

What's Cooking for A Finnish Christmas?

By Anita Smiley

When asked about fond memories many Finns will talk about favorite holiday foods, especially Christmas specialties. Likewise, a discussion about Finnish Christmas customs among our FAHS members always revolves around some favorite foods, so we thought that it would be interesting to share some of these favorites from our 2020 Christmas events.

Prune Tarts (Joulutorttu)

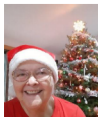
One of my favorite Christmas desserts was my mother's delicious, buttery prune tarts. This year I finally decided that I had waited far too long to make some and was only slightly disappointed. The puff pastry she made had lots and lots of butter, folded over many times as more butter was added. I did not go to that extreme and thus did not get that flaky pastry that makes them so good—and rich with calories. The next time I make prune tarts, I will use the purchased frozen puff pastry, which is also widely used in Finland. The filling is mashed stewed prunes with sugar added to one's taste.



My recipe calls for rolling the dough to a thickness of about ¼ inch and cutting into 4-inch squares. I made some with 3-inch squares and like the smaller tarts better. To form the tarts, cut each corner towards center and place the filling in the middle. Fold alternate corners and turn split toward the middle of the tart, taking the shape of a pinwheel. Press the four edges together over the filling. Brush tops of tarts with beaten egg and bake at 400 degrees for about 10 minutes or until golden brown. I found these much easier to make than I had visualized, and the pre-made, frozen puff pastry will simplify the task. These tarts also freeze well.

Family Pulla Baking

By Dianne Hawes & Liz Hawes-Weeks



Dianne Hawes

Liz Hawes-Weeks and her mom, Dianne Hawes, bake pulla for gifts. Dianne said, "The pulla rose so well and the baking made the kitchen smell so good. On Christmas Eve, to top things off, a hot sauna, then waiting for Christmas morning. I had a cup of hot tea and toasted pulla that morning and then enjoyed my family on Christmas Day."



Family Pulla Baking, cont'd

In the Hawes-Weeks household, the beginning of December is not only a time to get the Christmas tree but with the cooler temps it's time to warm the family and friends with coffee and pulla. I usually make four batches of pulla at Christmas time, resulting in about 28 loaves of bread. The process is an all-day event that usually starts around 6 a.m. While coffee is brewing, I pull out all the ingredients to let things warm up as they seem to work best at room temp.

We make pulla as a family. My son William helped roll and braid the pulla, learning how to make an even loaf. Teaching our children these traditions means that they will live on in the future. My mother taught me to make pulla and we always started with the rolling and braiding and then learning to mix and knead it. In our family we make the dough in a large stock pot and we still mix it completely by hand. It's always the left hand that mixes, and the ingredients are added with the right. The reason for this is that with the clean right hand you can answer the phone when it rings - as it always seems to!



This year I experimented with making a star pulla. The process required rolling out the dough into a circle and coating with butter, cinnamon and brown sugar in layers. The next step is cutting and twisting the dough to show the layers and pinch the ends to make the star. This was delicious and definitely something the family all enjoyed. We also like to make smaller pulla buns or mini loaves and put marmalade on top to bake, a delicious treat for me. It is a family tradition to give pulla to friends, family, bosses and teachers. My friends know and can taste the love we knead into the dough and since we only make at this time of the year, they know just how special they are to us.

Note to FAHS Membership: Who doesn't enjoy talking about food and, even better, sampling tasty treats? Sharing recipes in future newsletters for favorite foods for other Finnish holidays might also be of interest. Contact our newsletter editor or anyone on the Board if you have ideas.



Check out 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

The Finnish Foodie - Holiday Traditions

By Minna Waters

Growing up with a Finnish äiti and an American dad was a gift in so many ways; one that I appreciate even more so as an adult. Not only did I grow up with solid American traditions, I also learned the customs of Finland at a very young age. It was not uncommon to hear Finnish spoken daily, especially when my grandparents lived with us. As I got older, my interest in cooking grew and I started to hang around the kitchen to learn more. With Isoäiti and Ukki home for the holidays, I wanted to learn how to make traditional Finnish dishes for them. My grandmother and my mom would always make a few of their favorite dishes during the holiday season. They were called *rosolli*, *porkkanalaatikko*, and Jansson's Temptation. Those side dishes would accompany our usual Christmas ham or oven baked turkey for Thanksgiving. The American in me loves mashed potatoes (no lumps, please), which is a staple as our "American" side dish. I'll admit, *rosolli* was not my favorite as a child, but I do appreciate beets and variations to the recipe now. I hope you'll try some of these dishes, and as always, improvise (as my Aunt Mary always told me). If there is an ingredient that you don't care for, try leaving it out or replacing it!

