

2015 is the 150th Anniversary of Sibelius's birth and 90th Anniversary of the Finnish Hall

Celebrating the Life of Jack Smiley

by Gregory Smiley

On Saturday, November 21, the Finnish Hall was alive with stories and jokes as over one hundred people celebrated the life of Jack Smiley. The celebration went on for more than three hours as many people honored Jack, whose presence is still strong in this hall—where he and Anita had their wedding reception, where he stood leading many meetings as FAHS President, and where he spent many afternoons and evenings working, relaxing, acting, sipping wine, hosting visitors from many different countries and cultures, organizing fund raisers, carving, and enjoying the company of whoever was around.

People told stories about how Jack's life was full of fun - like placing an outhouse at the Preston four corners (with a sign reading "last stop before Rhode Island"). There were many stories about how his life was also one of love and giving. His children told stories of his patience and support, and many people talked about how much he gave to the communities and organizations he had been an integral part of.

Bob Onderdonk gave a toast as everyone shared glasses of beer, wine, or juice. As Jack had requested, a glass of beer was set by his picture so that he could celebrate along with his family and friends on that special day. The event closed with a slide show presenting the many aspects of Jack's life as some of his favorite music played in the background, and a meal was then served in the downstairs room.

Jack was a Galvanized Finn, and FAHS and Finn Hall have been fortunate to have him around. The Finn Hall was a wonderfully appropriate place for Jack's Celebration of Life, and his memory will live on.



**The celebration
of the life of
Jack Smiley
at the Finnish Hall
in Canterbury,
Connecticut
on November 21**

Photo by Maura Puckett

Finn Fest USA 2015 was “Finnspirational”

by Patti Folsom, Saul Ahola, and Steve Bousquet

FAHS members Saul and Sandra Ahola, Steve and Katrina Bousquet, and Patti Folsom attended Finn Fest USA 2015 in Buffalo, NY. They found the experience to be exceptionally worthwhile, even though this year's event attracted fewer participants than in previous years. Accommodations at the Buffalo Hyatt Regency Hotel were very comfortable and the shuttle buses ran smoothly from the hotel to the main venues. The timing of this year's festival, over the Columbus Day Weekend, October 9-12, provided an opportunity for some early leaf-peeping for those who made the drive from Connecticut.

Buffalo is not a city well known for its Finnish-American roots; however, the Finn Fest USA committee chose well with its theme of “Finnspiration” and the 150th Sibelius Jubilee in mind. Buffalo is a definitely a city known for its love and support of the arts; and the beautiful Kleinhans Music Hall, designed by Eliel and Eero Saarinen, provided a fitting setting for the Finn Fest organizers to pay tribute to Sibelius. Additional venues, including the Burchfield Penney Art Center, the First Presbyterian Church, the Pearl at the Webb, and the Buffalo & Erie County Central Library provided dramatic backdrops for a wide variety of programs and lectures.

Sandra and Saul Ahola thoroughly enjoyed the focus at Finn Fest on Finnish music and architecture. Sandra attended several sessions dealing with various aspects of the architecture, construction and resurrection of Kleinhans Music Hall, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. It is considered one of the greatest concert halls ever built in the United States. Needless to say, both Saul and Sandra were into “all things Sibelius.”

The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by JoAnn Falletta, held a concert entitled “Echoes of Sibelius” in the Kleinhans Music Hall on Saturday evening. Saul and Sandra particularly enjoyed Sibelius's First Symphony. Katrina and Steve Bousquet enjoyed the Violin Concerto played by Elina Vahala, which was a United States premiere. All were impressed with the orchestra's encore, a rousing and moving performance of Finlandia.

