water, floating and chatting and looking at the stars and sometimes northern lights, are magic moments that are hard to describe and money can't buy. The love for this pool in this little community is without a question, the pride and enjoyment of the people, and often we would say to each other, as a little mantra or declaration „if this pool wasn't here, this would be a desolate place: “ Ef þessi laug væri ekki hér, væri ekkert fólk hérna.“



Elín Agla Briem

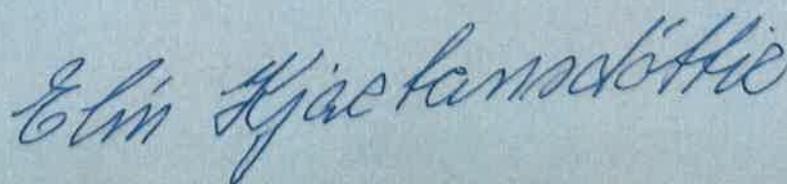
Regarding the nomination of swimming pool culture towards UNESCO'S Representative List of Intangible Heritage

I'm born in the year 1956 and I learned to swim as a child, as every Icelander did then and does now. Since then, I went swimming occasionally and after having my children, I found it necessary to take them swimming as often as possible, which was easy since you never have to go far away from your home to find a public swimming pool. Time went on and sometimes there were years between trips to the swimming pool but I took my grandchildren every now and then though, but in recent years I've been a frequent swimmer and try to go at least three times each week and feel bad when I can't go. In the darkness and frost it's wonderful to dip into the warm water, I feel like the water embraces me. I swim for at least 20 minutes and then go to the hot tub to float and stare at the stars above if it doesn't snow too much. I always go to the cold pot, sometimes you must break the surface ice before dipping in but it's very good for my arthritis to switch from going from hot to cold water. I love being with others at the swimming pool but it's also wonderful to be alone with yourself. The pool that I frequent is the public swimming pool at Laugar Reykjadal, in the north-east region of Iceland, but I have probably gone to over twenty different pools in Iceland. Going swimming does your soul and body good and is an invaluable asset of living in Iceland.

Please add the swimming pool culture in Iceland towards the UNESCO'S Representative List of Intangible Heritage.

With regards

Elín Kjartansdóttir



UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Sund og sundmenning fyrir mig

Sund er svo margt fyrir mér. Hreyfing, útivera, félagsskapur, huggulegheit og skemmtun.

Ég fer yfirleitt í sund til að synda, ég syndi þá oftast í ákveðinn tíma, í 15-30 mínútur. Eftir sundið teygi ég á og fer svo í heita pottinn. Ef kaldur pottur er í boði fer ég yfirleitt í hann líka og það úr heita pottinum. Ég fer þrisvar á milli þess heita og þess kalda. Í laugum sem eru með nuddpott eða heitari pott prófa ég þá líka. Ég reyni að prófa alla potta í hverri laug sem ég fer í.

Mér finnst æði að fara í sund í stórhrið og vondu veðri. Fátt er betra en að sitja í heitum potti og láta hriðina og vindinn leika um andlitið. Fara svo upp úr og í heita sturtu, þá er maður svo ferskur og fær í flestan sjó. Einnig getur verið gott finnst mér að fara upp úr lauginni og dýfa tánum í snjóinn. Jafnvel leggjast í snjóinn ef þannig liggur á mér.

Ég heimsæki margar laugar, ég er með sjálfri mér í ákveðnum „sundlauga-leik“ ef svo má að orði komast. Ég safna sundlaugum! Hef farið í 97 laugar á Íslandi. Það gilda ákveðnar reglur hjá mér í þessari söfnun, það verður að synda a.m.k. eina ferð í hverri laug og helst að prófa alla potta sem í boði eru. Þegar hverri heimsókn í nýja laug er lokið skrifa ég smá umsögn um hana, eins og er eru umsagnirnar mínar bara fyrir mig en hver veit nema að þær verði gefnar út þegar allar laugar landsins hafa bæst í safnið.

Sundhefð okkar Íslendinga er ákaflega mikilvæg að mínu mati, hún er góð fyrir sál og líkama. Það er mjög hollt fyrir alla að vera úti og í sundi hér á Íslandi erum við yfirleitt úti. Það að synda er mjög góð athliða hreyfing og svo er það félagsskapurinn. Það er mannbætandi að setjast í pottinn og spjalla við þá sem þar eru, allir jafnir og skemmtilegt að spjalla við þá sem maður hittir ekki á hverjum degi.

Ég mun halda áfram að fara í sund af því það er mikilvægt fyrir mig, mér líður alltaf svo vel þegar ég er búin í sundi.

Halla Rún Tryggvadóttir



UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Swimming and my swimming culture

Swimming is so many things for me. Exercise, being outdoors, being in good company, and enjoyment.

I usually go to the pool to swim, I usually swim for a certain amount of time, for 15 – 30 minutes. After swimming I do stretches and then go to the hot tub. If there is a cold tub I usually also go to that and from there to the hot tub. I go three times between the hot and cold tub. In swimming pools that have a whirlpool bath or hotter tubs I usually try them also. I try to go to every hot pot in every swimming pool I go to.

I love going swimming in a winter storm and bad weather. There are few things better than sitting in a hot pot and letting the snow and wind play around your face. Then going and taking a hot shower, then you are feeling fresh and able. I also find it pleasing to step out of the swimming pool and dip my toes into the snow. I even lay down in the snow when I feel like it.

I visit many swimming pools, I'm playing a game with myself, a "swimming pool game" you could call it. I'm collecting swimming pools! I have gone to 97 swimming pools in Iceland. There are certain rules for this collecting, being that I must swim at least once over the swimming pool and preferably try all the hot tubs that are available. After each visit to a new pool, I write down a short review about it, these reviews are just for me right now, but who knows if they will be published when all the swimming pools have been added to the collection.

In my opinion our swimming pool tradition is important for us Icelanders, it's good for the soul and body. It's good for everyone to be outside and here in Iceland the swimming pools are usually outside. Swimming is very good general exercise and there is also the company of others. It's wholesome to sit down in the hot tub and talk to those who are there, where everyone is equal, and it's fun talking to those that you don't meet every day.

I will continue to go swimming because it's important for me, I always feel better when I have finished a swim.

(sign)

Halla Rún Tryggvadóttir

Declaration of support for Icelandic swimming pool culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

I was six years old in 1963 when I had my first swimming lesson in the old swimming pool in Laugardalur in Reykjavík. This was the year before I went to the primary school. I lived close by the pool and knew that the president of Iceland had swimming there every day. I saw him often in the pool and realised that there is no difference of people when you are in the swimming pool.

Through out my years in primary school and secondary school I and my best friend where every day in the pool after school hours. This was our playground and I always remember the lady that asked us one day in the pool in spring time if we had been abroad in the sun. We had not noticed that we had been very tan during our stay in the pool every day during the dark winter of Iceland.

When the Scandinavian countries had competition of swimming 200 meters in a swimming pool it showed that Iceland had the most participants as the whole nation was swimmers. We were a proud nation of what we achieved in this competition.

I took all the swimming exam that I could take during my primary and secondary schools as this was as well competition between us at same age to achievement in swimming.

I went to sea when I became 16 years and had not much time to go to swimming pools but when I became father of two I was eager to see them learning to swim and go to the same swimming pool that I had spent my school years in.

When I became a grandfather I joined my grandchildren and their parents to the swimming class of infants that was exceptional experience. Seeing infants diving without any problems showed me how important the swimming pools were for the nation.

First swimming lessons took place in Iceland in 1925 following of grounding of a schooner with loss of lots of lives. The reason was that the crew had no knowledge of swimming and that led to the first courses. In 1991 I became principal of a Safety and survival training centre in Iceland which I was in charge of for 32 years. It's by no doubt that due to swimming knowledge many seafarers in distress survived due to their swimming knowledge. I'm convinced that this led to the fact that in 2008 we had for the first time ever no fatal accidents at sea which has been repeated eight times since then. Swimming knowledge has been one of the vital factors in many of the maritime accidents in Iceland which can clearly be seen

witnessed by the one crewmember and only survivor of the fishing vessel Hellisey that on the 11th March 1984 manage to swim 3 nautical miles to shore and report the casualties. Without the swimming culture this would be today unknown what would have happened.

Going to the swimming pool is always a enjoyable time where you meet people that you don't even know but you can always start a talk about the swimming pool which leads to the subject of the day.

I started with my tale about my younger days going to the pool seeing the president of our country in my local swimming pool but for the last eight years I had been living in the community of the presidency and have met the present president several times in the pool where he is with his family and talking to all people in the pool as a one of the guests but not as any dignitaries.

Capt. Hilmar Snorrason

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Hilmar Snorrason', written in a cursive style.

A letter of support of placing the swimming pool culture of Iceland on UNESCO'S Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The pools and I

The swimming pools of Iceland have always been an important part of all 40 years of my personal life in more ways than one. I trained swimming from the age of 8 to 16 in one of the 50 m outside pools, Sundlaug Kópavogs. Training multiple days a week in any weather, all year round. This was in addition to the weekly swimming-practice which was (and still is) a part of the school curriculum. All children in Iceland learn how to swim from an early age and can even go by themselves to the swimming pool from the age of 10. I even taught swim-classes myself during a couple of summers. My first child (born in 2013) I took for baby-swimming where it's amazing to see few month old babies swim around with aid, do exercises, and even dive underwater. Today our family of five visits the pool regularly to spend some energy, have fun or just take a much needed bath. I'm also a scuba and free diver so for me the pools are also a place to practice buoyancy, test the gear or practice breath holding.