Happy Holidays and Hyvää Uutta Vuotta from the Waters' kitchen!

Jansson's Temptation (My Favorite!)

Ingredients (Yield 8)

- 2 large yellow onions, sliced into thin strips (about ¼ in)
- 2 cans (2 oz each) anchovy filets in olive oil (can omit, but HIGHLY recommend keeping, they melt into the casserole, would also recommend to chop them up a bit)
- 6 potatoes (I prefer Yukon, or golden), peeled and cut into strips (like shoestring French fries, ~¼ in)
- 1 ½ cups heavy cream (can substitute milk)
- 1 Tablespoon butter

Directions

- 1- Preheat oven to 350F and butter a 9 x 13 baking dish
- 2- Place butter in a skillet and sauté onions (while onions sauté...)
- 3- Peel, cut, and rinse potatoes
- 4- Layer half the potatoes in dish, followed by one can of anchovy filets and oil from the can
- 5- Use rest of potatoes and second can of anchovies
- 6- Top with heavy cream or milk
- 7- Bake uncovered for approximately 50 minutes until the dish has turned deep golden brown (highly recommend using a large spatula or spoon to push potatoes down halfway through cooking)



DID YOU KNOW? Members and non-members can support FAHS when purchasing items from Amazon? The Amazon Foundation donates 0.5% of each purchase made through Amazon Smile. You MUST activate Smile when you on-line shop by searching smile.amazon.com and finding FAHS in the list of organizations. Every little bit adds up and helps. Thank you!

Porkkanalaatikko

(It's not pork, it's carrots!)

Ingredients (Yield 6)

5-6 medium carrots
1 ½ cups cooked rice
2 cups heavy cream or milk
2 eggs
1 Tablespoon of dark brown sugar or molasses
*¼ Teaspoon of nutmeg (optional)
1 Teaspoon salt

Topping Ingredients

4 Tablespoons butter
½ cup bread crumbs (Ritz crackers are great)

Directions

1- Preheat oven to 375F
2- Bring a medium pot of water to boil
3- Peel, rinse, chop, carrots and place in boiling water until they soften
4- Drain carrots and mash
5- In a large bowl, combine cooked rice, eggs, brown sugar, cream, salt, and nutmeg. Once done, put in a medium-sized, buttered casserole dish
6- Melt butter and combine with cracker crumbs; spread on top of casserole mixture
7- Bake for 45 minutes or until topping is golden brown and no liquid drains from casserole when the edge is pulled away from the side



Rosolli (Beetroot Salad)

Ingredients (Yield 4-6)

2 medium potatoes
2 medium carrots
3 medium beets (or 12 oz of jarred pickled beets)
2 small pickled cucumbers (or sweet pickles)
1 apple (any kind)
1 small onion
*½ filet/small can of salted herring, thinly chopped or sliced *optional*
Pinch of white pepper and salt

For the Dressing

½ cup whipped cream
½ reserved vegetable cooking liquid, chilled

Directions

1- Peel and cube potatoes, carrots, and beets into small ½ inch cubes
2- Bring a pot of water with a pinch of salt to boil and add the vegetables above; do not overcook
3- Save ½ cup of liquid in the refrigerator and drain the rest
4- Drain vegetables and place in large stainless steel or glass bowl
5- Peel, core, cube apple and pickles and add to mixed vegetables
6- Mince onion and add to mixture
7- *Dice pickled herring and add to mixture*
8- Combine ingredients well and add white pepper and salt and refrigerate for at least 2 hours
9- For the dressing, combine chilled liquid with the whipped cream and add this to the top of your salad. Add a pinch of sugar, salt and white pepper to taste. The idea is to have a sweet and sour taste combined

Clockwise from top: Mashed potatoes, Jansson's Temptation, Ham, Rosolli, Porkkanalaatikko

The Archive Committee met virtually on Thursday, January 14th. Co-Chairs Katrina Bousquet and Patti Folsom and committee members Kaz Kozlowski and Anita Smiley met via Zoom with Traveling Archivist Martha Lund Smalley. Ms. Smalley is working with the committee as part of the Traveling Archivist Implementation Grant funded by the National Historic Public & Records Commission and awarded to FAHS through the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board in collaboration with Conservation ConneCTion.

