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FINNISH CONNECTION



The group at the Finnish-Russian border zone at the Raate Road location.

SEARCHING FOR THE ROOTS OF HAPPINESS IN FINLAND

By Anita Hakkila Smiley

Planning a tour of Finland for the 28th time was a challenge. This required a new theme and some variety from previous tours for this adventure in 2024. Since Finland was designed

for the seventh time as the country with the happiest people in the world, it seemed only fitting that our tour would explore some of the reasons for this honor.

As I prepared to leave Helsinki for my return flight to JFK in New York, I

spent an hour sitting on the 10th floor balcony of the Vaakuna Hotel near the Helsinki railroad station, breathing in the fresh air and quietly observing as I pondered two weeks of travel around this relatively small country. The calmness, in the

middle of the capital city, overwhelmed me.

Here I was at one of the busiest locations in the city, and I heard only two car horns during that hour! There was the soothing rumble of the streetcars, punctuated by quietly resounding accor-

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dion music by a street musician. Daily foot traffic made its way among bicycles and scooters, and everyone patiently waited for green lights to cross roadways. This hour of observation left me with a feeling of calm and respect for the people of Finland, a feeling which had been building up as we made our rounds of Finland on tour.

The Finnish people respect the beauty of nature, which is obvious throughout the country. Nature trails and parks are available to all, and walking and biking are a way of life for most Finns. Jumping behind the wheel of a car is not always the go-to choice when walking or biking is an option. As a tour group organizer, my choices of inclusions provided many opportunities to indulge in the enjoyment of nature, experiencing this secret to happiness in the Finnish way of life.

Enjoying nature as a way of life

Our destination in Lapland of the Muonio/Pallastunturi area brought us to the center of Lapish fells and nature—and the world's purest air, as noted by Googling "world's purest air."

Overnighting for two nights at Harriniva in Muonio provided ample



Lynne Williamson and the group's guide from Kautokeino at the Hetta Visitor Center in Lapland.

time for an introduction to an understanding of how locals see the seasons and the life of the Sami people. In addition to our immersion into hiking and river rafting, a visit to a reindeer farm in Torasieppi and a presentation by a local Sami guide from Enontekio at the Hetta Visitor Center added to our appreciation for the Sami culture, people at one with nature.

We visited the Visitor Center at the Pallas/Yllästunturi National Park for a briefing by local guides on fell nature and

the availability of hiking trails throughout the park. Group members were invited to select a choice of a 2-hour hike or a walk along a shorter trail near the visitor center. Ripening cloudberries and bilberries were spotted along the trails, tasting included. Brief showers broke out as the group embarked but, fortunately, no one was deterred from this exhilarating experience since the clouds moved on, and it was a glorious day for hiking in the fells of Lapland. Our group members were aware of the Finnish saying that

"there is no such thing as bad weather, just unsuitable clothing."

Luncheon in the spacious dining room of the Pallastunturi Hotel was a welcome treat before moving on. Large windows provided views of the fell landscape for additional reminiscing on the hiking experience.

My memories had the addition of a visit with a group of 4-H exchange students to this same spot in November, 1956, with a hike in the fells and dinner at this same hotel. There was very little development in the area at that time and roads were scarce, but the scenery was equally mesmerizing.

On our return to Harriniva, our guides were waiting to take us on a white-water rafting experience over four rapids on the Tornio River. Another exciting adventure was about to take place.

We were told by our professional guides that everyone would be participating in steering by paddling, and they familiarized us with the technique. Clothing was provided, and we were shown our route on the Tornio River.

Our group was divided into two groups as we took our places in the rubber boats. Amid much laughter and excitement, we were on our way for this one-hour adventure, bouncing

along and moving through some powerful waves and troughs that sent water gushing over our heads. The day was not over yet for those who opted to end this adventurous day with a hot sauna and swim.

These two days in Lapland have made an indelible impression on our travelers, and it is obvious why Lapland has become such a renowned tourist destination and a favorite of the Finnish people for all seasons.

Our travel route started through the beauty of eastern Finland's lake district and scenic areas, such as the drive along the famous Punkaharju Ridge, with its beautiful landscape of ridges and lakes, and a stop to admire the popular scenic destination of Koli. The reason that Finland is often referred to as the Land of 180,000 Lakes became obvious during our travels. A cruise on Lake Oulu, the fifth largest lake in Finland, on the steamship Kouta to a UNESCO designated site gave an appreciation for the popularity of boating in Finland.

Much of Finland's scenic beauty revolves around the splendid pine and birch forests, which cover about 70 percent of the land area. At the Lusto Forestry Museum in Punkaharju, we

learned about the significance of the forests in the life of the Finnish people. The museum aims, in part, to "tell the story of the mental well-being and health that the forest provides to people and describes the significance of the forest in shaping Finnishness and identity."

