



# *Finlandia Foundation* Suomi Chapter

Promoting Finnish Heritage in Whatcom, Skagit, and Island Counties

*Winter 2014*

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Editor: Katy Borden

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**"Birth of The Legend"**

# Message from the President

## Suurkiitokset!

Many thanks to members who sent their ballots back on time for our election. The new board will be serving from October 1st, 2014 until June 30th, 2015. The results are listed in this newsletter.

We have received many kudos from Finland, rest of the USA and our own local members for our last 16 page newsletter. Thank you very much our fantastic editorial staff!! I also want to thank Boundary Bay Brewery for their kind donations for having Olli's Jazz Concert free of charge in their beer garden. Our most sincere thanks to Suomi Seura (Finland Society) in Helsinki for a grant to support our activities.

Our new board member, Maria Bjorklund, and her husband Francisco, are in charge of planning our Independence Day Party on December 5th. Hopefully many of you will attend this gala event in the Squalicum Boat House at Zuanich Park in Bellingham, the same place as in 2013. We are hoping to have some members from Vancouver Finnish War Veterans organization to attend as well.

Tapio Holma and I had the honor to participate in their meeting in September at the Scandinavian Centre. We also saw the documentary about many of them at The Nordic Heritage Museum in August in Seattle. Both of these events were very touching!! Mr. Esko Kajander promised to do his best to get some of the about 100 members of the War Veterans to attend our

Independence Gala. There are still about 12 members alive, who immigrated to Canada after the war. On November 2nd will be the 75th Anniversary of the beginning of the Winter War. (article in this newsletter)

Our Chapter is growing! From 5 founding fathers and mothers some 4 years ago, we now have 58 members. After our Olli's concert fund raiser, some prospective folks took information about our Chapter and we are hoping to break the 100 member mark next year!

All the best for everybody, enjoy our wonderful fall weather in this great northwest!!

Asko Hamalainen



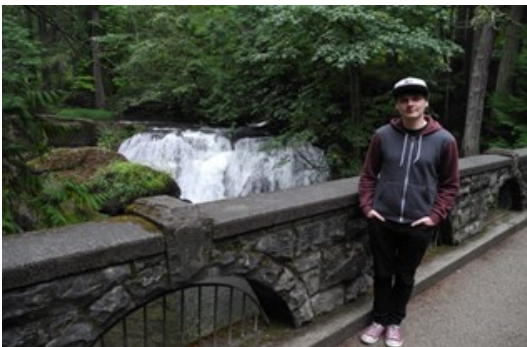
*Asko H with Esko Kajander, President of Finnish Veteran's Organization*

## OLLI HAS LEFT TOWN

Dear Members & Jazz Lovers,

Our Jazz concert was a great success. Not only had our members from Bellingham, Mt. Vernon, Seattle and Vancouver attending, but also as a surprise some visiting members of Finland from Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa showed up.

I am sure we are going to hear more from Olli in the future. Thank you all for attending! We'll hope to have some more of these music venues in the future. After the concert Olli had the pleasure of enjoying our sauna, which he really appreciated.



*September 24, 2014  
Hi Tapio and Brend,*

*Thanks again for the great concert and your incredible hospitality! I really enjoyed my stay in Bellingham, and surely hope to come back there soon. Anyway, hope you guys have a great autumn/winter, and we'll definitely be in touch!*

*All the best, Olli*

# Tove Jansson: Celebrating A Finnish Treasure

By Erica Steele

*"One summer morning at sunrise a long time ago I met a little girl with a book under her arm. I asked her why she was out of bed so early and she answered that there were too many books and far too little time. And there she was absolutely right." –Tove Jansson*

In 1914 the country of Finland was blessed by the birth of Tove Jansson, a bright young girl who grew into one of the country's most celebrated writers. This year marks the centennial of her birth and an opportunity for the wider world to learn more about this talented Finn.

Best known for her lovable characters, the Moomins, about whom she wrote lively adventure tales set in a magical land that was unsurprisingly reminiscent of her Finnish homeland, Jansson was a writer, painter, illustrator and comic strip author. She wrote her first book at age 14 ("Sara and Pelle and the Water Sprite's Octopuses") and went on to write several novels and collections of short stories for adult audiences in addition to the many Moomin tales she wrote and illustrated. In 1966 she received the Hans Christian Anderson Medal for her "lasting contribution to children's literature".