The committee will continue to meet with Ms. Smalley through the end of the grant period in March 2021 to draft a Collections Management Policy for FAHS. During our recent meeting, the committee discussed a new name for the Archive Committee—the Collections Management Committee. Also referred to as the Heritage Committee in the FAHS Policies and Procedures Manual, the duties of the Collections Management Committee would encompass the organization and maintenance of not only the archives, which include the written historical records of FAHS and Imatra, but also the artifacts housed in the archive room, the items in the display area and the numerous books in the archive area and the library. It is our hope that the new name will reflect the broad purview of this committee.

On the committee's agenda is an extensive inventory of the archive room, museum and library. This inventory will be reflected in the Scope of Collection section of the Collections Management Policy.

Reflecting and Celebrating with Hilma Carter

By Ann Gruenberg



One of the great joys of recent years has been getting to know Hilma (Olilla) Carter, who spent early years in Canterbury, Connecticut. Hilma's sister Winnie (Viana) was good friends with my mother, Lillian Saastamoinen Gruenberg, and the two stayed in touch over the years. Hilma and I almost shared a birthday, so Winnie made a tradition of sending me cards. After Winnie passed away, Hilma and I actually met. Hilma is dynamic, vibrant and courageous. She went to college in New York City (Barnard) and frequented jazz clubs in the city. It was there that she met Benny Carter, a talented jazz musician. While people may or may not recognize his name, most would recall certain familiar tunes composed by him. Fast forward several formative years. Benny and Hilma fell in love, got married, and lived fully ever after. Together they visited the White House by invitation of several presidents, and traveled widely. Hilma has always taken good care of herself and her loved ones.

She has done yoga as well as exercising. Hilma was a teacher for many years at Dalton School in New York City. Her life has been an inspiration to generations. As she turns 100, it is a joy to be able to celebrate her ongoing life with abundant *sisu*!

[Interested in learning more about Hilma and/or Benny Carter? Conducting an internet search yields additional info, samples of his music and photos.]

The Finnish American Heritage Society is pleased to announce that Kyle Bacon, son of Cheryl Smiley and grandson of Anita Smiley, was the recipient of a Finnish American Heritage Society Scholarship for 2020. The scholarship, after submission of an essay, was awarded by the FAHS Scholarship Committee; Ann Gruenberg, Chairperson.

Kyle, a graduate of the University of Connecticut with a BS degree, is currently enrolled at Columbia University in New York City, where he is undertaking a 12-month Master's Degree program in Architecture and Real Estate Development. He began the program in September 2020 and will complete it in August 2021. The funds received from the scholarship have been used for books and other supplies, apartment rent, and towards the purchase of a new computer.



Recently interviewed by telephone, Kyle is pleased with the program, with his emphasis on its real estate development/finance aspects. His current courses include Basic Finance, Deal Making, and a tax course. He has already worked for 4 years as a CPA. His career goal is to become a General Partner in a major firm dealing with real estate.

Kyle applied for the scholarship in part because of the influence of his father, Jeffrey Bacon, an architect who died when Kyle was 10 years old. Finnish design was very important to his father, who was a graduate of Columbia, and to Kyle. Finnish culture made an impression on Kyle who experienced the country on two of the tours organized by Anita. He remembers the warm welcomes by Finnish families. The most indelible part of Finnish culture for Kyle is the national characteristic of *Sisu*; a concept that will help him as he makes his way in the business world.

Kyle enjoys life in New York City, living in Harlem not far from Columbia. He shares an apartment with three other persons and very much likes the diversity, foods and general lifestyle of the city. The city is also important to him for networking and he hopes to work there upon completion of his degree.

Enjoy the outdoors!

at the Finnish Center at Saima Park Ski Trails

All are invited to ski, snowshoe, or hike the beautiful trails at the Finnish Center at Saima Park every Saturday in February. The gate will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Due to COVID-19 precautions, there will be no refreshments or rest rooms, and ski equipment will not be available to borrow. Visitors are asked to please wear masks and observe social distancing guidelines of at least six feet. Saima Park is located at 67 Scott Rd. in Fitchburg, MA. Members of the Finnish Center have access to the trails year-round, during all daylight hours. Annual membership dues are \$30.00 and run from October 1 through September 30. Applications can be downloaded from the website, www.saima-park.org. Please note that trail grooming is dependent on enough snow.