The place of no distraction

I sometimes go alone to the pool. There is nothing like sitting in the hot-pot, closing your eyes and feeling the snow kiss the face, or even the sun when one gets lucky. The pool is a place of no distraction. No cell-phones allowed. Sometimes one ends up listening in on a conversation between strangers or a group of friends in the hot-pot. The topic can be anything from politics to intimate things as often a trip to the swimming pool is agreed upon among close friends to catch up and chat about the ongoings in everyone's life.

The unique play between the weather and the pool

What is unique about the pools in Iceland is the interplay between the weather and the pools. In many, if not most other countries, the pools are common where the climate is warm and are first and foremost viewed as a luxury way to cool down in hot weather. In Iceland the atmospheric temperatures are rarely high, and the weather can change quickly and it can be quite extreme. A calm breeze, gailing winds, hail, rain and snow may all occur within one day. So, the swimming pools are not just visited during the few hot days a year but are a place to visit no matter the weather, all days of the year. The pools are hot no matter the weather. Countless memories of swimming back and forth while bombarded by hail and snow and the wind creating waves on the pool.

“Enginn veit hvað átt hefur fyrr en misst hefur”

Which is an Icelandic saying that can be translated as “No one knows what they have until they have lost it”. What really highlights the importance of swimming pools for the Icelandic nation is how many of those that live outside of the country speak about having a craving for the pools when not able to utilize them. And when people come back home, they often visit the pools frequently, even daily, so it is as if they feel an internal need to fill some kind of pool-quota before leaving the country again. We who have lived abroad recognize this feeling and I see this in many family and friends who live in other countries but come occasionally home to Iceland. I also see this in people who are not

26.02.24

originally from Iceland but have lived there some time but left the country again. Many of those people talk about missing going to the pools.

As a cultural heritage

I believe that the swimming-pool culture in Iceland deserves a place on UNESCO'S Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. It's truly unique and it is clearly an important part of the culture of this small island nation. It is important that this culture is not lost and although the pools have a generally stable set-up (swimming pool + hot-pot + steam-bath) thankfully the pools can be innovative, answering the needs of local people. For example, now there is a cold-pot at almost all swimming pools as a large group of people in Iceland (including my husband) now visit the steam bath and cold-pot to keep their fitness and to clear the mind. It is difficult to imagine living in Iceland without access to the swimming pools or hydrothermal pools.

Sincerely,



Dr. Hrönn Egilsdóttir

Swimmer, Diver, Mother, Wife and Daughter

Also, Head of the Environmental Division

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Garðabæ, 1. mars 2024

Ég er fæddur árið 1946 lærði að synda í kringum 6-7 ára aldur á Seyðisfirði. Þar var sundlaug en hún var bara opin á sumrin. Maður synti fyrst með kút og lærði sundtökin.

Á hverjum morgun vakna ég kl. 6:10, tek stunddótið mitt og fer í sund. Ég byrja á því að fara í sturtu og þvo mér. Í sundi hitti ég sama fólkið. Ég fer fyrst í heita pottinn og er þar í smá stund og tala við aðra karla og við förum yfir stöðuna á heimsmálunum. Svo fer ég í laugina og syndi 200 m. Þegar það er búið kem ég við í „legvatninu“ sem er grunn vaðlaug. Þar eru alltaf einhverjir til að tala við og láta ljós sitt skína. Sumir kasta fram vísum, aðrir segja brandara og enn aðrir leysa heimsmálin. Svo fer ég aftur í heita pottinn. Síðan fer ég í sturtu, þvæ mér og þurrka mér. Svo erum við nokkrir sem löbbum saman um sundlaugasvæðið með handklæði utan um okkur. Þetta er gert til þess að kæla sig niður í rétt hitastig svo maður hætti að svitna. Stundum vigtar maður sig og athugar hvort maður sé í ákjósanlegri þyngd. Svo klára ég að klæða mig. Síðan er farið fram í anddyri laugarinnar og þar setjumst við niður í stutta stund og fáum okkur kaffi. Það eru á bilinu 5-15 manns sem mæta reglulega í hópinn. Þrisvar sinnum í viku stundar hópurinn saman leikfimisæfingar í æfingasal í lauginni. Sá sem stjórnar æfingunum er 87 ára.

Hópurinn sem ég tilheyri er kallaður „Húnarnir“ því við liggjum á hurðarhúninum þegar það er opnað á morgnana. Hópurinn gerir ýmislegt fleira saman, t.d. förum við saman í vorferð.

Þegar ég er heima þá fer ég alltaf í sund, bæði virka daga og um helgar. Ég vil helst ekki missa af einum morgni í sundlauginni. Þetta gerir það að verkum að maður heldur líkamanum í góðu standi og svo er þetta gaman. Þetta er hluti af lífinu. Að fara í sund eru mjög mikilvæg lífsgæði.

Sund er eitt af því sem gerir lífið miklu skemmtilegra og betra en það væri annars. Vegna þess að ég fer í sund hefur maður talsvert meira gaman af lífinu.

Ég styð skráningu sundlaugamenningar á íslensku yfirlitsskrána um óáþreifanlegan menningararf. Ég tel sundlaugamenningu mikilvæga fyrir íslenskt samfélag og vil varðveita hana. Ég styð heilshugar við að íslensk sundlaugamenning verði tilnefnd og skráð á lista UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns.



Jón Gunnlaugsson

f. 1946

Gardabaer, 1 March 2024

I was born in 1946. I learned to swim around the age of 6-7 in the town of Seyðisfjörður. The town had a swimming pool, but at that time it was only open during the summer. We first used inflatable waistband while learning the swimming strokes.

Every morning I wake up at 6:10, grab my bag and go to the local swimming pool. I start by taking a shower and washing myself. In the pool I meet the same people. I go to the hot pot first and stay there for a while talking to other guests and we discuss the state of world affairs. Then I go to the pool and swim 200 meters. When that is done, I stop in a shallow wading pool. There is always someone to talk to and guests entertain each other. Some recite poems, others tell jokes, and yet others solve the world's problems. Then I go back to the hot pot. Then I shower, wash, and dry myself. Few of us who walk together around the pool area with towels around us. This is done to cool down to the right temperature so that you stop sweating. Sometimes we weigh ourselves to check if we are at the ideal weight. Then I finish getting dressed. Then we go to the lobby of the pool and there we sit down for a short while and have a cup of coffee. There are between 5-15 people who attend the group regularly. Three times a week, the group exercise in the gym at the pool. The person who directs the exercises is 87 years old.

The group I belong to is called "The Doorknobs" because we lie on the doorknob when the pool opens every morning. The group does other social activities together, e.g. we go on a spring trip.

When I am at home, I always go swimming, both weekdays and weekends. I will not miss a morning in the swimming pool. Going swimming means that you keep your body in good condition and it's fun. This is part of life. Swimming pool culture is a very important quality of life.

Swimming and swimming pool culture is one of the best things I know. It makes life much more fun and better than it would otherwise be. Because I go swimming, I enjoy my life a lot more.

I support the registration of swimming pool culture in the Icelandic inventory of intangible cultural heritage. I consider swimming pool culture important for Icelandic society and want to preserve it. I wholeheartedly support Icelandic pool culture being nominated and listed on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

(sign)

Jón Gunnlaugsson

Born 1945

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage -

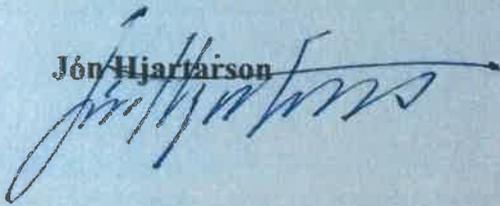
Hvern virkan morgun vikunnar fer ég í Kópavogslaug klukkan að ganga sjö og þar hittumst við sama fólkið utan við dyr og bíðum þess að hurð opnast klukkan hálf sjö. Eftir sund og heita pottinn og gufuna og kaldapottinn og hópgöngu kringum laugarnar setjumst við saman og drekkum kaffi og spjöllum, karlar og konur.

Ég er 85 ára og ólst upp í Sundhöllinni við Barónsstíg, en hún er nokkrum árum eldri en ég og þá voru miklar krakkahjarðir í hverfunum um kring og við stóðum í löngum biðröðum til að komast inn og hópar reknir uppúr eftir ákveðnum reglum til að koma nýjum hópum í laugina. Sundhöllin var og er menningarhús, frábær aðstaða til alls og sturtuklefarnir höfðu raðir af fótlaugum, sem þá voru nauðsynlegar, því við vorum ekki eins vel skæddir og í dag. Strákarnir í gúmmitúttum og götur forugar í rigningum og sturtustjórinn lét okkur skrúbba leggina vel. Engum Íslendingi dettur í huga að fara óhreinn í sundlaugina, eða að þrifa sig ekki vel í klofinu. Svo tókum við oft strætó inn í gömlu laugarnar í Laugardal og busluðum þar.

Íslendingar eru þaðþjóð. Í heita pottinum verður til vinátta, þar er einlægni og jöfnuður, glatt í öllum og aldrei talað um pólitík eða trúmál, né annað fólk.

Styd það eindregið að þetta verði viðurkennt sem nokkuð sérstakt í menningu okkar.

Jón Hjartarson



UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

In the morning every working day I go to the swimming pool Kópavogslaug before seven and there I meet and wait with the same people outside the door for it to open at half past six. After swimming and the hot tub, the sauna, and the cold tub we sit down and drink some coffee and talk together, men and women.

I'm 85 years old and I grew up in the swimming pool Sundhöllin by Barónsstíg, which is only a little bit older than me, then there were hordes of kids from the neighbourhood, and we stood in long lines to enter but then groups got to enter the pool and were then made to go so new groups could enter by a certain system. The Sundhöllin was and still is a house of culture, excellent facilities for everything and there used to be special foot bathes which were necessary because we didn't have as good shoes then as today. Boys used to wear rubber shoes and the streets were muddy from the rain and the shower guard made us clean our feet especially well. No Icelanders think to enter the pool dirty or not clean themselves properly in the groin area. We also often took the bus into the old pools in Laugardalur and played there.

