

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION SALUTES FINLAND 100 1917 - 2017

It was a remarkable year of recognition of an astonishing accomplishment: the 100th anniversary of Finland's December 6, 1917 Declaration of Independence from Russia. The Finnish government encouraged the use of the theme "Yhdessä/Together" for the myriad of celebrations of this milestone throughout 2017. Finlandia Foundation National and its chapters filled the centennial events calendar with an impressive variety of Finland 100 activities.

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION NATIONAL PARTICIPATED BY:

- sponsoring six Finland 100 Signature Events
- offering financial support to chapters for their celebratory activities
- expanding its Lecturer of the Year program to five Centenary Lecturers
- supporting artist appearances at chapters through its Finland 100 Music Program
- co-sponsoring SISU, the Traveling Sauna

These pages highlight centennial activities undertaken by Finlandia Foundation and chapters, as well as a sampling of the many other Finland 100 events that took place across the U.S. in 2017.

FINLAND 100 SIGNATURE EVENTS

Finland 100 Gala, February 18: The elegant affair in Delray Beach, Florida was a sell-out, attended by more than 200 including a delegation of the Finnish Parliament led by Speaker Maria Lohela. Guests enjoyed music by the Florida Male Choir, cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azejian, and dancing to the music by Fernanda, from Finland.

Ida Elina Concert Tour, April-May: Finnish kantele artist Ida Elina charmed audiences with her inventive, modern performance style on the ancient stringed instrument on her 10-city, inaugural U.S. concert tour. Her eclectic repertoire includes pop tunes as well as traditional music.

Women's International Study Center

Symposium, September 18: Former Finnish President Tarja Halonen and Icelandic business leader Halla Tómasdóttir engaged a capacity crowd with their discussion about "Leadership Values in a Changing World" at the New Mexico History Museum in Santa Fe. Willa Seldon of the Bridgespan Group moderated the program. WISC is based in Santa Fe at Acequia Madre House, which was the home of Eva Scott Fenyes, her daughter Leonora Curtin, and granddaughter Leonora Curtin, who was married to Finlandia Foundation founder Yrjö Paloheimo.

Minnesota Orchestra Concert Celebrating Finland's Centennial, September 22: Maestro Osmo Vänskä led an all-Finnish concert before an enthusiastic audience including Finland's President Sauli

Niinistö and his spouse Jenni Haukio, as well as many representatives of Finnish America attending FinnFest USA 2017. The Orchestra Hall program featured violinist Elina Vähälä and music by Aho, Kuusisto and Sibelius, including an encore performance of *Finlandia*, with the audience waving small Finnish flags. The program was repeated the following evening.

Philharmonia Northwest Finland

100 Concert, November 4: The Seattle chamber orchestra led by Music Director Julia Tai performed music by Sibelius, Rautavaara and Saariaho at Benaroya Hall. Soprano Maria Männistö, FFN Performer of the Year 2007, was the featured soloist.

The final of the six Finland 100 Signature Events was the program, "**Changing the Game: Peacemaking in Turbulent Times**," in New York City on November 9. The Finland Centennial Forum honored Finland's former President Martti Ahtisaari, founder of Crisis Management Initiative, and is described in the accompanying story by FFN President Ossi Rahkonen. (Find stories about the other five Signature Events in the Spring and Fall 2017 FFN newsletters.)

importance of diplomacy and peacemaking rather than wars. The turbulence in the present world demonstrates the need for the services of CMI.

Zedillo focused on the causes of international instability and turmoil, and recognized deep-rooted problems between nations and within population groups. He was critical of major nations not making it a priority to solve issues peacefully and with diplomatic means.

A discussion followed, with panelists Frank Wisner, ambassador and chairman of the board of American Friends of CMI; journalist and author Carl Bernstein; and social entrepreneur and producer Francine LeFrak. Moderator was *New York Times* reporter Somini Sengupta.

A musical *Sibelius Inspiration* interlude by Finnish cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azezian was well received.

FINLAND 100 GRANTS TO CHAPTERS

Finlandia Foundation National offered up to \$1,000 in a Finland 100 grant to each of its 56 chapters

to assist them in hosting at least one Finland 100 event in the calendar year 2017. We were pleased that 38 chapters requested funds to support 46 activities, from concerts to festivals, guest speakers and art exhibits. An estimated 9,000 people attended those events supported by FFN Finland 100 grants. Untold numbers participated in the full range of activities throughout the year.