Jansson was also an accomplished artist in addition to her literary achievements. She created a series of commissioned murals and had 7 solo exhibitions featuring her work, which evolved from an impressionist style to abstract modernist over the course of her career.

Tove Jansson died in 2004. In recognition of her life's work a "Tove Jansson and Finnish Children's Culture" €10 coin was minted in 2004. This year, to mark the centennial of her birth, commemorative Tove Jansson coins were again minted. In addition, she was featured on a postage stamp and a park near her childhood home in Helsinki was renamed as Tove Jansson's Park. Finally, a major exhibition of her work, Tove 100, took place at the Ateneum Art Museum.

Today Tove Jansson is Finland's most widely read author and the centennial provides the opportunity to curl up with one (or two!) of her books and learn more about this wonderfully imaginative writer from Helsinki. The recently published collection of Jansson stories from New York Review Books, *"The Woman Who Borrowed Memories"* is the first extensive selection of Jansson's stories to appear in English and a great place to start!

## Moomin Madness in Fairhaven

In honor of Finland's Independence Day, Village Books will host a story time featuring Tove Jansson's lovable Moomins of Moomin Valley. Join us to celebrate at 2PM-3PM on Saturday, December 6 at Village Books, 1200 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Bellingham. There will be art projects for children of all ages by FFSC artists. For more information, please call (360) 392-2665.



Little My, Muumimamma, Muumipappa, Muumitroll, Snork Maiden & Snufkin



# Winter War

## Finland vs. Soviet Union

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union. The war started the last day of November 1939. Russian leaders Stalin, Molotov and company had demanded certain areas of Finland to protect their own borders in the beginning of the World War II. The Finnish government refused these demands and as a result the tanks crossed the Karelian Isthmus towards Finland the last day of November with a pretense that some artillery shots had come from the Finnish side first. Totally false and even Russians today admit that they started the whole thing. When Finland protested this to the League of Nations (The organization similar to today's United Nations) it dismissed the Soviet Union from the organization. Similar incidents took place in many parts of Europe, which started the World War II, particularly when Germany attacked Poland.



The Soviet Union tried to conquer Finland by sending many divisions from Leningrad towards Karelia and in north close to Suomussalmi. Their wishes were to split Finland in south from Viipuri to north in Oulu. Stalin was surprised that the whole nation of Finland was ready to fight for their Independence. Labor together with farmers and city folks was ready to defend themselves to the last man and woman.

The Finnish forces were minimal compared to Russian red army. There were not enough even uniforms to all soldiers, military equipment was non existent, one rifle and ammunition was scared to everyone. This was the fight between David and Goliath! There was one Finnish soldier against ten from The Soviet Red Army's 163th division The world was amazed that Red Army could not do what it was sent to do to conquer the country. Ukrainian soldiers, which were sent to the Finnish borders could not adapt to heavy winter situation. They did not know how to ski! The temperature was 50 below in January and the Finnish newly built army based much on reserves skied in their white camouflage outfits several miles through forests during the nights and surrounded the enemy from many directions.

Many officers of Red Army could not find ways to defend and help their troops and much of the equipment was left behind and the Finnish Army collected the same. Artillery, rifles, machine guns and tanks.



*We fight for home, religion and homeland. Honour and Fatherland.*

The fiercest fights were done close to the Road of Raate. Many Finnish soldiers lost their lives there and Russians lost ten times that. The war lasted 105 days. The losses were great in both sides but Finland even after the armistice in March 1940 kept its independence. Some 10% of territory was lost, much of it in Karelia. A beautiful major city Viipuri was deemed to be too close to Leningrad (today St Petersburg) so the Russians wanted the border moved closer to the west. Also Petsamo in Lapland, where Finland had nickel and iron mines were given to the Soviet Union as a part of the peace treaty.

