



Sysmä Theatre House

# The Sysmä architectural heritage trail

Trail design and descriptions:  
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Visitors wishing to explore Sysmä's rich architectural heritage can choose from four different trails, of which two have been combined here. For full details on all four routes, please visit [www.visitpajanne.fi](http://www.visitpajanne.fi).

## 1 Authentic village atmosphere

Pusukuja, Maalarintie and Poikkitie

Visitors can still get a sense of old Sysmä life along these three streets which form a traditional Finnish village milieu built around a crop of residential and outbuildings, demarcated by traditional fencing and concealing enclosed yards and gardens. The buildings, including the grounds are private property and visitors are asked to show due consideration.

## 2 Lopperi 1843, Lopperintie 1

**Architect unknown.** Lopperi is one of the largest farms in Sysmä. It is also a site of great historical significance locally, having served as the venue for Sysmä's first ever council meeting in 1866. The building was also a guesthouse until the late 1880s and, as was common for the other great houses in the village, also provided the facilities for a local court. At Lopperi, an enclosed yard is surrounded by a series of old buildings, including the main building, stables, a storehouse, a granary and a stone cow shed that predates the main house as well as a so-called *hollitupa*, a building where high ranking officials traditionally waited for transport that local farmers were legally obliged to provide for them free of charge. By local standards, the main building is richly decorated with wood-carvings. The panelling, ornamental corner decorations as well as decorative window frames and ornamental eaves give the house a visually abundant finish. The delicate window design has also been used in the *hollitupa* and the window at the end of the stables building. The Lopperi yard is a private area.

## 3 Sysmä Theatre House, Väihkyläntie 1

**Former Sysmä Savings Bank building. Built by architects Usko Nyström, Petrelius, Penttilä. Renovation in 1998 undertaken by the architect Ritva-Maija Saarinen.** At the time it was built, the Sysmän Säästöpankki (Sysmä Savings Bank) building was a rarity as only five savings banks in Finland had the luxury of occupying their own purpose-built premises. The design embodies many architectural features typical of the national romantic period, which were only just coming into fashion at the time of construction. The main façade of the building is symmetrical – something that does not feature in what could be called Art Nouveau proper buildings. The tall attic spaces and high ceilings give the building a castle-like feel. The main hall is readily discernible in the shape of the building. The timber-clad façade and wooden decorations draw their inspiration from outside Finland, as was typical of the early national romantic movement. The building has variously served as a post office, library reading room, Finnish Civil War era civil guard military headquarters and even as a furniture store. A bank operated on the premises until 1936. The building was sensitively renovated to mark its centennial and is now used as a meeting and events venue.

## 4 Villa Sarkia, early 20th century, Myllymäentie 1

**Former bank manager residence. Architects Usko Nyström, Petrelius, Penttilä.** The manager of the local savings bank lived immediately adjacent to the bank building, enjoying a commute of just 10 metres. The residence was more pared down than the bank building itself. The hip roof, portico and upstairs windows allow the building to blend in with its next door neighbour. In later years, the building has served as a dentist's surgery and a nursery. Since 2010, Sysmä Council and the Nuoren Voiman Liitto cultural society have offered artists' residences at the building.

## 5 Aurinkola, Valittulantie 7/ Pusukuja

**Former Tenhovaara/Tevali building. Architect unknown.**

Aurinkola is a piece of old Helsinki in Sysmä. It is thought that the log-framed Empire-style building was moved from the Finnish capital and re-built at its current location in 1938. The hip roofed building with its series of t-shaped windows is horizontally clad in timber, with stretches of vertical timber cladding both at the very top and bottom of the walls. The building is entered via an enclosed porch structure located to the back of the building. Following many eventful decades, Aurinkola (Sunnyside) was renovated as a private residence and remains a cheerful addition to village life, a place truly worthy of its name.

## 6 Harmaala 1863, Lilumäentie 1 / Valittulantie

**Extension built in 1920s. Architect unknown.** One of the oldest buildings in Sysmä, Harmaala housed a village store until 1930. This hip-roofed, Empire-style log building is a rarity for Sysmä. Its harmonious exterior appearance is due to the understated palette and the regularly spaced six-paned windows, repeated across the attic floor. The shape and façade design are reminiscent of Aurinkola (Site 5). The delicate and subtle decorative woodcarvings over the windows are the perfect finishing touch for this wonderful building.

