



Nordic News

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

www.canadiannordicsociety.com

CNS 2013 Dates to Remember

Speakers' Series

Wednesday, March 27, 2013

Luncheon Date

Monday, April 8, 2013

Special Events

CNS Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, May 29, 2013

CNS EVENTS

SPEAKERS' SERIES

March Speaker **Wednesday, March 27, 2013**

APPROACHING ITS CENTENNIAL. FINLAND'S WAY IN WORLD AFFAIRS

H.E. Charles Murto

Finland's Ambassador to Canada



His Excellency Charles Murto will be giving a wide ranging overview on Finland's situation in today's world as part of the Speakers' Series of the Canadian Nordic Society. In particular he will touch on Finland in the European Union, Finland's evolving role within the United Nations, and, of course, the current status of Finland- Canada relations, with a special emphasis on the Arctic Council. Ambassador Murto arrived in Canada in August 2012 after serving for several years as an Ambassador on national security at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Murto joined the Finnish Foreign Ministry in 1971 and served in a number of positions within the Ministry and at postings in Madrid, Jakarta, Brussels, and Paris before

undertaking his first ambassadorship to Australia in 1991, and later to Spain in 2001 and Paris in 2005. He has worked for Foreign Affairs on matters relating to political affairs, protocol, cultural affairs and national security issues including as an instructor at the Finnish National Defence College.

Ambassador Murto graduated with a Master of Social Sciences degree from the University of Helsinki. He is married and has three adult children.

Date and Time: Wednesday, March 27, 2013 at 7:30 pm

Location: Main Dining Room, Army Officers' Mess, 149 Somerset Street W. (off Elgin), Ottawa
Coffee will be available

CNS LUNCHEONS

The next luncheon will be held on Monday, April 8, 2013, a week after Easter Monday, at the Army Officers' Mess, 149 Somerset Street W. (off Elgin), Ottawa. We have been assured the renovations have been completed.

The luncheon dates for the remainder of the spring of 2013 will be May 6 and June 3.

Thanks to Capt. Kathleen Tipton (CNS Councillor) for booking these luncheons for us.

Lennart Nylund Vice President

OTHER CNS INFORMATION

Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Nordic Society will be held Wednesday, May 29, 2013 at the Army Officers' Mess, 149 Somerset Street W. (off Elgin), Ottawa, at 7:30 pm.

This is a call for nominations of persons as candidates to the executive of the Canadian Nordic Society. The nomination form is attached to this newsletter. Closing date for acceptance of nominations is April 20, 2013, in accordance with Clause 25 of Bylaws.

Unfortunately, the form below is not fillable and submittable electronically. It must be printed out and completed by hand.

OTHER NORDIC EVENTS OR ITEMS OF INTEREST

Finnish Church Services

The dates for the Finnish Church Services for 2013 are:

Easter: March 24, 2013

Thanksgiving: October 6, 2013

Christmas Carols Sing-along: December 1, 2013

Christmas Church Service: December 15, 2013

All services take place at:
St. Peter's Lutheran Church
400 Sparks St. Ottawa
3 pm

Canadian Friends of Finland 2013 Ice Hockey Women's World Championship

Finland vs Canada

Friday, April 5, 2013 7:30 pm

Contact <mailto:patovirta-saffioti@alumni.utoronto.ca> for more information.

(I would expect there will be teams from other Nordic Countries as well)

From the Finnish Embassy

Here is some information on an intensive course in Finnish language in Jyväskylä, Finland.

Greetings from Jyväskylä Summer University!

Jyväskylä Summer University organizes an intensive course in Finnish language and culture this summer from the 24th of June to 12th of July. The course is held on the shore of Lake Päijänne in Jyväskylä, Finland, at Salmia Training and Development Centre.

In previous years people from all walks of life have attended the course - lawyers, teachers, high school and university students, parents with their children... all who have had one thing in common: an interest in Finnish language and culture. The course is perfect also for immigrants living in Finland. Every year there has been approximately 40 people from over 20 different countries from all over the world.

Besides the lessons there are also fun free time activities. Students visit cultural attractions, take trips to nature and concerts and get to know the Finnish way of life.

For more information on the course and accommodation options, please visit <https://kesayo.jyu.fi/Kieli-ja-lukiolaiskurssit/intensiivi/en/intensiven>

EDITOR'S SECTION

Sunstones

Recently a number of publications (Economist, The Ottawa Citizen March 9) had an article on the recovery of a crystal of the mineral calcite from a 16th century ship wreck at the bottom of the English Channel, speculating that the crystal may be the fabled **Sunstone**¹ used by the **Vikings** for navigation. According to the article in the Citizen, sunstones “worked as a kind of solar compass, allowing sailors to determine the position of the sun even when it was hidden by heavy

¹ The word “sunstone” also refers to a feldspar used as a gemstone.

cloud, masked by fog, or below the horizon” (which it would be a lot of the time close to the Arctic Circle)

The use of sunstones has been reported in the Icelandic Saga, the Saga of St. Olaf, which reports an event in which King Olav Haraldsson II, King of **Norway** (995-1030) visited a wise man named Rauðúlfr in a remote part of Norway bordering on **Sweden**. On an overcast day, Sigurður, one of Rauðúlfr’s sons, predicted the location of the sun, and a solar stone (Icelandic *sólarsteinn*) was used to verify the prediction. This saga is believed to be set down by a 12th–13th century ecclesiastic.

Sunstones are also reported in other Icelandic manuscripts, and in the inventories of several churches and one monastery. However, the documentation postdates the Viking era.



