



The Mogens Kiehn Collection Highlights Post World War II Immigration

Following World War II, many Danes immigrated to the United States. Among them was Mogens Kiehn, an engineer and inventor, who was educated in Copenhagen and who later spent time with the French Foreign Legion in Morocco. In the early 1950s, he came to Rockford, Illinois, where he worked as an engineer until moving to Scottsdale, Arizona. During his career he received thirty-two patents for a variety of inventions.

After a long, active and adventurous life, Kiehn has begun giving important artifacts to the Museum, artifacts that visually document his story and the many people with whom he has come in contact over the years. These include models and prototypes of his inventions as well as personal notes from such personalities as then General Eisenhower to the current Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, when he

was a Congressman from Illinois.

"Mr. Kiehn has led a colorful life," said Curator Barbara Lund-Jones, "and his documentation of that life through the artifacts and related memorabilia is exceptional." The artifacts that have been given to the Museum contain descriptions that place them within the larger context of his life.

"His interest in the Museum is gratifying," added Executive Director John Mark Nielsen. "It challenges us to also focus our collection efforts on post World War II immigrants. Theirs is often a different story from those who immigrated earlier, and we have a special responsibility to work with this generation or we will lose their stories."

An example of Kiehn's documentation can be seen in the poster from his good friend, the magician and character actor, Professor Tribini. Signed and given



to Kiehn in April 1972, it also includes a greeting card from Tribini's U.S. tour in 1963. On the back, Kiehn has added notes and an additional poster.



Historical Danish Folk Costumes



Lace-maker (right) is dressed in late Empire Style, C. 1840. The fabric in her dress is not homespun. On her head, she wears a cap for indoor use. Her costume is from Tønder, Southern Jutland. Standing beside her is a woman dressed in Sunday clothes from the southern part of the isle of Funen, 1790s. Her outfit is made from linen, wool and homespun materials. She wears a three-piece cap.

In late August, the Danish Immigrant Museum received a traveling exhibit called *Historical Danish Folk Costumes* from the National Museum of Denmark and began preparations for its installation. By mid-September, this exhibit, featuring 20 dolls dressed in traditional Danish folk costumes, will be up and ready for the public's enjoyment on the third floor of the Museum.

Each of the dolls is approximately 33" tall. Though costumes varied a great deal, these were fashioned to represent as accurately as possible those that were worn between the years of 1780 and 1860 in the different regions throughout Denmark. They also represent different occupations and activities from the peasant harvesters to the bailiff to the elaborate bride and groom outfits. The dolls were carefully

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Lorraine Larsen of Audubon, Iowa, Designs 2004 Christmas Card

The Danish Immigrant Museum is excited to announce that the 2004 Christmas card is "Jule Aften" by Lorraine Larsen. Lorraine has lived her entire life in Audubon County where she was a farm homemaker. In 1964, shortly after the family's youngest child was married and moved away, she started painting. She wanted to have a hobby that she could pursue 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 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. 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.

This year marks the 16th annual Christmas Card and the 5th year for the annual Keepsake Ornament. We hope you will make this year's card and ornament a traditional part of your Christmas holidays.

We have made it easy for you to order the 2004 Annual Christmas Card and Ornament. You can order online at www.danishmuseum.org and click on Museum Shop, call us at 800-759-9192 or send your order to the Danish Immigrant Museum Shop, Box 470, Elk Horn, IA 51531.

The Museum Shop is already looking for the 2005 Artwork for the next Christmas card. Since 2005 is the 200th anniversary of Hans Christian Andersen's birth, we are looking for artwork that might celebrate both Christmas and his life and work. We invite you to submit your suggestions or artwork to:

The Danish Immigrant Museum Shop
P.O. Box 470
Elk Horn, IA 51531

2004
Christmas
Ornament
(right) and
Christmas
Card were
designed by
Lorraine
Larsen.



Folk Costumes . . . – continued from page 1

researched and are beautifully dressed. All demonstrate impressive attention to detail and lively color.

Accompanying the dolls are nine life-sized bonnets dating from 1800 to 1870. A few are elaborate five-fold bonnets with metallic thread embroidery on the backsides, and others are much simpler and consist only of a single piece of fabric with a bit of lace trim. As the headdresses were the most recognizable features of a particular region, these pieces provide a great addition to the costumes.

Adding texture and color to the exhibit will be 16 hand-woven fabrics, also representing the different regions of Denmark through the distinct patterns, colors, and weaving styles. Various prints will detail the costumes and regions for the viewer. This exhibit is closely linked to

A Celebration of Heritage: Danish Folk Costumes in America on the main floor, which features life-sized costumes and bonnets, photographs, and paintings from the Museum's collection. Visitors will be able to enjoy the *Historical Danish Folk Costumes* until January 16, and will, without a doubt, leave the Museum with a deeper understanding of and interest in traditional Danish folk costumes.

The Danish Immigrant Museum is grateful to H. Rand and Mary Louise Petersen of Harlan, Iowa, for the generous donation that allowed us to partner with the National Museum of Denmark and the Nordic Heritage Museum of Seattle, Washington, in making this exhibit possible.

Commemorating the Christmas Seal Centennial

The Museum's winter 2004-05 exhibit will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Danish Christmas Seals. The exhibition will feature items from the Museum's collection, as well as a truly remarkable private collection on special loan. Conrad Pedersen of the Twin Cities area has very graciously agreed to make his personal collection of Danish Christmas Seals available for this commemorative exhibition. His collection is extensive and very well presented. His loan will make the viewing of this exhibition particularly memorable.

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Director's Corner

by John Mark
Nielsen

As I write this, I am in Chicago, visiting our second grandson who was born on September 8th. His name is Aksel, a good Danish name. With his birth, Dawn and I become *mormor* and *morfar* for the first time, as he is the first child of our daughter, Eva, and son-in-law, Mike. Aksel's cousin, John Henrik, our son and daughter-in-law's first child lives just five blocks away from them. To him we are *farmor* and *farfar*.

