

# America Letter

Summer 2005

Vol. XIX, No. 1

An International  
Cultural Center



**THE DANISH IMMIGRANT MUSEUM**

*Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, Protector  
Member of the American Association of Museums*

Your Museum in the  
Heart of the Continent  
BOX 470 • ELK HORN, IOWA 51531

## Hans Hansen: A Study in Danish American Ingenuity

Hans Hansen wrested a working farm from a tract of land near the Cedar River in eastern Iowa. The land was filled with timber and heavy brush growth,

which Hans cleared himself. He built with his own hand the family home and all of the farm buildings. To accomplish this, he frequently used tools of his own making, several of which are displayed in the exhibit. As is evident from a study of these tools, Hans met challenges posed by work and building projects with a vigilant economy, drawing as much as possible from materials at hand.

Hans Hansen emigrated from Denmark in February of 1899. Initially, he stayed with relatives near Centerdale, Iowa. That spring he got a job laying field tile. But soon he was caught up in the lure of the railroad and secured a job as a bridge building foreman on what would later become known as the Rock Island Railroad.

One of the pieces on display in  
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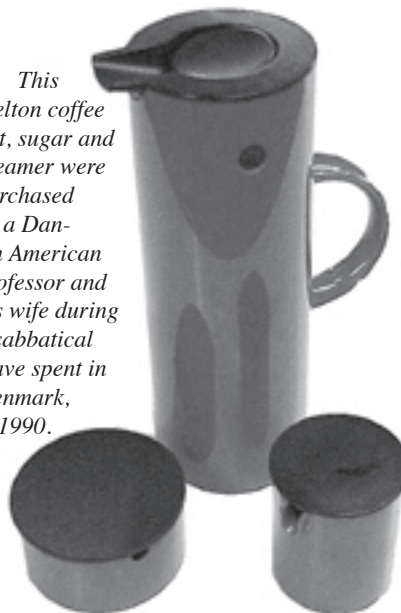
*Hans Hansen was in his 70s at the time this photograph was taken. The ingenious self-sufficiency with which he managed his farm had become well known in the area. This photo was taken as part of the preparatory work for an article about Hans and his farm appearing in The Cedar Rapids Gazette in December 1950.*



## Americans at Work and at Play: A Study of Danish Influences in Every Day Life

This exhibition is an exploration of Danish influences in the American home and workplace. It initiates the first in a larger series of such studies. This particular exhibit has evolved as an exploration of ways in which Danish Americans deliberately retain ties to Denmark through the use of Danish-made products at home and sometimes at work. These products range from fine porcelains and glassware to textiles, writing and cutting instruments, lighting fixtures and sound systems, cooking products and toys, to name but a few. Lenders to the exhibit are individuals, families who use these items and businesses, which sell these products to American homes.

*This Stelton coffee pot, sugar and creamer were purchased by a Danish American professor and his wife during a sabbatical leave spent in Denmark, c. 1990.*



## 2005 Exhibits Feature Culture, Contemporary Design and Immigrant Ingenuity

The scope of the temporary exhibits at the Museum this year breaks new ground. “Hans Hansen: A Study in Danish American Ingenuity” narrates a unique early 20th century immigrant story. An exhibit of prints, photographs and a short film celebrates the bicentennial of Hans Christian Andersen’s birth, a literary cultural icon. Modern Danish design as found in American homes is the focus of “Americans at Work and at Play: A Study of Danish Influences in Every Day Life.” Through these varied exhibits, visitors will have an opportunity to glimpse the rich tradition of the Danish and Danish American heritage.

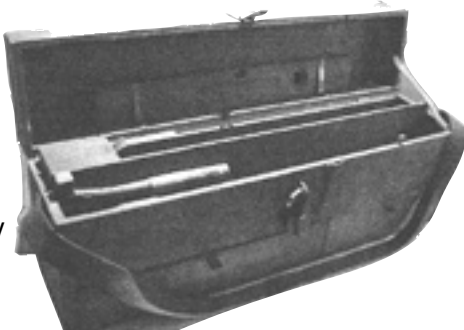
# Hansen Exhibit

More photos on page 20



The items in this display emphasize the manner in which Hans continuously utilized materials at hand. When his work horses died, he used their tails to make horsehair brushes in a range of sizes. The larger ones were sometimes dipped in kerosene or fuel oil to clean greasy machine parts. He used the smaller brushes to apply acid when soldering metal. Cheese boxes made an excellent storage space for these brushes, as well as for numerous other small items. To one end of each box, Hans attached a screw with a rounded head, which served as a drawer knob. The ice picks were made from old, broken pitchfork tines. The picks were never literally used for ice, but rather were used in Hans' workshop for various tasks, such as punching holes in metal. Hans used the picks extensively for punching holes through the corrugated steel roofing that he installed on several buildings.

Hans built this tool box when he was actively practicing the carpentry trade in the early 1900's. It was made



prior to the use of power tools and built large enough to hold everything a carpenter would need at that time. As an object, it provides important commentary on Hans and his approach to his work. The chest is well organized and comprehensive in terms of the storage space provided and in its custom designed niches for specific tools. It suggests a worker who is thorough, resourceful and prepared to address a broad range of contingencies in his trade.



From 1918 to about 1940, the Hansen's sawmill was powered by a steam engine. When an increasing need for repairs made its replacement prudent, Hans purchased a used tractor to power his mill. Use of the tractor required a special size pulley. Hans made the chisel displayed here for the specific purpose of "turning" the new pulley. He forged the chisel from an old file. He had forged the logging tongs from an old Model T drive shaft. He needed the tongs for handling larger logs. Traditionally, mill workers used chains for dragging logs, but Hans found it easier to manage the logs with tongs.



The story of this apron is best told in the words of Walter Hansen: "This was my father's personal carpenter apron which he had made. The hammer was his favorite which he used to build most of the [farm] buildings.

"On October 6, 1953 when we had finished installing a new roof on the high part of the house, Dad hung up his carpenter apron for the last time. Thirty-four days later Dad passed away. He had been ill for several months or more with emphysema before he suffered a major stroke and died at the age of 76 years. I have never used the apron or hammer since."

Hans forged this augur from "mild steel," which he salvaged from scrap metal. Mild steel is not excessively hard and is an easier grade of steel to work with than tempered steel. It is likely that this augur was one of the first tools which Hans forged in his new workshop.

Hans used the augur while clearing tree stumps from his land. It was designed for efficiency of operation. Traditionally, dynamite charges were sent under stumps after dirt had been cleared away with a flat, narrow spade. The augur allowed Hans to bore a direct path through the dirt to the underside of the stump so that he could place the dynamite charge where it would have maximum efficiency. It was a more direct, less time consuming approach than using a spade.



## Hans Hansen . . . continued from page 1

the exhibit dates from the period of Hans' association with the railroad. It is a contractor's transit which he used in building railroad bridges and later in laying the foundations for his farm buildings. It is a transit which he made using a carpenter's level and gun sights. This ingenious device has the accuracy of manufactured transits; it is expressive of Hans Hansen's continual approach to problems that presented themselves, namely, arriving at working solutions through the use of available materials.

The primary focus of the exhibit is on Hans Hansen's life from 1909 onwards. It was at this time that he purchased his first tract of land, about 82 acres, along the Cedar River, a few miles outside of West Branch, Iowa. The land was covered with timber and heavy brush undergrowth. All working space had to be cleared before use – building sites, farm grounds and fields. In early 1909, Hans built the family house. By 1915, he had erected the first of his barns, his double corncrib and a number of out buildings.

That same year, 1915, he put up a redwood silo. The materials were shipped to him from St. Paul. All the boards for the silo were 30 feet in length. Again, he

met the challenge of transporting these boards from the depot to his farmstead some miles away. In 1916, he built a barn (his second) adjoining the silo for his stock cows.

