



A Celebration of Heritage: Danish Folk Costumes in America

Danish folk costumes represent one of the most colorful parts of the heritage left behind by Danish immigrants to the United States. Some costumes were brought over from the old country; others were made after arriving in the new land.

The costumes that were brought over served as reminders of the old country – its history and culture, and were passed down through the families that settled here. The costumes reflected a variety of regions in Denmark and were often rich in both color and material. The ones found in the Museum's collection are often missing their original blouse and apron, perhaps indicating that these parts weren't seen as being as valuable as the actual dress, vest and pants and therefore weren't saved or were possibly worn out in more routine activities.

The costumes that were made in America didn't reflect regions in Denmark so much as they reflected Danish heritage in general in terms of their colors and uses. Danish American costumes were worn in parades, at folk dancing and other events celebrating

Danish heritage. They became a significant connection to the Danish roots of the people who wore them.

This exhibit shows the variation in color and style characteristic of the original Danish costumes; at the same time it gives a good idea of an emerging fashion characterizing Danish American folk dancing costumes.



"Five-fold bonnets" earned their name from the five folds in the back. The bonnets were used throughout Denmark. In the beginning of the 19th century, bonnets with different colored silk embroidery were common. From the 1850's onward, however, women wanted "clear necks", which meant bonnets that had only backs embroidered with either gold or silver thread and nothing else.

These Odsherred folk costumes, (left) made from cotton, wool, chamois, linen and silk, are original Danish folk costumes (now over 200 years old) brought over from Denmark. They were worn by Bertine and Jacob Norregaard at the New York World's Fair in 1939-1940, as part of the opening event of the Danish Pavilion.

Bertine Jensen Norregaard's costumes came down through her family. Bertine Jensen and Jacob Norregaard were in their twenties in 1903-04, teaching gymnastics and folk dancing at folk schools in Denmark, when they met. They became engaged, and Jacob sailed in 1905 from Bremerhavn to Tyler, Minnesota. Bertine came later (1906),



Danish American folk dancing costumes – The costumes made by those of Danish heritage here in the United States have served as reminders of Denmark, but in a manner that has become identifiable as Danish American. Instead of representing regions in Denmark, the costumes represented being Danish as a whole and, therefore, they were more alike than the traditional Danish folk costumes.

Danish American costumes, particularly those used for folk dancing, tend to be characterized by the use of three decorative borders on the skirt. A red ribbon is often used in a lacing pattern to close the costume vest, a practice seldom seen in the costumes made in Denmark. The velvet caps, when used with the folk dancing costumes, frequently have narrow lace edgings and satin ribbons, which hang down on each side of the caps and are used to tie a bow. The white cotton aprons frequently have fine needlework inserts. Red and white fabric is often used to represent the Danish flag.

The folk dancing costumes seen here were worn at special events such as parades, community festivities, and even at The World's Fair in 1939. This way they have become a way of not only remembering the Danish heritage but also teaching others of the rich history belonging to Danish immigrants and their descendants.



Folk costumes in America . . . continued from page 1

and they married in Minneapolis, Minnesota on November 10, 1906. Bertine brought the costumes with her when she came to America.

The fabrics in the costumes were all hand-woven and sewn by Ole Jensen's wife, who was from Odsherred in Zealand. She was Bertine's great-great-grandmother.

Woman's costume—The black skirt made in 1890 is a replacement for the original made in 1790. The bands of ribbon used for trim were taken from the original 1790 skirt. These ribbons were from France.

Man's costume—The vest displayed here is Ole Nielsen's original vest of homespun red and green striped woolen material; it was made in 1790. The chamois pants, which were made by Bertine to replace the first pair in approximately 1930, are a copy of the original 1790 pants. Ole Nielsen's original red wool cap from 1790 is also displayed.

Danish folk costumes were made primarily from 3 different fabrics:

1. "Vadmel" — fabric made from wool
2. "Hvergarn" — fabric made from a mixture of wool and flax
3. "Lærred" — fabric made from flax

The making of fabric was a way of saving up. Putting together a chest full of clothes, beddings, etc. for the daughters of the family was an investment in the future, securing a good economic status for one's children. Also, to have lots of fabric for making more clothes was important before marriage, because the content of the chest was to last a whole lifetime.

The wool was mostly obtained from sheep belonging to the family. The women went through the whole processing of the wool themselves. This took a long time and also demanded a certain expertise, which took years to gain. Each farmhouse would have 3-7 sheep and in May and September the women washed and cut the sheep. After the washing and cutting a long process of turning the wool into fabric usable for costumes began. During the long winter nights the women would work on the wool with their children and maids. The wool would then be used for socks, hats, mittens and shawls or woven together with flax into fabric that could be used to make skirts, vests etc.

The bonnet was the part of the costumes that varied the most from region to region. It showed the difference between young and old, unmarried and married, and rich and poor.

It was usually made of black velvet; the embroidery styles, which enhanced it, were reflective of the wearer's region.

Unmarried women took up bonnet making as an extra income. Anyone wanting a bonnet would give an amount of money to the seamstress and have her make the most of it. Bonnet makers were usually daughters of craftsmen; they had learned the necessary skills from their mothers or grandmothers. Once women got married they didn't have time to make bonnets, as the work that went into them was very time demanding.

The men's costumes (center) varied less from region to region than the women's did. Both men and boys wore hats — often knitted and red. The vests were made so that they could be turned over and worn on either side to make the most of the fabric.

Up until the Renaissance, men wore long pants but after that the knee-pants were introduced and only fishermen stuck to the long ones. The knee-pants were made from white wool, velvet or chamois and sometimes had beautiful buttons that served as both ornaments and a way of fastening the pants. The women had many things that would help them flaunt their wealth, lace and embroidery among them, but the men had only buttons to show off as status symbols.

Shirts were a complicated matter made from 15 pieces that had to be cut from one single piece of fabric. The wedding shirt was made by the future wife and often the man would wear it from his wedding day to the day he died.



The apron (above) was an important part of a woman's folk costume during both work and festivities. No matter which occasion, it always had to be clean. For everyday purposes, aprons were made of linen or wool and for more joyous occasions, they could be made of silk. Scarfs were worn around the neck to protect the skin from the cold, but also to keep the pale skin that was so highly sought after.

Girls went bareheaded with braided hair or wore caps until they got married. Once married, a woman could not show her hair and it was therefore hidden under a scarf or a bonnet.

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Director's Corner

by John Mark
Nielsen

On January 21, 2004, Norman C. Bansen died. He was one of several individuals whose vision led to the founding of The Danish Immigrant

Museum, and he was a charter member of the Museum's Board of Directors. With his passing, I lost a mentor and friend.

Many of us can point to specific individuals who have influenced our lives. Among those I would identify are my parents and grandparents who instilled in me a love and appreciation for family and for my cultural and spiritual heritage. It was Norman Bansen, however, who as my teacher at Dana College introduced me to Scandinavian and Asian literature. The study and teaching of these literatures have shaped most of my professional life. Exploration of Danish and Indian culture has resulted in opportunities to travel and teach in Denmark and India, experiences that were profoundly influential.

But Norman's influence on my life was also manifested in another important way. In the autumn of 1982, Norman suggested to Signe Betsinger and Arnold Bodtker that I be added to the committee assigned to identify a site for a museum that preserved and celebrated the story of Danish immigration. I was appointed to that committee, and so began a personal journey that has led step by step to my current position as Executive Director. In this position, I have the responsibility of carrying forward Norman's vision and the vision of those many individuals who

have shared the dream of creating The Danish Immigrant Museum.

In assuming this position, I have been challenged to grow in other ways as well. I have come to appreciate how the generosity of individuals who share an appreciation for their heritage makes the Museum possible. One can have a vision, but one also needs resources. We have been blessed with generous donors who give what they can. For this I am grateful.