Icelanders are a nation of bathers. In the hot tubs friendships become reality, there is sincerity and equalness, everyone is happy and there is no discussion of politics or religion, nor about other people.

I strongly support that this will be recognised as something special in our culture.

(sign)

Jón Hjartarsson

Góðan dag / Good day

My nomination for the culture of swimming and swimming pools to the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage is written here in Icelandic first and English below.

Á íslensku:

Við getum rifist um nánast hvað sem er, rétt eins og allar aðrar þjóðir. Skattar og velferð, útlendinga- og loftslagsmál, stjórnsýsla og spilling. Við getum fundið einhvern flöt á þessu öllu til að vera ósammála og hnakkrífast yfir. Erum við þá svona klofin þjóð? Það virðist stundum eins og það sé ekkert sem við gætum í grundvallaratriðum verið sammála um.

Þegar ég hugsa um hver menningin sé eiginlega á Íslandi nútímans, eins torrætt hugtak og menning getur nú verið, þá er alltaf auðvelt að hugsa með súrri kaldhæðni, „er það ekki bara nöldur, spilling og vesen?“ Af nógu er að taka ef maður les fréttir með einhverri reglusemi, eitthvert hneykslið eða einhver vanhæfni, frændhygli og brask er jú líklega fyrirsögn dagsins.

Þegar ég velti því einlæglega fyrir mér hvað það þýðir að vera Íslendingur og reyni mitt besta til að hugsa um jákvæðar hliðar þessa annars skringilega þjóðernis þá kemur helst þrennt óumflýjanlega upp í hugann.

Við elskum öll og berum virðingu fyrir náttúru landsins. Hún er okkar aðalsmerki og fyllir okkur bæði lotningu, hrifningu og ótta. Hún er orðin okkar helsta markaðsvara í ferðamannaíðnaði sem gengur stundum of langt, en mikilvægi hennar er miklu djúpstæðara eins og við vitum öll. Forfeður og formæður okkar allra, langt aftur í aldir, voru mótuð og fægð eins veðraðir smásteynar í fjöru af hörku náttúruaflanna og fegurð þeirra. Við erum börn hafsins, fjallanna og vindsins. Hins umlykjandi myrkurs vetrar og skínandi miðnætursólarinnar.

Við finnum líka öll fyrir þakklæti í garð björgunarsveitarfólks. Það er séríslensk hefð að vera með svona umfangsmikið apparat í sjálfbóðaliðastarfi eins og björgunarsveitirnar og það er aldrei hægt að segja það nógu oft, hversu ótrúlega magnað þetta fólk er. Þau hafa bjargað þúsundum og liðsinnt óteljandi fjölda af ferðalöngum, innlendra sem og út, og fórnarlömbum náttúruhamfara eins og við höfum séð stigmagnast undanfarin ár á Reykjanesi. Þau eru okkar besta spegilmynd sem þjóð að mörgu leyti. Óeigingirmi, samhjálp og ótæmandi þrek eru bara fáein þeirra orða sem eru mér efst í huga þegar ég hugsa um þetta frækna fólk.

En þrátt fyrir allt þetta lof þá er þeim báðum skákað á mínum huglæga forgangslista þegar ég reyni að kryfja til mergjar hvers eðlis menning okkar skerbúa er eiginlega, því að án nokkurs efa í mínu sálaritetri þá er það sundið sem stendur alltaf í forgrunninum. Sundið er ofar öllu öðru það sem gerir mig að Íslendingi. Í sundlaugunum er að finna helstu almannagæði í íslensku samfélagi og raunar eina almannarýmið líka, því ekki búum við mikla hefð almenningsgarða, né veðurfar sem heimilar það svo auðveldlega. Í sundinu hittum við vini, kunningja, ókunnuga eða slökum á einsömul. Samræður eiga sér stað, við nákomna jafnt og þá sem við þekkjum ekki og allar stéttir, allir aldurshópar, öll kyn og hneigðir, öll trúarbrögð og allir minnihlutahópar, allir sem telja sig íslenska eða vilja á annan hátt taka þátt í íslenskri menningu og samfélagi, eru velkomnir í sund. Það er ekkert

mikilvægara fyrir okkur öll en að standa vörð um þessa dýrmætu hefð okkar. Að sundlaugar séu almannarými, aðgengileg öllum, hvort sem er til heilsubótar, leiks eða afslöppunar. Ég óska þess heitt að þessi menningarhefð okkar komist á lista UNESCO; UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Því að það væri mikilvægt skref til að tryggja öryggi þessarar menningarhefðar um ókomna tíð, sem arfur okkar til framtíðarkynslóða. Sundið er einmitt undir þrýstingi, því að þjónustuskerðingar og verðhækkningar vegna fjárlagahalla yfirvalda og orkuskortur vegna orkufrekrar stóriðju, túrisma og rafmyntagreftri sníða sundlaugunum æ þrengri stakk.

Takk fyrir

In English:

We can argue about almost anything, just like all other nations. Taxes and welfare, immigration and climate change, administration and corruption. We can find some part of any of that to disagree about and argue endlessly over. Are we therefore a split nation? It sometimes seems like there is nothing we can fundamentally agree on.

When I think about what our culture even is in this modern period in Iceland, as vague a concept as culture can be in the first place, then it's always easy to think sardonically, "isn't it just complaining, corruption and bother?" The list is endless if you read the news with any regularity, some scandal or somebody's incompetence, nepotism or some scam is likely to be the headline of the day.

When I sincerely wonder what it really means to be Icelandic and try my best to think about the positive aspects to this otherwise strange nationality then three things inevitably come to mind.

We all love and respect our country's nature. It is our hallmark and it fills us with both awe, admiration and fear. It is our main marketed product in the tourism industry, which sometimes goes too far, but its importance to us runs far deeper as we all know. Our forefathers and foremothers, centuries back in time, were shaped and polished like weathered pebbles on the beach by the fury and beauty of the elements. We are children of the sea, the mountains and the wind. The all encompassing darkness of winter and the shining midnight sun.

We also feel immense gratitude to our rescue squadrons. It is a uniquely Icelandic tradition to have such an extensive apparatus run by volunteers as the rescue squadrons are and we can never say it too often, just how amazing those people are. They have rescued thousands and helped uncountable numbers of travelers, both native and from abroad, and the victims of natural disasters as we have seen escalate so much in the last few years of the increased activity in Reykjanes peninsula. They reflect our best qualities as a nation in so many ways. Selflessness, mutual aid and inexhaustible strength are just a few words that come to mind when I think about those mighty individuals.

Despite all of this praise, both of these are surpassed on my subjective hierarchical list when I try to dissect what the nature of our culture really is, on this far away, isolated island. Without any doubt within my soul there is always the swimming pool which stands in the

foreground. Swimming is above all other things what makes me Icelandic. In the swimming pools you can find the ultimate public goods in Icelandic society and in fact the only public space as well, as we do not have a rich tradition of public parks and as we don't actually have weather which would allow for that. In the swimming pools we meet friends, acquaintances, strangers or just relax by our lonesome. Conversations take place, to people close to us or those we don't know at all and all classes, all age groups, all genders and orientations, all religions and all minority groups, everybody who considers themselves Icelandic or in any way wish to participate in Icelandic culture or society, all are welcome to the swimming pool. There is nothing more important for us all than to protect this precious tradition of ours. That swimming pools remain our public spaces, accessible to all, whether for health and fitness, playing or relaxation. I wish nothing more than this cultural tradition of ours finds a place on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, as that would be an important step to ensure the safety of this cultural tradition for the foreseeable future, as our inheritance to future generations. The swimming pools are exactly under pressure as cuts to services and rising prices to balance government budgets and energy shortages due to the high demand of industry, tourism and cryptocurrency mining are putting the swimming pools as public goods and public spaces at risk.

Thank you

Nafn / Name: Jón Ferdínand Estherarson

Undirskrift / Signature: Jón Ferdínand Estherarson

Dagsetning / Date: 13/01/2024

31-01-24

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

For my is swimming part of my live. During me school years from 7-16 years I got a very good swimming training, which make me able to use 4 types of swimming stiles. To day I am very happy how good swimming training are general good in Iceland, thanks to all the swimming pools which are all around Iceland, heated up with geothermal water from the earth.

For more than 40 years I have had that plan to go for swimming 4 times pr. week all the year round. I spend about 90 minutes for each visit, swimming 750m, and after that taking good time in hot spa pots, with spray nozzles to give the muscles more blood stream which makes them softer and take away pain, if such is needed. In the spa pots I also meet my friends and learn to know lot of new people as well.

I will therefore strongly recommend at the Icelandic swimming culture will be stated by UNESCO.

JÓHANN ÓLAFUR ÁRSÆLSSON

Jóhann Ólafur Ársælsson (120942-7869)
Strandvegi 18
210 Garðabæ
ICELAND.

Declaration of support for Icelandic swimming pool culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage/Listi UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns.

Ég hef stundað sund frá barnæsku. Fór í skólasund í innilaug Akureyrasundlaugar og lærði að synda með dekkjakút á bakinu. Á veturna var útilaugin lokuð og við fengum skammtaðan tíma til að vera í innilauginni, ½ á mann. Fengum litaðar teygjur og eftir hálf tíma áttu gular, eða aðrar litaðar teygjur að fara upp úr. Svo var útilaugin opin að hluta á veturna með háum skjólveggjum í kring og pottur yfirbyggður og því hægt að segja að maður hafi farið í heitan pott og gufu samtímis.

