



The North American Felag (Canada and the United States) of the Vikings UK

Operating as

The Vikings – Vinland

Official

CONSTITUTION

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Official Charter Groups of the Vikings - Vinland

As of

1 April 2009

Torvik Vikings – Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Nordhere – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada

Sons of Lugh – Brandon, Manitoba, Canada

Wolves of the North – Kingston, Ontario, Canada

Odin's Ravens – Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Loki's Brood – Yorkton, Saskatchewan, Canada

Sons of Fenrir – Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Wolves of Wodin – Pincher Creek, Alberta, Canada

Fjellborg Vikings – Denver, Colorado, USA

Orkneyingar – Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA

Islendingur – East LeRoy, Michigan, USA

Austlend – North Carolina, USA

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The Vikings – Vinland Constitution

1. Name

- 1) The name of this organization shall be “The North American Felag (CANADA AND UNITED STATES) of THE VIKINGS-United Kingdom operating as ‘The Vikings - Vinland’ in Canada and the United States. (*Amended*)

2. Basis of Government

- 1) This document will be the governing document of the “Felag” and be known hereafter as the CONSTITUTION.
- 2) The group, herein after referred to as the Felag, was created as and shall remain an affiliate member group of the UK national Dark Age re-enactment society “The Vikings”, herein after referred to as the SOCIETY.
- 3) Each group within the Felag will establish their own set of bylaws that govern their operation. These bylaws must work in harmony with both the Felag and Society Constitutions.
- 4) A local group may have a constitution but it is not mandatory unless the group is a registered not for profit organization and then the constitution will be structured according to local jurisdiction regulations.
- 5) The constitution of the Felag may only be changed by majority vote at a general meeting of the Felag.
- 6) In any matter in which the Felag has power to set rules and regulations, and/or make decisions affecting the running of the Felag, the ultimate authority in such decisions remains with the Jarl, who may keep or delegate that authority as he/she sees fit, and/or appoint advisors and or officers as appropriate, unless this constitution specifically states otherwise.
- 7) Any changes to either the constitution or the rules and regulations must be reported to the membership as hereinafter described.
- 8) The Felag constitution shall be based upon the constitution of the society insofar as practical. This document sets out the Felag constitution in general and identifies any divergence from or additions to the society constitution.
- 9) Where no guidance is given within this document in respect of any particular matter then the society constitution shall apply in as far as the legal system of Canada or the United States permit.

- 10) Where no guidance is given within this document and/or the society constitution then the group leader and group bylaws have power of jurisdiction.

3. Felag Mission Statement

- 1) The Felag is committed to providing the public with demonstrations of Viking life and culture of 790-1066 AD through the activity called re-enactment by the presentation of Living History Exhibitions and Combat.

4. Membership

- 1) Membership in the Felag is open to all people but the granting of membership is at the discretion of the Jarl and Membership officer who reserve the right to refuse an individual membership in the Felag if it is known at the time of application that the member is not of good report or the applicant has been removed from membership previously.
- 2) Only those members, who have established a basic set of clothing consistent with the time period in article 3, section 1 above, may participate in historical re-enactment events.
- 3) Members who do not have period kit may borrow from others in order to participate or may participate in events by taking on support and logistic roles if they choose not to wear appropriate period correct kit.
- 4) Active membership will be defined as those individuals having paid their annual membership fee to the Felag and the Society by March 1 of each new membership year.
- 5) There are two types of membership: Adult (18 years of age and over) and Junior (up to 17 years 364 Days). Juniors may participate with parental/guardian permission but parents must be in attendance when their children participate.
- 6) The term of membership will be January 1-December 31.
- 7) If a member quits the Felag part way through the year, there will be no return of membership fees.
- 8) If a member joins for the first time after September 1 of the current year, their membership fee will be paid until December 31 of the following year.
- 9) A member of the Felag may not continue as a member if they are expelled from the society or their application for membership is refused by the society at renewal.

