

America Letter

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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



A glimpse of "Fitness, Form, and Rhythm in Motion: The Danish Gymnastic Tradition in the United States." Danish gymnastics emphasizes the development of flexibility and strength.

Stretch, Tumble, and Move

By Eva Nielsen

Gymnastics. In the United States, it's about young, small people careening across floor mats, twisting around bars, and sticking their landings in hopes of earning a perfect ten from the judges. But that's American gymnastics. Danish gymnastics is something entirely different.

The Danish Immigrant Museum's major exhibit for 2006, "Fitness, Form, and Rhythm in Motion: The Danish Gymnastic Tradition in the United States" opened on May 1, 2006 and will run through March 6, 2007. The exhibit explores Danish gymnastics—its roots, influences, and growth into a sport that reflects Danish cultural values.

Gymnastics are a part of growing up for every boy and girl in Denmark. Gymnastics has been a required element of the school curriculum since 1814. In the early 1800s, gymnastics instruction in Denmark was heavily influenced

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Across Oceans, Across Time, Across Generations®: The Orums

By Eva Nielsen

When Peter Orum boarded a steamship in Copenhagen in 1965, he wanted to learn about his trade and learn about America, then return to Denmark. It's 2006. And when you see what Orum, his family, and friends have made, it's clear he's here to stay.

Midwest Groundcovers, located 45-minutes west of Chicago in St. Charles, is enormous. On this spring morning, the company's 100-acre headquarters is buzzing with activity. Their main business is growing and selling plants for landscaping, and this is their busy season. Down the road, there's another 250 acres. Here's Midwest Trading, a sister business established to supply all the equipment that growers and landscapers need—containers, soil, compost, tools. Also, there's Midwest GROmaster, a company that designs and installs irrigation, fertilization, and recycling systems for nurseries, originally imported from Denmark, now mostly fabricated in the US.

All this started with Peter Orum. And, as he puts it, while sipping coffee in the company sales office, "Nothing happens overnight. It grows gradually."

To get to the roots of this story we have to go to Denmark where Orum grew up on a 2-acre nursery in Vraa, a town in

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Irma Orum (left), the daughter of Danish immigrants, Peter Orum (right), a Danish immigrant, and their daughter Christa Orum-Keller (center) have worked together to grow their business, Midwest Groundcovers. Peter was recently awarded the Carvel Immigrant Entrepreneur Award in Washington, D.C.

Director's Corner

By John Mark Nielsen

Immigrants. Immigration. "A day without immigrants." The attention of the nation is once again focused on an issue seminal to the American experience and also to The Danish Immigrant Museum.

The motto of our country is *e pluribus unum*, "out of many one." This idea of many coming together to form a whole is symbolized in the Great Seal of the United States. The eagle that appears on the seal holds thirteen arrows in its left talon. That each rod is clearly evident suggests the importance of each arrow, each individual member. But it is the banding together that provides strength.

While the thirteen arrows on the Great Seal represent the original thirteen colonies, we might also view them as symbolic of the many different peoples who contribute to the making of an American identity. In this sense, an arrow might represent the legacy and contributions of Danish immigrants to this country. Part of this contribution has been a willingness to blend in and to be a contributing part of the whole. This is a part of the Danish character.

Yet, Denmark, too, wrestles with issues of immigrants and immigration. At its heart, the recent controversy arising from the publication of the twelve Danish cartoons depicting the prophet Mohammed is an issue of immigration. In the 1960s and 70s Denmark willingly received immigrants from the former Yugoslavia and Turkey. These immigrants were willing to work at jobs many Danes no longer wished to do. However, many were Muslims, and the religious and cultural practices of some within this community have been at odds with a very secular Denmark.

Today there are approximately 200,000 Muslims in Denmark (about 3.6% of the population), many of them second and third generation Danes. Recent developments—including the founding and initial success of the organization Danish Muslims for Democracy—clearly demonstrate that most im-

migrants to Denmark are pleased to live in an open and free society. Assimilation is occurring.

