



# Nordic News

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

[www.canadiannordicsociety.com](http://www.canadiannordicsociety.com)

## **CNS 2012 Dates to Remember**

### **Speaker's Events**

**Wednesday November 21, 2012**

**Norway's Foreign Policy:  
Punching above our Weight  
H.E. Mona Elisabeth Bróther  
Ambassador for Norway to Canada**

### **Luncheon Dates**

**Monday December 3, 2012  
(Reservations required this month)**

### **Special Events**

**Lucia Pageant  
Saturday December 8, 2012**

## **CNS EVENTS**

### **SPEAKER'S EVENTS**

#### **November Speaker**

**Wednesday November 21, 2012**



#### **Norway's Foreign Policy: Punching above our Weight**

**H.E. Mona Elisabeth Bróther  
Ambassador for Norway to Canada**

Date and Time: Wednesday, November 21, 2012 at 7:30 pm

Location: Army Officers' Mess, 149  
Somerset Street W. (off Elgin), Ottawa  
Refreshments

Her Excellency Mona Elisabeth Bróther will be giving a wide-ranging presentation on Norwegian foreign policy to the Canadian Nordic Society, which will address a number of issues related to Canada-Norway relations, including co-operation in the Arctic region. Ambassador Bróther has recently arrived in Canada following a period as Deputy

Director General at the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's Department of Culture, Public Diplomacy and Protocol. She joined the Foreign Ministry in 1979 as an attaché. She has had an ever increasing series of assignments both within the Norwegian Foreign Ministries and at Norwegian embassies in Venezuela and Denmark, including stints as Norway's ambassador to Chile (2000-2004) and Venezuela (2008-2009). A number of assignments have involved dealing with issue related to sustainable development, environment, the 1992 Rio Conference on the environment, and as a Team co-ordinator for the events marking the 20th anniversary of Our Common Future, the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission).

Ambassador Bróther is a graduate of the University of Oslo. She is married and has two grown sons.

## CNS LUNCHEONS

The next luncheon will be held on Monday, December 3, 2012.

Roast turkey with trimmings will be featured, with soup, salad and dessert.

Price \$21.50 includes taxes and tip.

Location: The Library Room at the Army Officer's Mess, 149 Somerset Street, West.

For reservations, please contact Lennart Nylund at 613-829-8602 or [lnylund@sympatico.ca](mailto:lnylund@sympatico.ca)

The luncheon dates for 2013 will be: January 7, February 4, March 4, April 8, May 6 and June 3.  
No reservations required for these dates next year.

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

Lennart Nylund Vice President

## OTHER CNS INFORMATION



### ANNUAL SANTA LUCIA PAGEANT

Saturday, December 8, 2012

Doors open 6 pm Performance 7 pm

Socializing, games and refreshments 8 pm

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

400 Sparks Street at the corner of Bay

Admission \$15, Members of the Canadian Nordic Society \$10, Children age 17 and under, free  
Memberships to the Canadian Nordic Society will be sold at the door.

Individual \$20, Family \$30, Student \$15

For further information, please contact:

Lennart Nylund, Vice-President, Canadian Nordic Society, 613-829-8602

[lnylund@sympatico.ca](mailto:lnylund@sympatico.ca)

## October Speaker Report

H.E. Thordur Aegir Óskarsson, Ambassador of Iceland, addressed the topic of The Canadian Dollar: A Future in Iceland. This issue had been the subject of many newspaper articles earlier this year.

According to the Ambassador, The Bank of Iceland has recently published a voluminous report of the future direction Iceland should be taking with its currency.

H.E. reminded the audience that Iceland had been the first country to suffer in the financial disasters that have befallen the world in the last decade. Iceland saw a sharp decline in the value of its currency, the Króna, by 50%. Its GDP lost 10%. When the bank collapsed overnight their debt was 64 billion USD and Iceland's total GDB was only 14 billion USD at that time.

However, as the first to suffer, Iceland is now the first to rebound. Fisheries continue to be a long lasting resource, well managed. Tourism is improving.

The just published study by the Bank of Iceland looked at three options for the currency – adopt the Euro, retain but make changes to the Króna, or adopt some other country's currency. This last option led to the speculation about the Canadian dollar.

