



30 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

The Canadian Friends of Finland

Anniversary Publication 2012

Past, present and future

Thirty years is a long time for a small volunteer-based organization to exist. It is also a significant amount of time for a country. Over the past few decades, Finland has experienced a dramatic change from a traditional industrial country (i.e. lumber, paper, and mining) to a world leader in innovation, research & development, and high tech. At the same time, its educational system underwent a radical reform. Now, Finland is **reaping the benefits: its economy is one of the strongest in Europe, and its educational system is ranked top in the world.** The attention Finland is receiving is inspirational, and the nation's culture is flourishing.

While the significance of Sauna, Sibelius, and Aalto in forming the Finnish identity cannot be undervalued, new international icons have emerged in the Finnish cultural landscape that one could have only dreamt of thirty years ago. The list is overwhelming, and will make any friend of Finland very proud; think of composers Kaija Saariaho and Magnus Lindberg, conductors Esa-Pekka Salonen and Jukka-Pekka Saraste, soprano Karita Mattila, violinist Pekka Kuusisto, rock band *H.I.M.*, and metal band *Nightwish*; designers Harri Koskinen, Paola Suhonen, and Marjut Uotila; novelist Sofi Oksanen. The list could go on and on.

The 30-year old Canadian Friends of Finland (CFF) remains faithful to its original mandate of developing and promoting friendly relations between the peoples of Finland and Canada, by initiating and supporting social, cultural and

educational activities in Canada. Nevertheless, as the CFF was not founded to be a stagnant organization, it thrives by representing friends of the nation that Finland is today. Fortunately, today's Finland provides plenty of exciting building blocks for the CFF to meet its mandate. Reflecting the past and the present, it is exhilarating to think what may lie ahead in the next 30 years. Since true friends stick together, the CFF and Finland will continue to grow together.

The CFF remains committed to staying up-to-date with developments in Finland's social, cultural and educational fields. While the organization is proud to celebrate the past 30 years, it is equally delighted to continue enriching its members' lives over the next 30 years, and beyond. Thank you for joining us in celebrating this important mark in the CFF's history. We look forward to sharing many more memorable and thought-provoking moments with you and all friends of Finland.



Sincerely,
Tuuli McCully
President, Canadian Friends of Finland
On behalf of the Board of Directors



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND

I warmly congratulate the Canadian Friends of Finland on its 30th Anniversary.

In spite of their long geographical distance, Finland and Canada have a lot of similarities. Both of our countries are committed to equality, education and overall welfare of our citizens. Finland and Canada are both also cold Arctic countries with similar lifestyles in the Northern Hemisphere.

The relations between Finland and Canada are excellent. I firmly believe that this is not just because of the well-functioning cooperation between our governments, but because of the exceptional links at all levels of the society.

The Canadian Friends of Finland is a prime example of a volunteer-based organization that does valuable work especially in the cultural and educational sector. Its most significant accomplishments include major concerts such as the Canadian Premier of the Kullervo symphony at Roy Thompson Hall, more than twenty educational symposia, numerous exhibits, lectures and other performances.

The crowning achievement to date is the establishment of the Finnish Studies Program at the University of Toronto in 1989, which is now the largest and most significant of such programs in North America.

I would like to thank the Canadian Friends of Finland for its efforts to cherish the relations between our countries. I can assure you that Canada has plenty of friends in Finland too.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sauli Niinistö".

Sauli Niinistö
President of the Republic of Finland

Ottawa, 27 October 2012

On behalf of the Government of Finland, the Embassy of Finland in Ottawa and myself, it is my great pleasure to warmly congratulate the Canadian Friends of Finland in Toronto on the occasion of its 30th anniversary.

For the past 30 years, the aim of Canadian Friends of Finland has been to promote good and friendly relations between Finns and Canadians by engaging in a whole range of social, cultural and educational activities. The CFF has achieved remarkable success in its endeavours. The numerous concerts, symposia, exhibits and lectures organized by the CFF have had an important role in making Finland and Finnish culture known to Canadians, while at the same time providing Finnish-Canadians an important point of contact to their heritage.

The most remarkable accomplishment of the CFF has been the founding of the Finnish Studies Program at the University of Toronto in 1989. Today, it is the most significant program in Finnish studies in North America, designated as a Centre of Excellence by the Finnish agency for international mobility and cooperation CIMO in 2011. This underscores the invaluable contribution of the CFF, the important role that the members of the Finnish-Canadian community play in promoting Finnish interests in Canada.

In concluding I wish the CFF every success in its future activities. These 30 Years of Friendship mark an important milestone in an ongoing procession of activities.



Charles Murto
Ambassador



From Ideas to Action

*The following article, written by **Varpu Lindström** for the CFF 10th Anniversary Issue in 1992, is reproduced here to give the reader the background on the formation of Canadian Friends of Finland.*

Since the 1960's there has been a growing interest in developing cultural and academic links between Canada and Finland. These two modern northern nations have much to share, yet no official cultural agreement nor established organizational framework existed to promote co-operation. Discussions were held periodically in the Finnish-Canadian Cultural Federation and the idea was enthusiastically promoted by Dr. Aarne Siirala and his wife Kaisa. Additional inspiration came from Dr. Michael Branch, a central figure in the London-based Anglo-Finnish Society, who visited Toronto in March 1981 and lectured at the first Finnish-Ugric Mythology Conference in Canada organized by the Estonian Arts and Letters Association. Dr. Branch called together a meeting where the need to establish a friendship organization was once again promoted. Discussion was easy, but how could the seemingly formidable organizational challenges be met?

On September 14, 1981 the Department of International Affairs at the Ministry of Education in Finland invited Professor Varpu Lindström to take on the task of organizing a friendship society in Canada similar to the Anglo-Finnish Society in England. At this Helsinki meeting the general role of friendship societies was discussed as well as the means for funding and establishing the objectives of such an organization. During the same week, meetings were held with Helsinki Deputy Mayor Aarne Välikangas, Chairman of Finnish Friendship Societies and with Marja Leena Rautalin of the Finnish Literature Information Centre, both of whom gave further encouragement and promises of support.

Recognizing that the success of such an enormous undertaking depended on hours of voluntary labour, and that personal contacts would play a significant role in the early shaping of the organization, Lindström sought the help of two talented organizers in Toronto, Carita Gestrin and Paula Grönberg. This trio, which called itself "The Committee to Organize Canadian Friends of Finland", met on October 8th, 1981 to discuss the feasibility of such an organization.

"Did Canada indeed have many friends of Finland?" was asked more than once. They decided that many strong friendship ties already existed but they would benefit from a formal organization. One of their first steps was to adopt a CFF logo designed by Carita Gestrin and stylized by Paula Grönberg and a CFF letterhead design. The logo was later adapted to computers by Brenda Van Ginkel.

The early task was to clarify objectives and to involve other Canadian members. Five more preparatory meetings were held before a wider organizational meeting took place on January 26, 1982. Present at this meeting were Katariina Churchill, Stacy Churchill, Gunilla Creutz, Carita Gestrin, Bengt Gestrin, Paula Grönberg, Audrey Hozack, Rya Levitt, Varpu Lindström, Jane Mahut, Ken Mark, Eda Sepp, Ulla-Stina Sigmundt, Aarne Siirala and Kaisa Siirala.

In addition to the generous support from the Finnish Ministry of Education and the Finland Society (Suomi-Seura), the organization received substantial help from several Canadian institutions and corporations. Hart House at the University of Toronto, which had organized a student exchange programme with Finland as early as 1952, became our institutional base. Many former exchange members continue to support the organization. Jane Mahut, Director of the Koffler Gallery, was approached in the formative stages and has since hosted several Finnish art exhibitions. Similarly Professor Blanche Van Ginkel from the School of Architecture at the University of Toronto was one of the original supporters. Futura Graphics donated their services for our stationary and printing and Finnair gave invaluable assistance with mailings and transportations for exhibitions and guests.



Varpu Lindström, the founder of CFF, speaking at the dinner given in her honour on February 24, 2010 at the University Club of Toronto.

Sibelius - The Musical Heart and Soul of Finland

Ron Walenius - Director

There is no doubt that Sibelius is the greatest Finnish composer who ever lived. And there is no doubt that Sibelius ranks among the world's greatest composers.

It is no surprise to me that the music of Sibelius is rarely heard in the southern hemisphere. The music appeals to those of us who live in the northern climes because the music often suggests mists, frosts and icy landscapes.

CFF has done a good job in programming the music of Sibelius in various recitals and concerts that we have sponsored, but the most spectacular event of all goes back to Saturday, May 3, 1986 when we rented Roy Thomson Hall for a concert!

In the mid-eighties there was a second symphony orchestra in Toronto called the Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Robinson. Paul and his family were great friends of CFF and it was decided that CFF would rent Roy Thomson Hall and the Toronto Philharmonic would play the Canadian premiere of the *Kullervo* symphony by Sibelius.

CFF was in charge of promotion and people from all over Ontario attended. A full busload came to Toronto from Sudbury for the evening. We sold all but 6 tickets (I know, I was in charge of ticket distribution). It was a marvelous and successful undertaking, and as a bonus, it gave CFF considerable momentum.

In recent years seminars on the music of Sibelius have been presented on an annual basis by Rick Phillips, the former host and producer of CBC Radio's "Sound Advice", a weekly guide to classical music and recordings. Rick is one of Canada's foremost commentators on classical music and his lectures are always stimulating and sometimes provocative. Rick will next appear on our behalf on Nov. 17, 2012 and his topic will be the seven Sibelius symphonies.



Jean Sibelius

Ron Walenius, left and Rick Phillips, two Jean Sibelius enthusiasts at the Women's Art Association of Canada on Nov. 20, 2010, where Mr. Phillips held a symposium on the Sibelius symphonies.

Photo courtesy of J. Niinistö Archive.