The Ameriikan Poijat (Boys of America) Brass Septet from Minnesota, the only Finnish Brass Band in the United States and Canada, played several performances, but the most amazing one was focused on Jean Sibelius's

little-known and under-appreciated compositions specifically for brass septets. These types of small bands from towns large and small in Finland were common during Sibelius's time and have had a recent revival. Ameriikan Poijat, made up of music educators of Finnish descent from universities and secondary schools in Minnesota, was joined by guest soloist Alex Jokipii, who holds the position of principal trumpet for the Buffalo Philharmonic. The Sibelius marches that the brass septet played were especially enjoyable.

Another Sibelius-related session featured a fascinating discussion by Sibelius scholar Timo Virtanen, from Sibelius Academy, who discussed the compositional techniques that Sibelius used. Sibelius did not just sit down and create his musical compositions over short periods of time. Virtanen has studied archives of thousands of short musical phrases which Sibelius had written down and then apparently struggled for over extended periods to weave these phrases together as a mosaic in order to achieve his musical masterpieces. This was not easy work. It required a lot of *sisu*.

Many additional musical performances were interspersed throughout the program lineup. The downstairs of the Kleinhans Music Hall provided the perfect space for groups to play continuously while attendees helped themselves to coffee or tea. Some of the groups we heard were FinnAire, a smaller group spun off from the FinnFolk dance and performance band from Farmington Hills, MI, and Allotar, the duo of Sara Pajunen, the current Finlandia Foundation Performer of the Year, and Finnish accordionist Teija Niku. Wilho Saari, master kantele player, also appeared and played at several venues during the weekend.

Finn Fest provided ample time for polka and folk dancing. The Parahultaset dance group and SydWest musicians, both from Finland, provided a lively demonstration of Finnish dance styles. These musicians and dancers never tired and continued to play and dance the night away at the late night Cabarets on Friday and Saturday evening. The polka highlight of the weekend, the Polka Face-Off at The Pearl on the Webb on Sunday evening, was well worth the extra price of a ticketed event. Craft beer, delicious food, new-found friends, dancing up a storm, and toe-tapping music, all made for a memorable evening.

The world premier of a documentary film written, directed, and produced by Finnish American Marko Albrecht was a program that caught the attention of Steve and Katrina

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FinnFest - continued

Bousquet. This short film, "SISU: Family Love and Perseverance from Finland to America," was about family grit and determination in the face of tragedy. Marko has dual citizenship (Finland/USA) and shared his very personal story. We found the film very touching and inspirational. A Finnish festival wouldn't be complete without a cooking demonstration. Originally, Beatrice Ojakangas, noted author of *The Finnish Cookbook*, was scheduled to present a program on Finnish cooking; however, a family emergency prevented her from coming to Buffalo. It was certainly disappointing not to be able to meet an author admired for several decades; however, Anneli Johnson of Quincy, MA, stepped in to take her place. The program ran smoothly and Anneli had everyone laughing as she chose a volunteer from the audience to help with kneading *pulla*. Every program attendee also left with a tablespoon of *villi* starter to take home.

The *Tori* at Finn Fest was small but adequate. The Finnish Treasures gift shop and Suomi Imports, LLC, provided attendees with all things Finnish. Lenore Lampi's birch ceramic pieces were absolutely lovely and the wool sweaters and capes from Baltic Inspirations were warm and stylish. Family Tree DNA had a table and many attendees opted to have their DNA samples taken at the *Tori*.

One of the strands of Finn Fest was an all-day genealogy program on Monday. Patti chose to attend this program and found it to be extremely informative. The lineup of presenters was impressive and included Jouni Korkiasaari from the Institute of Migration in Turku, Finland, and Dan Karvonen, from the Institute of Linguistics at the University of Minnesota. Jouni spoke about common problems tracing Finnish home parishes, and Dan gave an interesting talk on the origin of Finnish surnames. Jani Koski, from the Finnish Family History Association, and Kent Randell, an archivist at St. Mary's College of Maryland, each gave information specifically relevant to Finnish genealogical research. The afternoon session of the program was held in the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library and provided a presentation by Rhonda Konig, Genealogy Librarian, followed by one-on-one research assistance in the library's computer lab.