The chapter events were posted on the Finland 100 calendar at FinlandiaFoundation.org, along with other Finland 100 and Finnish-American community activities that were open to the public. At year's end, there were nearly 300 events on the calendar.

FFN affiliates hosted many programs in addition to those that were supported by Finland 100 chapter grants. The Seattle and Columbia-Pacific (Portland) chapters were especially busy, with at least one activity each month. They not only planned their own activities, but actively partnered with other organizations and activities in their communities to expand the reach of Finland 100.

Here are some highlights of the year-long celebration at FFN chapters across the U.S.:

Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter

Under the direction of FFCPC Finland 100 Chair Pirjo Schulbach, the Portland chapter produced a full range of activities in 2017 to ensure there was something for everyone on its Finland 100 calendar. From learning to cook traditional foods to the installation of a six-foot-tall monument made of granite from Finland, the volunteers of FFCPC made lasting contributions to the Finnish-American community of the Portland area. A brochure neatly summarizes the activities.

FFCPC wrapped up its year-long celebration with a Finland 100 Christmas dinner, a program honoring Finnish veterans, and dancing to Maria Männistö's band at Nordia House in Portland, where a 100-year-old flag found in Vaasa, Finland graced the room.

Honored guests were veterans of the Winter War Väinö and Lempi Koskela (at right), as well as Juha Tuominen.



Ameriikan Poijat performed at the American Swedish History Museum.

Finnish-American Society of the Delaware Valley and New Sweden Alliance, Wilmington, Delaware

The two FFN-affiliated organizations jointly hosted the December 9 *Iltamat* (soiree) at the American Swedish History Museum in Philadelphia. The event was geared mostly toward members and friends of the Finnish and Swedish organizations in the Tri-State (Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania) area. Ameriikan Poijat, a brass band from Minnesota, performed, and Antti Vänskä, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Finnish Embassy in Washington, D.C., delivered remarks. The evening began with a pre-Christmas dinner, and a reception followed the concert.



CMI Chairman Alexander Stubb (center) visits with FFN Board members at the Finland Centennial Forum (from left) Tim Nurvala, Ossi Rahkonen, Hanna Wagner and Anne-Mari Paster.

CHANGING THE GAME: PEACEMAKING IN TURBULENT TIMES

By Ossi Rahkonen
FFN President

In planning its Finland 100 Signature Events, Finlandia Foundation approached the American Friends of the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI)

The program that evolved, "Changing the Game: Peacemaking in Turbulent Times," was a forum held November 9 at the Union Club of the City of New York. Co-sponsors were the American Friends of CMI, FFN and AmCham Finland, an international membership

based business-to-business network; Fazer Group, an international confectionary, bakery and food service company; and Heineken, the international brewer.

Finland's Ambassador to the United Nations Kai Sauer introduced President Ahtisaari, who spoke via video about the importance of peacemaking and how it is needed more than ever in the turbulent world. Keynote speakers were former Prime Minister of Finland and CMI Chairman Alexander Stubb, and Ernesto Zedillo, former president of Mexico, now a professor at Yale University.

Stubb traced the origins of peacemaking as a Finnish specialty not only during its 100 years of independence, but much earlier, when it was part of Sweden. Throughout its history Finland learned the



Keravan Mieslaulajat performed at the Independence Day gala at the Finnish Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter

Among its activities, FFNCC hosted kantele artist Ida Elina in concert May 6 at the Church of the Epiphany in Washington, D.C. The chapter's December 6 Independence Day gala at the Finnish Embassy featured the men's choir from Finland, Keravan Mieslaulajat. The 90-year-old choir received a grant from FFN to assist in its centennial visit to the U.S. While at Dulles Airport (which was designed by Eero Saarinen) the group performed *Finlandia*, flash-mob style.



Finlandia Foundation Berkeley Chapter filled its Finnish Hall with a crowd of about 270 for the Finland Independence Centennial Gala on December 3. The classic 1930s building was formerly known as the United Finnish Kaleva Brothers & Sisters Lodge #21.

