

## NEITURI'S CITY-LIKE LIVING IN THE EARLY 1900's

Life on the neck of land situated between Konnevesi and Keitele lakes was quite busy during the early 20th century. At the Temi's sawmill there were as many as 150 workers. Neituri was fortified by the order of the Russian Emperor in case that the Germans attack. After the ramparts were ready, it was time to build the canal, which gathered several hundreds of men during the summer months. But these times are now just a memory.

The stone ice pick – a tool of fishermen and hunters - found in the field northside of Neituri canal, proves that there have been people in the area as early as 6000 B.C. In their attempts for expansion the Häme tribes hunted throughout the area. During the 1500's, when people started to inhabit the wilderness, big part of Neituri was handed over to the noble family of Fleming. The local names Temi and Temintaipale originate from Fleming, which was difficult to pronounce.

The road from Istunmäki to Vesanto was built in the 1830's. The idea of a canal was mentioned for the first time in the 1880's, but the railroad of Suonenjoki, which would have passed through the area of Neituri, postponed the project.

In 1909 brothers Vilho and Johan Jakob Pietiläinen together with the businessman Otto Hyvärinen built a steam sawmill at Temintaipale, located on the shore of Konnevesi, a couple of kilometers from the current canal in direction Vesanto. The storage area and the port were built on the shore of Keitele, from where there was a connection to the railroad in Suolahti. The sawmill had its own "railroad" - horses that pulled loads of timber through the neck of land. Boards and planks were towed to Suolahti via mill's own Elli ship. There was also a planer and a mill in the area. A plywood mill was also planned to be build, but the brothers had new projects on their mind. New owners took control of the sawmill in the early 1930's, but it ended in bankruptcy. Pietiläinen brothers originate from Pietilänniemi in Hytölä. They also had a boat called Aura, which was used for church- and leisure trips on the Konnevesi Lake from 1906.

In 1913 Vilho Pietiläinen bought a farm in Hankasalmi and built a sawmill, which today is owned by Vapo Timber Oy. Pietiläinen, who practiced a number of different businesses, was also one of the co-founders of the plywood mill in Suolahti, built between 1918 and 1920.

### In the pictures:

1. Vilho and Elina Pietiläinen with their family in 1920's. Girls from left to right Irja, Eeva and Helvi.
2. In the early 1920's Vilho Pietiläinen was the first car owner in Hankasalmi and he did important transports with it. It was told that he drove the bishop to the Inauguration of Konnevesi church in 1922. At the backseat is sitting Elina Pietiläinen. Martta Hämäläinen and Helmi Laitinen are standing.