- 10) Any member expelled from or resigning from the Felag is also deemed to be expelled from or deemed to have resigned from the Society, excepting that the Felag may not over-rule the Society. The Society or Konungr may decide to allow the member to continue their Society membership as a provincial member upon receipt of a petition to this effect; such petition to be made to the Konungr in writing within one (1) calendar month of said expulsion or resignation from the Felag, and with the decision of the Konungr being final and binding, and to be conveyed to the ex-member and Felag. (*Amended*)
- 11) Any person joining the Felag will be considered a member of the nearest local group to them geographically. Should a member not be geographically close to any group, they will be considered a provincial member of the Felag but are expected to train with the nearest group whenever possible.
- 12) A provincial member is defined as an adult member with or without children who are members who does not have a local group to meet with nor is there a local group within reasonable driving distance from the member's residence.
 - a) A provincial member may attend any event of any group of the Felag or society provided that event is open to all re-eanctors.
 - b) In case or cases where a local group is contracted specifically to put on an event, it will be up to the contracted local group leader's discretion to permit provincial members or members of another group to participate in the contracted group's event.
 - c) A provincial member may hold any position within the Felag or society as their assessments, training and experience permit.
 - d) A provincial member is otherwise afforded all benefits and privileges of membership and is duly bound by this document and the Society constitution in all circumstances. (*amended – New item 12 a-d*)

5. Conduct of Members

- 1) Members of the Felag are expected to conduct themselves in the best possible manner when engaged in the activities of the Felag in accordance with the Constitution of the Felag and the Society. Common sense, good judgement and appropriate behaviour in the eyes of the public are important to be aware of at all times.
- 2) Members will not engage in activities that create drama, cause hard feelings or injure a member physically or emotionally. Members will not engage in activities that directly or indirectly undermines the efforts of Felag or its officers.

- 3) Members will not engage in the illegal use of illicit substances at or during any event. Any member found to be under the influence at any event, will be immediately banned from the Felag and may be banned from the Society at the discretion of the Konungr.
- 4) Members will endeavour to accurately portray the Viking cultures in all aspects as set down by the society and Felag constitution and published standards.
- 5) A member who disagrees with the decision of an officer may air that grievance with the officer in question first IN PRIVATE! Then a member will go to their Group Leader with that grievance if they have not achieved satisfaction.
- 6) Failure of a member to adhere to the constitution in any capacity maybe subject to removal as a member of the Felag by the Jarl and possibly expulsion from the Society by the Konungr.
- 7) A member may be removed from the Felag by the Jarl if it is determined that the member's conduct is detrimental to the Felag in any capacity. The Jarl has the responsibility to exercise due diligence in collaboration with Group Leaders before making this determination.
- 8) The Jarl may recommend to the Konungr that a member be removed from the Society if it is determined according to article 5, section 6 that the member's conduct merits such action. Final decision regarding membership in the society is the complete prerogative of the Konungr.
- 9) Should a member wish to grieve their removal from the Felag, then they may do so as per the Society constitution.

6. Fees

- 1) Fees will be assessed annually to all members and will be adjusted according to the operating needs of the Felag for the next operating year. Any surplus may be rolled over to offset costs or donated to DARF at the end of the fiscal year.
- 2) The Felag will set its fees independently of the Society Fee.

7. Insurance

IN CANADA:

- 1) The Felag may carry public liability insurance. This may be done collectively or individually as required by member groups. The minimum public liability will be \$2,000,000.00 (Canadian Funds) annually.
- 2) All members are covered for public liability, property theft and damage and injury to or by the public while in the performance of re-enactment in Canada.
- 3) Members are not covered for injuring themselves during training or in shows. If one member injures another then there is coverage. Non-resident members who participate while in Canada are covered

- 4) Resolution of insurance claims will be handled by the Jarl or Membership Officer according to the rules and procedures of the policy in effect.
- 5) The age of majority is determined by the local province or state in which the member resides and insurance regulations regarding age of majority will be adhered to in the local jurisdiction.
- 6) In Canada, the cost of insurance will be shared equally among all resident members.

IN THE UNITED STATES

- 1) In the US, the cost of insurance will be divided equally among all those who are resident members of the US.
- 2) All US resident members are covered for public liability, property theft and damage and injury to or by the public while in the performance of re-enactment in the USA and CANADA.
- 3) Members are not covered for injuring themselves during training or in shows. If one member injures another then there is no coverage. Non-resident UK or CA members who participate while in the US are covered. US members must sign a waiver to this effect.
- 4) Resolution of insurance claims will be handled by the Jarl and Policy holder according to the rules and procedures of the policy in effect.
- 5) The age of majority is determined by the local province or state in which the member resides and insurance regulations regarding age of majority will be adhered to in the local jurisdiction.
- 6) The US based groups will carry a minimum of \$2,000,000.00 (US Funds) in public liability.

