



Finlandia Foundation – Boston

April 2021 Newsletter

Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com>

April 2021

Message from Our President Sirkku Konttinen

Dear Finlandia Foundation – Boston members,

I learned to read when I was five years old, two years before starting school at age seven. I remember staring at my brother's ABC (Aapinen) book, sounding out letters and then syllables before the words started to appear. It was a magical moment. I was very proud of myself so at Sunday school, when the teacher offered us a book to take home, I quickly raised my hand to show that I could read. The book was called "Nellyn Koettelemus" (Nelly's Trial). It was an ordeal for me to read it. We had a lot of books at home and my parents always read to me and my siblings at night. Later on, I was fortunate to have my own library of interesting books to choose from.

Reading is one of the most popular ways to spend leisure time in Finland, with eighteen library books borrowed per person per year. There are multiple days in the calendar year when the Finnish flag is hoisted to celebrate Finnish language and literature: Kalevala Day; Finnish Language Day to honor Michael Agricola and Elias Lönnrot; Poetry, and Summer Day to celebrate Eino Leino. There is also Finnish Literature Day on Aleksis Kivi's birthday and Runeberg's Day on his birthday. Runeberg was a national poet, whose wife Fredrika created a famous pastry that is part of the celebrations on that day.

During this COVID-19 era I have walked and exercised, watched movies, streamed dance performances and concerts, cooked and baked. But my absolutely favorite thing to do has been reading. I have read both fiction and non-fiction. And biography is one of my favorites. It is a special day for me when I get a package from Finland with books in Finnish, my first and strongest language. To understand every word and to know the geography and culture very well makes the reading extra pleasant.

Our next membership meeting will be about Finnish literature. This time it will not be about Kalevala, Unknown Soldier, or Seven Brothers. It is about more modern authors. I would like you to bring your favorite book, tell us about writers you enjoy, the poem you love or the author you have newly discovered. There are great interviews and book talks that we can share. The zoom meeting is in English with some wonderful Finnish words.

Massachusetts has come a long way and it now ranks high in regards to the number of vaccinations completed. I will get my second dose of vaccine this week. Feeling quite optimistic, I have already been eyeing some flights to Finland this summer.

The spring is coming fast and this is another reason to celebrate. The days are longer, the leaves are coming out, and the birds are singing. To celebrate Vappu, I may brew some mead (sima) and fry some donuts (munkki) and meet up with some friends I have not seen for a year.

Have a wonderful spring!

-Sirkku Konttinen, FFB President

Book Talk on Sunday April 25

Our last meeting this spring will be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday April 25 via Zoom. This meeting will be devoted to Finnish literature and a discussion of some modern authors. The discussion will be led by our President Sirkku Konttinen. While by no means required, we encourage you all to participate by describing some books that you have enjoyed reading, some Finnish authors that you like, or perhaps some poems that you enjoy. There are great online interviews and book talks that we will share. The zoom meeting is in English and we will email you the Zoom link a few days before the meeting.

Virtual Screening of the Movie 'Tove'

The Finnish movie Tove is presented as part of Wicked Queer, the 37th Annual LGBTQ+ Film Festival and is being shown virtually between **April 8th and April 18th**.

Tove is a biographical film about author and illustrator Tove Jansson, creator of the *Moomins*. The film was written by Eeva Putro, and directed by Zaida Bergroth. Set from 1944 to 1956, the film shows how Tove Jansson finds worldwide success from an unexpected side project, in the midst of artistic struggles and an unconventional personal life. The film's title character Tove is played by Alma Pöysti, alongside Krista Kosonen and Shanti Roney. Pöysti has previously played Jansson on stage at Helsinki's Svenska Teatern, and like the artist has dual Swedo-Finnish nationality. The film is in Swedish with English subtitles.

Here is the link with the event and the ticket information: <https://www.wickedqueer.org/events/tove>

Cape Anne 'Finlandia' Presentation on April 17

The Finnish-American Society of Cape Cod will sponsor a presentation of Jean Sibelius' "Finlandia" on Saturday, April 17 from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m. Amber Roderick, professional flutist and musicologist for Cape Cod Symphony Orchestra, will present the story and history behind the composition of "Finlandia" and describe what makes Finlandia such a great piece of music. For a Zoom link, please check a recent email from Tapani.

Programs at the Scandinavian Cultural Center

There are several interesting programs at the Scandinavian Cultural Center in Newton that we can take advantage of while we wait to resume our meetings at the Center. Two upcoming events of interest are:

- Saturday April 24: Lecture on Nordic Brewing with Jereme Zimmerman, author of "Make Mead Like a Viking and Brew Beer Like a Yeti".

- Saturday May 15: "Book talk: *For the Love of Cod*" with Eric Dregni, Associate Professor at Concordia University in Saint Paul, Minnesota

Further details and registration information can be found at <http://scandicenter.org/events/>. Note that you can also order 'pulla' and other baked goods through this website.

Scholarship Opportunities

Finlandia Foundation – Boston is pleased to make the following scholarship available for the 2021-22 academic year:

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.

Further information along with application forms for the three scholarships can be found on our website at <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com/scholarships/>. For additional information about the first two scholarships, please contact: Edith Syrjala Eash, 80 Potter Pond, Lexington, MA 02421; syrjalaeash@gmail.com. For 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!**

Newsletter Co-Editors: Greta Ljung, Teresia Moller, and Tapani Ronni
Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com/>
Email: finlandiaboston@gmail.com



FINLANDIA FOUNDATION - BOSTON
P. O. BOX 308
ARLINGTON, MA 02474-0007

Membership: Please Renew or Join Us!

We value your membership in Finlandia Foundation – Boston. And unless you already did so, we encourage you to renew your membership or become a new member for 2021. The annual membership fee runs from January through December, and is \$30 for families, \$20 for individuals and \$10 for senior members. To renew or join us, please send a check to:

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION – BOSTON
 P.O. BOX 308
 Arlington, MA 02474-0007

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

Happy Spring!