Reminiscences

Ron Walenius

President 1987 - 1990



My wife, daughter and I spent a wonderful year in Paris during the academic year 1986-87. Both my wife and I were teachers and we were on a Leave of Absence for the school year. My daughter spent her grade ten year in an international school. While I was in Paris I was contacted by CFF in the spring of 1987 to inform me that I had been nominated to CFF's presidency. Of course, I accepted. It is very difficult to say 'No' in Paris in the springtime.

CFF grew dramatically in the eighties. A founding meeting had been held in Montreal well before my term in office and I was happy to attend founding meetings in Vancouver, Ottawa and Sault Ste Marie. By 1990 total membership in CFF in Canada surpassed 1,000.

When my term as president of CFF ended in 1990 I became president of CFF Education Foundation for a five year period. I've continued on the Board of CFFEF through to the present day.

Activities and events have evolved over the years and I'd like to comment on one of the most recent developments.

For some years, some members have lamented the fact that our organizations have not celebrated Finnish Independence Day on a regular basis. As a result, I chaired a small committee made up of Wuokko Davies, Ken Mark and Johanna Grönberg where we came up with the idea that we would celebrate Finnish Independence Day annually, but also, at the same time, launch a new series called "Unique Lives". I asked Katri West, one of CFF's first board members to give the initial presentation last year. Her talk was fascinating and it dealt with life in Finland during a period of rapid change. Heidi Saario enriched the evening with her piano presentation of *Finlandia*.

CFFEF has decided to continue the successful Independence Day/Unique Lives format again this year. I shall be the next speaker in the "Unique Lives" series and my topic will be "Growing Up Finnish in Northern Ontario". Hope to see you there.

Visit our website www.cff.ca

for information on upcoming events, to buy tickets,
join CFF, update your membership, and read CFF and CFFEF news.

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Finnish Films - From Kivi to Kaurismäki

Wuokko Davies - Director

Some people think of Finnish films as dark and gloomy. Films dealing with violence, divorce, alcoholism, neglect, suicide and murder are all difficult topics. However, they are a portrayal of real life; the wretchedness of some human life which many people find difficult to watch. Younger people are often disturbed by this stark reality and the way that some Finnish film producers want their films to evoke reaction. Often, in these films the cinematography, the colours, the sound and the dialogue match the subject matter.

Hollywood films tend to be more lighthearted and whimsical and often people tend to favour those types of films instead of more realistic, down-to-earth ones.

Some early Finnish films were comments on society. More rural Finnish films such as "The Well" and "The Last Wedding" portrayed simple rural life and were a few generations removed from today's society. But the problems of these people were often isolation and loneliness. When left alone with their problems, troubled people had no other recourse but to deal with matters as they saw fit.

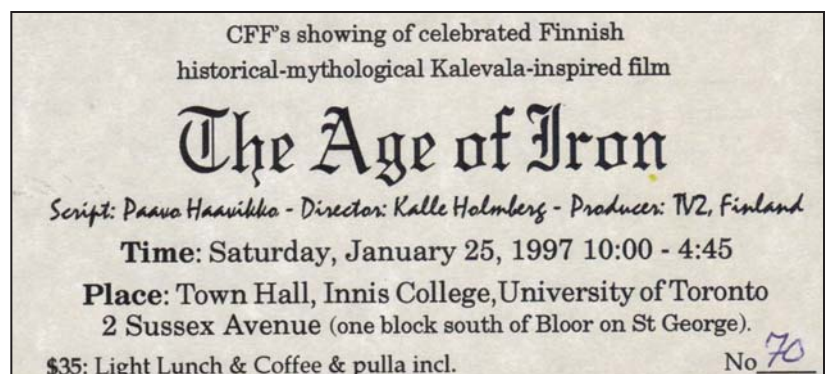
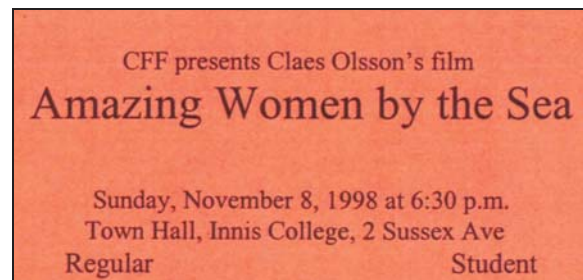
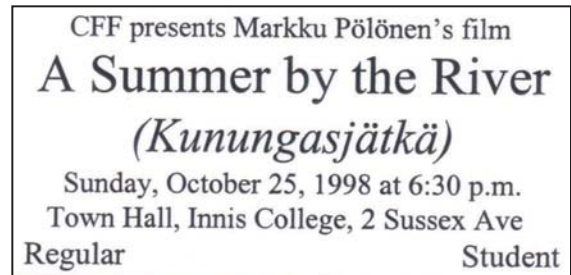
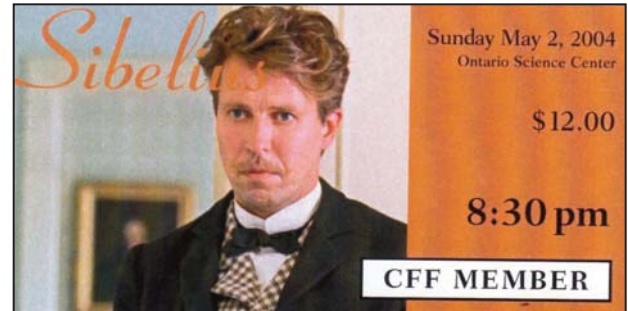
Finnish films also come in the form of documentaries as we saw in "The Life of Aleksis Kivi", "Sibelius" and "Päättalo - the Novelist." Films such as these portray the life stories of artists and their accomplishments.

Other educational films such as "Owls at the Northern Edge" and "Circumpolar Bears" appeal to the aesthetic beauty of nature and the love of the outdoors.

The film "Prinsessa" was based on a true story about the evolution of mental health care through the decades from the crude use of restraints to almost the present day.

The films shown at Innis College are a presentation of Finnish culture and history, which viewers should look upon as a learning experience. Finland has lived through tough times and just watching and reliving a film often brings back memories for those who have lived through them and horror to those who have not.

They are an expression of Finnish social interaction and are meant to provide a window into the director's/producer's intended message. Every film has a message.



Reminiscences

Sheila Embleton

President 1992 - 1995



At Varpu Lindström's invitation, I joined CFF in 1989, and its Board of Directors in 1991. A mere one year later, I found myself as its President, probably quite unprepared for the job, but with plenty of willing and more experienced board members to fill me in on any relevant previous history of the organization, and most importantly introduce me to CFF members, a veritable "who's who" of the Finnish community in Toronto and beyond.

As former presidents, we have been asked to write about particularly memorable or successful events from our time as president. I confess that that is not an easy task, as timelines of any events almost two decades ago tend to blur into one another. There is blurring in for two other reasons as well. First, the Board is very much a volunteer board, very hands-on, and very collegial, thus everybody who can pitches in to help on any and all events. The president may be called upon for some more formal role (such as chairing a meeting or a public welcome at an event), but the event is really led by the group, not the individual. So one may be forgiven for not remembering exactly what happened during those three years of one's presidency.

Second, CFF has always had a very close working relationship with the CFF Education Foundation, ever since the inception of the EF in 1990. Although the EF organizes many events, such as the annual symposium associated with the Chair of Finnish Studies at the University of Toronto, there is such close cooperation with CFF that again it is hard to remember who organized what! What I really remember most was the continuous string of exciting events and the pleasure of working with other dedicated volunteers in bringing them to reality.

I find it impossible to choose any particular events as somehow standing out more than others in my mind. Perhaps reflecting my own tastes and background, I have always enjoyed the films, the academic symposia, and the musical events (whether classical, or more popular, like Finnish tango or accordion!). It is astounding to me, looking back over these years, just how many prime events and speakers we have had – and perhaps the most astounding of all, the ability to engage with such celebrities on a one-on-one basis. Arja Koriseva, Katri Helena, Sinikka Sokka, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Pekka Kuusisto, Jaakko Ryhänen, Laila Hietamies, *Järvelän Pikkupelimannit*, and more ... My friends in Finland are often envious!



Most heartening is the number of both non-Finns and second-generation (and even third-generation) Finns who not only come to our events but volunteer for board positions. It is a joy to see sons and daughters of former board members become board members themselves. After 30 years, it is clear that CFF is here to stay, as an indispensable part of the fabric of Finnish cultural life in Canada.

Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Marja-Liisa Saraste, Sheila Embleton, Risto Ihmuotila and Kristiina Ihmuotila at a CFF reception, circa 1994.

Finnish Architecture

Seppo Kanerva- Director

An intriguing symposium on architecture, chaired by Börje Vähämäki, Professor U of T, and attended by over 100 people, was held on November 1, 1997. The impetus for the seminar was the design of Toronto City Hall by Finnish architect Viljo Revell. This design was the winner in an International Design Competition and became the core of Toronto's urban revival.

The symposium was a day long affair that started with greetings from the Ambassador from Finland, Veijo Sampovaara. He expressed interest and gratitude from the Finnish Government for the symposium celebrating a Finnish Architect and his design for the Toronto City Hall.

Douglas Richardson, University of Toronto Professor of Fine Art and a leading expert on Toronto Architecture spoke on the architecture of the Toronto City Hall, outlining the history of the competition and the significance the building design has evolved to in the world of design. The Toronto City Hall logo has become the most familiar municipality logo in the world. Richardson outlined that the building graces the location with significance in the two crescent-shaped towers sheltering the Council Chambers. The civic square became a centre for music and song sheltered by the elevated walk way encompassing it. He described the design in detail and walked us through the building and its unique elements.

Raili Pietilä is a partner in the world famous Finnish Architecture firm of Raili and Reima Pietilä Architects, who have developed significant projects in Finland and Europe. Reima passed away several years earlier and Raili was carrying his legacy forward. Organic themes and influences have evolved into natural shapes and forms that symbolize their architecture. The form and shape of the city hall shows similar roots as Pietilä's work has.

