

Pikkujoulu – Kymmenen Hyvää Asiaa (Ten Good Things)

by Katrina Engblom Bousquet

On Saturday, December 3, 2022, FAHS members, friends and families gathered to celebrate the annual *Pikkujoulu* at the Finnish Hall in Canterbury, CT. It was a well-attended and lively event.

Here are the ten good things that happened on that day:

1. About fifty people, young and old, attended the celebration.
2. The potluck luncheon, following the December membership meeting, was delicious, with a variety of good food and treats. Everyone was so happy to be together.
3. The raffle was a great success. The adult table and the children's table were full of wonderful prizes, thanks to the generosity of the donors. The winners were thrilled to receive their prizes.
4. My wonderful and hardworking young helpers for the raffle, Jordan, Maddy, Ben and Will made the raffle go smoothly. Kiitos, you guys!
5. Thanks to the generosity of our attendees, \$330 was raised and donated to the Canterbury Cares Food Pantry. This donation was happily received and will make a difference in our local community.
6. Anita Smiley organized and managed a sales table as well and raised over \$180, selling many quality items from the display case in the kitchen. This money will go to the FAHS general fund.
7. The live Christmas tree raffle was a success, organized by Stan Karro. The tree was generously donated by The Allen Hill Tree Farm. The winner gifted the tree to Matti and Marcia Huhta.
8. Santa visited our party this year. Kiitos, George Sipila*, for your generous donation of your time and talent. Your faithful commitment to this party is treasured. The children loved to see you again!
9. Live piano music and vocals were again supplied by our one and only Sean Tate. His talents and joyful spirit really helped to make our party special. Kiitos, Sean!
10. Everyone came together to make this special annual event happen, from the pot luck cooks, hall decorators, prize donors, raffle ticket purchasers, and attendees to the kind people who stayed late to help clean up the hall. As always, all the help that went into this event is very much appreciated.



*Sadly, George passed away unexpectedly on January 11, 2023. We will miss our *joulupukki*.



Matti & Marcia Huhta
Photo by Katrina Bousquet



Inka Pallasvesa, Finnish exchange student (second from left), enjoyed the pikkujoulu with her host family. From left, Anita Smiley, Inka, Amelia, Elizabeth and Raymond Carney from Preston. Photo by Stan Karro.

Andrew Harmon-Second Scholarship Awardee 2023

by Sean Tate

The Scholarship Committee of the Finnish American Heritage Society awarded two \$1,000 scholarships in 2022. As noted in the Fall Newsletter, the first scholarship awardee was *Elizabeth Hawes-Weeks*. The second awardee was *Andrew Thomas Harmon* of North Kingstown, Rhode Island.

Andrew Harmon is the son of Donna and Paul Harmon of North Kingstown, R.I. and grandson of FAHS members Mary Ellen and Bob Harmon. Andrew noted in his application essay that when his “great, great grandfather first came to this country from Hiitola, Finland, he found a small but thriving Finnish community. Families relied on each other for support. They had a sense of community responsibility.” Andrew looks forward to promoting civic responsibility and enforcing the laws of the United States after achieving his Criminal Justice degree.

Andrew’s career goal is in Federal Law Enforcement and he connects that goal with the Finnish ideals of civic responsibility, perseverance and sportsmanship. He cites his *sisu* as he has advanced in his chosen sport, the hammer throw, to become one of the top ten in the nation. He is pursuing his higher education at the University of Maryland (UMD) in College Park, MD; a university that is one of the top choices for FBI candidates. The scholarship is intended to help with university tuition.



Andrew Harmon with the UMD mascot, Tsetuto. Photo from family.

The Finnish American Heritage Society is proud to assist Andrew in his higher education and career goals.

Kerro Tarina – to tell a story

by Susan Cloutier

Four years ago, Mom [June Leiss] and I drove to the Jersey Shore, and passed a sign for the city of Lakehurst.

Mom commented, “I know Lakehurst. I saw the Hindenburg just hours before it exploded.”

I asked her, “Why didn’t you tell me sooner?” “I didn’t think it was important,” she responded.

Looking back, I came close to never learning about her place in history. Don’t miss out!

[Read the full story in the Summer 2020 newsletter found on www.fahs-ct.org]

Consider this writing prompt: Look around your house or your barn. Do you see something from your Finnish Heritage? Birch bark shoes? A sauna pail? Or a random reindeer? It might have some special meaning for you.

Why not write about one of these items, and uncover its deeper meaning?

Please contact Susan at susanhinz413@gmail.com for more information about the FAHS Writers’ Group.

Anita Smiley Feted at 30th Annual FinnFunn

by Rob Ranta

Anita Häkklä Smiley, supported by husband Jack, conceived in 1993 of a gathering of New England Finnish and Finnish-Americans as a means of building community across the six states. From simple beginnings of socializing on a hotel front porch in the White Mountains in New Hampshire, FinnFunn New England Weekend established strong roots that have supported an annual gathering to this day as we celebrated the 30th anniversary of FinnFunn on October 28-30, 2022, at the Inn at East Hill Farm, Troy, NH.