However, adopting another nation's currency has been ruled out on the basis of loss of control by Iceland. Even if this had been a viable option, the Canadian currency would not have been a good choice given the limited amount of trade between the two countries although we had a strong monetary policy.

There is a public interest, though mixed, in becoming a member of the European Union. An application was made in 2009 and discussions started on many of 35 issues that need to be addressed. If negotiations are successful, then a national referendum would be held. Later, in response to a question, he indicated that the issue of fisheries is the most difficult issue on this path.

Membership in the EU would not necessarily mean adopting the Euro although that would have trade advantages. So Ambassador Óskarsson feels that Iceland will be relying on the Króna for many years to come.

H.E. talked further on Iceland – Canada relations. There are some 200 000 descendants of Icelanders here in Canada. In fact, the first European baby born in Canada arrived in Lance aux Meadows when the Icelanders had their colony on Newfoundland.

The Icelanders in Canada have a strong sense of community, and an interest in preserving their heritage. The ambassador mentioned that when the poor Icelanders emigrated to Canada over 100 years ago they seem to prefer to bring books in their luggage than some other material things.

Thordur Óskarsson reported that the Icelandic Embassy was only established in Ottawa in 2000, with objectives to increase mutual understanding, promote Icelandic interests such as trade, and focus on common Arctic issues. He feels that his country, Canada along with Greenland and the Faroe Islands, should be working towards comprehensive policies on Arctic interests, especially environmental issues as a result of resource exploitation, commerce, and tourism. These discussions should be kept under the sphere of the Arctic Council, the chair of which Canada will assume in 2013.

Ambassador Óskarsson is very upbeat; while Iceland is no longer in the top 10 countries for competitiveness, it still ranks as number one country in the world for gender equality. He added at one point, “The volcano Eyjafjallajökull was turned on to attract attention to Iceland.”



Ambassador Óskarsson with his CNS mug flanked by Len Sillanpää, President of the Society, and Jack Ives, President of the Canadian Friends of Iceland. Photo by Editor.

Peter Macnaughton

## OTHER NORDIC EVENTS OR ITEMS OF INTEREST

### European Film Festival

The Canadian Film Institute is holding its 2012 version of the 27<sup>th</sup> European Film Festival at the National Archives Building, 395 Wellington St. between November 15 and December 2. For a complete list of participating films, please visit:

[http://www.cfi-icf.ca/index.php?option=com\\_cfi&task=showevent&id=96&Itemid=842](http://www.cfi-icf.ca/index.php?option=com_cfi&task=showevent&id=96&Itemid=842)

Denmark, Finland and Sweden are participating this year on Friday Nov 30, Wednesday Nov. 28, and Friday Nov. 23 respectively.

### Denmark:

En familie (A Family)

dir. Pernille Fischer Christensen

Denmark 2010

103 minutes

English sub-titles

Friday, November 30, 2012, 7:00 pm



*A Family* follows a successful family of bakers, the Rheinwalds. When their father Rikard falls ill, the desires of various members of the Rheinwald clan come into conflict. Ditte, his daughter, is torn as she and her boyfriend look to New York to begin a new life across the ocean. However, her father insists that she stay in Denmark to keep the family business alive. Others, on the other hand, want Ditte to follow her dreams abroad and make her own name for herself. By turns amusing and intense, *A Family* deals perceptively with issues of love, sacrifice and family honour.



## **Finland:**

Miesten Vuoro (Steam of Life)

dir. Joonas Berghäll, Mika Hotakainen

Finland 2010

81 minutes

English sub-titles

Wednesday, November 28, 2012, 7:00 pm



Told through a succession of intimate conversations, Berghäll and Hotakainen's acclaimed documentary offers a decidedly unusual portrait of modern Western men. Steam of Life observes Finnish men as they gather in the sauna to expel the toxins that plague them physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Shot on location amidst the steam of actual saunas, the film possesses a warm and painterly quality. You might find yourself believing that you too are encapsulated in a warm chamber of steam, listening to the men bare their hearts as naturally and nakedly as they bare their bodies. Steam of Life was named 'Best Film' at the Anjalankoski Film Festival and 'Best Documentary Film' at the Jussi Awards. Steam of Life also took home two awards at the Tampere International Film Festival including the Audience Award. Don't forget your towel.

