

November 2016



Nordic News

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

First Contact *(by Hilde Huus)*

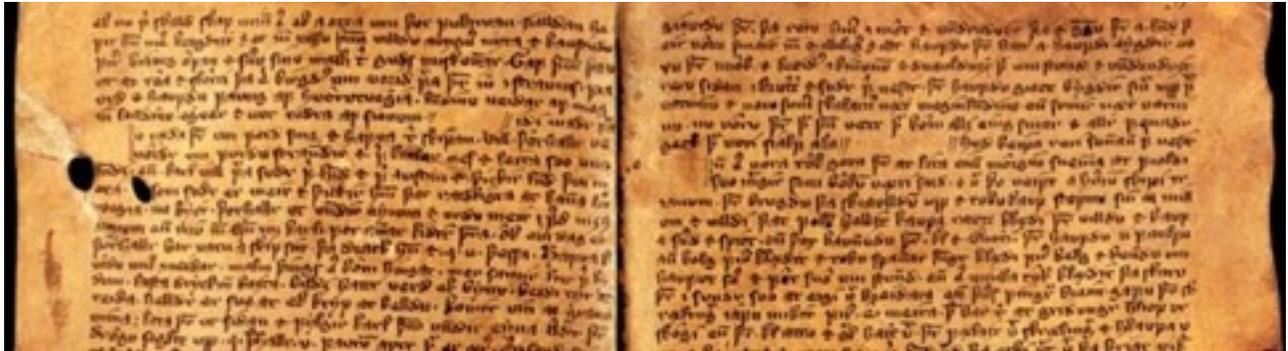
Our first evening of this year's Distinguished Speaker Series was a special one indeed. Journalist Samantha Rideout presented a beautiful animated film called "First Contact." She is the author of the screenplay of this film, which was produced by Canadian multimedia artist Scott MacLeod. Samantha thanked the CNS for its support in producing the film, noting that CNS members provided financial support as well as advice and encouragement.



Samantha Rideout introduces "First Contact"

Samantha explained that her interest in things Norse led her to spend a year studying in Sweden and then two more in Iceland, where she focussed her studies on the Icelandic sagas. She became particularly intrigued by the Saga of Erik the Red and the Greenlanders Saga, both of which describe North American geography very well. Some scholars believe that the two sagas describe

voyages to Newfoundland, while others believe the voyages were further south. There is now clear archeological evidence of Viking visits to Nunavut and l'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland. Recently discovered evidence also suggests possible Viking visits to the southwestern part of Newfoundland.



Manuscript of Saga of Erik the Red

The sagas describe meetings with native people wearing animal skin clothing, paddling canoes, and with certain facial features that correspond with native peoples of North America. Although it is impossible to know for sure if such meetings actually took place in Newfoundland, the film is based on that premise. The people depicted in the film are based on the ancestors of the Beothuk, whose culture and language were lost after the settlement of Newfoundland by Europeans. The filmmakers used archeological evidence and surviving written accounts of the Beothuk culture to portray this lost culture.

I found the film's screenplay to be both lyrical and imaginative and the haunting music complemented it beautifully. It included traditional Icelandic folk songs and a lullaby that is believed to be in the lost Beothuk language. (The lullaby was collected by a music ethnographer in the early 1900's from a Mi'maq-speaking woman who had Beothuk ancestors.)

There are two narrators in the film. One represents the voice of a mature Viking woman who, along with one other younger woman, accompanies the men on their voyage. The other represents the voice of a native woman. Of course they both narrate in English, but the Viking woman speaks English with a foreign accent. The native woman speaks English with no accent, which subtly but effectively makes the point that she is not the foreigner in this story.

The film is partially animated by Scott MacLeod's coloured pencil drawings. They evoke scenes from the distant past by emerging from initial sketches gradually into more and more detailed drawings until a clear picture appears before us. Many beautiful film images of the stunning Newfoundland landscape help to give a sense of being present in the story.