Finlandia Foundation Suomi Chapter

Viipurin Lauluveikot, The Singing Fellows of Viipuri, toured the West Coast from August 27 to September 7 as part of the Finland 100 celebration. The 120-year-old men's chorus performed in Bellingham/Ferndale and Seattle, San Francisco/Berkeley, and Los Angeles, with the assist of a FFN grant to the FF Suomi Chapter.

Finlandia Foundation Florida Chapter

drew a record crowd to its annual meeting in February, which was themed "From Kalevala to an Independent Finland: Images, Tales and Music." The program included a talk about Finland's history, selections by the Finnish Male Singers of Florida, and a live performance of scenes from the *Kalevala*.

Finnish Heritage Museum

The FFN-affiliated organization in Fairport Harbor, Ohio, summarized its many events in a letter to Finland's Ambassador to the U.S. Kirsti Kauppi. The busy group enjoyed concerts (Spring Nordic Delights with Emily Stauch, and the Newlands Co-op with Sara Pajunen and Vidar Skrede); Juhannus bonfire on Lake Erie's beach; St. Urho's Day with three varieties of mojakka; participation in One World Day at the Cleveland Cultural Gardens, where FHM sponsors the Finnish Garden; a "Dancing Fairport" YouTube video in the official Finland 100 dance

challenge; a Celebration Dinner with entertainment and informational program; an official USPS cancellation and a postage stamp; and Pikkujoulu and Independence Day potluck dinner and party.

Finns and Friends of Phoenix

The Phoenix chapter kicked off its Finland 100 celebrations with a March 25 gala co-hosted by Finlandia University President Philip Johnson and Gary Waissi, the Honorary Consul of Finland to Arizona and New Mexico. Bill Jackson, long-time friend and supporter of Finlandia University, sponsored this Finland 100 edition of the annual President's Reception, with music by the Olli Hirvonen Quartet from New York City.

In November, the Järnefelt Piano Trio---violinist Päivikki Nykter, cellist Katri Ervamaa and pianist Ruusamari Teppo---delighted Finns and Friends with a program of Sibelius, and the chapter enjoyed a SuomiFinland 100 afternoon of music and food in December.



North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum receives a Finland 100 mug from Ellen Liddle (right), president of Red River Finns of Fargo-Moorhead, and Marion Anderson, president of the Dakota Finnish Society of Minot.

Red River Finns

North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum proclaimed December 6, 2017, Finland 100 Day in North Dakota. The proclamation ceremony, which took place December 12 at the Capitol in Bismarck, was attended by about 35 people with Finnish roots from the North Dakota communities of Rolla, Rocklake, Perth, Kintyre, Wing and Belden, as well as from Minnesota and Finland.

After meeting with Governor Burgum, the group gathered at Dakota Farms Restaurant for dinner and visiting. Special guest Troyd Geist, state folklorist with the North Dakota Council on the Arts, spoke about opportunities in preserving Finnish culture in North Dakota.



FinnsConnect South Florida and the Finnish American Chamber of Commerce teamed up to welcome spring at a Vappu picnic in the park in Pembroke Pines. It drew more than 120 members and "Finthusiasts," including dozens of children. FinnsConnect wrapped up the Finland 100 year with a December 2 dinner party at a waterfront restaurant in Fort Lauderdale.

Finger Lakes Finns

On March 10 in Ithaca, New York, organist Kent Washburn accompanied the 1929 Finnish silent movie *Mustalishurmaaja* (The Gypsy Charmer) with his original musical score. He created the soundtrack from Finnish folk songs and classical selections. In May, the chapter hosted Centenary Lecturer Sharon Franklin-Rahkonen, who talked about the History of Finnish Independence.

Two Minnesota chapters produced Finnish music events in honor of Finland 100: the Finnish Music & Dance Festival organized by the **Finnish-Americans and Friends/Hibbing Chapter** in June, and a Fall Music Festival in October hosted by the **Kaleva Building Corporation** in Virginia.

Many chapters, like the **Finnish American Home Association** in Sonoma, California, combined Independence Day celebrations with their traditional Pikkujoulu parties.