## **Sweden:**

**En enkel till Antibes** (A One-Way to Antibes)

dir. Richard Hobert

Sweden 2011

105 minutes

English sub-titles

Friday, November 23, 2012, 7:00 pm



An elderly widower, George (Sven-Bertil Taube) is fed up with his grown-up children and maid as they conspire to take his money and sell his house. He decides that he has had enough and buys a one-way ticket to Antibes where he hopes to re-examine his life, forget about his family, and examine how the loss of his wife has changed everything. Along the way he faces delays and complications in his journey. A finely observed, moving story about self-discovery.

We are honoured to have the film's director, Richard Hobert, in attendance at the screening to introduce and discuss his film.

(Information on the European Film Festival has been taken from their web site).

## **Other items**

### **Finnish**

#### **Finnish Christmas Carol Sing-Along**

DATE: Sunday, November 25th

TIME: 3 PM (doors close at 3:15)

LOCATION: St. Peter's Lutheran Church  
400 Sparks St  
Ottawa, ON

Dates for the **Finnish Church** services:

Nov. 25th, 2012      Christmas carols, sing-along  
Dec. 9th, 2012      Christmas church service

Finland's Independence Day is December 6, 2012.



## Sweden

Britt Bengtsson, Information Officer at the Swedish embassy, has provided the following information (and information on the Swedish entry in the European Film Festival)

### **Raoul Wallenberg Exhibition at the Canadian War Museum**

The Exhibition:

**“To Me There’s No Other Choice – Raoul Wallenberg 1912-2012”**

November 21, 2012 - January, 6 2013.

#### **Canadian War Museum**

1 Vimy Place

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M8

(free event)



*This exhibition was created by the Swedish Institute in partnership with the Living History Forum, and is presented at the Canadian War Museum in partnership with the Swedish Embassy.*

This exhibition presents the story of Sweden’s Raoul Wallenberg and his role in saving tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews from the Holocaust. This dramatic presentation of his life and humanitarian achievements marks the anniversary of his birth, 100 years ago.

See an introduction to the exhibition on You-tube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gufQTuUnoPw>

Raoul Wallenberg is one of the most internationally acclaimed Swedes and he has received worldwide praise for his commitment of saving lives during World War II. As a diplomat and a businessman, Wallenberg was appointed legation secretary of the Swedish diplomatic mission in Budapest in June 1944. By issuing protective Swedish passports and renting buildings, “Swedish houses” where Jews could seek shelter. Wallenberg’s action raises questions about moral courage and individual responsibility; about acting instead of just standing by in the face of evil and oppression and about helping and protecting the persecuted. These are vital moral choices, and experience shows that resistance makes oppressors hesitate. By acting as he did, Wallenberg saved tens of thousands of lives and his actions showed the world that one man really can make a difference. Read more about Raoul Wallenberg:

<http://www.sweden.se/eng/Home/Society/Government-politics/Facts/Raoul-Wallenberg/>

## **Panel Discussion on Wallenberg**

Thursday, 6 December, at 7 pm  
The Barney Danson Theatre  
The Canadian War Museum

International Panel discussion:

### **Perspectives on Raoul Wallenberg’s legacy and moral courage**

The presenters are all well renowned in their respective fields of professions and the moderator is the former Member of the Canadian Parliament and the current Chairman of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, Mario Silva.

The panel consists of:

Brian Palmer, professor in Uppsala, Sweden – an award winning former Harvard professor in anthropology and religion whose course he held on Moral Courage was the most popular elective subject during his Harvard years.

Áron Máthé – a Hungarian historian who is the Head of Research Department at the House of Terror Museum in Budapest and he will give an outline of the historical situation in Budapest at the time Wallenberg was there.

Irving Abella – a professor at York University and the former president of the Canadian Jewish Congress. He is the author of the book *Coat of Many Colours: Two Centuries of Jewish Life in Canada* and the co-author of the book *None Is Too Many*.

