

Presentation of the Aerial Combat Portrait



The painting is a FINLAND 100 Project celebrating 100 years of Finnish Independence. It is a gift from the Columbia-Pacific Chapter of Finlandia Foundation (FFCPC) to the Ministry of Defense in Helsinki, Finland. Ms. Jerry Ghiglieri painted the portrait of portrait of Lieutenant, Jorma Sarvanto, whose daughter Eila Sarvanto Chisholm is one of the founders of FFCPC. In the picture Katariina Lehtonen delivers the painting to Jukka Juusti, the Minister of Defense.

On January 6th, 1940 Finnish Air Force pilot Per-Erik Sovelius was on patrol when he encountered a group of eight returning Soviet Ilyushin DB-3 bombers. He radioed their position and direction then managed to shoot one down. Responding from the Utti Air Force Base, Lieutenant Jorma Sarvanto attacked the formation in a Fokker D XXI aircraft destroying six additional Soviet bombers and killing the tail gunner in the seventh plane, all within FOUR minutes and only withdrawing when he ran out of ammunition. The incredible air battle drew worldwide attention. Sarvanto's photograph holding a Soviet bomber's rudder bearing the number "5" was widely circulated throughout the western world and it drew attention to the Winter War, an attack on Finland by the Soviet Union on November 30th, 1939.

The Oregon State Legislature has officially declared December 6th, 2017 as the 100th Anniversary of Finnish Independence. Last year our Oregon National Guard was in Finland training with Finnish Armed Forces. Portland State University, Portland, Oregon, has a "Finnish Classroom," room 124, Cramer Hall, dedicated in 1959 during the Oregon Centennial and "Revitalized" in 2009 as an Oregon Sesquicentennial Project.