




Suomenlinna

NEWSLETTER

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In charge of a village school on a lighthouse island

A new meeting room in the middle of the fortress
Spirit of Suomenlinna village fete Smallest library in Helsinki





LEADER

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BODY OF SUOMENLINNA

Local detailed plan for suomenlinna

Suomenlinna is government property, but the people living there are taxpayers and residents of the City of Helsinki. The island offers basic services provided by the City: a school, a daycare centre, a library and, in the summer, a rescue service station. The City is also responsible for maintaining the parks and streets; it purchases maintenance services from the administrators of this World Heritage site, the Governing Body of Suomenlinna. It is not always easy to secure availability of municipal services for this tiny, village-like community. A population of 850 is not enough to sustain a full complement of the services one would expect in a large city. Although Suomenlinna has been covered by the Archipelago Act for seven years now, residents still face a fair bit of trouble and expense getting to the mainland, to a health centre for instance. The ferry trip itself is short but going to the pharmacy or even just to an ATM is a major inconvenience for the elderly or for people with small children, particularly with the winter ferry schedule. It used to be the case that a road over the ice from Kaivopuisto to Suomenlinna was maintained during the winter months, and many still wistfully dream of it: it meant that in winter, a Suomenlinna resident could take a taxi home and ignore the ferry schedule.

Although the City does not offer the fortress residents quite the same services as those living on the mainland, the residents of Suomenlinna are not likely to go on strike. They did try once, though. Immediately after Finland became independent, the residents of Suomenlinna refused to pay their municipal taxes because of the poor availability of services. A court decision eventually forced them to pay their tax arrears, but the services did improve, gradually.

The local detailed plan now being prepared for Suomenlinna is based on a 30-year-old agreement whereby the costs of maintaining Suomenlinna are divided between the government and the City of Helsinki. After all, a World Heritage site belongs to everyone.

Suomenlinna currently has no local detailed plan. "Back when the fortress was built, they did not need building permits, but since the garrison here has been disbanded and the plan for usage prepared in 1975 has been largely implemented, it is high time to draw up local detailed plan for Suomenlinna," says Heikki Lahdenmäki, planning manager of the Governing Body of Suomenlinna.

However, neither the landowner (the central government) nor the City of Helsinki have considered a local detailed plan a matter of urgency. The area is already built up, and any repairs required have been managed through fixed-term special permits in cooperation between various authorities. But drawing up a local detailed plan is now considered necessary, because the new Land Use and Building Act indicates that construction based on repeated special permits is a deprecated practice. Another purpose is to bring

uniformity to the nomenclature and addresses on Suomenlinna, which is of considerable importance to the rescue services in particular and to all visitors to the island in general.

"The local detailed plan for Suomenlinna will be a protective plan, meaning that it will simply confirm what already exists. In general, Suomenlinna is a very exceptional planning site in that an unusually large number of studies and designs already exist.

"The plan will be easy to draw up because almost the entire area is held by one landowner, the government," says architect Janne Prokkola of the Helsinki City Planning Department, who is responsible for preparing the local detailed plan for Suomenlinna. "To preserve the special nature of the area, we will not be delineating blocks and street areas like elsewhere in the city," he adds.

The local detailed plan will cause no changes on Suomenlinna, but it will ensure the protection of its buildings and landscape.



- The draft local detailed plan for Suomenlinna will be completed in spring 2008 and will be put on display for comment.
- The draft will be discussed by the City Planning Department in autumn 2008.
- The City Council will approve the plan in 2009.