The presentation included photographs from one of their works, Mäntyniemi, the residence of the President of Finland. The exterior and interior flow together. The edges and curves were significant for understanding the shape of the structure, the geography and how the building graced its setting with incredible views of the Bay and the granite rock environment.

Jonathan Moorhouse, an architect from Finland is an expert in Jugendstil Architecture (Art Nouveau). He showed slides of buildings in an area of Helsinki that is built in this style. He talked about the history of the genre and related interiors with design, materials and colours in this graceful flowing style of the period from 1905 to 1930.

Seppo Kanerva, a Toronto-based architect presented his designs that included projects in Toronto - Suomi Koti Finnish Seniors Centre; in Sudbury - Finlandia Village (different levels of care in 5 buildings); and in Thunder Bay - Suomi Koti Seniors Apartments. These projects exhibit the influence of Finland and Finnish Architecture in his work, in particular, the influence of wood, rock, colour and light in the designs. The award-winning Village has a scaled version of a Finnish church (oldest wood church in Kristiina, Finland), a Finnish sauna (with sunken heater to keep steam low for wheelchairs) and interiors with light and wood finishes. Kanerva has created elements designed for dementia sufferers – circuitous corridors and outside paths, view of toilet from bed and even rummage closets to soothe needs. These innovations have brought more quality to the lives of the residents.

The symposium ended with a banquet in the City Hall Rotunda that was thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. Revell's daughter joined the event and related that Viljo Revell suffered a heart attack near the end of construction and unfortunately, did not see the finished building. John Sewell, keynote speaker, outlined Revell's City Hall as a source of inspiration for the community in Toronto and Ontario, as well as cities throughout the world. It highlighted how important a City Hall is and can be with exceptional design.



Toronto City Hall logo



Toronto City Hall celebrated Viljo Revell in 2010. Read more on page 21.

The History of CFF

From the Archives - Thirty Years of Canadian Friends of Finland

Raili Garth - Director and Archivist



*"London has one,
Dublin has one,
And now,
There is one in Canada:*

*a friends of Finland
association."*

In the beginning of the 1980's this announcement went out to the Finnish-Canadian community, heralding the birth of a new organization that became known as the Canadian Friends of Finland or CFF.

As the archivist of CFF, I have had the fascinating task of sifting through over 10 boxes of documents, collected by Varpu Lindström during the last 30 years of CFF activity. The contents reveal an impressive history of this organization, which has been so successful in "bringing Finland to Canada; its culture and fine arts, its outstanding design and technology." It has done it "by means of exhibits, concerts, lectures, films, live theatre, and host of other exciting events", as the historical announcement promised.

The **CFF archives begin** with minutes recorded on October 8, 1981, when Varpu Lindström, Carita Gestrin and Paula Grönberg met at Sutton Place and formed a 3-person committee "for the purpose of organizing a founding meeting for Friends of Finland in Toronto". Prior to this gathering, Varpu had participated in initial meetings with interested people in Finland and Canada, as documented in her article "From Ideas to Action", found on page 3 in this publication. This trio of feminine Finnish determination decided to contact Prof. William Mead of the University of London to explain the procedures of the Anglo-Finnish Society, which was used as a model.

The meeting of January 19, 1982 brought on board Finnair as the first business sponsor, offering to pay for a trip to Finland and for the CFF mailing, plus tickets as door prizes. This is also when the name of Audrey Hozack, who was involved with the Finnish Student Exchange programme first appears in the minutes. For many years she was a tremendous influence in the organization.

has been with the organization since before the official launch – Ken Mark. His name first surfaces in the minutes of the January 26, 1982 meeting. As the first treasurer, he opened a bank account for CFF on June 1, 1982 and deposited \$185.00 – a fine start for future activities.

Over 100 people attended the **Founding Symposium**, held on October 16, 1982 at Hart House. Aarne Välkanen, the Deputy Mayor of Helsinki, talked about Finnish culture, Michael Branch from University of London, England lectured on Kalevala, William Mead of the Anglo-Finnish Society of London, England was the luncheon speaker, and Blanche Van Ginkel from U of T discussed Finnish Architecture. The first CFF executive was chosen: Stacy Churchill (president), Audrey Hozack (vice-president), Varpu Lindström-Best (secretary), Gunilla Creutz (recording secretary), Ulla-Stina Sigmundt (membership secretary), Ken Mark (treasurer), Paula Grönberg (editor), with Carita Gestrin, Aarne Siirala, Eda Sepp, Irene Boychuck and John Becker filling the rest of the 12-member board. And so CFF was ready to show Canadians what Finland was all about!

The **very first official occasion**, anchoring the next 30 years of happenings, was a dinner for Helvi Sipilä on November 27, 1982, which also served as the first Finnish Independence Day celebration by CFF. Since that time, CFF has organized a staggering variety of events. It has shown almost 90 Finnish films, sponsored close to 100 lectures, put on 30 symposia and seminars, delighted audiences with up to 40 musical events, and participated in something like 40 miscellaneous happenings, such as exhibitions of Finnish design, introductory dinners for new Finnish ambassadors, book launches, dinner dances, and award ceremonies. And these numbers represent only those events, for which a record was found in the archives!

It was not long before other locations in Canada expressed an interest in starting branches of their own. By the end of 1984, queries had come from Mr. Hunnisette in Timmins, Ms. Ikäheimo-Lindgren in Ottawa, Chuck Sutyla in Saskatoon, Julia Charles in Vancouver, Juhani Numminen in Montreal, and Robert Purvis in Winnipeg. In later years, requests were also received from Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay. Many of these branches did get established and three of them – **Ottawa, Montreal and Vancouver** – are still active.

And it was in 1984 that the other member of the current executive board joined CFF, when Ron Walenius

became the contact person for the Cross-country committee, dealing with the various CFF branches that were springing up.

The year 1984 was significant in other ways, too, because it was at the lecture on Sibelius by Prof. Erik Tawaststjerna at the third CFF Annual General Meeting that Paul Robinson's interest in Finland was initiated. This resulted in the **Canadian première performance** of the *Kullervo* symphony by Jean Sibelius in May of 1986. Under the leadership of Audrey Hozack, CFF took on this "tremendous undertaking" with a budget of almost \$100,000 and brought it to a magnificent success. In fact, Roy Thomson Hall was so impressed with the event, that Audrey was asked to serve as a consultant for another group planning a similar large concert.

As noted earlier, celebrating **Finland's Independence Day** in December was often an important event in the CFF calendar. Some of these turned out to be major undertakings, such as the 80th Independence Day concert with Jaakko Ryhänen and Collin Hansen in 1997, attended by 800 people, and Arja Koriseva's dinner dance in 2003. Other significant Independence Day celebrations included concerts by Carla Huhtanen and Jun Fujimoto in 2000, Mari Palo, Kouta Räsänen and Hanna Susitaival in 2002, Sinikka Sokka and Eero Ojanen with Vic Lawrence Orchestra in 2004, and Heidi Saario and Cindy Koistinen with Walter Ostanec Orchestra in 2007. The current Independence Day events are on a more modest scale with the 2011 introduction of "Unique Lives", a celebration of the lives of individual Finns in Canada or Finland, held in conjunction with

Independence Day.

Kalevala has always played an important role in CFF's activities, especially in the beginning, when it was almost the only known fact about Finland for many Canadians. Thus a number of events in the early CFF history centered around this theme, starting with Michael Branch's speech at the Founding Symposium. There followed further lectures by Dr. Branch in 1984, and the "Wanton Lover Boy" seminar in 1985. Börje Vähämäki conducted a major Kalevala-themed seminar in 1993, with another one by Thomas DuBois and Aili Flint following in 2004. Kalevala was the subject of a lecture by Juha Pentikäinen in 1985 and was dramatized by the *Three Witches of Kalevala* in 1988. It was told as stories at the "Fireside Epic" in the same year, Carol McGirr recited its poems in 2003, and Gallen-Kallela's Kalevala paintings were viewed in a film in 2005. The musical interpretations of Kalevala started in 1983, when CFF joined with the Estonian community in presenting *Kalevpoeg*, an opera by Peter Such and Kristi Allik, followed by the *Kullervo* symphony in 1986 and the *Kullervo Choral Symphony* in 1993.

The topics covered by the various **lectures** put on by CFF during the last 30 years are truly wide-ranging, the only stipulation being that they concern Finland or Finnish immigrants in some way. For example, Vappu and Ilkka Taipale lectured on the peace movements in Finland in 1988; Sydney Allinson described the Winter War between Finland and Russia in 1990; Risa Shuman presented a close-up on Aki Kaurismäki in 1993; Tapani Harviainen discussed Finland and the Holocaust in

1995; and the Åland question was answered by Eric Luneberg in 1998. Oiva Saarinen talked about his book on Finnish immigrants in Sudbury in 1999; Kimmo Innanen described the Innanen asteroid and Kapteyn's star in 2003; Pauliina Raento displayed Finnish postage stamps in 2005; Rauna Kuokkanen lectured on the Sami woman in 2008; and Wolfram Eilenberger, in a humorous tone, described what it was like being married to a Finn in 2010.

Perhaps the most popular events put on annually by CFF during the last 30 years have been the **Finnish films**, which are usually very well attended. Films such as "Kivenpyörittäjän kylä" ("The Last Wedding") in October of 1997, drew over 400 people to its three showings. Other



Pianist Heidi Saario and Cindy Koistinen performing at the Finnish Independence Day Celebrations in 2007, with emcee Dave Duvall of CTV TV on the right.

Continued on page 11

popular films such as “Rauta-Aika” (“The Age of Iron”), shown in January of 1997 and “Täällä Pohjan tähden alla” (“Under the North Star”) from February of 2011, were regularly attended by over 100 people. CFF continues to present three films a year, with one more scheduled for this fall.

