

Recipe for a Perfect 80th Birthday Celebration

By Stan Karro

Ingredients:

Celebrant: Matti Huhta, Past President of Finnish American Heritage Society and currently Vice President of Aura Seura/Hall, and Celebrant's Wife Marcia.

Location: Aura Finnish Hall, Voluntown, CT

Date: Sunday, September 15, 2019, 2:00PM

Menu: Potluck with attendees bringing a wide variety of delicious Finnish foods and other dishes

Entertainment: Music by the Quiet Corner Fiddlers led by Saul Ahola, fiddler, Emcee, with singing by Hannu Makipuro, dancing by members of the Revontulet Dancers of Fitchberg, MA and Celebrant and wife Marcia

Audience/Attendees: Nearly 150 friends and relatives.

Weather: Perfect September day



Friends and relatives started to arrive early and take advantage of free parking at the grounds of Aura Hall with excellent parking support by volunteer staff.

With a significant group expected, arrangements were made to utilize a large tent adjacent to the hall building to allow for all attendees to enjoy the potluck together. The afternoon was filled with great music by the Quiet Corner Fiddlers along with songs by well-known entertainer Hannu Makipuro. Saul Ahola, a member of the Fiddlers, also provided a great commentary as the emcee during the event.

This celebration was one of the largest gatherings of local and regional Finnish and Finnish Americans in several years. It was truly an outstanding celebration and social gathering and all the members and friends thank Matti and Marcia for this social event that will be remembered for years to come.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MATTI!

Recently returned from a remarkable travel experience with the 2019 Anita Smiley tour of Finland, I am eager to share some impressions of this unique country. Anita Smiley, a member of Connecticut's longstanding Finnish community and a board member (and past president) of the Finlandia Foundation, has organized tours to Finland for 24 years as a way to give back to the country that first welcomed her as a 4-H exchange student in 1956. She loves to introduce Americans to Finland, the birthplace of her parents, and so far over 600 people have participated in these tours. I was one of the lucky ones to go this year, enticed by stories of the legendary activities – and food! – that the tours offer. I met Anita through my work as director of Connecticut's folk and traditional arts program for the past 25 years. Since 1995 I have enthusiastically supported the state's Finnish community as they have organized seven apprenticeships in Finnish cultural and occupational art forms, bringing master artists from Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts to teach these traditions to community members (including Anita). Exploring how Finns practice these art forms in the homeland, with a comparison to differences and/or continuations in America, was a goal of the tour for me. I also wanted to immerse myself in the sense of place of the country and meet its people, to feel the heart of Finland as much as possible; to learn, but also to wander and discover.

My fellow travelers came from all over the US, many from Finnish communities and family backgrounds. Though from diverse walks of life, they were fully engaged in discovering as much as they could about Finland, also sharing stories about their own families and heritage. Several people connected with relatives they had never met before, forming strong new bonds that will be deeply meaningful for years to come. Our individual interests and areas of expertise enlivened conversations among the group, and I was grateful for the insightful comments and questions that everyone contributed. Also, we shared a lot of laughter, and I found kindred spirits who will become new friends for life.



The 2019 tour focused on the natural environment and geography of Finland and the many ways that Finnish people interact with nature. Places visited ranged from the Turunmaa and Kvarken Archipelagos, to the Arctic Circle, to the fells of southern Lapland, to the Russian border, to pristine lakes, to winter attractions, to small cities such as Vaasa and Kuopio and larger urban areas of Turku, Tampere and Helsinki, and many, many other sites along the way, off the beaten path that tourists usually take. The packed itinerary immersed us in learning about and absorbing so many aspects of Finnish life (including food!) that interconnect – nature and culture, art and work, history and modernity, language and identity, wartime destruction and innovative rebuilding, struggle and resilience.

Tour stops, visits, and activities were extremely well planned and enjoyable, as well as fascinating. Here I would like to salute the team that makes the tour possible – travel agent Riikka Pajunen collaborates with Anita on designing the itinerary, finding special places to visit and managing the logistics of moving 38 people on a trip of 2230 miles. Tour guide Rafu Lofstrom provided us with a wealth of information about what we were seeing and the historical and social context behind everything, and he was a never-failing source of patience, jokes, reindeer-sightings, and even music!

Last but not least, we were grateful to have an intrepid and most helpful coach driver in Pertti Luokoma – we marveled at his ability to squeeze a huge bus through narrow spaces and up (and down) near-vertical inclines!

Every day brought multiple adventures, with the beauty of Finland's islands, forests, countryside, lakes, and cities almost becoming sensory overload. My camera battery ran out of power by late afternoon each day! Photographs help to recall all these experiences, some of which can be described through themes that recurred and intertwined throughout the trip.