Relaxation in a sauna is happiness

The relaxation enjoyed in a hot sauna, added to the calmness of the joy of immersion in nature, blend into a feeling of being at one with nature.

There were many opportunities for indulging in the sauna ritual during our two weeks in Finland. All hotels have sauna availability, with set hours for men's sauna and ladies' sauna.

Many hotel rooms have a private sauna, easily heated and with all provisions included. For those who have not had the opportunity to experience a sauna, this is the best way to get initiated.

Sauna and a dip in a lake is the ideal summertime ritual, and this was available at Sauna World and Spa at Ukkohalla on Lake Syväjärvi in Hyrynsalmi in eastern Finland. Among the nine different saunas available, the traditional Finnish smoke sauna was the favorite of our group members. A dip in the cool lake water added to the full experience, and

some also enjoyed the relaxation of the hot tub.

A good night's sleep usually follows a soothing sauna experience.

Music soothes the soul

Adding the enjoyment of music in all forms to the previously mentioned joy of an immersion into nature, and the relaxation of the sauna rounds out an inclusive reason for Finland earning the title of "Happiest People in the World" for seven years in a row. Our tour included music in many forms, running the gamut from folk music to opera, sharing the joy and the healing power of music with our travelers.

We started with optional attendance at a performance of "Don Giovanni" at the world-renowned Savonlinna Opera Festival. Sold-out performances at this month-long festival every summer attest to the fact that opera music is popular. On the following evening, we were treated to a dinner concert, enjoying Sibelius music performed by cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazim Azeizan at the Break Sokos Hotel amidst the beauty of Koli.

Another immersion into the Finns' love for music was included as we visited Kaustinen, the venue for the annual Kaustinen Folk Music

Festival. We were greeted by Matti Hakamäki, Director of the Finnish Folk Music Institute, who presented information about the history of folk music and the importance of preserving the folk music culture in Finland.

We were entertained by well-known local folk musicians Ritva Talvitie performing on the fiddle and Timo Valo entertaining on the harmonium.

Finland has a wealth of summer festivals incorporating music in many forms, all of which are strongly supported.

Other instruments for Finnish folk music were introduced, first at Parppeinvaara in Ilomantsi as we enjoyed a selection of songs played on the traditional Finnish kantele, in a setting reminiscent of the traditional Karelian rune singer's home. Later we enjoyed folk songs played on the traditional accordion as we sat by the powerful rapids on the Tornio River in the village of Kukkola, north of Kemi. Here we were surrounded by nature as we gazed at Sweden on the opposite shore.

Music education is promoted throughout the years of schooling in Finland, thus nurturing an appreciation of music in all forms. The sounds of nature and the sounds of music have been found to reduce stress, a com-

bination enhancing well-being and promoting happiness.

Our two-week tour, covering over 2,000 miles of the highways and byways of Finland, has highlighted the variety of experiences available to visitors in Finland, whether new to the country or experienced travelers looking for exciting new adventures.

Many travelers to Finland will start with the capital city of Helsinki, which has become a cosmopolitan blend of

many nationalities. In this city brimming with activity, it seems that the biggest draw for tourists is the marketplace/tori by the busy harbor, culminating after a walk from the center of town through the Esplanade Park. Stalls entice visitors with souvenirs from Finland, with aromas of delicacies being prepared, and with coffee stands beckoning with Finnish pastries.

Close to this bustling city environment of Helsinki, the tranquility of nature

is available at Nuukio National Park with its lakes and forests.

Scattered throughout Finland there are 41 national parks open year-round, all with marked trails and free to the public. Our visit to Pallas National Park in Lapland was a pleasurable introduction to nature's offerings in Finland and its link to Finland's happiness. Finland's number one ranking on the world's happiness scale is based on many factors. My evaluation of in-

cluding nature, music, and sauna is based on my observations of travels in Finland and interaction with Finnish people over many years. In addition, I note that the Finnish people are proud of their country and take pride in keeping it pristine and making visitors feel welcome.

For a shot of happiness, try Finland!

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America 250 Workshop

By Stan Karro

The Last Green Valley hosted an America 250 grants workshop at the Finnish American Heritage Society on Thursday, October 10. The program began with a tour at the Prudence Crandall House in Canterbury and then attendees visited the heritage society museum and archives. The workshop and casual meal with sandwiches followed. Invitations were extended to many Last Green Valley organizations including Central Massachusetts groups. Volunteers to discuss grant opportunities included CT Humanities, America 250 CT, and CT League of Museums.