Hans had a favorite hammer, also on display, which he used for all of his construction. Into the end of this hammer, he drilled a small hole, which he filled with soap. All of his buildings, with the exception of his house, were built with native lumber which was often very hard. Drawing upon the soap reserve in the end of his hammer, Hans would coat the nails with a soap film, making it much easier to drive them into the wood.

In 1916, Hans Hansen built a workshop with a blacksmithing forge. So that he could work in the shop year round, he installed an old steam boiler engine to heat the space during winter months. Hans Hansen's workshop was the heart-beat of his farm. In this shop, he devised and crafted numerous tools which he used to conquer a range of problems that presented themselves during the course of day-to-day farm operations. It was in his shop that he continuously refined his management of tasks through ingenious solutions.

In 1918, Hans Hansen acquired an

old abandoned sawmill located a mile north of his farm and relocated it to his farmstead. Hans purchased the mill for \$350, a sum advanced to him by a neighbor who wanted three barns built on his properties and made arrangements with Hans to pay off the loan through cutting the lumber required to build these barns. The sawmill turned out to have been a particularly advantageous purchase. It allowed Hans to process all of his own lumber needs in addition to taking on a substantial amount of custom sawing for others. Income earned through the sawmill helped him hold onto his farm during the Great Depression (1930's), a time when a number of farmers in the area lost their land.

Over the years, Hans Hansen and his sawmill became well known throughout the West Branch area, as did the ingenuity and self-sufficiency of his workshop achievements. Deciding that his story would make an excellent article for the regional paper, The Cedar Rapids Gazette, local journalist and West Branch resident, Bernie Corbin, interviewed Hans Hansen on his farm in late 1950. She focused on his achievements as a farmer, carpenter and machinist. Her article is a featured part of the exhibit.

## Bro Gift Completes Expanded Exhibit Area

Space for temporary exhibits at the Museum has been substantially expanded through the completion of an exhibit gallery on the mezzanine level. This was made possible through a generous gift from Merv Bro of Fountain Hills, Arizona. Overhead directional lighting has been installed to dramatically highlight individual artifacts and moveable wood panels have been constructed that tie into the surrounding wooden beams, creating a warm and inviting environment. The expanded gallery showcases the Hans Hansen exhibit that runs through October 2005.



*Overhead directional lighting dramatically transforms the mezzanine level into pleasing exhibit space.*



## Director's Corner *By John Mark Nielsen*

On Saturday, April 2nd, the voices of children echoed through the Museum. Kids decorated sugar cookies in the kitchen, using colored frostings, sprinkles and colored sugars to create the ugliest duckling they could imagine. Children and parents listened to Hans Christian Andersen (otherwise known as Karl Christensen) read some of his best-loved tales. They even saw the pea from "The Princess on the Pea," which is in the museum. If you doubt this, check the last lines of the story! And of course all sang "Happy Birthday" to Hans Christian Andersen before eating cake and ice cream. The Museum was alive with activity. As board member Tom Hansen said to me as we walked out of the Museum, "This is what it's all about!" He was right.

These past months the staff has been engaged in developing and carrying out important programming. The results have been greater engagement by a broader spectrum of our membership. In addition to the Hans Christian Andersen Birthday party that saw the Museum full of children, we hosted an essay contest on Moral Courage. This was the culmination of a project that brought Holocaust survivor, Judy Meisel,

to area high schools. Organizing and judging the student essays and hosting the prizewinners at the annual volunteer appreciation dinner involved another age group in the Museum's programming.

Indeed, we have been so busy that this issue of the *America Letter* will arrive late, due in large measure to the many activities at the Museum. Terri Johnson and Deb Larsen are serving as co-chairs of Elk Horn's annual TivoliFest held during the Memorial Day weekend; Terri and I are organizing and hosting the 24th annual meeting of the Federation of Danish Associations in Canada from May 26th to June 1st; Michele McNabb has spoken to numerous genealogy groups, and Barbara Lund Jones and Angela Stanford have been busy creating three engaging temporary exhibits, each celebrating a different dimension of the Danish and Danish American experience.

The three temporary exhibits are particularly exciting since the subjects represent an evolution from what visitors have traditionally seen at the Museum. The exhibit of contemporary art inspired by the tales of Hans Christian Andersen celebrates aesthetic expression. Recent Danish design is featured in the exhibit "Americans at Work and at Play." The tools and furniture made by Hans Hansen reflect the traditional immigrant story of the first half of the 20th century, featuring the craftsmanship and ingenuity of a man working in his tool shop. An important

added dimension is the fact that we have integrated video into two of the exhibits creating a more varied experience.

Finally, we are working at a redesign of our website. This will include a "virtual museum" dimension with the website visitor being able to see elements of our current temporary exhibits. As we develop our site, we want to make it possible for Museum members to visit our current exhibits but also access past exhibits as well. Finally, our hope, and this remains a dream for the future, is that we can provide members with access to our collection on line. This would make it possible to view and read descriptions and histories of the over 35,000 artifacts we preserve.

Programming is an important way that we provide value to you our members. While we trust that you take pride in knowing that your support helps us to preserve the artifacts entrusted to our care, we know we have a responsibility to serve you as well, no matter where you live. By reaching out to a wider audience, we want to engage and cultivate a younger audience. Programming takes time and resources, of which there never seems to be enough. However, I can say with confidence that the staff, your staff, here at the Museum shares a spirit of creativity and a willingness to serve that is unusual. I hope you can visit us, and I invite your financial support as we continue to seek ways to serve you.



## From A Curatorial Perspective . . .

*by Barbara Lund-Jones*

This past summer several of our staff members visited a remarkable farm in eastern Iowa, bordering the Cedar River, a few miles northeast of West Branch. The farm was established by a Danish immigrant, Hans Hansen, and is now operated by his son, Walter Hansen, who took over the farm following his father's death in 1953.

Walter Hansen kept and carefully maintained the buildings built by his father, as well as Hans Hansen's workshop

and the many unique tools, which Hans crafted in the process of maintaining and developing his farmstead. In his careful maintenance of the original farmstead, Walter Hansen has preserved both an important chapter in regional agricultural history, as well as an important passage in Danish American heritage and history.

The Museum is currently telling the story of Hans Hansen in an exhibit titled "Hans Hansen: A Study in Danish

American Ingenuity." The exhibit focuses on Hans Hansen's life in America, the first years of which were filled with adventures on the railroad; the primary focus of the exhibit, however, is on the farm that Hans established.

Hans Hansen emigrated from the Alsted District of Sorø County in southwestern Sjælland, Denmark in February 1899. His father was a small landholder in the Munke Bjergby parish. Hans

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## Curatorial Perspective . . . continued from page 4

would later be followed by two of his brothers. Why did he decide to leave his native Denmark? What brought him to America? Several years after his death in 1953, his family discovered a journal wedged deep in one of his tool chests. This journal described Hans' leaving Denmark and his first few days at sea.

I share with you now a passage that helps us understand why Hans Hansen chose to emigrate. It also gives us an insight into his ability to quickly adapt to challenges and arrive readily at a working solution, which is a primary focus of the exhibit. In this passage, his ingenuity manifests itself as he addresses the challenge imposed by the need for luggage.

"I thought that I had seen a great deal in Denmark; so far had I been to Mölle a couple of times and to the city an equal number and finally was so experienced so widely as to come to the King's Copenhagen. Anybody who is not entirely dead would marvel to have traveled so widely around, and finally I was not satisfied but must see more and so decided, so did it with the manner of a duke.