Land - Our first stop at the Haltia Nature Center in Nuukio National Park introduced us to the climate and different ecosystems around Finland. We learned from Rafu that Finland is the most rural country in Europe. Throughout the trip, we saw birch, spruce, and pine forests that cover vast tracts of land and provide a valuable and renewable resource for industry and people as well as a home for moose and elk. Driving from Turku to Oulu along the western side, views of farmland with wide fields of blue-green rye were stunning. I was intrigued by the varying styles of farm buildings and barns in different regions, the old-style haystacks still seen occasionally, and the

prevalent wooden hay storage huts in the middle of fields. Visits to the Agricultural Museum in Houtskar and Museum of Stinginess in Laihia enabled us to see how farm families lived inside old-style houses and how these were furnished with useful and creative objects. We encountered another surprising aspect of land in the Kvarken Archipelago, a UNESCO World Heritage area that is rising out of the sea at the rate of two cm per year. A walk along a trail at Mikkeliinsaaret Nature Station led through wild blueberry bushes and sea buckthorn to the Nature Station Tower with its 360 degree view of the islands, and a little further on, to a 16th century stone shelter once used by fishermen on the coast but now well inland due to the rise.

Reindeer running along the road were a delightful sight heading north towards Lapland, where the landscape opened up to graceful fells and where we stepped over the Arctic Circle. Reindeer also joined us at our cabins at Iso-Syöte, and the group hiked to the top of the fell to view spectacular scenes from the ski summit. During the hike Anita's granddaughter Meeri sang a lovely folk song for us on the fell, and a dinner of grilled *makkara* awaited us by a fire. Followed by a sauna in our cabins, of course!

Water - Finland's close relationship with the sea became clear as we spent the first night on the archipelago island of Nauvo via the first of several ferry trips. It was interesting to hear that ferry travel in Finland is free, enabling local residents and summer visitors to live and move about easily in this area. Dinner at the hotel featured the bounty of the sea, the first of many salmon dishes we would enjoy. Next day was spent traveling through the archipelago islands of Korppoo, Houtskar, Inio, and Kustavi by bus and ferry, with our excellent local guide Charlotta giving insight into the way of life in the islands. In the church on Houtskar, a carving of a model ship hangs from the ceiling as a reminder of the power of the sea – we would see these ships in several churches. Our overnight on the western tip of the island of Hailuoto included a walk along the beach after dinner, a sauna, and a sunset at almost midnight.

With the tour taking place in July, it can be hard to imagine a Finnish winter. But snow and ice were at the forefront during visits in Kemi to the icebreaker Sampo, and the Snow Castle with its ice restaurant and ice slide – temperature -5C. Here and at an indoor ski tunnel in Vuokatti, several brave souls tried out some icy sports. Water in many different forms provided play, swim, and steam time at our spa hotel in Vuokatti, and we traveled next to the picturesque lake district of Finland, tasting berry

liqueurs at Alahovi Vineyard and cruising on a boat to Kuopio. For centuries, whether summer or winter, saunas have offered warmth, comfort, and health to Finns, and we enjoyed the sauna experience many times during the trip. On Lake Piijärne, the Sauna Museum in Jämsä collects and restores over twenty historic smoke saunas, sometimes opening a few of the best-preserved for public use. We spotted a floating sauna as part of an amazing view over lakes during a delicious lunch at the top of the 168-meter-high Nasinneula observation tower. Tampere's location on the Tammerkoski Rapids between two lakes provides an ideal site for industry, especially cloth manufacturing. Helsinki, too, relies on water as a coastal city with many islands in the Gulf of Finland, including its destination for cruise ships.

Design – Finnish design has a justifiably strong reputation for innovation and creativity. I expected a stark contrast between older and modern architectural forms, but found instead an interplay between them, arising from the use of natural building materials, curving structural lines following a more natural shape rather than strict right angles, and a reverence for “place.” Rovaniemi in Lapland, nearly destroyed in World War II but now rebuilt with several architectural gems designed by Alvar Aalto, seemed to me to be a shining city in the north, with wide streets and a soaring bridge over a confluence of rivers. I spent some time walking through the impressive new spruce-façade Library Oodi in Helsinki, marveling at the hundreds of people enjoying and using the three floors of this wood-filled space on a Monday afternoon. Recently chosen as the best new public library in the world, Library Oodi's brochure describes its deep commitment to openness, learning, literacy, access, interaction, and discovery – characteristics so emblematic of Finnish life.