The workshop provided key information for applying for grants to prepare for the American 250th commemorations in 2026. With



Photo by Frances Kefalas of The Last Green Valley

over 30 workshop attendees, the museum committee provided details of the museum displays. Members supporting the evening event included Patti Folsom, Anita Smiley, Kristi Holohan,

Avani Joy Visone, and Stan Karro. The event provided an excellent opportunity to showcase our newly renovated museum displays to many new key regional and state visitors.

FinnFunn Weekend

Photos by Patti Folsom and Anita Smiley



FAHS member Kristi Holohan demonstrates the screenprinting process during Finnish and Finnish American Traditions of Design and Print.



Nutrition Specialist Holly Kouvo talks about the process of making rye crispbread for the Bread and Butter Table Demonstration.



Miska Kajanus, Finlandia Foundation Performer of the Year, presented a comedy skit on Saturday evening.



A FinnFunn participant enjoys making a tonttu at the craft table.



Karen Lovequist talks about a family keepsake during the program Cherished Keepsakes and Their Stories.



Rob Ranta, FinnFunn Weekend Co-Chair, and wife Susan greet visitors at the opening of FinnFunn Weekend.



Saija Laurila, who teaches Finnish at Saima Park, gives a lesson on pronouncing Finnish words.



Holly LeClair, East Hill Farm staff member and FinnFunn Committee Member, shows one of the local ciders available for the Saturday evening dinner.

How the Trees Lost Their Voice

by Avani Joy Visone

I have been Finnish my whole life. In spite of that, it wasn't until a year ago that the tools to understand my Finnishness were made available to me. This was in great part by the amazing people and learning resources here at the Finnish American Heritage Society & Museum in Canterbury, CT. One day an elder in this community handed me the book, *The Enchanted Wood and Other Tales from Finland* by Norma J. & George O. Livo. With a twinkle in her eye and a smile, she suggested I read it with my kids and maybe, just maybe, I would find inspiration therein to write an article about it.

I discovered through reading this magical storybook of Finnish folk tales along with my own personal study of Finnish folklore and myth, it turned out that long-held ideologies and beliefs of mine were surprisingly close to what is often regarded as specifically "Finnish." One of those ideologies espoused in many sources I have come across has been a healthy respect and love for nature and the many gifts Mother Earth provides.

I owe a part of my previously-established ideas about respect for this amazing planet we're on to my study of the folkways and beliefs of indigenous Americans. This easy and wonderfully natural blending of culture and ideas is seen in the history of the "Findians"; an ethnic group of individuals who are the result of the blending of indigenous Ojibwe peoples in Minnesota, Michigan,

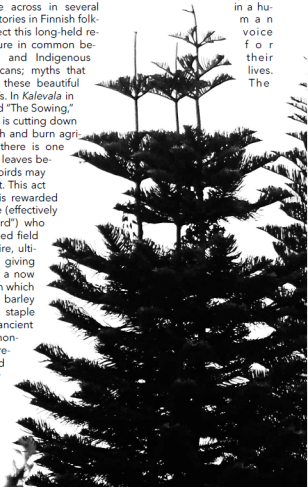
and Ontario and Finnish immigrants. They, too, discovered amazing commonalities that allowed them to live harmoniously and seamlessly together, such as a deep respect for nature and the forest, a long tradition of sweat lodges (sauna), and a recognition of the prejudices of mainstream society against marginalized peoples.

I have come across in several places now stories in Finnish folklore that reflect this long-held respect of nature in common between Finns and Indigenous North Americans; myths that demonstrate these beautiful shared beliefs. In *Kalevala* in the rune titled "The Sowing," Väinämöinen is cutting down trees for slash and burn agriculture, but there is one birch tree he leaves behind so that birds may alight upon it. This act of kindness is rewarded with an eagle (effectively a "thunderbird") who lights the felled field of trees on fire, ultimately giving Väinämöinen a now fertile field on which to plant barley which was a staple crop to the ancient Finns. By demonstrating restraint and cutting only that which was absolutely necessary and no more,

Väinämöinen is rewarded with a wealth of resources.

In yet another tale from *The Enchanted Wood and Other Tales from Finland* by Norma J. & George O. Livo titled "How the Trees Lost Their Power of Speech", a woodcutter goes to the woods to cut logs for his wife to use for cooking and warmth. However, with each tree he visits, they plead

in a human voice for their lives. The



oak tree pleads that its acorns are still unripe and if it is cut down no future oaks will grow. The maple claimed its sap was too important as a food source to small animals. The aspen said it needed to rustle its leaves to frighten wrong-doers from their wicked ways. And so it went with every single tree he approached. He took pity upon them and left empty-handed. The guardian of the forest visits him as he sits dejectedly at the forest's edge and rewards him with a

golden rod which will give him anything he asks for, within reason. He uses it the rest of his life, but when the rod is passed down to his grandson, he uses it greedily and is struck dead in a fire and the rod is lost forever.

