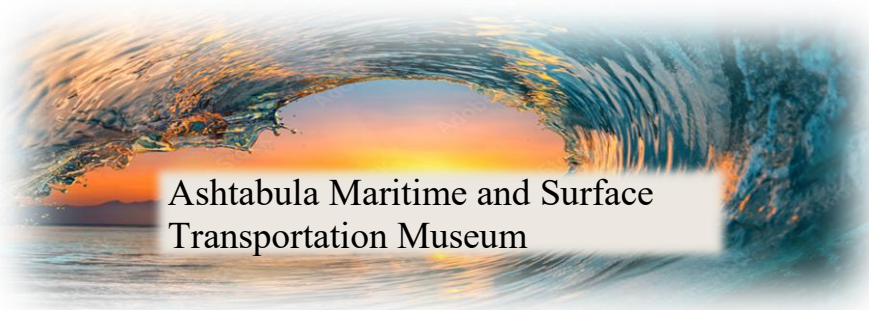


Ashtabula Titanic Survivor Anna Turja Lundi

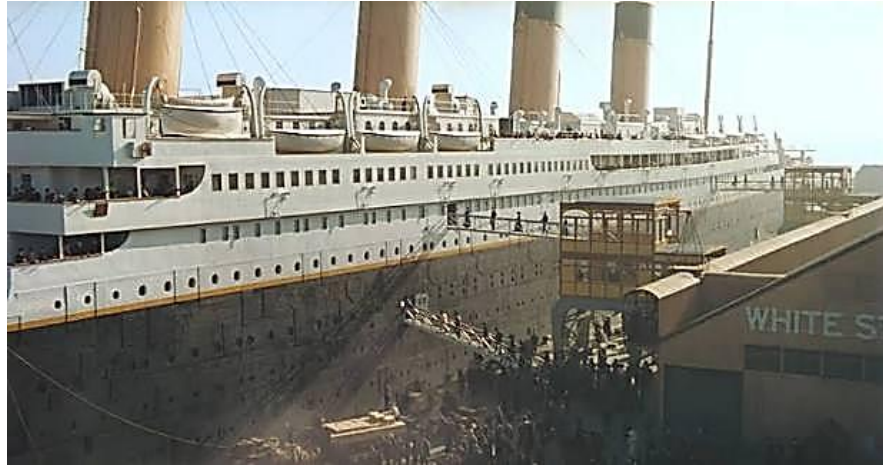


Anna Sophia Turja Lundi, age eighteen. This was the first photo taken of her upon her arrival in Ashtabula.



Ashtabula Maritime and Surface
Transportation Museum

Passengers
boarding the
Titanic in
Southampton in
April 1912



During her lifetime Anna Turja Lundi's Titanic survival story traveled from New York to Conneaut and Ashtabula where Anna married and raised her family and lived most of her adult life. She spent her final years in California with her son Reverend Martin Lundi in Bellflower, California. Anna's family has preserved her legacy and family members from both Conneaut and Ashtabula as well as the Ashtabula Maritime and Surface Transportation Museum continue to tell her story of courage and survival.

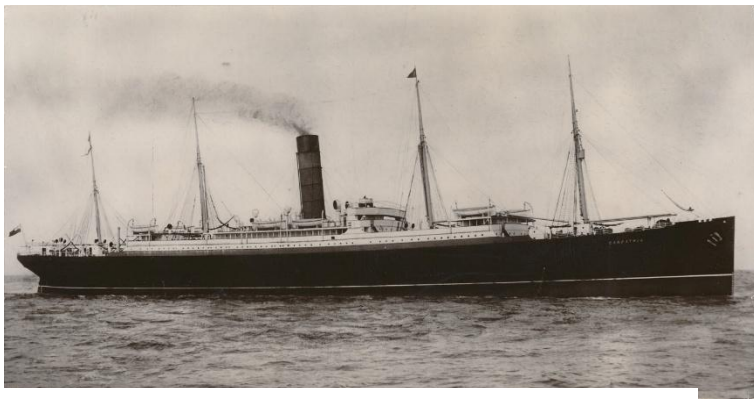
Anna Sophia Turja Lundi's story began in Oulainen, Oulu, Finland, where she came into the world on June 20, 1893. She was the daughter of Heikki Turja and Sanna Hakala and between this and another marriage Heikki had twenty-one children altogether. Anna's half sister Maria who lived in Ashtabula, Ohio and her husband John Lundi convinced her to come to Ashtabula to work in John's prosperous butcher shop and help with their children

John purchased a \$50.00 third class ticket and sent it to Anna to book a passage on the Titanic. Her brother Matt Turja lived in Conneaut, which made the offer even more attractive. Anna mailed a letter to her sister on April 3, 1912, from the port of Hanko saying that she and about one hundred Finnish immigrants were about to sail from there to connect with the Titanic. Maria Lundi received the letter on April 18.th

Anna boarded the *Titanic* in Southampton and travelled in third class. She shared a room with Maria Panula, her children and neighbor Sanni Riihivuori. Her roommates did not survive the Titanic sinking. Anna Sophia Turja survived.