News

Spirit of Suomenlinna village fete

Not only a showcase for restoration or a tourist site, Suomenlinna is also a city neighbourhood, and as such one of the most intriguing in Helsinki. The residents will be organizing a village fete, or neighbourhood festival, entitled Spirit of Suomenlinna over three days from October 19 to 21. The programme will include a wide range of extremely varied events, such as sauna, guided tours of nearby islands, beer-brewing, Suomenlinna films, jazz, theatre, brass band music and fine arts. The event is being organized by the Suomenlinna Society and Viapori Forum, an association of artists and craftspeople working on Suomenlinna. The festival is supported by the City of Helsinki and the Governing Body of Suomenlinna. The programme can be found in the calendar of events at www.suomenlinna.fi

The men who built the fortress

Daniel af Thunberg (1712-1788)

Like Augustin Ehrensvärd, Daniel Thunberg studied with Sweden's greatest mechanical genius, Christoffer Polhem, from 1745. When work on the fortress in Finland began, Ehrensvärd asked Thunberg to go with him. Thunberg was Ehrensvärd's right-hand man during the early stages of construction. Thunberg designed the Viapori dry dock and its dams, gates and pumps. His windmill prompted general amazement, as it ran the dry dock pumps, a grain mill and a sawmill all at the same time. Thunberg also developed machinery for the construction work and taught the soldiers how to make various devices and tools.



Graphic artist and author Markku Tanttu considers a library to be an important cultural service whose value cannot be measured by the number of users.

A new meeting room in the middle of the fortress

The newest meeting room available for hiring on Suomenlinna was completed in September. Called the Drafting Room, it is a room suitable for meetings and seminars in a central location next to Tykistölahti bay, only a stone's throw from the Suomenlinna Visitor Centre. It is a ten-minute walk away from the ferry jetty, and in summer the launch that docks at the Suomenlinna Visitor Centre jetty on Tykistölahti bay is even more convenient.

The Drafting Room has a large meeting table that seats about 30. There is a screen, a data projector, loudspeakers, an overhead projector and a WLAN connection. Catering can be ordered from a catering service on Suomenlinna, but the Drafting Room also has a small kitchen for preparing your own food, with a fridge and cooler, a convection oven, a dishwasher, a coffee maker, a kettle, and tableware for coffee. The Drafting Room is located upstairs at the Restaurant Café Chapman and is accessible through the gate to the shipyard behind the building. The room is not suitable for the movement-impaired.

The room is housed on the second floor of the Traverse Adlerfelt, built in the 1750s and 1770s as part of the outer ring of defences around the Susisaari dry dock. The seaside elevation was designed as a defensive wall able to withstand artillery fire from Vallisaari. During the Russian period, the building was an arsenal and a storage space for uniforms and kit, and there was also a barracks in the building. At the beginning of Finnish independence, the building housed prisoners of war and subsequently the works canteen of the aircraft factory which occupied the dry dock, followed by offices and break rooms of the Valmet shipyard. In early 2007, the premises were vacated by the National Board of Antiquities, which had used them as offices and a drafting room, and the space was renovated into the new meeting room and new offices.

Smallest library in Helsinki

"The Suomenlinna library is now a calling card for the Helsinki City Library as a whole, because it also caters to tourists. In fact, about one quarter of our visitors are tourists," says library manager Harri Sahavirta. For most foreign visitors, the Suomenlinna library is their only point of contact with Finnish libraries; many have been pleasantly surprised at the services it provides. The library has three workstations with Internet access for visitor use.

Sahavirta mentions a new feature introduced last summer, the Bestsellers collection, whose books are only to be lent out to fortress residents. The Bestsellers have been well received, and this sort of thing seems to work well in a small library.

The library was opened in vaulted rooms in Crownwork Ehrensvärd opposite the church in 1957 and it has been there ever since. In October, the library will be celebrating its 50th anniversary with a 1950s theme.

At the Spirit of Suomenlinna festival, author and graphic artist Markku Tanttu will give a literary talk, presenting the work of other authors and illustrators working on the island as well as his own.

"The library is very important for my work. Sometimes I have found some true gems. I see a library as a cultural service whose value must not be measured by the number of people using it. Even a small group of active users can be significant," he says.

Long-serving librarians Petteri Suvanto and Mervi Miettinen are happy that lenders can order a book from any library in the Helsinki region through the Helmet service on the Internet for pickup at the Suomenlinna library. This means that lenders, particularly the elderly and small children, do not need to go over to the mainland to visit a library; in winter, that would mean a long, dark journey, as the ferry only runs once an hour. And of course it would cost money, too.



