

TOIVO SIKKA (MAY 22, 1962 – MAY 23, 2015)



The Estonian ethnology and museum world has suffered a serious loss. On May 23, 2015 Toivo Sikka passed away after a long and painful illness. His life ceased at 53 years and a day. For 28 years of that time, Toivo Sikka was an employee at the Estonian National Museum, filling the positions of senior researcher and managing editor. Between 1992 and 2007 he also held the post of research secretary and his thoroughly written reports of the Estonian National Museum's activities, which are published in the museum's yearbooks, are from these years.

From 2007 Toivo Sikka was also the managing editor of the *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*, an international academic journal that was jointly founded by the Estonian Literary Museum, the Estonian National Museum and the University of Tartu.

It is precisely in the capacity of editor that Toivo Sikka excelled professionally. His extraordinarily painstaking attention to detail ensured that writers could rely on solid support. He checked all the names in their spellings, whether it be people or places, multiple times. One could also safely entrust old illegible manuscript texts

to Toivo Sikka because he was able to decipher them by some mysterious intuition. He went about this task with great zeal and enthusiasm.

Toivo Sikka did not wish to be a writer himself, but there was no way around it. Thus he ended up being one of the authors included in the One Hundred Years of the Estonian National Museum collection. In this work, his research focused on a time of dramatic change, i.e. those that took place in Estonian society, and primarily in the Estonian National Museum, before and after Estonia's regaining of independence in 1991.

In addition to editing and writing, Toivo Sikka was also the curator of several exhibitions held at the Estonian National Museum. As an ethnologist, he specialised in studying blacksmithery and blacksmiths. He was also responsible for the compilation of the respective section of the museum's permanent exhibition, which was prepared in 1994. With his characteristic diligence he devoted himself to this theme and consequently delivered several lectures on Estonian blacksmiths and the history of Estonian blacksmithery.

Toivo Sikka was a man with broad cultural interests. He was an active member of multiple societies and organisations, but his greatest passion was dedicated to philately. His colleagues helped him in this endeavour by saving envelopes with remarkable stamps or by sending him postcards from abroad. He was a meticulous and systematic stamp collector, just as he was in all his other projects and pursuits.

Toivo Sikka also participated in sport. He was a superb long-distance runner and participated in many competitions as well as folk runs. He ran around the lakes in Viljandi and Ülemiste several times and took part in several marathons, including the Tartu Ski Marathon.

Toivo Sikka was the archetype of a time-honoured intellectual with a wide range of interests; in addition he kept an alert mind and developed himself both physically and spiritually.

Estonian National Museum
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