



# BALTIC HERITAGE NETWORK

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## SÜNTERI SASS, FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE TO BALTHERNET HAS DIED

Aleksander Sünter or Sünteri Sass died on January 26th in Orissaare Parish, in Hindu Village. Sass celebrated his 42nd birthday on December 30th.

Aleksander Sünter was born in Kärkla Parish, in Sõmera Village on the island of Saaremaa. He graduated from Orissaare Secondary School and the University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy, and studied semiotics at the University of Tartu. He worked as an instrumental music teacher at the Orissaare Music School, and as a folk culture specialist and project manager at the Tartu Tiigi Seltsimaja. He led the University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy folk music chair, teaching introductory folk music history courses: Estonian folk music, and folk instruments and music.

Sünteri Sass was known in Estonia as a folk musician, and bandleader and singer of Oort. The band's homepage states: "Oort grabs the bull by the horns and digs deep into the grooves of the runo rock field. Mythical experiences are brought from millennia to you, creating song for our nation's future." Oort brought runo song



back into our everyday lives, so that it would not just be mere entertainment or a piece in a museum. Sünteri Sass was the soul of Oort; inside Sass was a mysterious force that invariably grabbed people. This force was evident in soft-spoken Sass, especially when he was making music.

Sass has been with BaltHerNet since its beginning. On the evening of the last night of the 2007 BaltHerNet archival summer school in Koke he played lõõtspill, the traditional Estonian diatonic accordion and sang. Participants from all over the world became so carried away with singing that the party did not finish until morning. A tradition was born: from that moment, no BaltHerNet summer school or conference would end without Sass and his powerful singing. These were always very anticipated evenings: white nights in the middle of summer that started with great momentum, but in the end were filled with nostalgia and melancholy. By morning, Sass was left with a small group of sleepless companions who did not want to leave and were ready to listen as long as Sass was willing to play and sing. These were very special moments of togetherness, which

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Latvians Abroad (LaPa) Museum meets Antiques Roadshow
- VEMU/Estonian Studies Centre collecting contest "70 Years from the Mass Exodus"
- Riina Reinvelt chosen as collections manager of the year
- The World Lithuanian Youth Association in Exile
- Memory and Trauma in International Relations
- Endel Tulving's archive finds a new home

### *A Note from the Editor:*

The submission deadline for the next issue is April 15, 2014. We welcome news articles, conference information, calls for papers, new publication information, and images. Please send articles in English with high quality images to:

Kristina Lupp  
kriss.lupp@me.com

The Non-Profit Association Baltic Heritage Network was founded in Tartu on January 11, 2008. NPA BaltHerNet was established to foster cooperation between national and private archives, museums, libraries, and institutions of research, public associations and organizations collecting and studying the cultural heritage of the Baltic diaspora. It aims to facilitate the preservation and research of the historically valuable cultural property of the Baltic diaspora, as well as to ensure accessibility of these materials to the public. NPA BaltHerNet is also committed to the organising of conferences, seminars and workshops, and to developing and administrating the electronic information website Baltic Heritage Network, a multilingual electronic gateway for information on the cultural heritage of the Baltic diaspora.

The Baltic Heritage Newsletter is distributed quarterly, on-line. The newsletter is compiled and edited by Kristina Lupp. Please send all related enquiries and submissions to Kristina Lupp: kriss.lupp@me.com  
www.balthernet.net  
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brought BaltHerNet members together as a friendly family. These moments were both therapeutic and meditative; one can only speculate as to what took place in the souls of those who fell under the spell of Sass and his music. The way he played the Ukuaru Waltz was so beautiful that it tore at the soul...

The 2010 summer school took place at the Traditional Music Centre in Viljandi where Sass was head of the Information Centre. At that time, the Traditional Music Centre was also an institutional member of BaltHerNet and Sass was the contact person, helping with the organisation of the Viljandi summer school.

In the summers of 2011 and 2012, Sass came with his own family ensemble, about which he has said: they would not have come together if he had not been ill. Sass was diagnosed in 2006 with a stage II brain tumour. In 2011, his illness reached the aggressive stage IV. He went for surgery and he recovered from his surgery. At the 2011 summer school in Kääriku he was much better and playing again. It was both beautiful and painful – Sass told us about his illness. The next morning he had to go to a regular post operative screening. Before he left, many hugs and warm wishes were exchanged. Sass really needed them, and we did too – we were all very worried. On the bus back to Tartu, we were very happy to hear the good news: Sass's condition had stabilised.