Virtual Finnish Culinary Delights – March 13th

The Annual FAHS Culinary Delights will be held virtually (for the first time!) on Saturday, March 13th starting at 2 p.m. The theme is “Finnish Comfort Food”. If you are interested and willing to be a presenter, please contact President Steven Bousquet at finnsteve1918@gmail.com. Or phone number 860-608-8366. Hope you will join us for this traditional presentation of Finnish food preparation.

Kerro Tarina – to tell a story

We welcome your story submission of 200 words or less. Contact Susan Cloutier with questions or for assistance at susanhinz413@gmail.com. Kiitos

"Katso, Aiti!" By June Leiss

On hot summer days my cousin, Roy Rautio and I swam with other Finn kids in Kitt Brook on Barstow Road in Canterbury. It was a fast-moving brook in 1934--deep enough for diving off of a wooden plank. The dark water held unfriendly creatures. Blood suckers hid in the mud and water moccasins; we threw stones to keep these snakes away, but they still scared us out of the water.

We were happiest when Heikki Ukkonen drove up in his big hay truck and took us swimming on the Quinebaug River. We headed toward an open field in Plainfield where the river was winding south toward Packerville. Swimming on Sundays was a time for family picnics. We wore rubber swimming shoes because of the muck and underwater weeds along the river's edge. At this bend in the Quinebaug, the water was calm unlike the swift current towards Packerville.



The older kids like Lillian Saastamoinen (Gruenberg) and Miriam Maki (Banka), swam across the river, climbed the embankment, and jumped far into the deeper water. We younger kids stayed closer to the shore where the adults taught us how to swim. We yelled: "Katso, Aiti!" (Watch, Mother!) just before we dropped underwater while pinching our noses.



In the late afternoon, we walked through the field to a little store across the road to buy ice cream, lollipops, or caramel "all day suckers." A nickel or a dime bought a lot of sweets back then. The little store is now a home. About 4 p.m., we piled back into Heikki's truck; chores waited. Farmers never had a whole day off!

June is in the middle with her Mom's arm around her

FAHS Annual Meeting via ZOOM

FAHS is showing its Finnish SISU adapting to challenging times with thirty-two members meeting via Zoom on January 3rd. Thanks to Steven Bousquet for hosting the ZOOM link. Live music from jazz guitarist Phil Palonen was enjoyed by all and the business of the organization was conducted. No Membership Meetings have been held since March 2020 due to the restrictions of the pandemic.

The annual FAHS Board of Directors election was held. The Nominating Committee (Jonathan Audette, Saul Ahola and Jobina Miller) announced a slate of nominees for consideration:

Officers:

President - Steven Bousquet
Vice President - Steven Coupe
Treasurer - Jobina Miller
Recording Secretary - Aaron Waters
Correspondence Secretary - Minna Waters
Membership Secretary - Jonathan Audette

Trustees:

Stan Karro Sean Tate
Arlene Baril Sue Coupe (2nd yr.)
Saul Ahola (2nd yr.)

The Membership present voted unanimously to approve the recommended slate of nominees.

The Membership congratulates new FAHS Board Members, Aaron Waters, Minna Waters & Arlene Baril; and says "thank you" to outgoing board

members, Rachel Linkkila, Laura Sasser-Cuff and June Leiss; and the Nominating Committee.

2022 marks the 35th Anniversary of FAHS. Hopefully, we can meet in person to celebrate. Ideas are welcome, please contact a member of the Board with suggestions to volunteer.

Other business discussed is highlighted in articles in this newsletter.

Photo of FAHS Zoom Membership Meeting



Want to join FAHS Meetings on Zoom?
Be sure we have your e-mail address!
Please send to jcaudette@hotmail.com

View FAHS videos on YouTube

What is YouTube? It is a Google based video streaming program and is free to view. FAHS has several interesting videos available, including photos celebrating the 25th Anniversary, a Mölkky game and a brief interview with member Bill Aho.

To access it: search for Finnish American Heritage Society CT YouTube or go to this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7QJgGX0G8HnLNZ6ZJeeadQ>

Get to Know Your 2021 FAHS Board of Directors

Board members were asked to introduce themselves to the FAHS Membership, to submit a photo and to answer the question: "Why do I serve on the FAHS Board?"