On a personal scale, Villa Mairea, the contemporary home designed by Alvar and Aino Aalto for the Gullichsen family, sits in a wooded grove near the village of Noormarkku. This house feels warm and comfortable, and is filled with breathtaking art (Degas, Picasso, Maire's own drawings and paintings as well as Aino's furniture and dishes) framed by large windows. Historical architecture was the focus of our walk through the Old Town Skata section of restored and still occupied 18th century wooden houses in Pietarsaari on the western coast. These 300 buildings, historically the homes of workers in local tobacco, lumber, and chicory industries, are intriguing for their colors as well as the decorative wood frames around windows and doors. The lace-making heritage of this area could be seen in the delicate lace curtains hanging in many windows.

History – the tour introduced me to much new information on Finnish history, especially the wartime years and the lasting effect on Finland's people. A somber guided tour of the Raate Road Museum, led by the son of a soldier in the Winter War of 1939-1940, made the personal cost of the war very vivid. At the same time, the bravery and resourcefulness of Finland's people fighting the Russian incursion especially in Karelia exemplified “*sisu*” in action. It was clear through this and other poignant experiences such as seeing the Suomussalmi war memorial to fallen soldiers, that the memories and lessons of the war are very central to Finland today. At a Tampere bar one light-filled late evening, tour-mate Linda Mead and I met a young couple who shared a drink (*salmiakki* liqueur!) and conversation with us. Even as young parents in an EU-member country, citizens of a global world, they commented on Finland's geographical position so close to Russia and the complications of diplomacy that occurred during World War II and still persist. Tour members engaged in an enjoyable and historically accurate “reenactment” of a lunch, with a menu and all the protocols (including the raised elbow required when



drinking *ryjyppy*, his special schnapps) as hosted by Marshal Mannerheim at his hunting retreat Marskin Maja. We also visited sites of older history, including Turku where our guide Rafu walked us through the city's streets, and beautiful medieval churches in Houtskar and Hauho with enchanting folk-art carvings and paintings.

Cultural traditions - In the Marskin Maja lodge were displays of the typical deep-relief woodcarvings that soldiers made during the Winter War, and which Connecticut Finns have learned to carve through one of our traditional arts apprenticeships. The prevalence of folk-art forms still common in Finland today reaffirmed for me the relevance of beloved traditions there. I find this also in Finnish communities in America, where language, culture, art and foodways are not nostalgic memories but useful practices that connect people to a treasured heritage that holds great value in their contemporary lives. In homes, shops, *toris*, and displays at the Craft Museum in Jyväskylä and Amuri Museum of Workers Housing, birchbark baskets and wooden vessels were ubiquitous, as well as rag rugs and *ryjy* weavings that re-use fabric and cover floors, chairs, beds, and walls. Sauna-building is a thriving occupational art form, and traditional music on fiddle and *kantele* are all part of Finnish communities in America as in Finland, and have been taught and learned in our apprenticeship program. A highlight of the tour, for me, came during our breakfast at Anni's farm – not only was her organic cooking delectable, but she also sang and played Karelian songs on her *kantele*. She mentioned learning these songs from an older Karelian folk musician, keeping alive a tradition that goes back to the days of the Kalevala.

Have I mentioned **food**?? Finland offered us a generous, creative, and delicious sustenance, a nutritious showcase of Finnish values. Memorable meals included astounding multi-course breakfast buffets replete with meats, cheeses, porridge, jams, breads, pastries, berries, coffee of course – and pickled herring. We savored a lunch of salmon chowder and homemade beer on a boat trip in the Kvarken islands, and bought loaves of the fruity, malty *saaristolaislimppu* or “archipelago bread.” My Finnish friends in Connecticut bake the most delicious *pulla*, and I was on a mission to try it as often as possible in Finland. Seasonal produce such as wild mushrooms made into soup and new potatoes boiled with dill were consumed eagerly, and the strawberries we bought at *toris* were unbelievably sweet. Fish smoked on the premises by a family-owned business became our open-air lunch at Strandis Larsmo, complete with a view of Storstrommen Bay on the west coast. Moose, elk, and reindeer were on several menus – “gamely” I tried these, but especially loved the *munkki* – light-as-air doughnuts baked in the craft village on Kustavi. One favorite experience was learning to make Karelian *piirakkas* with Jaana and her cooks at Nilsia. Fresh out of the oven, these rye-crust pies tasted incredibly good – perhaps the dip in butter they get after baking has something to do with it too! The settings for our meals added to the joy of eating, as we gathered at tables in a rustic ski resort (Tahko), a reindeer farm (Hirvikartano), a Lapp-style retreat warmed by an open fire (Vartiosaari), a riverside lodge with a roaring fire (Kiiminki), and on islands (Mossala, Nauvo, Hailuoto). Dinner at the Kulosaaren waterfront restaurant in Helsinki, our last meal together as a group, was made especially memorable with Meeri Smiley's beautiful singing and a sharing of our experiences. Suddenly and unbelievably, this brilliant tour came to an end.