Finlandia Foundation New York Metropolitan

The New York chapter hosted multiple events throughout the year, from a September Street Fair on Bleecker Street to the performance of *Sibelius Inspiration* at Scandinavia House in November. The December 6 Finnish Independence Day Celebration at Park Avenue United Methodist Church (below) featured the invocation by Pastor Tiina Talvitie of the Finnish



A procession at the New York Metropolitan Chapter's Independence Day Celebration.

Lutheran Congregation; a welcome by Eero Kilpi, chapter president; the keynote address by Ambassador Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director of the Office of UN-OHRLS; and music by Markus Kaitila, Johanna Telandar and Demetrios Jussi Tsinopoulos. Mistress of Ceremonies was Heli Sirviö.

Finnish American Society of the Midwest

On November 5, the Chicago-area FFN chapter hosted author Anu Partanen (right), who spoke about her best-selling book, *The Nordic Theory of Everything*. The afternoon event at Estonian House included refreshments representing the five Nordic countries. Other activities, some in conjunction with the Finnish-American community in Milwaukee, included musical performances by Gospel Helsinki and the Swedish male choir Runebergskoren, and the Chicago Gala Celebration of Finland's Independence at the city's spectacular Cultural Center on December 1.

Finlandia Foundation Northland Chapter

was busy with activities in Duluth, with the December 3 Itsenäisyyspäivä (Independence Day) Celebration luncheon and the Yhdessä - Together Finnish Independence Gala December 6 at the Duluth Depot Great Hall & Steffl Gallery, featuring a Finnish-American art exhibit, displays, refreshments and live music.

FinnFunn 2017

The 25th anniversary of FinnFunn weekend was a combined celebration observing Finland's centennial. The festive gathering in Massachusetts is a joint effort of the **Finnish-American Heritage Society** of Connecticut, and the **Finnish Center at Saima Park** and **Finnish Heritage Society, Sovittaja** of Massachusetts. The 2017 festivities were supported by a FFN Finland 100 grant. Held August 18-20 in Leominster, Massachusetts, the activities included speakers, musicians, art exhibits, music, Tori, and a visit by SISU, the Traveling Sauna.

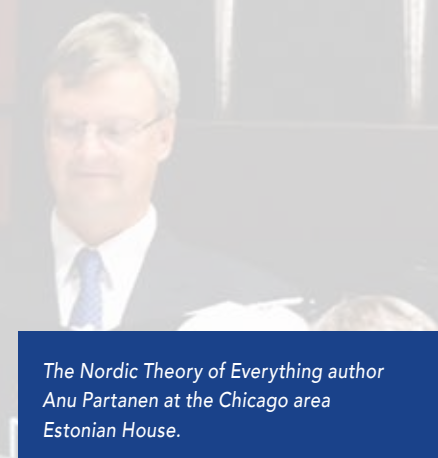
The Seattle-based Swedish Finn Historical Society hosted an exhibit of Märten Björkgren's stunning photographs of the Kvarken Archipelago, "New Land in the Old Country."



FINLAND 100 5



At its Suomi 100 dinner on November 5, the Finnish American Heritage Society in Canterbury, Connecticut recognized member Bill Aho, who is nearly the same age as the independent Finland. Bill, celebrating with daughter, Janet Burns, and son, Paul Aho at the Tamarack Lodge party, turned 100 on January 29, 2018.



The Nordic Theory of Everything author Anu Partanen at the Chicago area Estonian House.





Finland 100 Galas

Multiple chapters hosted gala centennial gatherings, including **Finlandia Foundation Boston**, **Finlandia Foundation San Francisco Bay Area**, and the **Finnish Center Association** in the Detroit area.

The **Finnish-American Society of Dallas/Fort Worth** imported talent from Finland to perform at its black-tie gala in November. Lola Odusoga, who was Miss Finland 1996 and second runner up to that year's Miss Universe, was the host; pop singer Laura Voutilainen (below) starred; and Ilkka Ihamäki entertained with some of his funny songs about current events.

Photo by Orvo Valila



At the Finlandia Foundation Los Angeles Gala, Consul General Stefan Lindstrom opened a bottle of champagne with dramatic flair in honor of Finland 100.