President - Steven Bousquet

During this very trying time, the FAHS Board has stayed strong and dedicated to our mission and membership, ensuring a positive future for FAHS. Board meetings were held on October 15th, December 17th, and January 28th. The Board continues working on needed hall repairs and monitoring the financial well-being of FAHS.

With great appreciation, I thank the outgoing board members for their hard work and contributions to FAHS: Recording Secretary Rachel Linkkila, Correspondence Secretary Laura Sasser-Cuff, and Trustee June Leiss. Welcome the new members of the FAHS Board: Secretary Aaron Waters, Correspondence Secretary Minna Waters, and Trustee Arlene Baril. We all look forward to working with Aaron, Minna, and Arlene. Their skills and enthusiasm are appreciated. Thanks to the returning Board members for their continued dedication and efforts. Vice President Steve Coupe, Treasurer Jobina Miller, Membership Secretary Jonathan Audette. Trustees Stan Karro, Sean Tate, Sue Coupe, and Saul Ahola.



I want to encourage members of FAHS to stay current with their membership dues. These dues pay for the heat, electricity, and propane needed to keep the hall going. We are hoping to start pulla bakes and hosting events at the hall in the second half of this year, depending on COVID-19 restrictions. We are looking forward to seeing everyone again in person. We will be having Zoom membership meetings the first half of the year, please look at the calendar online for events at fahs-ct.org

I serve on the board to ensure the Finnish American story stays relevant and continues into the future. My goal this year as president of FAHS is to ensure we maintain a healthy organization that serves our mission and membership. Wishing you all a healthy 2021.

Steven Coupe - Vice President

Being Vice President of FAHS gives me the flexibility to help the society where help is needed and where I can make contributions.

My other hope is to get back to doing video interviews of members as they tell their stories about being a Finnish-American or being related to one. I always have enjoyed listening to people talk about themselves. Hearing a story verbally is so much better than reading it in a book.



Steven & Susan Coupe in Switzerland 2019

Susan Coupe - Trustee

In the next year I would like to resume the pulla bakes provided it can be done in a manner that is safe for all. I also plan to continue communications with some of our older members.

Jobina Miller – Treasurer

I serve because I lived next to my Finnish grandfather, who, in true Finnish fashion, hardly ever talked. When I moved to Canterbury, I wanted to find out more about the Finnish culture since I couldn't ask him as he had passed. I also thought I had talents to help the organization, as well as some new ideas to offer.



Aaron Waters - Recording Secretary



Aaron joined FAHS in 2017 with his wife, Minna. After 20+ years of marriage, he became a "galvanized" Finn. But in 2019 after taking an ancestry DNA test, Aaron learned that he indeed was Finnish, all 1% and he has embraced it every day since. Aaron first visited Finland in 1998 during his and Minna's honeymoon. He loved the natural beauty and simplicity of the rural areas of the country, and was embraced by Minna's relatives and friends. Aaron has made several trips to Finland since, the most recent being December of 2019 where he experienced Finland's Independence Day, the festive evenings of *Joulu*, and even met the "real" *Joulupukki*. Aaron is a career officer and helicopter pilot in the U.S. Coast Guard and currently serves as the Commanding Officer of the U.S. Coast Guard's Leadership Development Center in New London. Aaron resides in Quaker Hill with Minna and the kids.

Minna Waters - Corresponding Secretary

Minna has been a member of FAHS since 2017. Minna can easily trace her Finnish heritage through her mother, Nelly Fyke (Taipale), who immigrated to the U.S. from Helsinki in 1970. Minna is a dual citizen of the U.S. and Finland and has been an active member of the Finlandia Foundation throughout her life beginning in 1979 as a founding member of the Tidewater chapter. After marrying Aaron, they were transferred to various duty stations where she continuously embraced her heritage through attending Finnish events and organizations around the country. In 2008, she moved to the National Capital Region and became a member of the Finlandia Foundation National Capital chapter, where she attended events at the Embassy of Finland, including Kalevala Day. Currently, Minna is the Events Director at the Admiral James M. Loy Institute for Leadership on board the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. She is the proud mother of Cade (17) & Erika (15).



Your Membership Dues help to sustain our organization, now more than ever.

FAHS relies on the income generated from our many events. But with 2020 events cancelled, it is challenging to cover the fixed costs associated with maintaining the Hall and running our organization: utilities, insurance, security, upkeep, communications, and more.

If you haven't done so already, please take a few minutes to send in your 2021 dues!
Kiitos paljon!