As the gentle voices of the two women tell the story of the first contact, we hear how each perceives the situation from a completely different point of view, informed by their own cultural background and expectations. The native people bring gifts of furs to establish good relations with the newcomers. The Vikings bring red cloth but see it as an economic exchange and wonder at the naïveté of the natives as they accept smaller and smaller strips of cloth in exchange for their furs.

The conflict with the native people that is described in the sagas is depicted in the film, but it is not the focal point. The narrators have other, everyday concerns that are common to all women and must be dealt with, regardless of any conflict between the men.

As Samantha explained, the film explores the broader truths of meeting people who are different from ourselves, of learning new perspectives, and of the dangers of misunderstanding that must be overcome to build new relationships. The history of Canada is built on all of these things and because of this, Samantha sees the current Truth and Reconciliation work in Canada as being of paramount importance to our country. That work and the film are both about the human capacity to survive human conflict, misunderstanding, and tragedy. An Icelandic version of the soundtrack is now being produced, as is an educational guide to the film for use in schools and libraries.

New Finnish Ambassador H.E. Vesa Lehtonen

The appointment of Mr. Vesa Lehtonen as Ambassador of Finland to Canada has been announced (see announcement below). The Canadian Nordic Society wishes him all the best and hopes he enjoys his stay in Canada.

Press release, October 11, 2016

The President of the Republic of Finland appointed Mr. Vesa Lehtonen as Ambassador of Finland to Ottawa, Canada on March 4, 2016 with the posting starting on September 1, 2016. Ambassador Lehtonen presented his credentials to Governor General David Johnston on October 3, 2016 in a ceremony held at the Citadelle of Quebec City.

Ambassador Lehtonen received a Master's degree in History from the University of Turku in 1991. Before initiating his diplomatic career, he worked as a journalist and a history and civics teacher, among other things. In 1995, Ambassador Lehtonen joined the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Lehtonen has previously been posted in Sweden (1996-2001) and in Italy (2004-2007), where he was Deputy Head of the Mission. At the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Helsinki, Ambassador Lehtonen has mainly served in the Department of Europe and in Human Resources Management. Before the posting in Canada, he headed HRM as Deputy Director General for Personnel (2012-2016).

Ambassador Lehtonen and his wife M.D. Pirjetta Manninen have four children, of whom the two youngest are here in Canada with them.

For more information and requests for interviews, please contact:
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EMBASSY OF FINLAND
OTTAWA

How the Vikings Changed the English language



Dr. Ian MacKay, Department of Linguistics, University of Ottawa

The recent Viking exhibit at the Museum of History sparked some discussion about what language the Vikings spoke. Our distinguished speaker for November, **Dr. Ian MacKay**, will take a look at Norse languages from a different point of view, namely, **How the Vikings Changed the English language**.

Did you know that the Canadian slang for the one-dollar coin comes ultimately from the language of the Vikings? Do you know where words such as *ugly*, *filly*, *reef*, *scathing*, *clumsy*, and *rotten*, come from? Do you know why it's truly surprising that we use the expression "they are" in English? Don't miss Dr. Ian MacKay's presentation on this fascinating topic on Wednesday, November 16.

About our Distinguished Speaker Series

Our distinguished speaker series take place at the Officers' Mess, 149 Somerset Street West at 7:30 PM, but we recommend arriving a little early so you can get your name tag and socialize a little if you wish. Speaker events are free for members, with a \$5 charge for non-members. There is some parking available at the mess itself in the evenings. Below are the upcoming dates for our Distinguished Speaker Series.

- November 16
- January 18
- February 15
- March 15
- April 19
- May 24

Norway Decides to Keep Mount Halti

Finland will be celebrating its 100th year of independence from Russia in 2017 and a group of Norwegians thought it would be a great idea to mark the occasion by presenting Finland with a new mountain. They apparently thought Norway could easily spare one - who would even miss it? The mountain in question is called Mount Halti, and the Finnish border runs most of the way up the mountainside. But it turns out that there was a little snag in this generous suggestion, and that is the Norwegian constitution. Article one states that the country is “indivisible and inalienable”. Oh well!