Anita's slide show of the past thirty years of FinnFunn celebrated the Finnish spirit. During this time, New England's now nine Finlandia Foundation chapters and a group in New York have prepared varied, engaging programs, complemented by FinnFunn Weekends produced by the planning committee and held at East Hill Farm, our anchor location.

As a surprise, Anita was deservedly honored for her determination, vision, and life-long commitment to preserving Finnish heritage and culture locally and in North America plus her initiatives linking American Finns to Finland since the mid-1990s.

Roy Helander, Jackie Harjula, David Maki, Stan Karro, Steve Bousquet, and Rob Ranta paid tribute to Anita while Anne-Mari Paster, president of Finlandia Foundation National (FFN), detailed Smiley's vital participation in and multiple contributions to the national organization. Messages from Jim Kurtti, former FAR editor, Ossi Rahkonen, past president of FFN, and son Greg Smiley rounded out the heartfelt words of appreciation and admiration for an amazing woman.

Co-chair Stan Karro presented Anita with a plaque. Its message acknowledged her FinnFunn labor of love; in turn, she challenged us to keep the spirit of FinnFunn alive for another thirty.

The program included entertainment, activity, culture, and socializing with old friends and new from throughout New England and from Arizona, New Jersey, New York and Canada. First-weekend participants Betty and John Erkkila of Rockport, Mass., remarked about the "heartwarming fellowship and chats with other Finnophiles" while presenter Dr. Hilary-Joy Virtanen commented on "how easy it was to get to know New England Finns and the strong Finnish communities they represent."

This was the year of the accordion. We were treated to the music of headliner Brent Buswell, virtuoso accordionist, who at 12, people recalled, jammed with his mentor Bert Stromholm, resident FinnFunn accordionist. Brent's repertoire featured Finnish and American standards like the "Säkkijärven Polkka" and on Saturday the toe-tapping "Orange Blossom Special." Many performed quick, familiar dance steps, bodies swaying, and hummed tunes as they ambled from the hall at the program's end.

Earlier, Buswell played a rousing march for The Parade of Masks. Participants displayed their self-designed Moomin character stick masks; others donned Halloween costumes befitting the season. Emcee Stephen Trimble guided the happy-go-lucky lot around the hall to audience clapping.

Bernie Nowak, who followed Stromholm as FinnFunn accordionist, delighted listeners; his Nordic and American music drifted throughout the tori/marketplace in the Troy School gym, blending with the memory-inducing aroma of pulla. At the Inn, Bernie entertained people gathering for the event, during the receptions and interludes.

FinnFunn participants and the public pored over the 23 exhibitors' goods ranging from quilts to *pukkos*[puukkos]/knives, pulla, jewelry and handmade items of the season. Vendors and customers alike appreciated the organization of experienced tori manager Martha Silander.

Everyone enjoyed the Revontulet Finnish dancers, garbed in brightly-colored traditional dress, who demonstrated several traditional folk dances, the first to "Langdäns Närpiösta." Dance director Leila Luopa taught audience volunteers dance steps; then they joined the Finnish dancers for a trip around the floor.

The upbeat sounds of Christine Anderson and the Oivan Ilo dance band accompanied the dancers. The ensemble later played Finnish music for dancing and listening. The program consisted of polkkas,



Anita Häkklä Smiley
Founder of FinnFunn
Photo by Steve Henrikson

schottisches (jenkkas), including "Penttilän Sillila" and "Schottische från Norbotten," for both upright and seated dancers. The tunes evoked for many the dances at Finn halls in earlier days when parents, grandparents and dance groups twirled about. The band closed with a favorite waltz, "Metsäkukka." Several people in casual conversation concurred that live music as a shared experience unifies a group.

Busy hands (and minds) make a happy heart. Folks who selected hands-on, minds on activities created Joulutorttu and a wine bottle Tonttu topper with Laura Henrikson, a himmeli with Eeva Malool, Finnish painted rocks and a Moomin mask with Jean Brunter and Arlene Baril, respectively, and a birch bark Finnish friendship ring with Elaine Moe.

Tin melting is a Finnish tradition typically practiced at New Years. Those who attended Hilary-Joy Virtanen's tin melting session learned their future through the form the melted tin took when immersed in cold water. A horse shape in modern readings means a new car. A woman's head suggests bad neighbors. Many feverishly scoured their tin shape and the shadows it created in hopes it had clustered which brings the promise of wealth.