Located near the Suomenlinna Centre, the Drafting Room has a large conference table that seats about 30. Its central location and high standard of equipment make it an excellent location for a meeting day at the fortress.

A village school by the lighthouse

Jutta Narjus is known as an old-fashioned head teacher, meticulous and warm-hearted. For recreation, she takes her motorcycle out on the road.

Everyone knows the village school teacher. Jutta Narjus, who has been head teacher at the Suomenlinna school for 16 years, is an important person for many of the residents of the fortress.

"I like living in a village. It means that I am part of the lives of my pupils. The people of Suomenlinna are fiercely proud of the place they live in.

"When my own children were small enough to be in a pushchair, I noticed that even in the throng in the city centre of Helsinki they tried to greet everyone they saw: they were only doing what they had become used to doing at home.

"A village school with only 70 pupils is inevitably more intimate than a larger school. I get to follow the development of my pupils from close up, from pre-school to adulthood. On the ferry, former pupils often come to say hello and reminisce.

"I think I get more hugs in a week than a person normally gets in a lifetime," she says with a laugh.

Smallest first!

The City of Helsinki is responsible for providing municipal services on Suomenlinna, even though the fortress is owned by the central government. The City provides passenger transport, a library, a daycare centre and a school. Year by year, the range of municipal services seems to diminish. The health centre is long gone, and the rescue services only maintain a presence during the summer months.

"But the school is here to stay," says head teacher Jutta Narjus confidently. "You cannot send little children off to school on the mainland on their own! It is a sorry state of affairs when a special-needs student has to be sent to a school community elsewhere. We are cut off by the sea here, and the children should be allowed to go to school with their neighbours, regardless of their learning capabilities."

Jutta Narjus is happy that there is no longer a strict requirement regarding the number of students per class in basic education, and the school has been able to keep three to four class teachers employed even though the classes have been of very different sizes.

"Because there are no municipal children's

or youth clubs on Suomenlinna, we decided to get organized ourselves. Suomenlinna has the highest percentage of children of any neighbourhood in Helsinki. Now there are music, cooking, circus and comics clubs in the afternoon, run by the parent's association Suomenlinnailmiö (Suomenlinna phenomenon). The Helsinki chapter of the Vesaiset Central Organization runs a daily afternoon group for pupils in 1st and 2nd grade at the school. It is difficult to organize clubs or child care groups on Suomenlinna because the age groups are so small that it is not seen as a worthwhile activity.

"But eight children at home alone are just as lonely as eighty," Narjus says, recalling the time before the self-organized extracurricular activities.

An energetic head teacher

"I have a passion for teaching. I could never be just an administrator.

"When I am with the children, I shut out everything else. The children know that they are very important for me. It gives me strength to be able to see a child's insights or searching for ways to make friends and become part of the community. The administrative work load sometimes seems excessive for a village school and could do with being reduced."

Mystery plays and blues

The school has an extensive musical tradition. Every year, pupils stage a performance of the traditional mystery play *Tiernapojat* (lit. Star boys) at the Thomas Market on the Esplanade in Helsinki before Christmas and at the Suomenlinna Christmas Event at the Jetty Barracks.

The school has a band that any school would be proud of. It all started with the purchase of a drum kit in the early 1990s following a phone call from the father of one of the pupils, a musician named Pekka Helin, on tour in Lapland: "There's this enormous set of gear at a rock-bottom price!" Now, the pupils play guitar, bass, drums, flute, piano and trumpet in the music clubs organized by the parents' association. The Viapori Winter Blues festival is also an educational event. Artistic director Aija Puurtinen, better known

by her stage name Honey B, always conducts a workshop with the children, following which they perform at the blues festival. The repertoire includes songs written by the pupils themselves.