Jonathan Audette – Membership Secretary



Why I serve: I appreciate the historical significance of the Finnish American Heritage Society and its predecessor organizations, the continuity that FAHS provides to its members, and the sense of community that it engenders. I wish to assist in keeping FAHS vital and help to ensure its existence far into the future. My goal for this year is to lead the implementation of new capabilities to effectively communicate, to engage a larger part of our community more frequently, and to grow the number of FAHS members.

Saul Ahola – Trustee

I've been a member of FAHS since 2009 following my retirement from internal medicine practice. Just before I retired, I started playing the fiddle and in 2013 was granted an apprenticeship by the Southern New England Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program, chaired by Lynne Williamson, to study traditional Finnish American fiddle music. This was one of many apprenticeships awarded to FAHS members over the years. It was natural that since being elected to the FAHS Board as a Trustee in 2014, I have focused on helping to plan musical events. During this past year of the pandemic there hasn't been much music at the Finnish Hall although I did arrange for a sextet of my friends to play several Sibelius pieces live at the hall for Virtual FinnFunn in October. My main goal for 2021 is to help Hannu Makipuro eventually get his concert produced, even if it has to be outdoors. Another goal is to investigate using Zoom technology to increase member participation. I've been impressed that our Zoom membership meetings have allowed members to stay together while apart and has even allowed members who live far away to participate. I will be working to try to include Zoom technology in our future meetings even when we can meet in person, so we can continue to include out-of-state members.



Stan Karro – Trustee

2021 continues to bring challenges. Early in 2020 we discussed the need for a long-term capital project format. This would be a key to help preventing unexpected and vital facility and related repair expenses. In addition, we need to develop new and creative avenues of revenue due to the COVID challenges and beyond. Recruitment of younger generation Finnish American members will be vital in the coming years. Why do I serve and support FAHS? The preservation of our Finnish heritage.

During the many months of our COVID isolation and with limited social contacts, my photo shows our daughter's dog Teddy. They live next door and he visits a couple times a day for treats. He is a social support to us (along with other family members) and with so many of the family on distance learning and teaching, he understands times are not normal.



Get to Know Your FAHS Board of Directors (cont'd)

Arlene Baril - Trustee

Arlene is a life-long resident of Brooklyn, CT, and has been a FAHS member for many years. She is a retired teacher from the Woodstock, CT schools. Recently, she was the driving force to re-paint the inside of the hall. The project to improve the interior décor continues with her guidance. She travelled extensively with her husband Richard including trips to Finland. Arlene's mother was Finnish and her father Swedish. She is a member of the local Day Kimball Hospital Women's Board and has Co-Chaired many fund-raising events for the NE Cancer Crusader. Arlene also has a significant background, along with her late husband Richard, in numerous community organizations including the Brooklyn Historical Society, garden club, and other non-profit service groups. Several years ago, they were honored with the Civic Achievement Award from the NE Connecticut Chamber of Commerce. She has two married daughters with three grandsons.



Sean Tate - Trustee



WHY...would I want to (continue) on the Board of Trustees? Because I believe FAHS deserves my support and my voice. As an internationalist and an educator, and as a 'galvanized Finn' drawn into Finnishness by the real Finn in the family, Karla, I continue to maintain a deep interest in this vital, and well-educated, country.

Beautification of our Finnish Hall Interior Continues

By Anita Smiley

During the pandemic, the interior of our Finnish Hall has been undergoing a serious facelift with repairs and painting. The beautification continues with some of the finishing touches such as the restoration of the large original wooden bookcase located to the right of the stage. We are grateful to Arlene Baril and Stan Karro for their dedication in cleaning and restoring the exterior and cleaning and painting the shelving and interior of the bookcase. The next step is to put this beautifully restored cabinet to its new use as a display cabinet for some of the artistic Finnish glass pieces that have been donated to FAHS over the years.

