

Iltatähti

Evening Star



Finnish Heritage House Newsletter

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FinnFunn Weekend 2021

By Aime Little Sanfilippo

The 29th annual FinnFunn Weekend was held at the Inn at East Hill Farm in Troy, New Hampshire, October 29th – 31st. What started 29 years ago as an impromptu opportunity for folks of Finnish descent to network and share stories has blossomed into a full weekend of programs, presenters, and cultural events.

When my mother asked me if I wanted to attend the FinnFunn Weekend with her, I honestly did not know what to expect. We have booked a 14-day bus tour of Finland this summer, and admittedly, all I know of our family's Finnish history comes from distant childhood memories and stories I have heard my mother tell. I thought this would be an excellent opportunity to get a little more knowledge under my belt before our trip in July. What a weekend it was! One full of many first-hand learning opportunities - one that has led me to a greater appreciation for my Finnish heritage and has lit a spark for me to learn more about my Finnish ancestry.

After checking into the beautiful farm on Friday, we started the afternoon with a craft workshop, led by

Laura Henrikson, making a pinecone tonttu ornament and card.



Did you know that in Finland today children still leave out a plate of porridge for the tontut at Christmastime?

Next, we played Finnish Trivia, learning many interesting facts about Finland and Finnish culture.

Did you know that Finns are the world's biggest coffee drinkers, drinking an average of 26.5 pounds of coffee per person per year?

We were then treated to a delightful welcome reception featuring craft beer tasting from Frogg Brewing and accordion music by Bernie Novak. After dinner, opening remarks were

given by Rob Ranta and Anne-Mari Paster, president of Finlandia Foundation National.

Did you know that Finlandia National Foundation will be hosting a National Sauna Week February 20th – 26th?

The night's entertainment featured a performance by Kent Washburn, the Finlandia Foundation Performer of the Year. Kent created an original musical score to accompany *Mustalaishurmaaja* (The Gypsy Charmer), a 1929 Finnish silent film, featuring classic Finnish folk tunes. This popular movie starred Teuvo Tulio in a star-crossed love triangle.

Did you know that Teuvo Tulio was known as the "Finnish Valentino" for his roles in Finnish silent films?

Saturday morning started with a presentation about Folk Medicine in the Kalevala by Dr. Hilary-Joy Virtanen. From childbirth to bleeding and frostbite to burns, Dr. Virtanen used examples from the Kalevala to illustrate how Finnish folk traditions and ingenuity were used to treat maladies long before modern medicine.

[Did you know that the Kalevala was written by Finnish physician, Elias Lonnrot, who wrote down oral folklore stories he heard while providing medical services throughout the Finnish countryside?](#)

With wallets in hand, we next headed to the Tori at the Troy Elementary School. The Tori (market) was filled with beautiful Finnish handcrafts, baked goods, and even candy!

[Did you know that Salmiakki was originally created by pharmacies as a cough medicine?](#)

The afternoon continued with an Interpretation of Finlandia with Amber Broderick. Mrs. Broderick highlighted how this symphony, written in 1899 by Jean Sibelius (when Finland was still part of Russia), is a musical journey, leading listeners through Finland's struggle for independence and their National evolution.

[Did you know that *Finlandia* had its origins in political protest as Sibelius wrote it to debut at a rally in support of freedom of the Finnish press?](#)

Festivities continued late into the evening on Saturday with dinner, a Halloween costume parade, raffle drawings, and performances by Finnish Folk dancers, Revontulet, accompanied by the band Oivan Ilo. We all even got to try our hand (and feet) at the traditional dances as Leila Luopa taught us Schottische hand movements and kavekyhumppa steps.



[Did you know that in Finland only children in pre-school and day-care centers celebrate Halloween?](#)

Sunday morning, we were treated to a slide show of past FinnFunn Weekends by Anita Smiley and a presentation on Finnish-American Folk Arts Today with Dr. Hilary-Joy Virtanen. As a researcher, Dr. Virtanen focuses on folk arts of the Finnish people and highlighted how traditional arts

– crafts, food, festivals, clothes, music, and customs – evolve depending on where Finns live and what resources they have.