Assimilation is a slow process. Many of us easily forget that Danish-Americans here in the United States have been ridiculed for their desire to honor their heritage while acknowledging loyalty to their newly adopted land. For example, when Danish immigrants living in western Iowa objected to the proclamation issued on May 23, 1918 by Iowa Governor William L. Harding banning the public use of all foreign languages, the governor responded: "Now think of a man who was brought from the filth of Denmark and placed on a farm for which he paid \$3 an acre. Ye gods and fishes, what Iowa has done for him he never can repay!"

The Danish Immigrant Museum is the only national institution charged with preserving the unfolding narrative of the Danish experience here in the United States. Part of our mission is to preserve the past, but we must also tell today's stories. An important step is launching "Across Oceans, Across Time, Across Generation," a new series in our *America Letter*. The story of the Orum family and Midwest Groundcovers is particularly appropriate as it highlights an individual, Peter Orum, who has recently been given the Carvel Immigrant Entrepreneur Award, and a family that has dramatically participated in a story of immigration, including the migration of individuals with roots in Mexico.

You, through your membership and support of The Danish Immigrant Museum, are also a participant in this unfolding story of immigration and assimilation. For that, I am grateful. My hope is that you will continue to support our museum as we seek to celebrate and understand immigration, assimilation and cultural heritage through our exhibits and programming.



Gymnasts . . . continued from page 1

by German gymnastics, which focused on marching exercises and vaulting. The German gymnastics tradition, too, celebrates individual, not team, achievement.

Danish gymnastics are about a healthy body and mind. In the late 1800s, after a large swath of Danish territory had been lost to Germany in the Dano-Prussian War of 1864, Danes began to turn away from all things German. Danish gymnastics came under the influence of Swedish gymnastics, which stressed the medicinal value of the sport. Danish gymnastics started to focus more on building strength and flexibility—and to celebrate the positive effect a healthy body has on the mind.

In Denmark, gymnastics is about community, about the group. The folk high school movement in the late 1800s influenced Danish gymnastics and further embedded the sport in Danish life. The folk high school philosophy was that all people—not just the urban elite—should be educated. Students studied in community learning about Danish culture and history through discussion and lectures. There were no grades, no tiering of performance levels, no hierarchy at all. Students learned together, sang together, and practiced gymnastics as a group.

In Denmark, then, gymnastics often looks like this: young and old people practice gymnastics, joining clubs and teams during the winter months. The goal is to create a healthy body by performing rhythmic routines to music, by vaulting, and by tumbling. The winter season often culminates in performances in front of the community—an opportunity to gather, socialize, and enjoy gymnastics.

Our new exhibit "Fitness, Form, and Rhythm in Motion: The Danish Gymnastic Tradition in the United States" further explores the evolution of Danish gymnastics. Study photographs, see gymnastics equipment manufactured by the Nissen Equipment Company of Cedar Falls, Iowa, watch a video of the 2006 National Danish Performance Team, and leave with a desire to stretch, tumble, and move!

Orums ■ ■ ■

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northern Jutland. “As long as I can remember I’ve been growing plants,” he explains.

Orum also grew up listening to travel stories. His father, uncle, and their cousin immigrated to Canada in the 1920s and worked there until the mid 1930s when the Depression hit. “By the mid 30s they wanted to go home and see if things were as bad in Denmark,” Orum says. “They hadn’t been home a year when they wanted to go back. Things were bad in Denmark too and there was no excitement there like in Canada. He tried to get back to Canada, but never did.”

When Orum completed eighth grade, the family couldn’t afford to send him to high school. So, Orum apprenticed at nurseries for four years, then attended horticulture school in Copenhagen. After several years in the Royal Danish Army, Orum was ready to follow in his father’s footsteps: he boarded a DFDS steamer (a ship from Denmark’s United Steamship Company) and crossed the Atlantic Ocean.

Orum was bound for Dundee, Illinois, where he had secured a nursery job. His plan: “I wanted to go and learn something about my trade and learn something about America and be here for a couple years or three and then go back and possibly start a nursery. But I’m still here.”