In the summer of 2013, Sass did not attend the summer school. We sent greetings to his home in Saaremaa, but we felt that something very important was missing... Sass's charm was not there.

Dear Sass, we are thankful for the unique moments that you have shared with us, for your warm and open mind, and for your music! You have now set off on your own path. What has been left behind? Gold has been left behind. We hold that in our hearts and when we come together, we will sing again – in your memory.

## **LATVIANS ABROAD (LAPA) MUSEUM MEETS ANTIQUES ROADSHOW**

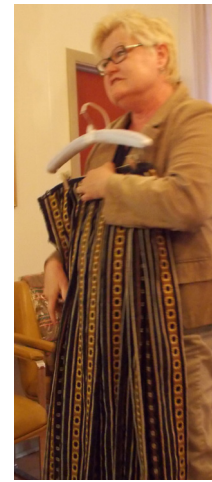
On September 22, 2013, a group of Philadelphia Latvians experienced an unknown event in Latvian society, which the organisers described as follows, "Latvians Abroad Museum (LaPa) meets American TV programme 'Antiques Roadshow.'"

Just as for the popular TV programme, people in Philadelphia were invited to bring

their heirlooms to the event, significant belongings which they had brought with them from Latvia, or which represented some important aspect of the first years outside Latvia. However, while in the TV programme various experts try to determine an objects' provenance and market value, the main role in the LaPa Roadshow belonged to the heirloom owners. Each owner told the audience about their object – its history, origin and significance in their life. After that, a panel of museum specialists evaluated the relevance of the heirloom to museums, its significance in a historical, cultural, societal or personal context and how it might be used in museum expositions. To make the event accessible to a wider audience, the presented objects with their stories and their owners were photographed and will be posted in a LaPa Roadshow gallery on the LaPa web



site. The stories and heirlooms brought to the event were very interesting, valuable and often times moving, for example, the children's Christmas picture book, drawn by the artist Alfreds Kalniņš and written by the author Vera Čakare in late 1944 in Czechoslovakia as they were fleeing from Latvia in World War II. The first eight pages depict the happy, joyous activities of a traditional Latvian Christmas during peacetime. The father brings a freshly cut Christmas tree from the snowy woods, the children bake gingerbread cookies, they learn poems to recite to Santa Claus, decorate the Christmas tree. On Christmas Eve, the whole family enjoys the decorated tree and Santa Claus distributes presents to the children. The last page of the book shows what is happening in Latvia at the time – soldiers behind barricades, explosions, bombs, grenades and above all, uncertainty about what happens next. "No other Christmas book in the world has such a negative, dark and hopeless ending," said Jānis Čakars, the grandson of the author and owner of the book. Jānis plans to republish the book and is looking for information about the artist Alfreds Kalniņš. Jānis' e-mail: chakarsj@gmail.com.



Inta Grunde shows the traditional Latvian skirt her mother wove in DP camp.

The other stories and heirlooms were equally significant. For example, Peter Dajevskis brought a wooden bench from the horse-drawn carriage with which his mother, the popular National Theatre actress, Helga Gobzine, had travelled from her home in Western Latvia to the DP camp Meerbeck in the British Zone in Germany during World War II. How the horses and carriages managed to travel on a German army ship is a story all its own. Several people brought beautiful skirts from traditional Latvian folk costumes. As Maija Medne's family fled from Latvia at the end of World War II, her mother had used the skirt as a bag for packing clothes. Since yarn was very difficult to get in refugee camps after the war, Inta Grunde's mother had unravelled a family's heirloom blanket, and used the yarn to weave the traditional skirt. Jolanta Mockas, who brought a set of porcelain coffee cups and pot, which she had obtained in Soviet Latvia after standing in line for hours, represented present day emigrants from Latvia. When she had arrived at the front of the line, she was given a choice of only two things: the coffee set or some plates. As she had neither one, she chose the coffee cup set.

The heirlooms that people took with them from Latvia, could be included in the "Latvian suitcase" exhibit, which LaPa staff are preparing for the celebration of "Rīga – European Capital of Culture" this year. The exhibit is scheduled to open in the former KGB building in central Riga on April 30 and run through September 2014.

Any community in North America interested in having a LaPa Roadshow can contact Maija Hinkle, maijahinkle@verizon.net or by phone at 607-273-1319.