We adopted the use of the Danish terms for grandparents (mother's mother, mother's father, etc.) when our first son, John Preben was born. My father announced that he would either be called *farfar* or grandfather. *Farfar* seemed easier to say for a little grandson, so *farfar* he has been—even to the spouses of his grandchildren. Most recently, Stephanie, our youngest son's fiancée, learned that she too should call him *farfar*. So the tradition continues.

The birth of a child fills me with wonder and a sense of responsibility: to cradle little Aksel in my arms and rock him as he squirms and wiggles; to see Eva and Mike hover over their new son as they take the first steps of parenting; to know two-year-old John Henrik, unprompted, sang "Happy Birthday, dear Aksel" when he learned of his cousin's birth affirms my hope that life and family continue.

I believe that I have a responsibility to acculturate these grandchildren to the heritage and the values that have provided meaning for my life. I look forward to coming Christmases when we gather as a family around the Advent wreath and Christmas tree to sing familiar American, Danish and German carols. I anticipate family dinners when the new family members too will join in the spirited conversations about politics, religion and art. I do know that my appreciation of heritage and culture came from my immigrant grandparents and the family rituals they maintained and passed on to us.

At the museum, we also have a responsibility to preserve the past and to

challenge coming generations to draw lessons from those who have gone before them. For that reason I'm excited to have Judy Meisel, a Holocaust survivor, visit area schools in Audubon, Cass and Shelby Counties and to share with teachers and students the resources we have at the Museum. I look forward to ways in which we can be a resource to our members across the country and to their young ones by providing or recommending resources for learning about their Danish heritage.

I am so grateful to the many supporters who are assisting us in meeting this responsibility. Through the generosity of the Eric and Joan Norgaard Charitable Trust, we are able to expand our educational outreach this next year. I am thankful for generous donors like H. Rand and Mary Louise Petersen, members of our Lifetime Leadership Society, who have once again stepped forward to make possible our partnership with the National Museum of Denmark and the Nordic Heritage Museum. This past Friday, I learned that Lorraine Larsen, an area artist whose work we featured in a recent exhibit, and her husband Leroy have made provisions for the museum in their estate, a very important step in assuring the Museum's future. And finally, I am thankful to the many who responded to our membership drive and to our summer appeal.

Fund raising is not my favorite activity. But I know that we need members and resources to fulfill our mission to collect, preserve and study the Danish immigrant experience. In so doing we are preserving an important story of the American experience. This is our most vital charge; this is our reason for being. I invite you to consider how you might invest in meeting this responsibility. We do this for the generations to come.



Matching Gifts

May 1, 2004 - August 31, 2004

The Coca Cola Company
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Woodmen of the World/Assured
Life

Midsommer Fest attended by staff in Dagmar, Montana

Curator Barbara Lund-Jones attended a revival of Midsommer Fest on June 27th in Dagmar, Montana at the invitation of local historian, Jens Sundsted and his wife, Gertrude. In keeping with tradition, the event was held at Nathaniel Lutheran Church situated in the countryside some distance outside of Dagmar. During the early years of the 20th century, Dagmar's Midsommer Fest was a major event extending for three days and drawing upwards of 500 people from miles away. They visited, they sang, they ate and they listened to speakers from different walks of life. When they left, they took with them a wealth of memories that gave Midsommer Fest a very special place in their shared history. As times changed and the century progressed, the traditional Midsommer Fest celebration also underwent changes. It faltered, modified and sometimes did not happen at all. This year, members of the Dagmar community, with the assistance of their pastor, determined that 2004 would see a revival of their beloved Midsommer Fest. The core choir members of Nathaniel Church committed their time to practice and recruited additional singers from several miles away. The assembled Midsommer Fest choir gave a truly remarkable and moving performance. The event also had a featured speaker, a special exhibit tracing the festival's history in the Dagmar community and concluded with dinner and socializing. Approximately 80 to 90 people were in attendance.

Harold C. Nielsen of Dagmar has researched the history of the Midsommer Fest. "This [event] was definitely the highlight of the year for the community and the outlying areas in the earlier years. To attest to this, in 1923 between 450 and 500 people attended the Midsommer Fest. It was treated as a formal affair, as everyone, including the children, were dressed in their finest clothing."

Nielsen has found the role of the area's young people to have been particularly important in the development of the Festival. "In 1908, an organization called the Young peoples Society was formed [in the Dagmar area]. Its membership



The Midsommer Fest choir gave a remarkable and moving performance. Some of the participants traveled a great distance for the event.

consisted of young Danish men and women of the area. Only unmarried people could be a member. One of their valuable contributions to the community and the church was the development of the spiritual and cultural aspects of the community. Their other purpose was to get the young people together to sing Danish songs, do lectures and readings, so they and others could better understand what the Danish language and literature could contribute to America. They also promoted gymnastics, folk dancing, choir, and a lot of other worthwhile activities. They were not an auxiliary of the church, but most of them were members of it. Many of their decisions and activities were related to the church. I believe they were very instrumental in starting the first Midsommer Fest. They were asked by the church to pick one of the speakers and the congregation was asked to pick the other. They shared this duty for many years."



A photographic exhibition on Nathaniel Lutheran Church and some of the prior festivals and gatherings held on its grounds was prepared by local historian Jens Sundsted. Many of the photographs displayed are ones he had taken over the years.

Festival participants (below) learn about the exceptionally rich history of Nathaniel Lutheran Church in an exhibition specially prepared by Jens Sundsted for the 2004 Midsommer Fest revival.



Nathaniel Lutheran Church in rural Dagmar, Montana. The weather for the 2004 Midsommer Fest was exceptionally cooperative.

