



2023 FinnFunn Weekend-Cape Ann Shaping Up

Open to the Public

Pre-register
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Gloucester and Rockport are the sites in 2023 of the thirty-first FinnFunn New England Weekend (FF23), October 27-29. Host chapter the Cape Ann Finns (CAF) has joined with Events Manager Isabel Pett and Gloucester 400+ to showcase our FinnTown which formed here in the mid-1800s and represented in many ways Finnish communities across America.

Pre-registration and Registration

Go to finnfunn.org for registration details, program schedule, and lodging information.

1. **Pre-registration is open now, by telephone - 202-420-8548 - up to May 14 for selected, reduced rates.**
2. **Registration begins Monday, May 15.**
Register/pay online at finnfunn.org or register/pay by telephone. Call Andrea Ranta Morgan at 978-491-0319 beginning May 15.

Longtime participants will once again enjoy a chapter-sponsored weekend as will recent FinnFunn attendees who have not benefited from the experience. Local residents curious about Finns and American Finns on Cape Ann, their culture, and Finland will find events of interest as well as discover similarities among Cape Ann's immigrant groups. This now-assimilated ethnic group ranked the fourth largest population here at the turn of the nineteenth century, and registered the largest Finnish population in New England prior to WW I. experience.

Meeting since 2019, the hard-working planning committee has shaped a balanced, program of culture and heritage blended with modern topics and activities. Participants develop their own weekend or day plan. Weekend events follow.

Music: Paul Niemisto and the Ameriikan Poijat Concert brass septet from Minnesota, preceded by SharetheMusic and Friends, a 40-member chorus, Wendy Betts, conductor. Guitarists and composers Muriel Anderson and John Westmoreland entertain. The sounds of flutist Jean Erickson, accordionist Bernie Nowak, fiddler Carl Rahkonen, pianist Marcus Johnson, and the Finnish dance band Oivan Ilo serenade.

Theatre: Gloucester-based Lanes Coven Theater Company presents a one-act based on a true story about John Morton, of Finnish ancestry, the Founding Father who cast the final vote to ratify the Declaration of Independence. The Rockport Community Theatre and director Sarah Clark entertain with a readers theater performance of "A Cape Ann Home Companion"-- humorous Finnish one-acts and scenes in translation.

Film: Finn-Am locals Ben and dad Jim Wickey talk about writing and producing their animated film "Plümmet to Adventure" set on Cape Ann. Produced by Valerie Nelson in 2018, "Finnish Music on Cape Ann," a riveting concert playing to a full house, is not to be missed in its videorecorded format.

Dance: Enjoy Leila Luopa and the Revontulet Finnish Dancers. Prior to, dance instructors Emily Fritz Tardiff and mom Annemarie Fritz have rehearsed a group of local youth in performing traditional Finnish dances. Luopa also leads the audience, standing or seated, in learning basic Finnish dance steps and hand movements. Oivan Ilo dance band accompanies.

Heritage & Cultural talks: Choose among Finland in the Twenty-first Century (Marianne Wargelin), Reds and Whites--The Road to Finnish Independence and Civil War (Sharon Rahkonen), Weapons and War in the Kalevala, also traditional Tin Melting (Hilary-Joy Virtanen), Music of the Finnish American Workers Movement (Carl Rahkonen), Writing Our Finnish American Stories workshop (LOY Suzanne Matson), craft workshops (Suzanne Maki), block printing (Deborah Chandler), granite (Les Bartlett), and, possibly, puukko/knives (Burt Langstrom) exhibits.

About Cape Ann: The Cape Ann FinnTown (panel), Bus tour of Cape Ann FinnTown with a quarry stop (Fred Peterson, Wayne Soini), The Main Street Rockport Murder (Wayne Soini, Robert Fitzgibbon), docent-led Folly Cove Designers and Quarry exhibits (Cape Ann Museum), 1892 Cape Ann--The Finns Are the Coming Race (Les Bartlett) + A Day in the Life of a Quarryman (Fred Peterson), bus tour of the historic City of Gloucester, celebrating 400 years (Jeanine Harris) round out the category.

Funn: Abundance Mobile Sauna (Mark Babson), a popular tori/marketplace (free admission), raffle tables, a raffle for a quilt designed for FF23 (Nancy Wonson), local American Finnish artists, authors, artisans, Decorate fins for the Finns Parade of Fins (Jean Brunter, Arlene Baril), Humorous Finnish Stories and Jokes (Sharon Love Cook, Stephen Trimble) offer relaxing, light interludes during a busy weekend.

The FF23 planning committee looks forward to greeting local residents, long-time and recent participants for a weekend of discovery, fellowship, and funn. FF23



2023 FinnFunn Planning Committee, left to right: Rob Ranta, Ray Hildonen, Elana Pistenmaa Brink, Nikki Korkatti, Fred Peterson, Barbara Greel Sachs, and Valerie I. Nelson. Not pictured: Anne Thompson Freiss, Dona Kaihlanen Shea, and Wayne Soini.



By Rob Ranta