Irwin Cotler – a Member of the Canadian Parliament and the Former Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and helped established Canada's Raoul Wallenberg Commemorative Day, observed on January 17th.

For further information on our upcoming events, Please visit the Event page of the Embassy of Sweden: <http://www.swedenabroad.com/en-GB/Embassies/Ottawa/Current-affairs/Events/>

All are welcome!

## EDITOR'S SECTION

### Other Mercury Feature Names with a Nordic Connection

Last month I presented a list of Nordic (and one Canadian) artists *et al* honoured by having a crater on the planet Mercury named after them. There were four additional features named after Nordic items of interest, extracted from the Gazetteer of Planetary Nomenclature hosted by the US Geological Service:

Feature	Type	Nationality	Description	Link
<a href="#">Fram Rupes</a>	Rupēs	Norwegian	Ship used in Arctic by Nansen, 1892-96, and by Sverdrup and Amundsen in Antarctica, 1909.	<a href="#">Fram Museum</a>
<a href="#">Gjøa Rupes</a>	Rupēs	Norwegian	Amundsen's ship through Northwest passage, 1903-06.	<a href="#">Gjøa</a>
<a href="#">Odin Planitia</a>	Planitia		Odin - Norse god.	<a href="#">Odin</a>
<a href="#">Tir Planitia</a>	Planitia		Tir - Norse word for Mercury.	<a href="#">Tyr</a>

Planitia – Low plain or basin - names for Mercury (either the planet or the god) in various languages

Rupēs – Scarp (steep slope or cliff) – named after ships of discovery or scientific expeditions

The ships used by Admundsen are honoured by having their names given to a scarp. But when I began to look into the name Tir Planitia I began to question the links between Odin and Tir and the planet Mercury.

I looked at some mythology with respect to the Norse. There were no references associating Norse gods to planets. Mercury is so close to the sun that it would hardly be visible to the Norse due to their high latitude, making it unlikely that they would deify it.

One web site said Julius Caesar formed an equivalence between various Roman gods and Norse gods, with Odin matching up with Mercury. The Romans had a habit of assimilating gods of conquered people, adding a Roman spin. One site (<http://www.ancient-mythology.com/norse/odin.php>) says: “When the Romans arrived in Germanic territory, they assumed that Odin was their messenger god, Mercury.” However, another web site indicated that the Germanic people had the habit of identifying Roman gods with the names of Germanic deities.

The word Wednesday comes from Woden’s Day, Woden being a variant of Odin in some old version of Germanic Languages. Wednesday was called *Mercurii* (Mercury in Latin). This may be the source of the linkage.

Odin was a very important god in Norse mythology. He was one of three founding gods, was the god of war, wisdom, magic and poetry. He’s listed as the supreme god. Being the god of

wisdom, he brought the runic alphabet to the Norse. As supreme god, he could have been identified with Jupiter; as god of war, linked to Mars.

One Wikipedia site said that **Tir** was an occasional spelling of the Old Norse theonym Tyr, and linked to a page Týr. On that page Týr is described as the god of single combat, victory and heroic glory in Norse mythology. A variant, Tiw in an old Germanic language, was equated to Mars, not Mercury, and led to the name for the day Tuesday.

In the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, under ARMENIA, (Zoroastrian, page 798), Tir seems to be some sort of divinity associated with Mercury in Zoroastrianism.

So I am wondering if the association of Norse gods to planets is entirely circumstantial and has no basis in fact from the Norse side. Nevertheless, it is nice that Norse mythological entities have been selected for features on planetary bodies.

I guess that's why it's called **Mythology**.

## **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 it has been for a number of years: \$20.00 for an individual membership; \$30.00 for a family membership. Please fill in the form, enclose a cheque and mail it to our mail box indicated in our letterhead.

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.



## 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: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax : \_\_\_\_\_

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	<a href="mailto:lennard.sillanpaa@sympatico.ca">lennard.sillanpaa@sympatico.ca</a>
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Peter Macnaughton - Newsletter Editor, (not a board member) 613-224-8527 [peter.macnaughton@sympatico.ca](mailto: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:

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