

Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS
Ranger-Naturalist

Over Iceland, With SAS — We are flying three miles above Iceland eating a breakfast of Danish ham and eggs.

Entire Iceland, incredibly beautiful, lies exposed to our view although it is as large as the whole state of Kentucky. One of the striking features of this North Polar flight, the SAS pilot assures me, is that the visibility is extraordinary when the air masses are of Arctic origin. And, to prove his statement, he points out in the remote distance, Greenland, still 200 miles away.

As we are cruising at six miles a minute, leaving the U.S.-built airbase on Iceland behind us, the



pilot assures us that on this direct Copenhagen - Los Angeles flight, our plane is never more than 90 minutes from an airfield — "thanks to your U.S. air pioneering in the northland."

Already Light
Although it is early, it is already light because days in June are long — lasting 18 hours, from 2 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Due to the Gulf Stream and despite Iceland's nearness to the Arctic, the climate is quite mild. Ocean currents circulate around Iceland in a clockwise direction which helps establish in the more heavily populated southeast section a 30 degrees Fahrenheit mean temperature for February, the coldest month. In midsummer, it will be 20 degrees warmer — around 50 F. Rainfall varies from 60 inches on the south coast to 15 on the north, most of it falling in fall and winter.

As Iceland recedes behind us, our well-informed Norse purser, who once lived on the island, tells me that the indigenous animals are the fox, reindeer — which were almost exterminated but are now protected — an occasional polar bear, a few walrus which were plentiful in olden days, and numerous seals and whales.

In addition, Iceland counts more than 100 species of birds, mostly aquatic such as whistling swans, and various ducks, including the eider duck which creates one of Iceland's industries — eiderdown. To line its nest, this duck plucks down from its breast — then, when the nesting season is over, farmers collect the old nests which are dried, cleaned of grit and grass and exported.

Fishing Mainstay
But fishing is Iceland's mainstay — in fact, from 80 to 95 per cent of its annual export consists of fish of which the cod is the largest part of the catch with herring a second.

Iceland, I was told, has about 450 species of plants. Much of the coastal areas, particularly in the south, are fringed with low-growing willows and birches together with grass, sedge, moss and lichen interspersed with bright wild flowers which are smaller and more vivid than those of the same kind in more southern lands. The only native fruits are the crowberry and bilberry.

Where level tundra is improved by cultivation, excellent hay and pasture results. But when drainage is poor, frost-heaves make hummocks and even when smoothed, return within 10 years to plague the

farmer and necessitate the use of hand scythes.

No snakes live in Iceland. Speaking of snakes naturally reminds one of St. Patrick and Ireland. The Irish first came to Iceland to spread Christianity and were soon superseded by the Norse who brought with them many German and Irish slaves. When the population reached 40,000 in 930 A.D., the freedom-loving Vikings established the first parliament in the world, thereby making Iceland the first country to be a republic.

Distinctive Features
Perhaps the most distinctive features of Iceland, despite its name are the hotwater springs, geysers, mud pots and quiescent pools. (The only other two places in the world to have them are Yellowstone Park and New Zealand.) Just 50 miles out of the capital, Reykjavik, there are many hot springs, including Geysir, which has given its name to the geysers throughout the world. It ejects water and steam into the air 80 to 150 feet at intervals of 5 to 36 hours.

Since World War II, the superheated water from these geysers has been drained into concrete aqueducts and brought to the capital city where it is used to heat homes, business houses, and hot houses in which cut flowers and vegetables are grown.

As we left the island, the SAS co-pilot pointed out to me the old coast line, some 150-200 feet above the present. As I studied it with glasses, he said that it was caused by the Ice Age, centuries ago. The heavy icecap resting on Iceland depressed the island, submerging it partly. Then, when the ice waned, the land rose — and the raised beaches are now found around the coast. In the northeast, he added, the land is still rising imperceptibly because Iceland is becoming warmer even today.

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Natural Gas Line Contracts Awarded

Portland — (U.P.)—Fish-Northwest Constructors Saturday announced award of \$7,065,000 worth of contracts for construction of 509 miles of main line and lateral and 47 miles of gathering lines for the Pacific Northwest natural gas pipeline.

Included was the main line across northeastern Oregon. R. D. Ricketts, president of the firm designing and building the vast project, said the contracts awarded covered the four main line sections from near Burley, Ida., to the Columbia river at the Oregon-Washington border.