We also have individuals who understand that the long-term success of The Danish Immigrant Museum involves investing beyond their lifetimes, and so they have made provisions for the Museum in their estates. Norman was one of these individuals. So too were Herbert C. Madison of Bethesda, Maryland, Reola Johnsen Lerager of Wichita, Kansas, and Clyde E. Johnson of Omaha, Nebraska, all who passed away last summer. In designating the Museum as a beneficiary, these individuals have expressed faith in our work and invested in our future.

When I was a young member of the Museum's site selection committee and later a charter member of the Museum's Board of Directors, I did not fully appreciate the significance of this kind of support. Indeed, I confess that there's still a part of me that finds it uncomfortable to discuss issues of this nature. With time and experience, I'm growing in my understanding. I'm grateful for Norman's influence in my life; I carry a part of him with me. But I'm also grateful for the provisions that he and others have made for the Museum in their estates. Their generosity allows us to be and to grow.

Insuring the Museum's Future:

How You Can Contribute

The Danish Immigrant Museum's future can be assured through the continued support of its members. There are a number of ways in which you, our members, can make significant contributions.

CASH GIFTS

Cash gifts are the simplest way of

realizing your charitable objectives and supporting the Museum's work. Cash gifts qualify as a charitable deduction for federal income tax purposes and are fully deductible up to 50% of your adjusted gross income in the year that you make the gift. Deduction amounts exceeding this limit may be carried forward up to

Insuring the Museum's future . . . – continued from page 3

five additional years.

SECURITIES

Gifts of appreciated securities held longer than one year (stocks, bonds, and stock in closely held companies) may also be used to contribute to the Museum. You may completely avoid capital gains tax while deducting the full current fair market value of the gift. Transfer of securities to the Museum can be done through the Atlantic, Iowa, Office of UBS Financial Services at 1.800.442.5887.

BEQUESTS

Through a will, you may assure the Museum's legacy. The Museum may be named as a residuary beneficiary of an estate, as the recipient of a specified gift or contingent bequest, or as the ultimate beneficiary of a charitable remainder trust. Bequests are deductible for federal

estate tax purposes. Gifts of IRA assets are especially good bequests to the Museum.

LIFE INSURANCE

There are several ways that you can give to the Museum through life insurance. You can give a policy that you already own, assign the dividends as a gift, or name the Museum as a beneficiary of the death benefits. In addition to estate tax benefits, donors may also gain an income tax deduction while contributing to the Museum.

REAL ESTATE

A gift of property held for more than one year can provide the same federal tax advantages as a gift of securities. You may also choose to retain the right to live in a donated residence after your

gift has been made.

GIFTS WITH AN INCOME INTEREST TO THE MUSEUM

Through a charitable lead trust, donors can provide income to the Museum for a period of years, at the end of which the principal reverts back to the donor or passes to other members of the individual's family. Often there is a significant estate tax benefit.

The staff at The Danish Immigrant Museum welcomes your questions and would be delighted to discuss gift opportunities with you.

Many members have made significant contributions of stock or named The Danish Immigrant Museum a beneficiary of their estate.

"Across Oceans, Across Time"® in Radio and Print

In an effort to serve our widely scattered membership, the Museum has initiated a weekly radio program that can be accessed on the Internet and a column that appears in the two Danish language newspapers: *Bien* and *Den Danske Pioneer*.

On Tuesday mornings, beginning in April, KJAN, the local radio station in Atlantic, Iowa, is broadcasting a five-minute program from the Museum. Staff members describe exhibits and artifacts or share stories from Danish culture or the immigrant experience.

Each week's program is placed on KJAN's website where you can listen no matter where you live. Access this weekly broadcast by going to www.kjan.com and then clicking on "Contests and Programs." On the next screen, click on the Museum's logo, wait while it loads, and you'll hear from us.

Last December, the Museum initiated a column in the two Danish language newspapers. Issues feature stories and photographs from the Museum's collections or from the Family History and Genealogy Center, written by Barbara Lund-Jones and Michele McNabb.

Our ability to run these stories has been made possible in part through the generosity of the Steffensen family, publishers of *Den Danske Pioneer* and Gert and Jytte Madsen publishers of *Bien*.

A Letter from the Royal Danish Embassy, Washington D.C.

ROYAL DANISH EMBASSY
Washington, DC

30 December 2003

Since its establishment in 1983 The Danish Immigrant Museum is fulfilling a very important mission as a preserver of Danish culture and heritage for present and future generations of Danes and Danish-Americans in the United States. The Museum is the only one of its kind in the United States.

Through its exhibitions and programs, the Museum tells the stories of the early as well as later Danish immigrants' experiences traveling across North America.

Coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the Museum this year the Family History and Genealogy Center was expanded and thereby improved the research facilities and resources.

I am proud of all the efforts and achievements of the Museum and I wish to thank the staff for their dedicated work.

All these achievements are however not possible without support from donors and I therefore highly recommend support be given to The Danish Immigrant Museum.

I wish The Danish Immigrant Museum continued success.

Sincerely yours,

Ulrik Federspiel
Ambassador

Editor's Note: A significant monetary gift from the Royal Danish Embassy accompanied Ambassador Federspiel's letter for which the Museum is deeply grateful.



Angela Stanford



Terri Johnson

The Museum Welcomes New Staff

The Danish Immigrant Museum is pleased to introduce two new members to our staff. Angela Stanford joins us as Registrar and Collections Manager, and Terri Johnson has been hired as the Museum's Executive Assistant. Each comes with experiences and skills that complement the present staff. We're happy they have joined us.

"A small town girl," as she puts it, Angela grew up in Allerton on the Iowa-Missouri border, south of Des Moines. She attended Graceland University in Lamoni where she majored in History and ran cross-country. During the summer of 1998, she interned at the Prairie Trails Historical Museum in Corydon, Iowa. Her experience there inspired an interest in museums that led her to a graduate program in Historical Administration at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Illinois. After completing her coursework, she interned at the Boulder History Museum in Boulder, Colorado.

and then returned to the museum in Corydon as Database and Exhibit Development Assistant.

Terri Johnson of Manning, Iowa, most recently served as Executive Director of the Manning Heritage Foundation, a non-profit organization with responsibility for promotion and maintenance of Hausbarn that the Foundation moved from Germany. A native of North Minneapolis, Minnesota, she worked for the City of Robbinsdale where she served as City Clerk from 1991 to 1994. In 1994, she and her husband, Richard, and their two children relocated to Manning, Iowa, to escape the hectic pace of the Twin Cities. Terri says, however, that one can get just as involved in small towns as there's so much to do. She comes to the Museum with experience and contacts in Iowa tourism.

Former Board Member to Lead AARP

Erik D. Olsen, D.D.S. of Glenbrook, Nevada, has been named President-elect of the American Association of Retired People (AARP). He will serve as President-elect for two years and automatically become national President in 2006.

Erik and his wife, Jackie are members of the Museum's Lifetime Leadership Society, a group of individuals who have donated over \$25,000 to the Museum. Erik also served on the Museum's Board

of Director from 1995 to 1999, and both he and his wife continue in their support for the Museum.



Current Board Member is Named Knight of Dannebrog

Board member Anelise Sawkins, Honorary Danish Consul for Minnesota and the Dakotas, has been named a Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog by Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. Anelise was presented with the Cross of Dannebrog at the Annual Queens Ball held in Minneapolis on April 17, 2004.



Museum Membership Drive

The Danish Immigrant Museum depends on its membership to meet the challenges of preserving the Danish immigrant heritage. We need our membership to meet the challenges of caring for the artifacts from thousands of donors. Members have the satisfaction of knowing that their support does help preserve history.

The Danish Immigrant Museum, along with the joint efforts of its Board of Directors, is taking an active role of increasing the Museum's membership. Our overall goal is to recruit 500 new or lapsed memberships by August 31st the end of our fiscal year.