Mamma kenndi mér að stinga mér. Ég átti að miða á næstu línu í botninum af hliðarbakkanum og átti ég að stefna á línuna, það gekk eftir nokkur skipti.

Manni mínum kynntist ég í sundlaug Akureyrar og hefur sund verið órjúfanlegur þáttu okkar lífs. Erum bæði búin að dæma í sundi og þjálfá og unnið allskonar sjálfbolaliðið starf. Tveir synir af þremur æfðu markvisst sund; tveir þeir yngri voru í ungbarnasundi. Barnabörn hafa verið í ungbarnasundi og tvö eru nú í krakkasundi, svo kölluðu Dillu-sundi á Akureyri. Amman fær stundum að fara með og fer iðulega oní, en er ekki á bakkanum eins og flestir foreldrar, þar sem það er svo gaman að rifja upp gamlar stundir þegar ég vara að æfa börn í sundi.

Bæði höfum við hjón keppt í garpasundi og unnið mikið þar, bæði í innanlandsstarfi og norrænu; í þjálfun, keppni og dómgæslu.

Að fara í sund á aðfangadag er órjúfanlegur þáttur jólaundirbúnings.

Sund er allra meina bót, andlega og líkamlega.

Karen Malmquist
Karen Malmquist

Declaration of support for Icelandic swimming pool culture towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

I have been going swimming since I was a child. First it was school swimming in the indoor swimming pool in Akureyri's main pool, there I learnt to swim with a rubber swimming aid made from an old tire. In the wintertime the outdoor swimming pool was closed, and we had our time rationed in the indoor swimming pool, half an hour per person. We got coloured bands that we had to wear and half an hour later all yellow bands or some other colour had to leave the pool. In those days the outdoor pool, which was open for part of the wintertime, was shielded by high walls and the hot pot was partly covered so it could be said that we went swimming and to the steam room at the same time.

My mom taught me how to dive. I was supposed to aim for the next line in the bottom when I jumped from the pool side and head to the line, that worked after a few tries.

I met my husband at the swimming pool in Akureyri and swimming has been an integral part of our lives. We both have been swimming judges and coaches and worked in various volunteer jobs. Two of our three sons specifically trained in swimming; and two of my younger ones were in swimming classes for toddlers. My grandchildren have also been in swimming classes for toddlers and two are now in swimming training for kids, which is called Dillu – Swimming here in Akureyri. As their grandmother, I am allowed to go with them sometimes and often go into the pool with them, not staying on the side of the pool like most of the parents, it brings up good memories from the days I was teaching children to swim.

Me and my husband have both competed in Garpa swimming (Masters swimmers for 25 years and older) and worked a lot with the Master's swimmers, both locally and in the Nordic countries; in training, competing, and judging.

To go for a swim on the 24th of December is an integral part of preparing for Christmas.

Swimming is good for all things, both mentally and physically.

(sign)

Karen Malmquist

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

I am a woman in my sixties. Since the age of ten, going to the public swimming pool has been a regular part of my lifestyle. I go there every other day, about 15 times a month.

It is an activity that improves both physical, social and mental health. I swim, do gymnastics in the pool, relax in the hot tub and chat with people there, whether I know them or not.

I think Icelandic swimming culture is a unique activity and a cultural get-together. Something that comes with living in Iceland where there is an abundance of warm water and a cold climate.

Please document this practice.

KRISTIN LINDA JÓNSDÓTTIR

Vegna tilnefningar sundlaugamenningar á Íslandi til UNESCO á yfirlitsskrá yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararft mannkyns (UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage).

Sund og Sundlaugar

Ferðir mínar og fjölskyldunnar í sundlaugar Íslands eru með jákvæðustu og gleðilegustu stundum lífs míns og tilheyra bestu minningum mínum.

Ég er Íslendingur, fædd 1956 og uppalin á Vestfjörðum og hef lifað mest af minni 68 ára ævi hér á landi. Engin sundlaug var þó nærri mér í uppveitinum en við börnin sóttum sundnámskeið í næsta byggðarlagi á vorin. Ég fór á hverju vori frá 9 ára aldri til 12 ára og lærði að synda margar tegundir sunds; bringusund, baksund, skriðsund og bak-skriðsund. Ég féll strax fyrir því ævintýri sem ég upplifði að sund í sundlaugum var og hef verið mikið fyrir sundferðir alla tíð síðan.

Eftir að ég eignaðist börn fór ég með þau í sund, bæði í Reykjavík og öðrum sveitarfélögum landsins og þau voru alltaf mjög hrifin af því og skemmtu sér vel. Ég stundaði sund á meðgöngunum mínum og það kom sér alltaf mjög vel að búa við þær æfingar í og eftir fæðingar. Eftir að börnin uxu úr grasi fór ég aftur að fara ein í sund og fór þá að synda óslitið í langan tíma, með mismunandi sundtegundum, eða í ca. 40 mín. Og hef þá synt um 1000 metra. Síðan geri ég leikfimi í vatninu í ca. 20 mín. Og hef þá verið klukkutíma í lauginni. Eftir það fer ég í heitan nuddpott, geri teygju-æfingar á hálsi og herðum og slaka síðan vel á.

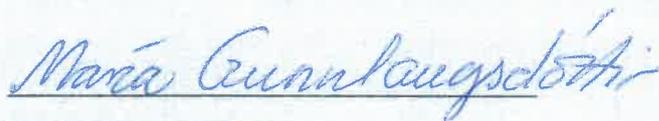
Sundferðir eru og hafa verið mikilvægt minni heilsu, jafnvel skipt sköpum, bæði líkamlega og ekki síst andlega. Það er mjög hvílandi og styrkjandi fyrir heila- og taugakerfi að vera í sundi, m.a. vegna þess að það er ekki von á neinni truflun eins og símhringingu, skilaboðum, dyrabjöllu o.þ.h. Miðað við aldur minn þá tel ég mig vera með betri heilsu á allan hátt vegna sundsins og vatns-æfinganna en annars væri.

Ég hef lengi haft gaman af því að fara í mjög misstórar og mistæknivæddar laugar víðsvegar um landið. Í sumum er náttúrulega heitt vatn og í öðrum er vatnið hitað með rafmagni. Sumar eru stórar og glæsilegar og aðrar litlar og frumstæðar; sumar eru innanhúss og aðrar undir beru lofti en allar eru þær skemmtilegar að heimsækja.

Ég myndi gjarnan taka þátt í að styðja tillögu um tilnefninguna til UNESCO.

Ég vona að sundlaugum, heitum pottum og köldum og sundmenningu Íslands verði viðhaldið með sem bestum hætti í framtíðinni.

fimmtudagur, 7. mars 2024



María Gunnlaugsdóttir

Kt. 270356-7969

Regarding the nomination of swimming pool culture in Iceland towards UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Swimming and swimming pools

My and my family's visits to the swimming pools in Iceland are among my most positive and happiest moments in my life and are some of my best memories.

I'm Icelandic, born in 1956 and grew up in the Westfjords and have lived most of my life here in Iceland. There was not a swimming pool near where I grew up, but we, the children, went for our swimming lessons in a nearby town each spring. I went every spring from the ages of 9 to 12 and I learned how to swim in different strokes; breaststroke, survival back stroke, freestyle and backstroke. I fell easily for the adventure I experienced that swimming in swimming pools was and have since then enjoyed going swimming.

After I had my children I took them swimming, both in Reykjavík and other municipalities around Iceland and they always loved it and had a good time. I went swimming when I was pregnant with my children, and it prepared me and helped with their births and after them. After my children grew up, I began to go swimming alone again and swam for a long time, swimming with different strokes for about 40 minutes. I have been swimming around 1000 meters. Then I do gymnastics in the water for about 20 minutes. By then I have spent about an hour in the swimming pool. After that I go to the massage hot tub, do stretches for my neck and shoulders, and then relax.

Going swimming has always been vital for my health, even been instrumental, both for my physical health but also for my mental health. It's very relaxing and restorative for your brain and nervous system to go swimming, for example there is nothing there to disturb you like a phone call or a message, the doorbell ringing and so on. Compared to my age I think I am in all ways healthier because of the swimming and pool gymnastics than I would be without it.

I have for a long time enjoyed going to different kind of pools, different in design and size all over the country. In some pools there is geothermal water and in some the water is heated with electricity. Some are big and glamorous, and others are small and primitive; some are indoors and others outdoors, but they are all fun to visit.

I would like to support the nomination towards to UNESCO.

I hope swimming pools, hot tubs and the swimming pool culture in Iceland will be safeguarded in the best way in the future.

Thursday 7. March 2024
(sign)

María Gunnlaugsdóttir

Kt. 270356-7969

Íslensk sundlaugamenning á heimsminjaskrá UNESCO.

Ég lærði að synda á 7. áratug sl. aldar. Það var langt að fara á krókóttum malarvegum fyrir bílveika stelpu og laugin var hálf köld. Sundkennslan var í lok skólaársins og hefur líklega staðið yfir í 1 til 2 vikur í senn. Hver hópur fór 3x ofaní hvern dag, og þess á milli fengum við okkur nesti, fórum í leiki eða reyndum að hafa ofanaf fyrir okkur með öðrum hætti.

Þrátt fyrir að þetta hafi ekki verið neitt sérstaklega skemmtilegt þá hef ég æ síðan verið þakklát því framsýna fólki sem gerði sundkennslu að skólaskyldu. Eftir að ég varð fullorðin þá hef ég notað okkar frábæru sundlaugar óspart og lít á þær sem sérstök forréttindi okkar íslendinga.