Finn Fest USA 2015 was so enjoyable that the positives definitely overshadowed the negatives—and

there were very few. One that bears noting: Those of us used to (or spoiled by) freshly sliced *pulla* next to the coffee pot at East Hill Farm were disappointed not to find any *pulla* accompanying the coffee that was served throughout the day.

We all agreed that possibly the best part of the weekend was meeting new people. Whether you introduced yourself to the couple at the next table in the hotel restaurant, summarized your day's activities with a group in the elevator, struck up a conversation with the person in front of you at the buffet, or started chatting with those waiting for the next shuttle bus, it was fun to discuss and compare your personal stories as a Finnish-American and/or your interest in Finnish culture.

Finn Fest USA 2015 was truly "finnspirational!" First-time attendees Steve and Katrina Bousquet said they hope to attend many more.



FAHS members, left to right, who attended FinnFest USA 2015 in Buffalo, NY : Katrina and Steve Bousquet, Saul and Sandra Ahola, and Patti Folsom

Photo provided by Patti Folsom

Think Green !

Did you know that you can receive your FAHS newsletter "Finnish Connection" by email ? Simply contact Linda Kuja via email at -
lleitkowski @ sbcglobal.net

It was a dark and stormy day, but inside the Finnish Hall in Canterbury, there was an enlightening and upbeat atmosphere at the 5th Annual FACES at FAHS. Once again, the Fine Art & Craft Exhibit & Sale at the Finnish American Heritage Society was presented in conjunction with The Last Green Valley's prestigious Walktober. This multifaceted event was held throughout the many levels of the hall. At the last minute, space was found in the hall for most of the outdoor displays, but two intrepid artisans, by setting up their displays in outdoor tents, demonstrated the characteristic of *sisu* that Finns hold dear. With works by 24 artisans, 9 craft demonstrations, tours of the Heritage Center, captivating music, and wonderful food offerings, the 200+ visitors had many delightful ways to enjoy their time at the event.

Once inside the hall, people gravitated downstairs thanks to the enticing aromas emanating from the FACES at FAHS Café, coordinated by FAHS member Dale Froehlich. In addition to the warming comfort food, coffee, and pulla, attendees were treated to the lively accordion music of FAHS's Mike Kotowski, demonstrations of wood carving by FAHS members Ritva Autio and John Harris, and weaving by gifted artisan, Peggy Church of Chaplin, CT.

Entering the main level of the hall, one was immediately aware that this was a very special event. Stunning displays of extremely high caliber works in many different media, styles, colors, patterns, textures, and forms along with several craft demonstrations beckoned viewers to visit all the lively spaces on the historic stage as well as on the main floor. The lovely and pristine mandolin and mountain dulcimer music of Mack and Melanie Johnston of Hampton provided a counterpoint to the steady, soft dialogues between attendees and artisans.

A brief walk up an indoor ramp brought guests to the 1998 addition of the Finnish Hall. Three longtime FAHS members, Katrina Bousquet, Anita Smiley, and FAHS President, Stan Karro guided people through the climate controlled Archives, Heritage Museum, and Library. Folks were also able to witness and acquire information on two distinctly Finnish crafts: Elaine Moe, of Millers Falls, MA, provided a wide variety of handmade birch bark items and Lin Gordon of Westfield, MA, demonstrated the creation of flax fibers (which were used for household linens as well as the traditional Finnish garb on display), using an antique Finnish spinning wheel. FAHS member and arti-

san Penny Harris Bennett's original fine art photo cards presented another opportunity to shop locally in the museum.

Several people donated wonderful items to our Archives. Arlene Carlson and Elizabeth Carlson Glaude brought several Finnish books and many 78 rpm Finnish records and Annukka, Alex, and Bettina Neubauer of Andover, CT donated many Finnish magazines. Also visiting from afar was FAHS member, Kaarina Lyons and her husband, Stewart, from Guilford, CT who added a link to FACES at FAHS on the website of the Order of Runeberg in New Haven, CT.