At the February 2004 Board meeting in Yorba Linda, California, the Board dedicated itself to each present board member recruiting ten new or lapsed members. The Board is actively pursuing this new endeavor. The Museum is grateful for their willingness to commit to this important effort.

The Museum's development department has prepared itself for the assignment of conducting a Phone-a-Thon Drive. This recruitment campaign is targeting the Museum's lapsed memberships from 1997 through 2002. The structure of this action begins with the mailing of a groundwork letter inviting the individual to rejoin. The second phase of the membership drive is to hold a Phone-A-Thon. With the help of volunteers, an invitational phone call is made two weeks following the sent letter to those who did not respond. At this time, we also learn how the Museum might better serve their interests and any concerns or suggestions they may have for the Museum.

Basic membership provides admission to the Museum and pays for three newsletters and an annual report. Every dollar beyond the basic membership assists in preserving the collection, maintaining the building facilities and paying for staff. Gifts of artifacts are gratefully accepted, but each gift brings with it an on-going cost of caring for it.

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From A Curatorial Perspective . . . by Barbara Lund-Jones

Internship projects have dominated the last few months. From February 9th through April 21st, Freja Børsting, a student in Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen, served as an intern in the curatorial department. Her responsibilities involved research for and participation in the planning of the 2004 spring/summer exhibit, *A Celebration of Heritage: Danish Folk Costumes in America*.

Freja was responsible for photograph-

ing and documenting the individual folk costumes in the Museum's collection, as well as the general exhibition research, which placed the costumes within their proper context, whether it be from a specific region of Denmark or, more properly, within the Danish American folk dancing tradition.

Freja dressed all of the exhibition mannequins and arranged their placement within the exhibition. She took her work at the Museum very seriously

and made significant contributions to the projects in which she was involved. Many of Freja's research findings are embedded in the text accompanying the exhibit photographs on pages one and two of this newsletter. Freja was also an enormous help with a major book-sorting project initiated by the curatorial department early this year.

Aubrey Biangi of Atlantic, Iowa entered into a second, though much shorter, internship under the direction of the curatorial department. Aubrey is a practicing nurse, earning some credits in the humanities through Iowa Western Community College. Her internship was associated with a course in Iowa History. In order to give Aubrey maximum learning benefit despite a relatively short term of service, she was assigned to work with the second exhibit mounted this spring, *Expressions of a Danish American Identity: Exploring the Creative Work of Lorraine Larsen*.

Aubrey's responsibilities entailed close work with the artist. She was assigned the development of a biographical sketch for the artist, as well as a work-up of a historical context for the individual pieces of work shown in the exhibit. Aubrey distinguished herself through the development of an excellent rapport with the Audubon, Iowa artist, Lorraine Larsen. The information she gathered contributed importantly to the development of the exhibit in its final form.

Reflecting on My Internship

by Freja Børsting
University of Copenhagen

The last eleven weeks I've witnessed at The Danish Immigrant Museum how an interest for cultural heritage has helped build a lasting memory for people of Danish roots from all over the United States. It has been quite a journey. I have learned a lot and have been overwhelmed by the warmth present in this place.

I am not quite sure what I expected of this internship before I got over here. While packing my suitcase in Denmark I was more worried about finally getting my visa and having all the paper work ready than what I was actually going to be doing while interning at the Museum.

After arriving in Elk Horn though I soon realized that I was going to learn a lot - not just about the folk costumes I was going to research - but also how this small community has come together to make sure that the Danish cultural heritage will not be forgotten. The support from the community is incredible. Museums in Denmark usually don't have volunteer programs and are often not as open to letting in the community as museums are in the States.

My experience at The Danish Immigrant Museum has shown me how people's visions of building a cultural center in the middle of Iowa has turned out to be a success. With help from donors and volunteers The Danish Immigrant Museum will keep moving forward, bringing people even closer to their Danish heritage and keeping it alive for many generations and years to come. Remembering ones roots with interest and pride will help build a strong identity on both a personal and communal level.

I am grateful that I got the opportunity to witness a young museum that has managed to create a foundation for keeping alive the stories of the many Danish immigrants who came to the States in search of better lives. As a Dane I am proud to see how hard everybody is working to preserve the Danish history and also are keeping it alive in their every day lives. The result of the mixture between Danish and American culture is something quite unique that's well worth preserving, and hopefully I will be able to return some day to see how far the Museum has prospered.

Membership drive . . . - continued from page 5

In a global community fragmented by strife, preserving and understanding one's ethnic and cultural heritage can help us understand our values, beliefs and assumptions and in turn assist us in understanding how we interact with peoples of other cultures and ethnic backgrounds. It reminds us too that we are part of a larger human story of migration.

Support also ensures that the experiences of immigrants from a relatively small nation played a role in shaping world events. This reminds us that individuals do matter and contribute much to the unfolding of human history.

Admission & Hours

ADMISSION

(Includes Bedstemor's House)
Current Museum Members:
FREE with Membership Card
Non-Members: Adults, \$5;
Children (ages 8-17), \$2

MUSEUM HOURS

Mon.-Fri.: 9:00 am-5:00 pm; Sat.: 10:00 am-5:00 pm ; Sun.: 12:00 noon-5:00 pm

BUSINESS HOURS

Monday - Friday: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

FAMILY HISTORY & GENEALOGY CENTER HOURS

May-Oct.: Tues., Wed., Fri., 9:00 am-5:00 pm
1st & 3rd Saturday: 9:00 am-5:00 pm
Nov.-April: Tues., Wed., Fri.: 10 am-4 pm
Other Times By Appointment

All facilities are closed on New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving & Christmas.

(Local weather conditions may cause occasional closures.)



Expressions of a Danish American Identity:

Exploring the Creative Work of Lorraine Larsen



***Lorraine dances around the
Christmas tree with her two sisters
and male cousins, 1985***

OIL PAINTING

Lorraine remembers her childhood experiences at Christmastime in this oil painting of "Christmas at Grandma Hansen's". Grandma Hansen lived on a farm northwest of Audubon, Iowa. Family members would gather in her home and celebrate Christmas as they had in Denmark. After their meal, the tree would be brought out and the candles lighted. The children would gather around the tree and sing songs while merrily dancing. When the dancing and singing stopped, the family members would exchange presents. In this painting, Lorraine is the child with blond hair and a blue dress. She dances around the tree with her two sisters and two of her male cousins. Note the many details so adroitly captured in this work.

***Lorraine as a child holding an
admired doll, 1983***

OIL PAINTING

During the years that Lorraine grew up, families often did not have the resources to give dolls to their little girls for presents, or, if they were able, such gifts were few and far between. Lorraine has always cherished dolls and, as a child, vowed to have more. In this painting, she has reinterpreted an early photograph depicting herself as a young girl standing with her two sisters and holding her doll. In the painting, Lorraine stands alone, holding her doll, emphasizing its importance to the girl.

For many years, Lorraine Larsen was a farm homemaker. She started painting shortly after the family's youngest child got married and moved away in 1964. She wanted to have a hobby on the farm. By 1970, Lorraine was a proficient, self-taught artist. Over the years, her creativity has taken a number of forms. Her work as an artist has included sketching, drawing, watercolor painting, oil painting, mold making, quilt making, plate making and doll making.

Memory plays an important role in Lorraine's work, particularly her paintings. Several of her paintings reflect her childhood experiences. She grew up in an early Danish American home and spoke primarily Danish as a small child. Her Jule Aften (Christmas Eve) painting depicts, with great charm, the Danish tradition of dancing around the Christmas tree. Danish American homes throughout America kept this tradition vividly alive.

Another of Lorraine Larsen's paintings depicts the teasing that she was subjected to in country school because she spoke a language other than English. She shows herself being chased by a large girl, who frequently teased her because she spoke Danish. In a mixture of Danish and English, Lorraine, the child, calls out "quit nappe mig" (quit pinching me). Lorraine's parents strongly encouraged her to learn the "new language," English, in Kindergarten.

