**Some words about Bjarni, seen from an Icelandic aspect.**

His American history is not here.

Bjarni Örn Þórisson was born on April 11th 1950 in Hafnarfjörður, Iceland. His mother was María Þorvaldsdóttir, of an upper middle class family, and his father was Þórir Svavar Jónsson.

María was born in 1928. She attended drama school and learned how to play the piano with dr. Viktor Urbancic. María acted in some plays and played the piano in several plays and for the family. María and her sisters always sang when they met. María was a talented artist, beautiful and had a charming stage presence. She was a very young bohemian when she first met Þórir, a married violinist, who played the violin with a dance band in one of Reykjavik´s main dancing halls. During the daytime Þórir played the violin with a symphony orchestra.

After Bjarni´s birth the relationship ended and Þórir took no responsibility in Bjarni´s upbringing. María lived still in her parental home in Hafnarfjörður, where her sister Þóra lived also, with her son Már, who was born a few months earlier. María tried to present herself as an actor in Reykjavík, and Þóra took much care of young Bjarni meanwhile.

When María went to New York in 1955, she left Bjarni with his grandmother, who took care of him. Bjarni was much with Þóra and her children, though. It is not clear what María was doing in New York, but we know that her first two or three months there, she liked her new life very much and sang and danced along the streets of Manhattan, with other Icelanders she met there. After a while she moved to Florida, where she soon started sewing on her sewing machine, mending clothes for people. There she met Joseph Edward (Ed) Bradwell II and soon moved with him to Los Angeles, where María became Maria Bradwell.

When María and Ed had settled in Los Angeles, Bjarni was sent across the ocean to his mother. That was in 1957. Bjarni, now Bjarni Bradwell, had by now won the heart of his relatives in Iceland and was much missed after his leaving.

Bjarni was only once in Iceland after this. That was when María paid her Icelandic relatives a visit in 1965. María herself, was more often in Iceland, last time when she was 69 years of age in 1997, a couple of years before her death. She was at that time invited by relatives, who wanted to see her for the last time. She was already fatally ill by then, and died a couple of years later, in 1999. Many Icelandic relatives visited María and Bjarni in California, so Bjarni was every now and then being reminded of his kin. Þóra visited them in 1989.

A decade before her death, María moved to Washington, thousand miles away, and Bjarni never saw her after that. It is quite clear to all bistanders, that Bjarni´s relationship with his mother was often problematic. She left him too often.

In Iceland we use to say that Bjarni never recovered after serving in the Vietnam war. We believe that his life never took the course he had expected, after that. Being asked why he was never in Iceland during his adult years, he replied that he didn´t think that he had much to present. In Iceland Bjarni´s relatives kept him in their heart and his presence was always nearby.

This spring Bjarni talked to Þóra with the help of Skype. Bjarni sat by his table in Corona, looking face to face with Þóra, who sat by her table in Reykjavik. That was a beautiful moment for both of them, and also for those who followed the event on lacation. See photos at https://www.flickr.com/photos/marvidar/sets/

Our last farewell to lovely Bjarni!