The fire is so gargantuan, so large that the trees are forever scared to speak ever again.

On the flip side of this story, we find instances in *Kalevala* where boats made of birch lament falling into disuse. Indeed, the birch tree from which Väinämöinen crafts his kantele laments its injuries from having its bark stripped or its branches cut for sauna whisks. The birch dreams of having a lasting positive effect on the world around it rather than these fleeting joys. There, then is honor in the felling of these trees; the cutting of this wood. It is used to create something beautiful that brings immense joy to all around who hear its music. Väinämöinen pledges it will have "good luck in plenty, a new sweeter life; soon you'll be weeping for joy with delight you will echo".

Although it is clearly intended as a children's book, *The Enchanted Wood and Other Tales from Finland* is a wonderful way to understand it through the lens of easily digestible myths and fables that are accessible and entertaining for readers of all ages. These stories pave a pathway to allow the reader to connect and better understand their own "Finnishness" -- just like it did for me. There are amazing cultural insights, valu-

able education knowledge about Finland's history and culture, and it even includes a generous section of authentic Finnish recipes for your dining pleasure.

These stories show so much similarity to our indigenous brothers and sisters in humanity who demonstrate a similar respect for the plants and trees they use for tools, food, and building. And we can learn so much from these fables in the modern age when the cultural messaging tells us that we need to control nature to suit our will. However, I would argue that there is nothing we can do to better honor our Finnish cultural heritage than to stop anytime we are tempted to cut a tree, or kill a pest, or dig up the ground and think. Are we controlling nature or are we working collaboratively with it in a way that can be mutually beneficial to all? As we've seen in these ancient tales, those who work with nature instead of against it are those who can find abundance and blessings. For only when we learn to become a part of this great cycle of nature; will we find true and lasting peace and safety on Mother Earth.

Let's start writing!

Why not pick a topic for our next newsletter?

Consider these writing prompts:

1. Describe an experience where you reached inside yourself for your "sisu."
2. Drawing on your Finnish connections, describe an experience you will always remember. For example, your first sauna or your first time making pulla.
3. Have you visited Finland? Recount a memory that still stands out in your mind.
4. Why do you volunteer at a Finn Hall?

Matti Huhta's 85th Birthday Party

By Karen Lovequist

Matti Huhta, President of Aura Hall, celebrated his 85th birthday at the Harvest Concert, Dance and Smorgasbord on September 21, 2024. Matti's wife, Marcia, and many family members attended, including their dog Karhu who eagerly greeted guests.

The Aura Hall was filled with friends and local Voluntown people along with many FAHS members from all over CT and RI, plus MA Finnish Halls. Outside a tent was set up to accommodate guests, and the gentle rain showers did not dampen the celebration.

Matti and Marcia danced to the accordion music of Ed Hendela with special friend Hannu Makipuro performing with Ed. There were a lot of smiling faces on the dance floor.



Photo by Lynne Williamson

Matti and Marcia with Karhu in foreground at Matti's birthday celebration.

Guests enjoyed a catered dinner of Matti's favorite Finnish foods such as meatballs with gravy, mashed potatoes, peas, pickled cucumbers, and beets.

The dessert table held an aston-

ishing selection of homemade treats including blue and white "Finnish" cupcakes, assorted cookies, chocolate cakes, and a Happy Birthday Matti cake, all enjoyed with coffee. It looked like everyone had a wonderful time.

I Am Afraid

By Susan Cloutier

When I was ten, I helped out in a neighbor's cow barn. Pete Kuteka, a gray-haired Russian farmer, hobbled around his property after being kicked in his hip years ago by an angry bull. "Dammit. Dammit" he muttered when his leg no longer carried him at the end of the day, and his cane became a poor substitute for a muscular limb.

In the later afternoon, I called his black and white herd from the fields, and they ran into the barn where I poured their evening scoop of grain inside their stanchions. One day a pregnant cow failed to return home, and the old Russian sent me into the woods looking for the heifer. I took a long walk in a field where the grass

was chewed close to the earth, and soon found the footpath into the woods. There, I found the cow standing quietly, her head lowered to the ground. Next to her, lay her dead calf.

The grieving mother followed me back to the barn; the old farmer wondered why just the two of us walked out of the woods. I was afraid to tell the news. "Her calf is dead."

"How do you know? Did you put your hand on its heart?" he demanded.

"No."

"Go back and put your hand on the heart. Make sure the calf is dead."

Terrified, I ran away from his words. I

ran through the field because the sun was down, and shadows walked along the stone walls, and hung in the trees. I found the calf in the same spot. Giving a longer inspection, I saw the calf's eyes were open. The body was perfect—tiny hooves, and a pink nose—but the calf was entombed inside a gray, brittle, embryonic sac. Did the calf suffocate? Reaching inside for my sisu, I placed my small palm on the chest of the calf. The body was cold and dry.