New Museum Shop manager a familiar face

Jan Paulsen has returned to The Danish Immigrant Museum as the new Museum Shop Manager. Jan has had 18+ years of retail and management experience. Some of that experience came when she was the first manager of our Museum Shop from 1994 to 1999. Since then she has worked for the Girl Scouts of America and the Danish Windmill in Elk Horn.

Jan is working on product development for the shop that will offer new and exciting inventory. Partnering with a buyer who regularly travels to Denmark, she has selected exciting items related to the bicentennial of Hans Christian Andersen's birth. She also just got back from a buying trip at the Umauga Gift Market in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The new products will be available in the Christmas catalog due out in the end of September. So, be watching for it in the mail or you can also find the products on the web site www.danishmuseum.org.

"It is great to be back at the Museum" Jan stated. "I have missed the experience of working in a great environment in such a beautiful setting with wonderful staff who understands what teamwork means." Many new changes are in the works from bookkeeping to new display areas in the Museum Shop. We invite you visit us when in the area.



Successful Membership Drive held

In 1998 the Board of Directors set an annual goal of increasing membership each fiscal year. A growing membership is important to the future of The Danish Immigrant Museum. Achieving this goal will assure the Museum's growth and contribute to financial stability. During the February 2004 board meeting in Yorba Linda, California, the Board of Directors assigned the Development Department the task of completing this goal.

Offering their time and skills, several members from the Board's Development Committee assisted Deb Larsen, the newly hired development associate, in strategizing a plan of action targeting the Museum's lapsed membership. Committee members, Thomas Hansen, Nils Jensen and Kai Nyby, as well as our director, John Mark Nielsen, were instrumental in the success of this brief campaign. Within six month's time and a deadline date of August 31, 2004, a total of 255 new or lapsed memberships were attained.

Planning and preparation for this assignment was completed in early spring. During the months of May, June, July and August, three separate Phone-a-Thons were held. The process included a preliminary invitational letter sent to individuals whose memberships had lapsed somewhere between the years of 1998 and 2003. Within this letter it was indicated that they would be receiving a phone call to discuss their future involvement with the Museum. Many "tracked" letters were "returned to sender" and no further address information could be found. This, too, was beneficial as the Museum could take this opportunity to update its records.

The next step included three Phone-a-Thons, volunteers placing the assigned phone calls. At this time we also learned how the Museum might better serve the member's interests, or of any concerns or suggestions. With the help of numerous local volunteers, the Museum's three phone lines were lit up many evenings. Leroy and Clara Pedersen, Annette Andersen, Lois and Lamont Christensen,



Danish graduate student joins staff

Tina Wittorff, a 24-year old, Danish graduate student from Aalborg University, has joined the Museum staff until January 15th 2005. Her internship at The Danish Immigrant Museum is part of a final project in completing a graduate program in Tourism, which is a supplement to her degree in Culture, Commu-

nication and Globalization at Aalborg University. Tina is excited to have an opportunity to study an interesting part of her national history while completing her graduate program. During her stay, she will work to improve the Museum's marketing and advertising plans.

In addition to her studies Tina has a practical knowledge of the Danish tourism industry. She has worked at the Tourism Welcome Center in Århus, Denmark's second largest city, where she also resides. Tina's interest in the tourism industry does not come from strangers since Tina's older brother is employed at a Tourism Welcome Center in one of the largest tourist areas in Denmark.

Both Tina and the Museum look forward to a wonderful five month internship and are grateful to the American Scandinavian Foundation for their assistance in obtaining the necessary visa that makes her visit possible.



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

In this issue, the curatorial column is taking on a slightly different perspective. Rather than writing about ongoing projects, such as the new exhibits, which are covered elsewhere in this letter, I want to ask for your help with an important project that is very near and dear to our department – collections documentation.

The importance of a well-documented collection cannot be over emphasized. Collections documentation is ongoing and has several identifiable stages. Perhaps the most important of these is the documentation secured at the time an artifact is offered to the Museum. It is at this stage that my staff and I have the first opportunity to become acquainted with members and visitors and to set the stage for documentation that will preserve a family's memory in a very unique way. And we can do this only by providing as complete a context as possible for your gifts. The information we need - and which will set off your gifts

to their best possible advantage - include detailed information on:

- 1. The person or persons to whom the item belonged
- 2. How the item was used.
- 3. How it was passed down among family members.

In line with these items, we'd also appreciate any other information – or even family stories – that you think others might find helpful when they see your gift on display.

Very importantly, we want to know about the people to whom an object belonged. We frequently ask for short, summary statements about the family members associated with particular artifacts. And it is even better when this background information is accompanied by photographs and any related memorabilia, which help to fill out the picture of the lives associated with the gifts.

We need this documentation for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the overall strength of a collection is in-

timately tied to the documentation of its individual pieces. In a heritage collection such as ours, the more documentation we secure, the more likely we are to be able to note discernable patterns, shared traditions and community interrelationships, as well as contrasting observances.

We welcome your gifts. And when we ask for more documentation, remember that we are trying to do justice to your gift and to the place it will have in our collection. You can help by providing us with as much informational material as possible.

A museum's collection staff works not only for current generations, but, for those that come after as well. The greater our documentation, the greater will be the legacy made available for both contemporary visitors and the generations that follow.

Barbara Lund-Jones



Membership drive

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Jeanette and Eivind Lillehoj, Connie Johnson, Thomas Hansen, Dr. John Mark Nielsen and Terri Johnson assisted Development Associate, Deb Larsen, with this course of action. This task would have been impossible without their willingness to support this effort.

At the same February 2004 Board meeting, the Museum's Board of Directors also set for itself a goal of each present board member to recruit ten new or lapsed members. The competition ended on August 31st with a tie between Vern Hunter and Dr. Gordon Esbeck, each recruiting fourteen memberships. Second place draw was awarded to Joy Ibsen and Kai Nyby, both enlisting nine memberships. The Board's enthusiasm and efforts are very much appreciated.