Why is he still here? Well, first of all, love.

Her name is Irma. Irma’s parents were Danish immigrants: her father came from

Bornholm, her mother from Kerteminde on Fyn. Peter and Irma crossed paths through the Danish Junior League, which met in the Dania Society’s clubhouse space on Kedzie Avenue in Chicago. They were both active at the Danish American Athletic Club on Pulaski Avenue where Peter did gymnastics and Irma did Danish folk dancing.

They married. They had children, Christa and Stig. And this isn’t just Peter’s story anymore; it’s the family’s story.

The children grew up in a bilingual home: Peter spoke Danish with the children and Irma, who learned Danish from uncles, spoke English. Peter’s and Irma’s cultural traditions intermingled and the children grew up in a Danish atmosphere.

Meanwhile, the Orums did consider returning to Denmark permanently.



Palle and Lydia Ørum, Peter Orum’s parents, pitched in during visits from Denmark, this one in 1971. Palle and Lydia knew their way around plants: Peter grew up on a small nursery in Vraa in northern Jutland.

They traveled to Denmark where Peter consulted with a trusted teacher from horticulture school, sharing his plans to start his own nursery. His teacher advised against a return to Denmark. Orum explained his teacher’s thinking, “He said we have too many plants in Denmark. We don’t need another man growing more plants here. He said you



Irma and a young Christa at work in the early 1970s. “We did very much grow up in the business,” Christa says. She is now a vice-president for Midwest Groundcovers.

ought to stay in America and do that.”

This made sense to Orum. In Denmark, Orum says, there was a different approach to landscaping; there are many more plants in the garden and tall hedges surrounding the property. While in the United States, Orum says, “You had two upright junipers on either side of the door and then you had seven yews on one side and three and a half on the other side and they’re all pruned like meatballs. And the lawn, a couple shade trees and that was it. And I thought, man, there’s room for a lot of plants, so maybe I should listen to the old teacher.”

He did. On the flight home Orum and Irma decided to start their own business: Midwest Groundcovers. Peter would take care of the nursery and Irma, who had been working for Icelandic Airlines when they met, would take care of the office.

They worked. Orum says, “At the very beginning it was family and friends who helped us on the weekends and they were paid by beer and hamburgers.”

Their daughter Christa, now Christa Orum-Keller and a vice president in the company, recalls that as children she and her brother grew up in the business. “I remember my first job here was when I was five...My mom would be working in the office and my dad would be working in the nursery. And I would

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Orums . . .

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make cuttings—these little pachysandra cuttings.”

Even Orum’s parents worked during visits from Denmark.

As the business grew, so did the workload. Orum needed workers, paid workers. So this Danish immigrant turned to a group of people whom he had worked with and respected since his early days at the Dundee nursery: Mexican immigrants.

Orum says, “When I came to the nursery in Dundee I found out that most of the workers even at that time 40 years ago were Mexican. I have worked and lived with the Mexicans ever since and found them to be delightful people, good workers, family people.”

And now this is no longer just the story of the Orum family; it’s the story of other immigrants, other people coming to this country, other lives changing.

It happened like this: Orum asked a customer to send any Mexican workers that he didn’t need over to Midwest Groundcovers. “So these two Mexicans showed up the next day...and I said I have work for one. I said you decide who it’s gonna be and we start tomorrow. Then they argued about it for half an hour.” They made a decision. “So that was Juventino Castillo. And he’s still here. He started in 1972. And he is now a foreman running one of the departments on the nursery we have in Michigan.”

Christa adds, “And his son is a department manager there. And his brother is a nursery manager here.”

It turns out that much of Castillo’s extended family works for the company as well.

Not only that, but many of the Mexicans that work for Midwest Groundcovers come from Castillo’s hometown or other small towns in San Luis Potosi, a Mexican state north of Mexico City. Orum and Irma have visited Castillo’s hometown in Mexico. They were invited to the wedding of Castillo’s oldest daughter. Her name? Irma.