Thank you for reading through these memories of a once-in-a-lifetime trip! I can't wait to return to Finland, a country that definitely invites a longer stay, a deeper immersion, more conversations, meals, and adventures, and many more saunas!



Tori Open Air Market 2019

By Elizabeth Hawes-Weeks

Saturday, October 5, 2019 a cool crisp autumn day at the FAHS Hall. Our 2019 Tori market was stop number 76 on the Last Green Valley Walktober event this year. We had 17 Vendors registered and 16 in attendance. The kitchen was jumping and Mike played wonderful accordion music. A steady flow of shoppers visited the vendors and lots of purchases were made on this beautiful Saturday.

The delicious jams, jelly, and relishes from Ilma Tikkanen were highly sought after at our Tori. We had the beautifully fragrant soaps from Emily of SISU Soap and from the Walters from Howlin Possum Farm. The lovely hand-crafted wooden boxes and cutting boards from Ron and soft comfortable pillows and towels from Gail. The beautiful hand-woven table wares, weavings and wreaths from Lynn Landry were available to brighten our homes. The very artistic photos from Alexandra and Penny were there to brighten our day. Elaine Moe was there to show us the traditional Birch bark weaving and had beautiful ornaments for the holidays.

Paula was there to help us organize our kitchens with Tupperware, Denise Smith had delicious foods, spices and other meal ideas with Tastefully Simple. Amy Webster came with her mobile Lularoe show a very fun way to show her collection of women's clothing. Lloyd from the Raivaaja Foundation was there to give us all the news and lovely books and music on the Finnish culture. We had the hammering of metal at Hickory forge with Scott showing how blacksmithing is done. The eclectic wares of Lehtinen family, Mike Angstrom and Eleonore with housewares, jewelry and other items. Our resident Boy Scout William from Troop 19 was there to sell popcorn to help raise money for the troop. At the end of the day Gail Morrissey had our real time pain relief with lotions to help ease away the day's work.

The Finnish American Heritage association table was run by Katrina and sold lots of Finnish wares including aprons, cups, and some beautiful glassware and linens. The FAHS table brought in \$231. The raffle baskets were lovely and fun, raising \$180. The raffle was supported by Irene and Rita. Our raffle winners were Ann, Caroline, Marita, Kerttu, Stacia, Saul, Sandra, Dianne, Kathrine, Aili, and Lorraine. The Wines From Around the World basket was won by Eleonore Arvonen. I had the privilege to deliver it to her at home in Plainfield and she was very excited. She also celebrated her birthday October 11th, 91 years young.

The Pulla bake on Thursday provided us limited Pulla for the sale but it was eagerly purchased, selling out all the loaves that were made for the event making \$196. Thank you to Marita, Kerttu, Arlene, Stan and Jean for taking the time to make it. We had the wonderful aromas of meatballs and potatoes with veggies coming from the kitchen. The kitchen was supported by Marita, Kerttu, Dianne, June, Laura, Saul & Sandra and we are very thankful for all their help.

Advertisement was provided by Katrina to local papers and flyers were made by myself. Our parking helpers were Susan and Jonathan. They were wonderful help keeping the traffic flowing in our parking lot and in and around the hall. This was a very successful event and vendors have advised that they were looking forward to Tori 2020. Thank you to all those who attended and helped out with all the behind the scenes tasks. All the profits from the 2019 Tori market will be put toward the fundraiser to replace the front doors of the Hall.



FinnFunn News Update

By Stan Karro

On October 1st the FinnFunn raffle ticket was drawn and announced with the award of free accommodations at the East Hill Farm Resort during FinnFunn weekend. The winner was Sharon Love Cook of the Cape Ann, MA Finns. She has never attended a FinnFunn weekend. The raffle met some of its objectives to attract individuals that had never attended in prior years. We thank Holly LeClair, Marketing Director and The Inn at East Hill Farm for their generous donation to this outstanding fundraiser raffle.

Other good news the resort is sold out. To some that is not very good information but there are other accommodations in the region if you would like to attend the weekend events.

Thanks to the persistence of Laila and Mauri Auvinen we have been able to arrange for the Lecture of the Year (LOY) from Finlandia Foundation National...two this year. Eleanor Ostman and Soile Anderson from the Twin Cities region. They are both culinary professionals and will provide a cooking program to attendees on Sunday morning. Laila and Mauri met the LOYs at FinnFest and were able to arrange this commitment.