The earliest document in the CFF archives mentioning the Finnish Studies program is from October 24, 1986. It discusses the policy on the establishment of a Chair at the University of Toronto. By January, 1989 an agreement had been reached with U of T, and CFF had established an Education Foundation (CFFE) for the purpose of supporting Finnish Studies. **CFFE was registered on June 15, 1990** and incorporated on July 5 of the same year.

Since then, many of the events held have been used as fund-raisers for CFFE. This activity culminated on February 24, 2010, when CFFE presented a cheque for \$500,000 to the University of Toronto towards an endowment required to establish a **permanent Chair of Finnish Studies** at the university. CFF is currently in the middle of a campaign to raise the remaining funds. On Nov. 25, 2011 the Centre for International Mobility in Finland designated the Toronto Finnish Studies program as the North American **Centre of Excellence in Finnish Studies**.

Since 1990, thanks to the generosity of many donors, CFFE has awarded **scholarships** to over 140 students from the Finnish Studies program. Three of the original donors – Finnish Society of Toronto (with a total of 30 scholarships given over the 22 years), Toronto Finlandia Lions Club, and Raija Kokko Humanitarian Award (originally Leaside Community Pharmacy award) – still continue to support CFFE with their annual contributions. Other longtime scholarship supporters include Ulla-Stina and Pieter Sigmundt, Olli Reinikka and Ville Masalin, and Martta Maria Aho Ensio. The contributions of these and other loyal supporters are much appreciated. See page 17 for more information on donors.

The Finnish Ministry of Education financially assisted CFF in its early years with its cultural endeavours. Each

year CFF submitted a budget outlining its various plans for symposia, speakers, films etc. and the Ministry sent over the money to pay for them. As various new branches were established, it also granted seed funding to CFF Toronto to distribute to the branches for their cultural activities. At the end of each financial year, CFF submitted to Finland an audited report showing how the funds were used. **CFF is very grateful to the Finnish Ministry of Education for this extremely important support.**

Over the years the Finnish government has further shown its appreciation of the work done by CFF by bestowing numerous awards on its executive. **The White Rose of Finland** (Knight First Class and Order of the Lion) is awarded to individuals as an acknowledgement of their efforts in advancing Finnish culture and language. This honour has been bestowed upon Varpu Lindström, Sheila Embleton, Börje Vähämäki, Audrey Hozack, Linda MacRae and Jim Lindala. It is members like these who have made CFF so influential and respected over the 30 years of its existence.

The papers of CFF are now located in the Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections at the York University Keele Street campus. The *fonds* contain many interesting documents on the multitude of activities sponsored by CFF, and are available to researchers.

Thanks to Noreen Stuckless and Ken Mark for their assistance on the financial facts.



Presentation of the White Rose of Finland, Knight First Class to Börje Vähämäki on Feb. 24, 1998, with other previous recipients. From left: Veli Ylänkö, Anneli Ylänkö, Ambassador of Finland Veijo Sampovaara, Börje Vähämäki, Varpu Lindström, Audrey Hozack, and Linda MacRae.

I was a president of CFF between 1998 and 2000. During my presidency, we hosted many events with guest speakers and performers. Some of the more memorable speeches included a talk by Oiva Saarinen, a professor at Laurentian University. He spoke at the AGM in 1999. He discussed his book "Between a Rock and a Hard Place", which is about Finns in northern Ontario. Paul Kaihla spoke at the awards dinner the same year, on his book "Savage Messiah" which is about a brutal religious sect leader in Quebec.

In 2001, Arja Alho, a past member of the Finnish Parliament who was at York University doing research for her doctorate, spoke at the awards dinner and then again at the AGM in 2001. Her topic at the AGM was "Everything is Bigger in Canada."

At the 2000 awards dinner, the speaker was Dr. Sheila Embleton. Her topic was "How I became a Finnophile". Dr. Embleton has proven herself to be a true "Finnophile", as a long-time, productive member of the CFF board and as the President of the Education Foundation.

The topic of the symposium in the year 2000 was the past President of Finland, Urho Kekkonen. I particularly enjoyed this symposium, on a personal level, because I had met President Kekkonen in England while I was a student there. For me, the highlight of the symposium was the speech by Dr. Varpu Lindström, which was so clearly presented and full of wry humour.

Also in 2000, Dr. Pirjo Markkola (my cousin!) spoke about "Women and Welfare in Finland." She gave this speech while she was a visiting scholar at York University.

Many of the musical events also were memorable. In September 1999, Katri Helena came to perform at a fundraising concert at what is now known as the Toronto Centre for Performing Arts. To the delight of the audience, she and Dr. Börje Vähämäki did a little waltz on stage during her performance. Katri Helena was also accompanied by her then-husband, Panu Rajala. He is an expert on F.E. Sillanpää and gave a talk at U of T about our Nobel-prize winning author.

In December 2000, at the Independence Day celebrations, Carla Huhtanen sang with her wonderful soprano voice.

In addition to these wonderful speeches and performances, we also had many Finnish films shown at Innis College at U of T; movies by some well-known directors including the Kaurismäki brothers.

There were many other events, too numerous to mention here. I had a pleasant and rewarding time as a president of CFF.

Hilkka Davidson
President 1998 - 2000



Presidents of Canadian Friends of Finland 1982 to 2011

Year	President
1982	Stacey Churchill
1984	Audrey Hozack
1987	Ron Walenius
1990	Linda MacRae
1991	Phyllis Jones
1992	Sheila Embleton
1995	James Lindala
1998	Hilkka Davidson
2000	Ken Mark
2002	Katri West
2004	Seppo Kanerva
2006	Ismo Heikkilä
2008	Bill Holt
2011	Tuuli McCully

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Canadian Friends of Finland (CFF) is to develop and promote friendly relations between the peoples of Finland and Canada, by initiating and supporting social, cultural and educational activities and events in Canada. Networking and cooperating with individuals and other like-minded Finnish and Canadian organizations helps CFF accomplish this mission.

Learning the Language and Culture

Finnish Studies at the University of Toronto

Pia Päiviö - Ex-Officio member of CFF



Pia Päiviö, Assistant Professor
of Finnish Studies at the U of T.

Finnish Studies Program Curriculum 2012

FIN100H1 - Elementary Finnish I
FIN110H1 - Elementary Finnish II
FIN200H1 - Intermediate Finnish I
FIN210H1 - Intermediate Finnish II
FIN220H1 - Introduction to Finnish Linguistics
FIN230H1 - Finnish Culture 1800 to Present
FIN235H1 - Finnish Literature 1800 to Present
FIN240H1 - Masterpieces of Scandinavian Literature
FIN250H1 - Finnish Cinema
FIN260H1 - Scandinavian Cinema
FIN300H1 - Advanced Finnish 1
FIN305H1 - Finnish Morphology and Syntax
FIN310H1 - Finnish Folklore: The Kalevala
FIN320H1 - Finnish Canadian Immigrant Experience
FIN330H1 - Regional Origins of Finnish Culture
FIN340H1 - Advanced Finnish II
FIN350H1 - The Finnish Short Story
FIN360H1 - Bilingualism in Finland
FIN400H1 - Translation: Finnish-English
FIN410H1 - Finnish Literature 1700-1900 (in Finnish)
FIN415H1 - Finnish Literature in the 20th Century
FIN420Y1 - Independent Study
FIN421H1 - Independent Study
FIN430Y1 - Independent Study

Students of Finnish descent are often searching for their roots, their identity – for themselves. For them, the Finnish studies can become a positive obsession – a way to better understand oneself and one’s family.

The Finnish Studies Program is primarily an undergraduate Bachelor of Arts program. While the major program has two to three students annually, many more have enrolled in the minor program.

Today, most of the first year students are of non-Finnish descent. In an elementary level language course only about 20% of the students are of Finnish descent. However, after the first year of studies that percentage increases: typically students with Finnish descent choose Finnish as their major.

But why do students of non-Finnish heritage start studying at the Finnish Studies program? Basically, the old saying “sisu, sauna and Sibelius” sounds Greek to the younger generations. Finnish music in general attracts a great number of students to learn more about the language and culture of their favorite composer, band or idol. Fans of Kaija Saariaho, Heavy Metal bands such as *Korpiklaani*, *Apocalyptica* or *HIM* alias Ville Valo inspire students to learn Finnish. About 20% of the students are studying Finnish because of videogames like “Angry Birds” originating from Finland, or because of cartoons such as “Päsilä”.

One major motivator for very efficient students is the fact that Finland offers multiple English language MA-programs every year – for free. A surprising number of 17-year old first year students already think of that!

One cannot ignore the influence of J.R.R. Tolkien in the success of the numbers of enrollments in the Finnish Studies program. These Tolkien fans are passionate learners of folklore, aboriginal cultures, Finno-Ugric languages, and cultures and politics of endangered languages. These students go well together with your typical linguistics students, who are curious about learning a language which is exotic to them, but which still is much less of a headache than some really exotic languages.

What makes an instructor’s life relatively comfortable is the fact that all students are aware that the Finnish Studies program is not going to be a joy-ride all the time. Finnish has a reputation of being a difficult language, and I like to keep that reputation (although it is not true), because then, only those students who are dedicated, motivated and willing to work hard choose to enroll. With fascinated, energetic, knowledge-hungry students, it is a pleasure to teach the Finnish Studies Program and often times turn Finnish to FUNnish.

Learning the Language and Culture

Student Exchange Program

Ken Mark - Director

The Hart House Finnish Exchange which celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2011 is considered the longest-running non-academic, international exchange at the University of Toronto. It began with an informal invitation from a Finnish men's choir that performed at Hart House in 1950 to come over and help rebuild some university dormitories in Helsinki.