7. Dissolution

- 1) The Felag is not responsible for society procedures in respect of dissolution of the society and will not be held responsible for any costs that members may incur due to their membership in the society.
- 2) In the event of dissolution of the Felag, all Felag documents and files will be destroyed and any funds retained will be donated to DARF in the United Kingdom.

8. Felag Officers

- 1) All Felag officers are required to actively work with members in their responsibilities as needed and as personal time permits.

- 2) The Jarl, Membership Officer and DARF Officer are elected positions, the other Officers are appointed accordingly by the Jarl based on the descriptions contained herein.
- 3) Felag officers will have attained the minimum rank of Drengr in order to hold an officer position except the DARF Officer position. In the event that a Drengr is not available, a Frihal may hold the position except for Jarl and Membership officer as long as they are qualified for the position.
- 4) Felag officers must be certified as an RTT or CAT or other Society qualifications to hold the positions of Combat, Archery, LHE, -Cavalry or Authenticity respectively, as set out herein.
- 5) Authority of Thegn: The individuals in the positions of Training, Authenticity or LHE Thegn have the obligation to enforce the Society's rules and regulations. Their word is final on the field.

a. Individual Roles and Responsibilities of the Viking Officers:

i. Jarl:

1. Elected every 3 years by popular vote of the membership – needs ratification by the Konungr.
2. Needs 3 nominations for position.
3. Organize and Chair the Annual General Meeting.
4. Organize special Meetings of the officers as required.
5. Set rules and regulations consistent with the Constitution
6. Delegates projects and assignments to officers as required
7. Act as a contact person for public enquiries.
8. Encourage officers and group leaders to take leadership roles by allowing them to organize events and trainers.
9. Provide guidance and direction to all officers and Group Leaders.
10. Act in good faith for the benefit of all members when acting in the capacity of Jarl.
11. Establishes operating rules and regulations in consultation with the membership.
12. Work in unison with the Membership Officer
13. May remove a member from the Felag for misconduct, but not the Society.
14. May not be a group leader.
15. May hold more than one officer position.
16. Liaises with the UK as the voice of the Felag.
17. May be voted out as Jarl with 70% vote at AGM or forced out with letter requesting resignation signed by 70% of membership.
18. May recommend a replacement in the event of early resignation in good standing, for the remainder of the current term of office.
19. Must be a Drengr or above
20. Must have served as a Felag Officer for two years.
21. Must have served as a Group Leader for at least two years.

22. Report all financials to the Group Leaders in the form of an annual income statement and balance sheet or when requested to do so by the membership in the event of extenuating circumstances.

ii. Felag Second in Command (2iC)

1. Responsible for assuming the duties of the Felag Jarl or other officers in his or her absence.
2. Appointed by the Jarl on a year to year basis
4. Organize and track minutes of meetings of Officers, and the general membership
5. Advise the Jarl on and track and report all matters of a disciplinary nature regarding member conduct
6. Acting in good faith for the benefit of all members
7. Must have had at least two years experience as a group leader
8. Must have held an officer's position for at least one year at the Felag level
9. Must be the rank of Drengr or above
10. Work in tandem with the Jarl and the other officers to uphold and maintain the tenets and directives contained herein.
11. May be a Recognized Training Thegn or Certified Authenticity Thegn but may not hold another officer position.
12. Must be a member in good standing.
13. May not be a group leader during term of office

ii. Membership Thegn:

1. Act as contact person for UK membership Officer.
2. collect fees for membership
3. Organize and track membership statistics, personal information and assessments.
4. Acts in the place of the 2iC when the 2iC is unavailable
5. Distribute the Runestaff if needed
6. Notify members of changes in membership standards, fees etc.
7. Pay administration costs as required.
8. May hold more than one officer position.
9. May be a group leader. (*Amended*)
10. Elected every three years, must be nominated by 2 or more different members. (*Amended*)
11. Must be a Drengr

iii. Felag Combat/Archery Training Thegns (2 positions)

1 Combat Thegn, 1 Archery Thegn

1. Must be a Recognized Training Thegn for Combat or Archery by the society

2. Must be a Frihal
3. Responsible for all combat/archery training issues and related documentation
4. Responsible for training standards and assessment
5. Reports regularly to group trainers about training related issues.
6. Liaises with the Society Training Thegn
7. Appointed by Jarl

iv. Felag Village Training Thegn.