The Find the Moomin activity, organized by Arlene Baril, took people outside on a sunshine-filled, fall day to locate hidden Moomin; those who discovered all ten received a prize from the Moomin Company. Seven wordsmiths employed physical, mental, and shared activity in Susan Cloutier's Writing Workshop. They penned stories using collaborative strategies for improved outcomes. Folks who reserved a space in Mark Babson's Abundance Mobile Sauna exerted physical activity too--through relaxation!

The weekend opened on a lighthearted note with laughter and cheer generated by Stephen Trimble's humorous Finnish stories and jokes and similarly closed on Sunday with Finnish Jeopardy! Teams "battled" for first place, assisted by an eager audience, to fashion questions in response to host Michael Cappello's answers taken from the big board.

In between the merriment, an array of heritage and cultural presentations formed the program's core. Attracting attention was a participant-created triptych of photographs depicting our Finnishness--photos, for instance, of home life, club and church activities, festivals, work, and Finn halls. Jean Brunter coordinated the activity.

Jenna Carroll's presentation through artifacts, literature, music, among others, provided a vivid, specific instance of the immigrant experience of Finns in Southwest New Hampshire. Attendees identified several comparisons to their forebears' immigrant journey.

A well-attended discussion about the role of nature and sisu, central themes in three current books about Finnish life, generated lots of audience commentary ably guided by leader Patti Folsom.

David Maki, editor of the *Finnish American Reporter* (FAR) and director of the Finnish American Heritage Center in Hancock, MI, spoke eloquently about both the Center's role as sole repository of Finnish American materials, and the critical importance of the FAR monthly newspaper as a community builder spanning North America. We left confident about Maki at the helm in both positions because his leadership is rooted in Finn nature. Do it the right way, or not at all.

Amber Broderick, musicologist, educator, and flutist, returned by video recording prepared expressly for FinnFunn. Her guided listening of Sibelius' "Pohjola's Daughter" provided a deeper understanding and appreciation for a general audience.

Hilary-Joy Virtanen, professor of Nordic Studies at Finlandia University, collaborated with Broderick on this topic; Virtanen explained how stories from spoken folklore and written sources like the "Kalevala" inspired Sibelius to transpose the spoken and written word into musical notes for his tone poem.

Dr. Virtanen later spoke about beings in traditional Finnish folklore. Spirits and beings are not cuddly Tonttus/elves but were believed to be helpers to farmers, many working for positive results (good), others, maybe not (evil), both helping to explain a bountiful crop or a disastrous flood, for example.

Everyone gathered in the main hall to hear Leonard Kopelman, Boston attorney and Honorary Consul of Finland, speak about Finland and NATO and Finlandization, the latter a policy Finland adopted during the Cold War to maintain its independence from the then Soviet Union. Dr. Kopelman had recently returned from a series of meetings in Finland. His view is that of Finland being accepted into NATO in spring 2023

and, as a result, Russia's facing the force of a one billion NATO population across the member nations. He drew attention to NATO countries Turkey and Hungary whose authoritarian drift contradicts a basic tenet of NATO-advocating democracy. Because Finlandization is beyond its "use by" date, Leonard saw Ukraine's adoption of the outdated policy as inapplicable.

Michael Cappello and team managed the number of donated items for the raffle table which exceeded the count from past years thereby increasing the number of happy winners. Especially noteworthy is the increase in donations from businesses, many of whom advertise in FAR. Local Granite Roots Brewing was on hand with several of its 10 types of beer for tasting.

This year, a silent auction consisting of several upscale items whetted the appetite of people drawn to high stakes competition. Treasurer Ron Joki's satisfied look betrayed the total revenue taken in to cover FinnFunn 2022 expenses while leaving a cushion for next year.

The plentiful, delicious home-style cooking prepared by the Inn's kitchen staff and served family style by courteous and accommodating servers addressed another kind of appetite. Strong coffee, pulla and homemade cookies kept body and soul together at peckish moments. The kitchen and lodging staffs, both managed by Holly Luopa LeClair, provided first-rate guest care.

Attendees' comments cite good fellowship and quality program offerings to sum up our thirtieth anniversary weekend. Oliver Pajunen and Janice McGinn, Bradford, Ontario, praised the program's quality and variety in addition to the warm and friendly atmosphere. Barbara Youngberg of West Sand Lake, New York, a participant for over a decade, concurred, adding she "learns something new about Finnish culture each year," enjoys hearing Finnish stories and looks forward to the "casual conversations" that spring up.

Anna-Liisa Sidden of Ballston Lake, New York, says the weekend "feels like home and loves being with fellow Finns who share her heritage." Ruth and Tom Noonan, frequent participants from Clinton, Mass., echoed Sidden's strong sense of place. "Everyone is friendly at FinnFunn. We enjoy the shared warm feeling about our Finnish heritage." Linda Guinter and Steve Huhta "loved their visit to FinnFunn"; its array of programming was more than they expected and "well worth" the travel from Arizona.