When Nicholas Ignatieff, the Warden of Hart House and eight students went over the following year, they soon realized that the student union brought in workman to do the actual building. The Finns found other jobs for the Canadians. However, the visiting students helped build a sauna at a new campus in Otaniemi. In return, the first Finnish group that came over in 1954 built a sauna at Hart House Farm. It has been remodeled several times and remains a centre-piece of the Farm experience.

From such modest beginnings has developed a quadrennial exchange in which groups of students spend a summer working in the other country. For participants, the thrilling experience of living and working in a foreign country is the highlight of their university days and creates lifelong memories and friendships.

The Exchange experience has led to several marriages. Katri West, a CFF stalwart from almost its very beginnings, met her husband Gordon West in Finland in 1959. They recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

In all, about 128 Canadian have participated in the exchange as have a similar number of Finns. Originally, the exchange involved four Helsinki-based universities: the University of Helsinki, The Hanken School of Economics, The Helsinki School of Economics and the Helsinki University of Technology (TKK). The last two are now part of Aalto University.

Among other things, the Exchange hastened the admission of women to Hart House when the 1967 group included four females. That reality helped to persuade Hart House officials to permit women to become members in 1972. Before that, the building was a male bastion. That same year, the Canadian group to Finland included four women.

Many former exchange members have served as CFF board members. Three of them became president. Here is a list of most of them along with their Finnish Exchange affiliation in brackets:

Michelle Arnold ('93)
John Becker ('55)
Irene Boychuk (admin '80)
Dr. Peter Brawley ('59)
Christine Shirota (née Brown) ('97)
James Courtney (admin '67)
Lisa Douglas ('89)
Audrey Hozack* (admin '51-'83)
Linda MacRae* (admin, '67, '87-2004)
Ken Mark* ('68)
Paul Meyer ('93)
Linda Milne (admin '67)
Dr. Anne Tonisson ('72)
Katri West* and Anneli West (spouse and daughter of Gordon West) ('59).

*served as CFF president

Front row from left: Jim Lindala; Monique Bégin, Member of Parliament for Saint-Léonard-Anjou; Judy Erola, Member of Parliament for Nickel Belt; and Linda MacRae at the Jukka-Pekka Saraste dinner hosted by CFF on Oct. 23, 1994 at the Granite Club.



Reminiscences

Ken Mark

President 2000 - 2002



What I remember most about being CFF president is not so much the events and activities during my term of office – it was actually a very quiet time – but how I got the job. After serving as CFF's inaugural treasurer that included the heady financial traffic related to filling Roy Thomson Hall for one glorious musical evening with the Canadian premiere of Jean Sibelius's *Kullervo* symphony, I was more than content to slip back and hide among the weeds as just another board member.

That idyllic existence came to an abrupt end when one day Jim Lindala came up to me and asked, "Isn't it time that you stepped up to be CFF president." As all of us can recall, when Jim had that determined look in his eye, he would never take no for an answer.

The major events during my term included a symposium in the fall of 2001, "The Finns Meet the Vikings", featuring Thomas DuBois and Birgitta Wallace who discussed the archeological dig and research done at L'Anse Aux Meadows, Newfoundland and Labrador, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. At the 2001 AGM, former Finnish cabinet minister Arja Alho, who was finishing up her academic work at York University, spoke on "Everything is bigger in Canada".

At the 2002 AGM, our very own Sheila Embleton discussed "The Role of English in Contemporary Finland". She concluded that English is quickly pushing aside Swedish as Finland's second language.

In the summer of 2001, we fulfilled our musical mandate by presenting *Trio Feroce* consisting of Emilia Otava, Andrei Sytchak and Heidi Saario who performed "Music from Beethoven to Sibelius".

Among the films shown at the time were: "Return to Plainlands", "Tommy and the Wildcat", "A Small Pilgrimage", "Takin' Moses for a Ride", "Little Sister" and "The Life of Aleksis Kivi".

Finally, my mother-in-law Jeanne Carter graciously offered us her cottage in Keswick on Lake Simcoe to host the CFFEF AGM in August 2001 which Jim Lindala attended in his wheelchair.



CFFEF AGM in August, 2001 in Keswick on Lake Simcoe.

Front row seated from left: Ken Mark, Jim Lindala, Hilka Davidson.

Middle row from left: Varpu Lindström, Linda MacRae, Ian Mark, Derek Davidson, Viola Lindala, Noreen Stuckless, Wally Stuckless.

Back row from left: Seppo Kanerva, Terry Carter, Anja Kanerva, Tuula Haukioja, Börje Vähämäki, Gunilla Creutz.

CFF Members and Membership

Gail Patterson

Director

The majority of CFF's more than 200 members come from the Greater Toronto Area but the organization is also represented by those from Central and Northern Ontario, Vancouver, Quebec and the state of New York. Our membership fees, for each calendar year, of \$25 (adult), \$15 (senior/student) or \$500 (lifetime) are used primarily for the printing and postage of flyers advertising our many activities. We have a reduced ticket price for our members to attend most of our events and some events are only advertised to the members. We are continuing to decrease the printing and mailing costs by encouraging members to access our information by email.

In 2012, we made a facelift to our website and now membership renewals, new registrations and ticket purchases can be made online at www.cff.ca.

Many active event attenders and our new younger fans are introducing their friends and families to CFF's social, cultural and educational events and thereby helping us with our mission to develop and promote relations between peoples of Finland and Canada. As a result, our "youth" and "non-Finn" memberships continue to grow.



Original CFF logo, designed by Carita Gestrin and stylized by Paula Grönberg.



Current CFF logo, designed by Annu Mallinick.

Reminiscences

To be elected the president of Canadian Friends of Finland in 2002 was a wonderful experience. Finally I could retire from being the recording secretary of CFF for 20 years!

One of the more memorable moments in my time as the president was when two days before the third Nokia concert at the Recital Hall in North York Centre I got a phone call from Mari Palo in Finland. She was to be the soprano at the concert but the voice was that of a bass singer. She could not come! Luckily she had found a replacement, Taina Piira who had been here two years earlier for the previous Nokia concert. Varpu Lindström and Finnair were pulling strings to get the plane tickets changed in time and a new insert had to be made and printed for the program. And in midst of all this Varpu lost her mother suddenly. But the concert was great.

Then we had Arja Koriseva! As a Tango Queen she was something else - and a very sweet girl.

Many visitors from Finland came to give very intellectual talks on various subjects. Learned much about the Sami and Kalevala and Finnish rock - that is, as in music.

Enjoyable experience all along.

Katri West

President 2002 - 2004



Helping Finnish-Canadian Students

Scholarship Donors over the Years

Raili Garth et al

As Wuokko Davies recalls, when Varpu Lindström visited Toronto Finlandia Lions Club, she wanted to give them her ideas on the value of the scholarship program. She emphasized how important it was to support the students, because university courses are over \$1000.00 each and students usually have a course load of five or six courses. Besides that they have other expenses for books, housing, miscellaneous fees, etc. When choosing an elective, they often choose Finnish.

In Varpu's experience, when a scholarship is offered, students tend to work harder, because they now have a goal to achieve. They feel valued, knowing that their studies are not for naught. One student is selected to receive a scholarship from each of the various Finnish courses that are offered. Students are judged on commitment and grades. Financial need is not always a criterion for the awards.

Varpu felt that the rewards to the community were long term, resulting in future student involvement in the community for 10 to 20 years. That is why CFF believes that the scholarship program is an important asset that needs to be supported.

Some of the companies and individuals who have donated scholarships over the years are listed below:

Finnish Society of Toronto
Martta Maria Aho Ensio
Raija Kokko Humanitarian Award (Leaside Community Pharmacy)
Toronto Finlandia Lions Club
Journal of Finnish Studies Essay Prize
Olli Reinikka & Ville Masalin
FINNSTAAUT
Ulla-Stina and Pieter Sigmundt
Finnair Travel
Canadian Friends of Finland, Vancouver
G. James Lindala Foundation
Toronto Suomi Lions Club
Centennial Driver Education/Eric Malmström
Osuuspankki (Finnish Credit Union Ltd.)
Börje Vähämäki Retirement Fund
Vox Finlandiae
Canadian Friends of Finland, Montreal
The Finlandia-Canada Chamber of Commerce Travel

We would like to warmly express our gratitude to all the donors.

Below you will find a short description of some of these organizations that have regularly given out scholarships.

"Thank You" to Wuokko Davies, Olli Reinikka, Burt Rairamo, Elsie Jokinen, Viola Lindala, and Seija Hyhkö for their help in writing this article.

Finnish Society of Toronto Scholarship

The presentation of the Finnish Society of Toronto Scholarship is made to the student who receives the highest marks in the Finnish Language Studies at University of Toronto. This scholarship has been presented each year since the beginning in 1990. The Finnish Society of Toronto continues to operate in the spirit of its founders, who 106 years ago established the society to form a bond of union between the Finlanders of Toronto and vicinity, so as to unite them. One of the first things the society organized was to set up a library with newspapers, Finnish novels, and books on history, political philosophy and economics. The motto for the new society was "free thought". The Finnish Society of Toronto Scholarship was the first scholarship available to students in the University of Toronto Finnish Studies Program and continues to this day.

Maria Martta Aho Ensio Scholarship

The Martta Maria Aho Ensio Scholarship is donated in memory of an exceptionally talented Finnish woman, Martta Maria Ensio, nee Aho, by her husband and children. Martta Maria Aho Ensio was a celebrated actress in the theatre. She studied under the renowned Ella Eronen in Finland and performed on many stages in Finland, in the United States, and in Canada. She also wrote and translated plays. The scholarship is given annually to a student in Finnish Studies at the University of Toronto who shows strong determination, leadership qualities and/or exceptional artistic merit.

Raija Kokko Humanitarian Award Scholarship

The Raija Kokko Humanitarian Award was initiated as the Leaside Community Pharmacy/Raija Kokko Scholarship in 1990 by the owner/pharmacist Raija Kokko. She remembered how much even a little help meant in university. It was changed to its current name in 2004 after the death of Raija Kokko. The first recipient of this scholarship, presented to a student in the Finnish Minor Program, was Karen Davidson.