Finlandia Foundation of Montana

Blue and white lights and candles glowed and Finnish music filled the air in a downtown Missoula park on December 6, where FFM members shared glögi, small Finnish flags and information about Finland (below).

Among other activities, the chapter was instrumental in Missoula Mayor John Engen issuing a proclamation recognizing the month of December as Finland's 100th Anniversary of Independence Month. FFM also presented the film *Steam of Life* about the sauna, and "Nordic Happy Hour" with Finnish foods, music and decor.



POY Pirjo Polari-Khan delighted audiences in the Detroit area.

Finlandia Foundation of Michigan

In July, visitors to the Farmington Founders Festival in suburban Detroit were treated to a free show by FFM Performer of the Year Pirjo Polari-Khan. Pirjo also rode in the festival parade as an honored guest and performed at the Finn Camp in Wixom in a weekend tour sponsored by the Finlandia Foundation of Michigan (formerly Finnish American Cultural Corporation).

Centenary Lecturers

The Lecturer of the Year program was expanded for the Finland 100 year to feature five experts on different aspects of Finland's Independence and Finnish-America. Centenary Lecturers Thomas A. DuBois, Sharon Franklin-Rahkonen, Peter MacKeith, Börje Vähämäki and K. Marianne Wargelin traveled to appearances in Washington, D.C., Metro Detroit, the Delaware Valley, Chicago, Tucson, Phoenix, Colorado, Seattle, Minneapolis, and Lanesville, Massachusetts; Houghton, Michigan; and Ithaca, New York.



SISU the Traveling Sauna

Throughout 2017, a cheery red sauna on wheels rolled across the U.S. as the mascot of Finland 100. The working sauna, towed for 22,000 miles, was a part of 102 events at 70 locations in 35 states. Finlandia Foundation was one of the sponsors of the project, which was supported by the Embassy of Finland in Washington, D.C.

Many FFM chapters hosted SISU, including **Atlanta Finland Society** in Georgia; **Finlandia Foundation Inland Northwest** in Idaho; **Finlandia Foundation Northwest** in Duluth, Minnesota; **Red River Finns** in Moorhead, Minnesota; **Finlandia Foundation of Montana**.

FINLAND 100 MUSIC PROGRAM

Similar to the Performer of the Year program, FFM offered financial support

to chapters that booked an appearance by select musicians, including past POY Jazz guitarist Olli Hirvonen (2014) who traveled to Arizona in March for back-to-back performances booked by the **Finnish-American Club of Tucson** and **Finns and Friends of Phoenix**. Sara Pajunen (2015) played traditional tunes on her violin for the **Finnish Heritage Museum** in Fairport Harbor, Ohio. Craig Randal Johnson (1999) played "Piano Music from Finland" for audiences at Finland 100 events in Englewood, Colorado; Houghton, Michigan; Moorhead, Minnesota; and Ashtabula, Ohio.



Sibelius Inspiration was the Spotlight Event of the FFM Finland 100 Music Program. *Sibelius Inspiration* features Finnish cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azejian in live performance with video, lights and sounds designed to evoke the natural world that inspired composer Jean Sibelius. Venues had the option of hosting a concert performance without the multi-media component.

Makkonen and Azejian are accomplished musicians, each with a master's degree from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. They have appeared as soloists, in ensembles, and as a duet across Europe and in the U.S. Between October 14 and November 11, they performed *Sibelius Inspiration* in Seattle, Portland, San Diego, Denver, New York City and Newton, Massachusetts (Boston area), with the support of the FFM chapter in each of those locations.

A capacity crowd of 300 enjoyed *Sibelius Inspiration* hosted by House of Finland in San Diego. A gala dinner followed the concert, attended by (from left) Teuvo Pulkkinen, vice president of House of Finland, and his wife Marjut; Ossi and Karin Rahkonen; and House of Finland President Eeva Syvanen and her husband Henri Syvanen.



The Finnish American Heritage Association of Ashtabula, Ohio enjoyed "Piano Music from Finland" by Craig Randal Johnson in September at Bethany Lutheran Church. The FFM Performer of the Year in 1999 is flanked by FAHA Trustees (from left) Carol Mead, Jean Cupido, Elsa Shepard, Sue Rose, Linda Riddell and Janet Eskelin.

