



Nordic News

240 Sparks Street, PO Box 55023, Ottawa, ON K1P 1A1



Hanne Sjøborg, our Councillor responsible for marketing, initiated and co-ordinated the design and purchase of our stunning new CNS banner to be used at our events. (photo: Henry Storgaard)

A Musical Treat From Iceland on Friday, June 7

His Excellency Pétur Ásgeirsson, Ambassador of Iceland, has asked the CNS to assist in organizing a concert featuring renowned mezzo soprano Hanna Dóra Sturludóttir, and pianist Snorri Sigfús Birgisson. The program will include Icelandic music as well as Grieg pieces and some familiar operatic arias., all for the very reasonable price of \$20 per ticket, including a reception sponsored by Ikea Ottawa. Please see poster below for additional information including a link to order your tickets online. Tickets can also be purchased from any Council member and at the door. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to hear two fine Icelandic musicians!



A MUSICAL TREAT FROM ICELAND

An evening of favourite Icelandic songs and popular opera arias with renowned Icelandic mezzo-soprano Hanna Dóra Sturludóttir, accompanied by pianist Snorri Sigfús Birgisson.



Friday, June 7, 2019, 7:30 pm
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church,
Kent & Wellington, Ottawa
(Free parking at Supreme Court, across Wellington)

General admission: \$20
(Concert and reception)

Tickets can be obtained online at:
<http://www.canadiannordicsociety.com/upcoming-events.html>
(Any remaining tickets will be available at the door)

Sponsored by the Embassy of Iceland
In collaboration with the Canadian Nordic Society
Organized by Costa Kapsalis

To view an example of Hanna Dóra Sturludóttir singing please visit:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-DcX9jORPA>

Get Ready for Midsummer!



Come celebrate midsummer with us in this beautiful spot by the Gatineau River

Last year's St. Hans/Juhannus/Midsommar celebration in Cantley was a tremendous success even though it rained. This year, in addition to planning for clear skies, we will have accordionist Anne Dalvi to provide the appropriate Nordic midsummer music and to help with the singalong around the bonfire! This is a free event and we will provide the *pølser* (Norwegian hot dogs) and soft drinks. Just bring a salad or dessert and any other drinks you like. Watch for details to come!

Twelfth President Erik Solem - (1980 to 1983)



Knut Erik Solem (Erik)

Knut Erik Solem is currently living in Norway, but has lived in Canada at various times in his life and has a daughter, Birgitte Solem, whom he often visits here. His studies and career in the intriguing field of strategic forecasting have led him back and forth between Canada and Norway, as well as to the U.S. and Europe.

Erik earned his B.A. in Political Science, Economics, and Philosophy from the University of Manitoba, having already earned a degree from the University of Oslo. He continued his studies in England, where he obtained an M.Sc in Advanced European Political Studies from the University of Leicester before receiving his Ph.D. in Politics from the University of Oxford in 1968.

He returned to Canada to work for the Canadian government for some years, and was the founding chairman of its Interdepartmental Committee for Futures and Forecasting, a network of experts from 40 federal departments and agencies specializing in strategic trends. He was also a member of the Board of Directors of the United Nations Association in Canada, “an historic, national charitable organization providing the leading policy voice on multilateralism in Canada.”

At the Department of National Defence (DND) he was in charge of the “Study on Technological Trends, Threats, and Opportunities” while also a member of its Advisory Group on Knowledge-based Systems and Robotics. From 1991 to 1994 he was in charge of the Futures and Forecasting Program of the Directorate of Social and Economic Analysis of DND, which provided advice, analysis and studies of longer-term socio-economic and technological trends and their impact on defence and security.

Knut Erik Solem has taught and lectured widely in the US, Canada and Europe. He has written and published extensively on political and economic integration as well as on energy, science and technology, forecasting, long term planning, and strategic questions.

In 1994 he was appointed a full professor at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, from which he has since retired as Professor Emeritus of Political Science.

