



## 2003 Events

### Independence Day Charity Ball, featuring Finland's "tango queen" Arja Koriseva

**When:** December 6, 2003

**Where:** The Granite Club, Toronto

**Organizers:** CFCC & the Canadian Friends of Finland Education Foundation

**Description:** A joint committee of the Canadian Friends of Finland Education Foundation and the Canada-Finland Chamber of Commerce organized a grand Independence Day Charity Ball at the prestigious Granite Club in Toronto on December 6, 2003.

"Finland has so much to celebrate", exclaimed Valerie Knuuttila, the General Manager of the Finnish (Toronto) Credit Union, "I am thrilled that Finnish Canadians are able to rejoice in Finland's achievements."

Ms Knuuttila was part of a newly-created joint committee of the Canadian Friends of Finland Education Foundation and the Canada Finland Chamber of Commerce that resurrected a fine old Finnish Canadian tradition – a grand Independence Day Charity Ball. People from as far as Sudbury came to Toronto to attend the Ball, not to mention those who flew in from Finland.

According to Dr. Varpu Lindström, professor of history at York University and co-chair of the Independence Day Charity Ball, Finnish Canadians and their Canadian friends organized Finland-Aid concerts and dinners during the late thirties, and particularly during the Winter War and its aftermath, in order to give financial assistance to their troubled homeland. In Finland, the annual Independence Day Ball at the President's Palace is the social highlight of the year.

Today, Finland is a thriving nation. It is among the ten wealthiest nations in the world. It is known for its high level of technical expertise and its commitment to social welfare and equality. Its citizens are, according to UN surveys, the best educated in the world. Recently Finland became the first country to have two women as democratically elected heads of state: Tarja Halonen, President and Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Prime Minister. Finland's commitment to education is also visible in Canada. For the past twelve years Finland has co-sponsored the Finnish Studies Program at the University of Toronto together with the Finnish Canadian community.

Tommi Korhonen, chair of the Canada-Finland Chamber of Commerce and General Manager of Finnair and Co-chair of the Independence Day Charity Ball committee, stated that it is most appropriate that the goal of the charity ball is to support the Finnish Studies Program. He was pleased that Finnair was a major sponsor of the event. Another enthusiastic member of the Committee, Tuula Kivinen, owner of Flowers of the World noted before the event, "I can't wait to see all the men and women dressed in their finery sweeping across the dance floor to the tunes of a ballroom orchestra's melancholy tango or sentimental waltz."





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Kivinen was thrilled that the Ball had a special 30-minute segment of uninterrupted tango with the all time tango queen of Finland, Arja Koriseva ([www.arjakoriseva.fi](http://www.arjakoriseva.fi)), who flew to Toronto especially for the Charity Ball. Dr. Hilikka Davidson agreed, who planned a menu fit for an Independence Day feast.

Organizing an Independence Day Charity Ball required a great deal of work and community support. According to Bill Holt, the committee wanted to find an excellent keynote speaker who can appeal to all Canadians. Ari Elo, of the Northern European, stressed the importance of sharing information.

Before the event, Katri West, President of the Canadian Friends of Finland, recommended, "For now, everyone should mark December 6 in their calendars and plan to celebrate Finland's Independence Day at the Granite Club."

"How wonderful to revive the old tradition," exclaimed the President of the CFF Education foundation, Dr. Sheila Embleton, as she welcomed everyone to this "sparkling event in Toronto which has brightened the darker days of winter."

Reservations were made with Valerie Knuuttila at the Finnish Toronto Credit Union, with updates to the program posted on Finland's Independence Day Charity Ball web site: [www.canadafinlandcc.com/charityball.html](http://www.canadafinlandcc.com/charityball.html). The tickets, including the dinner, entertainment and dance were \$150 (\$90 tax deductible) payable to the CFF Education Foundation.





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# Finland's Independence Day Charity Ball



DECEMBER 6, 2003

RECEPTION AT 6:30 P.M.  
SEATING AT 7:00P.M.

Come to celebrate Finland's Independence Day and rejoice in Finland's outstanding achievements by reviving a grand, old tradition - an elegant, formal, Independence Day Charity Ball on Saturday, December 6, 2003 at the prestigious Granite Club Ballroom, 2350 Bayview Avenue, Toronto.

Featuring Finland's all time favourite Tango Queen, the stunning Arja Koriseva. Following a formal dinner, Koriseva will perform a short concert and then thrill the tango enthusiasts with a thirty minute segment of uninterrupted tango.

After your elegant dinner and entertainment, enjoy ballroom dancing till midnight to the tune of The Vic Lawrence Seven Orchestra.

The keynote speaker for the evening will be His Excellency, Ilkka Ristimäki, Ambassador of Finland.

*The Independence Day Charity Ball is in benefit of the Finnish Studies Program at the University of Toronto. Tickets are \$150 each (\$100 is tax deductible). Why not book a table for eight and bring your family and friends to this joyous, festive occasion.*



TANGO QUEEN, ARJA KORISEVA

Dress code:  
black tie optional/decorations

Tickets (unfortunately restricted to 350 persons) are available NOW.

**To buy in person or order  
via telephone contact:**

Helena Ahola  
Finnish (Toronto) Credit Union  
191 Eglinton Ave. East  
Toronto, ON M4P 1K1  
1-800-668-7242 or 416-486-1533

The Charity Ball is organized by Canada Finland Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Friends of Finland Education Foundation.

Major sponsors are Finnair and the Finnish (Toronto) Credit Union.



For additional information see: [www.canadafinlandcc.com](http://www.canadafinlandcc.com)  
or contact: [helena@finnishcu.com](mailto:helena@finnishcu.com), [varpul@yorku.ca](mailto:varpul@yorku.ca), [vknuuttila@sympatico.ca](mailto:vknuuttila@sympatico.ca)