We are fortunate to also have well known Finnish artist Eric Aho of Vermont with a presentation on Saturday morning. The afternoon schedule on Saturday have the Cape Ann Community Performers/Actors providing several segments of their recent plays. This has been a very successful event for them in the Cape Ann/Gloucester region. Please view the www.fahs-ct.org website for additional details of the weekend in Troy, NH.

Wine & Beer Tasting at the Finnish Hall

By Jobina Miller

On Friday November 8th the Finnish American Heritage Society will host their annual Wine and Beer Tasting evening. The event is being chaired again this year by our Treasurer, Jobina Miller. The event is planned to begin at 6:00PM with a 9:00PM closing. The evening will provide a variety of beverages from regional distributors and breweries. The evening will also have an interesting Silent Auction along with refreshments. Bring your friends and relatives to an always upbeat and enjoyable social evening.

Santa is Coming to the Finnish Hall, Save the Date

By Katrina Bousquet

Our annual *Pikkujoulu* Children's Christmas Party, membership meeting, and potluck will be held on Saturday, December 7th. This year the event will be Co-chaired by Katrina Bousquet and Marita Sasser. This always is an event with traditional Holiday music, songs, great food, a Christmas raffle, and of course an appearance by Saint Nick. For those with young children, please bring one gift wrapped for each child that can be given during the visit by Santa.

The membership meeting will start at 11:00AM followed by the always popular potluck at noon. The party begins at 1:30PM with Santa's arrival (weather permitting) shortly after the songs and music end.

Our fun raffle is usually very oriented towards children's gifts and proceeds from the raffle are donated to a local charity. Join us for a joyful traditional Christmas event.

Archive Request for Support, Heritage Society

By Stan Karro

During the last several months the Finnish American Heritage Society has been reviewing the archive publications and related collections at the Finnish Hall. The work has been supported by James Kurtti of the Finlandia University Heritage Center as a result of a grant received from Finlandia Foundation National several months ago. We have been able to determine the value of our collections and will need additional long-term support to catalog the existing publications. We are in need of individuals with excellent Finnish language skills to help with cataloging and determining the value of future donations from members and friends of the heritage society. Library and archive experience would be very beneficial. We expect this activity to take some time. If you are aware of any individuals who would volunteer or have these skills, please contact Stan Karro at svkbrklyn@aol.com or cell # 860 480-3648 or contact any board member of the heritage society.

An additional request from our archive committee is for a publication called "Immigrant Radicalism in Rural New England, A History of the Finns of Eastern Connecticut 1915-1945" by Richard Lenzi. Previously, this was a hardcover publication with several copies in our collection but none are available today. If any member or friend of the Heritage Society has a copy and would be willing to donate it to our collection, it would be appreciated. Thank you for your support and understanding.

2019 FAHS Scholarship Recipient Amanda Vainio

By Ann Gruenberg

The Finnish American Heritage Society Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the recipient of the 2019 Scholarship. Ms. Amanda Vainio grew up in Finland, with English as her second language. She benefitted from the high-quality educational opportunities available in Finland. Amanda finished her secondary education at Canton North High School, in Massachusetts. Her letters of recommendation from her high school teachers describe her as talented and according to her application essay, she has had an enduring motivation to focus on social justice, especially in the context of criminal justice reform. As a freshman, she is enrolled at the University of Massachusetts in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, with a focus on Criminal Justice.

Her long-term goals include applying for the law school program. In her own words, "I am dedicated with introducing and infusing the spirit of justice and equality for all people on the planet, as is the culture and values instilled in me since birth as a Finnish native -- something I want to give as a Finnish American. Being born poor does not prevent people from adequate housing, medical welfare and education in Finland, and it should not be an obstacle in America, either."

The Scholarship Committee is delighted to support Amanda in her meaningful educational pursuits, and we wish her all the best as she continues her studies.

We are also pleased to report that the procedural changes in the Scholarship Committee are moving along well. Specifically, the funds will be managed by the Treasurer of FAHS. The review process will continue to be managed through the Scholarship Committee. The Fund will continue to be endowed, as has been the case for over two decades, ensuring resources for future generations, in perpetuity. Interest accrued, supplemented by special fund-raising initiatives, will continue to provide support to eligible recipients.

Please look for the Application for the 2020 FAHS Scholarship in the Winter newsletter.