Ég bjó erlendis þegar ég var í framhaldsnámi og það var ekki það í íbúðinni minni. Því var ég alltaf með handklæði og sjampó í skólatöskunni og fór reglulega í sérstakt almenningsbaðhús þar sem hægt var að leigja baðker eða sturtu og/eða fara í sund (hefur nú verið breytt í mathöll) eða ég fór í sundlaug sem var í nágrenninu til að komast í bað. Laugin var hálf köld, enda stór og kynnt með rafmagni, engir heitir pottar. Þar var ekkert verið að ganga eftir því að fólk færi í sturtu án fata áður en farið var í laugina og mér fannst það hálf sóðalegt. Ég saknaði íslensku lauganna.

Ég upplifi okkar sundmenningu sem sérstaka að því leyti að öllum er kennt að synda á barnsaldri, við erum með fjölda útisundlauga um allt land með heitum pottum og gufuböðum og hreinlæti er mikið. Sumir fara eflaust bara til að synda, en laugarnar eru í raun bæði félagsmiðstöðvar og „spa“ þar sem flestir láta einnig líða úr sér í heita pottinum, fara í gufu og spjalla eða hlusta á aðra spjalla. Fyrir mig er þetta ómissandi hluti af lífinu á Íslandi, þótt ég fari ekki daglega í sund. Það er til dæmis dásamlegt að fara í sund og heitan pott utandyra þótt úti sé ausandi rigning eða bylur. Laugarnar gera dimman og kaldann veturinn sannarlega bærilegri, auk þess maður getur jafnvel nælt sér í smá D-vítamín og lit.

Í „minni“ sundlaug er ég með áunna rútínu sem tekur alla jafna um 1 klst. og kortér með öllu: Sturta, heitasti potturinn, 500 m sund, gufa, aðeins í kalda þegar ég treysti mér, uppúr og aftur í sturtu. Mér finnst líka einstaklega gefandi að geta ferðast um landið og farið í rútínulaust sund og heitan pott nær hvar sem ég ákveð að stinga niður fæti eða tjaladhæl.

Þá tel ég fatalaus sturtukröfuna til fyrirmyndar, bæði vegna hreinlætis og eins hvað það er menntandi fyrir krakka að sjá venjulega líkama af öllum gerðum, stærðum og aldri. Ég var einu sinni með amerískan skiptinema og hafði nær aldrei séð annað fólk nakið, ekki einu sinni fjölskyldumeðlimi. Hún elskaði að fara í sund á Íslandi.

Að sundlaugamenningin okkar fái stimpil UNESCO getur skipt máli að því leyti að „upphefðin kemur að utan“ og að við komum etv. til með að meta og hlú betur að henni til framtíðar. Þá getur það aukið áhuga ferðamanna á að fara í almennar sundlaugar, en ég er ekkert viss um að við viljum það endilega.

Bestu þakkir fyrir flott framtak.

Kveðja,



MÁLFRÍÐUR KLARA KRISTIANSEN, kt. 110656-4329

Icelandic Swimming Pool Culture to UNESCO'S Heritage List

I learned how to swim in the sixties in the last century. It was a long way to travel on a bumpy gravel road for a carsick little girl and the pool was often cold. The swimming lessons were at the end of the school year and usually took one to two weeks. Each group went swimming three times each day and in between we had lunch, played games and tried to entertain ourselves in other ways. Even though this experience was not particularly enjoyable I have always been grateful for the foresighted people that decided to make swimming a part of compulsory education. In my adulthood I have used our fantastic swimming pools rigorously and look at them as a special privilege for us Icelanders.

I lived abroad during my postgraduate education and there wasn't a bath in my apartment. Therefore I always took a towel and shampoo in my school bag and went regularly to a public bath house where you could rent a bath tub or a shower (this bath house has now been changed into a foodhall) or I went to a swimming pool nearby where you could take a bath. The pool was cold since it was big and heated with electricity, and there were no tubs. It was not required that people took a shower before they went to the pool and I thought that was unclean. I missed the Icelandic swimming pools.

I experience that our swimming culture is in some ways special, since everyone is taught to swim in their youth, we have many outdoor swimming pools with hot tubs and steamrooms and cleanliness is a matter of great importance. Some go to the swimming pools to swim but the swimming pools are community centers and „spas“ where most people relax in the hot tub, go to the steamroom and listen to others talk. For me it is an integral part of life in Iceland, even though I don't go everyday. It is for example wonderful to go swimming and to the hot tub outdoors even in heavy rain or snow storms. The swimming pools make the dark and cold winter truly more bearable and you can even get some vitamin-D and color.

In „my“ swimming pool I have acquired a routine that takes about one hour and a quarter with everything included: Shower, the hottest hot tub, 500 meter swim, steambath, as much of the cold tub as I feel up to, again to the shower and showering. I find it particularly pleasing being able to travel around the country and without routine, just when I feel like it or wherever I put down my tent being able to go swimming and to the hot tub.

I also consider the demand of showering naked to be exemplary both because of the cleanliness and it is also educational for kids to see normal bodies of all shapes and sizes and at all stages of life. I once had a American exchange student staying with me and she had almost never seen other bodies naked, not even her close family members. She loved going swimming in Iceland.

That our swimming pool culture gets approved on the UNESCO list would mean that the approval comes from “the outside” and that we ourselves will appreciate and take better care of it in the future. It could also increase the interest of tourists of going to the public swimming pools, but I'm not sure that that is what we want.

My deepest thanks for this great initiative
Best regards
(sign)

Málfríður Klara Kristiansen

Garðabæ, 1. mars 2024

Ég er fædd árið 1945 og lærði að synða 9-10 ára gömul á Seyðisfirði. Þangað fórum við krakkarnir í sveitinni og dvöldum í um það bil viku til að læra að synða. Ári síðar fórum við á Eiðar í um það bil 10 daga og lærðum áfram þar.

Eftir þetta fór ég aldrei í sund og aðeins örsjaldan á meðan ég var með börn. Eftir að ég hætti að vinna og fór á eftirlaun byrjaði ég að mæta í sund.

Ég mæti í sund því mér finnst mér líða miklu betur í skrokknum. Maður finnur fyrir vellíðan af því að vera í heita vatninu og synða. Ég er ekki mikið fyrir félagsskap í lauginni. Ég fer bara í sund og dóla mér í sundi, synði heilmikið. Ég fer bæði í heita pottinn áður en ég synði og líka eftir að ég er búin að synða. Ég er lengi í sturtu eftir á. Maður fyllist vellíðan af því að vera í sundi.

Ég styð skráningu sundlaugamenningar á íslensku yfirlitsskrána um óáþreifanlegan menningararf. Ég tel sundlaugamenningu mikilvæga fyrir íslenskt samfélag og vil varðveita hana. Ég styð heilshugar við að íslensk sundlaugamenning verði tilnefnd og skráð á lista UNESCO yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns.



Pálína Karlsdóttir

f. 1945

Gardabaer, 1 March 2024

I was born in 1945 and learned to swim when I was 9-10 years old in the town of Seyðisfjörður. We, the kids from the countryside, I went there and stayed for about a week to learn to swim. A year later we went to Eidar for about 10 days and continued studying there.

After this I never went swimming and only rarely while I was bringing up my children. After I stopped working and retired, I started attending swimming.

I go swimming because my body feels much better afterwards. You feel the euphoria of being in the warm water and swimming. I'm not much for socializing in the pool. I just go swimming and enjoy swimming; I swim a lot. I go to the hot pot both before and after I swim. I take a long shower afterwards. Swimming makes you feel good.

I support the registration of swimming pool culture in the Icelandic inventory of intangible cultural heritage. I consider swimming pool culture important for Icelandic society and want to preserve it. I wholeheartedly support Icelandic swimming pool culture being nominated and listed on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of humankind.

(sign)

Pálína Karlsdóttir

Born 1945

Reykjavík 19.03.2024

I have been frequenting the swimming pools since I remember. I loved them as a kid, loved the water slides and just the feeling of the warm water. For more than 20 years I have been a regular guest at the swimming pools all over Iceland. I swim couple of times every week and then almost always freestyle. I only learned to swim freestyle six years ago but it transformed my exercise regiment in the pool. It made it even more fun to swim. I tend to have a basic routine when I go to the swimming pool. I will start by swimming somewhere around 1-2 kilometers. After that I go to hot tub to relax for a moment before heading over to the steambath. After feeling warm and cozy I take a dip in the cold pot and then head out.

The swimming pools have been an inseparable part of my life since I was born. I have made friends in the pool, been on a date in the hot tub, played with my children in the children's pool as well as organizing informal meetings with colleagues in the hot tub. The pools is where I learned to accept my body, by being around other naked bodies. The pools reflect the endless summer brightness and keep you soul warm in the winter dark.

I lived abroad for a decade with limited access to swimming pools. I discovered very soon that apart from family and friends, I missed the swimming pools the most. A big part of my life had changed. When I moved back one of the first things I did was to buy a year pass for the pools. It was on top of the agenda. I think it is important to safeguard the swimming pool culture in Iceland to sustain as a meeting place for people from all walks of life. I fully endorse the nomination of the Icelandic swimming pool culture to UNESCO'S list of intangible cultural heritage in order safeguard this important tradition and quality of life for my children and generations to come.

Jón Þór Pétursson



Regarding the nomination of Swimming Culture in Iceland towards UNESCO's Intangible Heritage List

It would be a certain kind of prison for me if I couldn't go swimming. It was a hard time for me during covid when the swimming pools closed for three and half months and when I was recuperating after a shoulder surgery this spring and couldn't swim. For me going swimming is as vital as being able to speak. For many people this is a culture that is very important, and they would feel left out without it.

Please accept the nomination of Icelandic swimming culture towards the UNESCO's Intangible Heritage List.