Membership helps to preserve the Danish immigrant heritage. With all of us working together, we can continue to achieve our ultimate goal. "All for one and one for all!" ~ "En for alle og alle for en!"

Deb Larsen, Development Associate



Henri Sørensen's Paintings for The Yellow Star: The Legend of King Christian X of Denmark

In 2000, Henri Sørensen, a Danish illustrator, completed a series of paintings for a children's book by Carmen Agra Deedy entitled *The Yellow Star: The Legend of King Christian X of Denmark*. This book relates the legend that King Christian X wore a yellow star in solidarity with Danish citizens who were Jewish. Though she makes clear that the story

is a legend, Deedy suggests the story is important in symbolizing the loyalty and fearless spirit of the king and his people in fighting against intolerance.

From October 14 until December 1, visitors to the Museum will have an opportunity to see an exhibit of the

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Board member Thomas Hansen enjoys assisting children in making snogbrød.

Sankt Hans Aften (Danish for Midsummer's Eve Festival) was celebrated on the grounds of The Danish Immigrant Museum on June 19th. This Danish festival is thought to ward off evil spirits. Over 150 people were in attendance on this particular chilly and damp evening, reminiscent of such a night in Denmark. The annual event was sponsored by the Elk Horn-Kimballton Danish Brotherhood Lodge No. 341, Rebuild Society-Heartland Chapter, and The Danish Immigrant Museum.

The festivities began with a bring-your-own blanket and picnic food to eat with your family or friends. During the evening, visitors were entertained by the Vikings and a wandering minstrel. Other activities included children playing games, guests taking a self-guided

tour of the Museum's exhibits, singing and making *snogbrød* (roasted bread on a stick), and followed by cookies and ice cream. At dusk the huge bonfire was lit and a effigy of a witch was burned.

Sankt Hans Aften is the time in Denmark for lighting fires on Midsummer Eve, the longest day of the year. The custom of setting bonfires at midsummer stretches back to Viking times, predating the coming of Christianity to Scandinavia. With the advent of Christianity, the

Sankt Hans Aften celebration attracts all ages

tradition continued on the feast day of St. John the Baptist, which is the feast day closest to the summer solstice. To make sure that the coming year would be good, the Danes lit these fires on their farms, in small villages, or any open space to burn the power of the evil spirits. The people would dance and sing and send the witches off to Blocksbjerg, a mountain in Germany where the big witch lives.



The Sankt Hans Aften bonfire lights the Iowa sky.



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.)



Family History & Genealogy Center searches for Danish immigrants

Are You a Danish Immigrant? Do you know one? Then we would like to have information on you! Enclosed with this *America Letter* is a copy of our Immigrant Information Form which can be filled out and returned to the Library. Photographs, documentation, and lengthier biographical and family information may also be attached.

Family history told through quilts

#4

Maren Jensen (Minnie)

Born July 4, 1876, Dwight, Illinois
Died November 23, 1947, age 71, San Bernardino, California
She was the fourth child of Jens and Kirsten Jensen.
On September 19, 1896, she married Niels Pedersen.
They had 11 children.



Making a quilt



The Family quilt Minnie made, one of many she did. This quilt has been donated to the Danish Immigrant Museum in Elk Horn, Iowa. (Mary Louise Boesel Wirts is pointing to the square she embroidered 65 years before.)



This exhibit features two quilts devoted exclusively to family stories and family history. One of the quilts is from the Museum's collection. The second is specially loaned for the exhibit.

In each of the quilts, every block tells a different family story. In exhibition notebooks accompanying the quilts, the family associations linked with each block are presented in both visual and written form. Because the quilts are so well documented, the exhibit is of interest to both quilters and nonquilters alike.

Maren (Minnie) Jensen, depicted here, made the Jens Christian Jensen family quilt. She was the fourth child of Jens Christian and Kirsten Marie Jensen.

The quilt from the Museum's collection focuses on the Jens Christian Jensen family. Jens Christian Jensen and his wife, Kirsten Marie, emigrated from Denmark in 1868. They farmed for a few years near Dwight, Illinois, eventually selling this farm and purchasing land near Cozad, Nebraska. The Jensen family at this time numbered nine, two adults and seven children. Kirsten Marie died shortly before their move to Nebraska, just a few weeks after the birth of their seventh child.

Jens appealed to Kirsten's family in Denmark for help. Kirsten's half-sister, Marie, then twenty years old, agreed to come and help with the children. Upon her arrival, she and Jens married, as it seemed the proper thing to do. Marie and Jens had another fourteen children, one of whom died in infancy. Altogether, Marie raised twenty children into adulthood. The quilt blocks reference the lives of these children and the children of the quilt's maker, Maren (Minnie) Jensen Pedersen, who was the fourth child of Jens Christian Jensen and his first wife, Kirsten Marie. Family members and friends designed the thirty-one blocks

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Hans Hansen Exhibit to be featured

This summer, several staff members from the Museum traveled to just outside West Branch, Iowa to the Walter Hansen farm for hospitality and history. Walter and his wife and daughters gave personal tours of the extensive farm and sat down to talk about Walter's father Hans who cleared the land and built the farm. An exhibit, which will be installed in February and will remain up much of 2005, is the result of this fascinating and educational visit.

Hans Hansen immigrated to the United States from Denmark during the first decade of the 1900s, and worked for the railroad for a time in order to earn the money necessary for building his farm. The house was completed first and the outbuildings followed over the next several years. Hans' sons, including Walter, worked with their father constructing the buildings and running the farm. Walter still resides in the house with his family and continues to farm the land.

