

October 2016



Nordic News

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

Distinguished Speaker Series

This month's distinguished speaker is **Norway's Ambassador to Canada, Anne Kari H. Ovind**. She will address the CNS on Wednesday, **October 19** at 7:30 PM at the Army Officers' Mess, 149 Somerset Street West, Ottawa. Her topic will be **The High North: Opportunities and Challenges**.



Her Excellency Anne Kari H. Ovind. Photo: Sam Garcia

Ambassador Ovind is uniquely qualified to speak on this topic of great interest to Canada and the Nordic countries. Her official biography on her arrival in Canada earlier this year included, among many other distinguished accomplishments, the following:

Over the past 6 years, she has led the Section for the High North, Polar Affairs and Resources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo. Her responsibilities comprised implementation of Norway's Arctic policy, including coordination across all ministries to produce a coherent and comprehensive policy, the Arctic Council and regional cooperation as well as bilateral relations in the field of Arctic affairs.

As usual, we recommend arriving a little early so you can get your name tag (if you are a member) 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 in the evenings. Please refer to our [Facebook Events Page](#) for information on other upcoming speakers and events.

The CNS Takes Action on Norwegian Veteran's Case

by Hilde Huus

Petter Blindheim is a decorated Veteran of the Royal Norwegian Navy. Like many young men of his generation, he fled to Britain after the Nazi occupation of Norway. Blindheim joined the Royal Norwegian Navy at age 18 and became one of only 27 survivors of the crew of 74 on the corvette *Montbretia* (pictured below). It was Petter Blindheim who heroically removed the primer of its depth charge after the ship was torpedoed. He then came to Camp Norway in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, and remained in Canada after the war. He is now one of the last surviving Norwegian World War II veterans in North America.



On June 2, 2016, the CBC reported that Petter Blindheim was refused admission to the Camp Hill Veterans facility in Halifax, as well as being denied access to long-term care assistance normally granted to Veterans (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/nova-scotia-veteran-norwegian-denied-care-camp-hill-1.3611528>). CNS Council was dismayed by this story. But we were taken aback and indignant when we heard the reasons given by Veterans Affairs Canada for refusing him the treatment normally given to Veterans. Veterans Affairs officials considered Mr. Blindheim to have been a “resistance fighter” rather than a true Veteran. In their opinion, Norway surrendered to Nazi Germany on June 9, 1940, the date that Nazi Germany officially occupied Norway. In addition, the letters from Veterans Affairs to Blindheim stated that Norway was not a member of the Allied Forces.

While it is true that conventional armed resistance to the German invasion ended on June 10, 1940, Norway never surrendered to Nazi Germany. Resistance continued under King Haakon VII and part of his government when they left Norway and formed a government-in-exile, which operated from England. Nazi Germany put pressure on the Norwegian parliament to issue a request that King Haakon VII abdicate. On 3 July, he turned down the request, and on 8 July gave a speech on BBC Radio proclaiming his answer. "The King's No", as it became known, became a great source of inspiration to the Norwegian resistance, which became stronger and more effective as the War progressed. (Note: A 2016 docudrama film regarding King Haakon VII's famous response, "Kongens nei", was selected as the Norwegian entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 89th Academy Awards.)

After the German occupation, both the Royal Norwegian Navy and the Royal Norwegian Air Force were re-established in Britain and saw extensive combat in the North Atlantic and in the air wars over Britain. The Norwegian Army was re-established in Britain. The main armed resistance movement in Norway, called the *Milorg*, was controlled by the government-in-exile, which declared it to be the fourth branch of the Norwegian Armed Forces. At the end of the war, *Milorg* fielded some 40,000 combatants.



Members of "Milorg", the Norwegian resistance, at the Akershus Fortress, Oslo, May 11, 1945

CNS Council could not remain silent to the plight of Mr. Blindheim and the erroneous statements made by Veterans Affairs, and decided to take action. First we posted the CBC article on our Facebook page to alert our members to the situation. Then, in common with many other individuals and organizations nationally, including CBC's Rick Mercer and Rex Murphy, we went to work to see if there was anything we could do to assist him and to set the record straight.

We contacted Mr. Blindheim's son, Peter Blendheim. He suggested that the CNS petition the Minister of Veterans Affairs about this matter. Council did so. A letter was sent to the Honourable Kent Hehr on June 14 (see the June 15, 2016 posting on the [CNS Facebook page](#) for the full text of the letter). We informed our CNS members of the situation and invited them to contact the Minister themselves and several of our members did write personally to the Minister.

CNS received a reply from the Honourable Kent Hehr on July 12 which included the following statement:

Since becoming aware of the challenges faced by Veterans in accessing health care in Nova Scotia, Veterans Affairs Canada has been working very closely with members of Parliament and the Nova Scotia Health Authority to find a solution that ensures the welfare of our Veterans, including Allied Veterans.

On June 24, 2016, we announced a new agreement with the Nova Scotia Health Authority to expand Veterans' access to long-term care at Camp Hill. This collaboration on the part of the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the Department recognizes our Veterans' extraordinary service to Canada and its allies and will provide the flexibility and compassion necessary to help Veterans who require long-term care.

I have also instructed the Department to undertake a review of the Veterans Health Care Regulations so that we can better address the long-term-care needs of our Veterans.