"I marched into the house of an emigration agent in Lille Strandstræde and asked him what he would take to convey my inconsiderable person and all my possessions from Copenhagen to a certain place in Iowa, U.S.A.. With a crushing indifference he told me that it was no more than 192 kroner and 30 øre, not more. I had hoped to slip through for 150 kroner, but since there was not any prospect for a reduction in the price, therefore I had to bite into that sour apple and to insure myself a place on board, I paid him 20 kroner right then into his hands. The rest would have to be paid the day we sailed.

"With my head full of anticipatory thoughts, I went home to pack up for the long trip. That was the first difficulty to conquer. I had indeed no suitcase. That was bad but I had always heard that Americans were never perplexed but understood how to help themselves in a pinch. So I decided that I just as well willingly begin to practice myself in that



*Hans Hansen frequently created tools intended for very specific tasks, as was the case with this chisel. He planned to make a shoulder yoke for carrying pails and needed a special tool to gouge out the shoulder area. He gave the blade of this chisel a very unusual shape, so that it could serve as his gouging tool. Hans fashioned the yoke from native bass wood. He chose this wood rather than the abundant native walnut, as the bass was a lighter, softer wood and better suited to the carving requirements of a shoulder yoke.*

*The photograph of the Hansen farm was taken by Walter Hansen during the depression years of the 1930's; it presents a view of some of the buildings from the west. The photo records Hans Hansen's steady progress in the development and expansion of his farmstead. All of the buildings seen in the photo were constructed by his own hand. During the depression, Hans preserved the wood on his buildings with a covering of old crank case oil. When Walter took over the farm, he cleaned the buildings and repainted them red.*

art, right away. And out of the door I went, for there was no time to lose. Out in the stable I saw an old sack hanging and the thought struck me what if one took it and filled all of that carpet bag. The goods in that would be safe for the

whole trip. When I finished packing all my things, in the evening we had a little farewell party. That was indeed the last evening in Denmark; no, beg pardon, the next to last."

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## In Memory...

Members of the Museum have lost two dedicated and loyal former board members. Roland Jensen, formerly of Des Moines and more recently of Ankeny, Iowa, served on the Board of Directors from 1985 to 1993. As a contractor, he brought expertise to the Board's Building Committee and played a key role in the construction of the building. Wilber Williamson, also of Des Moines, served from 1988 to 1995. A former history and sociology professor at Grand View College, he advocated building a strong financial foundation for the Museum, and his gift of \$100,000 was instrumental in beginning the Holger Danske Endowment in 2001. We are grateful for the generosity and service of both these individuals, and we will miss them.



# "Tribute to the Rescuers: Essays in Moral Courage"

Last year the Museum initiated a pilot project to increase awareness among high schools students about the rescue of Danish Jews during World War II. This was an outgrowth of the Museum's earlier participation in an ongoing project with the Center for Holocaust Education in Omaha and Dana College in Blair, Nebraska. Funding for the Museum's project was made possible by a generous gift from the Eric and Joan Norgaard Charitable Trust of Northbrook, Illinois.

As reported in the winter issue of the *America Letter*, Judy Meisel, a Holocaust survivor and subject of the film *Tak for Alt*, spoke to students at Audubon, Elk Horn-Kimballton and Harlan high schools. Following her visit, students were challenged to write essays in which they explored how individuals are sometimes called upon to act with moral courage.

Essays were to include consideration of an historic experience, reflection on a contemporary situation, and an explanation of how what was learned influenced the writer. Because young writers show different levels of writing maturity, there were two levels of competition, one for 9th and 10th graders and one for 11th and 12th graders. Judges for the essay contest were Eivind and Jeanette Lillehoj

of Kimballton and Museum Director John Mark Nielsen.

The winners of the contest were announced at the annual volunteer appreciation banquet held at Elk Horn Lutheran Church on the evening of April 26th. Winners at 9th & 10th grade level were: Ashlyn Spies, First Place, \$750 (Audubon) and Amanda Mennenoh, Second Place, \$500 (Audubon). At the 11th & 12th grade level, the winners were: Allison Burns, First Place, \$750.00 (Elk Horn), Joanna Olson, Second Place, \$500.00 (Audubon), Daniel Hansen, Third Place \$250.00 (Elk Horn).

Also recognized were teachers Randall Spies of Audubon High School and Linda Peterson of Elk Horn-Kimballton High School for their efforts to encourage student participation. They each received gift certificates for \$50 to purchase materials for their classes.

(The generous prize amounts and teacher recognition were set three years ago by donors, the Institute for Holocaust Education, Dana College, and the Museum and reflect the seriousness and importance of the subject matter.)

The Museum's hope is to expand this contest to include the children and grandchildren of members and to other communities with strong Danish identities.

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## Gandhi: Warrior of Peace Allison Burns, First Place Winner 11th Grade, Elk Horn-Kimballton High School

Bang, Bang, Bang! Three shots ring out in a crowded garden in New Delhi. A slim figure, walking to prayers, falls to the ground calling, "Hey Rama (Oh God)." These were the last moments of one of the world's greatest examples of moral courage, Mahatma Gandhi. This peaceful liberator of India helped improve the lives of Indians and others worldwide, but instead of using physical violence, Gandhi used non-violent methods of protesting. He said, "Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind.

It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man" (Mind). He used this idea in all of his dealings with the injustices of the world. His moral courage has reached throughout the years and even influences us today.

Gandhi's mission began in South Africa. In 1893, he went to South Africa to give advice in a lawsuit. When he ar-

## America Letter

Published Three Times Annually By  
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# Ghandi . . .

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rived, he found that those of the Indian race were treated terribly and looked down upon by the Caucasians of South Africa. Seeing this racism and being mistreated himself by whites during his stay convinced him that he should take action. He spent many years in South Africa, peacefully protesting to the government about the injustices, and, by doing so, greatly helped improve the lives of the Indians there. It was also in South Africa where he began to observe a lifestyle of simplicity and humility.

After finishing much of his work in South Africa, he returned to India to find that the British were also infringing on the rights of the Indian people. This spurred Gandhi into action. Following his belief in non-violent protests, he organized the Muslims and Hindus in protest against British rule. Many of the protests involved the Indian people refusing to participate in any government-funded activity. Many of these protests caused Gandhi to be thrown in jail, but fearing international protests and violent uprisings among the Indian people, the British wouldn't dare hurt him.

Gandhi lived by his concept of non-violent protests and was grieved when his followers committed violent acts. For example, when Muslims or Hindus began to commit crimes against the British, Gandhi would go on fasts. He would refuse to eat or drink anything for days until the fighting stopped. In this way he used himself as a weapon for good. Though he fought to keep the British from ruling India, he did not hate the British. After a mob killed a British government police officer, Gandhi felt personally responsible and fasted for three days. He showed great compassion for all human kind no matter who they were or where they were from.

One of Gandhi's famous traits was his humility. He could have been a very wealthy lawyer, and many of his followers offered him money, but he took a different course. Instead, he chose to simplify his lifestyle. Refusing to hurt any living thing, Gandhi took up a vegetarian diet; he also gave up all his riches and committed his entire life to serving others. He worked tirelessly toward a



*Allison Burns accepts her first place prize from Dr. John Mark Nielsen, Director of The Danish Immigrant Museum.*

better world not only for Indians but for all humankind. He stated, "For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and there through of humanity" (Mind).

After Gandhi's death in 1948 by a Hindu radical, the whole world was in a state of mourning (Gandhi). Political and religious leaders from around the world offered their condolences to India. India and the world had lost one of the most influential leaders of our time. In the words of Louis Fischer, the author of *Gandhi: His Life and Message for the World*, "His legacy is courage, his lesson truth, his weapon love. His life is his monument. He now belongs to mankind" (Fischer).