1. Must be a Recognized Training Thegn for Living History Exhibitions (LHE)
2. Must be a Frihal
3. Responsible for all training for LHE
4. Reports regularly to group LHE
5. Liaises with the Society LHE Thegn
6. LHE Thegn is appointed by the Jarl

v. Felag Authenticity Thegn.

1. Must have been a group AO for a minimum of two years
2. Must be a Frihal
3. Responsible for the authentic portrayal of clothing and kit for the Felag
4. Reports regularly to the Group Authenticity Officers
5. Liaises with the Society Authenticity-Team and the Society Authenticity Thegn
6. Appointed by Jarl
7. Must have a sound knowledge of all types of period 760-1066 kit and have completed a secondary kit check toward Drengir promotion.

vi. Felag Health and Safety Thegn

1. Must be certified in CPR and First Aid (emergency)
2. Must be familiar with society Health and Safety regulations
3. Must be a Frihal.
4. Liaises with the Society HS Thegn
5. Appointed annually

vii. DARF Officer (DARK AGES RELEIF FUND)

1. Responsible for organizing

2. Making disbursements of the fund in time of emergency to members who require financial assistance.
3. Must have been a member of the Society for a minimum of one year.
4. Elected every three years.*(amended)*
5. Disbursements will be made in consultation with the Jarl as the need arises.

9. Elections

- 1) The Jarl, Membership Officer and DARF officer will be elected by September 1, (to serve the following calendar year) annually for the membership officer and the DARF officer and every three years for the Jarl by a simple majority vote. A quorum of 34% of the active membership is required to be present at the election meeting. Elections will be held at the AGM.
- 2) Officers must be nominated by two members and must be willing to accept the nomination to be eligible for election.

10. Meetings

- 1) The Felag will have one annual general meeting or “Althing” to be held at Gimli during the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba. This choice is made given that the majority of members of the Felag attend this event annually. This Althing will be held after hours on Sunday. The date of the AGM will be subject to the Civic Long weekend in Canada and falls on the first Sunday of the Month of August each year. This will continue until such time as this location may no longer be viable or another suitable method of election is achieved.
- 2) The Jarl may call an extraordinary meeting of members or officers as the need arises. Time and location will be determined by convenience to members or officers. This meeting may take the form of a face-to-face meeting or may be done by conference call or live connect via the internet.

11. Committees

- 1) Committees will be established by any officer with approval of the Jarl as deemed necessary. These committees will be responsible for organizing, publicizing, and recruiting volunteers for various projects and events put on throughout the year.

12. Local Groups

- 1) A local group may be established when there are three – (3) adult members in the same geographical location who, by their own interest and commitment decide to create a group. A letter must be sent to the Jarl expressing intent. In order for a group to form, it must have:
 - a. a name
 - b. a group leader
 - c. a training officer
 - d. an authenticity officer
 - e. and an LHE officer
 - f. a specific cultural portrayal within the 790-1066 Viking age
- 2) Any member can hold one or more positions at the group level.

13. Affiliations

- 1) The Vikings-Vinland is officially a member organization of The VIKINGS of the United Kingdom and affiliated to all groups united under the Society. However, the Felag occasionally works in cooperation with other national and international re-enactment organizations.

14. Ratification

- 1) This constitution must be ratified by a 51% majority of the membership in attendance at a general meeting. (*RATIFIED, AUGUST 1, 2009 GIMLI, MANITOBA*)

15. Due Notice

- 1) Members will receive due notice of all functions of the Felag. This may be in the form of a newsletter, published in print or published electronically through the yahoo group or the Felag website.

16. Amendments

- 1) The constitution amendments must be ratified by a 51% majority of the voting membership.

17. Yahoo Groups

- 1) The use of the Yahoo Group List serve as an election tool is possible in the event that quorum is not obtained at a gathering of members and must be conducted in the form of an online poll. In this event an electoral officer will be appointed by the Jarl to manage the poll.