**With kind regard
Pétur Þorsteinsson**

20 9 24
Pétur Þorsteinsson

This is my nomination for: **UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.**

It is very important to have a culture of swimming pools in Iceland! I, as a foreigner, have noticed that for Icelanders, swimming pools are much more than just swimming: exercise, somehow spa day, chit chat, and finally meeting new people, so I would say it is a public space where you can feel yourself as a part of a community! I know that not many countries provide a schedule as provided here in Iceland because time to visit a swimming pool is very limited; it can be a maximum of 1,5 hours. Icelanders are very lucky, as they can come and swim the whole day!

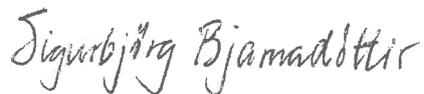
Nataliia Bodrova:

Nataliia Bodrova

**Declaration of support for nominating Icelandic Swimming Pool Culture for UNESCO 's
Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

I have been swimming for many years and I have loved it since I was a child. I have tried many sports but swimming is the best exercise for me. When I go swimming, I start by swimming, then I go to the hot tub and the steambath. I end up floating in the pool and getting some good relaxation. The good thing about swimming is that you can go in all kinds of weather, it always feels good. I think swimming is very important for me, it's good exercise for the body and very good for my mental health too. In the future I will support the swimming tradition by keep on swimming and try swimmingpools wherever I go. I think the nomination is very important for Iceland because we love swimmingpools and the tourists I have met think that the swimmingpools are amazing.

Sigurbjörg Bjarnadóttir

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sigurbjörg Bjarnadóttir". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter 'S' being particularly large and stylized.

31-01-24

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

For me swimming is part of my life. During my school years from 7-16 years I got a very good swimming training, which made me able to use two types of swimming strokes. Today I am very happy how good swimming training is generally good in Iceland, thanks to all the swimming pools which are all around Iceland, heated up with geothermal water from the earth.

For more than 40 years I have had that plan to go for swimming 4 times per week all the year round. I spend about 90 minutes for each visit, swimming 750m, and after that taking good time in hot spa pots, with spray nozzles to give the muscles more blood stream which makes them softer and take away pain, if such is needed. In the spa pots I also meet my friends and learn to know a lot of new people as well.

I will therefore strongly recommend that the Icelandic swimming culture will be stated by UNESCO.

SIGRÍÐUR KARLSDÓTTIR

Sigríður Karlsdóttir (240845-3189)
Strandvegi 18
210 Garðabæ
ICELAND.

Stuðningur við tilnefningu til Intangible Cultural Heritage

Sund er mikil heilsubót. Það nærir sál og líkama, hreinsar áruna svo öll vandamál dagsins gleymast. Ég var svo heppin að læra að synda frekar ung miðað við marga landsbyggðarkrakka. Jón Ingi kenndi mér sund í sundlauginni í Austurbæjarskólanum þar sem ég var við nám einn vetur 1966-7. Þá flutti ég til Ólafsvíkur þar sem sundlaug var í byggingu og við krakkarnir biðum spennt eftir að yrði opnuð. Þegar af því var loks var sundlaugin mitt annað heimili á sumrin og var áhuginn svo mikill að við fengum leyfi til að synda í ískaldri lauginni þegar hitakerfið bilaði. Það endaði með svæsinni eyrnabólgu.

Föðurfjölskylda mín bjó í Laugardalnum og þau höfðu sund í hávegum og föðursystir mín Kolbrún Ólafsdóttir, var ein af þremur fyrstu konum sem fór á Ólympíuleika og keppti í sundi. Hún var sannkölluð sunddrottning og keppti þar í 100 metra baksundi. Þetta var árið 1948 og hún þá 16 ára gömul. Ég hef því haldið því fram að ég hafi sundgen, enda var það í eina skiptið sem mér var hrósað á öllum mínum menntaskólaferli, sem sé fyrir skriðsund sem íþróttakennarinn lét mig sýna hinum í bekknum. Slíkt gleymist ekki.

Ég fer nokkrum sinnum í viku í sund og syndi þá yfirleitt 1000 metra, mest skriðsund. Svo er farið í pottinn og ef þar er fólk eru umræður teknar um öll heimsins mál, bæði vandamál og ekki vandamál. Ég fer á ýmsum tímum dagsins og hitti því mismunandi hópa og einstaklinga. Það finnst mér fint. Potturinn er ekki aðalmálið fyrir mig, heldur hreyfingin sjálf, vatnið, útklefinn, pottarnir og sturturnar. Best er að nota alltaf sama snagann í horninu á klefanum, en ég get ekki gengið að honum vísam, því aðrir eru sömu skoðunar og ég hvað þetta varðar.

Allar sundferðir byrja með rösku stökki úti laugina, þegar ég hætti að þora því þá ætla ég að flokka mig sem gamalmenni. Öllum sundferðum er lokið með sauna og kaldri sturtu. Við tekur „nýr“ og ferskur dagur, þar sem orkan er endurnýjuð og áran hrein. Sundið er því ómetanleg heilsubót.

Það væri skemmtilegt ef sundmenning Íslendinga kæmist á heimsmingjaskrá UNESCO, ég held að menningin sé einstök á heimsvísu og sundkunnátta Íslendinga er öðrum þjóðum fremri. Ég styð því tilnefningu á UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage Heilshugar.



Steinunn Ósk Kolbeinsdóttir, kt. 080752989

Uppsölum

861 Hvolsvelli

Support for the nomination towards Intangible Cultural Heritage

Swimming provides great health benefits. It nourishes both the soul and the body, cleanses your aura so all daily problems are forgotten. I'm lucky how young I learned to swim compared to many children who were from rural areas. Jón Ingi taught me how to swim in the swimming pool at Austurbæjarskóli where I was in school for one winter, 1966-7. Then I moved to Ólafsvík where there was a swimming pool being built and we, the kids in the town, waited with anticipation for it to be opened. When it was finally opened, the pool became my second home in the summertime, and we were so enthusiastic that we were even allowed to swim in the ice-cold pool when the heating system broke down. That ended with a really bad ear infection.

My father's family lived in the area Laugardalur and they all held swimming in high regard and my father's sister, Kolbrún Ólafsdóttir, was one of the first three women to compete in swimming at the Olympics. She was a true pool queen and competed in 100-meter backstroke. This was in 1948 when she was then sixteen years old. I have always maintained that I have swimmers' genes, the only time I was complimented in all my high school education was for freestyle swimming, which the teacher asked me to show my other classmates. That you don't forget.

I go swimming several times each week and usually swim 1000 meters, mostly freestyle. Then I go to the hot tub and if there are people there, we discuss all matter of things, both problems and non- problems. I go at various times of the day and therefore I meet different groups and individuals. I like that. The hot tub is not the main thing for me, but the exercise, the water, the outdoor shower room, the tubs, and showers. Best is to use the same hanger in the corner of the shower room, but I can't take it for granted, others are of the same opinion as I in this regard.

I always start my swimming in the same way, briskly jumping into the pool, when I can't do that anymore I can call myself an old person. I finish by going to the sauna and take a cold shower. After that a "new" and fresh day begins, were my energy is regained and my aura is clean. Swimming therefore gives precious health benefits. It would be great if swimming culture in Iceland would be accepted to the Heritage List of UNESCO, I think this culture is unique worldwide and the general swimming abilities of Icelanders is special among nations. I therefore support the nomination towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Wholeheartedly.

(sign)

Steinunn Ósk Kolbeinsdóttir

17.2.2024

Ég sendi hér með stuðningsyfirlýsingu til UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage og óska þess að sundhefð Íslendinga verði skráð á listann. Sund fyrir mér er slökun, samvera, samfélag. Ég bý í litlu þorpi á Íslandi þar sem ekki er mikið um opinbera afþreyingu og þess vegna gegnir sundlaugin í þorpinu því hlutverki að vera staðurinn þar sem þorpsbúar hittast. Þar spjöllum við, leikum við börnin okkar og börn hvers annars og njótum þess að slaka á saman. Ef sundlaugin er biluð, eða á einhvern hátt ekki aðgengileg er lífið í þorpinu fátæklegt. Þess vegna vona ég að sundhefð Íslendinga komist á skrá yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf, svo allir geti skilið og séð hvað sundhefðin er mikilvæg í okkar daglega lífi.

Sæbjörg Freyja Gísladóttir

Sæbjörg Freyja Gísladóttir

17. 2. 2024

I hereby send my support to UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage that the swimming pool culture of Iceland will be put on the list.

Swimming for me is relaxation, being in the company of others, community. I live in a small village in Iceland where there is not a lot of activities for everyone and that is why the swimming pool in the village is the main meeting place for the villagers.

There we meet, play with our children and the children of others, and enjoy relaxing together. If the swimming pool is out of order or in some way not accessible, the life in the village is less varied. For these reasons I hope that the swimming culture in Iceland will be put on the intangible heritage list for everyone to understand and see how much this tradition means to us in everyday life.

(sign)

Sæbjörg Freyja Gísladóttir

23.2.2024

Stuðningsyfirlýsing vegna tilnefningu sundlaugameningar á Íslandi til UNESCO, á lista yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns

Sundlaugarmening mín

Það má seja það að ég er að hálfu alinn upp í sundlauginni í Laugaskarði. Ég var farinn að fleyta mér mjög snemma um 4 ára. Ég er fæddist og ólst upp í 9 systkina hóp frá Ljósalandi í Hveragerði og var svo heppinn að systir mín og mágur þjuggu í gamla Laugaskarði. Móður mín og faðir stunduðu bæði sund, móðir mín lærði þó aldrei að synda en þó gerði tengdasonur hennar ýmsar tilraunir til að kenna henni sundtökin sem hún lærði en var alltaf vatnshrædd. Faðir minn lærði sundtökin af föður sínum sem var mikill sjósundmaður sem stundaði sjósund við Vatnsnes í Húnaavatnssýslu. Við systkinin stunduðu öll sund.