Toronto Finlandia Lions Club Scholarship

The Toronto-Finlandia Lions Club has provided a scholarship to the Finnish Studies Program at the University of Toronto every year since it was chartered as a Lions Club in 1989. Consequently, these contributions would date to 1990. The Toronto-Finlandia Lions Club was started by the ladies who were originally Toronto-Suomi Lioness members as soon as it was established that women could also be Lions (i.e. not only an auxiliary to a Lions Club). Since then, the club also accepts male members so the Toronto-Finlandia Lions Club currently has women and men as members.

Journal of Finnish Studies Essay Prize

The Journal of Finnish Studies Essay Prize was first given in 1995, to commemorate the first issue of the Journal, which was to be published the following January. The award wished to encourage and recognize good scholarly writing. Susan Vickberg-Friend won the prize three times between 1999 and 2001.

Olli Reinikka & Ville Masalin Scholarship

The Olli Reinikka & Ville Masalin Scholarship has been given every year since 2000 to the student who has shown scholarly excellence in a Finnish Studies course and has demonstrated a seriousness of purpose. The award was won in the first year by Rowena Young.

G. James Lindala Lectureship Fund

The James Lindala family foundation funds an annual guest speaker at the CFFEF Awards dinner. Ilkka Ristimäki gave the first Jim Lindala Memorial Address in 2002. Other speakers have been Pirkko Mäkikokkila, Juri Kivimäe and Oiva Saarinen.

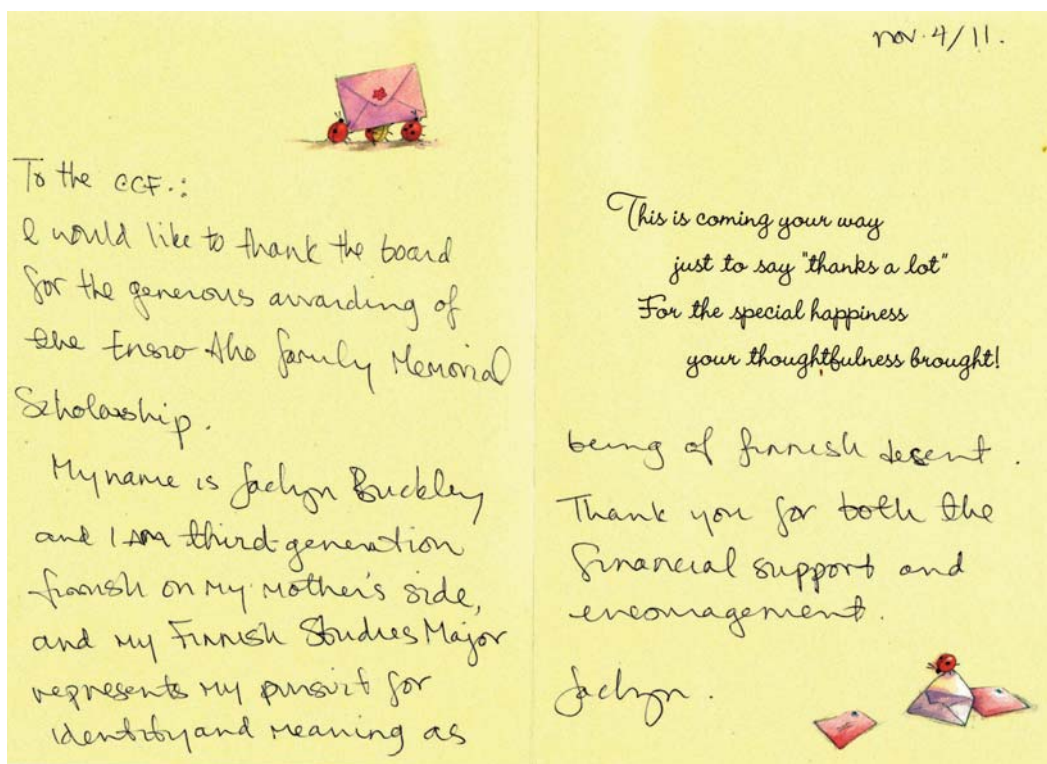
FINNSTAAUT Scholarship

The Finnish Studies Alumni Association of University of Toronto was established on November 23, 1999 to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Finnish Studies at University of Toronto. The first FINNSTAAUT Scholarship was donated in the following fall, in November 2000, to Susan Herr. The Scholarship was awarded to a deserving student based on a criteria of having achieved a high scholastic standard, combined with extra curricular and/or community service.

The Toronto Suomi Lions Club Book Award

In 2008, The Toronto Suomi Lions Club began to offer an annual Toronto Suomi Lions Club Scholarship, either directly to a deserving student of the Finnish Studies of University of Toronto, or in the form of a textbook subsidy for such expensive textbooks as "Kalevala". Toronto Suomi Lions Club recognizes the valuable work that the Finnish Studies is performing in teaching and promoting the Finnish language, culture and heritage.

The Toronto Suomi Lions Scholarship fits into the Lions motto, "We Serve" our communities by helping young people, and especially those who are experiencing financial difficulties with the cost of their education. In the larger picture, the Lions are dedicated to helping the less fortunate and take an active interest in the civic, cultural, social and moral welfare of our Finnish community and the community at large around us.



Thank you note from Jaclyn Buckley for the Martta Maria Aho Ensio Scholarship she received in 2011.

Reminiscences

Seppo Kanerva
President 2004 - 2006



The 24th Annual General Meeting at Croft House at University College had a great turnout: 40 people attended when the first Mission Statement for CFF was outlined.

The founding clause for CFF Education Foundation was that its sole purpose is to support Finnish Studies at the University of Toronto. A major initiative to secure the long term viability was assisted by Pekka Sinervo, professor of Physics and Dean. It was contingent on CFF providing \$500,000 as their part of a required \$3 MILLION for the Endowed Chair. (This task had a time frame and was satisfied by CFF and CFFEF on the 30th of June, 2009.)

The years 2004-2006 were filled with many events. A spectacular Independence Day Gala, attended by the Ambassador, and a full house was held at the Granite Club. A Finnish singer and band had us dancing and swinging after a fine meal and speeches. Silent Auction and ticket sales raised funds for the Endowed Chair.

"Letters from Karelia", a National Film Board film directed by Kelly Saxberg, an emotional journey into the tragic experiences of Finnish Canadians who moved to Soviet Karelia after the 1st World War, was shown at York University in January. It was particularly fascinating for us, as it was based on research by our very own Historian Varpu Lindström, and even had a malicious (but compassionate) guard played by Börje Vähämäki. The film won awards.

In February the *Karelian Music Ensemble* presented and played traditional musical instruments from Karelia with Arto Rinne, Igor Arhkipoff and Alexander Bykadoroff at University College.

The Symposium for 2005 was on "Finnish Art & Literature" and the painter Albert Edelfelt, with following films: "100th Anniversary of Edelfelt's Life", Edelfelt's painting "In Luxembourg Park", and "If There is a Will". Lecture was given by Sirpa Kähkönen, and Anne Korpela was the keynote speaker at the Awards Dinner.

Several films were shown: two at the Ontario Science Centre to support the Endowment Fund – "Shades of Happiness" and "One Way Ticket to Mombassa". Later, documentaries on Finnish and Soviet (boos and hisses) POWs were shown: "Damn Russkies". Other films were "Mother of Mine" - 2nd People's Choice at TIFF and another Finnish Documentary: "Fire and Ice".

Lectures included Pauliina Raento, who talked about "Miniature Messengers: Finnish Postage Stamps" - political and social trends of a country through examination of imagery on their stamps, and "Contemporary Finnish Women Writers" by Professor Virpi Varttinen.

"Celebration of Music from Finland" was organized in November with Karen Davidson, soprano and Heidi Saario, piano, and the group *Kaiku* from New York (three Finn female vocalists). A full house raised funds at the Latvian Centre for the Endowed Chair Program.

A lecture was given by Assistant Professor Päivi Kataikko on "Finnish Architecture and Building Culture Today".

Six splendid years with the Vice Consul Sisko Peltonen-Sirén were celebrated at a farewell reception with a concert by *Vox Finlandia*.

The two years were active and encouraging for Finnish Studies and ended with a fun day of music and dance at the "Midsummer Soirée at Villa Harmony".

Being elected to the office of President of this organization was a humbling honour. My term from 2006-2008 was one of the easiest volunteer Board positions I've ever been privileged to serve upon, as Board decisions were always made through collaborative consensus. From what I recall, this camaraderie of process resulted in films, lectures, symposia, concerts, and other events every 2-3 months throughout the year. While all events were memorable in their own right, I'll take the liberty of highlighting two of my memories;

- speaking with Albert and Pirkko Karvonen about their careers in documenting wildlife. It was fascinating to learn about the patience and discipline of this type of film-making

- meeting with Martti Aaltola and having subsequent correspondence with him as he left his Finnish Consulate posting in Ottawa and spoke at our AGM on "Political and Economic Implications of Finland's Recent Parliamentary Election" on May 23rd, 2007.

The Mission and activities of CFF will surely continue to create an ever expanding circle of influence not only of Finns, Finnish -Canadians, but also Canadians, as awareness and then understanding of the Finnish culture enriches everyone whose life is touched by our Finnish culture.

Congratulations to everyone who has been involved in bringing CFF to this historic 30th Anniversary!

Ismo Heikkilä

President 2006 - 2008



CFF and CFFEF Boards at Villa Harmony on August 29, 2009 at the CFFEF AGM.

Front row seated from left: Wuokko Davies, Tuire Walsh, Varpu Lindström, Noreen Stuckless, Bill Holt.