If anyone has pieces of Iittala, Humppila, Arabia, Aarikka, Artek, and other Finnish glassware that you would like to donate to FAHS, we would gladly add them to the display. Since meetings are not being held in person, please contact any of the Board members for donations. Once we can meet again in person, we look forward to sharing the "new look" at our historic hall. *Näkemiin.*



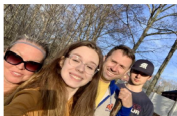
Arlene Baril (L) & Anita Smiley

Celebrating Our Finnish Heritage

By Aaron & Minna Waters

The onset of the pandemic was abrupt to say the least. One day we were enjoying the Finnish delicacies at FAHS' Culinary Delights, the next day we were rushing to the Job Lot to gather food, water, and TP. As I reflect back on this past year and how we (The Waters Family) spent our time, I realized that it was ensconced in Finnish culture and tradition. Maybe it was because Minna and I had just returned from Finland in mid-December, maybe it was the energy we received from attending the latest FAHS event, or maybe it was just coincidence. Either way, we sure did learn much about Finnish culture over the past year. Going forward, Minna and I will be writing a series of blog articles, titled "*Celebrating Our Finnish Heritage*". Each FAHS newsletter will contain an introduction and a link to the newest episode (or two) that will bring you along on our Finnish discovery during the COVID-19 era. This article is meant to give you a 'sneak peek' of what is to come. Full articles are available at acmefinns.com. Here's a preview:

The Finnish Foodie - As you get to know us, you will discover that Minna and I are "foodies". If you don't know what a foodie is, Webster's Dictionary defines a foodie as: "*a person who enjoys and cares about food very much.*" In this series, Minna and I will share our favorite foods and drinks from Finland. More importantly, we will share ways to purchase them that may or may not involve the Job Lot (shout out to Sean Tate). We'll even share our recipes so you can make them in your home.



From left: Minna, Erika, Aaron and Cade

The Sauna - Two years ago, Minna's parents and our newest FAHS members, Nelly (The Finn) and Jerry (galvanized), gifted us their sauna kit. Stacked neatly in a pile, off in the dark recesses of our basement collecting dust it sat. In the second week of lockdown, we (the whole family) decided it was time to build this sauna. We worked for hours on a Saturday and a Sunday setting it up. Once the Finnishing (deliberate spelling) touches were completed and the sauna was operational, we began our sauna odyssey.

The Music - Occasionally, we stumbled across the Finnish culture when we weren't even trying. Six years ago, a friend of ours and a huge fan of the British rock band, AC/DC, showed Aaron a video of a band covering an AC/DC hit called *Thunderstruck*. Fast forward to 2020 while browsing YouTube, we came across the same video, so we decided to watch. We liked it, so we watched another music video by this unknown band, a cover of a Metallica song called, *Nothing Else Matters*. While the song was known by both of us, it was the landscape in the video that struck Minna as familiar. Find out why in this series.

Technology - In these episodes, we will share their experiences with using technology to gain access to all things Finland. From listening to local radio stations across Finland, to attending online concerts, to watching New Year's Eve in Helsinki on TV, or even learning how to speak Finnish, all from the comfort of your own home; we will share the ways we leveraged the internet and other technologies to get a live view into Finland.

Finally, in each of our articles, we will be asking for you to share your stories celebrating our collective Finnish Heritage here in America. We would love to hear how other members enjoy the Finnish culture, especially the food! If you don't want to write an entire article, share your story or recipe with us and we'll be sure to include it in one of our episodes. Until then... *Kippis ja paljon onnea!*

Finlandia Foundation National (FFN) Announces Anita Häkkinen Smiley Fund

FFN announces the formation of a new fund honoring Anita Smiley. According to FFN, the Anita Häkkinen Smiley Fund “will help support travel for students doing research in Finland, help Finnish performers come to the U.S., and support other projects that strengthen the ties between our two countries.”

Anita has made promoting cross cultural ties between Finland and the U.S. a lifelong endeavor. She led 24 tours to Finland which has helped many Americans from across the U.S. to learn about Finnish history and culture, and has assisted numerous Finnish Americans connect with their Finnish roots. She has served on the Finlandia Foundation National board of trustees for more than 18 years and was president from 2009-2013. Locally, Anita has served on the FAHS Board for over 30 years and in 1989, with her husband Jack, founded FinnFunn. Anita holds dual citizenship in Finland and the United States, and in 2016 she was presented the Cross of Merit of the Order of the White Rose of Finland awarded by President Sauli Niinistö for her promotion of Finnish culture.

According to FFN, “Gifts to Finlandia Foundation National, including the Anita Häkkinen Fund, are doubled and matched dollar-for-dollar by the Paloheimo Foundation.”

One can contribute to the fund online by going to *FinlandiaFoundation.org* and under the “Donate Today” tab specify Anita Smiley under “fund.” Or you can send a check made payable to “Finlandia Foundation National” to Finlandia Foundation National, PO Box 92046, Pasadena, CA 91109-2046 specifying the Anita Häkkinen Fund.