Í Hveragerði í 500 manna byggðalagi þá var sundið mjög vinsælt, þar kynnist fólk þegar það hittist daglega. Man ég sérstaklega eftir húsmæðrum sem stunduðu sundlaugina ásamt hóp að börnum þeirra, margar af þeim voru heima og sáu um uppeldið við börnin sín meðan faðirinn vann fyrir heimilinu. Ég minnst þessa tíma sem fjöri og fögnuði þar sem var strax lagður undirbúningur fyrir sundkennslu. Börn frá nágrannabyggðalögum voru keyrð í sund til að læra sundtökin.

Fljótlega á vorin streymdi fólk úr Reykjavík það var fólk sem áttu sumarbústaði og einnig orlofshús, þessu fylgdi mikill gleðskapur og fjör í sundlauginni alla daga. Einnig voru nokkrir sem æfðu sund og man ég að flestir sem voru bestir á landinu komu í laugina til að æfa því það voru ekki margar laugar 50 metra. Skarphéðinssundmót voru alltaf mjög skemmtilegt, þá fóru flestir Hvergerðingar til að hvetja og fylgjast með.

Ég er í dag að verða 74 ára gömul á 4 börn 9 barnabörn og 2 langömmu börn. Sund er minn lífsmáti, ég syndi yfirleitt á hverjum degi og ég kann öll sund en er aðallega með baksundið núna, það gerir það að verkum að ég losna við bakverki þegar ég syndi og einnig geri ég styrktaræfingar ofan í lauginni og einnig er kaldri potturinn vinsæll og á ég marga sundvini sem stunda laugina sér til heilsubótar. Við ræðum oft um lífsins mál og pólitíkin er oft skemmtileg og flest málefni sem eru á döfinni eru rædd og leyst. Börnin mín stunda öll laugar og einnig barnabörnin. Ég hef tekið eftir því að flest af þessu fólki sem stunduðu laugameninguna hér áður fyrr eru margir farnir yfir móðuna miklu en þeirra börn og barnabörn tekin við, alltaf gaman að hitta fólk sem maður hefur ekki séð síðan þau voru lítil. Ég vona svo að fáir að eldast vel svo ég geti stundað laugar í framtíðinni. Einnig vil ég hvetja sem flesta að prófa

sundlaugarnar okkar á Íslandi . Það hefur breyst mikið með komu ferðamanna sem er bara jákvætt sérstaklega ef sturtubvottur er ekki að pirra þá því að það fer enginn í sund nema að þrifa sig í sturtubaði áður en að gengið er til laugar . Ég mun segja það að sundlaugar eru okkar menningararfur sem má ekki eyðileggja sem ég vil hvetja að það sé tekinn til athugunar hjá UNESCO's á lista yfir óáþreifanlegan menningararf mannkyns.

Kveðja

Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir frá Hveragerði

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

23. 2. 2024.

Support for the nomination of swimming pool culture in Iceland towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humankind.

My Swimming Pool Culture

You could say that I was almost half brought up in the swimming pool in Laugaskarð. I started to be able to float around very early, at 4 years old. I was born into and grew up with a group of nine siblings in Ljósaland in Hveragerði and I was so lucky that my sister and brother-in-law lived in the old farm in Laugaskarð. Both my mother and father swam but my mother was never a good swimmer even though her son-in-law tried to teach her in various ways and she was always afraid of the water. My father learned to swim from his father who was a skilled sea swimmer and practiced swimming in the sea by Vatnsnes in County Húnavatnssýsla. All my siblings and I swam regularly.

In Hveragerði, which then was a town of 500 people, swimming was very popular, people met daily there. I especially remember the housewives that frequented the swimming pool with their group of children, many of whom were at home taking care of their children while their husbands worked to provide for the home. I remember that time as a joyful and happy time where the foundation for further education in swimming was laid. Children were driven from neighbouring counties to learn how to swim.

Early in the spring people from Reykjavík that have summer cottages and holiday houses started to arrive in droves to the community, this always brought with it happy times and fun at the swimming pool every day. I also remember that people who were training in swimming and those who were the best swimmers in the country came to the pool to train because then there were not many 50 meters pools in the country. The swimming tournaments called Skarphéðinssundmót were always fun, then almost everyone in the town of Hveragerði went to cheer and watch.

I'm almost 74 years old, I have 4 children, 9 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Swimming is a way of life for me, I swim almost every day and I know all of the ways to swim but I usually practice backstroke these days since it helps with my backpains and I also do strengthening exercises in the swimming pool and also enjoy the cold tub and I have many swimming friends that frequent the pool for improving their health. We often discuss all of life's problems and the political ones are especially fun and most things that are talked about are thoroughly discussed and solved. My children frequently go to the swimming pools and my grandchildren. I have noticed that those I remember from the pool in the old days are gone over to the other side, but their children and grandchildren have taken over from them, it's always fun to meet those who you have not seen since they were little. I hope I get to age well so I

can continue to frequent the swimming pools in the future. I also want to encourage everyone to try our swimming pools here in Iceland. A lot has changed with the arrival of tourists but in positive ways especially if they are not bothered by having to shower properly, no one goes to the swimming pool unless they clean themselves in the shower before going to the pool.

I would say that our swimming pools are a heritage that should be safeguarded, and I would encourage that they are taken into account for UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Best regards

(sign)

Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir from Hveragerði.

Sundmenning.

Orðið *sundmenning* er ekki gamalt í íslensku máli, en þar mun átt við reglubundna sundiðkun, sem stunduð er bæði til gamans og andlegrar og líkamlegrar heilsubótar.

Almenn sundkunnátta mun þó næsta nýlega til komin á Íslandi. Á nokkrum stöðum í fornum ritum er getið manna sem voru vel syndir og þreyttu á stundum kappsund. Óljóst er þó um sannleiksgildi sumra þeirra sagna, svo sem hinna frægusu, er Grettir sterki synti úr Drangey og til lands til að sækja eld og af Helgu Jarlsdóttur, er hún synti með syni sína í land úr Geirshólma.

Margar sögur gengu um afreksmenn að líkamlegu atgervi fyrrum sem voru „syndir sem selir“, en oft sagt til að auka orðstír þeirra. Á 19. öld fóru menn að vakna til vitundar um nauðsyn þess að menn kynnu sund og gætu bjargað sér ef féllu í vatn. Um árið 1830 voru gefnar út sundreglur, leiðbeiningar við sundkennslu.

Ungmennafélögin, sem flest voru stofnuð snemma á 20. öld, stuðluðu mjög að sundkennslu og var þá farið að kanna sund víða, einkum þar sem voru heitar laugar, gerðar þá sundlaugar, í fyrstu hlaðnar úr torfi, eða kaldir lækir stíflaðir sem hlýnuðu smávegis af sólarhita og kennt þar sund. Sum staðar varkennt sund í sjávarvíkum þar sem sjór gat smávegis volgnað.

Um 1930 var víða tekið að gera sundlaugar þar sem heitt vatn kom úr jörðu og kenna þar sund. Nú er svo komið, að sundkennsla er orðin almenn og sundlaugar hvarvetna sóttar af öllum almenningi.

Ég lærði sund um 10-11 ára aldur í opinni sundlaug með heitu jarðvatni, en reglubundið sund hóf ég ekki fyrr en um 1980, í Sundlaug Vesturbæjar. Ég fer yfirleitt á hverjum morgni kl. 6,30, er laugin er opnuð, og er þá oftast hópur karla og kvenna, mættur við dyrnar. Mennt fara í sturtu og þvo sér, síðan syndir hver að sínum hætti og svo sem hverjum líkar. Sjálfur syndi ég ekki nema 50 metra, meira ræð ég í rauninni ekki við lengur, enda kominn vel yfir meðalaldur karla á Íslandi.

Eftir sundið fara flestir í heitan pott, nokkrir jafnvel í kaldan einnig, sumir nota vatnsnuddið. Í pottinum eru „málin rædd“ góða stund. Margt ber á góma, nýjustu fréttir, landsmál og heimsmálin, sumir tala um áhugamál sín, segja gamansögur eða hvaðeina annað rætt. – Nokkur hópur fólks stundar leikfimiæfingar á laugarbakkanum með armsveiflum, skrokkebeygjum og hoppi, allt til að liðka líkamann.

Einu sinni í viku, á fimmtudögum, er stigið á vog og þyngd færð til bókar. Í lok hvers árs er þyngd hvers og eins færð í línuriti á blað. Sumir fylgjast nákvæmlega með vigtinni frá einni viku til annarrar, og menn bera þyngd sína saman hver við annan.

Síðan að laugarferð lokinni, setjast menn niður og fá kaffisopa sem laugin leggur til, standa menn þó stutt við. Síðan heldur hver til síns heima eða í vinnu, allir hressir og endurnærðir.

Fyrir kemur að pottverjar, svo sem hópurinn nefnist jafnan, fara saman í stuttar ferðir, út um landið, sumir hópar jafnvel saman til útlanda.

Þessi sundlaugamenning er líklegast nokkuð sérstök fyrir Ísland, að minnsta kosti ef miðað er við vesturlönd. Þetta er mörgum andleg og líkamleg þörf og þakka menn sundlaugunum góða líðan og heilsu líkamans. Sundiðkun er ekki aðeins hefð, heldur alhliða líkamspjálfun og

jafnframt nokkur líftrygging, ef svo má segja, að menn séu ekki alveg ósjálfbjarga ef þeir falla í vatn.