Meet Our Members

New

Member: Karen Lovequist

What is your background -- connection to Finnish culture/ancestry? My mother was born in Lanesville, MA to Finnish parents - her father, Jacob Kallio from Teuva and her mother, Lempi Tuomivirta, from Seinajoki immigrated in the early 1900s. They moved from Cape Ann to New Haven, then to Byram, CT. In later years my grandparents moved to Voluntown where my mother's two sisters and families lived. My father was born on the island of Gotland, Sweden in the Baltic. He immigrated to America when he was 18 and lived in Westchester (NY). My parents met at a Finnish hall in Port Chester, NY where the Finns gathered for community and dancing. My brother and I grew up in Rye Brook where my mother's brother and family lived. Since most of my father's relatives were in Sweden, we spent many holidays with Finnish grandparents and aunts and uncles and cousins. I have many fond memories of being together and good laughs, something about our sense of humor!



What are a couple of your early favorite Finnish cultural memories? When my brother and I were young we went to events at the Finnish Hall and also at Aura Hall in Voluntown with our cousins. I remember the music and the dancing and everybody having a good time. We spent many evenings at Tamarack Lodge in Voluntown, seems like we did the same thing - eating, drinking, dancing. My accordion-playing uncle, Dennis Anderson, played lively music! Speaking of food one of my favorites baked by my grandmother was nisu pulla, with butter and had to have coffee. I remember my grandfather reading the Raivaaja front to back. My mother and her sisters would speak Finnish when the kids were listening so that we would not know what they were talking about. And I still did not learn Finnish. Other favorites were visiting my mother's aunts, uncles & cousins in Rockport, MA going on picnics and hearing about the local history.

What prompted you to join FAHS? I heard about FAHS from a friend and appreciated its dedication to Finnish heritage. Then I attended a wonderful FinnFunn event in Leominster/Fitchburg. My cousin and I joined in the fabulous Suomi Finland 100 Celebration at Tamarack Lodge of course! Again last year I was at the FinnFunn in NH. I figured it was about time I joined FAHS!

What do you hope to next attend at FAHS? I was invited to attend the new member luncheon in Canterbury which I am looking forward to. I will be visiting my mother's sister, 98-year-old Aunt Anne, who lived in VTown until last year, now she is in Plainfield. Later in November I plan to attend FinnFunn 2019.

Do you have Finnish family local to Canterbury -- if so, what brought them there? My mother's two sisters lived in Voluntown with their families. They married Navy men who were best friends. Uncle Dennis had a poultry farm in Voluntown, and Uncle Lester followed, opening a garage. My cousins are local in VTown and Griswold. Our tradition is to be together Christmas Day, this started 80 something years ago and continues.

What would you most like to engage in about Finnish culture or history, etc.? There was an excellent presentation of eastern CT Finns in Hartford a couple years ago; some of it looked very familiar. I am always interested in Finnish history in America and in Finland. I would like to learn birch bark craft and play the kantela. And bake a delicious pulla. Plus learn Finnish finally!

Hannu Makipuro's Concert "There's Magic in the Air" at StoneHurst at Hampton Valley, March 28, 2020

Hannu Makipuro's Spring Concert at the Finnish Hall in April 2017 was sold out for both performances and was certainly one of the best musical events in the thirty-year history of the Finnish American Heritage Society. On March 28, 2020, Hannu and the same talented band of jazz musicians, with Phil Palonen on guitar, Bill Rood on sax, Rufus Davis on keyboard, Roger Glidden on bass and Matt Vernali on drums and hopefully Mark Makipuro doing some scat singing, will strive to repeat that musical triumph at *StoneHurst at Hampton Valley*, a unique venue nestled on 90 acres along Route 6 in Hampton. The brand-new barn at StoneHurst is rustic yet chic, and with cabaret seating will hold an audience of 299. With proceeds to benefit the Finnish American Heritage Society, it is hoped that this one Saturday evening concert performance will be another full house.

"**There's Magic in the Air**", the title of the concert, comes from an original jazz tune composed by Mark and Hannu Makipuro that was the opening piece at several of Hannu's outdoor Tamarack concerts years ago. The evening's program will feature vocal and instrumental Jazz Standards and Broadway Show Tunes and there will certainly be a few traditional Finnish tunes as well. One of those Finnish tunes will be familiar to those who danced around the Juhannus bonfire this past June while Ed Hendela on accordion and Hannu on trumpet played "*Finn Hall Jenkka*", a dance tune with an infectious beat and melody that Hannu himself had composed.

StoneHurst's doors will open at 6:30 pm on Saturday March 28, and will feature cabaret seating with complimentary hors d'oeuvres served and a cash bar available. Admission is \$35 per person and tickets will go on sale December 1st, 2019. For more information call 860-423-3854 Eila Makipuro.