Do you have ideas or suggestions for the FinnConn Newsletter?

Newsletter Contributor Meeting

All curious, new, and veteran contributors to the FAHS Newsletter are invited to attend a future meeting via Zoom. The agenda will include hearing your insights and suggestions regarding goals and guidelines for future newsletters. Please email one of us with your interest to attend and we will provide details about the meeting date and time.

The success of *FinnConn* is directly attributable to the dedicated FAHS community of contributors.

Kay Gruder: Kayakerk@msn.com

Member News & Milestones

Congratulations – Onnea

To Mrs. Anne Long of Plainfield, CT, on her 100th birthday November 21, 2020. Anne is the aunt of current member, Karen Lovequist and sister-in-law to early member, the late Dennis Anderson.

To Kyle Bacon of Westport, CT, who was recently presented with a FAHS scholarship to support his graduate work on architecture and real estate at Columbia University in NYC. (see page 6 article)

To Chloe A. Buffington on her Magna Cum Laude graduation from the Univ. of Northern Florida; with a major in Art History and minors in Painting and Honors. She is the Guest Relations Lead at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Jacksonville and the granddaughter of Don & Ellen Buffington of Granby, CO.

Get Well Wishes – Pikaista Paranemista

To Joyce Hannula of Westminster, MA, continues to recovery from a fall earlier in 2020.

To George Sipila of Brooklyn, CT, on his recent shoulder surgery.

To Arlene Baril of Brooklyn, CT, on her recent medical procedure.

To Lucas Kelley (grandson of John and Rita Kelley) and family who moved to Surprise, Arizona for health reasons. He is now being followed by a team of doctors at Phoenix Children's Hospital. A few weeks ago, Lucas had started to have bruising of arms and legs which means his platelets are low. Blood work came back excellent. Conclusion: it's a "boy thing". He's a very active 8-year-old. Most recent update indicates possible infection. Note: Several years ago, FAHS held a fund raiser to help with Lucas' medical support.

Sympathies – Otamme Osaa

To the family and friends of Olavi Niskanen of Middelburgh, NY, who passed away in December at age 84. He was the brother of Eila Makipuro of Willimantic, CT.

To the family and friends of Meg Gault, wife of Rick Gault of Brooklyn, CT, (former Treasurer at FAHS) who passed away December 23rd at age 60.

Kalervo (Kavi) Ruuskanen of Tolland, CT formerly a lifelong resident and constable of Canterbury, CT passed away at age 79 on December 16th following complications of COVID-19 and cancer.

Jane KenKnight of Tucson, AZ, mother of Yvonne Mohrbacher passed away December 17th at the age of 83.

To the family and friends of Violet (Bunny) Krukons of Essex Junction, VT, passed away in December at age 76 following recovery complications after surgery. She was the mother of Arthur Gautesen of Essex Junction and cousin of Urho Haapala of South Killingly, CT. Violet was well known for her annual contribution of maple syrup for our community breakfast event.

To the family and friends of Mauno Antero Petajasoja (Oja) of Woodstock, CT, who passed away at the age of 76 on January 12th. Survivors include his sister, FAHS member Lisa Liinamaa of Brattleboro, VT.

Welcome New Members

David W. Lindroos of Sandwich, MA

Kate Angus of New York, NY

Linda & Stephen Magnusson-Rosario of
Garrison, NY

Travis Palonen of Canterbury, CT

Nelly Fyke of Pensacola, FL

Anne Long of Plainfield, CT

New Members are ALWAYS welcome!
Membership coupon is enclosed.

Coming Events at a Glance

2021 Membership Dues are now due

Sunday, February 7	Membership Meeting 2 p.m. (Zoom)
Sunday, March 7	Membership Meeting 2 p.m. (Zoom)
Saturday, March 13	Finnish Culinary Delights 2 p.m. (Zoom)
Thursday, March 25	Board Meeting 7 p.m. (Zoom)
Thursday, May 6	Membership Meeting 7 p.m. (Zoom)

The complete Calendar of Events is on the
FAHS website at: www.fahs-ct.org

President	Steven Bousquet	860-608-8366
Vice President	Steve Coupe	401-568-6614
Treasurer	Jobina Miller	860-377-0789
Secretary	Aaron Waters	215-454-2494
Correspondence	Minna Waters	215-454-1614
Membership	Jonathan Audette	860-917-5296



is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve and promote Finnish-American heritage. Membership 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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