Thanks to CNS member Ross Francis for bringing this to our attention. For more information, go to: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/15/halti-plan-halted-norway-will-not-gift-mountain-top-to-neighbour-finland?CMP=share_btn_link

Upcoming Events of Interest

The Danish Club of Ottawa Annual Bazaar



- Real Danish Pastries and Delicatessen
 - Restaurant with Open Face Sandwiches
 - Danish Christmas Decorations and Gifts
 - Embroidery and Other Handicrafts
 - Books, Lottery and more....
- (Please note: Cash only)

November 5, 2016, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre (Take Pinecrest North to the end)

danishclubottawa.com

Free admission, free parking



- The **Montreal Norwegian Club Christmas Sale** is on Friday, November 11, 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM and Saturday, November 12, 10:30 AM to 3:00 PM. To quote the Club, “You won’t want to miss

this once-a-year opportunity to purchase Norwegian food, crafts and gift items, and enjoy our open-face sandwiches, cakes and more. In addition to the perennial favourites (chocolates, sweaters, pewter, etc.), we will have a variety of new items for sale this year – and we'll have plenty of stock.” The sale takes place at the Norwegian Church and Community Centre, 5065 Sherbrooke Street, Laval, Québec (<http://www.norskeklubben.ca/locations/norwegian-community-center/>)

Monthly Luncheons



CNS members enjoying the October luncheon

Our members meet for lunch once a month at the historic and beautiful Officers' Mess at 149 Somerset Street West, (just east of Elgin Street), Ottawa. Lunch is served at noon and tickets can be purchased for a very reasonable cost at the bar immediately to your left as you enter the building. (These luncheons have to be one of the best deals in town!) Many of us gather at the bar for a drink and to chat at around 11:30 before moving on to the dining area. You will hear a mix of English and various Nordic languages and lots of interesting conversation. We wear name tags because it is a different mix every time, and this helps us to get to know each other. Please do join us!

Below are the dates of the remaining luncheons for this year:

- November 7
- December 5 (special Christmas lunch - see reservation details below)
- January 9
- February 6
- March 6
- April 3
- May 1
- June 5

Special Christmas Lunch - Reserve Now!

Our Christmas lunch this year promises to be extra special! Our newest CNS Councillor, Tryve Ringereide, along with CNS member Cecilia Ignatieff, are putting their impressive musical credentials to work to prepare a program of singalong English and Scandinavian Christmas songs. If we are lucky, perhaps Trygve will even sing a solo or two for us! If you have suggestion for a favourite Nordic Christmas song, Trygve would love to hear from you! You can contact him at artsandculture@canadiannordicsociety.com

If you wish to attend the Christmas lunch, you must reserve a spot by **Wednesday, November 30**. Contact our treasurer, Lennart Nylund by email at treasurer@canadiannordicsociety.com or by phone at 613-829-8602.

The lunch includes a full turkey dinner with all the trimmings at a cost of \$21.50, payable at the bar on the day of the lunch. We kindly remind our members that the cost does not include a tip and that a tip paid to the bartender does not get passed on to the servers. Please leave your tip on the table to ensure the hard-working Mess servers receive them.

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

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



Interlangues

Language School / École de langues

Interlangues is recruiting for teachers of: Danish, Swedish and Norwegian. Interlangues is a school that provides language training in 72 different languages to employees of the federal government.

The ideal candidate would meet the following criteria:

- Be a native speaker of target language
- Have a post-secondary education from the country of origin
- Have experience in teaching adults
- Be eligible to work in Canada
- Reside in the National Capital Region.

Those who are interested can send their resumes directly to:
noha.fahmi@interlangues.ca. For more information contact Noha Fahmi at 819-965-7028

Join CNS

You can join CNS online, by mail, or in person.

Online

To join 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

In person

You can join in person when you attend one of our luncheons or speaker events. Please speak to any one of our Council members



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

RECEIPT FROM CANADIAN NORDIC SOCIETY

Received From: _____

The amount of: \$ _____ For the year: _____

Date Received: _____

Received by: _____ Title: _____