The recovered sunstone is called the Alderney Crystal, from the wreck of an unnamed Elizabethan era warship sunk on or about November, 29, 1592 in the English Channel off the coast of Alderney, the northern-most of the Channel Islands (though at least one online article says the ship was named the Alderney, and another puts the sinking in the Thames). The crystal itself is a block of Icelandic Spar, normally an optically clear form of calcite but

rendered opaque by immersion in the sea.

Icelandic Spar is an optically clear form of calcite, originally found in **Iceland** in basaltic cavities and has a property called birefringence, which transmits light of different polarizations in different fashions through itself.

Birefringence in a mineral crystal occurs when light interacts with the crystal structure within a crystal – light polarized in one direction with respect to internal crystal planes travels faster than light polarized in another direction, resulting on the light of the different polarizations refracting at different angles within the crystal. This effect is very strong in clear crystals of calcite. Light in the atmosphere is polarized even when coming through clouds, tending to be more polarized at right angles to the sun. So by looking through a crystal of Icelandic Spar one can identify the direction of least polarization and deduce the direction of the sun.

Icelandic Spar is chemically pure calcite; most calcite crystals are opaque and coloured because of impurities.

The crystal has been identified by Dr. Guy Ropars (to whom the picture is attributed) and his team at Rennes University who have authored a paper showing it is possible to use such crystals in navigation. In 1975 A **Danish** archaeologist Thorkild Ramskou posited that the sunstone could have been one of the minerals (cordierite (iolite) or Iceland spar) that polarize light and by which the azimuth of the sun can be determined in a partly overcast sky or when the sun is just below the horizon. He invented the term “Viking compass”.

However, a book “Polarized Light in Nature”² asserts “It is possible for an acute observer to ascertain the strong polarization of light from the sky without any artificial aids but with the naked eye alone.” (Page 33) Maybe Rauðúlfr’s son had such skill; if so, perhaps so did many Viking seafarers and the sunstone was an assist for the unskilled.

By the way, the magnetic compass was invented by the Chinese in the first millennium, and its first use in Europe dates to the late 12th century, so it wouldn’t have been used by the Vikings. Also, it appears that some animals and birds can sense the polarization of light to use for navigation.

Peter Macnaughton

NORDIC RESOURCES

Just a reminder that there is a list of Nordic Resources located on our website

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

including the Nordic Embassies, the Ottawa based social organizations, and links to newspapers and museums in Nordic Countries. The list is on the Nordic Resources tab on the general web site, or use the link above.

MEMBERSHIP

The CNS membership year is from September 1 to August 31 which means that it is once again necessary to renew your membership for the 2012-2013 year. Our membership dues remain the same as they have been for a number of years: \$20.00 for an individual membership; \$30.00 for a family membership, \$15.00 for a student membership. Please fill in the form, enclose a cheque and mail it to our mail box indicated in our letterhead. Unfortunately, the form cannot be completed or submitted electronically.

It is the membership dues that enable us to have our Speakers’ Series which has been one of the distinguishing aspects of the Canadian Nordic Society program since we were established in 1963. While we work in close co-operation with the five Nordic embassies situated in Ottawa, CNS does not receive any financial support from any embassy or other organization.

We depend on our membership to enable us to continue carrying out a program of activities that promote a better understanding of the societies and cultures of the Nordic countries.

² (B.V. W.J. Thieme & Cie-Zutphen; English version Cambridge University Press, accessed through Google books)



Canadian Nordic Society

If you are already a member, please pass this on to a friend!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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

email: _____

To reduce costs, the newsletter will be sent electronically to those with email addresses unless otherwise advised.

Family Membership - \$30, Individual Membership - \$20. Student Membership - \$15.

As a Member you:

- will receive the Society's Newsletter
- are invited to participate in all CNS events
- are encouraged to become actively involved in the life of the Society
- receive discounts on tickets to CNS events

Canadian Nordic Society Board Members – 2012-2013

Lennard Sillanpää - President	613-837-1641	cell: 613-298-4799	lennard.sillanpaa@sympatico.ca
Lennart Nylund - Vice President	613-829-8602		lnylund@sympatico.ca
Simon Snow - Treasurer	613-866-7669		ottawalainen@rogers.com
- Secretary	Position Vacant		
Martti Lahtinen - Councillor	819-827-0899		mLahtinen_13@hotmail.com
Kathleen Tipton - Councillor	819-923-3311		kdtipton5@yahoo.ca
Sheila Hellström – Councillor	613-731-0063		shellstrom@sympatico.ca
Bruce Miller – Councillor	613-745-1151		nordic@brmiller.ca
Lars Öhman - Honorary President			

Peter Macnaughton - Newsletter Editor, (not a board member) 613-224-8527 peter.macnaughton@sympatico.ca

If you have any questions about your membership, please contact one of the Board Members. Membership dues can be given to any Board member or you can mail your payment to:

Canadian Nordic Society
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P.O. Box 55023
Ottawa, ON K1P 1A1

www.canadiannordicsociety.com email: info@canadiannordicsociety.com

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NOMINATION FORM For ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF May 29, 2013

We the undersigned, hereby nominate _____
to serve on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Nordic Society for the year 2013 – 2014.

Signature of Nominee _____
(to confirm willingness to serve on the Board of Directors if elected).

Signatures: (3 signatures required)

Nominated By: 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Date: _____

A brief bio of the Nominee attached to this form would be appreciated.

All signatures on this form must be members in good standing with dues fully paid.

Closing date for acceptance of nominations will be April 20, 2013.

Please submit this form to Chairman, Nominating Committee, Lennard Sillanpää, in person, or mail before April 20, 2013 to Canadian Nordic Society, Box 55023, 240 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P1A1.