Webmaster Steve Henrikson will post photos of FF22 [FinnFunn22] to reminisce as well as to encourage others near and far to attend the 2023 FinnFunn next year in Gloucester and Rockport, Mass.

<https://capeannchamber.com/visit-cape-ann/> In January, preliminary information about FF23 [FinnFunn23] goes online and expands as October 27-29 nears. Check back often. Please join us.

* Note: this article is reproduced, with permission, from a recent edition of the Finnish American Reporter (FAR), associated with Finlandia University in Hancock, MI. FAR is a monthly, English-language journal featuring articles of interest to Finns across North America.

To subscribe to FAR, click on this link: <https://www.finlandia.edu/far/subscribe/> or call 906-487-7549.

FAHS Museum Makeover Update

by Patti Folsom, Co-Chair, Collections Management Committee

The Collections Management Committee has been working throughout the Fall to transform our museum into a more visitor-friendly and interactive exhibit space. FAHS was one of 15 organizations in Connecticut awarded a Museum Makeover Grant. Museum Makeover is a program of Conservation ConneCtion and is supported through a partnership with the Connecticut League of History Organizations (CLHO) and funded by a grant from the CT Cultural Fund. The CT Cultural Fund is administered by CT Humanities, with funding provided by the Connecticut State Department of Economic and Community Development/ Connecticut Office of the Arts.



Elysa Engleman and Arlene Anderson with the new display. Photo by Patti Folsom

As part of the Museum Makeover Grant, FAHS received site visits from traveling curators Elysa Engelman, Director of Exhibits at Mystic Seaport Museum, and Nicole Carpenter, Programs and Collections Director at the Westport Museum for History & Culture. Grant funds were allocated for the creation of an educational wall panel, an interactive door panel, and display case materials. After several weeks of emails and Zoom sessions between the FAHS Collections Management Committee, the traveling curators, and graphic design consultant Arleen Andersen, a beautiful introductory wall panel was created for visitors to see as they enter the museum area.

The new panel entitled, "What We Bring with Us," is designed to show examples of what Finnish immigrants brought to the Canterbury/Brooklyn area and encourages visitors from all ethnicities to imagine what they would bring with them if they were to travel to a foreign land. The interactive door panel adjacent to the wall panel asks visitors to write down their ideas about what they would bring with them and post these thoughts on a card that can be attached to the door with a Finnish flag magnet.

Plans are underway to create new wall panels and exhibit displays in the remainder of the museum. These displays will focus on several themes taken from the introductory wall panel, including the influence of the environment on Finnish-American arts and crafts, the importance of community, with sauna and *talkoot* (a gathering to carry out a major task, such as harvesting), and the influence of Finnish culture on Finnish-American music and arts. Display cases in the library area will feature artifacts from local Finnish families taken from items in our archives and artifacts loaned or donated from local families representing immigrants from all areas. The Imatra collection (see page 11), will also be relocated to this room and a small display case adjacent to the library will be devoted to themes and materials directed especially for children.



Travis Jacobsen paints the museum.
Photo by Patti Folsom.

In order to give the museum a complete facelift, the Collections Management Committee sought bids from local contractors to repaint the museum. In November the FAHS Board approved the bid from Northeast Painters, LLC. Owner Travis Jacobsen spent four days in early December at the FAHS museum painting the walls, trim, and ceiling, and transforming the two rooms of the museum into a beautiful backdrop for our new displays. The soft gray color palette gives our museum a professional look and we are grateful for the superb work done by Travis.

The FAHS Museum is closed to the public until May 2023. The museum will be open during winter Membership meetings and FAHS events. At the Annual Membership meeting, members were given a preview of the new panel display and the new paint palette.

The Collections Management Committee will continue to meet during the winter months every Wednesday from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. In addition to designing new display panels and exhibits, the Committee will continue to work on reorganizing the archives and cataloging items into the CTCollections online database. The committee will also be brainstorming educational programming for children and families during the summer months.

Tails from the Kitchen

by Susan Coupe from the FAHS Writers' Group

As I pegged an apron onto my solar dryer (the clothesline), I thought about the stories an apron can tell. I had pulled that one out of the drawer for June's [Leiss] protection at a pulla bake. Where were the stained ones from events of the past – spaghetti suppers, chicken barbecues, Pannukakku breakfasts and potlucks? My thoughts flew



Kaz Koslowski dresses a mannequin with the folk costume (Eteläpohjanmaa) donated by Pearl McCahill. The Kansallispuku belonged to Pearl's mother, Helmi Sipilä. Photo by Patti Folsom.

to aprons of my past. My precious Marimekko, a gift from a dear friend, is worn only at pulla bakes. My King Arthur apron is a treasured one given to me by a King Arthur Flour demonstrator. My stepfather has sewn numerous ones: a watermelon, garden themed and a harvest themed apron to name a few.