An event of this magnitude does not happen without a great deal of planning, cooperation, and effort by a great many people. The FACES at FAHS Committee consisted of FAHS members Penny and John Bennett, Katrina Bousquet, Annaliisa Brassard, Dale Froehlich, Susan Frost, Stan Karro, Jobina Miller, and Sean Tate, guided by Co-Chair, Patti Folsom and Chair, Beverly Johnson. For the past several years, the Committee has been very fortunate to also include local community members Diane Allen, Janice Leitch, and Brian Tracy.

Other FAHS members who helped with event publicity, set-up, parking, staffing the Café, directing visitors, and clean-up were: Sandra and Saul Ahola, Don Buffington, Richard Fitol, Judy and John Gallinat, Ann Gruenberg, Rita Kelley, Fran Kotowski, June Leiss, and Irene Profetto. We were also fortunate to have local residents Richard Allen and Bob Leitch help with set-up and NY resident, Julie Behounek, as our go-to helper for the day of the event.

Many people donated fabulous food for the Café: Salmon Chowder, Pea Soup, Chili Soup, Vegetarian Chili, Chicken Soup and delectable desserts: homemade brownies, whoopee pies and more. In particular, we wish to thank Diane Allen, Julie Behounek, Katrina Bousquet, Patti Folsom, Dale Froehlich, Stan Karro, and Jan Leitch for their donations. FAHS member Matt Froehlich and his friend, Mason Scott, worked the entire day helping artisans unload their wares, taking and serving luncheon orders, and at the end of the day helping artisans load their wares for the trip home. Without the help of these extraordinary young men, the day would have been much more arduous for the artisans and staff!

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Smiles on FACES at FAHS continued

Responding to our request for financial support essential for Publicity, Printing, and other expenses were Patrons: Sandra and Saul Ahola, Janet Kniffin, Inga Person, John Austin, Sr., Inka Dolan, Robert Guttay, Jennifer A. Malone, and Irene Profetto. Without the assistance of these individuals, our widespread event coverage would have been greatly curtailed and attendance at the event would have been diminished. Our heartfelt *kiitos* goes to each of them.

When first begun five years ago, the goals of FACES at FAHS were modest: to provide a low-cost, low-stress venue for artisans and to improve community relations for FAHS. Thanks to the efforts of many FAHS members, local residents, and friends, these goals have been met over and over again.

Organizing FACES at FAHS has been likened to the painting of the Golden Gate Bridge. When one gets to the end of the bridge, one simply turns around and begins painting again. To that end, the FACES at FAHS Committee has conducted the It's a Wrap meeting and will begin to implement some changes and new ideas in January, 2016. To find more information and photographs of the 5th Annual event, go to the FACES at FAHS page on Facebook. The Committee always welcomes new members and suggestions and the Finnish Hall offers an intimate, friendly, and welcoming atmosphere – regardless of the weather!



Left : The Finnish Hall filled with artists, crafts people, and visitors.



Right : Amy and Richard Jakowski with their pottery and fused glass display.



Left: The Neubauer family with their gift of Finnish magazines for the FAHS library.



Right : Lin Gordon at her spinning and weaving display and demonstration.



Left: Musicians Mack and Melanie Johnston providing entertainment.



Right : Elaine Moe and her display of birch bark crafts.

Photos by Sean Tate

As the large and satisfied crowd left the Finnish Hall on a cold but pleasant Saturday night, you could hear many of them saying, "It just gets better and better every year." That was their rating of the fourth year of the Quiet Corner Fiddlers (*pelimannit*) who teamed up with Rob Miller's smoked pork barbecue (*porsaan grilli*) for a memorable event at FAHS on October 24.