Hans had a brilliant mind for problem solving and that will be the focus of the exhibit. The Hansen family will gracious-

ly loan several items from his farm shop, which will tell the story of his creativity and ingenuity. Several handcrafted tools such as an auger and horsehair brushes, as well as a homemade tool chest will be among those pieces. A particularly vivid and touching piece will be the carpenter's apron Hans always wore, forever stained by the hours of work it saw. On the farm, it still hangs in the farm shed where he last left it before his death. Neither the apron nor the hammer that is still hanging from a loop on the side of the apron has been used since Hans last hung them in the farm shop. Walter has left them in their place in honor of his father. In addition to farm tools, Hans also built and detailed furniture and other household accessories. A few of his candlestick holders will be on display.

Visitors will appreciate the work of Hans Hansen and will be intrigued by his ingenuity. The Museum is excited to receive these pieces and wishes to extend a warm thank you to the Hansen family for being so generous.

The first block, also, Svendborg, Denmark, represents the entire country of Denmark and Ciria's 100% Danish heritage. Rise is the parish where Grandfather Rasmus Hansen was born in 1862. It was the home of the Hansen family dating back to 1473. Rasmus was the seventh of eleven children born to Hans Andersen Hansen and his wife Kirsten Hansen. It was a Danish custom for the eldest son to inherit the farm. We do not know his personal reason for coming to America in 1883. We only know that coming to America offered young men a promise to own their land which was not possible in Denmark. I found him to be a laborer at the home of a widow in 1889 in Denmark.



Rise 1 Block 1



Hansen and Maren (Anderson) Hansen

Upon his arrival in the United States he came to the home of his cousin in Jackson township, Shelby county, Iowa. It wasn't long after that he purchased a farm near by which began his life of prosperity. In 1889 he married Maren Andersen who was born in Morsod Parish, Denmark on the Island of Fun. Maren came to the US in 1888 to the home of Fred Petersen also in Jackson township where she worked as a domestic servant. It is not known whether she came especially to become the wife of Rasmus.

Rasmus Hansen sailed back to Denmark on several occasions returning with young men whom he had encouraged to come to the United States where they worked for various farmers for their room and board while saving earnings toward a farm of their own.

The history of the first block from Margaret Christensen's quilt is explained in this excerpt from her notebook, which has been specially prepared for the exhibit.



Volunteer spotlight: *Dolores Gregersen Connelly*

Our spotlight in this issue of The America Letter is on a volunteer who has accumulated hours at a fast pace since joining our dedicated group at the Museum's Family History Genealogy Center. Dolores Gregersen Connelly is a native of the Elk Horn area having been born Southeast of town on a farm known as Hansen Heights. She grew up near Anita, Iowa and after graduation began a career as a bookkeeper. Dolores relocated to Honolulu, Hawaii where she continued in her profession spending the last 20 years as VP/Director of Accounting with the largest ad agency in Honolulu. It was there in Hawaii that Dolores met and married her husband, Bob Connelly, who was originally from Southern Illinois. Her husband passed away in 1996 and when she retired in 1999, Dolores moved back "home" and is currently residing in Atlantic.

Since The Danish Immigrant Museum's beginnings Dolores has been a donor and wholeheartedly approved of the idea that the town of Elk Horn promote its Danish heritage. Her parents, four grandparents and three great-grandparents are all buried in the Elk Horn Lutheran Cemetery and all but one of her grandparents came from Denmark.

Before Dolores even came back to the area she was thinking of volunteering and decided to do so at the Museum as "I just plain wanted to help out." After her return to the area in 1999, she attended a volunteer orientation in September and started volunteering in October. On the day of orientation she was not certain whether she would prefer being at the front desk as a greeter or working in the FHGC. During the tour that day, upon arriving in the FHGC, Margaret Christensen asked her "Are you here to help us?" Dolores replied "yes" and has been with the Museum's Family History and Genealogy Center ever since.

Mae Petersen taught her how to research, and Dolores comments, "We have had good fun working together!" A real perk is that her volunteering has gotten Dolores delving into her own genealogy and through three contacts in Denmark has found 29 of her ancestors. She has met relatives that she had not known before and has received old family photos.

Dolores has passed several volunteer hour milestones and last year accumulated over 1,000 hours since she began volunteering at the Museum. You will find Dolores each Tuesday at the FHGC. She, along with our other enthusiastic,

dependable volunteers, assist Michele McNabb in keeping our Center running and helping our many patrons with their searches into their own roots. Thank you, Dolores!



Organization- Lodge Associates

Cedar Valley Danes, *Cedar Falls, IA*
Danebod Lutheran Church, *Tyler, MN*
Danish American Club of Milwaukee, *WI, West Bend, WI*
Danish American Club of Orange County, *CA, Aliso Viejo, CA*
Danish American Heritage Society, *Ames, IA*
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #15, *Des Moines, IA*
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #35, *Maniteno, IL*
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #56, *Lawrence, KS*
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #75, *Albert Lea, MN*
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #341, *Elk Horn, IA*
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #348, *Eugene, OR*
Danish Club of Tucson, *Tucson, AZ*
Danish Vennelyst Park, *Omaha, NE*
Heart of Iowa Danes, *Ames, IA*
Knudsen Old Timers, *Glendale, CA*
Nebraska District of DBIA, *Lincoln, NE*
Outlook Study Club, *Elk Horn, IA*
Rebild National Park Society, Inc., Arizona Chapter, *Tucson, AZ*
Rebild National Park Society, Inc., Upper Midwest Chapter, *Maple Plain, MN*
Rebild National Park Society, Southern California Chapter, *Glendale, CA*
Red River Danes, *Fargo, ND*
Ringsted Danish American Fellowship, *Ringsted, IA*
Royal Danish Embassy, *Washington, D.C.*
Sons of Norway, *Waverly, IA*
Symra Literary Society, *Decorah, IA*

Quilts . . . *continued from page 8*

in the quilt, which Minnie assembled in 1938. Minnie's granddaughter, Lois Elna Christiansen Eagleton, gave the quilt to the Museum in 2002.