Historians today in Ukraine, Russia and Finland have tried to figure out how a small army and their poor equipment prevailed. Finland experts are determined to point out that the enemy, even though they had better equipment, were not familiar with winter weather conditions and before anything they lacked the SISU! The Finnish soldiers defended their country understanding that the Independence was the only thing that would keep the country free of communism and dictators like the Kremlin group.

The country had a chance to breathe for a while before the continuation war started again in 1944. That's another story and is not for today.

Article by Tapio Holma

## Commander Mannerheim

Carl Gustaf Mannerheim June 4, 1867 - January 27 1951, was the Commander in Chief of the Finnish Army during the Winter War 1939 and later became the President of Finland. His story is an interesting one and Tapio will prepare an article about Mannerheim for the January issue of our newsletter.

*In 1951 the United States Postal Office honored Commander Mannerheim with these stamps*



## Finland's position as a Russian neighbor..

Lately many nations in Europe have examined their positions towards Russia because of an uneasy situation in Ukraine. Recently also the Centre of the Finnish Statistics made a survey among Finns "How they feel about the situation in their own country towards Russia." The main question was to give answers whether Russia is a security threat to Finland today.

Among those surveyed 7% of those interviewed felt that the threat is rather great, 35% felt it is somewhat great, 45% felt it was quite small, 10% felt it was no reason to worry and 3% said they would not have a comment or knowledge enough to determine.

Because of the EU and the West's sanctions against Russia it was generally felt that if Russia does not want to buy and import yogurt from Finland it does not mean that Russia would threaten Finland militarily. These matters are in no means in the same category.

## Sibelius Jubilee 150 Years

Events are being planned all over. For us here on the west coast the selections are varied and are provided for those who may be traveling and have the opportunity to enjoy the festivities.

- The Oregon Finlandia Foundation will plan a Sibelius dinner event with local musicians.
- A contra tenor, Albert Montanez, will perform in the San Francisco Conservatory and Ms. Marja Kaisla is performing with him in various events.
- Finland/Sweden genealogical society in Seattle will arrange a Sibelius event.
- The Redwood Symphony in California will play Sibelius' seventh
- Seattle Symphony will play all Sibelius's symphonies in the spring of 2015
- Los Angeles heavy metal concert "Sibelius and Heavy Metal", which one is heavier"??

There will be many venues available with local music groups. So far, two events are being planned: on March 29th, 2015, Whatcom Symphony Orchestra will play the 2nd Symphony and Maestro Michael Palmer has plans to include his music in the Bellingham Music Festival in July. Our own FFSC will organize among other things a major event with domestic and foreign performers "Sibelius On Your Mind" later in the fall of 2015. We are also working on possible film showings at the Pickford Film Center. More details will follow in our next newsletters.



# Suomi Corner

## Begin Finnish out loud now: 20 phrases

By Peter Marten, October 2013

After you jump-start your Finnish skills using our phrase list, you can sit in a Helsinki café “Saisinko kupin kahvia?” (Could I have a cup of coffee, please). So you want to learn Finnish? Start here and now. Learn one each day, or see how many you can master in one sitting.

Finnish	English
Hyvää päivää	(literally: Good day) How do you do?/Hello
Mitä kuuluu?	How are you?
Hei!	Hi!
Tervetuloa	Welcome
Hauska tavata	Nice to meet you!
Hyvää huomenta	Good morning
Hyvää iltaa	Good evening
Hyvää yötä	Good night
Kaunis ilma tänään	Nice weather today
Anteeksi	Excuse me/Sorry
Näkemiin	Goodbye
Anteeksi, en puhu suomea	Sorry, I don't speak Finnish
Puhutteko englantia?	Do you speak English?
Saisinko ruokalistan?	Could I have the menu, please?
Saisinko viinilistan?	Could I have the winelist, please?
Paljonko tämä maksaa?	How much does this cost?
Saisinko yhden oluen?	Could I have a beer, please?
Saisinko kupin kahvia?	Could I have a cup of coffee, please?
Saanko laskun?	Can I have the bill, please?
Kiitos	Thank you

