



Nordic News

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

Dates and Forms for Annual General Meeting and Election of Council 2018-2019

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Canadian Nordic Society (CNS) will take place on Wednesday, **May 23**, 2018 at the Army Officers' Mess, 149 Somerset Street West, Ottawa at **7:30 PM**. At the AGM, the Council for 2018-2019 is to be elected. The Nominating Committee is seeking nominations of those individuals prepared to serve actively on CNS Council and thereby contribute to the Society.

If you wish to be nominated, or if you wish to nominate a member of the CNS in good standing for a position on Council, kindly complete the [nomination form](#). If you wish to confirm that a member is in good standing, you may do so by contacting the Treasurer, Lennart Nylund, at treasurer@canadiannordicsociety.com. The Treasurer maintains the up-to-date list of members who have paid their dues for the current year.

Those members unable to attend the AGM may exercise their right to vote through a proxy, who must be named on the [proxy form](#). Each CNS member is entitled to a vote, either in person or by proxy; for those holding a family membership, each family member in good standing and over the age of 18 is eligible to cast a vote.

Nominations must be received by Wednesday, **May 9**, 2018. Don't miss your chance to shape the next CNS Council!

Gerard Kenney and the Canadian/Nordic Connection

by Hilde Huus

What struck me most about John Gilbert's March 21 talk on Gerard Kenney, was Kenney's unusual drive to follow his passions wherever they might lead him. Throughout his life, he seemed to commit himself completely to whatever intrigued him at the time.

John started by explaining how he had first come to know Gerry (as he called him), and to share his passion for the North. When John attended King Alfred School in London, one of his teachers was

Frederick Spencer Chapman. Chapman had participated in two expeditions to Greenland in the early 1930s and it was he who inspired John's early interest in the Arctic. After immigrating to Canada in 1953, John combined his interest in the Arctic with a new interest in radio communications by becoming a radio operator at a small research base called Eureka, on the northern end of North America's most northerly island, Ellesmere Island. In addition to his work as a radio operator, John was responsible for weather observing and recording. The coldest temperature he recorded was -62F.

During the long, dark winters, John passed the time by reading, and that is how he became familiar with the story of the Norwegian explorer Otto Sverdrup. In 1898, Sverdrup and his crew set out in the *Fram* (the same ship that had been used by Fridtjof Nansen in his Arctic expedition, and would later be used by Amundsen in his Antarctic expedition), to see if they could circumnavigate Greenland via Baffin Bay. They were unsuccessful and were forced to overwinter on Ellesmere Island. Between 1899 and 1902, they overwintered there three more times. Sverdrup and his crew explored and mapped the area, including the islands to the west of Ellesmere Island which are now known as the Sverdrup Islands. It was Sverdrup who gave "Eureka" its name, because he was so happy to have finally reached that spot in 1901.

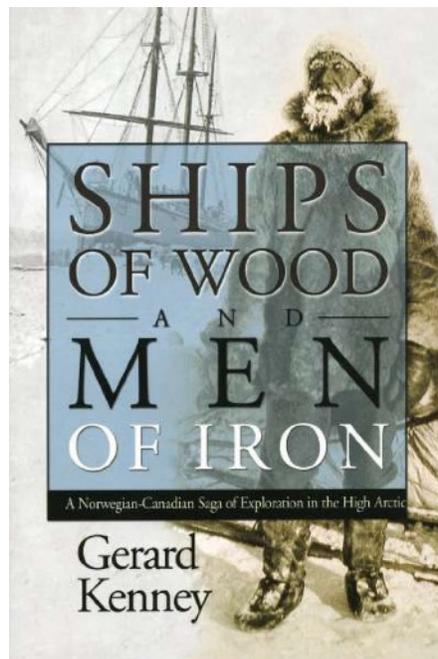


Otto Sverdrup

Like John Gilbert, Gerard Kenney had also lived on Ellesmere Island. His early career was spent working for Bell Canada. While posted at Grise Fjord, at the southern tip of Ellesmere Island, an RCMP officer showed him a grave marker he had come across, with the name Ove Bruskerud inscribed on it. Bruskerud was a member of Otto Sverdrup's crew. He had apprenticed as a smith and signed on to the expedition as a stoker, responsible among other things for tending the fire for the *Fram*'s steam engine. When he died of pneumonia in 1899, Sverdrup had him buried at sea. The marker found by the RCMP officer had been placed on Ellesmere Island as an act of commemoration.

John Gilbert and Gerard Kenney met for the first time in 1970 at a telecommunications meeting in Greenland. By then, Kenney was working for the Arctic Institute of North America, a research and educational institute based at the University of Calgary. He had started writing about the North and this would be a constant theme in his prolific writings for the rest of his life. (He published a great many articles on a wide variety of other subjects as well.) His reports on the North included recommendations and solutions for the challenges facing its inhabitants with regard to self-government, self-expression, and communications. John noted that many were implemented and are now considered best practices worldwide.

Kenney's travels to Scandinavia and Western Canada kindled in him an interest in the discovery of the Northwest Passage. This, coupled with his interest in education, led him to write two books about the North - "Ships of Wood and Men of Iron: A Norwegian-Canadian Saga of Exploration in the High Arctic," and "Dangerous Passages." The first was about Sverdrup's expedition and other Arctic expeditions between 1903 and 1948. "Dangerous Passages" was about the navigation of the Northwest Passage by Roald Amundsen from east to west, and by Henry Asbjorn Larsen from west to east, but it also addressed the environmental and sovereignty issues that Gerry could see were in store for the Arctic. John played us a recording of Gerry reading a passage from "Dangerous Passage," a poignant moment.