Matti Turja paced back and forth in front of the Nickel Plate Train Station in Ashtabula. The long, anxious wait to discover if his sister Anna had lived or sank into the depths of the North Atlantic with the Titanic had ended. Anna had survived! Matti hurried from his home in Conneaut to meet her at the Nickel Plate Railroad Station in Ashtabula and take her to the home of their half-sister Maria and brother-in-law John Lundi who lived at 81 Oak Street in Finn Town.

Matti and his family lived on Lake Drive in Conneaut, and he worked on the Conneaut docks, most likely the Pittsburgh & Conneaut Dock which thrived in this era, employing many immigrant and local workers. A few weeks earlier Anna's half-sister Maria had received a letter from the White Star Line, informing them that Anna had not survived the sinking of the Titanic. After agonizing days and nights of mourning, the Lundi family received notification from the White Star Line that her name had accidentally been placed on the list of people who had not survived. After much confusion and effort because she did not speak English, White Star Line officials confirmed her identity and survival.



The Carpathia

Anna had indeed survived, and she had been transferred to the Carpathia. She arrived in New York City aboard the Carpathia on Thursday, April 18, 1912, at Pier 54 around 9:25 p.m. Because of her status as a surviving immigrant who

lost all her possession, federal officials did not require her to be processed at Ellis Island and White Star Line officials took her directly from the pier to St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan.

St. Vincent's Hospital staff confined Anna to her room for a week for her safety and to enable her to recuperate from the trauma and exposure of the Titanic's sinking. By the time she left New York around April 25, 1912, The White Star Line had paid Anna's entire medical bill, the Red Cross provided clothing and other necessities, and the White Star Line also purchased a ticket to Ohio for her on the Nickel Plate Railroad.

Although the New York Central Railroad controlled the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad which featured high-speed luxury travel, Anna took the Nickel Plate which connected to a parallel track running directly into Ashtabula. Her brother Matti met her at the Nickel Plate Depot, and he escorted her to Maria's home at 82 Oak Street in Ashtabula.

Anna came to the best haven available after her traumatic Titanic experience. Finn Town, a closely bonded Finnish community surrounded the Lundi's Oak Street home and expanded into Ashtabula Harbor including Cherry Street, West 8th Street, and most of the west side of the harbor. Italian immigrants provided a counterweight on the Harbor's east side.

Quiet and shy Anna's arrival at the Lundi home proved to be another challenge for her to overcome. Family members noted that Anna seemed dazed and traumatized. Neighbors from all parts of Finn Town crowded into the Lundi home to meet the young woman that a newspaper reporter had described as "fair, slender, and exceeding bashful."



Anna slowly adapted to her new Ashtabula surroundings. Most of her fellow Finnish immigrants in Ashtabula Harbor of this era worked exhausting, hazardous shifts as manual labors on the docks, on the railroads, or in other labor-intensive industries.

John Lundi followed a different path by earning a position as a prominent, wealthy, local business owner. His butcher shop catered to the needs and wants of the dense Finnish population around Oak Street, providing traditional meat and staples to workers and boarding houses. Following the pattern of the classic 1912 neighborhood meat market, John's butcher shop also served as a gathering place for people to gossip, exchange news from Finland, and transact business solely in Finnish.

Finn Town itself conversed entirely in Finnish, making it easy for immigrants like Anna Turja to seamlessly live, shop, and socialize without meeting the challenge of learning English. The neighborhood featured immigrant operated general stores, boarding houses, and a shantytown near the Cascade Docks where Finns operated fishing bait and tackle shops. Seven Finnish owned pubs vied for public participation alongside Finnish temperance societies, while public saunas were popular with everyone, providing physical health, relaxation, and community gossip.

Finn Town churches guided Finns in their daily lives and conducted regular services, funerals, and weddings. Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church, a Suomi Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church, served the immigrant dock and ore shoveling workforce, while the Finnish Congregational Church on Oak Street ministered to the independent Finnish immigrants in Finn Town. Gethsemane Evangelical Lutheran Church played a guiding role in Finn Town.



Finnish American Heritage Association

Finn Town residents appreciated music, and they knew how to have fun. They formed brass bands, and choirs like the Humina Band which featured weekend entertainment and concert tours. They gathered at Sovinto Hall which towered as the largest wooden structure

in Ohio since its construction in 1897 for folk dancing, theatrical plays, and community parties. They established and participated in sports clubs, swimming, and outdoor gatherings near the Ashtabula River and Lake Erie.