Old Home Day, An Annual Canterbury, CT Event

By Stan Karro

On Saturday, October 12th, the Canterbury Historical Society took part in the Annual Old Home Day at the Canterbury Congregational Church grounds. The location is appropriate as the Prudence Crandall Museum is directly across from the event and the historic Canterbury Center One Room School House which has been restored and contains a collection of early photos of graduation classes is adjacent to the church site.

The event started at 10AM with the Finnish American Heritage Society participating with volunteers Matti and Marcia Huhta with some support from Stan Karro. The heritage society theme was Pulla bread and baking along with an explanation of the Finnish word Sisu. Thanks to the efforts early this year at Pomfret Community Schools' Finland week, we were able to use the placard showing the pulla making and baking process (thank you Saul and Sandra Ahola) and the sisu pins (thanks to Katharine Leigh) "Ask Me About Sisu". Many purchased pulla which sold out by midafternoon (several came to buy because the Tori sold out early the week before) and many attendees (non-Finns) stopped to learn more about pulla bread and the word sisu. Many visitors were of Finnish descent and shared stories of life in Canterbury and the local region.

This event is a great social and educational day for Canterbury residents and the local region with a wide range of booths to visit...nonprofits such as The Last Green Valley, Lion's Club, many crafters, artists, agricultural exhibits, and environmental organizations. To learn more about this event and to consider visiting next year, see the link below for details of this year's program. Thanks to Historical Society President Ellen Wilson for organizing an outstanding event and program.

<http://canterburyhistorical.org/?event=annual-old-home-day-fall-celebration-on-canterbury-green>

Amerikan Suometar Award Recognizes 2 New England Finns

(Originally Published in the "Finnish American Reporter")

By Jim Kurtti

On a recent trip to New England, Jim Kurtti, director of the Finnish American Heritage Center, presented the Amerikan Suometar award and pendant to two exceptional Finnish-Americans – both who have worked tirelessly to preserve Finnish American history for decades. The rather recently created award – which is represented in the form of a traditional Finnish viiri, or table pendant – was made by the well-known company Taitopaino Oy of Tampere, Finland. The recipients are Burton Jernström, of Lisbon, Connecticut and Sirkka Tuomi Holm, of Francess town, New Hampshire.

The Amerikan Suometar viiri was designed by the staff of the Finnish American Heritage Center. The former Finnish-language newspaper at Suomi College's Finnish Lutheran Book Concern (Suomalais-Luterilainen kustannusliike) "Amerikan Suometar" (America's Lady Finland) was the inspiration of the award's name. "Amerikan Suometar" was published from 1899 to 1962.

The symbol on the pendant, the hannunristi (St. Johannes' cross), is attributed to St. John (Johannes), but also has pre-Christian roots in Finland, as well as other Nordic countries.

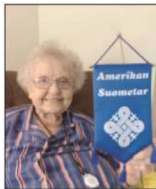
The design was used as a protective symbol on buildings – in particular barns, similar to Pennsylvanian Dutch hex sign traditions. Similarly, the symbol was a popular motif on carved and embroidery items in early times. In the 1950s the Finnish Local Heritage Federation (Kotiseutuliitto) recognized the hannunristi as a Finnish cultural symbol.

A planned surprise presentation of the Amerikan Suometar for Jernström was thwarted by illness. In other words, the surprise was on the planners, when Jernström himself wasn't able to be present at a pot-luck presentation set at the Finnish American Historical Society of Canterbury (Connecticut), because of what Jernström referred to as "tickaitis," referring to his bout was a deer tick-related malady, from which he was recovering.

A few days later, Jim Kurtti was able to present Jernström with his award with a few other Canterbury Hall members present. Jernström was both surprised and pleased with the recognition. "I've never received an award before," Jernström mused. When Kurtti acknowledged Jernström's leadership and dedication to keeping the Finnish Hall of Canterbury going, and preserving the local history in their archival space, Jernström demurred, "I'm no archivist. I was just a chicken farmer. The only thing I'm an expert at is shoveling chicken sh**," he laughed.

Jernström, although not a trained archivist, is rather knowledgeable in archival practice. Furthermore, what he may lack in expertise, he makes-up for in passion. He, along with a small cadre of other FAHS members has collected and maintained the collection housed at the Canterbury Hall. Jernström, with quick wit and unvarnished honesty, readily credits the work of many, but in a subtle and self-effacing humility admits he's been passionate about the preservation of the Finnish hall in Canterbury and Finnish-American history.





Sirkka Tuomi Holm was bestowed the recognition at her 99th birthday party/film premiere. Roughly 130 friends, neighbors and New England Finns gathered to celebrate the first 99 years of this incredible woman's life presented in the Kristin Ojaniemi film, "Sirkka: Past & Present" made possible through the support of the Finnish American Heritage Center; the title taken from Holm's decades-long feature appearing in the "Finnish American Reporter" from its conception in 1986.