In addition to these paintings, a number of Lorraine's figurines reflect her Danish heritage both in terms of her choice of subject matter and in her choice of coloring. Many were made from clay found on the Larsen farm.

Some of Lorraine's art work springs from her vivid memory. Other pieces develop from her study of old photographs that have meaning for her. In Lorraine's words, "You may forget what people did or said, but you can never forget the way they made you feel". Lorraine's vivid recall of a range of experiences contributes to the individual nature of her work. The current exhibit honors her remarkable talent.



THE FIGURINES IN THIS CASE ARE MADE FROM CLAY FOUND ON THE LARSEN FARM.

During the early 1970s (c. 1970-1972), Lorraine Larsen worked at Greentree Pottery in Audubon, Iowa - a business owned and managed by Judy Sutcliffe. Initially, they made Heritage plates. They made about 75 in total. Early on, however, they began experimenting with other forms of expression. Lorraine's association with Ms. Sutcliffe led to invaluable experimentation and a broadening of Lorraine's talents. While associated with the pottery, Lorraine began to experiment with the making of figurines from the red clay on the Larsen farm. During the course of time, she made several figurines from this clay, some of which are displayed in this case. Some of the figures were sculpted as challenges; others were carefully molded to represent people that had meaning in Lorraine's life.



More photos on page 8

Museum partners with organizations in Holocaust essay contest

For the past two years, The Danish Immigrant Museum has partnered with Dana College in Blair, Nebraska and the Anti-Defamation League's Institute for Holocaust Studies in Omaha, to sponsor a high school essay in the Omaha area. Our cooperation arises from the rescue of the Danish Jews during World War II, but the focus has been expanded to pay tribute to all rescuers. Next year, our plans are to expand the contest to the Lincoln Public Schools and Elk Horn-Kimballton High School and high schools in surrounding communities.

Essays are divided into two categories,



those written by 9th and 10th graders and those by 11th and 12th graders. First, second and third place winners in each category received cash prizes, and students whose essays received honorable mentions were awarded a certificate and book on the Holocaust.

The theme of this year's essay contest was *moral courage*. Over 250 students submitted essays. As an example of our effort to engage a younger audience, the cosponsors are pleased to share "The Bully: From Sandbox to Global Stage." This essay won first prize in the 9th-10th grade category and draws upon the rescue of the Danish Jews for inspiration.

The Bully: From Sandbox to Global Stage

Brandon Boyd

Ninth Grader, Blair High School

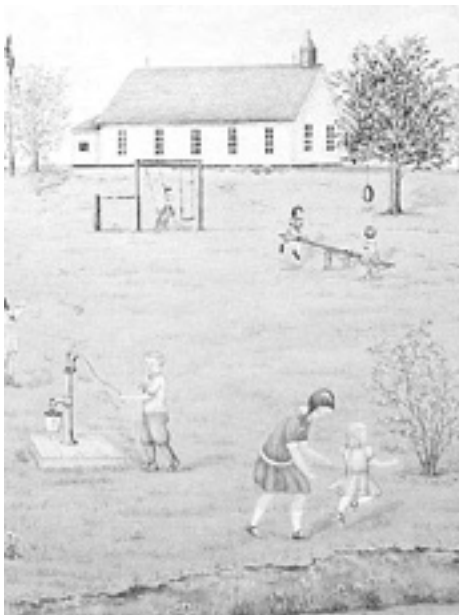
All-important lessons that are learned in life have been learned in the sandbox. This common phrase is true of people as well as nations. The horrific events of the Holocaust could not have happened had it not been for life's lessons to have steered off course among the leaders of Nazi Germany. The deaths of millions of Jews are to blame on this hateful, and misguided, thinking which became political actions. Fortunately, some lives were spared due to the moral courage of others, and that can provide inspiration for us today as we seek to take a stand for those that are incapable of standing up for themselves.

Speculations have arisen that Hitler and Stalin were bullied and abused as children. Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, indicates that his childhood was somewhat normal. However, this is debated by many. "In his book, *The Mind of Adolf Hitler*, Walter C. Langer describes Hitler's father as 'brutal, unjust, and inconsiderate. He had no respect for anybody or anything.... [He] played the part of the bully and whipped his wife and children who were unable to defend themselves. Even the dog comes in for his share of this sadistic display'" (Boraker 4). This bullying gave rise to seeds of hatred, and they were later vented against the Jewish people.

Fortunately, there were a few who took a stand against Hitler's brutality. "Of all the countries of Nazi-occupied Europe, only Denmark rescued virtually

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Lorraine Larsen Exhibit . . . — continued from page 7



Lorraine, blond child in the foreground, is chased by an older girl during school recess because of Lorraine's use of Danish, 1974

OIL PAINTING

The setting for this painting is a recess break at the Ross Schoolhouse, a one-room schoolhouse that was located in north central Audubon County, Iowa. The school no longer exists but Lorraine's memories of it remain vivid. In the foreground of the painting, one may observe an older girl chasing Lorraine, who cried out "Quit Nappe Mig" or "Quit Pinching Me". Lorraine spoke little English at that time and the older girl often "tormented" her for speaking Danish. Lorraine's parents strongly encouraged their daughter to learn the "new language" in Kindergarten.



Lorraine and Leroy Larsen's farm northwest of Audubon, Iowa, 1970

OIL PAINTING

Lorraine painted this scene ten years before she and Leroy moved from their farm into the town of Audubon. The farm now has few buildings standing. Lorraine's talent has recreated vital, detailed memoirs from the Larsen family's farm life. The Larsens farmed traditionally, raising corn and soybeans. Additionally, they fed cattle for marketing. At one point in his cattle buying, Leroy participated in cattle roundups in western Nebraska. Lorraine has documented that activity in another of her oil paintings.

College for Seniors at Iowa State University

Three Museum staff members served as guest faculty for Iowa State University's College for Seniors. Modeled on the popular Elderhostel concept, ISU offers eight-week courses for seniors in Ames and the surrounding area. "Ethnicity in Iowa: The Scandinavian Experience" was one of the courses offered during the spring of 2004. The Museum's staff joined ISU faculty and the curator from Vesterheim Museum in Decorah, Iowa, as presenters. According to Jorgen Rasmussen, a retired ISU faculty member and course organizer, this class had the highest enrollment of the courses offered during the spring.

On April 12th, Curator Barbara Lund-Jones presented "Developing a Heritage Collection," focusing on the ways in which The Danish Immigrant Museum has been developing a collection that is at once local and national in character. Dr. John Mark Nielsen followed her on April 19th with a presentation entitled, "Pot Boilers, Shoot-Outs and Sentimental Romances." He examined the popular fiction written by Danish immigrant writers for audiences both in Denmark and the United States. Family History Librarian Michele McNabb completed the Museum's participation on April 26th with a presentation "Researching Danish Immigrant Ancestors" that overviewed available Danish and U.S. resources for researching Danish ancestry.

The Bully . . .

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all its Jews” (Berenbaum 157). The stand against the eradication of the Jews in Denmark was a matter of faith: faith in God above man. H. Fuglsang-Damgaard, the Lutheran Bishop of Copenhagen, openly urged Danes to protect the Jews. He proclaimed: “We shall fight for the cause that our Jewish brothers and sisters may preserve the same freedom which we ourselves evaluate more highly than life. We must obey God before we obey man” (Berenbaum 158). The Danes did not look upon the Jews as a separate race, but looked upon them as countrymen, neighbors and friends. It would have been unnatural, and immoral, to look the other way. By their display of moral courage, as many risked their own lives in the effort, 7,220 Jews were able to secure freedom in Sweden, and others were looked after in concentration camps.