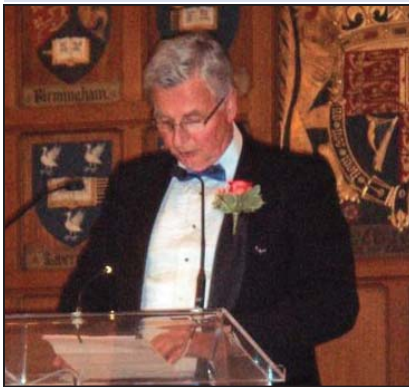
Back row from left: Seppo Kanerva, Riitta Nikolakakos, Ken Mark, Gail Patterson, Börje Vähämäki, Sheila Embleton, Hilikka Davidson, Susan Herr, Katri West, Ron Walenius, Ismo Heikkilä, Susan Vickberg-Friend, Burt Rairamo, Paul Lindala.

Reminiscences

Bill Holt

President 2008 - 2011

In October 2009 CFF celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Finnish Studies program at the University of Toronto. In addition, the evening's celebration also paid tribute to the retirement of Professor Börje Vähämäki from the University. Prof Vähämäki was the founding chair of the Finnish Studies program at the University and principally responsible for its growth.



During my tenure as president, CFF Toronto undertook quite a number of social and cultural activities – of which I will highlight only a few of the more memorable ones.

On February 24th, 2009 we participated with CFFEF in presenting a cheque for \$500,000 to the University of Toronto representing the initial funding for the proposed Permanent Chair of Finnish Studies at the University of Toronto. This ceremony took place at the Faculty Club of the University. That evening CFF held a tribute dinner at the University Club of Toronto honouring Varpu Lindström for her pioneering efforts in championing the concept of a permanent Finnish Chair at the University of Toronto and for her dedication and inspiration in the founding and growth of CFF.

The CFF in association with the City of Toronto held a symposium in Toronto on September 13-14, 2010 honouring the world renowned Finnish architect Viljo Revell for his iconic design of Toronto's City Hall. This symposium celebrated the 100th birthday of Revell as well as the 45th anniversary of the opening of Toronto's City Hall. The Toronto City Hall is world famous for its unique clam-shaped design and twin towers.

On November 10th, 2010, we presented the first annual Varpu Lindström lecture at the University of Toronto. The Varpu Lindström lecture series was established to honour the contribution of Varpu Lindström to the CFF in Canada and to her efforts in recording the experiences of Canadian Finns and Finnish women in particular to the cultural fabric of Canada. The initial lecture was presented by Megan Leslie, a federal Member of Parliament. Megan Leslie's topic was "The Role of Finnish Women in the Canadian Immigration Experience". The series continues in 2012 with Judy Erola, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women in the early 1980's, as the guest speaker.

During my tenure as Immediate past president, on January 31, 2011, the CFF along with the Canadian Opera Company participated in the Canadian premier of the Finnish Opera *Love from Afar* by the Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho. This was held at the new Four Seasons Opera House in Toronto.



Megan Leslie, Member of Parliament for Halifax and guest speaker at the first annual Varpu Lindström lecture on November 10, 2010. Seated to her right is Varpu Lindström.

Photo courtesy of J. Niinistö Archives

CFFEF and the Chair of Finnish Studies

Sheila Embleton

President, CFFEF

Canadian Friends of Finland Education Foundation (CFFEF) is a sister organization to CFF, incorporated in 1990 for the sole purpose of raising funds to support the Finnish Studies Program at the University of Toronto. I have had the privilege of being President of CFFEF since 1995, taking over from Ron Walenius. Over our two decades, we have raised well over a million dollars for the following purposes:

Scholarships to students - We have many donors who give faithfully year after year, supporting our excellent students. We give half a dozen scholarships each year, normally awarded at the banquet associated with our Annual Symposium;

Costs associated with events - such as the Annual Symposium or the Annual Varpu Lindström Lecture;

Ongoing costs of maintaining the salary for the Chair - The Chair has been funded, since 1989 when it was first established, on the basis of 5-year contracts with the University of Toronto. The first of these was fully funded by the Government of Finland, while subsequent contracts have been funded in a three-way funding arrangement between the Government of Finland, the University, and CFFEF. The current contract expires in 2014; and

Endowment to fund the Chair in perpetuity - As part of an agreement with the University, we provided a cheque for \$500,000 in 2009 towards the \$3,000,000 endowment required to establish a permanent Chair.

Over the years, our fundraising has relied on the generosity of many donors, some larger and some smaller,

some of Finnish heritage and some not, some individual, some foundations and some corporate. In particular, Nokia has been generous in supporting some of our fundraising concerts and Finnair has provided air-tickets for raffles. The support of FINNSTAUT, the alumni of the program, has been steady and shows the value that the students themselves put on their experiences in this program.

2012 marks a turning point in our activity. Through a generous bequest from the estate of John Korhonen, we contracted with the company Partners in Transformation (PIT) to conduct a feasibility study with respect to **raising the remaining \$2,500,000 to fully endow the Chair**. The study concluded that this was feasible, between individuals and corporations in both Canada and Finland. We then hired PIT to assist us in this year-long fundraising campaign, which will run until June 2013. The campaign was launched in Helsinki on September 3, 2012 at a dinner generously hosted at his official residence by Canada's Ambassador to Finland, Christopher Shapardanov, and in Toronto on September 15, at an event at the Albany Club. Our International Campaign Chair is **Esko Aho**, prime minister of Finland (1991-95), who led Finland into the European Union and whose career in the private sector led him to be President of SITRA (the Finnish National Fund for Research and Development), eventually to be Executive Vice-President (Corporate Relations and Responsibility) at Nokia until this September, and now to be a visiting fellow at the Kennedy School at Harvard. We look forward to announcing a successful conclusion to this ambitious campaign in June 2013!

Presentation of the \$500,000 cheque by CFFEF to the University of Toronto in support of a permanent Chair of Finnish Studies. From left: Christina Kramer, Professor, U of T; Börje Vähämäki, past Professor, Finnish Studies, U of T; Anne-Marie Brassoau, Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science, U of T; Sheila Embleton, President, Canadian Friends of Finland Education Foundation; Pekka Sinervo, past Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science, U of T; and Varpu Lindström, Professor, York University.



CFF Montreal

A Vast Array of Cultural Programs in Montreal

Anneli Lukka - Director, CFF Montreal

The Montreal Branch of Canadian Friends of Finland got underway in the 1980's, after one of the present Board members, Anneli Lukka had been invited to attend an early Toronto Symposium with an information session about the new organization. The Québec group has been small and informal but has hosted an exceptional number and variety of cultural programs and other activities in and around Montreal.

The President's chair has been occupied by Willard Ellis, Spruce Fraser, Christian Roy, Matti Terho, Harriet Algarotti, Kirsti Moberg, Kaarina Kailo, Pirkko Mönkäre and William Luomala, some of them for several years. Professor Varpu Lindström was our ardent supporter, friend and a frequent speaker in Montreal at our Tuesday meetings.

Some of our earlier illustrious speakers and guest performers include the noted novelist Antti Tuuri, accordion wizard Veikko Ahvenainen and singer Jorma Hynninen with Ralf Gothoni. One of the most memorable moments was the hurried fashioning of hors d'oeuvres in the home of the then-President Spruce Fraser, for the McGill University cocktail party in honour of Helvi Sipilä, the first-ever female Assistant-Secretary-General of the United Nations and later the first woman to run for President of Finland.

Of the guests from Finland we remember best an actress trio lead by legendary Eeva-Kaarina Volanen, architect Raili Pietilä, and several colourful Sami delegations especially at the time of Kaarina Kailo as the chair. Other highly regarded visitors from Finland have been the Finnish MP Arja Alho with her children and husband Petteri Väänänen, also a speaker, Pirjo Markkola on Finnish women, Harri Syväsalmi on doping in sports, Tuula Tuisku on the Nenets (the indigenous people of northern Arctic Russia), and marvellous artists Katri Haahti and Aino Favén.

Another cherished visitor was the eminent Väinö Linna translator Richard Impola from New York State and fabulously talented weaver Kaija Sanelma Harris from Saskatchewan. On the musical note, we hosted the delightful *Kaiku Trio* from New York City, Venezuelan *Churuata Group* and *Montreal Kantele Ensemble*. The prominent speakers from Ontario and Québec are far too numerous to mention.

Besides invited guests, we have advertised and attended numerous Finnish concerts – from Esa-Pekka Salonen and Osmo Vänskä to *The Rasmus* – exhibitions, recitals,

talks and readings in Montreal. The branch has shown to a wider audience Finnish Canadian films such as “Letters from Karelia” and “Under the Red Star”, and among our membership Finnish films such as “Mies ilman menneisyyttä” by Aki Kaurismäki and a whimsical Japanese “Ruokala Lokki” depicting Finnish culture.

Besides cultural programs, Montreal CFF has filled the void left by other aging Finnish organizations to strengthen the community with various get-togethers. Besides summertime ethnic dinners, the Finnish-Québécois joie de vivre is enjoyed at springtime Sugar-ing-offs, Christmas parties, BBQs, Sauna picnics in the summer, and Corn Roasts and Apple Picking in the fall.

Except for larger gatherings at McGill and Concordia universities and at local churches, recent meetings have been held at the Finnish church home on Doctor Penfield Avenue. The branch is financed solely by membership fees and open-faced sandwich sales.



Helvi Sipilä, with CFF President Spruce Fraser behind her left shoulder, at the cocktail-party organized by Montreal CFF. Back row left: CFF Secretary Allan Ailo and Board member Unto Virsunen.



2012 Board of Directors. Front row from left: Anthony Virta, Susan Laflamme, Kirsti Moberg (Treasurer); Back row from left: Timo Virta, Thomas Virta, William Luomala (President) and Mark Kytölä; Missing from picture: Pirkko Mönkäre (Secretary), Barbara Rudnicka, Gene Angelles and Anneli Lukka.