Margaret Christensen, who lives near Jacksonville, Iowa, made the second quilt, which is loaned to the Museum for this exhibit. Margaret's quilt consists of forty-two blocks and tells the history of two families, spanning a few generations. In the quilt, Margaret traces her Darnell family lineage from Great Britain through their participation in vital moments of American history, such as the American Revolution and the War of 1812. She also traces her husband's, Orvie Christensen's, family from Denmark

through their settlement in America.

Margaret has taught family history and genealogy for a number of years. Her notebook is full of suggestive traces for those interested in researching family history, such as a copy of discharge papers from the War of 1812. Her notebook also has ship manifests listing Orvie Christensen's great-grandfather's journey to America from Denmark. Family history researchers will be intrigued by the documentation Margaret has provided for each of her quilt blocks.

Several items top the current wish list of Family History & Genealogy Center

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.
- *Strangers in Hollywood: the history of Scandinavian actors in American films from 1910 to World War II*, by Hans J. Wollstein (1994; \$59.50 on amazon.com)
- *What did they do? In Danish....*, by John E. Herl (\$13 from www.genealogystore.com)
- *From Copenhagen to Okanagon*, by Ulrik E. Fries (1949; \$9.95 and up used on abebooks.com)
- *But you can feel it*, by Emil B. Fries

(1980; \$9.95 and up used on abebooks.com)

- Microfilm of 1928/29 Chicago city directory (\$149)

Thanks to Carolyn Sand, William R. Miller, and Sandra L. Wunder, who recently 'adopted' large-scale Danish maps for our collection since the last AL. Several others are on order. The following maps are still orphans: north and south Bornholm, and the areas of Nykøbing Mors, Thyborøn, Hundborg, Farsø, Struer, Holstebro, Ulfborg, Lemvig, Hammershøj, Bjerringbro, Karup, Viborg, Hadsten, Randers, Ebeltoft, Fornæs, Lohals, Korsør, Holbæk, Sorø, Reersø, Kalundborg, Nykøbing Sjælland, Sejerø, and Saltholm. Each map costs \$15 and will be labeled with the adoptive patron's name.

Volume dating back to 1642 acquired

Fairly frequently Museum members or visitors call about or drop off donations of books that they no longer want, telling us to do whatever we want with them. Initially, of course, we look for volumes to add to our collection or use for educational purposes, and then try to find appropriate homes for the ones that don't fit our collection guidelines. Every once in a while, however, something unusual is donated that doesn't fit. Such was the case this past winter, when a group of books arrived after several phone conversations with the donor. Among them was an insignificant looking vellum volume, which turned out to be an intact 1642 edition of *Jyske Lov*, one of the landmarks of Danish legislation. Inside the front cover is an inscription in elaborate 17th-century penmanship indicating that the volume had been presented to its original owner by court painter Karel van Mander, who at the time was in painting his way through members of the Danish royal family. With the assistance



Jyske Lov in its original vellum binding – 362 years old!

of retired antiquarian bookdealer and super-sleuth Jens Christoffersen, minor repairs were made to the volume. Jens also constructed a beautiful protective box for it. Through his contacts it was decided that the volume will be sent to Copenhagen for auction this fall. It will be exciting to see where it ends up.



Volunteers honored recently at a banquet included (front, l to r) Charlotte Sorensen, Mae Petersen, Esther Sand-Hendersen; (center) Jeanette Knudsen, Dolores Connelly, Gayle Stuart; (back) Andy Kissel and Jim Kelgor.



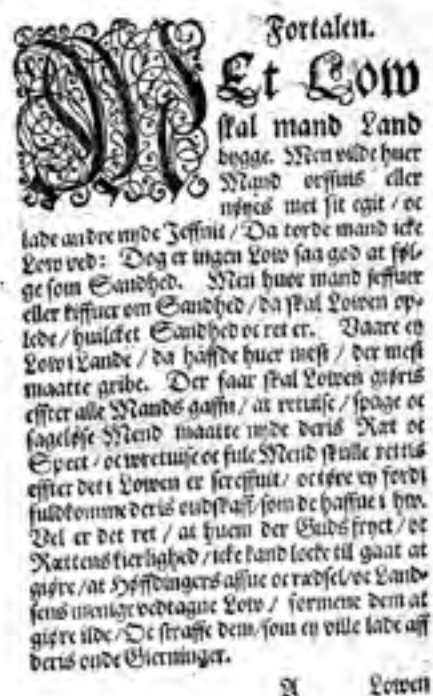
Genealogical researchers: home access available

If you are a Museum member and an avid genealogical researcher, you may be interested in having home access to HeritageQuest Online™, a database that allows searching in U.S. censuses, over 25,000 local and family histories, and PERSI, the valuable genealogical *PERiodical Source Index*. Remote access will be available through the Museum website beginning this fall for members who join or upgrade their membership to the \$100/year level or more. If you are interested in this, contact Michele at FHGC or Development Associate Deb Larsen at the Museum. Deb is also the person to contact if you can't remember what membership level you're at or when it expires.

Enhancements to the Museum website this fall will include the first visual images of the FHGC display of Danish immigrants from Tivoli Fest 2004, vignettes from our "Across Oceans, Across Time" series, and pictures of current Museum exhibits and activities.

1642 volume . . . – continued from page 10

will be, and how much this incidental donation will benefit the Museum.