**Strategies:** All letters are pronounced. When there are double letters such as ii the sound is elongated  
 “i” is pronounced as a long “e” as in me “y” is pronounced as “u” as in you  
 “a” or “A” is pronounced as “ah” as in father “j” is pronounced as a “y” as in you  
 “ää” is pronounced as “uh” as in up “o” is pronounced as long “o” as in go  
 “äi” is pronounced as a long “a” day “ö” is pronounced as “er” as in her

## Finnish is a funny language

kuusi palaa	The spruce is on fire
kuusi palaa	The spruce returns
kuusi palaa	The number six is on fire
kuusi palaa	The number six returns
kuusi palaa	Your moon is on fire
kuusi palaa	Your moon returns
kuusi palaa	Six pieces



*Mark Bjorklund of Bellingham, WA beat a world record that had been held since the 1970's. The previous record was 156 mph. He went 196 mph on a bike built by him and his brother, Carl Bjorklund at their Superat shop. The event was held at Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah.*

## Finland's 97<sup>th</sup> Independence Day Gala

This year we celebrate the 97<sup>th</sup> birthday for Finland on Friday the 5<sup>th</sup> of December at the Boat House in Squalicum Harbor, Bellingham at 6:30 PM. (same place as last year)

This year is a milepost for many reasons to recognize that Finland has kept its Independence through the tumultuous period of the 40's when so much had to be given to defend the country. Both in the Winter War and in the Continuation War, more than seventy years ago when some 50,000 men lost their lives defending the homeland. Laborers, farmers and cityfolks with unbelievable Sisu made it clear to the enemy that Independence was the only choice for Finland.

Today there are still some 30,000 war veterans left, whom we want to remember and remind future generations the importance of this struggle. There are still some 300-400 war widows with broken hearts, average age reaching 95+ years. More on this in other pages of our newsletter.

Our gala event is full of beautiful music played by local talents. As a surprise we may even have visitors coming from other cities. Great Finnish hors d'oeuvres will be available as usual. Besides we'll have a no host bar in order.

We'd like to see all of you join us for this special evening. Soon you'll receive the invitation from our board with an RSVP request. Please return them promptly so our organizers can make the proper arrangements for the food as needed.

## Thank you!

We appreciate kind contributions received from Ms. Lempi Wilson and Ms. Kathy Hasenjaeger to support our newsletter. Also many thanks to Boundary Bay Brewery and Finland Society for their grants to our various activities.





## *Finlandia Foundation*

Suomi Chapter

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**We're on the Web!**  
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**Winter War 1939 between Finland and Soviet Union**

## Election Results

The board's term October 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

This is confirm that today we have verified the election results of Finlandia Foundation Suomi Chapter of their annual election. The ballots received from the members indicate that the following officers and board members were elected on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 2014.

President: Asko Hamalainen

Vice President: Maria Bjorklund

Treasurer: Joel Rautiola

Secretary: Hanna Winter

Membership Secretary: Mary Penttinen King

Member at Large: Kathy Hasenjaeger

Member at Large: Erica Steele

Member at Large: Brend Holma

Newsletter Editor: Katy Borden

Ex Officio Board Member: Tapio Holma

Confirmed and verified by Brian Rusk and Beth Rusk ( Not affiliated with FFSC)

**"Democracy is based upon the conviction that there are EXTRAORDINARY POSSIILITIES in ordinary people"**

***Harry Emerson 1878-1969***

## Calendar of Events...

December 5<sup>th</sup> Independence Day Celebration @ Squalicum Boat House

December 6<sup>th</sup> Moomin book reading and art at Village books 2 PM – 3 PM

March 29<sup>th</sup> WSO at Mt Baker Theatre to play Sibelius Second Symphony

## Seeking Newsletter Content

Please note, the deadline for the January edition of the Newsletter is January 3rd, 2015. We are seeking travel stories, history, cultural interest articles, comics, photos, recipes and anything pertaining to the Finnish way of life here in Bellingham and abroad. All submitted ads and articles will be printed as space permits, and at the discretion of the Editor. Please email your submissions to

[brendhh@yahoo.com](mailto:brendhh@yahoo.com) or [ffsuomi@gmail.com](mailto:ffsuomi@gmail.com)