His daughter is the actress Birgitte Solem. She co-wrote and performed in the play “The Pigeon King,” which was performed this year at the National Arts Centre. She also co-produced and starred in Canadian productions of Ayad Akhtar’s award-winning play “Disgraced” and has a recurring role in the television series “A Handmaid’s Tale,” among many other accomplishments.

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, May 15. We had an excellent turnout and the Council shown below was re-elected for 2019-20.

From left to right: Treasurer Lennart Nylund; Councillor Kristin Udjus Teitelbaum; Councillor Hanne Sjøborg.; President Karin Birnbaum; Secretary Astrid Ahlgren; Councillor Hilde Huus; Vice-president Trygve Ringereide



Martti Lahtinen's Bucket



(by Hilde Huus)

Martti and I have received a lot of positive comments about his five-part series called “Martti Lahtinen’s Bucket List - 100 Days in Finland,” which debuted in our [November 2018 issue](#) and ended in our March 2019 issue (all issues are available on the CNS website’s [Nordic News](#) page.)

His musings about his desire to return to the land of his birth struck a chord with many, and his unique way of looking at the world kept us all entertained.

Well it turns out that Martti has more to tell about his ongoing journey to recover his Finnish identity and complete his education. Since the original "Bucket List" series is complete, I suggested to Martti that we start a new series containing whatever material he decides to write about. Since, knowing Martti, it may contain just about anything, I am calling it simply "Martti Lahtinen's Bucket." Enjoy! (Note: Martti goes by many self-inflicted names, including "Tomi Salami," which he uses in the true story below.)

Driving the Getaway Car

(by Martti Lahtinen)

In reply to a note of appreciation for his Bucket List series from our Secretary, Astrid Ahlgren, Martti sent this response, including an explanation of his link to organized crime.

Thank you for the review. I hope the message carries to those Canadian Nordic Society members who read the Newsletter, especially those who identify with displacement issues. Meanwhile, I'm one who believes that events conspire to happen for reasons. After writing the Bucket List series, and focusing on "Family Of Origin," some of the recollections factored splendidly this past fall in fulfilling a contractual obligation to Carleton University where I am working towards a three-year B.A. in Sociology and Anthropology. In order to graduate Sociology 4410 (a fourth-year honours Criminology course), I agreed:

- (1) to attend 12 weeks of lectures;
- (2) to participate enthusiastically in each three-hour seminar class;
- (3) to write a 24-page paper on a given topic relating to the course.



Martti took to heart the slogan, "Stay in school." Seven decades and four universities later, he's still there, one course short of finishing a three-year BA.

I had no difficulty with parts (1) and (2), and I scored 13 out of 12 toward my final mark (out of 100). My professor, Darryl Davies, knew me from two of his previous classes that I sat three years ago. Knowing that I was a card-carrying member of Alcoholics Anonymous, he suggested that I write a history of the world-wide fellowship and my relation to the local chapters over 12-plus years of sobriety. I did respond to the challenge, while taking a chance on using plenty of personal anecdotal (Bucket List) material, and I had no clue – after piecing together 8,000 words – whether he would score me a "D" or an "A." Honestly, I woke up many a night in a cold sweat fearing the former result.

Two days after I submitted my paper, a private number I recognized flashed on my cellphone. I dreaded – absolutely feared – answering the call, thinking it would be bad news. I nervously hit the response button. As it turned out, Prof. Davies was calling to tell me that, although Carleton teachers are not allowed to reveal students' course marks before they are submitted to – and appear in – normal department channels, he chose to bypass the procedural rigamarole to tell me that (1) I had written an outstanding essay; and (2) he had given me 92% (an A-plus) for my final mark. Not only that, Prof. Davies asked me to speak to the incoming class that I had graduated magna cum loudly the term previous. Prof. Davies and I had a pre-emptory chat re my presentation to his SOCI 4410 class. Since the course focused on Family Of Origin, he suggested I stay on that track. Along with my yarn, Prof. Davies had an ex-convict – Montreal native Jimmy Holt – scheduled to speak on the same subject (and considerably more) in the same month.

I performed one hour of stand-up calamity on Jan. 28 and succeeded (1) in using up most of the oxygen in the room; and (2) in having none of the 25 students fall asleep during my windy spiel.