"Still dead."

I've never told anyone this story, and now you know how a young girl with long, skinny legs, and long, brown braids found her sisu in the woods at dusk.

Lätty/Pancake Breakfast

By Anita Smiley

A new FAHS fundraiser, a Finnish lätty/pancake breakfast, took place on Saturday, September 28, introducing hungry attendees to the small, thin pancakes which are so popular in Finland and in Finnish communities in the United States. Arlene Baril and I, co-chairs, extend thanks to the following hard-working FAHS breakfast crew: Pam Kempain, Carolyn Otto, Jodie Wagner, Cheryl Smiley, Sharrann Smiley, Kerttu Lavallee,

Avani Visone and family, Patti Folsom, Stan Karro, and Heidi Hare.

The teamwork of our FAHS volunteers contributed to preparations going smoothly on the preceding day and the service under control on the day of the breakfast. Proceeds raised provide much-needed funds which help with keeping our FAHS budget on target. Events such as this breakfast are necessary to sustain our precious hall.



Photo by Patti Folsom

Anita Smiley and Arlene Baril

A Classic Poultry Reunion

By Stan Karro

During the past several months, the FAHS museum committee has developed a historic poultry display illustrating the agricultural activities of the early Finnish immigrants in the Eastern Connecticut and surrounding region.

Many individuals contributed to the support of these families, including Professor William Aho of the UConn Poultry Science Department and Donald Francis, the regional UConn Poultry Extension Service Agent based in Brooklyn, CT. Professor Aho was recruited by the UConn Administration from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in 1952 and Don Francis joined the Extension Service a few years later from



Photo by Kaz Kazlowski

From left to right, Katrina Bousquet, Donald Francis, Professor William Aho, Paul Aho, Anita Smiley, Stan Karro, Patti Folsom.

Massachusetts. Other reunion participants included Bill Aho's son Paul Aho, a well known poultry economist and consultant, as well as Anita Smiley and Stan Karro, both of whom experienced poultry farming with their families in their youth.

The heritage society

hosted the event for Bill Aho and Donald Francis on September 25 at the Canterbury Hall to discuss the supporting poultry activities of the 1950s and 1960s when they coordinated educational and economic advice to the poultry industry. The reunion included a tour of the museum and poultry

display, followed by a casual lunch of salmon chowder.

Following Bill Aho's retirement from UConn, he continued his poultry educational career as an instructor at Arbor Acres in Glastonbury, CT for 20 years. Bill today is 106 years old and resides in Mansfield, CT. For an interesting article on Bill, Google William Aho at UConn "I Often Feel Lucky." Donald Francis following his retirement from the Extension Service, was elected First Selectman of Brooklyn for many years and has served on several town commissions. He resides in Brooklyn, CT where his family purchased a poultry farm decades ago from a Finnish family.

A FALLEN LEIF | Marvels of a Creative Mind

By Sean A. Tate

"Flutterzungen in the mind."

"You have to motivate the sound. Music is not that which sounds. Music is why that which sounds, sounds like it sounds, when it sounds." (NYT)

It was said that he looked like a cross between Santa Claus and Methuselah. He loved word play and had a vocabulary of self-invented words that he used to colorfully impress upon his musicians what and how he wanted them to play. He was dramatic to the core. He was not only a world-class conductor and a composer of great depth and breadth but was also a brilliant and totally creative mind that could weave together music, philosophy and spirituality. He was a teacher and a mentor. He was irascible and intimidating. Interviewing him could lead to a torrent of words just as his music could be a torrent of sound. He was unique. He was Finnish, born in Vaasa. As of October 9, 2024, he is no longer physically with us, but his musical being and soul will continue to have a profound impact on the world of music and culture. This was Leif Selim Segerstam.

During the month of October, 2024, while Americans were intensively struggling with the finale of their presidential election process, the world of music, and Finland, observed the passing at age 80 of this truly remarkable and creative person.

Numerous obituaries have been written to acknowledge the loss of this towering musical personality. *The New York Times* observed that "in a small country with a unique musical culture, Mr. Segerstam occupied a singular place: he was the king of our country's cultural industry," the newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* wrote after his death. He himself said he was "the Jesus of music," explaining, "In the world of music I have truths that are



By Korea.net / Korean Culture and Information Service

just as valuable as the teachings of Jesus."

He led a distinguished career, making his debut as a violinist in 1962. He made his first conducting appearance in 1963, when he also gained a conducting diploma from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, where he also studied piano, violin and composition. He continued his education at the Juilliard School in New York (Sibelius One).