Gandhi's example led to other movements for freedom. His ideas can be seen in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s movement for black civil rights in the United States and in Nelson Mandela's anti-racist movement in South Africa. Both of these leaders were known for their peaceful protests such as Martin

Luther King, Jr.'s civil rights marches. King and Mandela were both jailed for their peaceful actions and Martin Luther King, Jr. lost his life for his ideals.

Gandhi taught us that there are alternatives to wars and violent protests when trying to stop injustices from continuing. He taught us that non-violence isn't cowardice, but takes more courage than most people realize. It would be easier to face an angry mob with an automatic weapon than sitting patiently unarmed. I know that sometimes war or physical violence is necessary, but in many aspects of world politics and even in our lives, it would be wiser to use non-violent methods of solving problems.

Albert Einstein once said about Gandhi, "Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth," and he is right (Williams). Today, especially in American culture, teenagers are taught to try to be better than everyone else so they can have a

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# The Sounds of Silence

## Ashlyn Spies, First Place Winner 9th Grade, Audubon High School

Imagine the next time that you go to church, there are soldiers waiting to take you away. You don't know where you are going, what will happen or if you will live. Imagine that you, along with other church-goers, friends, and family members are forced onto trains and treated like animals. While you are getting on the train, you see people being shot and falling to the ground. Men and women alike are herded onto the horrible trains. Young and old wait to see if they will live another minute. The trains take you to the closest place to hell that you will ever know. The treatment and death knows no age. Young and old are treated alike. You are judged on your religious beliefs, what family you are born into, and whatever handicaps you are born with.

Many of us could never imagine this, or if we could, it wouldn't be an accurate picture. This actually happened to hundreds of thousands of Jews, gypsies, mentally disabled, and religious and political prisoners. Many of these peoples, especially the Jews, were punished for their belief. Some of them, such as the mentally disabled, were punished for something that they couldn't even control. These groups of people died because of who they were or what they stood for.



*Ashlyn Spies accepts her first place prize from Dr. John Mark Nielsen, Director of The Danish Immigrant Museum.*

None of us could possibly imagine what these brave people went through unless we were there, even after learning all the facts.

The unfair treatment started after the end of World War I. After the loss of World War I, Germany's economy suffered. Although the Jews were soldiers, the Germans needed someone to blame. They blamed the Jews. When Adolf

Hitler came to power the anti-Semitic feeling grew stronger. The Jews were stripped of their basic rights as citizens. On Kristallnacht, synagogues were burned to the ground, and Jewish shops were looted. Almost 26,000 Jews were arrested and taken to the work camps and 100 were killed just on that night. They were barred from public places, schools, and the few jobs that were still left open for them. Many families were driven from their homes and their possessions were burned in the streets. They were herded onto trains like animals and taken to ghettos. The ghettos were surrounded by walls and no Jews were allowed to leave. Many families may have been forced to share one small room. This made it easy for diseases such as typhoid to spread. The conditions the Jews were forced to live in were unsanitary and they only received starving rations. Anyone caught stealing food into the camp or leaving the camp to find food for their families was killed. Children were left as orphans, women left as widows, and men were left with nothing, not even

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## Ghandi . . . – continued from page 7

better car, a better house, a better job, and more money to buy better things. Much of moral character and kindness is lost in our society. To many teenagers today, it might be hard to believe that someone who could have been so well off gave up everything and lived a life of poverty and service for a belief. We don't have to go to the extremes that Gandhi did, but just standing up for our beliefs and values can change the world for good. If each of us can show the kind of moral courage portrayed in the life of Gandhi, the world would be a nicer place to live in. Each of us has the potential to make

a difference in the world. In the words of Gandhi, "Be the change that you want to see in the world" (Teubner).

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## 2005 Marks Bicentennial of Hans Christian Andersen's Birth

Hans Christian Andersen, one of the world's best-known writers was born on April 2, 1805 in Odense, Denmark. His stories are loved around the world; according to the Hans Christian Andersen Museum in Odense, only the Bible has been translated into more languages than tales of this famous Dane. Perhaps it's because so many of his stories celebrate

a deep human hope – that individuals can persevere and find happiness and success.

To mark this occasion, The Danish Immigrant Museum held a 200th Birthday Party for children in the community. Approximately 90 children and parents attended Hans' Birthday Party on April 2nd. We provided cake, ice cream, bal-

loons and gift bags which included a free family pass to the Museum for each child in attendance. The children also had fun decorating "Ugly Duckling" cookies in the kitchen. The Atlantic Friends of the Museum were kind enough to bake and donate approximately 250 cookies for the party. Karl Christensen, of Kimballton, WAS Hans Christian Andersen that day delighting our guests, young and old, with stories throughout the day and leading the laughing children in a parade through the Museum. The festivities ended in the Bro Dining Room with the crowd singing Happy Birthday to Hans. Three children's names were drawn for a special prize of their choice of a book from the Museum Shop.

– continued on page 10

### Sounds . . . – continued from page 8

their pride.

Jews were also deported to concentration camps such as Auschwitz. As soon as the Jews got off the train, they were separated into two groups. One group was taken to a building. There they were told to take off their clothes. Once they were inside the building, the doors shut. The showerhead-like fixture gave the false security that they were just taking a shower. They were gassed to death. Their bodies were cremated in ovens. These ovens needed body-fat to burn. After awhile, the ovens stopped working because the bodies had little fat on them.

The other group of Jews was sentenced to work to produce goods for the Germans. The conditions here were even worse than they were back at the ghettos. They lived in crowded living quarters, were tattooed, and given uniforms and a small amount of food. They worked until they were exhausted. Some were beaten and tortured, and often they were murdered. The Jews that listened to the Nazis and worked hoping that their lives would be spared only prolonged their death and suffering.

Some Jews survived these death camps. They were the lucky ones. To have survived means they had overcome Hitler and proved him wrong. They were the good that had overcome the evil.

Some brave souls took the Jews in and hid them or relocated them to a safer place. These people were the sounds in the silence. When no one else dared to say or do anything, they stood up and did right. They didn't do it because they had to. They didn't do it because there was a medal or money involved. Nor did they do it to become heroes, even

though they were. They did it because they were humane when the rest of the world wasn't. They were human enough to care about another living soul, even if it meant risking their own lives. These people were ordinary people that became extraordinary heroes. Although the numbers of those saved by rescuers was small, it made a huge difference to many people. Thousands of people survived the Holocaust because of these angels.

Each Jew that survived the Holocaust has a different story about the people who rescued him or her, but the one thread that all the stories have in common is the people. Without them, there would be no stories about the Holocaust to tell. There is a hero in every story. Each rescuer is a hero in someone's eyes. Even the acts of kindness made people heroes. Leaving food by the ghetto fence, hiding someone, or even moving a Jew to another county was all gestures of rescuers.

The Holocaust was a time when evil was rewarded, and good acts were punished. Rescuers risked their lives, even for someone they didn't know. They didn't have to do this. They could have sat back and pretended it wasn't happening, like everyone else. They were human enough to do something. I admire these heroes. It is easy for us to say that we could do something the way they did, but it is not proven until we are put to the test. Are you human enough?

#### SOURCES

Books:  
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"The Importance of Anne Frank." San Diego, California: Lucent Books, Inc., 1999.

Internet:  
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Feb. 20.2005



*Hans Christian Andersen (Karl Christensen) beams over his 200th birthday cake.*



*Consul Lowell B. Kramme*

## Knighthood Bestowed on Consul Lowell B. Kramme

Her majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark has appointed the Royal Danish Consul of Iowa, Lowell B. Kramme, Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog. First conferred in 1671 by King Christian V, the decoration is presented to persons who have made a significant contribution to the arts, sciences, or business life or who have served Danish interests in an outstanding way. Consul Kramme has given meritorious service to Denmark since Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II appointed him to the position in 1996.