Today we can look to the Danes heroic efforts as a source of inspiration as we deal with one of the greatest threats to our own schools, nation, and lives — bullying. “It is disturbing to learn that 160,000 children miss school daily due to fear of attack, peer intimidation or bullying, and that 24 percent of high school students say they took a weapon to school in the past year” (Druck). This is a problem of immense magnitude, and even has roots locally. As recently as this weekend, the *Omaha World-Herald* reported in their 2/21/04 edition that a Millard North teenager was beaten in his own front yard by two other students while another videotaped the beating and fifteen other students watched. In Blair, Nebraska, this school year, news media reported that a student was shocked by a cattle prod while others stood idly by. Where was the moral courage of those who failed to intervene? They apparently did not realize they were accomplices by their non-action. “When the dignity and safety of an individual is assaulted, the dignity and fabric of the group as a whole is diminished” (Coloroso 22). Last year, as a Conflict Manager for my school, I intervened in arguments, which could have easily become fighting or bullying situations. As president of my class, I try to set an example for my fellow students so they know that those who can easily be picked upon are not alone. Like the Danes looked upon the Jews, they are my classmates, my neighbors and friends.

My brother, who was a sophomore last year, demonstrated he shares this view when he came to the aid of an eighth-grader who was taking some classes at the high school. Some students resented the presence of this middle school student, and picked on him. My brother intervened when a big bully had his knee on the neck of this eighth-grader. He made it clear to his fellow high-school students that the eighth-grader was hands off. My brother took a moral stand against another in his own class. He made it clear to other bystanders that abuse of those unable to fend for themselves would not be tolerated.

Bullies, like Hitler and Stalin, are often children who have been abused or bullied themselves. They bully to give themselves a sense of power, when in their lives they are experiencing issues, which they have no power over. Intervention is often required to break the chain of violence, and the bullies must be made to feel a part of the group so they don’t feel isolated from others. If there is no intervention, and no success at bringing them in as part of the group, their future is bleak. “By age 24, up to sixty percent of people who are identified as childhood bullies have at least one criminal conviction” (OPD).

So goes the health of childhood, so goes the health of adulthood, and so can go the health of a nation and its leaders. It is critical that hate is not able to manifest itself in the home, in school, or in society as a whole. Bullying, hatred for others manifested physically, tends to pass on generation to generation without the intervention of those who choose to show moral courage: placing themselves in harms way to blunt the attacks and building bridges for the bully and victim alike. The world is a giant sandbox; we must learn the lessons of childhood well if we are to make the world a happier and safer place for all.

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Among those attending Grand View College’s “Studenterfest” were (l-r) Egon Bodtger and Diana Bodtger of Salem, OR; and Erik Sorensen of Monroe, IA.

Grand View College holds Studenterfest '04

Grand View College’s “Studenterfest” was held the first weekend of April in Des Moines, Iowa. On Friday, April 2nd, Danish writer Peter Fogtdal presented a lecture titled “Vikings on Valium”, Denmark as seen through the eyes of foreign visitors through the ages. The Danish Immigrant Museum was represented at “Studenterfest” on Saturday, April 3rd with a booth set up along the *Taste of Grand View Marketplace*. Deb Larsen and Museum intern, Freja Børsting, visited with college students, alumni and visitors.



Annette Andersen of Kimballton, IA, shared table space with the Museum, demonstrating to the public the Danish art of papirklip.



WISH LIST

The following items are at the top of the current FHGC Wish List. If you have any of these or similar materials and wish to discuss making a donation, contact Michele McNabb at 877-764-7008 or at librarian@danishmuseum.org.

- Vols. 1-15 (1915-1939) of the *Danish Brotherhood Magazine*, and issues of *The American Dane* from 1997 on.
- *Danes in Omaha* (recent, but apparently out of print).
- Histories of Danish settlements in the Northwest.
- Published compilations of tombstone inscriptions or naturalization records from areas heavily settled by Danes.
- Back issues of *Bien* and *The Danish Pioneer*.

Thanks to Halvor Strandskov, William Lord, Ib Johan Mercebach Mørk and Carlos A. Hedstrom, jr., who have 'adopted' large-scale Danish maps for our collection since the last AL. At last count we were lacking 41 maps to complete the set. Areas still not covered include the island of Bornholm, parts of northeastern, northwestern and north central Jutland (roughly north of a line drawn between Ringkøbing and Aarhus, Læsø, and eastern Zealand. Each map costs \$15 and will be labeled with the adoptive patron's name.

"But Grandma Spoke 'Dane'," the FHGC introduction to Danish-American and Danish genealogy, will be offered at the FHGC this summer on June 10, 17, and 24th, from 6-8pm. The fee is \$10 per workshop and \$25 for the three sessions. Pre-registration is necessary, since space is limited. Contact the FHGC for details.

This six-hour mini-course, which we will also take to a site near you, covers key U.S. records pertaining to Danish immigrants, basic Danish genealogical resources, getting around the language barrier, and useful online resources. It fits well into a special 'genealogy day' or fund-raising event for local Danish-American groups. For further information about cost and available dates contact Michele McNabb.

Several individuals have approached us about a beginning Danish class and we are giving some thought to offering such a course this fall. Anyone interested should contact John Mark Nielsen or Michele McNabb to discuss convenient times.

ACTIVITIES AND NEWS

- Computerization of Danish Brotherhood membership records continues, with just under 300 lodges now having finished the initial input stage. In late April volunteers at the Danish Immigration Archives at Dana College began to proofread the lodges, correcting spellings as they go, and adding additional information. Having these valuable membership records more accessible is a real boon in answering genealogical queries.
- The FHGC listing of DB members' deaths now covers 1941-1970. The next decade is being proofread and should be added to the list by the end of May.
- Our search ability has been greatly enhanced by the addition of HeritageQuest Online™, a database that allows us to search U.S. censuses, over 25,000 local and family histories, and PERSI, the valuable genealogical periodical index. Thanks to Lois Christensen, The Walnut Genealogical Society, and Ib Mercebach Mørk for making this possible. As our webpage develops and our new server comes on line we will be offering remote or home access to the database to Museum members. Stay tuned!
- Thanks to the generosity of Mae Petersen and Dolores Connelly, Genealogy.com's Immigration and Passenger Lists Database has also been added to the library's offerings. This resource, available only at the FHGC, can be searched for individuals coming from many European countries and leads to primary sources for each entry.
- There are also some great Danish websites that we frequently use when researching immigrants. We've compiled a listing of pages that we frequently use or recommend. If you would like a copy of this, check the Museum webpage genealogy section for a downloadable list or contact Michele at the library.
- Our vertical file collection of Danish immigrants now numbers about 4000 folders. These include copies of information submitted with Wall of Honor nominations as well as information from other sources that is not in book form. Lamentably, about one-third of the Wall submissions include no information other than what is on the Wall of Honor plaque (name, date of immigration, and place). If you are uncertain whether ad-

ditional information has been included for someone you know is on the Wall, please contact us. We will check the file and let you know what we have. We have also devised a form for adding additional material, which we'll be happy to send out.

- Our latest addition to the above files is Wall of Honor nominee Walter Petersen, who was born in Fjelstrup, in German-occupied Haderslev County, in 1887, and came to the US with a couple of friends on the *Lusitania* in 1908. He settled in Cedar Falls, Iowa, where he married Anna Kamilla Petersen and farmed until his death in 1974. One of five siblings who left Denmark, his file includes a vivid newspaper interview conducted two years before his death, where he remarks that he took up the smoking of cigars en route to America, when he was given a box by a seasick fellow passenger.
- During Tivoli Fest the FHGC will be open free to the public on Saturday and Sunday. Artists from The Elegant Pen will demonstrate their calligraphy skills on Saturday afternoon and travel videos of Denmark will be shown in the classroom throughout the weekend. On display will be pictures of some of the immigrants who came to this area, and there will be a couple of door-prizes that one can register for. We hope to see a lot of you!

NEW HOURS

From May 1 through the month of October the FHGC will be open from 9-5 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. As well, the library will be open all day on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month, so we hope to catch some of you weekend visitors to Elk Horn. If these times are not convenient, appointments can still be made.