I traveled back to Thanksgiving dinner at Ponaganset Middle School where I worked as an Instructional Teacher Assistant. I brought in my apron collection for the students to wear while they prepared our feast. The boys chose first. They had a great time picking out just the right one; pink and ruffled ones were for the girls.

Jump to baking with the grandkids, Kaydence, Taylor and Walter. My oversize aprons cover them from neck to knees. They bake like me – ingredients everywhere – flour and colored sugars and bright sprinkles on the floor, counters, their faces and hands. They love to decorate with bright colors, especially on their own pulla.

My grandmothers came to mind – Grandma Goff was noted for her brown bread she made for every bake sale and bean supper. Grandma Laiho was a chicken farmer. We knew her as Mary, but her given name was Maria. Her apron was used to keep her clothes a little cleaner! There were many chicken farmers like my grandmother. Her apron protected her clothes from dust, broken eggs, and chicken manure. She didn't have indoor plumbing, just the sauna where my Uncle Henry was born, so laundry was not easily done. She was a young widow. It was up to her to provide for her family of six children.

Now, I am reminiscing about my own apron history. In seventh grade, the girls first Home Economics project was an apron. I am quite sure my first sewing machine experience was not a pretty one – very crooked seams. I did not wear an apron when I was a young wife, they were for old ladies. My father-in-law nicknamed me Julia Child as I wore my ingredients well – flour on my hair, face and shirt. The counters and floor were covered as well as the stove top. Now I always put on an apron for holiday cooking/baking as I can carry more needed ingredient in the skirt up the stairs from the basement- potatoes, onions, raisins, nuts or prunes – whatever I need.

I wear an apron more these days. My shirts are less stained from splatters. I tend to keep my apron during meals. They protect me from inevitable spills while eating. I can't find the hole in my spoon! So, my aprons are laundered often. They wear their greasy and blueberry pie stains proudly. I wonder about the stories your aprons could share.



Fall/Winter Yard

Story and photo by Katrina Engblom Bousquet from the FAHS Writers' Group



Welcome back to my yard!

A lot has happened here since the summer and I'm going to tell you all about it. Here we are, coming down the same gravel path. To our left, the deep and delicious summer shade has made a gradual and beautiful transition. Little by little, the velvety green leaves on the Norway Maples changed to russet brown, disappointing to see as the neighboring Sugar Maples explode in unreal shades of red and orange. These amazing displays gradually fade away, exposing the craggy outcropping of New England ledge and stone walls in the wild wooded lot next door. My shade garden and Hosta collection seem to have finally given up the struggle. All summer long, the plants here have somehow survived drought, an inattentive gardener, intense heat and hungry White-Tailed Deer. No longer lush and tropical, they slowly wither away to spotty, brown ragged remnants, revealing sculptures and my collection of unusual rocks.

The Covid house, if you remember from my previous article [Fall 2022 Issue], still stands unchanged. This structure was a beacon of comfort through the rainstorms of the autumn, offering shelter from the pelting acorns. The furniture remains in place throughout winter for the occasional camp fire, as does the wind chime, playing somber music according to the whims of the weather. Nearby is the pile of wood awaiting splitting and stacking, ready to feed the sauna stove because the sauna never takes a break. Always ready to steam away the day's troubles and soothe aching bones, it stands ready in all weather. What's better than sitting in a steamy sauna with the russet and golden leaves spiraling all around you in a dance of decline? I'll tell you; sitting in a steamy sauna

watching the moon settle over the bare branches with snowflakes drifting downward, swirling toward the cold, sleeping grass.

The old stone wall still keeps watch over the flower beds, although there is nothing much left to see. The hostas and lilies have wilted away with the warmth, although the Christmas ferns and mosses are still around. They will be there all Winter long, just as green as before but a little wilted and worn. These stones shelter the Chipmunk families, busy all through the Fall, collecting and storing acorns, protecting their dens from the wet and cold. Along the tree line behind the stone wall, I can see what the leaves have been hiding since May.

Along with branch damage from spring and summer storms, there are more interesting things; I can now see the winter sunsets through the barren branches, vivid slashes of orange and gold, belying the frigid air. There are also bird nests, empty now, sitting on branches once hidden by lush green foliage. They are exposed to all who care to notice. Perched on the bare branches of winter, these nests are soggy bedraggled lumps of wood, moss and dirt. It's hard to believe these sad-looking structures were, mere months ago, Grand Central Station to the endless comings and goings of bird parents toiling to feed and protect their needy hatchlings. I can now see where those busy birds were racing to. Some will be revisited and repaired by the same nesting pairs, others abandoned, dissolving with the spring rains.

My vegetable, herb and flower gardens have been put to bed, bare except for the random bit of leftover material that didn't make it into the compost bin. The soil sleeps for now, waiting for just the right temperature so seeds from last year's crop can become this year's surprise garden volunteers. The patio is bare, except for my hammock which I still use if the day is bright and sunny. The furniture is stacked and covered; the umbrella put away.