The Quiet Corner Fiddlers was started by Chuck Morgan of Willimantic to give fiddlers in northeastern CT a chance to get together weekly and have fun playing music at one or another of their homes. When he first organized the group over ten years ago, many of the fiddlers who came together were "graduates" of Chuck's adult education course which promised, "Even you can learn to play fiddle in six lessons."

FAHS member Saul Ahola was one of those graduates and has been playing with the group of 12 to 20 musicians every Tuesday night since 2005 and feels he indeed is slowly getting a little better every year. The group plays the full gamut of fiddle music from Celtic, Appalachian, New England, Quebecois, and even Texas Swing traditions. In 2011, Saul received a grant from the Southern New England Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program to study Finnish folk fiddle music under the tutelage of John Chambers and Christine Anderson, members of the Finnish folk band, Oivan Ilo, and soon was sharing the many Finnish folk tunes he learned with the Quiet Corner Fiddlers group.

The music played by the fiddlers at the smoked pork barbecue came from the same wide variety of tunes that the Quiet Corner Fiddlers play at their weekly sessions, not just by fiddlers but from a variety of instruments including jaw harp, viola, mandolin, bass, acoustic guitar, and even clarinet (a common instrument in traditional Finnish *pelimanni* bands). There were audience sing-a-longs like the ones that were so common in Finnish dance halls in years gone by, tunes like "Tennessee Waltz" and "Wings of a Dove." The music pieces that made the night special for the audience and the fiddlers were the same Finnish tunes that northeastern Connecticut Finns had danced to on many Saturday nights over the 90-year history of the Canterbury Finnish Hall. There were polkas like "*Karjalan Poika*" (Karelia Boy) and "*Ellin* (Elli's) *Polkka*" and Scottisches like "*Isä Kullan Jenkka*" (Dear Dad Schottische). And there were wonderful vocals by

Hannu Makipuro who joined the fiddlers for "*Metsäkukkia*" (Forest Flowers), "*Väliaikainen*" (Temporary), "*Sininen ja Valkoinen* (Blue and White) *Tango*" and of course the quintessential Finnish waltz "*Emma*" with the audience joining in on each plaintive chorus. *Pelimanni* music, like all traditional fiddling allows for improvisation, and any written music is "just a suggestion." Not so with the Quiet Corner Fiddlers' last piece of the night. The "Finlandia Hymn" was played just the way Jean Sibelius composed it, and that was a perfect ending for a night of Finnish music.

It wasn't just the Quiet Corner Fiddlers who the attendees felt were getting better and better each year. Rob Miller has gradually perfected his craft of smoked pork barbecue as well—good enough to take Grand Champion Overall last year at the Plainfield Pride Barbecue Cook-off. Like fiddling, smoked barbecue requires a lot of practice, patience, and improvisation. Rob and his pal, Jason Vincent, began to get serious about barbecue four years ago and built their custom BBQ out of a 275 gallon tank. The most critical components needed to achieve excellence are time, temperature control, and judgment as to when the result is optimal. It takes around eight hours at 225 degrees for pork butt barbecue for example. Temperature swings are incompatible with excellence and Rob's experience as a systems integrator by trade led to his addition of a state of the art temperature control system to his BBQ which holds temperature steady within +/- 5 degrees. There are some secrets, such as seasoning, which Rob is reluctant to discuss; but he did reveal that president Stan Karro had a hand in designing and tweaking the spice rub used for the "*Porsaan Grilli* FAHS" this year.

Finally, the kitchen crew Irene Profetto, Saul Ahola, Arlene Baril, Ethel Records, Jean Karro, Lily, Aila, Katrina Bousquet, and Tomas Gutierrez and others who prepared and served the baked beans, coleslaw, cornbread, smoked ribs and pulled pork, and the desert certainly contributed to the success of the evening. It had been the hope of all involved that the end result would be an event to be remembered and that it indeed would have those leaving the Finnish Hall saying, "This just gets better and better every year." Thanks also to Sean Tate for his collection of photos during the evening.

Photos by Sean Tate are on page 7.