OUR WEB(PAGE) IS BEING SPUN

If you have visited our webpage at www.danishmuseum.org recently, you know that we have a new look. The main page has been reformatted and hopefully the changes we've made will lead you more readily to parts of the site that you want to visit. We will gradually be adding more photographs and sections. In the meantime, as in all good building projects, things may temporarily be covered up or put away, so please bear with us while we are under construction.



The David Simpich Marionettes held performances in Elk Horn this past April.

The David Simpich Marionettes hold performances

The David Simpich Marionettes performed *The Hans Christian Andersen Storybook*, "a marionette play set somewhere inside a volume of the famous Dane's fairy tales" on April 1st and 2nd.

There was a public performance on Friday evening, April 2nd, in the old gymnasium of the Elk Horn/Kimballton Community Schools. Three performances for the students were held on Thursday, April 1st, and on Friday, April 2nd.

In addition to the marionette performances, Peter H. Fogtdal, a best-selling Danish writer spoke to the high school's

AP English class on Thursday, April 1st. Fogtdal, who has written a number of historical novels as well as screenplays for both film and television, discussed the craft of writing. As a part of his visit to America's heartland, he also lectured at Dana College in Blair, Nebraska, and Grand View College in Des Moines.

Thanks to a generous gift from Dennis Andersen, Elk Horn native and former Museum board member who resides in Atlanta, Georgia, the Museum was able to sponsor these exciting events.

Corrections to the Annual Report

We have learned of two errors in our 2003 Annual Report:

- The Danish Club of Milwaukee should have appeared among the Order of Lolland contributors as the club made a \$500 donation during 2003.
- Floyd and Dorothy Jorgensen of Pinewood, Minnesota, gave a special memorial gift in honor of Dorothy's grandparents Olga and Soren Jensen. Their last name incorrectly appeared as Jessen instead of Jensen.

We do apologize and make every effort to be sure that our records are correct. Should others be found, please bring them to our attention by contacting Deb Larsen, Development Associate.

A Week at the Family History and Genealogy Center

by Michele McNabb

What does a Librarian DO All Day?

That's an easy question, isn't it? Librarians read books when not dealing with patrons. Contrary to this popular misconception (and I have never yet met a librarian who does read books during working hours), our time gets spent doing a lot of different things, and often multi-tasking. This is especially true when one is the only staff person and the buck stops with Michele. To answer the question of what I do all day, I recently kept track of my activities for an entire week and thought I'd pass on a synopsis of my labors to *AL* readers. (Should anyone be a real glutton for punishment, you're welcome to an hour-by-hour description of the week!)

My usual workday is 8am to 5pm. Since the library is not in the main Museum building, the first thing I do each day is telephone the Museum to let another staff member know that I have arrived. The next thing on the list is to turn on lights and computers, and attend to infrastructure chores. These may be as diverse as watering the flower-boxes or shoveling snow outside the building, checking toilet paper or soap supplies in the restroom, adding paper to printers, or making coffee for the volunteers (and myself) on the days we're open to the public.

The next task is attending to email. Over one-half of our remote inquiries come electronically, and I like to respond as soon as possible, so I check my email several times a day. For those who want help looking for their ancestors, we have a number of forms and informational materials that we attach to return email to let people know our hours, location, research and translation fees, and to provide aids to doing genealogical research. Many of the people who contact us initially will not do so again because we charge fees for our services, but there are enough people out there who do want our assistance to keep my volunteers and me busy.

But there are other kinds of email as well. On Monday, one of our long-distance data-entry volunteers sent me the file she had completed on the Danish Brotherhood lodge for Portland, Maine. I reformatted and saved it, printed it out for future proof-reading, made up a file folder for the print-out, re-sorted the data into an alphabetical listing, printed that out and put it in our DB binder for in-house use. Since the Portland lodge only had 340-odd members, the membership list only ran to 10 pages and didn't take so long to do. Next, there was an inquiry from someone going to Denmark this summer to

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A Week at . . . – continued from page 11

visit their ancestral home who wondered how much it cost to take the Storebælt Bridge from Zealand to Funen. I checked the Internet, but couldn't find the information, so sent an inquiry to a Danish librarian friend (who found me the Danish-language website for the Bridge and sent me the information, when I then passed on to our patron).

Since we're not networked yet to the main building, Deb Larsen emailed me an updated listing of Museum members to replace my year-old copy, and Jenny dropped by to exchange back-up tapes for the Museum server. A bouquet of flowers was also delivered from a grateful patron. That was nice – it really spruced up the reception desk! After getting the mail from the post office (two doors up the street), most of the rest of Monday was spent doing patron research. In this instance it meant spending hours at a microfilm reader looking at church records in Danish Gothic handwriting, making copies of entries that pertained to the family I was working on. This is brain-intensive work that is difficult to do when we are open, the phone is ringing, and so on, so I tend to schedule it for the days when we are closed to the public. At 5:30 I went up the street to the Lutheran Church, where I spent 3 hours at the annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner. 'My' volunteers put in more than 3000 hours last year; so many of them got awards this year. It was nice to see them get recognition for their many hours of loyal work.

Tuesday's email brought in an offer from a couple of long-distance volunteers to spend the first week in May volunteering here. Needless to say, I confirmed this offer with alacrity, and then wrote a note in my planner to schedule some time planning what they are going to do. A couple more DB lodges were also in my email box, ready for processing. By then my Tuesday crew, Jim, Jeanette, Mae, Dolores and Sharon, started arriving (Andy comes promptly at 8 and secrets himself in the back volunteer room), so I spent some time talking about the previous evening, assigning tasks or checking what projects they were intending to work on. By that time the digital photographs from the evening before had been forwarded to me, so I saved them and made copies for the volunteers to see.

I had next started working on adding immigrants to our computerized vertical file database and printing labels for their folders, when suddenly the ceiling began leaking in two places right over the file cabinets. The preceding evening had been quite stormy, but this was a first! Volunteers quickly placed a wastepaper basket under the leaks, while I notified the Museum, got instructions, then phoned the building owner and a roofing

firm in Atlantic. Then it was back to the immigrant data. I managed to get 50 or so individuals entered before being called to assist volunteers with HeritageQuest and Internet questions. Late in the afternoon, I was back at research, this time translating the church record data found the previous day, and putting it into the templates I use when making up a research report. That day ended with my continuing the research by checking several Danish websites.

Wednesday morning, I continued working on new immigrant files, since I wanted to have work for Lois, my volunteer who was coming in at 1pm. My Wednesday morning assistant, Jim, worked on his own project. We had a patron come in before we were officially open. Since many of our visitors are from out of town or in town only briefly, I try to stay flexible about accommodating them. In this case, she only wanted information to plan a future visit. The day's mail contained several payments for research and translations, which then had to be entered and registered in various places, and the reports or translations emailed or sent out. Then the building owner called to check on the roof leak, resulting in a spate of phone calls. I ordered microfilms from Salt Lake City, took several more phone calls, and did a bit of research for one patron and research preparation for another. Each of my volunteers has his/her own interests and strengths. Since most of them don't read Danish, or at least the older Gothic script, I need to tailor tasks according to who is available and what they are able to do on a given day. In this case research preparation meant creating a timeline of events in a person's life as a basis for looking for various records. This is crucial, since what the volunteers find in the U.S. and online Danish records determines whether and what microfilm records will be ordered. A fairly quiet afternoon meant that I was able to get more research done.