## 7 Suurkylä Manor 1801, Suurkyläntie 2

**Following changes made in the 1810s, the building took on its current shape in 1867. Architect unknown. Constructed by carpenter Gustaf Nordgren and master bricklayer Gustaf Stenberg.** Commissioned by Hans Ander Wijkman, the manor house's main building, a log structure, dominates the surrounding agrarian landscape from its hilltop location. The entrance and outbuildings are to the north of the building. The horizontally clad walls feature pilasters topped with Ionian capitals as well as several windows. The semi-circular top panes are false windows and reference the arched windows of stone buildings. The high attic windows give the

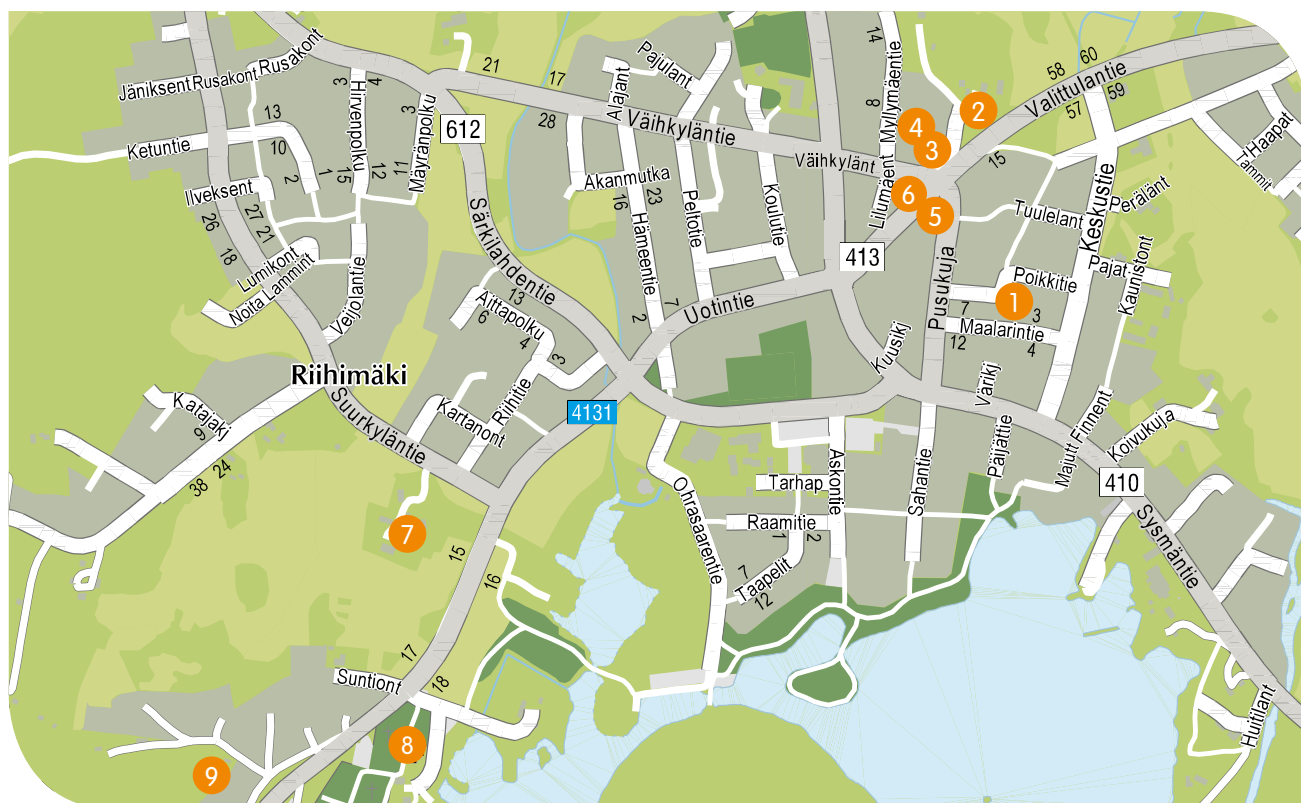
impression of a two-storey structure. The combination of the yellow ochre finish with white accents hints at Empire-style influences but the detailing speaks of late 19th century historicism. The manor house with its range of outbuildings and old trees is a highly distinctive and distinguished feature of the village. The only one of its kind, it speaks volumes about Sysmä's rich manor house heritage. The manor house grounds are private.

## 8 St Olaf's Church 1510-20

**Sacristy re-built c. 1660 and church building extended in 18th century. Extended to cross-shaped design by Carl Ludwig Engel (design 1826, constructed 1832-35). Restoration by: architect Kauno S Kallio (1953).** The lakeside location of the village church reflects the important role of Lake Majutvesi as an ancient transport route. Made of natural stone, this medieval building is a rarity in the inland region east of Päijänne. The beautiful church has undergone a series of transformations over time and offers a delightful setting for the small local congregation. Finished in white chalk paint, the end walls are decorated in red brick. The red brick decorative features remain in the original part of the church, while in the later, Engel-designed arms of the cross the brick-clad areas have been covered in plaster and white chalk paint. The wooden bell tower from 1845 consists of three parts and with a quadrangular floor layout throughout represents the western Finnish style.

## 9 Sysmä Museum of Local History and Culture 1855, Makasiininmäentie 4

**Former parish granary.** Leipälä, the Sysmä parish granary was completed some 10 years before the great famine. Constructed using natural stone, the imposing castle-like structure served as a granary that provided grain for local residents on interest during the challenging times. It could be considered a type of bank. As banking services spread in Finland, the parish granary system became unsustainable. Today, the building houses a local history museum run by the Sysmä Seura association.



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