Top left : The Quiet Corner Fiddlers on stage at the Finnish Hall, with singer Noreen Morgan (far left) on guitar, performing “Tennessee Waltz.”

Top right : The Pork BBQ buffet table.

Left : Singer Hannu Makiporo, Charlie Halbert on viola, and to their right, Saul Ahola on violin, performing “Metsäkukia.”



Left : A view of the Finnish Hall filled with FAHS members enjoying the dinner and concert.

Photos by
Sean Tate

FAHS Archive Update

by Stan Karro

The Finnish American Heritage Society completed an extensive addition to the Finnish Hall in October 1998. This construction was undertaken without borrowing any financial resources. Funds were all obtained via fundraisers and a contribution from the Inatra Foundation. This project included the current archives facility, and the project was completed under the leadership of Jack Smiley, as mentioned in the last published newsletter.

Our Archive has over 2000 publications, of which some are held in limited volumes in libraries such as ones at Harvard and Yale. The archives also have an extensive collection of videos and audio recordings of members of the Finnish community, along with many family documents of their lives and activities. Burton Jernstrom has been the Chairperson of the Archives for this time period and has placed hundreds of publications from various sources, including his own, into this collection. His determination to preserve the history of the Finnish immigrants and the region has been his priority as a member of the FAHS. He also has a personal archive of U.S. historical artifacts, including war events spanning over one hundred years.

The volunteers of the archives and FAHS members are challenged with upgrading documents, videos, and audio recordings to current media to help preserve these important items for years to come. The archive facility requires controlled humidity and temperature to minimize the degradation of these materials over the long term. Recent concerns regarding the aging equipment for temperature and humidity control has resulted in a request to organizations for grants to replace the current system. The Jewett City Savings Bank Foundation has provided some resources for this replacement and other sources are being pursued.

FAHS Members Meet and Tour Litchfield, CT.

Historical Society Archives

by Katrina Bousquet

On August 24, Stan Karro, Burton Jernstrom, Anita Smiley and I took a trip to The Litchfield Historical Society to see an example of an archive. Linda Hocking showed us around and offered some advice on how to get started.

Our first job is to write a mission statement for the FAHS archive, which will help us in deciding what items to accept in our small archive room. The mission statement will also come in handy when we start to write grants, which would be useful when purchasing archival materials as we rearrange our shelves. We also learned about the different programs we could employ to organize our archives. These programs would make it possible for present members and future researchers to find items more easily.

At Finn Fest Buffalo, I spoke with Jim Kurtti, Director of The Finnish American Heritage Center and Historical Archives at Finlandia University, Hancock, Michigan. He offered helpful advice as well. Steve and I attended a workshop given by Jim at Finn Fest, about the future of archiving.

We are excited to start this new venture at FAHS, preserving the gifts given to our organization over the years, and future gifts as well.



Left to right : Anita Smiley, Katrina Bousquet, LHS guide Linda Hocking, and Burton Jernstrom amid the archives of the Litchfield Historical Society.

Photo by Stan Karro



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Cell: 860-450-6534

Email: bands@askpartner.com

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2015 Veteran's Day at the Finnish Hall

by Stan Karro

On November 11, the Finnish Hall hosted local veterans, organizations, and FAHS members to recognize the contributions of military individuals with service to our country. Burton Jernstrom and Matti Huhta co-chaired the afternoon event, which started at 2:00 pm.

Following a welcome from Stan Karro and the National Anthem played by Mike Kotowski, our key speaker was Roy Piper, Canterbury's First Selectman, who is also a retired Naval Officer with 23 years of service.

Matti Huhta and Anita Smiley read lists of additional veterans' names which will be added to the memorial board at the courtyard. An invocation at the beginning of the program was given by Pauline Andstrom, who also provided the benediction.

The VFW Honor Guard led by Bill D'Appollonio Commander of VFW Post 10688 of Canterbury performed in the courtyard followed by taps by Mike Kotowski to conclude the memorial service. Refreshments were served to all after the program.

