

Ancestor of the famous Finnish actress has been visited by Kalevala-translator

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Szerző: Melano

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Hungarians and Finns have been in contact since ages. Our relatives, parents, grandparents might have a cool or romantic story about Finland and Hungary.

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[Anna Easteden: The woman with 9 lives](#) [3]

If these stories related to the past - which is far behind us -, we may think, that it has nothing to do with the present. But in real life everything is connected to the times about we don't know so much. This is just like that with beautiful redhead American-Finnish actress, Anna Easteden who comes from a family, what was visited by Kalevala collector long time ago.

All of us have a great ancestor in the family. But do we have a poet as relative? Anna Easteden (born as Anna Shemeikka) surely does. I feel myself ashamed, because I know her since ages and I just recognised this some time ago. For the recognition I must be thankful to Enikő Szíj, the retired associate professor of Finno-Ugric studies, who came to us while we were sitting in a podium last December, when the actress was a special guest at Melano Magazine event. She mentioned that Anna might be descendant of Petri Shemeikka, the famous Karelian poet from Suistamo.



Petri Shemeikka in on old photo

"His grave is in Ollola currently that is where I used to go when I was a child. He rests next to the grave of my dad's grandparents" - noted Anna Easteden for the question of Melano Magazine. He was born in Suistamo, which is situated right now in Russia. "I have at home in Finland an old photo, not a digital copy, but really old picture about him. He is my grandfather directly few generations ago" - remembered the Finnish-American actress, who was born in Tohmajärvi, in Finland, not so far from the Finnish-Russian border.



Béla Vikár visited personally Pedri Shemeikka in Finland

"The name Shemeikka is familiar from the collection of Kalevala songs, which were not finished by the publication of Kalevala. But it might be also known from the Juha, which is written by Juhani Aho" – underlined Enikő Szíj, She added that in this book Juha acts as a husband of a woman, but Shemeikka appears as a woman chaser from Karelia. The story has been filmed, but also appeared in Opera as well.

Béla Vikár, the Hungarian ethnographer visited Karelia in 1889. He went there to collect rhymed songs, meantime he was also working on the Hungarian translation of the great Finnish epos, named Kalevala. His memories can be read in Hungarian language in Ethnographia I (1890 – pages 231-245). Among others Béla Vikár visited Suistamo. Actually he suggested in his memories the visit of "Semejka-brothers", but he noticed that their name in Finnish is originally Vaano.



Anna Easteden visited Budapest in December, 2017 in frame of Suomi 100 events

"The Semejka-family is concerned among those families where the science of singing survived as a legacy. From the brothers only the 75 year old, half-eyed Peter Semejka has been visited me" - Béla Vikár remembered. „He told me that he could sing for me at least three days, but I must have power to note all things to a book. Finally, he had been singing and telling me hunting and magic songs" - wrote Béla Vikár. The ethnographer also mentioned that Peter Semejka invited him to his house and Béla promised for Ukko that next time he will do that.

Petri Shemeikka (or Peter Semejka) died in 1915, at the age 90. In 1889 he should have been only 65, not 75 as Béla Vikár mentioned. But this could be either translation problem either just an error in writings. The great poet is already the part of the history and as we mentioned in the start: somehow we are all connected with the past, and sometimes we follow the path of our ancestors. Béla Vikár has contacted the Shemeikka family and many decades later Anna Easteden (Shemeikka) visited Budapest, Hungary. Maybe was it a will of the old Petri? Or just a coincidence? I felt myself as lucky as Béla was with her great-grandfather. Anna Easteden's life turned upside down after her visit, this year she gave a birth to a beautiful girl, named Everett. Her daughter became 14 weeks old lately and she is simply adorable.

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Other languages:

Forrás webcím: https://melano.hu/ancestor_of_the_famous_finnish_actress_has_been_visited_by_kalevala_translator

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