[Did you know that the most popular genre of music today in Finland is Heavy Metal?](#)

We took some time to explore the farm before feasting on a roast turkey lunch. The farm is located at the base of Mount Monadnock. There were many pastures of animals – cows, horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, pigs, ducks – and many wooded trails to explore. We even managed to find a wooden tonttu hidden on the trail!



[Did you know that forest covers 74% of Finland – more than any other European country?](#)

Additional weekend programming included: pumpkin painting, writing your Finnish story workshop, woodcarving presentation, Finnish Jeopardy, and *Deep River* book discussion.

[Did you know that the 30th annual FinnFunn Weekend will be held next year at The Inn at East Hill Farm in Troy, NH October 28th – October 30th, 2022? Be sure to save the date!](#)

Texas to Maine

Finnish Heritage House recently received a gift of back issues of "The Journal of Finnish American Studies". This is an annual publication that contains scholarly articles dealing with Finland, Finnish Americans and Finns around the world. You will find articles on topics such as Finland in the 1950's, Finnish traditions, Finnish working classes, Finnish Civil War, cooking and cookbooks in the 19th century Finland, Finnish liberation, etc.

Helena Halmari, professor of linguistics at Sam Houston University in Texas, was editor of this Journal from 2011 to 2021. She contacted Steve Gifford in January and offered a collection of back issues to Finnish Heritage House. Copies of these issues will be displayed in the front room at FHH and available for all to enjoy in Spring 2022.

Finnish Rag Rug Raffle Winner



Joanne Nelson

We are delighted to introduce Joanne Emery Nelson for two reasons. First, she was the winner of our annual rag rug raffle in December (pictured). She says her cat loves to sleep on it! Every year, Tootie Wilson weaves and donates a rag rug for the raffle. We appreciate her generosity.

Second, Joanne has been elected to serve as the Vice-President of Finnish Heritage House, replacing the late Reggie Montgomery. She grew up in Thomaston, and still lives there with her husband and four cats, all of whom were adopted from our local animal shelter. Joanne's hobbies include reading (especially biographies and crime novels), fishing, and gardening. These gardens, in addition to flowers, include cucumbers, tomatoes, corn, Swiss chard, potatoes, green beans, peas, strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries.

When she was growing up, she spent a lot of time with her Finnish grandmother Ellen Anderson. "I found it fascinating that my grandmother spoke a different language," she said.

What also sparked her curiosity was learning to bake nisu and learning to speak a few Finnish words. It is noteworthy that her grandmother was part of the Anderson family that donated the land for the Finnish Congregational Church and the Finnish Heritage House. Her father also had an interest in stories passed down through the generations.

Joanne says, "My attraction to my Finnish heritage really amped up when Alex Anttila (anglicized to Anderson in the US) started corresponding with Reggie." She is happy to be a part of our Board and to be helping to promote our Finnish heritage and culture.

Welcome, Joanne. We are delighted that you have agreed to join our Board, and we are certain that you will be a dedicated member.

The savory Finnish breakfast. Finns rarely eat anything sweet over breakfast. Jam isn't a popular bread topping. Most likely, you'll see that Finns put butter, cheese, cold cuts, and veggies on top of their open sandwich. Porridge with berries is a very Finnish breakfast too.

The Finnish Heritage House

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Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Finnish Heritage House to preserve the memory of our Finnish immigrant ancestors who freely chose a new homeland and transplanted the seed of the Finnish people to be assimilated within the American dream.

In their honor, we pledge to help their descendants in tracing their family roots, as well as promoting closer ties between our two nations.

Reginald Dwight Montgomery



ST. GEORGE, Me – Reginald Dwight Montgomery died of Covid-19 on December 21, 2021, the 21st day of the 21st year in the 21st Century at Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine. Reggie was born in Rockland, Maine, on October 10, 1957, the son of Maynard Austin Montgomery and the late Lucinda Polky Montgomery. As a 1975 graduate of Georges Valley High School, he worked hard to get enough extra credits to graduate a year early so that he could enter the work force. That work ethic and his sisu continued throughout his life, starting with a paper route as a pre-teen to running a garage, to purchasing a truck and becoming an independent trucker.