Má einnig nefna, að nokkrir hópar fólks iðka sjósund, ekki aðeins á sumrum þegar heitast er, heldur á veturnum einnig, og þeir, sem vanið hafa sig á að synda í köldum sjó, meta það jafnframt heitu sundlaugunum sem mikla líkamsþjálfun.

Því tel ég mikilsvert að sundiðkun Íslendinga, sem nánast má nefna sem lifandi íþrótt alls almennings á Íslandi, en ekki aðeins keppnisíþrótt tiltölulega fárra, sé veitt alþjóðleg viðurkenning sem sérstæð fyrir þjóðina og dagleg iðkun verulegs hluta þjóðarinnar sem heilsunærandi líkamsíþrótt.

ÞÓR MAGNÚSSON



Regarding the nomination of swimming pool culture in Iceland towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Culture.

Swimming Culture

The word swimming culture is not old in the Icelandic language, but it refers to regularly going swimming, which is done both for enjoyment but also for the betterment of mental – and physical health.

The widespread ability to swim among the population is relatively new in Iceland. In the Icelandic Sagas, a handful of protagonists are mentioned who were able swimmers and their great swimming achievements were recounted. It is unclear how true these stories are but among the most famous characters from the Sagas are Grettir the Strong who swam from the island Drangey to shore to fetch fire and of the woman Helga Jarlsdóttir, who swam from the skerry Geirshólmi to shore with her sons.

There are many stories of heroes who had special physical abilities to be able to “swim like a seal” that are usually told to enhance their reputation. In the 19th century people started to understand the necessity of being able to swim and save themselves in water. In 1830 rules on swimming were published as well as swimming instructions.

The youth associations, most of them established at the beginning of the 20th century strongly promoted swimming lessons and swimming started to be taught widely, especially in areas with access to hot springs. Swimming pools were built in these areas, first with turf or in cold streams that were dammed in which the water was slowly warmed by sunlight. Swimming lessons took place there. In some places swimming lessons took place in small coves where the sea could become warm.

By 1930 swimming pools were being built where hot ground water was accessible to teach swimming. Today, swimming lessons are commonplace and swimming pools are visited by everyone.

I learned to swim when I was 10-11 years old in an open swimming pool with hot ground water, but I didn't start to be a regular swimmer until around the year 1980, then in Sundlaug Vesturbæjar (the swimming pool in the area Vesturbær in Reykjavík). I try to go every morning at 6:30 when the pool opens and by that time a group of men and women are usually by the door. This group showers and washes themselves and then everyone swims like they see fit. I only swim 50 meters, not able to do more, being well over the average age of Icelandic males.

After swimming most go to the hot tub, even some to the cold tub, some use the water massage. In the hot tub “things are discussed”. A lot of different things are

talked about, the current news, things that are going on inside and outside the country, some talk about their hobbies, tell funny stories and so on. A relatively large group of people does gymnastics on the side of the pool, waving their arms and bending their bodies and jumping, anything to limber up the body.

Once a week, on Thursdays, people are weighed, they step on a scale and their weight is written down. At the end of each year everyone's weight is put into a graph. Some follow their weight carefully week to week and compare with others.

When the pool trip is over, the group sits down and has some coffee which the swimming pools offers, but only for a short time. Then everyone goes to their own home and job, feeling refreshed and re-energized.

This group, that has been named, the "hot tub-dwellers," even goes on short domestic trips together and a part of the group has gone abroad together.

The swimming pool culture in Iceland is quite probably quite unique to Iceland, at least when compared with other western countries. It is for many a mental and physical need and people thank the public swimming pools for their good health. Going swimming is not only a tradition but also a general workout, even a life warranty, so to speak, that people are able to save themselves in water.

It can also be mentioned that there are groups that go sea swimming, not only in the summer at its warmest, but also in the winter and those who have grown accustomed to swimming in the cold sea, appreciate it as an equally good workout as going to the hot swimming pools.

In connection to this all I feel it is important that swimming culture in Iceland, which is a living sport for the public of Iceland, not only a sport for relatively few, is given an international recognition as special to the nation, where it is practised daily by a large part of the population as a health promoting sport.

(sign)

ÞÓR MAGNÚSSON



Ísafjörður, 11 March 2024

Letter of support: Iceland swimming culture

To the UNESCO selection committee,

In this letter I write in very strong support of Iceland's application for swimming culture to be considered on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. My connection to this important Icelandic tradition comes both from professional and personal connections. I am a specialist in coastal cultures, and I study Icelandic maritime heritage. Of course there are natural connections to coastal culture and swimming: deaths at sea were a leading cause of death for centuries in Iceland and learning to swim was a matter of safety. But deeper than that, it is obvious to me as an outsider trained in anthropological methods that swimming pools are at the absolute heart of Icelandic society. The swimming pool culture is at once so commonplace and simultaneously so unique. It is a part of life that you barely have the language to discuss because over time it becomes so obvious to you, and you forget that every visit to the pool is in fact a deep involvement in Icelandic culture.

As a mom of two, an immigrant to Iceland, a children's swim coach, and a swimmer myself, I can't express strongly enough how important Icelandic swimming culture is to me and my family. When we moved to Iceland in 2008, I heard the same thing that I still hear in conversations now with newcomers. "If you want to experience real Iceland, go to the public pool." The pool is equality: a place where everyone is welcome, everyone is mostly naked – simply themselves – and one last place in modern culture to meet others without the trouble of smartphones or expectation of drinking. In many smaller towns, there may not be a pub, grocery store, library, or even petrol station – but there will be a small pool. Icelandic children grow up going to the pool several times a week, and in all kinds of weather. The pool is community: people discussing news, gossip, events, or also just sitting in quiet relaxing together. The social dynamics are very special; you can talk, you can listen, you can be there without taking part in the conversation but you are still there, and still welcomed because it is your hot pot too, even if you were the last one to come in. Also, there is often hot coffee brought outside and there is nothing more blissful than a cup of hot coffee after having walked through the snow to get to the hot pot. The children are allowed to eat popsicles in the pool; there are floating chess boards so you can sneak a quick game in while you soak. Once my friend had a birthday cake brought to her in the hot pot of the local pool. Over Christmas break there was a movie projected on the wall in a community pool and everyone watched it relaxing on the float noodles.

The special aspects of Icelandic swimming pools really hits home especially when I travel outside of Iceland. Abroad, my children are shocked when they aren't allowed in hot pots and saunas, or even in a pool at all in certain times! How strange that people abroad don't shower completely, and naked in front of each other, before entering the pool! Where are the free arm floaties to protect smaller children and *where* are all the toys?!

I have never lived in the capital city of Reykjavík, which has many of the larger pools in the country. At first I was annoyed at the 16.6 meter length pools in many of the smaller communities; they certainly does mess with one's stroke count and time-keeping when doing laps. But even this aspect of Icelandic swimming culture has grown on me. It's easier to keep the smaller pools warm and cheaper to build and maintain a smaller facility. Again: access for all, community, discussion, equality - a true Icelandic intangible cultural heritage tradition. A nomination on the Intangible Cultural Heritage list would be a celebration of these Icelandic values and provide continued support to keep this important tradition alive.

Sincerely,

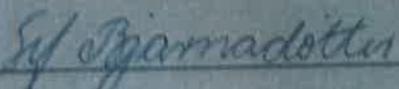
Catherine Chambers, Ph.D.

- UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Eg styð tilnefningu sundlaugarmenningar á Íslandi til UNESCO á lista yfir óápreiðilegan menningarart mannkyns 23.02.2024

Ég er á sjötugsaldri og þegar ég var 7 ára var vígð sundlaug í sveitinni minni og þá lærði ég að synda. Það var orðið innbyggt í mig að fara í sund þannig að þegar ég flutti ung til útlanda í nokkur ár hélt ég áfram að synda en það var í kaldri innilaug og mikið saknaði ég alltaf íslensku sundlauganna. Sundlaugin mín núna er Sundhöll Reykjavíkur því hún er næst mér. Þar er alltaf sama ritúallíð; bringusund aðra leiðina og baksund hina, í 30 mínútur. Svo er það kaldri potturinn (tímann oní honum má mæla í sekúndum) og að lokum heitipotturinn í mislangan tíma.

Þegar ég fer út á land fer ég alltaf í sund á hverjum stað fyrir sig en þar er ritúallíð byggt óðrúvísi upp. Syndu minna, hangu meira í heitapottinum því það endar alltaf með spjalli við einhvern eða einhverja. Mér finnst það góð aðferð til að kynna staðnum að fara í laugina.

Svo er það líka dásamlegt að fara í heita sundlaug, fljóta á bakinu í tímaleysi, horfa upp í stjörnuhimininn og láta sig dreyma.


Sif Bjarnadóttir

UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

I support the nomination of swimming pool culture in Iceland towards UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Heritage of Humankind.

23.02.2024.

I'm in my seventies and when I was 7 years old there was a swimming pool opened in my area in the countryside where I learned to swim. It became ingrained to go swimming so when I moved abroad for several years I kept swimming in a cold indoor pool, and I always missed the Icelandic swimming pools. The swimming pool which I go to now is Sundhöll Reykjavíkur because it is closest to me. It is always the same ritual; breaststroke one way, backstroke the other way, for 30 minutes. Then it is the cold tub (the time in it you can measure in seconds) and finally the hot tub for some time.

When traveling around Iceland, I go swimming in every area but the ritual is different. I swim less and hang out more in the hot tub because it always ends in a chatting with some people. I think it's a good way to get to know a place by going to the pool.

Then it's also so wonderful to go to a warm swimming pool, float on your back and loosing track of time, look upon the stars and let yourself dream.

(sign)

Sif Bjarnadóttir