



Finlandia Foundation - Boston

November 2020 Newsletter

Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com>

November 2020

Message from Our President Sirkku Kontinen

Dear Finlandia Foundation Boston members,

The pandemic is still directing our lives; I am sure you are all tired. Usually I want the time to proceed slowly. But now I find myself often thinking of next summer with hope that we can travel a bit more and see friends and family safely. I am also missing live cultural events: music, dance, theater. Fortunately, we have had an absolutely beautiful fall in New England, and my husband and I have been able to swim and paddle board even in November.

In 2019, the Finnish American Heritage Center partnered with Finnish-American documentarian Kristin Ojaniemi of Paynesville, Michigan, to create a documentary entitled "Sirkka: Past & Present". The documentary celebrates the life of Sirkka Tuomi Holm, who was a social activist, actor, patriot, and feminist. The film premiered at Sirkka's 99th birthday on 15 August 2019 in Frankestown, NH. Sirkka passed away on Tuesday, October 27th, 2020 in Peterborough, NH. She was 100 years and two months, and she was alert right to the end. She even voted the day before she died. We are going to stream this wonderful documentary on Sunday, November 22, 2020 at 3 p.m. via Zoom. **To register, please send an email to finlandiaboston@gmail.com.** Given the recent elections, you will find it fascinating to see how Sirkka's family was part of the voting process. Sirkka's life was not easy, but her attitude was remarkably positive. It is an inspiring story and her giggles will make you smile.

In October, I participated in FinnFunn 2020, which was held virtually this year. The program included a celebration of Roy Helander, who has been a very active member of Finlandia Foundation Boston, Saima Park, and other Finnish organizations in our area. His knowledge of music, theater, and history is amazing. Hopefully, we'll be able to celebrate Roy in person soon.

In Finland, the Independence Day on December 6 will also be celebrated virtually this year. Instead of the traditional in-person reception, President Sauli Niinistö and Mrs Jenni Haukio invite all Finns to celebrate by watching the Finnish Broadcasting Company Yle, which will show the event live on Yle TV1. In the evening, viewers will enjoy presentations of Finnish performing art as well as compilations of scenes from Independence Day receptions held in previous decades. In addition to the Presidential Palace, the broadcast will visit different parts of Finland and follow how Finns celebrate the day in various ways. Viewers will have the opportunity to send their own greetings to the evening's broadcast.

The Finnish National Opera is also offering many good programs online. If you go to their website www.oopperabaletti.fi, you will find the virtual Stage 24. At the moment you can stream the operas 'Jää' and 'Covid fan

tutte' and ballets 'Giselle' and 'Seitsemän veljestä' (Seven Brothers), among others. You also find programs for children and interesting conversations - many only in Finnish, though.

For those of you who like to read, Finlandia Foundation National (FFN) is promoting a wonderful book called 'Deep River' by Karl Marlantes. There is a recorded interview with the author that is available to our members through finlandiafoundation.org. FFN has been very active in creating virtual programs in these challenging times.

Earlier this fall, it was announced that Covid-19 sniffing dogs will start working at Helsinki Airport. According to preliminary tests conducted by a research group at the Veterinary Faculty of the University of Helsinki, dogs are able to smell the virus with almost 100% certainty. They can also identify the virus days before the symptoms have even started. This is something that laboratory tests fail to do.

Many of you may enjoy baking. With the holidays coming, traditional recipes are always popular. You can find some old favorites on our website later this month. It is also possible to buy delicious baked goods at the Scandinavian Cultural Center in Newton.

Enjoy the upcoming Thanksgiving Holiday. And please stay safe and healthy!

-Sirkku Kontinen, FFB President

A Note About Upcoming Events

As Sirkku mentioned in her President's message, we will have a Zoom meeting this coming **Sunday November 22 at 3 p.m. to view the film "Sirkka: Past and Present"**. **To register for the event, please send a note to finlandiaboston@gmail.com.** You will then receive the Zoom link by email ahead of the event. If you want to learn more about Sirkka in the meantime, there is an interesting article about her in the Concord Monitor available on-line at <https://www.concordmonitor.com/Born-100-years-ago-she-votes-and-smiles-35788298>. Her obituary available at <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/ledgertranscript/obituary.aspx?n=sirkka-tuomi-holm&pid=197031814> also provides interesting information about her life.

While there are some encouraging news about COVID-19 vaccines, it is uncertain when these vaccines will be available to the general public. But based on current information, we believe that in-person events will not be possible for several months yet. We deeply regret this since we have truly enjoyed seeing everyone at the Scandinavian Cultural Center in Newton. Right now, we anticipate that our Annual meeting that typically takes place the last Sunday of January will be held virtually online. Further information will be provided by email or in our December 2020 newsletter.

Scholarship Opportunities

1. Savele Syrjala Journalism Scholarship

For a student of Finnish-American heritage studying in the field of Journalism or Communications.

2. Aina Swan Cutler Music Scholarship

For a student of Finnish-American heritage studying music (excluding hard rock and electronic music).

3. Lauri Armas Lindell Architectural Scholarship

For a student of Finnish-American heritage studying architecture in the United States or Finland.

For an application or for further information about the first two scholarships, please contact: Edith Syrjala Eash, 80 Potter Pond, Lexington, MA 02421; syrjalaeash@gmail.com
For further information about the architecture scholarship, please contact: Linda Lindell, 471 Waltham St., Lexington, MA 02421; lindalindell@verizon.net. **The application deadline is June 30, 2021 for all three scholarships!**

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Membership: Please Join Us!

It is soon time to renew your membership or to become a new member of Finlandia Foundation – Boston for 2021. The annual membership fee, which runs from January through December, is \$30 for families, \$20 for individuals and \$10 for senior members. To renew your membership please send a check to:

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Tax-deductible donations are also welcome. We thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you soon.

Happy Thanksgiving to All!