He ran “Reggie’s Rubbish Removal” for 25 years and was highly respected by all his customers as a fair and honest businessman. Retirement was not in his plans. He sold his rubbish business and purchased a cargo van used to deliver artwork and antiques, travelling all over the United States for pickups and deliveries, still actively running his business when he contracted the virus.

Reggie became very interested in local history and genealogy, especially his Finnish heritage. He was able to travel to Finland three times and hoped to return in 2022. In 2015, a chance email to the Finnish Heritage House (FHH) in South Thomaston, Maine, from a young Finnish man, Alex Anttila, changed his life. Alex was researching

his US family and found the Anderson (Anttila) family in Maine. He and Reggie bonded, and he became like a son to Reggie. Alex came to the US three times, and Reggie took him to visit relatives all over the country, and even to Times Square in NYC on New Year’s Eve in 2017.

Reggie’s last trip to Finland was to attend Alex’s graduation from nursing school. He had booked a trip for the summer of 2020 to serve as Alex’s best man, but the pandemic made the trip impossible. His planned 2022 trip was to meet Alex and Mimosa’s new baby.

Reggie was an integral part of the Finnish American community in mid-coastal Maine, serving as the Vice-President and Photographer and Newsletter Editor of the Finnish Heritage House, and an active member of the Finnish - American Society of Mid-Coastal Maine. He also volunteered behind the scenes for additional projects, including the Finnish Historical Monument installed on FHH/Finnish Congregational Church property, soliciting bids for necessary maintenance on the properties, and doing minor repairs whenever requested.

Reggie created and printed the posters for our POY/LOY events, and the raffle tickets for our annual rag rug raffle. He was an excellent cook and delighted in trying new Finnish recipes for any pot-luck meals.

He is survived by his father, two brothers, two sisters, an aunt, several uncles and nieces and nephews. A celebration of Reggie’s life was held on Tuesday, January 4th at the First Baptist Church of St. George at Wileys Corner. Memorial donations may be made to the Finnish Heritage House, P.O. Box 293, South Thomaston, ME 04858.

Finnish Card Games?

[Marjapussi](#) (also known as Marjassi) and its bidding variant [Huutopussi](#) are played in southern Finland with 32 (sometimes fewer) cards. There are many variations of this game described in the book *Marjapussissa Porvooseen* by Pekka Ranta (WSOY, Porvoo, 1993) ISBN 951-0-18597-3.

Freeman “Ed” Dodge



Owls Head, ME. Freeman “Ed” Dodge died on January 12, 2022. Born in Boothbay Harbor on December 13, 1938, he was the only child of Freeman E. Dodge and Katharine Seavey Dodge. During his school years at Boothbay Region High School he was an excellent athlete, lettering in football, basketball and baseball, graduating in 1957. Through the mid-80’s he coached freshman football and girl’s JV basketball at Rockland District High School.

In addition to his family and sports, Ed loved the ocean. He attended Maine Maritime Academy for two years and left that school to go lobstering. Later, he enlisted in the US Coast Guard to fulfill his military requirement, serving honorably for four years. It was during this time that he met his beloved wife, Kay Ross, marrying her on January 4, 1964, two months after their first blind date. At the time Ed was serving as a relief keeper of various lighthouses, and they both had fond memories of their time as newlyweds living at lighthouses.

While raising his family, he was a commercial fisherman/lobsterman, and also fished for shrimp, groundfish, and scallops. From 1980-1984, Ed taught future fishermen the art of the profession at the Region 8 Vocational School, while lobstering part-time during the summer. He returned to lobstering full-time in the mid 80’s, until he retired in 1996. He was also active in the New England Fisheries Management Council and the University of Maine Fisheries Extension.

As a resident of Owls Head, Ed was very civic-minded and became active in local town government, as a member of the Planning Board, Harbor Committee, Town Council, Midcoast Regional Planning Commission, twice as the Harbormaster, and chair of the Board of Selectmen for six years.