The transfer of the Order ceremony took place at a dinner in Washington, D.C. on April 14, 2005. His Excellency Ulrik Federspiel, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark, bestowed the decoration on Consul Kramme.

Lowell and his wife, Marilyn, are members of the Museum's Lifetime Leadership Society and have been most generous in their support for the our programming. We congratulate and celebrate with both of them.



The Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet was held April 26th at the Lutheran Church in Elk Horn. Approximately 110 people were served a delicious Danish meal provided by Larsen's Catering.

A number of volunteers were recognized for their various levels of hours donated this past year. Rosa Clemesen received a clock engraved with 1000 hours. Her name was also placed on the volunteer plaque at The Danish Immigrant Museum. Rosa joins 17 other volunteers who have contributed 1,000 or more hours to the Museum.

Connie Johnson, who for many years served with me as Volunteer Coordinator, received special recognition

for her service to the Museum. Connie resigned her position in January to spend more time traveling with her husband, Lynn, visiting her grandchildren, and gardening. We're happy to add, however, that Connie continues to do volunteer work at the Museum.

As part of the evening's entertainment, prizes were awarded to the winners of the "A Tribute to the Rescuer's: Essays in Moral Courage" contest that the Museum sponsored, and the two first place winners read their essays. Those in attendance loudly applauded and all agreed that this added significantly to the evening.

*Joyce A. Petersen*  
Volunteer Coordinator



*Children gather to sing happy birthday and watch the cutting of the cake.*

## Hans Christian Andersen . . .

— continued from page 9

All of us at The Danish Immigrant Museum hope you will join us in celebrating the bicentennial of this wonderful Danish writer. We hope you will visit us sometime this year to visit our Hans Christian Andersen exhibit and shop for unique Hans Christian Andersen merchandise in the Museum Shop. Watch for other Museum events throughout the year that will celebrate this famous and well-loved author. For information on events and attractions, please call 800-759-9192.



# Museum Windows Receive Ultra-Violet Light Treatments

As a professional institution, The Danish Immigrant Museum must offer a safe environment for both its own artifacts and those being loaned to the Museum for exhibits. Among the ways we do this are using acid free tissue and boxes in storage, imposing regulations for protection from pests in both storage and exhibit areas, and trying to keep light exposure to a minimum. The latter has been difficult due to the many windows in the building.

Large amounts of natural light encourage fading, and accelerate the dehydration and deterioration of artifacts. In addition, heat can be responsible for fading as well as discoloration and cracking in pieces made of wood. To eliminate as much of the UV exposure as possible, and to greatly reduce the amount of heat that comes into the building, a film is placed on the interior of each window that deflects the destructive ultraviolet

rays. From the inside looking out, the film is nearly unnoticeable. There is a slight mirroring effect looking in from the outside, but as glass already reflects, it is not distracting.

Though there are products available that can be purchased and applied by individuals rather than companies, the Museum felt it was a safer and more productive choice to hire a company to treat the windows. They are trained, they have all of the necessary equipment, and there are warranties involved that we would not have if we did the treatments ourselves. With that in mind, representatives from two different Ultraviolet (UV) film companies were contacted and they offered estimates of around \$6000.

To support this effort, the Museum's Development department explored funding opportunities, launching an appeal to Danish Brotherhood and Sisterhood Lodges. The initial challenge gift

was made by DBIA Lodge 361 of Elk Horn-Kimballton, which hosted the Heartland District convention last fall. Proceeds from that convention and a match from Woodman of the World enabled the Lodge to present the Museum with a check for \$2000. Recently, DBIA Lodge 56 of Kansas City contributed \$1,000 and appeals are being made to other lodges.

After reviewing the estimates, the Board authorized the project, and Iowa Sun Control of Urbandale, Iowa, was hired. This company has been in operation since 1976, and has treated thousands of



*The UV is lifted to the windows.*

windows. In fact, after September 11, Iowa Sun Control, as one of the 80 top installers in the United States, was invited to Washington D.C. to treat windows as the Pentagon was being reconstructed. They have a solid reputation, and the Museum felt they were the best choice for the project. In addition, the company gave the Museum a price break as they intend to use pictures of the Museum in its advertising.

Three men from the company arrived on a Monday morning and began cleaning and stripping the windows of all dirt, build-up from cleaners, and the older low-quality UV film that had been installed by staff a number of years ago. The workers then measured and cut each piece of film, and adhered it to the windows, and in just three days the process was complete.

The Museum is now able to offer much better light protection to the artifacts housed in the building, a key factor in preserving our collections. The Museum has been very pleased with the results of the treatment, and wishes to extend sincere thanks to those lodges who have supported the project and invite others to consider participating.



*Workers apply UV film to the Museum's windows.*



*The Tea Ball won the  
Formland 96 Award.*

## New Products Have Arrived

The Danish Immigrant Museum is proud to announce we now carry the Rosendahl Line of chic Danish products. Not only do we sell these items we also have them featured in our new exhibit "Americans at Work and at Play: Danish Influences in Everyday Life."

Rosendahl launched its first designer product, the winestopper, in 1993. Erik Rosendahl's philosophy is to create collections and not products, so the family soon grew. Today, the Rosendahl collection ranges from wine accessories to watches, glasses and porcelain. Rosendahl has become a large family.

Thus, Rosendahl has been the primary driving force in the construction of a brand-new market in the gift sector. Today, the products are trend-setters, designed using glass, stainless steel and plastic. Their quality and practical functions have made them popular household items.

Rosendahl wishes to preserve its emphasis on Danish design tradition. Accordingly, they mainly use Danish designers. This is to ensure the quality of the products and design integrity.

The products are perfect for the hard to buy person because every object in the collection is unique. Applied art for daily delight. For more information call Jan at 800-759-9192.



*This Lemon Squeezer won the  
Formland 95 Award.*



### Artist, Museum honored

*Artist Lorraine Larsen (left) and Jan Paulsen, Museum Shop Manager view the award the Museum received for last year's Christmas card that Larsen designed. The painting that inspired the card is in the background.*



## MEMORIALS

**January 1, 2005 – April 30, 2005**

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

Thelma Mae Allen  
Dixie Anderson  
Agnes Assink  
David Bullers  
Cahryn Christensen  
Margaret Christensen  
Myrna Christensen  
Gerda Kirkegaard Fiske  
Mabel Fredrickson  
Mary Gulizia  
Stan Haahr  
Roland Jensen  
Monita Haahr Jorstad  
Robert C. Kirkegaard  
Anna Larsen  
Harry Loft  
Magda Lund  
Elsie Rasmussen McNabb

Patricia Ann McNabb  
Evelyn Metzger  
Emery Mikelsen  
Ruth Herman Nielsen  
Karl Olsen  
Mary Ellen O'Rourke  
Jerome Paulson  
Eivind Pedersen  
Sven Rye  
Christena Schoening  
Lynn Selzer  
Wilbur Sorenson  
Harold Stadsvold  
Erik Struckman  
Karen K. Struckman  
Merrill Walker  
Ellie Whitaker  
Wilber Williamson  
Gerda Wittrup



# Wall of Honor – January 2, 2005 – April 30, 2005

Rasmus L. Jacobsen and Carrie (Karen) Christensen, Irvington, NE – Lawrence & Joyce Jacobsen, Omaha, NE; Robert & Nancy Jacobsen, Portland, OR; James & Susan Jensen, Omaha, NE; Richard & Gertrude Johansen, Bennington, NE; Doris Norgard, Omaha, NE; Lois Ringo, Bozeman, MT. Bernhard (Ben) Eli Andersen Rasmussen & Elsie Marie Sorensen Rasmussen, Alexander, IA – Carl Rasmussen, Nevada, IA.