The famous beginning words of Jyske Lov, usually rendered by “Med lov skal land bygges” (By law a land is built)



The beautiful protective box constructed by Jens Christoffersen



Activities and News

- Our Danish Brotherhood death index now spans 1941-1995, which covers all the issues of *The American Dane* and its predecessor that the library currently has.
- Thanks to long-distance volunteers Carolyn and Kenneth Sand and Inger Højfeldt the 2-volume *Danske i California* has now been indexed. Carolyn has also indexed obituaries and personal notices in the library's copies of *Church and Life*. Both will be added to our in-house database collection after proof-reading.
- Volunteers Dolores Gregersen Connelly and Jeannette Knudsen, assisted by Sheiree Planck and Jim Kelgor, have been organizing obituaries and entering them into a consolidated database, which will facilitate looking for same. If you have obituaries of Danish immigrants or their offspring, please send us copies. If they are in Danish, we'll be happy to send you a complementary translation in return.
- Volunteer Herb Christensen has begun photographing tombstones in several Elk Horn-Kimballton area cemeteries as part of the Iowa Tombstone Photo Project. He's finished and uploaded several hundred stones from the Kimballton cemetery. These can be accessed at: www.iowagravestones.org.
- Danish researcher Pia Viscor will be visiting the Museum during the first two weeks in November. Her research interest is in Danish Baptist congregations and families, particularly those from Skjoldenæsholm, who immigrated to the U.S. Many settled in Racine; others in Iowa and Nebraska. If you have information on any of these families and are willing to be contacted, please let Michele know by mid-October.
- Beginning November 1st the FHGC will be “falling back” to its winter hours: 10-4 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. We will no longer be open on alternate Saturdays as well.



At the Family History and Genealogy Center Sharon Winchell (seated right) and Mae (back left) Petersen assist patrons looking for ancestors on the Internet.

Museum expands educational opportunities

Through a generous grant from the Eric and Joan Norgaard Foundation, the Museum is able to continue its partnership with the Institute for Holocaust Education to offer exciting educational programming for area schools and residents, and for our members across the country. The Institute located at the Jewish Community Center in Omaha has its roots in The Foundation for Tribute to the Danes and Other Rescuers, which was formed in New York shortly after World War II.

On Monday October 4th, the Museum will host area educators for a workshop on holocaust education. This workshop will focus on the film *Tak for Alt: Survival of Human Spirit* and the Tribute to the Rescuers Essay Contest. (Readers of the *America Letter* will recall the student essay that appeared in the summer issue.) Presenters will include Beth Seldon Dotan, Director of the Institute of Holocaust Education and several educators who have incorporated the film and essay contest into their curriculum. Participants will receive a curriculum guide that accompanies the film.

On November 10th and 11th, Judy Meisel, the subject of the film, *Tak for Alt*, will visit area schools and also make a public presentation. As a young Jewish girl in Lithuania at the beginning of World War II, Judy and her family were interred in a concentration camp where she lost her mother. During a forced march as the Russian army advanced, she and her sister were able to escape. Ultimately they made their way to Denmark. It was in Denmark that Judy says her faith in humanity was reborn. Later she immigrated to the United States, where as a young mother, she became active in the Civil Rights movement when she witnessed prejudice towards African-Americans.

In the spring of 2005, the Museum and Dana College will sponsor a special essay contest limited to high school students at Audubon, Atlantic, Elk Horn-Kimballton, Exira, and Harlan public. This contest is a pilot project that grows out of the contest that has been held in the Omaha area for the past two years. If

all goes well, we hope to sponsor future contests for the children and grandchildren of members across the country.

Related to these educational activities, the Museum has on exhibit during October and November paintings that the Danish artist Henri Sørensen did for the children's book, *The Yellow Star: The Legend of King Christian X*.

***Tak for Alt* Available to Members
VHS and DVD copies of *Tak for***

***Alt: Survival of a Human Spirit* are available to members and member organizations to borrow.** We simply ask that you pay the cost of postage and handling. The film is an hour in length and makes an interesting and thoughtful program. You may make arrangements to borrow either a VHS or DVD version of the film by calling Terri Johnson, Executive Assistant at 1-800-759-9192.



Sørensen's paintings . . . – continued from page 5

original oil paintings that Henri Sørensen completed for this book. The paintings offer striking renditions of King Christian, the Danish people and the city of

Copenhagen during World War II.

This exhibit is made possible by special arrangement with Peachtree Press of Atlanta, Georgia, the publisher of *The Yellow Star* and the generosity of the Eric and Joan Norgaard Charitable Trust of Glenview, Illinois.

Copies of *The Yellow Star* are available from the Museum Shop and would make a wonderful gift for children of all ages. It has won a Christopher Award and a Parent's Choice Gold Award from the Parents' Choice Foundation. The cost is \$16.95.



October is Family History Month

One way you can share your Danish heritage is through gift certificates for translations or genealogical research. Certificates for both services are available at the Museum Store as well as at the FHGC'

Michele will be presenting two lectures on Danish genealogy at the 19th Family History Workshop held at Minnesota State University in Moorhead on October 2nd. And we will also have a computer for research purposes in the Museum's display area at Norsk Høstfest from Oct. 6-9 [Terri: check dates, please]. If you're planning to visit the festival, bring your family materials and questions and we'll see if we can't answer some of them!

The month will end with a group bus trip to Omaha, where humorist Garrison Keillor will be performing on Sunday, Oct. 24th. Tickets for the performance may be ordered through the Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp at 800-656-2654. Bus ticket reservations (\$10) can be made by calling the Museum. Since seating is open we encourage Museum members to try to sit together wearing Danish colors.



Activities & news . . .

– continued from page 11

The Saturday experiment this summer went quite well, and will probably be repeated next summer. If our regular hours are not convenient to your Elk Horn visit, appointments can still be made by calling 712-764-7008.

- Fall classes and workshops will include a 10-week beginning conversational Danish class, and two workshops on Danish genealogy. Registration for the workshops held on Saturday, November 6, 13, 20 from 10am-noon may be done through Iowa Western Community College (712-755-3568). If your organization would be interested in having a Danish genealogy workshop day, contact Michele at the library number above.

Wall of Honor – May 1, 2004 – August 31, 2004

Alf & Lili Gregerson, Ridgefield, WA – Diane Gregerson-Bowe, Seattle, WA; David Gregerson, Vancouver, WA.