He said actual laying of the pipe was expected within the next few days. Contracts involving the first eight main line sections were awarded in mid-May and construction is already underway in that part of the system which begins in the San Juan Basin in New Mexico.



SITTING ON STAGE at San Francisco Opera House, President Eisenhower glances curiously at Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov (arrow), during opening session of UN meeting. At right is Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld. (International)

Oregon Methodism In Middle of Big Building Program

Eugene — (U.P.)—Oregon Methodism is in the midst of a big building boom. The Rev. Edward Terry of Portland told the church's annual state conference here.

Rev. Terry said a composite report of the four district superintendents in Oregon showed substantial building improvements either completed or under way at these places: Includes Medford Astoria, Albany, Bay City, Bethany, Boring, Buena Vista, Creswell, Cornelius, Dallas, Days Creek Fossil, Gardner, Grande Ronde, Harrisburg, Hepper, Hermiton, Hood River, Jefferson, Medford, Marquam, Milton, Molalla, Monroe, Myrtle Creek, Nehalem, Pendleton, Pleasant Home, Rainier, Seaside, Shedd, Tualatin The Dalles, Willamette, Yoncalla and Portland.

Complete new churches have been built in North Bend, Four Corners in Salem and Parkrose Heights in Portland.

Election Held
Elected to the general conference of the Methodist church in Minneapolis next April were Howard B. Somers, Ernest W. Peterson, Dr. L. E. Nye and Rev. Carl Mason, all of Portland; Mrs. Louise Bunch of Forest Grove, and Rev. Daniel Wolker of Corvallis.

Elected delegates to the Western jurisdictional conference in July, 1956, were Ray Miller of Forest Grove, Charles G. Howard of Eugene, Forrest Frye and Rev. Edward Terry of Portland, Rev. Lawrence Guderian of McMinnville and Rev. Meredith A. Groves of Eugene.

Yreka Council Plans Swim Pool Election

Yreka—The Yreka city council last week gave preliminary approval to a plan to build an election seeking approval of issuing \$70,000 worth of bonds for a new municipal swimming pool.

A measure calling for the election passed its first reading this week. Second reading and final passage is due Tuesday. If approved, the election would be Aug. 2.

Dead line for Sunday Classified is at noon Saturday



SEN. WAYNE MORSE To Talk Here July 5

Speech on Election Issues Expected From Sen. Morse

A speech on the issues expected in the 1956 campaign is anticipated by local Democrats when Sen. Wayne L. Morse appears here as their guest of honor at a dinner to be held at the Jackson hotel Pioneer room, on Tuesday, July 5, beginning at 7 p.m., according to Robert A. Boyer, Democratic county chairman.

The dinner will climax a two day visit to Jackson county which will begin with the senator's appearance in Ashland as guest speaker at an all day Independence day celebration under the sponsorship of the Ashland Lions club.

Tickets Available
Tickets for the Morse dinner July 5, which is open to the public, may be obtained at Lamports' and Walt Young's Stationery store, or by calling 2-4914 and 2-5131, Boyer said. The committee in charge includes Mrs. Cecil Norris, chairman, Tom Reeder, and Mrs. George L. Brown, all Medford; Larry Sheehan, Rogue River, and Mrs. L. Peers Wilmet, Ashland.

Robert B. Duncan will be master of ceremonies. Bishop W. Shepard, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, will give the invocation and Miss Kay Fisher of Phoenix, vocal soloist, will furnish music.

Since the seating capacity of the Pioneer room is limited, Mrs. Norris and her committee announced that reservations should be made as early as possible. Those purchasing tickets in advance will be accommodated first, she said.

Eaglewood Man Killed In Coos Bay Accident

Coos Bay — (U.P.)—Chester Robert Bonhomme, 26, was killed outright early Saturday when a parked panel truck toppled on top of him and rolled into a gully a mile from here on the Empire cutoff road.

Bonhomme had been a passenger in the truck, operated by Vernon Jantzer, 22, Greenacres, Ore. Jantzer lost control of the truck and it slid onto a shoulder above the gully. As Bonhomme alighted from the vehicle on the right side it tipped and crushed him as it rolled off the roadway.

Bonhomme moved to Eaglewood, Ore., recently from Vincennes, Ind., where his widow, Ruby, still resides.

PEA CONSUMPTION
Chicago — Average American family uses 500 percent more frozen peas and about five percent more canned peas, but 75 percent less of fresh peas than before World War II.

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