Henry (Henrik) Hansen, Bagley, IA – Garold Hansen, Bagley, IA.

Karl Berg Larsen & Anna Gudrun (Leth) Larsen, Chicago, IL – Karl & Sonya Larsen, Iowa City, IA.

John Laursen & Christine Andersen Laursen, Waterloo, IA – Alfred & Anna Laursen, North Canton, OH.

Ane K. Hansen, Chicago, IL – Henrietta Wheeler, Rochester, MN.

Peder Marius Pedersen & Inger Poulsen Pedersen, Malta, MT – Pearl Swank, Poplar, MT.

Marianne Clerget, Shoreview, MN – Helen Stub, Minneapolis, MN.

Carl Alfred Christensen, Hector, MN – Naomi Christensen Staruch, Minneapolis, MN.

Johan Emanuel Holm & Carrie Christensen, Omaha, NE – Donna Holm Long, Boring, OR.

## BUSINESS-ORGANIZATION ASSOCIATES

A & A Framing, Kimballton, IA  
 AmericInn Motel & Suites, Elk Horn, IA  
 Answers, Atlantic, IA  
 Audubon State Bank Charitable, Audubon, IA  
 Bank of Maple Plain, Maple Plain, MN  
 Carroll Control Systems, Inc., Carroll, IA  
 Cedar Valley Danes, Cedar Falls, IA  
 Childs & Hall, P.C., Harlan, IA  
 Culligan Soft Water, Atlantic, IA  
 Danebod Lutheran Church, Tyler, MN  
 Danish American Club of Milwaukee, West Bend, WI  
 Danish American Club of Orange County, Aliso Viego, CA  
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #15, Des Moines, IA  
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #341, Elk Horn, IA  
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #348, Eugene, OR  
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #56, Lawrence, KS  
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #75, Albert Lea, MN  
 Danish Club of Tucson, Tucson, AZ  
 Danish Mutual Insurance Association, Elk Horn, IA  
 Danish Vennelyst Park, Omaha, NE  
 Danish Villages Voice, Elk Horn, IA  
 Dike Danish Sisterhood Lodge #176, Waterloo, IA  
 Elk Horn Country Store, Elk Horn, IA  
 Elk Horn Pharmacy, Elk Horn, IA  
 Elk Horn-Kimballton Community School, Elk Horn, IA

Elk Horn-Kimballton Optimist Club, Elk Horn, IA  
 Faith, Family, Freedom Foundation, Calistoga, CA  
 Hardi Midwest, Inc., Davenport, IA  
 Harlan Newspapers, Harlan, IA  
 Heart of Iowa Danes, Ames, IA  
 Investment Centers of America, Inc., Ogden, IA  
 Irving F. Jensen Co., Inc., Sioux City, IA  
 Kessler Funeral Homes, Inc., Audubon, IA  
 KJAN, Atlantic, IA  
 KNOD, Harlan, IA  
 Knudsen Old Timers, Glendale, CA  
 Landmands National Bank, Audubon, IA  
 Marge's Hair Hut, Elk Horn, IA  
 Marne & Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn, IA  
 Nebraska District of DBIA, Lincoln, NE  
 Nelsen & Nelsen, Cozad, NE  
 Olsen, Muhlbauer & Co., L.L.P., Carroll, IA  
 Outlook Study Club, Elk Horn, IA  
 Pacific NW District Lodges D.B., Eugene, OR  
 Proongily, St. Paul, MN  
 Rebuild National Park Society, Inc., Arizona Chapter, Tucson, AZ  
 Rebuild National Park Society, So. California Chapter, Glendale, CA  
 Rebuild National Park Society, Upper Midwest Chapter, Maple Plain, MN  
 Red River Danes, Fargo, ND  
 Ringsted Danish American Fellowship, Ringsted, IA

Royal Danish Embassy, Washington, DC  
 Scenic River, Inc., Bayport, MN  
 Shelby County State Bank, Elk Horn, IA  
 Stone Printing Company, Carroll, IA  
 The Viking Club of Orange County, Seal Beach, CA  
 Westergaard Farms, Whiting, IA



## MATCHING GIFTS

**January 1, 2005 – April 30, 2005**

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

American Express  
 Bank of America  
 Boeing  
 Dominion Foundation  
 Eli Lilly & Co. Foundation  
 IBM Corporation  
 PepsiCo  
 Pfizer Foundation  
 Thrivent Financial for Lutherans  
 Woodmen of the World/Assured Life

# Museum Partners with Chicago Danes to Restore the Hans Christian Andersen Statue in Lincoln Park

A successful tribute to Hans Christian Andersen took place in Chicago's Lincoln Park on April 2nd, the bicentennial of his birth. With a cold wind blowing off Lake Michigan and under a "Danish Blue" sky, the guests and speakers shivered as they huddled near the H.C. Andersen statue.

The Danish Immigrant Museum, represented by Deb Larsen, was delighted to be a part of the morning's festivities. Katrine Vange Keller, former Museum board member, was instrumental in the preparation of this 200th birthday tribute. Two members of The Royal Danish Guard, Sven Madsen and Peter Diessel, officially opened the tribute. The program included speeches given by Vice Consul Lisbeth Christensen, Dr. Christian Noekkentved, Linda Steffensen, Preben Hammer, Alderwoman Mary Ann Smith, Gunny Harboe and Deb Larsen; singing by Tina Winther, her father, Thorkil Winther; and story readings by Ernst Harboe, Tina Winther, and Katrine Vange Keller. The conclusion to

the program was the laying of the wreath at the foot of H.C. Andersen's statue by Katrine's daughters, Erika and Berrit Keller, dressed in their folk costumes. Following the program, the celebration continued with attendees warming themselves with kringle, coffee and Gammel Dansk!

A hundred years earlier on April 2, 1905, the beautiful statue of Hans Christian Andersen was unveiled there in the park. Many first generation Danish immigrants were living in Chicago at that time. This city was also the gateway to those Danish immigrants who moved on westward to settle in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota and the Dakotas. A century after its unveiling, the statue is now in need of restoration and conservation.

To assure that the statue is properly cared for a group of Chicago Danes formed "HCA Chicago 2005" and contacted The Danish Immigrant Museum, for its endorsement of the project and for assistance in processing and recognizing



donations. Several days after the event, Alderwoman Mary Ann Smith informed members of the group that Chicago Park District funds had been secured for the statue's restoration. "HCA Chicago 2005" is planning to use funds collected to purchase a plaque or a bench, to beautify the site and to encourage storytelling activities at the statue.

*(Photos courtesy of Neil Andersen, Chicago, IL)*



*Katrine Keller introduces Gunny Harboe and Deb Larsen.*



# Museum Participates in Rebuild National Park Society Annual Meeting

With representation from Denmark and chapters from across the United States, Rebuild National Park Society, Inc. members arrived in Chicago, home to Rebuild founder Max Henius. During April 20-23 scheduled events and the 2005 Annual Rebuild Membership Meeting took place. The Chicago Midwest Rebuild Chapter, led by Chapter President Al Iversen and his committee, were outstanding hosts for the attending members from afar, including, Dr. John Mark Nielsen, Thomas Hansen and The Danish Immigrant Museum, represented by Deb Larsen.

During the annual meeting, Nielsen, met with Lars Høgh Hansen, General Secretary of the Rebuild National Park Society, and former Museum board members Lowell Kramme and James Iversen who are currently serving on the Rebuild Board of Directors. The purpose of this meeting was to explore cooperation between the Rebuild Society and the Museum.

