



Finlandia Foundation – Boston

September 2021 Newsletter

Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com>

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Message from Our President Sirkku Konttinen

Dear Finlandia Foundation – Boston members,

Welcome back everyone! I hope you all had a wonderful summer wherever you spent it.

The tenth session of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament (FEP) was held virtually in June. The FEP is part of the Finland Society (Suomi-Seura). Three Foundation – Boston board members participated, one with voting rights. There were nine different committees: Political and official, Citizenship, Senior, Social, Study and training I & II, Youth Culture and Information, Finance and statutory. The committees discussed and voted on about 70 different initiatives ranging from voting rights, passports, electronic identification, funding for Finnish schools abroad and more. One of the important initiatives was the naming of a permanent representative for expatriates in the central government of Finland. The virtual village where the meeting took place was accessible all around the world. Even if it was a bit hard to wake up at five o'clock in the morning for the committee meetings, it was worthwhile to share this space with so many people joining from different countries. The Finnish Expatriate Parliament is an institution where Finns living abroad can get information and our opinions heard. We should all be active in discussing initiatives for the next meeting.

I was lucky to travel to Finland this summer and stay there for a whole month. It was wonderful to see family and friends. We saw the Repin exhibition in Ateneum and the Helsinki Biennale in Vallisaari, but most of the cultural events were cancelled because of COVID. The weather was good the whole time, so we walked a lot, my husband biked long distances and we swam in small lakes in Espoo and big lakes in Saimaa. Vendace (muikku), crayfish (rapu), cloudberry (lakka), red currants (punaviinimarja) were on our menu among many other Finnish delicacies.

We have had our first board meeting of the fall season and discussed future programs that will be impacted by many restrictions still in place. We will update you as we hear from speakers. There is now a pilot program underway to create a joint calendar for the New England Chapters: Finnish Heritage Society, Finnish Center at Saima Park, Cape Ann Finns, Finnish-American Society of Cape Cod, and Finlandia Foundation – Boston (finlandiafoundationboston.com). Also, as we welcome autumn, please remember to check out what is going on in the Scandinavian Cultural Center that represents all Nordic Countries.

With warmest wishes,

-Sirkku Konttinen, FFB President



Fall is a beautiful time in New England. Come celebrate the season and reconnect with old and new friends at the 29th FinFunn Weekend, which takes place October 29-31. The event will be held at the East Hill Farm in Troy, New Hampshire. (www.east-hill-farm.com/events/event/finn-funn-weekend-2). The Inn invites you to register by phone for the all-inclusive weekend. For health and safety, the planning committee recommends attendees be vaccinated.

The Program includes familiar and new activities, presenters, and performers. Accordionist Bernie Nowak and the Oivan Ilo band, the Finnish dancers, crafting, the raffle, sauna and topical Finnish videos are sure to please. New presenters and performers bring fresh perspectives to Finnish and Finnish-American cultural topics. For the first time: learn to write your Finnish story followed by an optional writing workshop. The tori/market will also return. Hosted by a Cheshire County service group, the market blends Finnish favorites with local products.

For registration information and rates please visit <https://www.saima-park.org/ff2021/schedule.html>

Upcoming Webinar on Finnish Inheritance Laws

Receiving an inheritance is a great gift but planning and managing the process can be very complex.

In collaboration with Finland Society (Suomi Seura), Finlandia Foundation National (FFN) is coordinating a Zoom-webinar **"Managing inheritance issues incl. taxation cross Atlantic (Finland - USA)"** on October 19, 2021, at 12pm ET. The presenters are Ann-Christine Westerlund from New York, NY and Anne Nikula from Helsinki.

Registration information will be available on the Finlandia Foundation National website as we get closer to the event.

Events 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. These include art exhibits, workshops, Zoom lectures, and Book Talks. Also, please make sure to check out Hulda's Swedish Baked Goods that can be ordered through the Center. Details can be found at <https://scandicenter.org/events/>

Marimekko Celebrates Its 70th Year

Marimekko, which is Finnish for 'Mary's Dress', turns 70 years old this year. The company was founded in 1951 by Viljo and Armi Ratia after Viljo's oil-cloth factory project failed and was converted to a garment plant. Armi encouraged some artist friends of hers to apply their talents to designing textiles. To show how the textiles could be used, the company made some simple dresses, which quickly became popular. The company received international attention when Timo Sarpaneva, Finland's leading industrial designer at the time, invited the company to present a fashion show at the 1957 Triennale in Milan. The dresses were later showcased by Giorgio Armani in the upscale department store Rinascente in Milan. In 1960, Jacqueline Kennedy was wearing Marimekko on the cover of Sports Illustrated.

Today, Marimekko products are sold in about 40 countries and there are roughly 150 stores around the globe. In 2020, the brand sales of the products worldwide amounted to EUR 286 million and the company's net sales were EUR 124 million. The key markets are Northern Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, and North America. Marimekko has recently teamed up with Adidas for a collection of shoes and gear with familiar patterns.

Marimekko's anniversary year will be filled with special activities, interesting anniversary products, and collaborations with international artists and designers. Details of the celebrations can be found at <https://www.marimekko.co.th/page/marimekko-70-years/>.

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Suomi-koulu Moves to Weston

Prior to the pandemic, Suomi-koulu held its bi-monthly Saturday meetings at the Waldorf School in Lexington. Starting this fall, the classes will be held at the Weston Methodist Church located at 377 North Avenue in Weston.

Suomi-koulu, more formally known as the Finnish School of New England, was founded in the spring of 1991 to serve the Greater Boston area. The purpose of the school is (1) to teach and perpetuate the Finnish language, (2) to provide information about Finland and Finnish culture, and (3) to maintain Finnish traditions among Finns living in the New England area. The school offers language classes for children of all ages and adults too. The classes take place on two Saturdays per month. Each school day concludes with social time over coffee and refreshments. The semesters close with seasonal celebrations in true Finnish style. All this for a very affordable tuition too!

Upcoming classes this fall are scheduled for September 25, October 9 and 23; November 6 and 20; and December 4 and 18. An outdoor event will be held on October 30 and on the December 18 meeting we will celebrate Christmas. For further details including how to enroll, please visit <https://sites.google.com/site/bostonosuomikoulu/home-en>

Membership in FFB

We value your support of Finlandia Foundation – Boston. Our annual membership fee, which runs from January through December, is \$30 for families, \$20 for individuals and \$10 for senior members. To renew or join us, please send a check to:

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

Congratulations!