Thursdays we're not open, so it was another good day for doing research. I had visits from several Museum colleagues in the morning, delivering items or asking for copies of forms for the Museum reception desk. While backing up the Danish Brotherhood files onto a CD, another task that must be done independently since I'm not linked to the Museum server, a local resident came in for some translation assistance and webpage advice. Then I fielded several phone calls from The Walnut Genealogical Society, who were having problems getting into HeritageQuest Online from their computers (as a member of the Museum contributing to the FHGC over a certain level, the society

has remote access to HQO). After this was resolved, I processed several new DB lodges that had been submitted, and then drove up to the Museum to check for mail, pick up supplies, and run errands. More Danish research took up the rest of the afternoon. In the evening I spent about an hour and a half at the Cass County Recorders' office, looking over the naturalization records that had just been transferred there from another county office.

On Friday, the work continued. Wednesday afternoon two of my volunteers had spent several hours up at the Museum, looking up Wall of Honor files for which we had no papers in our file folders. The result was a 4-inch stack of folders that had to be compared to our immigrant master list and labeled, which is how Friday began. For some reason, some Wall of Honor files have nothing in them, so we are trying to fill in the gaps. We've gotten through the letter 'K' and hopefully will finish the project before Tivoli Fest in late May. By this time volunteers Charlotte and Esther had arrived, so I spent some time going over what they would be doing, then started printing out FHGC brochures and informational materials that I would be handing out during my "College for Seniors" presentation the following Monday. Since the library does not have a high-speed copier, making 70 copies takes quite a while. The alternative would be taking the material up to the Museum, but the copier there is old and cranky and often goes on strike.

Between trips back and forth between my computer — where I was working on Monday's lecture — and feeding the printers, I took several phone calls, including one from Denmark that necessitated speaking Danish, managed to count and record the money I would be giving to Jenny later that afternoon, answered a few query letters, and answered volunteer and patron questions. Then it was time for our weekly staff meeting up at the Museum. Two hours later, I was back at the library, where it was official closing time. However, my volunteers were in the middle of helping a patron and graciously followed up with her even though it meant that they left a half hour later than usual. The day, but not the week, ended with another phone call from the building owner about the leak, more handout printing, and checking email. The week actually ended on Sunday afternoon, when I finished writing my lecture and making handouts for the following day's presentation.

So that was a week in my working life: typical in some respects and (hopefully) atypical in others. Since the tourist season



Volunteers honored included, **seated (L to R):** Charlotte Sorensen, Mae Petersen, Esther Sand Hendersen, Alice Simonsen and Doris Rasmussen. **Second Row:** Dorothy Turner, JoAnn Thielen, Delores Connelly, Joan Larsen, H. John Jones, Inga Hoifeldt and Ralf Hoifeldt. **Third Row:** Jeanette Knudsen, Andrew Kissel, Gayle Stuart, Richard Nelson, Jim Kelgor. **Back Row:** Paul Hansen, Fern Kissel.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner held

The Museum held its annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Monday, April 19th, at Elk Horn Lutheran Church. Over 100 volunteers, guests, board members and staff gathered to celebrate volunteer hours donated during 2003. Over this time, 145 volunteers contributed 6,823 hours. Of this total 3,004 hours were given at the Family History and Genealogy Center. Last year the Museum had volunteers from 19 Iowa communities and 6 states outside Iowa.

Gifts and recognition are given annually to individuals as they reach milestones of hours volunteered. Those recognized in each category were: 4000 hours: Dick Nelson of Elk Horn; 3000 hours: Jim Kelgor of Atlantic; 2000 hours: Mae Petersen of Harlan; 1000 hours: Dolores Connelly of Atlantic, Inga Hoifeldt and Ralf Hoifeldt of Urbandale, Andrew Kissel of Elk Horn, and Gayle Stuart of Walnut; 500 hours: Esther Sand Hendersen of Manning, Fern Kissel of Elk Horn, Alice Simonsen of Elk Horn, and Charlotte Sorensen of Exira; 250 hours: H. John Jones of Elk Horn, Jeanette Knudsen of Harlan, and Earl Madsen of Elk Horn; and for 100 hours: Paul Hansen of Elk Horn, Marcella Jensen of Atlantic, Joan Larsen of Atlantic, Avaline Marks of Omaha, Doris Rasmussen of Harlan, JoAnn Thielen of Atlantic, Dorothy "Dusty" Turner of Exira, and Sharon Winchell of Atlantic.

In closing, Director John Mark Nielsen, who served as Master-of-Ceremonies, thanked all who volunteered, stating that the Museum could not be what it is without their help. He added that the numbers are impressive to donors around the country and important in demonstrating the support of local residents as he solicits contributions.

Planning a Family Reunion?

If you're looking for an interesting place to have a family reunion, why not consider Elk Horn? Over the past years, a number of families have enjoyed spending a couple of days here. With the Museum, the Windmill, the AmericInn with pool, county and city parks, bed and breakfasts, shops, bakery, restau-

rants, and nearby golf courses, there's plenty to do and all at small town prices. For big city attractions, they're just an hour away in Des Moines and Omaha. Let us assist you in planning your family reunion. Contact the Museum at 1.800.759.9192.

A Week at . . . – continued from page 12

hasn't really begun, we don't have a lot of visitors yet. When they do start coming, there will be less time for creating files, doing research and other 'behind-the-scenes' tasks. However, since our patron visits are unpredictable, there always has to be things for the volunteers to do, and preparing for this takes time. Trouble-shooting computers, while not my favorite task, has to be done as well. Some of the computer problems will hopefully be taken care of and some of my tasks made easier or disappear once the FHGC is hooked up to the Museum computer network and server, which is supposed to happen in Phase II of the upgrade to the Museum's computer system.

What didn't get done during my week that I would have liked to do? For one thing, I didn't get to work on anything related to our

webpage. Since that's our main 'face' to the outside world, it's an important task, but one there just doesn't seem to be enough time for on either my part or the rest of the staff. Another task that did not get done was any cataloging of our collection. This time the problem lies partly with our lack of linkage with the Museum computer system, partly with finances, since we don't yet have the budget to subscribe to the necessary cataloging databases. Until our library is cataloged, there is a great deal of information that remains inaccessible to the volunteers and me, so that is a task that I look forward to squeezing into my future work week.

And now, if you will pardon me, I think I'll go read one of the interesting books on our shelves....



Volunteer spotlight

On a farm near Kenmore, North Dakota, stood a small, dilapidated homesteader's shanty that had a story to tell. The spotlight in this issue of the America Letter is on a dedicated group known as The Cedar Valley Danes. It was this organization that, through vision and hard work, moved the cottage known as the Jens Dixen house to the grounds of the Museum and, along with the help of local volunteers, restored it.

Who are The Cedar Valley Danes and how did this group get started? In the early autumn of 1986, Svend Koch was contacted by The Danish Immigrant Museum Board member, Dennis Larsen, and asked to set up a meeting for people in Cedar Falls and the surrounding area. The purpose of the meeting was to determine if there was enough interest to form a support group for the new Museum that was to be built in Elk Horn, Iowa. There was a good response. At the present time the club has 131 members who meet three times a year and a newsletter, edited by Ron Bro that comes out quarterly. Their prime "money-maker" is from a festival held in the Sturgis Falls, which is a three-day affair each July.

One of the first projects that The Cedar Valley Danes undertook was moving the Morning Star chapel from Waterloo, Iowa. This chapel was built by Charles

Johann Walensky a Danish Immigrant to Waterloo who helped build many churches during his career. He was 83 years old when he started to build this 6' x 8' church, finishing it in 1951. It served as a wedding and baptismal site for people of all denominations. Later, his grandson LaVerne Walensky and LaVerne's wife, Ann, arranged to have it moved to their acreage in Waterloo. Several years later, the family contacted The Danish Immigrant Museum to see if the Museum would be interested in having the chapel on the grounds. That is when The Cedar Valley Danes became involved. Repairs were made, the roof re-shingled and a trailer was borrowed to move the chapel from Waterloo to the Museum. Svend, his brother, Carl, Arnie Jensen, Clair Bullers and Dave Lorenzen took part in this project.