The first full day offered sightseeing tours including Chicago's Danish landmarks, opening of the Chicago Board of Trade, followed by a trip to Virgil, Illinois where the group toured the new "state-of-the-art" production facilities of Midwest Groundcovers owned by Chicago Midwest Rebuild and Museum

members Peter and Irma Ørum. The Ørums have generously provided many of the plantings on the Museum grounds.

A short bus ride to St. Charles, Illinois took the large group to the Ørum's main headquarters where they hosted a reception, followed by a delectable dinner comfortably accommodated in an impressive tent. Many times guests could be heard saying that the "atmosphere" was just like Rebuild in Denmark and never had they tasted such tender and delicious prime rib.

On day two, Katrine Vange Keller guided participants "In the Footsteps of Rebuild founder Max Henius" with stops in Lincoln Park, buildings on The Loop, and Humboldt Park Stables. The warm greeting from Leif Nielsen as the Rebuild members entered The Danish Home of Chicago was a welcome reprieve from the cold rain of the morning. Seated in the dining room, reminiscent of similar "homes" in Denmark, the group was graciously served an authentic Dan-

ish lunch in the hyggelig atmosphere. After touring The Danish Home, Tor Jensen directed the members back onto their buses, always mindful of keeping everyone on schedule.

The final day included various meetings for the attending Rebuild National Park Society members. Christian IV Guild Induction ushered in the Gala Banquet held on that final evening. Participants thoroughly enjoyed themselves. As Rebuild members departed on Sunday, a renewed and stronger bond emerged between Denmark and the United States and between the Rebuild leadership and The Danish Immigrant Museum.

*(Photos courtesy of Kirsten Blaemire, Los Angeles, CA)*



*Visitors were treated to a dinner in a tent set up on the grounds of Midwest Ground Covers.*



*At the dinner, Nielsen brings greetings from the Museum and thanks the Ørums for their support.*



*Peter Ørum, founder and owner of Midwest Ground Covers, greets members of the Rebuild Society.*

# Correction to the 2004 Annual Report of Contributions

We're embarrassed. There was an error in last year's Condensed Financial Statements found in the annual report that was mailed with the winter issue of the America Letter. We carefully checked all the spelling of names in the report, but overlooked the omission of a line of figures and the inversion of several numbers in the condensed financial state-

ments. Thanks to former Board of Directors president, Chuck Frederiksen, who caught our error, we offer the corrected version. The important factor is that the bottom lines did not change, and we can celebrate last fiscal year as a banner year for the Museum.

## Condensed Financial Statements Years Ended August 31, 2004 and 2003

### Condensed Statements of Financial Condition – August 31, 2004

	2004	2003
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and Investments .....	1,139,433	738,814
Contributions Receivable (Net) .....	40,400	13,200
Gift Shop Inventory .....	45,620	47,402
Property and Equipment (Net) .....	2,780,047	2,838,032
Other Assets .....	5,320	4,656
<b>Total Assets .....</b>	<b>4,010,820</b>	<b>3,642,104</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses .....	25,248	21,122
Notes Payable .....	339,730	478,668
<b>Total Liabilities .....</b>	<b>364,978</b>	<b>499,790</b>
Net Assets .....	3,645,842	3,142,314
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets .....</b>	<b>4,010,820</b>	<b>3,642,104</b>

### Condensed Statements of Activities – For Years Ended August 31, 2004

	2004	2003
<b>Support and Revenue</b>		
Contributions and Support .....	1,077,786	735,942
Admissions and Program Fees .....	23,877	23,680
Gift Shop Revenue (Net) .....	38,062	57,100
Investment and Other Income .....	59,737	49,487
<b>Total Support and Revenue .....</b>	<b>1,199,462</b>	<b>866,209</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Program Services .....	252,222	294,497
Supporting Activities .....	443,712	422,856
<b>Total Expenses .....</b>	<b>695,934</b>	<b>717,353</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets .....</b>	<b>503,528</b>	<b>148,856</b>
Net Assets – Beginning of Year .....	3,142,314	2,993,458
<b>Net Assets – End of Year .....</b>	<b>3,645,842</b>	<b>3,142,314</b>





## News from the Genealogy & Family History Center

### SUCCESSFUL AUCTION

On April 18th the Bruun-Rasmussen auction house in Copenhagen held its spring auction. Among the book offerings was the 1642 edition of Jyske Lov donated earlier to the Museum, which was the subject of an earlier article in AL. We are happy to report that the book sold for 10,000 DK kroner, which will provide a nice sum for the acquisition of new Danish genealogical and local history materials for the Library.

### WISH LIST

Thanks to the eight individuals – all FHGC volunteers -- who banded together to purchase a subscription to some of the online databases on the previous list, and to Cynthia Friis, who purchased *What did they do? In Danish....*, a guide to Danish occupational terms.

The following items are currently at the top of the FHGC Wish List. If you wish to discuss making a donation of the following or contributing money toward their purchase, contact Michele McNabb at 877-764-7008 or at [librarian@danishmuseum.org](mailto:librarian@danishmuseum.org).

- Vols. 1-15 (1916-1939) of the Danish Brotherhood Magazine, and issues of The American Dane from 1997 on.
- Microfilm of 1928/29 Chicago city

directory (\$149)

- Strangers in Hollywood: the history of Scandinavian actors in American films from 1910 to World War II, by Hans J. Wollstein (1994; \$59.50 new on amazon.com)
- From Copenhagen to Okanagan, 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)
- Back issues of Saga of the Sanpitch (Sanpete County, Utah) containing articles about Danish pioneers (Michele has a list; \$5 each, although many are out of print).
- Pre-2000 issues of *Bien*, the weekly Danish-language newspaper published in California.

Thanks to Esther Sand-Henderson, who recently 'adopted' three large-scale Danish maps for our collection. The following map areas remain orphans: north and south Bornholm, and the areas of Thyborøn, Hundborg, Farsø, Struer, Ulfborg, Hammershøj, Bjerringbro, Karup, Hadsten, Ebeltoft, Fornæs, Lohals, Reersø, Nykøbing Sjælland, Sejerø, and Saltholm. Each map costs \$15 and will be labeled with the adopting person's name.



*Wedding picture of early immigrant Christian Pedersen and wife Mina, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, 1863.*

## Wedding Photos Featured in TivoliFest Photograph Display

Orange Blossoms & Lace is the theme of this year's TivoliFest photograph display, which will feature wedding photographs of Danish immigrants. The response to our appeal has been excellent, and many lovely pictures have been sent to us. The photos will be on display in the FHGC lobby during this year's festival and through the month of June. Most will later become part of the FHGC online photo gallery.

Also on exhibit from TivoliFest through the end of June will be a display of Hans Christian Andersen's genealogy, including documents such as his 1819 confirmation record. You may enjoy reading about his life at one of the Hans Christian Andersen Center's websites: [http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/liv/index\\_e.html](http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/liv/index_e.html).

## Information Request

Are You a Danish Immigrant or Long-term Resident? Many people responded to the Immigrant Information Form that was appended in the fall America Letter. We would like to have some information on all immigrants or long-term residents from Denmark. If you would be willing to fill out a form or distribute it at meetings

of your local Danish-American organization, contact Michele at the FHGC for copies.



