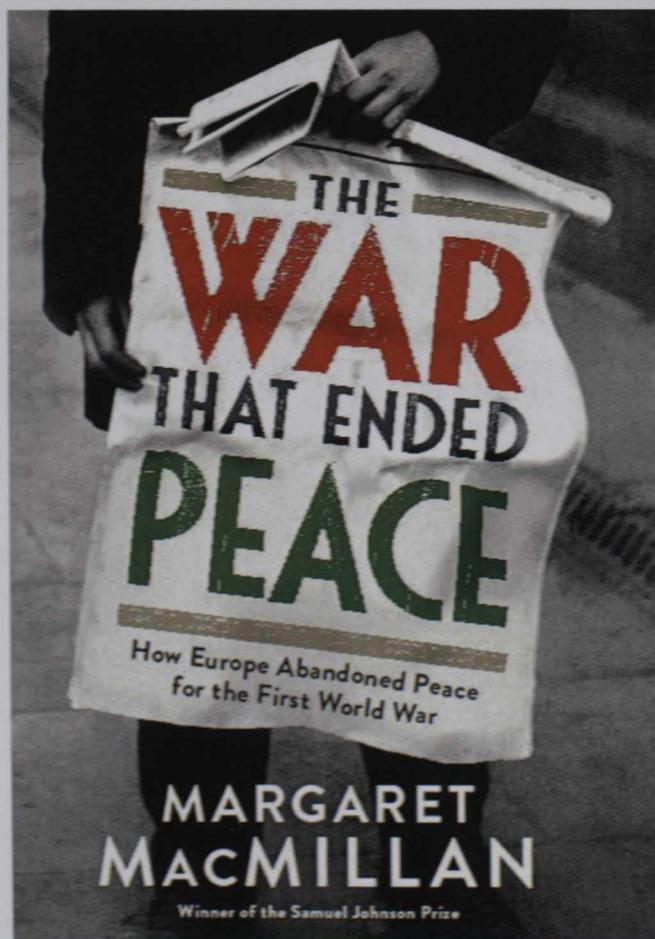


is believed to be integral to Finnish culture and put it into action. Through the course of my life adventures I have had the privilege to meet many non-Finns who have demonstrated remarkable fortitude and courage. The potential lies in everyone to do remarkable things, but *sisu* specifically is what connects all Finns through our inherent cultural expectation to step up to adversity and meet challenges head on. I have personally recognized it in myself as a police officer, soldier, husband and most importantly, as a father. I have proudly begun to pass the *sisu* spirit to my children Markus and Maija Valtonen.

The periods of extreme adversity that have faced the Finnish people demonstrates how *sisu* has woven itself into the fabric of Finnish culture and connects us with our Finnish heritage no matter where we are around the world.

To all those veterans and Lottas, whose numbers are becoming fewer and fewer with each passing year, *Kiitos!* It is now our duty and responsibility to embody the Finnish *sisu* spirit. We will make sure we as Finnish Canadians do not forget your sacrifice allowing us the opportunity to live full lives and to pass our proud Finnish heritage to the next generation.

*Lieutenant-Colonel John M. Valtonen has been a serving Infantry Officer with the Canadian Armed Forces – Reserve Force for the past 27 years. He is the past Commanding Officer of the 2nd Bn Irish Regiment of Canada and Algonquin Regiment in Northeastern Ontario. He has deployed with NATO forces to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Afghanistan. John M. Valtonen has also been a Canadian police officer for the past 25 years and holds the rank of Staff Sergeant with the Greater Sudbury Police Service.*



*Margaret MacMillan's history books are available throughout Finland's library network.*