An extensive collection of Finnish American war veterans photographs were on display at the hall. Burton Jernstrom displayed his unique personal collection of war memorabilia including books of both Finland and the U.S. Thanks to all who participated and attended this tribute to our veterans.



Above, from left: Burton Jernstrom, Paul Ahola, Bob Korpinen, Bill and Sylvia Aho. Photo by Stan Karro
Below : VFW Post 10688 of Canterbury Honor Guard. Photo by Anita Smiley



Popular Craft Beers, Many Participants, and Silent Auction Highlight Wine and Beer Tasting Event

by Stan Karro

Jobina Miller again chaired this annual event at the Finnish Hall, which was the most successful in recent years, with attendance at an all-time high along with generous revenue contributions for the Hall Preservation Fund from all who attended. Ticket sales were outstanding along with the arrangements from the Booze Barn and John Brisson, with many regional distributors, and with the craft beer servers receiving the vote as the most popular.

We thank all who attended and those who provided items for the Silent Auction which included a turkey for the holidays from Saul and Sandra Ahola's farm in Woodstock, CT, and Matti and Marcia Huhta's huge basket of goodies. The highest bidder for the turkey was Gail Linkkila of Chaplin, Jobina's mom. The items, which were very diverse, attracted much attention and competitive bidding.

They provided a good incentive for holiday season gift buying. The appetizers were much appreciated and perfectly complemented the tasting event.

Some of the revelers are pictured below.

Photo by Anita Smiley





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

On the sixth of December, each and every Finn can feel proud and privileged to celebrate our independence. Recent news from around the world has proven that peace, freedom and economic stability are not self-evident for everyone.

The conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as the shocking terrorist attacks, have affected us all. Violence and unrest have taken centre-stage in a dramatic way. This unrest and distress has triggered a flow of immigrants across Europe – we are still seeking sustainable solutions to this situation. However, it is clear that the fundamental solutions to curbing migration depend on achieving lasting stability in the conflict zones. Trust and a common approach by several countries will be needed in order to build peace. Recent incidents have shown that increasing cooperation is needed throughout the international community. We also increasingly need each other.

We Finns have settled in all parts of the world. Mobility around the world has been commonplace for many of us at some point in our lives. Many Finns grow up in an international environment as a natural part of their lives and become used to the countless different outlooks they encounter around the world.

However, the Finnish identity knows no boundaries. It is an inherent part of us and our ties to Finland remain strong. You, expatriate Finns, are important ambassadors for Finland, spreading knowledge of the unique features of our identity and culture. Solidarity and integrity have been among Finland's strengths for our almost 100 years of independence. There is a continuous need for determined efforts towards solidarity – both within and beyond our national borders.

I wish you all a wonderful 98th Finnish Independence Day and restful days ahead as Christmas approaches.

*Sauli Niinistö
President of the Republic*

Members' News and Milestones

Congratulations- Onnea

- **Ann Gruenberg** on her recent retirement from Eastern Connecticut State University and her recent appointment to the State organization of the Boards of Education.
- **Marjorie Seppala Gilmore** of East Greenwich, RI, mother of **Patti Folsom** and **Tom Gilmore** on her 90th birthday on December 4.

Sympathies -Otamme Osaa

- To the family of **Esko John Koskinen** of Montvale, NJ, on his passing on July 12.
- To the family of **Gertrude Kivela** of Plainfield, CT, on her passing on September 26.
- To the family of **Rob and Jobina Miller** of Canterbury, CT, on the passing of Rob's father **Robert Miller** on November 28.

Get Well Wishes - Pikaista Paranemista

- **Pauline Andstrom** of Plainfield, CT, on her recovery from recent throat surgery.
- **Marjorie Seppala Gilmore** on her recovery from recent fractured pelvis.
- **Edward Kelley**, husband of **Rita Kelley** of Killingly, CT, on his recovery from recent eye surgery.
- **Josie Stenbeck** of Killingly, CT, on her recovery from recent hip surgery.
- **Ilma Tikkanen** of West Greenwich, RI, on her recovery from recent heart complications.

