

Jon Vagnsson Cat Driver H-4 55-60

Cat Driver Jon Vagnsson a Man of Courage Friends, Jon Vagnsson Cat driver at H-4 1955-1960 passed last Thursday, 27 January. He was 76, same age as his lifelong friend, Chris. They both grew up at the old village of Latrar until Chris's family moved away in 1943. Jon's family was the last to leave in 1952 when the Latrar village was abandoned only one year before the first contractors came in to prepare for the construction of H-4 in 1953. The two returned to Latrar in 1955 to work for the building contractor and later the 934th. Jon was usually employed at Latrar by the construction contractor in the summer and by the 934th Transportation clearing snow in the winter with Einar. He was one of Elli's crew of 10 Icelandic caretakers who maintained the site in the winter of 1960-1961 in anticipation for final disposition of stores and equipment in the following summer. He then moved to Isafjordur where he married his surviving wife, Johanna. They had three children. Jon and his brother Hinrik operated their fishing boat that they crewed together until retirement a few years ago. Jon was a quiet, confident man with a steady hand. He was the one who rode the Cat D-8 backwards down the hillside above Latrar when it came off the road during one of the snow clearing operation and could not be pulled back over the steep bank. That took both nerve and a steady hand. Watching him and Chris a few years ago having a grand time in a lifelong favorite past time – fishing in the Adalvik bay and cleaning the catch at the landing afterwards like when they were young lads was an unforgettable experience that took me right back to the 1950's when I observed the same so many times. Mom and dad and Gummi all send you their best regards, Fridthor