I had already met Jimmy – who spent 38 of his 74 years in Canadian jails – last semester when he spoke to another Prof. Davies class, after which I chauffeured him home. During our ride, I suggested we had met before – during one of his bank robberies, in the early 1980s, likely in 1983. My daughter Reina (she was age five) and I were in the TD Bank, corner Bank St. and Glen Ave., when three armed balaclava-clad robbers burst in and cleaned out the cash drawers. The heist took about a minute, although time seemed to freeze for that spell.

I still see the event in slow motion when I replay it in my mind. I remember staring at the pistol barrels and feeling really helpless and vulnerable – but not scared – victimized, in all likelihood. Along the lines of PTSD, I suspect. Bank personnel sometimes are unable to return to work after having guns waved near their body parts.

During the robbery, I feared Reina doing something obtrusive to tickle very nervous trigger fingers, so I sat with her on the bank floor and quietly did a play-by-play in her ear. I jest you not. When the masked trio entered, Reina said, "Look, Daddy, it's Hallowe'en." I said, "No, they're just doing their job."

After I regaled Jimmy with our having a front-row ticket – very possibly – to one of his capers, he allowed that it could have been his gang doing the job in 1983. I recall that Ottawa set some high-water marks in bank holdups in the early 1980s, and it was mostly gangs from Montreal who outsourced their work westward to Ottawa and along Highway 401, even as far as Toronto, because security in Quebec had tightened up and made it "too hot" to work locally.

Jimmy's early-child abandonment and subsequent criminal life story is horrific, and my family of origin shit is hugely less spectacular than his when you compare our respective vinaigrettes. Incidentally, Jimmy was an alcoholic and drug-user. Apart from his incarceration for robberies, his extensive police blotter rap sheet included shooting two people, one of whom died. He was handed a 19-year sentence for the killing. But we of the alcoholic realm should not compare sad beginnings. Abandonment in all its forms is the great equalizer: it's Ground Zero for second place in life.

Prof. Davies and I conspired to form a game plan for Jimmy's return engagement speaking to the class. I agreed to pick him up at his residence, drive him to Carleton and later back home. Imagine that: Tomi Salami driving Jimmy Holt's getaway car. That sort of adventure wasn't on my original Bucket List, but it's near the top now. On the light side.

Contributions to *Nordic News*

We appreciate receiving your articles and news to include in the *Nordic News*. Please email them to the editor, Hilde Huus, at communications@nordicsociety.com

Canadian Nordic Society Co-ordinates

Our website is www.canadiannordicsociety.com, and you can contact us by email at info@canadiannordicsociety.com.

The CNS council list, including email addresses and phone numbers, is available at:

<http://www.canadiannordicsociety.com/council.html>

And the CNS has its own, very active, [Facebook](#) page.

Join CNS or Renew your Membership

You can join CNS or renew your membership online, by mail, or in person. Our membership year runs from **September 1st** to August 31. We encourage you to pay online using PayPal. This is the quickest and most efficient method. If you prefer, you can pay in person when you attend one of our luncheons or speaker events. Please speak to any one of our Council members.

Online

To pay online, go to the CNS website (<http://www.canadiannordicsociety.com/join-cns.html>) and complete the membership form . Payment may be made through PayPal.

Note: it is not necessary to have a PayPal account.

By mail

Please print and complete the membership form below, enclose a cheque payable to the Canadian Nordic Society and mail to:

Canadian Nordic Society
240 Sparks Street
Box 55023
Ottawa, ON
K1P 1A1



Canadian Nordic Society

240 Sparks Street, PO Box 55023, Ottawa, ON K1P 1A1

www.canadiannordicsociety.com

Membership Application/Renewal*

Date: _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone (home): _____ Phone (work): _____

Email: _____

Family Membership \$45, Individual Membership \$30, Student \$20
(Membership year is September 1st to August 31)

****To apply for membership online or renew online using PayPal, please go to:***

<http://www.canadiannordicsociety.com/register-renew-member.php>