Holm's contributions, as highlighted in the film, go back to the early 1920s when she first appeared on a Finn hall stage in Virginia, Minnesota. "I was a few months old, and this soprano sang to me in a cradle on stage. She had a beautiful voice and at the end of her solo I raised my head and looked at the audience. She wasn't very happy," Sirkka chuckled. "I had stolen her scene!"

Some would say that Sirkka's gregarious nature and zest for seeing the positive has stolen the scene ever since.

Throughout her nine decades Holm has carried the banner of Finnish-American causes, cultural and political. From her early adulthood on she has been involved in programs, lectures, exhibits and every sort of medium including writing for various Finnish publications, such as "Naisten Viiri," "Kaiku" and "Työmieks-Eteenpäin." Donning one of her Finnish folk costumes, kantele in hand, she has performed before civic organizations, universities, youth groups and discussion groups.

In the 1970s, Holm was involved in an oral history project through Towson State College, interviewing Finns in the Baltimore, Maryland community.

Holm, an avid reader of history and social justice, has collaborated on several books, including "Red Diapers" and "Sampo: The Magic Mill."

Sirkka, and her late husband Taisto Holm — a Gardner, Massachusetts Finn — collaborated on numerous projects, FinnFests and New England Finnish-American history projects. The Holm home has been filled with their writings, photo collections, societal records and a vast variety of unique Finnish-American ephemeral materials, including correspondences, clippings and photos from their fans across the continent.

"I'm so happy this material is being saved for the future," Holm mused regarding her sizeable donation of these materials to the Finnish American Heritage Center's Archive, as she arranges a move into assisted living in nearby Peterborough.

"It really important that we keep this history alive. I wish more people understood the importance of that." It should be noted that Holm also gave her library of feminism and activism to the Maki Library at Finlandia University, with each volume labeled "From the collection of Sirkka Tuomi Holm, Finnish-American Progressive Feminist."

The Finnish American Heritage Center echoes Sirkka's challenge by saluting Burton Jernström and Sirkka Tuomi Holm for their contributions in keeping our history alive. Established in 1932, the FAHC is presently the only archive collecting Finnish-American materials on a national level.

Congratulations - Onnea

- To **Hannu and Eila Makipuro** of Willimantic, CT on their upcoming 60th wedding anniversary on November 28, 2019.
- To **Matti Huhta** of Moosup, CT on his 80th birthday - September 15th.
- To **Amanda Vainio** of Chestnut Hill, MA on her 2019 scholarship awarded by FAHS.
- To **Anita Smiley** of Preston, CT celebrating her 85th birthday on November 19th.

Get Well Wishes - Pikaista Paranemista

- To **Fran Kotowski** of Canterbury, CT on her recent health issue.
- To **Marita Sasser** of Lisbon, CT on her recent shoulder surgery.

Sympathies - Otamme Osaa

- To **Patti Folsom** of Greenville, RI, family, and friends on the passing of her husband William (Bill) Folsom.



Checkout and “LIKE” the
FAHS Facebook page, listed as
– “Finnish American Heritage
Society of Canterbury, CT”



FAHS is a member chapter of Finlandia
Foundation National (FFN).

Visit their website at –
www.finlandiafoundation.org

Coming Events At a Glance

Saturday October 26	John Simon Author Event 4:00pm
Sunday November 3	Membership Meeting 1:30 pm
Friday November 8	Wine & Beer Tasting/Silent Auction 6:00pm to 9:00 pm
Friday November 15- Sunday November 17	FinnFunn Weekend East Hill Farm, Troy NH
Thursday November 21	Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Saturday December 7	Membership Meeting 11:00am Potluck 12:00pm Pikkujoulu 1:30 pm
Thursday December 19	Board Meeting 6:00 pm

The complete Calendar of Events will appear in the Winter issue and will be on the FAHS website at:
www.fahs-ct.org

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Vice President	Stanly Karro	860-480-3648
Treasurer	Jobina Miller	860-377-0789
Secretary	Rachel Linkkila	860-377-5914
Correspondence	Laura Sasser Cuff	860-377-4149
Membership	Steve Coupe	401-568-6614



is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve and promote Finnish-American heritage. Member is open to all who are interested in the purpose of the organization.

For your Convenience, a Membership Coupon is enclosed in this issue.

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FINNISH CONNECTION

ISSN 1525-6928

This newsletter is published quarterly by the Finnish American Society.

Subscription is free for members and \$30/year for organizations.

Readers are invited to submit material.

FAHS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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