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Finnish Coops in Brooklyn (NY) on National Register of Historic Sites

Brooklyn, NY
Amerikan Uutiset
Mikko Koskinen

On May 20, 2019, the National Register of Historic Places in the United States, listed Alku 1 and Alku 2, located at 816 and 826 43rd Street, Kings County Brooklyn New York, as the first two coop buildings in the USA, built by Finnish immigrants, on the National Registry of Historic Places.

Previously, on March 21, 2019, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation designated both buildings as Historic Sites in New York State.

The Board of Alku 1 and Alku 2 worked very hard to prepare and submit the actual application to get the historical designation.

Considerable input to that application came from Valerie Landriscina, a licensed architect, and Cecil Feilla, both on the Board, and Robert Alan Saasto, Esq., who furnished extensive historical references himself, and directed the Board to other sources in the USA and Finland to secure historical proof to establish that in fact, that Alku 1 and Alku 2 were the first coop buildings in New York State and in the



Boardmember Valerie Landriscina and Robert Saasto, Esq., were very instrumental getting the approval for Alku 1 and 2 on the National Historic Site in NY.

USA, which were built by Finnish immigrants.

Furthermore, it is proven that the Finnish immigrants were the first to bring the concept of cooperative ownership to the United States.

On May 26, 2019, Robert Alan Saasto, Esq., led a tour of what was once Finntown in Sunset Park, Brooklyn New York.

The ultimate purpose was to lay the groundwork to have some of the other 24 Finn coop buildings built around Sunset Park put plaques in their walls to commemorate the Finns who built those buildings in the early 1900s.

Alku 1 and 2 already have plans to put the pla-

que on their building, and the Imatra Hall has a plaque ready to be installed!

Those plaques, plus the Finlandia Street sign at 40th Street and 7th Avenue, would serve as permanent visual confirmation to anyone visiting the neighborhood as to the contribution of the Finnish immigrants to that neighborhood.

It is the ultimate goal of Robert Alan Saasto to secure recognition of the Finns for bringing to the USA the concept of cooperative ownership, whether it be buildings, food markets, banks, credit unions, etc.

This is a major first step towards that recognition.

MEP's assault, sexual harassment conviction to stand

A past conviction for assault and sexual harassment against freshly-minted Finns Party MEP Teuvo Hakkarainen has become enforceable, the Helsinki Court of Appeal ruled on Tuesday. This means that Hakkarainen will have to pay the 80-day fine for the offences, which were committed in December 2017.

A lower court had convicted the then-Finns Party MP and sentenced him to a 45-day fine for assault and sexual harassment of National Coalition Party MP Veera Ruoho.

However, the appeal court stiffened the sentence to an 80-day fine, which based on Hakkarainen's income at the time, amounted to 5,440 euros. The lower court had also ordered the former sawmill owner to pay Ruoho an additional 1,400 euros in damages.

During the district court trial, prosecutor Eija Velitski had called on the court to hand down a two-month suspended sentence. However she said last spring that she would not appeal the appellate court's ruling.

Ruoho is a former Finns Party MP who quite the nationalist party when immigration hardliner Jussi Halla-aho became chair in June 2017.

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Memories of
FINNISH HARLEM
1888 - 1955