My small pond is still now, the fountain also put away. It did a great job of keeping the surface of the water in a constant state of ripples, discouraging mosquitoes from laying eggs. The bugs and frogs are gone, but the pond continues to serve a purpose when it's not frozen. Squirrels, birds and cats still come here for a drink. All around me I can hear some of the same sounds as in warmer weather, although a little changed. The birdsong is a little less energetic, the pond and bugs are quiet and the cold breeze sounds sharper as it cuts through the bare branches. The noise I hear mostly though is the sound of things going to sleep.

Do you know the story of this Rya?



Photo by Lynne Williamson, CCHAP

When Aili Galasyn took a weaving class at the Canterbury Hall years ago with a Finnish instructor, her husband, Val, decided to tag along and became interested in the craft. The class was challenged by the instructor to create an original design and Val thought of weaving a Finnish Flag. He drafted a rather complex pattern, invited other students to participate in the project, only Aili accepted, weaving a few rows in the beginning. When asked why this pattern, Val responded it was a tribute to Aili's Finnish Heritage. The one-of-a-kind work has been donated to FAHS and is proudly displayed at the Finn Hall.

Dr. Valentine Galasyn passed away December 2, 2022 after a thirty-year naval career during which he served as a physician; eventually becoming director of the Naval Undersea Medical Institute in Groton and helping Windham County Memorial Hospital establish an Emergency Department.

Daughter Elaine Prince remembers how her dad "...enjoyed our small farm, repairing and maintaining all our vehicles (and anything else that broke down), building things, the outdoors, traveling, camping, weaving and much more". "You truly loved Mom and our family well and we have been blessed. Thank you, Dad. I will see you again".

Fran Miller recalls: "As a 4-H service project when my sisters and I were teenagers, you helped us to organize and staff a free screening clinic for those in need in our community. I remember neighbors coming to the house when they needed minor medical care, because they couldn't afford a medical bill. That was a different era, and I

don't ever remember you turning anyone away if you were able to help. Even after your retirement, you continued to volunteer in the community".

"Late last week my grandfather, Valentine "Val" David Galasyn (who I am named after) passed away," wrote David Miller. "I remember his face hovering over me in the ER, when I slashed open my forehead and needed stitches. Who else has gotten the opportunity to be stitched up by their Grandpa? I remember him taking me out in his giant backhoe to move boulders out of the field, teaching me how to feed pigs slop, and letting a cow lick salt out of my hand. The man did everything, and he shared as much as he could with family".

Granddaughter Christine Duarte wrote: "He spent his life building a legacy of service, dedication, empathy, and love without trying to be anything more than himself and using the talents God gave him. For me though, he is just Grandpa. He helped teach me how to fish, took me to where the fireflies like to hang out at their farm, and showed me how to feed their pigs. He used his high-level medical skills to fix many childhood boo-boos over the years". "I loved just sitting with him in the porch swing by the pond, enjoying the time we had together".

Dr. Galasyn will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, DC in the spring.



Top, from left: Fran Miller, Valerie Poettgen, Katherine Wright and Elaine Prince.

Bottom: Aili and Val Galasyn. 50th Wedding Anniversary.

FAHS Newsletter Committee Update

by Kay Gruder

This issue of *Finnish Connection* offers many prompts to reflect. The FAHS Museum Makeover Update features information about a new display panel entitled, "What We Bring with Us." The display is designed to show examples of what Finnish immigrants brought to the Canterbury/Brooklyn area and also encourages viewers to think about what they brought or would bring with them when traveling to a foreign land. You could use this as a conversation prompt when talking among family or friends.

Tails from the Kitchen is a piece written by Susan Coupe, a member of the FAHS Writers Workshop group. It captures some of the stories an apron could tell, and invites the reader to think about the stories their aprons could share. I know that this story inspired me to wear my apron more often and to let the glorious stains be a map of my travels through the kitchen.

This issue also includes some important updates about the FAHS Board, Membership Meeting Highlights, and By-Laws. As is true, every year at this time, the Board welcomes new members or current board members shift roles, and those who are departing roles are publicly appreciated.

What I value most in this issue of *Finnish Connection* is that the content touches upon all the important components of FAHS, as a place where community comes together, traditions are preserved, culture is celebrated, learning occurs, creativity is stimulated, youth are visible, and outreach happens. Wishing you a few moments to pause and to truly enjoy this issue.

Also, welcome to the newest volunteer member of the Newsletter Committee, Karen Lovequist. Learn more about Karen in the Fall 2019 edition of FINNCONN (found on www.fahs-ct.org) where she was featured as a new member.