Then in 1999 they undertook an even larger project, the aforementioned Jens Dixen House. On the farm of Bert Schou's father was the tiny cottage that had survived for over a 100 years. Bert credits his wife, Adelaide, with the idea to have this homestead shanty moved to the Museum where it would be restored. It seemed logical to her that it would be placed on the Museum grounds "where it would add another dimension to the

Museum as Jens Dixen's work was around the world," according to Bert. Jens Dixen was a Danish lay minister and teacher who moved to the home in 1901. There he taught boys from the area who were known as "shanty" boys, the focus of his teaching on spiritual training. Bert Schou's father, who had bought the farm directly from Jens Dixen, had attended school there in 1912. Bert obtained funding for transportation of the house through the Danish Inner Mission Society. (At the 1910 World Mission Conference in Edinburgh Jens Dixen became interested in Africa and helped start the Sudan Mission in Nigeria.) Bert and Ron Bro assisted with the move in May of 1999. Ron then developed a work plan based on the recommendations of Darrell Henning of Vesterheim Museum who was the consultant for the restoration project. The restoration took place over a period of four years, beginning in May of 1999 with a calculated total of 600 hours of volunteer work including travel time. Cedar Valley Danes Svend Koch, Dave Bullers, Clair Bruce and Ron Bro completed the work. They expressed gratitude for the help of Elk Horn and Kimballton volunteers who also pitched in and for lodging provided by a local B & B. Svend made the comment that through the organization they "have met a lot of good people and had a lot of fun." After lots of hard work, the Jens Dixen House was open for viewing by the public at the time of The Danish Immigrant Museum's 20th anniversary celebration.

The Danish Immigrant Museum is grateful for The Cedar Valley Dane's sponsorship and labor that brought two important buildings of historical significance to the Museum's grounds and for their continued support. With their booth at various events this dedicated group continues to inform people about The Danish Immigrant Museum.

MEMORIALS

January 1, 2004 – April 30, 2004

Memorials have been received in loving memory of the following individuals:

Otto S. Hoiberg	Elna Johansen
Clara Johnson	Virgil Jensen
Mark Pedersen	Remor Mercer
Kay Lykke	Arne B. Jensen
Nadjeschda Overgaard	Carol J. Gerdes
Martha Rasmussen	Myrna Anderson Stark
Paul T. Hansen	Rose J. Eggerss
Elsie Rasmussen McNabb	Norman C. Bansen
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Esther Frost Magnussen	Gerhardt & Ossa Sandvard
Evelyn Frost	Dearie Clemsen
Ib H. Petersen	Ethel Hoegh
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Gary Heuwinkle	Lois Mae Duskin
Joyce Hansen	Martha Rasmussen Holtkamp
Dale Hoegh	Jamie Doonan
Doris Hansen	Wayne Petersen
Deborah Garrison	Marian V. Bjork
Russell Petersen	Elmer T. Sornson
Bernice (Andersen) Linden	Norma C. DuVall

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Danish American Club of Milwaukee, WI	Nebraska District of DBIA, Lincoln, NE
Danish American Club of Orange County, CA	Olsen, Muhlbaauer & Co, LLC, Carroll, IA
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #15, Des Moines, IA	Outlook Study Club, Elk Horn, IA
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #35, Homewood, IL	Proongily, St. Paul, MN
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #341, Elk Horn, IA	Red River Danes, Fargo, ND
Danish Vennelyst Park, Omaha, NE	Ringsted Danish American Fellowship, Ringsted, IA
Elk Horn Pharmacy, Elk Horn, IA	Stone Printing Company, Carroll, IA
Elk Horn-Kimballton Community School, Elk Horn, IA	Supreme Lodge of Danish Sisterhood in America
Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, Solvang, CA	Symra Literary Society, Decorah, IA
Hallett Materials, Des Moines, IA	Rebild National Park Society, Arizona Chapter, Tucson, AZ
Hardi Midwest, Inc., Davenport, IA	Rebild National Park Society, Southern California Chapter, Glendale, CA
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WALL OF HONOR

January 1, 2004 – April 30, 2004

Einar Jensen, Newell, IA - Elise K. Jensen, Newell, IA
Elise K. Jensen, Newell, IA - Elise K. Jensen, Newell, IA; Lowell & Esther Haahr, Newell, IA
Lars (Lewis) Juhl & Anne Marie (Mary) Sorensen Juhl, Irwin, IA - Veryl & Arlene Benton, Guthrie Center, IA; Eugene & Betty Juhl, Irwin, IA; Russell & Marilyn Juhl & family, Mitchellville, IA; Cara Petersen, Washington, D.C.; Eric & Debbie Petersen, Pueblo, CO; Everett & Doreen Petersen, Hampton, IA; Peter & Shirley Petersen, Canyon, TX; Roger & Pam Petersen, Blair, NE; Milo & Betty Sorensen, Guthrie Center, IA.
Ane Johanne Marie Zinck Juhl, Irwin IA - Veryl & Arlene Benton, Guthrie Center, IA; Eugene & Betty Juhl, Irwin, IA; Russell & Marilyn Juhl & family, Mitchellville, IA; Cara Petersen, Washington, D.C.; Eric & Debbie Petersen, Pueblo, CO; Everett & Doreen Petersen, Hampton, IA; Peter & Shirley Petersen, Canyon, TX; Roger & Pam Petersen, Blair, NE; Milo & Betty Sorensen, Guthrie Center, IA.
Hans Christian Peterson, Council Bluffs, IA - Robert D. Wilber, Macedonia, IA; Diana (Wilber) Prigge, Des Moines, IA; Shari (Peterson) Poffenbarger, Council Bluffs, IA; Kim Peterson, Council Bluffs, IA; Julie (Peterson) Steenbock, Council Bluffs, IA; Gary Peterson, Carson, IA; Carol (Peterson) Johnston, Omaha, NE; Steve Fox, Carson, IA; Mike Fox, Carson, IA.
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Matching Gifts

January 1, 2004 - April 30, 2004

The following companies have provided matching gifts to the gifts of their employees, retired employees and member organizations:

Eli Lilly & Co. Foundation	IBM
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Union Pacific	Bank of America Foundation
Dominion Foundation	The Coca Cola Company
Woodmen of the World/Assured Life	Chevron Texaco
General Mills Foundation	Pfizer Foundation
	Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

Special Gifts for Special Projects

The Danish Immigrant Museum gratefully acknowledges major gifts from the following individuals over the past months that have allowed us to accomplish specific projects.

- Upgrade of the computer network, server, and software; Vera and Folmer Nyby, Michigan City, Indiana
- Purchase and installation of soft water system; John and Karen Molgaard, Atlantic, Iowa
- Purchase and installation of irrigation system; Estate of Elsie and Louie Hansen, Atlantic, Iowa
- David Simpich Marionette's and Danish Author, Peter H. Fogtdal; Dennis J. Andersen, Atlanta, Georgia
- *A Celebration of Heritage: Danish Folk Costumes in America* and additional storage material; Eric and Joan Norgaard Charitable Trust, Glenview, Illinois.



Board meeting held in Yorba Linda well attended

As a part of the Museum's 66th board meeting, over 140 guests celebrated the work of The Danish Immigrant Museum at a luncheon held on February 7th, 2004, in Yorba Linda, California at The Knudsen Cultural Center. The Viking Club of Orange County, The Rebild National Park Society's Southern California Chapter, and The Danish Lutheran Church of Yorba Linda sponsored the highly successful event. Deb Larsen, Development Associate, described the various ways individuals could support the Museum, and John Mark Nielsen presented a program on the Museum's past, present and future. Carlo Christensen, President of the Rebild Society of Southern California served as master of ceremonies, and Jonathan Neal provided musical entertainment and accompanied the group singing. The Danish American Club of Orange County presented the Museum with a check from the proceeds of their æbleskiver sales at their annual summer street fair. Among the many guests was Christian Castenskiold, a second cousin to Queen Margrethe II of Denmark and a long-time supporter of the Museum.

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