Leif Segerstam led numerous orchestras in Europe, including in his own country, the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. He was an unparalleled interpreter of the music of Finland's greatest musician, Jean Sibelius, "bringing a composer's creativity to Sibelius's barren, uncompromising scores." (Nossiter: NYT). "He had an instinctive and profound understanding of Sibelius's sound world, producing performances that were both monumental and full of inner life. His Sibelius discography was vast and wide-ranging" (Sibelius One).

Segerstam was also a champion of the music of his fellow Finnish composer, Einojuhani Rautavaara, and recorded several Rautavaara sym-

phonies and concertos with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra (Gramophone, 2024).

As a composer, Mr. Segerstam was amazingly and creatively prolific. He purportedly composed 371 symphonies, most likely a world record for the genre, as well as numerous smaller works. Many of his symphonies have yet to be performed and await explorers of his music to bring them to the musical public.

Segerstam's creativity and the depth of his thinking were expressed in many of his pithy comments; his was a mind in constant motion and when he could not find existing words to describe a musical feeling, he invented them.

Compilations of his "strange sayings" appeared in various publications from the musicians who experienced them. A group of musicians from the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, with whom Segerstam was working, collected some of his expressions and Dale Gold, the Principal Double Bassist for the orchestra, compiled a master list from his fellow orchestra members, noting that "these aren't the fractured phrases of someone who speaks English as a Second Language...we have before us a record of the creative mind of a kaleidoscopic flexorator electrically fluxating new meaning into a tired old language." (Classical Music Guide, 2005). They quoted Segerstam as saying "I have words for everything that can be expressed." Examples included: "Coincidentally," "Embryomalic," "Electricifically," "Fiveness," "Flimmer," "Inexclickable," "Fenugrish five things," "I am fluxating in 8," and "It is a valsefy."

One of the best in-depth interviews in English with Segerstam was done by the award-winning broadcaster Bruce Duffie on December 5, 1997, in an office of Orchestra Hall in Chicago. Duffie begins his transcript with this

introduction of the conductor/composer:

"When you come face-to-face with the Finnish composer-conductor-pianist Leif Segerstam, you are convinced he is Santa Claus. The complexion, the round belly, the jolly laugh are all straight from the story book and every visual reproduction of Saint Nick. And in a very special way, like Santa, Segerstam has a very global vision of music....his music.... and how he expects performances to reflect these ideas"

Segerstam's vision of music, and its very Finnish ties to nature, can be seen in these two short excerpts from the Duffie interview:

Question by Bruce Duffie (BD) : "What is the purpose of music?"

Leif Segerstam (with a matter of fact tone) "Oh I thought we answered that....communication..

BD: Communication. Period. Just like that,

LS: Yeah.

BD: Communication of the composer to the musician or to the audi-

ence?

LS: No, no. I think in nature, the big, the cosmic thing is talking through us. In some way actually, the composers are therapists. They listen to nature, and nature is giving their session.

We give nature the time to release the tensions into what we capture from nature.

We're just the tools.

BD: Greatness. What is it that makes a piece of music great?

LS: If it stirs up rich feeling, you can't verbalize it but you feel that it is there. Your hairs get stiff and electricity is in the atmosphere at that time when these vibrations clash. It is a complex harmonic happening and probably it is possible to analyze mathematically. But when it happens in my free-pulsative scores, then it is easier to feel it like a wonder."

BD: So, that's what music is...a wonder?

LS: Yes. The human being is in front of nature and is forced to think that it is a wonder and that we are a part of

such a greatness; our mind can get so far without going there, just by imagining it.

Leif Segerstam was himself a wonder and Finland and the world are poorer for losing him but will continue to be enriched by his music, imagination and creativity.

"Segerstam disease: gastronomical music."

"More grease in the pianissimo." (Classical Music Guide Forums, 2005)

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Sibelius One. Leif Segerstam 1944-2024

Wired (Staff). The Strange Sayings of Leif Segerstam. January 25, 2007.

Hyvää Joulua. Let the Festive Season Begin!

For many years, Charlie Langevin of Allen Hill Farm of Brooklyn, CT, has arranged to donate a Christmas tree for our Pikkujoulu/Christmas party. We encourage our local heritage society members to patronize this tree farm for your hol-



iday needs. We raffle the items for children and tree along with many adults with proceeds

given to the local Canterbury Food Pantry.

They are located on 504 Allen Hill Road in Brooklyn only a short distance from the Finnish Hall. For business hours at the farm go to www.allenhill-farm.com.

Building Maintenance Update

Installation of new gutters on the north and west roof section is complete. The Contractor for the front canopy entry has been selected and the project is expected to be

completed by the end of the year. Several additional grants are being applied for to fund our major roof replacement project, expected to start at the end of the second quar-

ter of 2025. Some member donations have been received, and added fundraising will be required.