# Activities and News from the Genealogy & Family History Center

- Thanks to the efforts of Herb Christiansen and Karma Sorensen images of tombstones in the Kimballton, Hamlin Lutheran, and Elk Horn cemeteries can now be viewed online at <http://iowagravestones.org/>. More local cemeteries will be added as the weather improves. Similar sites exist for other states, often through the USGenWeb, and individuals can contribute their own photos to these collections.
- On the Road: The FHGC has been represented at several genealogical society workshops and conferences in recent months. We had a table display with brochures and genealogical handouts at the annual meeting of the Greater Omaha Genealogical Society in mid-April and at the meeting of the Nebraska State Genealogical Society in North Platte on May 6-7. In recent months Michele has also spoken on Danish and Danish-American genealogical research to the Cedar Valley Danes, the Story County [IA] Genealogical Society, and the Greater Omaha Genealogical Society. This summer will see the FHGC staff as Danish genealogical resource at the Hjemkomst Festival in Fargo-Moorhead on June 24-25, and Michele speaking to the Danish Interest Group of the Minnesota Genealogical Society in the Twin Cities on July 25th.
- Danish Visitors: On April 15th Asbjørn Hellum of the Vejle City Archives and Ruth Hedegaard, archivist with the Vendsyssel Historical Museum, visited the FHGC as part of their Museum tour. Among other things, they demonstrated some collaborative websites among local Danish archives that might be helpful for genealogists in the U.S. Michele will be reviewing these sites as well as paying visits to archives in Denmark during a trip there in August.
- In October the FHGC will be host-



*Librarian Michele McNabb speaks to the Cedar Valley Danes at their April meeting.*

ing Danmarks Radio producer Frank Esmann, who will be producing a series of radio vignettes on interesting or successful Danish immigrants and Danish-American families, based on materials found in the Museum collections. We know there is a lot of 'buried' information in the library, so if you know of a person or family whose story is part of our collection that you think might fit the bill, please contact us about them.

- Genealogical Tote Bags are now for sale at FHGC and in the Museum store. The bags, which feature an outline map of Denmark and the legend "Danish Roots ... American Branches," come in two colors and



*New tote bags are for sale at the Museum and FHGC.*

sizes: an open canvas model w/ red design for \$11.50 and a red zippered version w/ white design for \$14.50.



## HeritageQuest Online™ Update

Since September over 140 Museum members have signed up for remote access to this valuable set of genealogical databases. Home access is available to members at the annual giving level of \$100 and above. If you are interested in signing up, contact Development Associate Deb Larsen at 1-800-759-9192, or fill out the HQO request form sent out with your annual renewal. Note: We were delayed by technical problems when we first began this arrangement with HQO, but these have been resolved, and members have been able to enjoy this benefit.

# Researching Ancestors

Library visitors often ask how to start researching their Danish ancestry. The following are some tips to help you begin:

Start by collecting information on the children of your immigrant ancestors, the ancestors themselves, and any known siblings who settled in the U.S. or Canada. Typical useful sources of information include the following:

- Death/burial, marriage and birth/baptismal records (including marriage applications)
- Obituaries and tombstone inscriptions
- 25th, 40th or 50th anniversary newspaper articles
- Newspaper articles for 'round' (80, 90, 100) birthdays
- Funeral home records
- Church records (especially Lutheran)
- Federal census information, beginning in 1930 and working backwards
- State census information (some states have detailed mid-decade censuses; others don't)
- Declarations of intent and final naturalization petitions for foreign-born males over 21 (before 1920) and all foreign-born individuals after 1920. Before 1920 minor children and wives automatically became citizens when the male head of household did; children who had reached majority before then had to apply in their own names.
- County and town histories in the area(s) of settlement
- Danish Brotherhood Records (found at FHGC and at the

Danish Immigrant Archive at Dana College in Blair, NE)

- Social Security applications
- WWI draft registration records
- Land records, including homestead files
- Online sources, such as the Ellis Island passenger arrival records (NYC arrivals 1892-1924) and the USGenWeb for the area(s) in which family members lived. The Library has a listing of useful websites which we'll be happy to send to you.

Once you've gathered materials from the above sources, or if you have family documents such as correspondence or postcards from relatives in Denmark, diaries, Danish passports or other authorizations, or labeled family photographs it should be possible to form a picture of about when they came to this country, where they settled, and likely, where they came from.

For a variety of reasons the names used in America by Danish immigrants are often different from what they were back in Denmark. Sometimes it is just a matter of a spelling change, such as 'Niels' becoming 'Nels,' or 'Marie' turning into 'Maria,' but frequently the difference is greater than this. You will need to have some idea of what the names were likely to have been in Denmark before starting to search Danish records.

The FHGC does offer translation services for Danish documents, correspondence and other materials. Contact Michele McNabb for further details.



*Kids posed for pictures on the big birthday cake in the Museum Shop.*



## *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

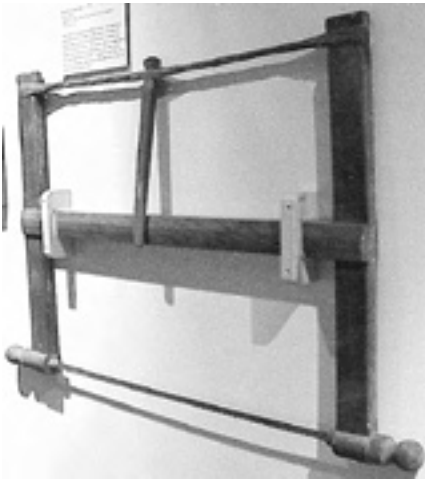
*Other Times By Appointment*

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

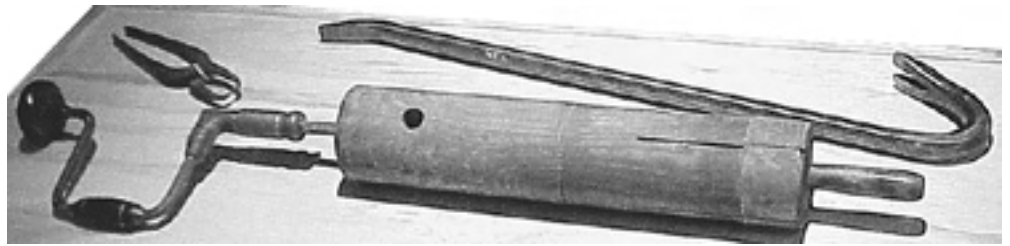
*(Local weather conditions may cause occasional closures.)*



# Hansen Exhibit



Hans enjoyed testing his carpentry skills. He made this modified buck saw at the time he decided to take on the challenge of making wagon wheels. For this purpose, he needed a saw that could cut circles. He had the blade on hand and designed the frame to accommodate it; the blade on a true buck saw would be wider. Using this tool, Hans cut out a set of wooden wagon wheels that saw many years of service on the Hansen farm.



The crowbar dates from the period of Hans Hansen's carpentry work in Cedar Rapids. It is among the first tools he forged. Hans designed the cylinder boring tool so that he could keep the family's old Model T Ford motor in repair. Hans forged the tongs, with their pointed ends, in order to make a certain repair on an old Studebaker car, which he purchased around 1934 or 1935. At this time, he transformed the old Model T Ford into a pickup by removing its top and back seat and building a box unit on the rear of the vehicle.



Hans made this wagon (above) for his oldest son, Paul. He made the wagon box himself and cut the wheels down from old buggy wheels. Through the years, all of the Hansen children played with it and sometimes used it for their tasks, such as gathering walnuts. Walter probably played with the wagon more than any of the other Hansen children. He sought to make it as much like an automobile as possible. He put a set of old Model T parking lights on it, which burned kerosene, and added to this an old style automobile horn. He also added a steering device so he could coast down the hills and installed a brake for better control. The brake is the only one of these additions to have remained on the wagon.

Sometime during the first year of his mill operation, Hans broke one of his legs below the knee when a log shifted. He was anxious to repay the loan for the mill and had a great deal of lumber to cut that winter in order to meet requirements for the neighbor's barns. So as to not lose time, but still allow his leg to heal, he devised a special knee-high crutch with a sling (left) on which he could place the knee of his broken leg, allowing him to keep his weight off the lower part of his injured leg. In this manner, he was able to proceed with work at the sawmill.