

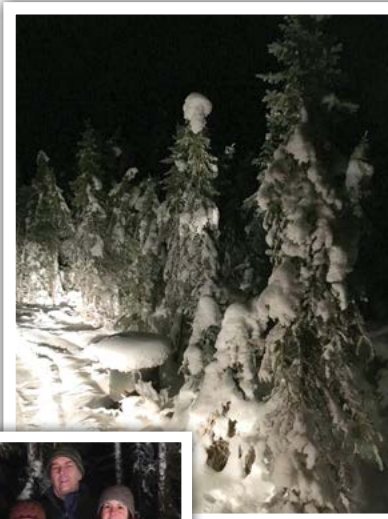
Winter Journey to Fairbanks, Alaska!

by Karine Munk Finser

The unexpected and profound may be met in unusual places. Torin and I flew in a small propeller airplane over darkened earth dappled with white snow and beautiful mountain tops, following a pink horizon that was strangely comforting in this stark contrast. The sun was slowly rising before it would slowly set, and the light was therefore far more precious, a friend to accompany us into a remote place, in the Arctic North: Fairbanks, Alaska.

There is a silence in such a vast place, where people live in homes and cabins tucked away behind frosty hills, and roads are lined with thousands of birches and black spruces, and the eye is freed to see into far distances of space, not into blues but into blacks, nuanced by different degrees of dark, and the white snow reflecting any light source, both by day and by night.

So it was that we discovered that also here anthroposophy lives, if not in great numbers certainly in real depth. We were scheduled to meet some members in the Florence Bates Memorial Library for tea and conversation. Our host Karl Hough drove us through the afternoon darkness, down icy hills and around nearly invisible white corners, then through permafrosted forest where the mountain hinders the sun's passage. A left turn into a narrow driveway where snow-clad trees bent down to us, and there we saw the luminaries, little candle-lit vessels, leading us deeper into the woods to the library. There, a small cabin door opened and warm faces and a scrumptious spread welcomed us. Inside, we met with Karl joined by Tal Harlan, Chelsi Espinosa, Stephanie Graf,



and Deborah Bennett (joined by Cassie Jackson in the center photos.) Hundreds of anthroposophical books lined the walls around this small circle where we heard of the work of this group and the tremendous things shared in this small cabin in the North.

Recently they had met here, every evening of the Holy Nights, to study *The Gospel of Luke* according to Rudolf Steiner, and here they had welcomed many friends including Sergei Prokofieff. And many had traveled to conferences and taken courses and degrees to deepen their capacities, preparing for bringing a carefully nurtured Waldorf impulse to Fairbanks.

We were moved by this group of people and the evening was unforgettable. We ended with Torin speaking of the Theme of the Year, and we said goodbye

with heartfelt wishes to return again one day to this library so full of light and warmth in the middle of such great outer darkness.

Karine Munk Finser is an artist and coordinator of the Renewal Courses at the Center for Anthroposophy in Wilton, New Hampshire. She is pictured with her husband Torin Finser at left.