Viapori MC — the laughing motorcycle club

"I have been working around the clock for years, and I have not had time for any serious hobbies for a long while. But now that I have joined the Suomenlinna motorcycle club, I have been living out an old dream of mine. Viapori MC organizes trips to other World Heritage sites, for instance.

"It's a proud feeling to drive around with fellow Suomenlinna residents."

The members of Viapori MC also double as the doormen at the Viapori Jazz festival. "We have club meetings where we laugh a lot. And I mean a lot. I have never laughed so much! It is so wonderful to be able to spend time with people who live like this."

The lighthouse lit the way

"Why did I move to Suomenlinna?" Jutta Narjus smiles at the question, or possibly at her answer.

"It may sound strange, but I decided as a young person that I wanted to live in a lighthouse. I studied in Helsinki and did my job training at the Suomenlinna school. I returned to Turku, which is where I came from, but I soon decided that I would come back to Suomenlinna. And it all happened so easily.

"When I was expecting my son Max 16 years ago, I arrived on the doorstep of the Suomenlinna school and told the then head teacher Anja Unkari that I would be willing to work here now. It turned out that she was going to retire at the time when my maternity leave would be over.

"So there I was with my newborn son, my daughter Matilda and my dog Kreetta, on an island with a lighthouse in the church steeple. I was provided housing by the City, a small, pink wood house that had just been completed. The day I moved in happened to be my birthday, and my divorce had just been finalized. Then I was in Suomenlinna, protected by the mighty walls. I sat alone in my kitchen and looked out of the window, watching the beam of the lighthouse skim the horizon. I'm home, I thought to myself.

"Realizing this dream was probably the most important thing I have ever done. I had moved into a crystal cocoon, next to a lighthouse in the middle of Helsinki!"



Events on Suomenlinna

For details, please see the calendar of events at www.suomenlinna.fi.

Spirit of Suomenlinna village fete, October 19-21

Organized for the first time and lasting from Friday to Sunday, this neighbourhood festival offers a wide variety of colourful activities for everyone interested in the island. Musicians, artists and craftspersons working on Suomenlinna will show you what they are capable of.

Docking Week, October 22-28

Every autumn in late October, old sailing ships arrive at the historical dry dock. Most of the 25 surviving sailing ships in Finland dock at Suomenlinna for repairs over the winter. From October 25, visitors to the Suomenlinna Museum can view the poster exhibition *Baltic harbours — Gateway to the Future* and the *Open the Gates!* exhibition, both of which will remain open until March 2, 2008. There will be daily guided tours of the *Open the Gates!* exhibition dur-



ing Docking Week, and special guided tours of the shipyard are also available. Children can spend time at the activity corner of the *Open the Gates!* exhibition at the museum.

Concert series 'Seitsemän', October 28 and December 2

The concert series *Seitsemän* (Seven) given by the Icelandic-German group *Adapter* that was started in spring 2007, will now continue. The second concert in the series, 'Due Pezzi' by Franco Donatoni, will be given on Sunday, October 28 at 16.00. The third, 'Wintertime', will be given on December 2 at 16.00. The venue for both is the *Tenaille von Fersen*.

Christmas Event, December 1-2

King Gustav III and the *Olde Militia* will be opening the Christmas season again with a cannon salute at the jetty. The event has something for the whole family: a Christmas market at the *Jetty Barracks*, seasonal delicacies at the restaurants and cafés, and the chance to visit museums and craftsmen's workshops. Children can follow the trail of the *Fortress Gnome* and visit the Christmas workshop at the *Ehrensvärd Museum*.

