



1935-2020

### *Rolf Berggård has left us*

An important person in the sphere of culture has left his home village Kangos and many culture friends in the Nordic countries.

Rolf Berggård was one of those who from the beginning supported the idea of a support society for the Laestadius Museum in Pajala, “Friends of the Laestadius Museum”, the question of such a society having been raised during a Laestadius day in Lainio in the summer of 2008. In due course Rolf himself became one of the honorary members of the society. Having joined the society he eagerly discussed different ideas in order to support the work at the Museum which very much depended on volunteers.

During the last years, however, he was not so much able to be present in our little group who takes care of the heritage of Lars Levi Laestadius. But we knew that Rolf was with us in his thoughts. He had been affected by a serious illness, limiting his active participation.

Himself a member of the Laestadius family Rolf did not make a big business of that but saw in it a task he had to take care of. He was a great-great-grandchild of Eleonora Laestadius, the eldest daughter of Lars Levi and Brita Cajsa, in her marriage with Henrik Mäkitalo, a farmer from the village of Kangos. In that branch of the family there are many pedagogues. Many of them in Kangos, among others Rolf’s uncle Edvin Mäkitalo, a central figure in the cultural endeavours of the village. One of the results is to be seen in the Village Museum area with many old houses and pieces from the area. Rolf’s work with this Village Museum cannot be overestimated.

During the Laestadius week in the summer of 2005 we made a visit there with Rolf as our guide. In one way one could say that the Kangos Village Museum is an extension of the Laestadius Museum. He even guided the faraway visitors from USA. Some of the members of Eleonora’s branch of the family had emigrated to USA. Rolf and his wife Eila had a close contact with some of those descendants who visited Kangos and Pajala. In the spring of 2007 some of these visitors brought with them a memorable gift to the Laestadius Museum, a silver spoon that had belonged to Lars Levi and then passed on from generation to generation until it now found its way back to its original user.

Another part of Rolf’s work as a pedagogue was as headmaster of the Lapland’s Mining District folk high school (Malmfältens folkhögskola). There he is said to have been a much liked educator and leader.

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