Member News & Milestones

Congratulations - Onnea

To Jackie Engblom of Brooklyn, CT, who celebrated her 90th birthday on September 29.

To Josie Stenback of Dayville, CT, who celebrated her milestone 100th birthday on October 25.

To Katrina Bousquet of Norwich, CT, who celebrated her 60th birthday on October 1.

To Stephen Bousquet of Norwich, CT, who celebrated his 60th birthday on October 29.

To Anita Smiley of Preston, CT, who celebrated her 90th birthday on November 19.

To Alexandra Bousquet and Kristan Fischer who were married on November 15. Alexandra is the daughter of Stephen and Katrina Bousquet.

Get Well Wishes - Pikaista Paranemista

To Irene Profetto of Brooklyn, CT, who broke a bone in her back and is recovering at Westview Healthcare Center.

Warmest wishes

To Marja-Leena Huhta of Moosup, CT, as she relocates to Heinola, Finland. Marja-Leena was the guest of honor at a celebratory dinner at the Riverview Restaurant on November 10. Approximately 40 friends, family, and FAHS members attended the dinner and wished her well before her move at the end of November.



Hannu Makipuro serenades Marja-Leena Huhta at the Riverview Restaurant.

SUBMISSIONS

If you would like to have any "well wishes, condolences or congratulations" included in our upcoming newsletter, please contact a board member by January 20, 2025

Donations - July-November

Saul and Sandra Ahola, Woodstock, CT, Scholarship fund in honor of Josie Stenback's 100th birthday

Arlene Baril, Brooklyn, CT, in honor of Josie Stenback's 100th birthday

Patti Folsom, North Kingstown, RI, in honor of Josie Stenback's 100th birthday

Roy Helander, Maynard, MA, in honor of Josie Stenback's 100th birthday

Anita Smiley, Preston, CT, in honor of Josie Stenback's 100th birthday

Leo and Margaret Tefft, Hope

Valley, RI, in honor of Josie Stenback's 100th birthday

Stan and Jean Karro, Brooklyn CT, in memory of Eila Makipuro

Anneli and Bruno Lonnberg and family, Turku, Finland, in memory of Eila Makipuro

Neal and Maryann Moon, Hampton, CT, in memory of Eila Makipuro

Ellen Lehtimäki, Brooklyn, CT, in memory of Eila Makipuro

Concetta Nicolossi, North Kingstown, RI, ongoing monthly donation, general fund

Allan Seppa, Pittsfield, MA, pro-

ceeds from his photography exhibit, general fund

Sean Tate, Preston, CT, books about Finland

Lloyd and Joyce Hannula, Westminster, MA, one map, books, six LP albums

From the estate of Ilma Tikkanen, Plainfield, CT, scholarship fund

Paul Aho, Storrs, CT, various poultry related farming publications and ads

Kristine Holohan, East Lyme, CT, four Finnish flag zippered pouches, 20 handmade greeting cards for museum cart

FAHS Membership Form

**Membership year is January 1 - December 31, following the FAHS Fiscal year.
Annual dues are payable on December 31, prior to the Annual Meeting in January.**

Please complete this form and mail it with your check to FAHS, P.O. Box 252, Canterbury, CT 06331.

Name(s) of member(s) _____

Street Address _____

City, state, and zip code _____

Home Phone Number _____ Cell Phone number _____

Email address _____ ☐ I agree to receive FAHS Constant Contact emails.

☐ I am/we are new member/s TERVETULOA (Welcome) ☐ This is an address change

☐ I am renewing my membership (\$30 / person or \$50/household a year)

☐ I/we would like to donate _____ (tax deductible to the extent provided by law)

Please use my donation for: ☐ General Operations ☐ the FAHS Scholarship Fund

☐ the Preservation Fund ☐ the FAHS Museum

☐ I am interested in a planned legacy gift in my estate planning (A FAHS Representative will contact you)

We need your help! Volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Volunteering is also a great way to get to know your fellow FAHS members and help achieve our mission of promoting Finnish culture and traditions. Please indicate the areas where you would be willing to volunteer:

Events: ____ Sauna week ____ Culinary Delights ____ Pancake breakfast ____ Chicken BBQ

____ FAHS Open House ____ Juhannus (Midsummer Festival) ____ Canterbury Old Home Day

____ Kekri (Fall Festival) ____ Finnish Cocktail Delights ____ Pikkujoulu (Little Christmas)

Fundraisers: ____ Pulla baking ____ Yard sale

Committees: ____ Hall Maintenance ____ Newsletter ____ Program/event planning

____ Museum/Collections Management ____ Grants ____ Scholarship

Other volunteering options: What skills and talents do you have that might be used to assist FAHS?