CFF Vancouver

Dianne J. Kilback, President

The Vancouver Chapter of Canadian Friends of Finland congratulates Toronto on their thirtieth anniversary. Here in Vancouver we celebrated our twentieth anniversary in 2009. Over the years we have sponsored many events showcasing Finnish culture. Our regular Sunday afternoon film showings have proved to be very popular and they have included many of the well known classics such as "Under The North Star" and "Man without a past". Just recently we enjoyed "Päätaalo - the Novelist" and "Princessa". We have sponsored events such as the piano recital given by Janne Mertanen, and concerts featuring the *Finnish Chorale Society of Seattle* with Finnish American soprano Maria Manisto. We have a good working relationship with the Finnish groups south of the border. CFF has been able to collaborate with them to organize some quality concerts. Every year we have a Runeberg Celebration in February. One of our members, Bob Poult organizes some form of entertainment relating to Runeberg's life. This year he had a group put on a skit taken from Runeberg's "Moose Hunters". We are also fortunate in having the Runeberg choir perform every year for the celebration. Also this year, Aija Elg, a visiting Finnish Lecturer with the University of Washington came and gave us a lecture on the history of the Finnish Language. Varpu Lindström and Börje Vähämäki have been our guest lecturers several times. We were very saddened to hear about Varpu's death and will miss her contributions to the Finnish-Canadian community.

CFF Vancouver publishes two newsletters every year in the fall and spring. We send copies to the archives in Victoria. Last month I received an email from the archivist who was very interested in collecting some of the immigrant stories that we have featured in the Newsletter. I think this demonstrates the importance of organizations such as the Canadian Friends of Finland in keeping a record of the immigrant experience.

We participated in Finn West 2011 and have an information table at the Midsummer Festival every year. We have been fortunate in having a facility such as the Scandinavian Centre in Burnaby to use for our meetings and events. Finally, I would like to say that much of the credit for keeping CFF Vancouver functioning goes to our hard working Board Members: Mabel Eastwood, Ulf Fagerlund, Leena Lambert, Doris Helgren, Veikko Niemela, Yasushi Ishimura, Christina Yli-Luoma and Fred Levo.

We hope to see another twenty years of Canadian Friends of Finland Vancouver.

CFF Ottawa

Connie Whitmore, President

The Canadian Friends of Finland in Ottawa began in 1988 as a branch of the Canadian Friends of Finland based in Toronto. In 1993, the Canadian Friends of Finland (Ottawa) incorporated as a non-profit charitable corporation. We share the same Mission Statement with CFF Toronto.

The Ottawa organization currently has approximately 120 memberships and a Board of Directors consisting of ten individuals. We hold annual celebrations of Joulujuhla, St. Urho, and Juhannus. Other special interest events are held throughout the year and have included concerts, events with other Nordic organizations, movie nights, and lectures. Every year or so we regularly sponsor concerts with Finnish interest. Within the last five years CFF Ottawa has sponsored two concerts featuring Finnish violinist Pekka Kuusisto, one with Finnish accordionist Johanna Juhola and one with Canadian cellist Denise Djokic. We have supported an appearance in Ottawa of the Finnish group *Rajaton*, and in 2009 sponsored a concert by Toronto pianist Heidi Saario and soprano Cindy Koistinen. Being in Ottawa, we often work closely and with the support of the Embassy of Finland. Our website can be found at www.canadianfriendsoffinland.ca.

Congratulations to CFF Toronto on its 30th Anniversary!



Above: Finland's former Ambassador to Canada, Risto Piipponen is shown at the Governor-General's Nordic event in January, 2011, surrounded by two of the mascots from Ottawa's annual Winderlode carnival event. The mascots, called ice hogs, were part of the event Nordic celebration which included exhibits by the Embassy of Finland, the Royal Norwegian Embassy and the Embassy of Sweden. Photo by Bob Diotte.



The Finland Table at Midsummer with Vancouver Board member Veikko Niemela and member Dave Laprise with two interested visitors.

In Appreciation

Over the years CFF has had the fortune to have hardworking, trustworthy and creative board members. In this publication we bring up mostly the names of the current board members, but we would like to express our warm **“Thank You”** to everyone who has helped the organization over the years. This includes those who have performed tasks such as booking performers and rooms, selecting films, doing correspondence, designing logos and advertising material, soliciting scholarships, recording minutes of meetings, touring Finnish visitors around Ontario, chairing panels, down to making the coffee and taking tickets at the door.



CFF and CFFEF Boards (with spouses) at Villa Harmony on August 27, 2011 at the CFFEF AGM.

Front row seated from left: Wally Stuckless, Raili Garth, Hanna Grönberg, Laura Pervilä, Bill Holt, Seppo Kanerva.

Second row from left: Noreen Stuckless, seated: John Patterson, Varpu Lindström, Tuuli McCully.

Third row from left: Ken Mark, Ismo Heikkilä, Gail Patterson, Diane Rairamo, Wuokko Davies, Katri West, Heikki Pervilä, Miriam Grassby, Gordon Davies, Gordon West.

Back row from left: Burt Rairamo, Dave Garth, Ron Walenius, Anja Kanerva, Börje Vähämäki, Pia Päiviö, Heikki Walden.

Missing: Paul Lindala, Tuire Walsh, Riitta Nikolakakos, Sheila Embleton.

CFF has been fortunate to have the support of many individuals, organizations and companies for 30 years. Their generous participation has been critical to the success of many CFF endeavours. The list below does not begin to express the extent of this support, but gives an idea of its diversity. So to these and to the many other supporters, CFF wishes to express its profound appreciation.

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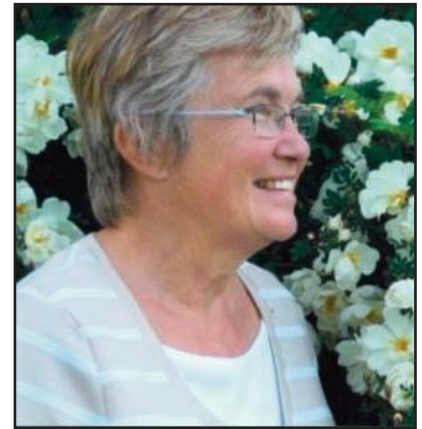
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Varpu Marjatta Lindström

September 13, 1948 - June 21, 2012

Varpu Lindström was born in Helsinki, Finland. Very early she displayed exceptional, undiminished curiosity, energy, and leadership qualities. Her classmates in Helsinki called her “*kaikestainnostunut Varpu*” (the all-enthusiastic Varpu). At the age of 14, as her family immigrated to Canada, Varpu was uprooted and thrown into an alien environment, a new country where people spoke a language she did not understand. Her positive spirit and inquisitive mind, however, helped her through the traumatic first months and years in Canada. She went on to receive a thorough Canadian education and grew to love deeply her new homeland, yet always retained her love of Finland.



Varpu's life was dotted by remarkable accomplishments. Her professorial career at York University was simply stellar. She was an outstanding **teacher** as evidenced by her teaching awards and by numerous testimonials from students and colleagues. She was a highly respected and admired **administrator** on various levels of York: as Chair of History in Atkinson College and as its Master; as Founding Chair of the International School of Women's Studies at York; as Chair of the School of Social Work; as a long-standing member of York University Senate; and as a senate-elected member of the Board of Governors of York University. Yet, her scholarship will arguably remain her greatest academic legacy. Her book “*Defiant Sisters, A Social History of Finnish Immigrant Women, 1890–1930*” was a doubly pioneering study: it helped establish oral interview-based social history as legitimate history and it was the first dissertation devoted to the history of women. Her subsequent books cemented her reputation as the world's leading expert on the social history of Finnish women in Canada. In 2006, Varpu's career as scholar, teacher, and administrator earned her the highest honour York University can bestow upon a faculty member: the title of **University Professor**.

Another profoundly significant contribution Varpu Lindström made to Canada was the founding in 1982 of the Canadian Friends of Finland friendship society (CFF), as whose secretary Varpu served until 2009. CFF has been recognized for all the years since 1982, both in Canada and in Finland, as key to the development and maintenance of cultural linkages between the two countries. It grew from its Toronto roots to being an organization with very active branches also in Montréal, Ottawa, and Vancouver. Before the Finnish Embassy had a cultural attaché in Ottawa, CFF partly fulfilled that role. Until a few years ago, Finland had a consulate-general in Toronto, but since its closure, CFF has once again become the most prominent player on the Finnish and Finnish-Canadian cultural scene in Toronto. None of these organizations would have been founded, let alone prospered and been able to accomplish all they have done today, in strengthening cultural and academic relationships between Canada and Finland, without Varpu's organizational skills, her hard work and dedication, and her indomitable spirit of voluntarism.

In 1990, inspired and encouraged by Varpu Lindström, CFF formed the CFF Education Foundation to support the newly established Finnish Studies Program at the University of Toronto. This involved much lobbying in both Canada and Finland, to get people to support what seemed at the time like an impossible goal. But then Varpu specialized in achieving difficult or seemingly impossible goals. In her last few months, Varpu helped support and guide our largest fundraising campaign ever: CFFEF embarked upon a campaign to raise \$3.5 million to endow the Chair of Finnish Studies in perpetuity. When successful, this will represent the crowning achievement of Varpu's highest vision and dream.

In 1991 Varpu was awarded the Knight First Class of the Order of the White Rose of Finland, and in 2012 the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, both of which cited Varpu's academic as well as her cultural contributions to Canada and the relations between Canada and Finland. Varpu was a mother, a wife and, in the end, a grandmother. She was a role model for her sons Allan and Martin, for her husband Börje, for her fellow Friends of Finland, and for numerous colleagues in academe and in the Finnish community in Canada.

Varpu Lindström will be remembered for her boundless capacity for love, kindness, wisdom, mentoring, and encouragement.

Börje Vähämäki



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