Events

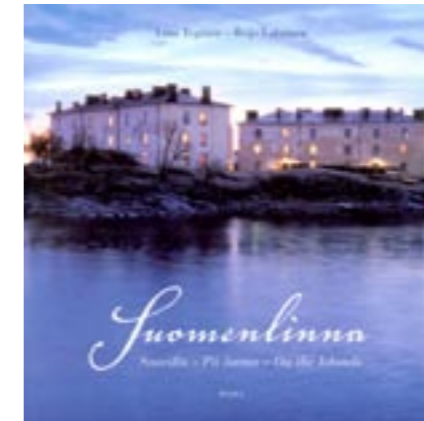
1.9.–16.12.	Guided tours in English at weekends
19.–21.10.	Spirit of Suomenlinna
22.–28.10.	Docking Week
28.10.	'Due Pezzi' concert, <i>Tenaille von Fersen</i>
1.–2.12.	Suomenlinna Christmas Event
2.12.	'Wintertime' concert, <i>Tenaille von Fersen</i>
9.12.	Christmas carols for the family, <i>Suomenlinna Church</i>
19.12.	Christmas carol sing-along, <i>Suomenlinna Church</i>

Exhibitions

4.5.–2.3.	Open the gates! Exhibition of vessels from Suomenlinna dock, <i>Suomenlinna Museum</i>
7.–30.9.	POTretti, portrait exhibition, <i>Jetty Barracks Gallery</i>
5.–28.10.	Northern fringe, <i>Jetty Barracks Gallery</i>
25.10.–2.3.	Baltic harbours — Gateway to the future, <i>Suomenlinna Museum</i>
2.–25.11.	Jaana Erkkilä, Jaakko Pernu, Irene Välimäki, <i>Jetty Barracks Gallery</i>
8.12.–5.1.	South Pole, Lapland Artists' Association, <i>Jetty Barracks Gallery</i>

New book on Suomenlinna

A lavishly illustrated exploration of well-known places on Suomenlinna but also of homes and workshops not usually open to the general public. The artists featured in the book include graphic artist Erik Bruun, blacksmith JT Pälkkö and the ceramic collective *Pot Viapori*. The public buildings featured include the *Naval Academy*, the submarine *Vesikko*, the *Church*, the *dry dock*, the *Toy Museum* and the *Ehrensvärd Museum*.



A brief history of the fortress, in one hour or half

The fortress comes to life on our guided walking tours, held in English during the winter season. The tour answers such questions as why this huge fortress was built on a group of islands in the first place and who the unfortunate *Carl Olof Cronsted* was.

If you are on a really tight schedule when visiting Suomenlinna, you can take in a brief history of the fortress at the *Suomenlinna Experience* wide screen video presentation at the *Suomenlinna Museum*.

Introducing tourist services on Suomenlinna

Located on *Tykistölahti* bay near the *Suomenlinna Visitor Centre*, *Restaurant Café Chapman* is open all year round. In winter, it offers a lunch menu on weekdays and can be privately booked at other times. In summer, there is a pleasant terrace outside the restaurant, and an à la carte menu in the evenings.

In summer, the historical log building beside the restaurant is available for private functions for 100 to 200 people. *Chapman* can also provide catering services to all meeting rooms and function rooms rented by the *Governing Body of Suomenlinna* all year round.

The restaurant has been managed since 2000 by *Eija Salonen*, who has more than 20 years of experience in the restaurant business. *Chapman* is a family business, where even the children contribute in summer. In addition to the restaurant in *Suomenlinna*, the family runs a restaurant at the pavilion in *Haukilahti* in *Espoo*.



Guided tours

Guided tours of the fortress in English at weekends from September 1 to December 16 and from January 12 to May 31, at 13.30. The tours begin at the *Suomenlinna Visitor Centre*, where tickets are also sold. Adults EUR 6.50, children EUR 3. The tour is free for *Helsinki Card* holders.

Suomenlinna Experience wide screen video presentation

The *Suomenlinna Museum* is open daily from 10.00 to 16.00. The wide screen video presentation in the museum auditorium starts every half hour. You can choose the language in your earphones (Finnish, Swedish, English, German, French, Russian or Japanese). The museum entrance fee is EUR 5 for adults. Admittance is free for children under 18 and *Helsinki Card* holders.



SUOMENLINNA VISITOR CENTRE

Open every day from October 1 to April 30, 10.00 to 16.00, except for December 2, December 24-25 and January 1 (closed).
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