Mr. Blindheim was accepted into the Camp Hill Veterans' Home on June 24, a satisfactory resolution to his plight. But your CNS Council was looking for more than this. We wanted Veterans' Affairs to acknowledge that it was an error to state in their original letter to Mr. Blindheim that Norway had surrendered to Nazi Germany. President Tim Mark contacted Veterans' Affairs to ask them again to clarify this erroneous statement. The resulting August 22 email from Jeff Valois (Director of Parliamentary Affairs), Veterans Affairs stated:

I can confirm for you that with respect to use of the word, "surrender", Veterans Affairs Canada is not the authority on the historical accuracy of this term. However, we understand the sensitivity associated with the terminology and will ensure references to our Allied Veterans use different terminology in future.

Norway was unquestionably an ally of Canada in the Second World War. For the purpose of determining eligibility for Veterans' benefits, "resistance group" is defined in Veterans' legislation as any force that was raised during World War I or World War II in a country after it was occupied by an enemy of His Majesty in that War and that operated against that enemy. Service as a member of the Royal Norwegian Navy raised in England during the period from June 9, 1940 to the end of the War is considered qualifying service. It is not considered resistance service.

We appreciate this regrettable matter being brought to our attention. This matter is truly unfortunate and it definitely was not intended that the language in our products would be insulting or offensive.

The internal policy is currently being revised and the use of this term has now been removed from our correspondence.

As CNS member Trygve Ringereide pointed out in his own letter to the Minister, there is a long military connection between Canada and Norway. A memorial stands in Nova Scotia to the Norwegian sailors and soldiers lost in The Battle of the Atlantic and a similar memorial has stood at the original site of “Little Norway” in Toronto since 1976, honouring the service of the Norwegian airmen who trained there. In 2007, a Memorial and Museum was officially opened at Gravenhurst Airport in Muskoka, attended by many Norwegian veterans from Norway and Canada.

CNS Council has pressed this issue as far as we are able. We recognize that any further efforts will have to be directed through diplomatic channels and we do hope that the Royal Norwegian Embassy will take the matter up with Global Affairs Canada.

Recently Recommended

Our last issue included an item on the Norwegian television series “**Occupied**”, which is showing on TVO on Sunday evenings at 9:00 PM. (Note that the series has not been showing up on TVO’s programming schedule, but is nevertheless showing on Sundays at 9:00 PM). CNS member Ross Francis kindly brought the series to our attention.

That item led other members to recommend a Danish crime television series called “**The Bridge**”, now available on Netflix Canada. It was recently remade as “The Tunnel” in a British/French production shown recently on PBS.

Leo Lehtiniemi recommends a Youtube video of “Atlanterhavsveien” (*click the link to view*), the Norwegian Atlantic Road. The **Atlantic Ocean Road** is an 8.3-kilometer road that runs through several small islands and reefs on the west coast of Norway, connecting the island of Averøy with the mainland at Eide. It offers a spectacular view of the open sea and surrounding landscape as it twists and turns its way from one island to another. Imagine you are the driver as you view this “Norwegian Construction of the Century!”

If you wish to recommend other Nordic shows, films, books, videos, or anything you come across, send an email to communications@canadiannordicsociety.com and we’ll share the information with your fellow CNS members (anonymously if you prefer)!

Other Upcoming Events of Interest

- A traditional **Finnish Thanksgiving Service** will take place on Sunday, October 2 at 3:00 PM at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 400 Sparks Street, Ottawa. Following the service, there will be a coffee social. Please use the parking lot side door entrance and note that the door is locked during the service for security reasons. Everyone is welcome!
- Saturday, November 5 is the date that has been set aside for the extremely popular **Danish Club's annual bazaar**. Watch for more details.

Monthly Luncheons

Our members meet for lunch once a month from September until June at the historic and beautiful Officers' Mess at 149 Somerset Street West, (just east of Elgin Street), Ottawa. There is some parking available in nearby streets, and the Ottawa City Hall parking garage is always open. The City Hall pedestrian exit onto Lisgar Street is just a couple of minutes walk from the Officers' Mess.

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!

Lunch is scheduled for the first Monday of the month this year, with the exception of September. Here is the schedule for the rest of this CNS year.

- October 3
- November 7
- December 5 (our special Christmas lunch - reservations are required)
- January 9
- February 6
- March 6
- April 3
- May 1
- June 5

Contributions to Nordic News

We appreciate receiving your articles and news to include in the *Nordic News*! Please email them to communications@canadiannordicsociety.com

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



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

VOLT®

Workforce Solutions

Volt is currently hiring Nordic localization testers/Proofreaders for a game testing company in Downtown Montreal.

The localization testers will be presented with translated scripts and documents and must proofread to ensure there are no errors.

We are looking for people who can read/write Swedish, Danish, Norwegian or Finish with Native fluency and are available for 24 hours or more a week. Fluent in English is also a must. The position is contractual and on-call.

Benefits of the localization tester role:

- Working with a team of international testers;
- Offices accessible by public transport;
- Unique experience to proofread unreleased games.

Nordic localization tester role:

- Read through the on-screen text to detect errors; - Write error reports;
- Communicate with clients via email;
- All related tasks.

Requirements:

- Native fluency in Swedish, Danish, Norwegian or Finish; - Excellent level in English;
- Computer Literate;
- Valid work permit or Canadian residency/citizenship;
- Interest in Video Games, apps is a good bonus.

If you are interested in this role, please send your resume directly to:

montrealgametesting@volt.com

Thank you!

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: _____