Plucky Kantele Artist Ida Elina Tours U.S.

Inspired by slap guitar playing, Sibelius Academy-trained Ida Elina brings a unique and modern percussive style to the kantele, an ancient member of the dulcimer/zither family. She is billed as the world's first pop kantele player for her repertoire of contemporary music and traditional folk tunes.

As a Finlandia Foundation Finland 100 Signature Event, Ida Elina's inaugural U.S. tour took her to 10 cities, where FFM chapters hosted concerts that reached about 800 people who gave her rave reviews.

Finlandia Foundation Utah launched the tour in Provo on April 19, and Ida Elina wrapped her appearances on May 6 in Washington, D.C., hosted by **Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter**.

In between, she traveled to Seattle, Bellevue and Rosburg, Washington for appearances supported by the **Finlandia Foundation Seattle Chapter**, **FF Suomi Chapter** and the **Finnish-American Folk Festival** of Naselle. In Portland, she was hosted by **Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter**; in California she had concerts with



Finlandia Club of Sacramento and **House of Finland in San Diego**. The **Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities Chapter** hosted her in Minneapolis; and in Thomaston, Maine, the **Finnish Heritage House** sponsored Ida Elina's appearance.



FINLAND 100 ACROSS THE USA



Embassy Events

The Ambassador of Finland to the U.S. Kirsti Kauppi attended several events at FFN chapters throughout the year, and the Embassy of Finland in the United States planned a number of special Finland 100 activities in Washington, D.C. The Midsummer FinFun day on June 17 brought the Finnish game *mölkky* and Team Ajattomat from the Vantaa Gymnastics Club (above) to the National Mall. On December 2, the real Santa Claus traveled from Rovaniemi to Dupont Circle for a FinFun Christmas with music, activities for the kids, and Finnish gingerbread cookies and glögi.

"100 Friends of Finland" who delivered congratulatory messages in short YouTube videos included composer Kaija Saariaho, artist Eric Aho, performer Taina Elg, comedian Conan O'Brien, Minnesota Wild hockey player Mikko Koivu and representatives of Finnish America like FFN President Ossi Rahkonen. A fascinating 12-part series, *Centennial Story of Finland*, traces the country's history, and is linked at the Embassy website Finland.org.

Hancock Happenings

The Finnish American Heritage Center and Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan organized two major events "in the heart of Finnish-America" during the Finland 100 year.

Juhannus '17, a three-day festival June 23-25, honored the centennials of Finland's Independence and Settler's Co-op in Bruce Crossing, and the 125th anniversary of the town of Toivola.

Finland's Ambassador to the U.S. Kirsti Kauppi was featured speaker, and SISU the Traveling Sauna popped up at various locations. There was a Tori (marketplace), Finnish Folk Music Camp, Juhannus kokko at Agate Beach on Lake Superior, performances by the Kivajat Youth Folk Dancers, music by Ameriikan Pöijät, and a celebration of Finnish-American farm life at the preserved Hanka Finnish Homestead Museum in Askel.

In December, as it has every year since 1917, Finlandia University celebrated Finland's Independence Day. A *Musical Salute to Finland 100* featured pianist Craig Randal Johnson, the Copper Country Chorale and the Kivajat Youth Folk Dancers.

Big Greetings from the U.S. to Finland

As part of its Finland 100 celebrations, the Finlandia University Finnish Council in America in Hancock created a gigantic Centennial Greetings Finland! card that was sent to the people of Finland and President Sauli Niinistö. The project was a team effort that involved gathering 1,904 signatures at more than a dozen events in Michigan, and at FinnFest USA 2017 in Minneapolis.

David Savolainen conceived the project, which was designed by John Kiltinen. Linda Berry, Pauline Kiltinen and Judy Quirk assembled the accordion-folded card, shown (right) with Pauline and John Kiltinen.



Ambassador Kirsti Kauppi and FFN President Ossi Rahkonen at the Embassy's Independence Day Gala in Washington, D.C.



**Finlandia
Foundation
National**

A non-profit, philanthropic organization, FFN was founded in 1953. For information about its mission and to contribute to its programs:

FinlandiaFoundation.org office@finlandiafoundation.org
PO Box 92046 Pasadena, CA 91109 626.795.2081
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