FAHS Apprentice Weavers Making Progress

by Katrina Engblom Bousquet



The FAHS weaving apprentices are making progress on projects begun in the new year. They have moved on from weaving samplers to more permanent projects. Mary Ellen, Katrina, Liisa and Lisa are weaving colorful table runners with *Poppana** fabric strips. Bob has been weaving a rug on a large floor loom and a new project on a smaller table loom. Through these last few months, we have learned how to plan for and measure out a warp, and set up our looms to weave. We are learning to troubleshoot, make adjustments and modifications to our looms and help each other “figure things out.” Our instructor Peggy Church has been instructing and observing us throughout the program. This internship was made possible by The Southern New England Apprenticeship Program (SNEAP).

Table runner in process using Poppana fabric.
Weaving & photo by Katrina Bousquet

* Editors' note: *Poppana* is a type of traditional Karelian woven fabric, made on a hand loom. Also referring to the fabric strips used: 3/8-inch bias cut cotton fabric, often used resulting in a soft, nubby texture.

Finlandia Foundation National Joint Chapter Meeting Recap

by Minna Waters

On October 21-23, 2022, FAHS President Steve Bousquet and FAHS Vice President Minna Waters attended the Finlandia Foundation National Joint Chapter Meeting at the Scandinavia House in New York City.

After a welcome reception and concert Friday evening, Saturday was spent meeting fellow Finns and fellow chapter members from around the country. “It’s important that we continue to grow and support and strengthen our network, our individual organizations, Finlandia Foundation National and our Finnish-American community,” said FFN President Anne-Mari Paster. Speakers that day included Communications Advisor to the UN, Satu Järveläinen; FFN Young Leaders Board and National Capital Chapter President, Mikko McFeely; FFN Lecturer of the Year committee chairperson Hilary-Joy Virtanen; American Scandinavian Board President Edward Gallagher; and FFN Board Member and Performer of the Year committee chairperson Katariina Lehtonen.

Steve Bousquet, along with other chapter presidents, spoke about their individual chapters’ events, happenings, and struggles coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was noticed that our Finnish American Heritage Society is one of the largest and most active of the nearly 60 chapters under the FFN network. Increasing membership was a collective concern amongst the chapters and with some tips from the Young Leaders Board we gained insights on how to better engage the millennial generation through modern communications and social media routes and were provided ideas on how to generate intriguing and engaging events.

On Sunday, a concluding tour of Finntown in Brooklyn, NY, was provided to see first-hand Imatra Hall building and the first non-profit co-operative apartment buildings in the nation, built by Finns, many of which are still standing today.

For more information on the Young Leaders Board visit:
[linkedin.com/groups/13959445](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13959445)

For more information on FFN and upcoming events, visit
www.FinlandiaFoundation.org



The Alku Building was the first coop apartment building in all of NYC. Photo from FFN website.

The Imatra Society

The Imatra Society was an association of Finnish immigrants in Brooklyn, NY. The society served many functions including being a workers' association/union, an employment agency and a publisher of newspapers in Finnish. Imatra became a popular meeting place for Finns, with a brass band, chorus, theater group, discussion club, a woman's club, a library, and a reading room.

Other activities included sending care packages to Finland for the poor, assisting newly arrived Finns at Ellis Island, holding Miss Finlandia beauty contests, hosting visiting dignitaries from Finland including athletes, Presidents, ministers and performers. The Imatra Society experienced

financial difficulties due to a diminishing Finnish population. Imatra Hall was sold in 1996 to a nondenominational church and the Imatra Foundation was created.

Highlights from FAHS Annual Membership Meeting – January 8, 2023

Maintenance: Over \$10,000 has been raised to fund the replacement of the Finn Hall windows. President Steve Bousquet is negotiating with vendors for a purchase price.

Annual Dues increase: President Steve Bousquet presented a proposal to raise the annual membership dues to \$30 per individual and \$50 for a family membership to help cover the cost of operating the Hall. The motion passed unanimously. This change is effective now. If you have already paid your 2023 FAHS dues (thank you); please consider making a donation of the difference to FAHS to help cover increasing insurance and utility costs.

2023 Bylaws Review: Information about the five-year, Board approved By-Laws revisions were mailed/emailed to all members and reviewed at the 2023 Annual Meeting. Approval of the By-Laws is pending a membership vote at the meeting on February 5, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. Please contact Ellen Levonius Buffington if you have questions, comments, or desire more information. ellenmbuffington@gmail.com or 970-576-8360.

Food Service Permit from NE Department of Health: FAHS applied for and has received our 2023 annual food service permit (thank you to Stan Karro for coordinating).

