

Book lovers pack A-Spire Theatre

GIMLI, MB — The A-Spire Theatre was filled with approximately 60 people on April 24 for a quadruple book launch featuring Marjorie Anderson, Birna Bjarnadóttir, Martha Brooks, and Gillian Johnson.

Tristin Tergesen welcomed everyone to the evening, which was part of both Manitoba Book Week (April 22 – 28) and the NÚNA (now) cultural events (April 22 – 29). Lorna Tergesen, of H.P.

Tergesen & Sons Store, was MC for the evening and introduced the books, authors, and the night's readers.

First came Dan Johnson, who read from his sister Gillian's latest young adult novel *Thora and the Green Sea Unicorn*. Thora, who is part mermaid, is from the fictional town of Grimli, which has a definite Icelandic flavour. (Gillian, who now lives in England and Tasmania, was unable to attend.)

Marjorie Anderson, head of Anderson House Publishing and editor of *Blessed: Portrait of Asdis Sigrun Anderson* (which was written Asdis's granddaughter Katrina Anderson), spoke on the development of the biography from a family publication to a book aimed at a mass readership. A daughter of Asdis Anderson, she and two of her siblings Sylvia Koshyk and Dennis Anderson read excerpts from their late mother's biography.

Dr. Birna Bjarnadóttir introduced the new collection in English *My Parents: Memoirs of New World Icelanders*. In 1956, the first Chair of Icelandic Studies at the University of Manitoba Dr. Finnbogi Guðmundsson collected memoirs of pioneer experiences from the children of Icelandic settlers; they were published in Icelandic. This new collection, edited by Dr. Bjarnadóttir, includes seven of the original 14 essays. The translations were done by grad students of the Icelandic Department at the University of Manitoba. Readers included Elva Simundson and David Gislason.

Award-winning author Martha Brooks rounded out the evening with a dynamic reading from her new young adult novel *Mistik Lake*. The story explores the rippling effects of a tragedy through different generations of Icelandic women.

Following the readings, the authors, editors and readers were on hand to talk to members of the audience and sign copies of the books, made available for sale through Tergesen's.



Martha Brooks read from *Mistik Lake*, hot off the press.



PHOTOS: DAVID JÓN FULLER

Back row, from left: Dan Johnson and David Gislason. Front row: Elva Simundson, Birna Bjarnadóttir, Martha Brooks, Sylvia Koshyk, Marjorie Anderson and Dennis Anderson.



Marjorie Anderson, Sylvia Koshyk and Dennis Anderson read from *Blessed: Portrait of Asdis Sigrun Anderson*.