Jacob & Martine Jorgine (Hansen) Brodersen, Jacksonville, IA – Bernice Brodersen Skow, Emmetsburg, IA; Morgan Peter Camery, Le Sueur, MN; Miles Joseph Camery, Albuquerque, NM; Joan Camery Prather, Lake Quivira, KS; Janis Camery Pientok, St. Francis, WI; Margaret Brodersen Hatcher, Harlan, IA; Max Richard Brodersen, McCook, NE; Kristy Brodersen Galt, Tacoma, WA; Barbara Camery Reininger, Sun Prairie, WI; Susan Kelley Harbour, Lexington,

KY; James Louis Kelley, Severna Park, MD; May C. Finn Magee, Mequon, WI.

Valborg Eleonora Lind Kiertzner & Otto Emil Kiertzner, Sr., Ida Grove, IA – Leroy & Joan Kiertzner, El Monte, CA.

Dagny A. "Swensen" Svendsen, Harlan, IA – Elliott Svendsen, Harlan, IA; Larry Svendsen, Green Bay, WI; Keith Svendsen, Loveland, CO; Carol Stoll, Wellman, IA.

Valdemar Marius Theobald Jensen and Thora Petrea Nielsen Jensen, Audubon County, IA – Beverly Mae Lauritsen Maas, Atlantic, IA; Anna Mary Mildred Alice Jensen Lauritsen, Atlantic, IA.

Peter Andreas Andersen Hermansen, Story City, IA – Peter and Janet Hermanson, Story City, IA.

Jørgen Gunnar Andersen, Modesto, CA – Karen Elizabeth Andersen, Santa Maria, CA.

Marius Friis & Alice Larsen Friis, West Branch, IA – Paul and Janet Friis, West Branch, IA.

Martinus P. Maigaard, Des Moines, IA – Ronald P. Maigaard, San Diego, CA.

Christian Jensen (Johnson), Clay Township, Shelby County, IA – Dixie Woodrum, Roanoke, VA; Debra Sisk, Millstadt, IL.

Memorials – May 1, 2004 – August 31, 2004

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

Doris Bell
Carl Bonnesen
Irene Bruning
June Christensen
Mathilda Christensen
Stanley N. Christensen

Neelna J. Clausen
John Ertmann
Valborg Godfredsen Eve
Astrid Hansen Fehl
Elin Frandsen

Clara Froker
Dwayne Haahr
Harvey C. Hansen
Ruth Jean Hansen
Ruth Henriksen
Joan Jacobsen

Al Jensen
Esther Hansen Jensen
Merlyn Jensen
Rose Jensen
Borge Jessen
Nioma Johnson
Allan E. Juhl
Alberta Kennedy
Irene Ladd
Christian S. Larsen
Thelma Larsen
Bernice C. Linden
Violet Lund
Eva Muller Machutas
Gilbert Mannering
Robert J. McDermott
Claude G. Metzler
George Mortensen
Cindy Nelson
Joyce Ann Nelson
Lawrence P. Nelson
Lorraine Lucille Bengard Nelson
Ruth Herman Nielsen
Gordon Petersen
Kenneth Potts
Edna Hedvig Refshauge
James C. Rosse
Constance Webster

Business Associates

AmericInn, Elk Horn, IA
Answers, Atlantic, IA
Audubon State Bank Charitable Foundation, Audubon, IA
Bank of Maple Plain, Maple Plain, MN
Carroll Control Systems, Carroll, IA
Childs & Hall, P.C., Harlan, IA
Culligan Soft Water, Atlantic, IA
Danfoss A/S, Nordborg, Denmark
Danish Mutual Insurance Association, Elk Horn, IA
Elk Horn Country Store, Irwin, IA
Elk Horn Pharmacy, Elk Horn, IA
Elk Horn-Kimballton Community School, Elk Horn, IA
Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, Solvang, CA
Faith, Family, Freedom Foundation TR., Calistoga, CA
Hallett Materials, Des Moines, IA

Hardi Midwest, Inc., Davenport, IA
Harlan Newspapers, Harlan, IA
Henningsen Construction, Inc., Atlantic, IA
Irving F. Jensen Co., Sioux City, IA
KJAN, Atlantic, IA
KNOD, Harlan, IA
Kessler Funeral Homes, Inc., Audubon, IA
Landmands National Bank, Audubon, IA
Marge's Hair Hut, Elk Horn, IA
Marne & Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn, IA
Nelsen & Nelsen, Cozad, NE
Olsen, Muhlbauer & Co., L.L.P., Carroll, IA
Proongily, St. Paul MN
Scenic River, Inc., Bayport, MN
Stone Printing Company, Carroll, IA
Travel by Scott, Canoga Park, CA
Westergaard Farms & Scandinavian Bed & Breakfast, Whiting, IA

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Phyllis Hoegh, (712) 764-4111

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Immigrant Information Sheet

Name(s) of Immigrant(s): _____

Year of Immigration: _____

Primary Place of Settlement in U.S. (city or town and state): _____

IMMIGRANT INFORMATION (biographies, documentation, photos, etc. may be attached or sent as email attachments to: genealogy@danishmuseum.org)

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Father: _____ Mother: _____

Date of Marriage: _____ Place of Marriage: _____

Name of Spouse (incl. maiden name of wife): _____

If Deceased, Date of Death: _____ Place of Death: _____

Occupation: _____ Religion: _____ Military Service: _____

Other places lived: _____

Names of children (birth year optional):

Emigrated from: _____ Date: _____

Port of Entry: _____

Reason for immigration: _____

Other relatives who also immigrated: _____

Additional information and family history highlights: _____

Information completed by: _____ **Date:** _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

Immigrant Information Sheet • page 2

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Mailing address: _____

Return form to: FAMILY HISTORY & GENEALOGY CENTER – PO BOX 249 – ELK HORN, IA 51531-0249

Return form to: FAMILY HISTORY & GENEALOGY CENTER – PO Box 249 – ELK HORN, IA 51531-0249