**Maija Hinkle**



## VEMU/ESTONIAN STUDIES CENTRE COLLECTING CONTEST "70 YEARS FROM THE MASS EXODUS"

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the great escape of 1944, when over 70,000 people fled Estonia from Soviet occupation. The journeys into the free world were dramatic and often tumultuous. The first stops in Sweden or Germany were considered temporary – the people hoped to return home. However, that did not happen. Those who did not remain in Sweden or Germany moved on to Australia, to North or South America, or to England. Many refugees tried living in several countries and on various continents over the next years. We are calling on people to record their families' journeys and subsequent fates.

The contest: we are expecting escape-themed stories that talk about leaving Estonia, the journey of the escape, arriving to new places and the life there, as well as the movements that followed which lead to arrival in Canada. We are also interested in how memories of the escape are carried on from generation to generation: if, how and what they speak about these memories in the family circle or in the Estonian community.

### *Who can participate?*

- All Canadian Estonians, both of older and younger generations, are welcome to participate.
- The biographies of people who escaped Estonia in 1944 have been keenly collected in exile communities and in Estonia. These tales are mostly written or spoken by the people who were adults during the escape. The stories of the older generation are also very welcome to this contest – especially since there are not many people who carry on these memories.
- Stories of Estonians who were children or teenagers during the escape have been far less documented. Yet, it is important to know how children and young people remember escaping and adapting to new locations.
- Even those who have no personal memories of the escape can participate in the contest. We hope that current children and teens co-operate with parents, grandparents or great grandparents. They could interview and ask questions from

both those who escaped as adults and those who were children at the time.

### *How to research?*

- You may submit your contribution in written format (in Estonian or English), or as an audio or video file. You may also create your own home page/virtual exhibition or even a documentary.
- Things found in home archives, such as diaries reflecting the escape and starting of a new life in a new place, letters, documents and photos, as well as original memories that have been written down (or recorded) earlier, are VERY welcome to this contest. We also accept objects that were a part of the escape journey, with stories and information about the origin/maker of the object, as well as the owner and more.
- The collected material will be preserved in VEMU and with the author's permission,

will be used in future VEMU exhibitions.

The deadline of the submission is February 1st 2015.

Please submit your works to: VEMU/ Estonian Studies Centre, 310 Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON M5S 1W4.

Along with your entry, present the details of the author: name, age, address, telephone number, email address.

**MONETARY AND BOOK AWARDS FOR THE BEST WORKS!**

Info: Piret Noorhani,

piretnoorhani@vemu.ca, t. 416 925 9405.

Please visit [www.vemu.ca](http://www.vemu.ca) for further contest details.

# VEMU





## RIINA REINVELT CHOSEN AS COLLECTIONS MANAGER OF THE YEAR

The Minister of Culture for the Republic of Estonia, Urve Tiidus, announced the 2013 Annual Estonian Museum Awards on January 31st at a ceremonial presentation held at the University of Tartu Museum. The honourees were chosen by selected committees of the museum advisory board to the Ministry of Culture. Ten awards were presented.

The prize for the year's collections manager went to Riina Reinvelt, Chief Collections Manager for the Estonian National Museum. The award was given in recognition of her work digitising the museum's precious metal holdings, for entering their descriptions in the museums' MuIS information system and

for improving the storage conditions of the collection. The project included more than 4,000 items, including various types of brooches used with folk costumes, rings, silverware and so on.

We congratulate BaltHerNet founding member Riina Reinvelt on being recognised for her efforts and wish her continued success in the work that she is doing.

**Piret Noorhani**

Riina Reinvelt, Chief Collections Manager for the Estonian National Museum, during her visit to VEMU/ Estonian Studies Centre in Toronto in



## BALTIC STUDIES SUMMER INSTITUTE

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A rich program of cultural events and lectures related to the Baltic lands will be offered in conjunction of BALSSI 2014.

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Scholarship application deadline is March 7, 2014.  
 Applications accepted for enrollment through June 1.

\*Scheduling of classes at the second-year level is contingent on sufficient enrollment and may be canceled due to low enrollment. Please apply as early as possible to help ensure your class will be offered.



BALSSI IS SPONSORED BY A CONSORTIUM OF 11 U.S. UNIVERSITIES AND RECEIVES ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF BALTIC STUDIES.

## ESTONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM: CALL FOR MATERIALS

Baltic Way, held on August 23 in 1989 was a small nation's unique declaration of their intent. Two million people from the Baltic States took part in the peaceful protest that symbolised hope, being together as one family, sharing the same joys, goals, and ideas.

In 2016, a new building of the Estonian National Museum will be opened in Tartu. At present, new permanent exhibitions are being prepared. The exhibition of Estonian culture is preliminarily named "Estonian Dialogues" and the exhibit of the Baltic Way will be part of it.