After retiring, Ed enjoyed hunting, boating, fishing, cutting wood, going on adventures with his best canine friends, Cameron and then Tuomo, and traveling nationally and internationally.

He even took up a love for cooking in his later years, much to Kay’s dismay. As an active member and former President of the Finn-Am Society of MidCoastal Maine, he served as chairman of FinnFunn Weekend held at the Samoset Resort with over 200 attendees. He and Kay hosted a Finnish exchange student, Janita, and they loved her as their own. He also volunteered at the Mussel Ridge Historical Society.

Ed will be remembered by his friends and family for his huge heart for people and animals, his endless patience, and his love for dancing and telling stories. Not only did he love his daughters and wife dearly, he embraced all his sons-in-law, nieces and nephews. He loved teaching future generations about hunting, fishing, navigation, carpentry, engines, and tree cutting/wood chopping.

Predeceased by his parents, he is survived by his wife of 58 years, Kay, and his three daughters, Christina Linscott and her husband David, Katie Swenson and her husband Tim, and Susan Gallagher and her husband Frank and their children Abbie and Liam as well as many nieces, nephews, and several cousins.

Did you know?

In a social climate that has become sensitive to gender neutral pronouns it is of interest to note that the Finnish language, personal pronouns (words used as substitutes for a person's name, such as he and she) do not specify whether the person discussed is a woman or a man **Hän** is the gender-neutral Finnish personal pronoun that treats everyone equally.

EASY FINNISH SAUSAGE SOUP RECIPE (NAKKIKEITTO)



FINNISH SAUSAGE SOUP OR NAKKIKEITTO INGREDIENTS

1. **Sausage.** If you're in Finland, use nakkimakkara, but if you're abroad, you can use any plain hotdog or German sausage. Make sure they are not flavored! Use plain processed ones.
2. **Potato.** Any potato will do, but waxy ones are preferable! Starchy potatoes will make the stock a bit on the thicker side and classically, this dish is very watery.
3. **Carrots.** Great for adding that "earthy" flavor!
4. **Yellow onion.** Or use whatever is available in your pantry, shallots will do.
5. **Bouillon.** You can use whatever bouillon cubes you have as long as it is not fish or game meat. Alternatively, you can also use actual stock.
6. **Bay leaf.** This is optional but I think it adds a little bit of extra "Oomff".
7. **Lemon juice.** Traditionally, you do not add lemon juice in nakkikeitto, but you can as it gives a bit of extra freshness to the dish.
8. **Parsley.** For many, parsley is a boring herb but honestly, for this dish, it is more than just a decoration. It actually gives a bit of freshness to the dish while eating it!

HOW TO MAKE NAKKIKEITTO

1. **Chop your ingredients.** You can chop them or you can dice them up.
2. **Boil your stock.** If you're using bouillon cubes then add it in your pot with boiling water and dilute it.
3. **Add your chopped ingredients and bay leaf.** Dump them all in the boiling stock and cook until the vegetables are cooked.
4. **Add your sliced sausage.** When the vegetables are fork tender.

Season it up. Flavor your simmering soup but keep in mind that the sausage has salt in it.

2022 Scholarship Award Donation

Kathleen Anderson has made this Finnish costume and dressed another beautiful Finnish doll to be raffled off for the 2022 Finn-Am scholarship fund. This is the second doll in as many years that Kathleen has made and donated. These donations are a huge help to the scholarship funding. We are all very appreciative to Kathleen for her support and to all the people who buy chances to win the doll. The costumes depict regions or significance in Finnish history.



Kathleen and the doll she made and donated. The doll's name is Helvi, a very Finnish name.

Finnish Humor.

Conversation between Veikko and his friend Jarkko.

"Yesterday marked 21 years since I arrived in Finland."

"Did you celebrate with a beer and a sausage?"

"No. I've become Finnish. I told no one. I sat in the dark in silence and thought about herrings."

"That's the spirit."

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fh.sthomasston.me@gmail.com

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To **JOIN** as a new member, or to **RENEW** your membership, please complete this form and return, with a check payable to Finnish Heritage House, to FHH, P.O. Box 293, South Thomaston, ME 04858.

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