Gerry's final book was called "Lake of the Old Uncles," which is the name of the isolated place in Québec where he built a cabin. There he reflected and developed his personal philosophy, inspired by that of Henry David Thoreau. (Note: I checked [amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca) and all three books are available.)



Panorama shot of the evening, courtesy of Nancy Gilbert, the speaker's daughter

After the talk, CNS President Karin Birnbaum recounted how she met Gerry for the first time while walking in the Gatineau Hills. It was Karin who invited Gerry to join the CNS, and he served as its Acting President in 1996.

It was so interesting to hear from John about how the events and interests in Kenney's life were interconnected, and how they were also connected to John's own life. Those connections ultimately led to John Gilbert assisting in the documentation of the collection of Gerard Kenney's papers, which are now deposited at the University of Calgary.

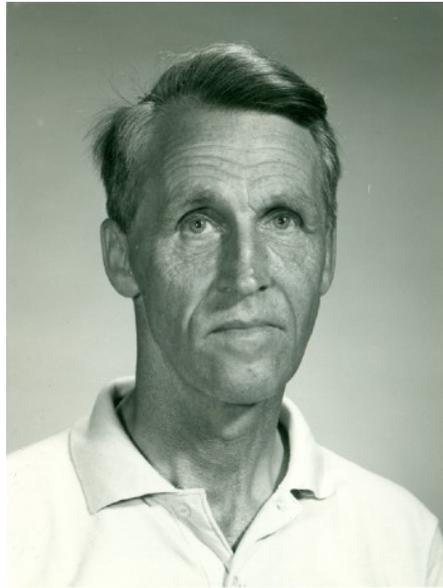
JennyLind Concert on June 7

This is a heads-up to mark the evening of June 7 on your calendar for the annual Jenny Lind Concert, hosted by the Swedish Embassy in collaboration with the CNS. Watch for additional details!

Other Items of Interest

- Thanks to Tuula Bigras for telling me about a cooking show from Norway that she has been watching for some time now, called "**New Scandinavian Cooking**." Tuula notes that it is not a brand new program, but it does feature interesting ingredients, beautiful scenery, and a bit of history on the places where the host, Andreas Viestad, does his cooking. It is on channel 525 on Rogers on **Monday mornings** from 1:30 AM to 2:00 AM, so you will probably want to do as Tuula does and record it for watching later!

Eighth CNS President Lars Öhman (1973 to 1975)



We were very sorry to learn of the death on April 19, 2018, of founding CNS member and Past President Lars Öhman. Below is his obituary as published by Tubman Funeral Homes and the *Ottawa Citizen*, April 24, 2018.

Lars passed peacefully with family at his side on April 19, 2018 at the age of 94. Born in Lycksele, a small town in northern Sweden, he was the eldest of four to parents Halvar and Astrid Öhman, brother to Martin, Margareta and Birgitta. Beloved husband to Svanhild, mother to their 4 children and predeceased in 1987 and then Maria, predeceased in 2016. Father to Viveka, Lars (Janet), Klas (Susie), and Hans (Kelly). Proud Farfar to Anders (Amanda), Tyra, Hannah, Graison, Laniah, Sam, Avery, and Riley.

Lars's career started in Stockholm where he studied at Sweden's Royal Institute of Technology receiving his Master's degree in Aeronautical Engineering. He met Svanhild during this time in Stockholm and in 1950 they married. Prior to coming to Canada, he worked for the Swedish Air Industry Federation (FFA) in Stockholm and SAAB in Linköping as a design engineer.

In June 1960, the young family, five in all, came to Canada by ship immigrating through Halifax's Pier 21 and then to Ottawa for a new opportunity at NRC's world class high speed wind tunnel. Lars's career flourished for over 40 years, retiring as Director of Flight Research at NRC but continuing as a practising Researcher Emeritus well into his 80s. Lars embraced Ottawa and Canada enjoying its outdoors, downhill and cross-country skiing, playing hockey, swimming, jogging, and paddling his canoe at his Pimisi Bay cabin near North Bay. Well cultured, he enjoyed musical concerts at the NAC, playing piano and actively participating in the annual Swedish Santa Lucia festival. A strong supporter of the

Scandinavian community, he was a founding member and past president of the Canadian Nordic Society.

Lars was well regarded by all as a scholarly gentleman and the quintessential “Swede”. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Canadian Cancer Society in memory of Svanhild and Maria. The family would like to extend a special thanks to the staff at Chartwell Riverpark for the thoughtful and dignified care provided during the last years of his life.

Below is an NRC photo of Lars taken in 2007, with the following description: “NRC researcher emeritus Lars Ohman pushes the button to start the 50,000th test conducted in the trisonic blowdown wind tunnel since it opened in 1963.” Lars was described by the NRC as one of Canada’s foremost authorities on the CF-18 Hornet, a Royal Canadian Air Force fighter aircraft.



Lars attended CNS luncheons and events regularly with his wife Maria up until her death in 2016. They were both respected and highly valued members of the CNS and are sadly missed.

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. We encourage you to pay online using PayPal. This is the quickest and most efficient method.

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

In person

You can pay 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

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

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