The exhibit will be in Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and English. It will be based on the map of the Baltic Way and will include photos, films, and memories from archives. Visitors can also contribute to the exhibit by sharing their own memories and what the Baltic Way meant to them.

As some people have recollected, Baltic people from all over the world organised demonstrations and other events supporting the Baltic Way that day. However, materials about it are few. We ask your help to look around in your archives and consider whether you have materials about the Baltic Way.

Thank you for your support and if you find something, we would be happy to hear from you by March 2014

Contact: Agnes Aljas [agnesaljas@gmail.com](mailto:agnesaljas@gmail.com)

## KRISTINA ŪSAITĖ. THE WORLD LITHUANIAN YOUTH ASSOCIATION IN EXILE, 1950 - 1980



Ūsaitė, Kristina. Pasaulio lietuvių jaunimo sąjunga XX a. 6–9 dešimtmečiai. Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2013.

Using archival and published sources as well as historiography, the monograph discusses the ideological background of the World Lithuanian Youth Association (WLYA) and analyses various aspects of establishing the WLYA, emphasising the role of the Lithuanian World Community (LWC) and other ideological youth organisations in exile it played in the process. The book also reconstructs the evolution of the WLYA during the 1960s to 1980s.

The author is interested in existential and every day problems of the newly established organisation, its attempts to mobilise youth of Lithuanian origin under the conditions of emigration, emphasising the non-ideological nature of the organisation. Ūsaitė shows the relationship of the WLYO with the LWC and other Lithuanian émigré organisations, and with its sister associations, the Lithuanian youth associations (LYAs), established in other countries.

The monograph discusses the conditions of establishing LYAs and its activities. It tries to reconstruct the development of the relationship between LYAs and the Lithuanian Communities or institutions that functioned as such, as well as between LYAs and other youth organisations of other nationalities in North and South America, Europe and Australia.

Translated by Deimantė Bandzevičiūtė

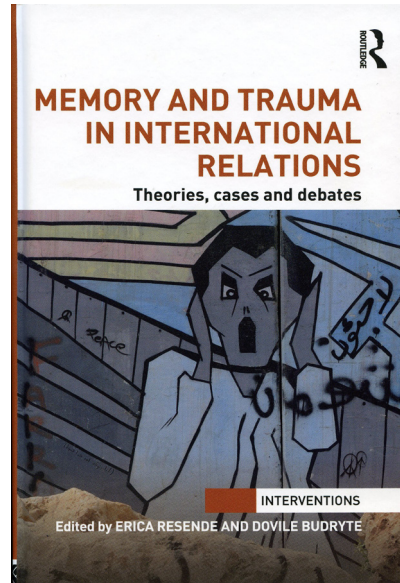
## ENDEL TULVING'S ARCHIVE FINDS A NEW HOME

The 10th of January, the archives of Estonian psychologist and memory researcher Endel Tulving (born 1927) arrived at the Estonian National Museum. Tulving was born in Estonia and worked for decades as a scholar in Canada, and decided his archives would be preserved at the National Museum.

Tulving's archive includes handwritten materials, books, photos, and audio about both him and his wife, artist Ruth Tulving (1930-2012). Among the handwritten materials (42 boxes arrived to the Estonian National Museum collections) was professional correspondence with academic colleagues (Gus Craik, Henry Roediger, Daniel Schacter, John Gardiner, and others), lecture ideas, notebooks, presentation materials, as well as memoirs, including life in exile and development related documents.

From University of Toronto professor emeritus, to honorary doctorate from the University of Tartu, to Estonian Academy of Sciences foreign member, more about Endel Tulving and his research can be found at [http://et.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endel\\_Tulving](http://et.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endel_Tulving) and <http://alicekim.ca/tulving/> - **Estonian National Museum**

## MEMORY AND TRAUMA IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



[www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415637268/](http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415637268/)

The launch of the book "Memory and Trauma in International Relations" (Routledge, 2013) took place January 6, 2014 at Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania. The book is a compilation of cases compiled by Dr. Dovilė Budrytė, Associate Professor of Political Science at Georgia Gwinnett College, and Dr. Erica Resende, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations at the Graduate Research Institute of Rio de Janeiro.

At the launch, one of the authors of the book, Budrytė, shared her insights on such universal concepts as guilt, apology, traumatic experiences, and transnational memory, and fostered discussion about the interpretation of the subject within the context of Lithuanian history and collective memory. The book includes Budrytė's case about traumas in Lithuanian historical memory after World War II.

Valdonė Budreckaitė