Anna Turja enjoyed the advantages of immediate family, and Finnish culture in her new homeland, as well as surviving the worse maritime disaster of her time, but her life had been propelled into new pathways from the ones she had planned to take. She did not go to work in her brother-in-law John's butcher shop, after all. She may have helped with her half-sister Maria's children, but only for a short time.

On April 30, 1913, Anna Sofia Turja married Emil Theophilus Lundi in Ashtabula. Emil, a fellow Finnish immigrant, was the brother of John Lundi, the brother-in-law who had enticed Anna into embarking on the Titanic to come to Ashtabula to work in his butcher shop. The couple settled into a home at 1459 West 9th Street, which was part of Finn Town, located up the hill from Ashtabula Harbor. The couple eventually had seven children, four sons and three daughters.

Anna spent most of her adult life in Ohio, but Finish remained the primary language in their home, and she never completely learned English. Anna cultivated a calm personality and focused on her home and children, instead of dwelling on the Titanic tragedy. She did not talk about her Titanic experiences often with outsiders, and then only briefly, relying on her children, especially her son Martin, to act as interpreters during interviews and events as she grew older. Every April 15, she told her family her Titanic survival story. Later in her life she consented to interviews with the Ashtabula Star Beacon and local papers, but she never capitalized on her survival story.

In 1953, the film “Titanic” appeared in theaters and Anna Lundi was invited to view the film’s Ashtabula premier. Her granddaughter, Kay Piper recalled her grandmother’s reaction to the film. in a 1979 interview. This was the first movie her grandmother, now 60 years old, ever saw and she did not understand



Kay Piper in a 1979 family photograph with her grandmother, about three years before Anna Lundi died at age 89.

Hollywood film making. She thought she had just seen a documentary and her family remarked that she seemed dazed.

When someone asked her if that was a realistic portrayal of that night, Anna said, “If they were closed enough to take those pictures, why didn’t someone help us?”

Anna never forgot her Titanic experience and her recollections did not dim with time. She described the Titanic as being a beautiful ship just like a town, lacking nothing. There were swimming pools, concert halls, and libraries. She said the third-class accommodations were elegant.

Anna told family members that the thing that bothered her the most was hearing people screaming. She recalled survivors bobbing in the ocean calling for help and

a minute later just silence. The sounds haunted her for the rest of her life. When some of the people tried to climb into the overloaded lifeboats, the men at the oars pushed them away. Even people wearing life jackets did not survive long in the frigid north Atlantic waters.

In every telling her Titanic story, Anna Lundi noted several fateful occurrences that made the difference in her survival chances. When she and her roommates left their cabin after the collision, a Titanic crew member tried to push them back. They brushed past him and continued toward the deck, and then the crew members closed and chained the doors behind them. When they reached the deck, some of her companions led the group to a higher deck where she thought they would be safer.

Anna changed her mind and returned to the lower deck where several people congregated. A sailor grabbed her and shoved into one of the last remaining lifeboats, lifeboat number fifteen. The people in the boat could not see the Titanic sink, but they heard the boilers explode and the gurgling of water rushing into the sinking ship. About 1,500 people out of 2,200 died in the Titanic sinking and as a third-class passenger, Anna's odds of survival had not been in her favor since four out of five people in third class died.

The Carpathia picked up her lifeboat, No. 15, at about 7 a.m. on April 15, 1912.



Anna Lundi told and retold her story, acknowledging the miracle of her survival, but downplaying her courage at dealing with the traumatic aftermath of the sinking and how it shaped her life. She began a Star Beacon interview by saying, "I thank God every day for everything, I am a happy lady."

Anna's husband Emil worked on the Ashtabula docks for a time and later worked as a custodian at Harbor High School for 29 years.

When Emil died in 1952, Anna remained in Ashtabula for decades before she moved to California. She passed away in 1982 at age 89, and she is buried in Edgewood Cemetery in Ashtabula along with her husband Emil.



DR. PAUL J. COLLANDER AND FAMILY

One of the many ironies of Anna Turja 's Titanic story is that she likely never met fellow Finn Erik Gustaf Collander who was born in Mikkell, Finland on April 19, 1884. He trained as an engineer and worked as a technical director at a large paper mill near Helsinki.

On April 1, 1912, he left Finland to travel to the United States to study and to pay a surprise visit his cousin Paul Josef Collander a doctor who had emigrated just eighteen months before and settled in Ashtabula.

Like Anna, Erik boarded the Titanic at Southampton but as a second-class passenger paying between \$60.00 to \$65.00 for his passage.

Titanic histories do not record whether Erik befriended and spent time with other Finnish passengers traveling in second class

or if he talked to third class passengers like Anna. The irony of his story is that his cousin Dr. Paul Collander lived at 132 Oak Street and Anna's half-sister and brother-in-law Maria and John Lundi lived at 81 Oak Street. Erik and Anna were both bound for the same destination, and Anna finally arrived on Oak Street, but Eric did not. His body was never found.



Erik Gustaf Collander