A Note of Thanks

from Anita Smiley

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all who came to celebrate Jack's life with us on November 21, and especially to those who offered to help in so many ways - providing support and encouragement, helping with the appetizer and dessert tables, setting up and taking down chairs and tables, parking cars, and sharing remembrances. It was an uplifting day for all who were there as fond memories were shared by so many of Jack's family and friends.

Kiitokset!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all !



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 .

Welcome New Members

- **Jorma Huttunen & Michael Sylvia**
of New York, NY
- **Simone Masadi** of Providence, RI
- **Jason & Lisa Robertson** of Dayville, CT
- **Eric, Patty, Molly & Daniel Arnio**
of Canterbury, CT

New members are always welcome to the Finnish American Heritage Society. Please use the enclosed Membership Coupon to sign up and send it with your dues to the FAHS, P.O. Box 252, Canterbury, CT 06331.

PRESIDENT	STANLEY KARRO	860-480-3648
VICE PRESIDENT	STEVEN BOUSQUET	860-608-8366
TREASURER	JOBINA MILLER	860-377-0789
SECRETARY	ANITA SMILEY	860-889-7820
CORRESPONDENCE	RITA KELLEY	860-465-6236
MEMBERSHIP	STEVE COUPE	401-568-6614

Coming Events At a Glance

Thursday, Dec. 17	Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
Sunday, January 3	Annual Membership Meeting, 1:30 pm
Thursday, Jan. 28	Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
Saturday, Feb. 6	Laskiainen/Sledding Day, 10:00 - 2:00
Sunday, Feb. 7	Membership Meeting, 1:30 pm
Thursday, Feb. 25	Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
Saturday, March 5	Finnish Culinary Delights, 1:30 pm
Sunday, March 6	Membership Meeting, 1:30 pm

All events are held at the Finnish Hall, 76 North Canterbury Road (Conn. Route 169) in Canterbury, CT, unless otherwise specified.

The complete 2016 Calendar of Events will appear in the Winter 2016 issue and on the FAHS website at www.fahs-ct.org.



Finnish American Heritage Society

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

The 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.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 252, Canterbury, CT 06331

Street address: Finnish Hall, 76 North Canterbury Road

Phone number: (860) 546-6671 **E-mail address:** info@fahs-ct.org

World Wide Web address: www.fahs-ct.org

On Facebook at: www.facebook.com/fahscanterburyct

FINNISH CONNECTION

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FAHS newsletter committee:

Collection of materials and proofreading: Jackie Harjula,
Patti Folsom, Anita Smiley, and Linda Kuja

Members' news and milestones: Stan Karro

Editing and layout: Allan Seppa

FAHS MEMBERSHIP COUPON

New address? Need to pay dues? Or just want to send us more information about yourself ?

Fill out this coupon and send it (with your check) to FAHS, P.O. Box 252, Canterbury, CT 06331.

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☐ This is an address change

☐ I am renewing my membership for ☐ 2015 ☐ 2016 (\$20 / person or \$35/household/ year)

☐ I would like to make an additional donation of _____ (tax deductible
to the extent allowed by law)

☐ Please use my donation for general operations

☐ Please use my donation for the Hall Preservation Fund

☐ Please use my donation for the FAHS Scholarship fund

☐ I have or will make a planned legacy gift in my estate planning

☐ I am a new member

What is your Finnish connection ?

What interests do you have ?

What skills and talents do you have that can be used to assist FAHS in promoting our heritage ? _____

What else would you like to tell about yourself ?

What FAHS committees/events are you interested in helping with ?

___ Fund raisers/dinners ___ Hall maintenance ___ Children's activities

___ Grants ___ Newsletter ___ Other