Nominating Committee: The 2023 Nominating Committee presented the slate of officers: President: Steve Bousquet; Vice President: Minna Waters; **Recording Secretary: VACANT**; Treasurer: Jobina Miller; Membership Secretary: Aaron Waters; Co-Correspondence Secretaries: Katrina Engblom Bousquet and Ellen Levonius Buffington; Trustees: Arlene Baril, Patti Folsom and Stan Karro. The slate was approved. Saul Ahola and Susan Coupe continue as trustees. Congratulations and welcome to the new and returning Board members. Thank you to members leaving the FAHS Board: Sean Tate, Erika Waters and Steve Coupe; your dedication to the FAHS Board is appreciated. Thank you to the 2023 FAHS Nominating Committee for your time and effort: Katrina & Steve Bousquet and Anita Smiley.

Suurella arvostuksella, kiitos paljon

(With great appreciation, thank you so much)

by Katrina Engblom Bousquet and Ellen Levonius Buffington, Co-Corresponding Secretaries

Donations received and thank you notes sent mid-October - December 2022

Artifact donations to the museum:

- Arlene Baril, Brooklyn, CT – Sixteen vintage postcards.
- Lorraine McManus, Southampton, MA - *Sotilasalbumi* / "Military Album" & *Tervetuloa* Tile

Monetary Donations:

Fundraiser:

- Matching donation from Charter Oak Federal Credit Union, Norwich, CT - \$1,025
- Donations totaling \$550 from: Urho & June Haapala, Danielson, CT; and Brian Andstrom, Plainfield, CT (for the Leo Andstrom Family)

Donations to the Scholarship Fund in the amount of \$145 in memory of Ilma Tikkanen:

Roy Helander, Stow, MA Patti Folsom, North Kingstown, RI

June Leiss & Susan Cloutier, Canterbury, CT.

Donations of \$50 to the Museum, \$80 to the General Fund and \$100 in memory of Carl Anderson from:

Patti Folsom, North Kingstown, RI Marita Sasser, Lisbon, CT Michael Driscoll, Norwich, CT

Member News & Milestones

Sympathies – Otamme Osaa

To the family of Dr. Valentine Galasyn of Canterbury, CT, who passed away on December 2, 2022, at the age of 94. <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/hartfordcourant/name/valentine-galasyn-obituary?id=38321363>

To the family of George Sipila of Brooklyn, CT, who passed away on January 11, 2023. He was the *joulupukki* at many of the FAHS pikkujoulu celebrations, including in 2022.

<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/27058282/george-w-sipila/plainfield/connecticut/dougherty-brothers-funeral-home?fbclid=IwAR1gZ8HcyIZoQmp2a3VE8uRciUFxtndC2gvibISZ1ISb9KPQHR9mHzwdYM>

Submitting Member News & Milestones

If you would like to have any "well wishes, condolences, or congratulations" included in the spring newsletter, please email minna.waters@gmail.com by April 10, 2023.

Please put "News and Milestones" in the subject line. *Paljon Kiitoksia*/Many Thanks, Minna.

Onnellista uutta vuotta



Finnish American Heritage Society

The Finnish American Heritage Society, Inc.
is a non-profit organization established in 1987 to preserve and promote Finnish-American heritage. Membership is open to all who are interested in the purpose of the organization.

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YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com> and search for Finnish American Heritage Society, Canterbury
On Facebook at: www.facebook.com/fahscanterburyct

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This newsletter is published quarterly by the Finnish American Heritage Society. Subscription is free for members and \$30/year for organizations. Readers are invited to submit material.

FAHS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Collection of materials and proofreading: Kay Gruder, Patti Folsom, Anita Smiley, Jackie Harjula, Ellen Buffington and Karen Lovequist.
Members' News and Milestones:

Welcome New Members!

Wayne, Amy & Lauren Tuiskula - Cherry Valley, MA

Laila M. Plante - Carver, MA

Liisa Silander - Plainfield, CT

Maarita Dubitsky - North Windham, CT

New Members are ALWAYS welcome!
Membership Form found www.fahs-ct.org

President	Steven Bousquet	860-608-8366
Vice President	Minna Waters	251-454-1614
Treasurer	Jobina Miller	860-377-0789
Recording Secretary	VACANT	
Co-Correspondence Secretaries	Katrina Bousquet Ellen Buffington	860-608-2653 970-576-8360
Membership	Aaron Waters	251-454-2494

Coming Events at a Glance

2023 Membership Dues are now due

February 5 Sunday	Coffee Social Member Meeting	1 p.m. 1:30 p.m.
February 16 Thursday	Board Meeting	7 p.m.
March 5 Sunday	New Member Pot Luck Member Meeting	12:30 p.m. 1:30 p.m.
March 23 Thursday	Board Meeting	7 p.m.
April 1 Saturday	Member Meeting Culinary Delights	12 noon 2 p.m.-4 p.m.
April 10 Monday	Spring Newsletter Deadline	
April 15 Saturday	Pancake Breakfast	8 a.m.

Please visit www.fahs-ct.org or the FAHS Facebook page for the most current calendar information.