Please tell us more about yourself, including your Finnish connection and/or your interest in Finnish culture:

Revised October 2024

Finnish-American Heritage Society Scholarship –

2025 Application Procedure and Form

The Finnish American Heritage Society (FAHS) Scholarship Fund began in November 2000. Since then, scholarships have been awarded to forty-three students who are motivated to support the mission (purpose) of FAHS. The FAHS By-Laws state that: the purpose of the Society is to encourage members and others in the community in learning, collecting, preserving, and enjoying the Finnish-American traditions, customs, history, and cultural heritage. The society desires to promote better awareness and appreciation of Finnish contributions to American life, past and

present, as well as Finnish contributions to the world".

The primary intent of the Scholarship is to perpetuate Finnish-American heritage through support of relevant educational initiatives. These can be related to, but not limited to music, the arts, health, education, the environment, and architecture or engineering.

The Scholarship Committee does not discriminate based on age, gender, ethnicity, nationality, belief, or any other conditions. Scholarships are awarded annually. FAHS greatly appreciates on-

going donations to the Scholarship Fund, to ensure it will continue "in perpetuity."

The current fund balance is over \$20,000. The committee invites candidates to apply, with the deadline of April 30, 2025; notification of recipients will be by June 30. The awards will be presented in the fall. Members of FAHS and their families are eligible. Anyone who has been awarded a scholarship is asked to wait at least a year before re-applying, to give others a turn.

To Scholarship Applicants:

If you are interested in applying for a scholarship and have questions, please email Finnish American Heritage Society at scholarshipfahs@gmail.com and include your contact information. We encourage eligible candidates to apply for support from the Finnish American Heritage Society. Wishing you all a healthy, peaceful year in 2025!

Warmly,

Members of the Scholarship Committee 2025

PLEASE NOTE: The scholarship is awarded in a non-discriminatory process. The essay should focus on how your studies will relate to Finland and/or Finnish American heritage. The criteria used for selection is not based on the percentage of Finnish heritage present in an individual. It is

based on the focus of studies and proposed use of funds, as they relate to the mission (purpose) of FAHS. Do not include any identifying information in your essay, since these are read "blind" by independent individuals. Please make sure you keep copies of application materials for your

records. Winning essays may be included in future FAHS publications.

These materials and other information about FAHS activities can be found on the Finnish American Heritage Society website at www.fahs-ct.org.

Finnish American Heritage Society, Inc. Scholarship

Deadline: Postmarked, or received by email, on or before April 30, 2025.

Selection Criteria: Relevance of proposed use of funds
Documented ability to successfully engage in proposed studies
Motivation
Need

Eligibility: Enrollment/Acceptance in a post-secondary school Membership (or family member) in FAHS

1. Name; Address; phone; e-mail address: _____

2. Name and address of school you plan to attend: _____

3. Identification of need/estimate of your college expenses, be specific:

4. What is your plan to meet your college expenses: _____

5. FAHS Membership/Connection:

Please Also Include:

☐ Two letters of reference - one in-school and one out-of-school.

Optional: one page resume including school accomplishments, community service, work experience, and other recognitions.

☐ A one-page (typed) essay addressing your motivation, goals in pursuing post-secondary education, and how you propose to address the purpose of the Finnish American Heritage Society Scholarship Fund. **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THE ESSAY**

☐ Photocopies of transcripts from most recent education experience, if available.

► Mail completed application materials to Finnish American Heritage Society Scholarship, P.O. Box 252, Canterbury, CT 06331, by April 30, 2025 or Email to scholarshipfahs@gmail.com



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

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

Street address: Finnish hall,
76 North Canterbury Rd., Canterbury, CT 06331

Phone number: (860) 546-6671

email: info@fahs-ct.org

For more info visit

fahs-ct.org

YouTube: search "Finnish American Heritage Society, Canterbury"

Facebook: facebook.com/fahscanterburyct

Instagram: @fahs_of_ct

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Vice President	Jodie Wagner	860-546-5666
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Newsletter Committee: Molly Arnio, Ceilidh Burdick, Jacqueline Andstrom, Patti Folsom, Jackie Harjula, Karen Lovequist, and Anita Smiley.

FINNISH CONNECTION

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FAHS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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Coming Events at a Glance

Saturday - December 7, 2024

11:00am - Membership Meeting
12:00pm - Potluck
1:00pm - Pikkujoulu

Thursday - December 19, 2024

7:00pm - (Zoom) - Board Meeting

Sunday - January 5, 2025

12:00pm - Potluck
1:00pm - Annual Membership Meeting
Program - Finnish tin melting

Welcome New Members

New members are always welcome!
Membership coupon is enclosed.