18. Privacy

- 1) The Felag will not release any personal information to any outside agencies unless it is for the purpose of reimbursement or emergency and then only with a member's consent.

19. Media

- 1) The Felag and its officers will endeavour to portray the organization within the media in a way that is consistent with the society constitution. Members' images may be used by the society or Felag to promote the organization in a dignified and respectful manner as long as permission has been obtained by the owner of the images.
- 2) If an individual is contracted to take photographs for the Felag, then the photographer will not release those photos to any party outside the Felag for any reason without express written consent from the Jarl and the individuals in the picture. Such activities will be governed in a separate document between the Felag and the individual.

20. Employment as a Re-enactor

- 1) Should a member be approached to work in a capacity for a wage as a reenactor, then that member is solely responsible for reporting any income earned to their appropriate tax jurisdiction. The Felag will not be held liable for any members' personal tax obligations.

21. Payment for Appearances

- 1) Any remuneration for an appearance of a Group or Groups will be managed by the local group leader or in the event of a large event, the event coordinator according to the method agreed to by the members participating. Should the Felag be required to turn out in full, then any remuneration will be divided among those participating by the Jarl or Membership Officer on an ad-hoc basis depending on circumstances at the time.

21. Felag Finances

- 1) The Jarl will establish and keep record of all financial transactions for the Felag through the use of a bank account.
- 2) The Bank account will be in the name of The Vikings-Vinland and have up to four officers as signatories and a minimum of two signatories required for any disbursement. The Jarl will hold the Felag cheque book.
- 3) The Bank account will have the Jarl, 2iC, Membership Officer and one other felag officer as signatories

- 4). Expenses will be discussed with group leaders as they arise. Disbursement of felag funds will be handled by the Jarl, 2iC and Membership officer in a way that is fiscally responsible and conservative.
- 5). The Membership Officer will have a discretionary fund of 300.00 per year to use for expenses related to membership fees and administration costs. Any remaining funds at the end of the year shall be carried forward to the next year. All receipts must be kept and submitted to the Jarl for accounting purposes.
- 6). No officer shall incur an expense in the name of The Vikings-Vinland without first getting prior approval from the Group Leaders and Officers. Any attempt to do so will result in the immediate removal of the Officer from their position and possible removal as a member from the Society. (Zero Tolerance)
- 7). Reporting of financials shall be made annually with monthly bank statements attached at the AGM.

Provenance of the name Vinland

*The island ("insula") of Vinland ("Winland") was first recorded by Adam of Bremen, a German ([Saxon](#)) geographer and historian, in his book *Descriptio insularum Aquilonis* of approximately 1075. To write it he visited Danish king [Svend Estridson](#), who had knowledge of the northern lands.*

The main source of information about the Viking voyages to Vinland is derived from two Icelandic [sagas](#), [The Saga of Eric the Red](#) and the [Saga of the Greenlanders](#). These sagas were written down approximately 250 years after the settlement of Greenland and are open to considerable breadth of interpretation. Combining those two, it seems that there were possibly two separate attempts to establish a Norse settlement in Vinland, neither of which lasted for more than two years. The disbandment of the small Viking colony seems to have had several causes. Disagreements among the men about the few women that followed on the trip, and fighting with an unidentified group of indigenous people (called "[skrælingar](#)" in the Sagas) already living in the area, are both indicated in the written sources.

The two Sagas tell that after the settlement of Greenland by the Vikings, a merchant by the name of [Bjarni Herjólfsson](#) set sail from [Iceland](#) to Greenland to visit his father, a new settler in Greenland. His ship was blown off course by a storm and thus accidentally discovered a new land, presumably the east coast of North America, in 985 or 986. It was late in the summer, and he did not want to overwinter in this new land, which he noted was covered with forests, so he did not land and managed to reach Greenland before winter fell. He then afterwards told the story and sold ships to [Leifr Eiríksson](#). With wood being in very short supply in Greenland, the settlers there were eager to explore the riches of this new land. Some years later Leifr Eiríksson explored this coast, and established a short-lived colony on a part of the coast that he called Vinland. (Source: [Wikipedia.com](#))

The name Vinland was adopted by Vikings Canada on September 28, 2009 by majority vote as their official name. The Vikings – Vinland!