The work is seasonal in the nursery business. Often Mexican men travel to



A team pots shrubs at the company’s Virgil, Illinois facility. Midwest Groundcovers employs hundreds of seasonal workers between March and October. Many are Mexican immigrants.

the United States to work for the busy season, returning to their families in Mexico during the winter. Others stay and make a home in the United States, working in to management or supervisory positions in larger companies or starting their own small businesses.

Midwest Groundcovers depends on this influx of Mexican workers. Orum says, simply, “Without them this type of agriculture will disappear.”

So Orum works hard on behalf of the company’s Mexican workers. He speaks working Spanish, something Christa believes strengthens his ability to relate to the Mexicans in the company. (Orum picked up Spanish during his 10 years of night school—along with degrees in financing and accounting from Northern Illinois University.) Orum provides subsidized housing to many of the seasonal workers. And the family has set up a youth and educational scholarship—a scholarship created in memory of the Orums’ son Stig who was killed in 1990 while riding an antique Danish Nimbus motorcycle with his father.

Also, Orum is deeply involved in the recent immigration reform debates raging in this country. He is lobbying, particularly through the American Nursery and Landscape Association, for the McCain-

Kennedy Bill, which would, as he says, “Take care of those [illegal immigrants] who are here in a reasonable way and would make a guest worker program that functions so we can get workers in the future, legally.”

Orum is clear that his immigration experience was not like those of earlier immigrants—or of more recent Mexican immigrants, for that matter. He explains that many immigrants leave a country and a situation that is bad. “And I didn’t leave something bad. I left something good and came to something that I, with the help of some other good people, made better.”

The National Immigration Forum apparently agrees: Orum has recently been awarded this year’s Carvel Immigrant Entrepreneur Award in recognition of what he, his family and friends have made in the United States.



***Become a member of
The Danish Immigrant
Museum today!***

**It’s easy to do, call 1-800-
759-9192 or go online at
www.danishmuseum.org**

Museum Partners with Local High School Students

In an effort to partner with the museum and to get his students involved in the community, Elk Horn-Kimballton High School's Ag Instructor and Future Farmers of America (FFA) Advisor Clint Smith contacted The Danish Immigrant Museum.

This spring, Smith, students from his



Danish Seed Savers



The Danish Seed Savers Association in Denmark (Frøsamlerne) is developing a collection in which many of us have a vested interest. They are looking for garden plants (primarily vegetables) that are of Danish immigrant origin. They would like seeds from these plants so that they can re-establish them in Denmark. They hope to learn of groups, organizations or collectors who have been working with Scandinavian immigrant varieties.

Given the large number of individuals with Danish heritage who have settled in this country, it is quite likely that some are carefully cultivating plants from seeds originally brought over from Denmark by their parents, grandparents or, even, great-great-grandparents. Anyone cultivating such plants and willing to share their seed is requested to contact Lila Towle, the president of the Danish Seed Savers Association. If there is a family story that goes along with these plants, that is even better. Ms. Towle's address is as follows:

Lila Towle
Foreningen Frøsamlerne
Drøwten 9, Lindum
8830 Tjele, Danmark
9854 4462

A visit to the group's website, <http://www.froesamlerne.dk>, will provide additional information. The group was inspired by and is associated with the Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah, Iowa.



Clint Smith holds on while Shelby Bissen and McKenzie Hansen extract a tree from its pot. Smith spearheaded a partnership between Elkhorn-Kimballton High School and The Danish Immigrant Museum. The students will work on the Jens Jensen Heritage Park on the museum grounds.

Natural Resource Management class, and FFA members planted flowers in the museum's entrance garden.

Smith then approached the museum's development department with another idea: he proposed to submit two matching grant applications, one with FFA Environment First Grant Program and another with the BOIC Grant Program. These grants would allow the Elk

Horn-Kimballton High School classes to partner with the museum for continued development of the Jens Jensen Heritage Park on the museum grounds. In conjunction with the grant, students would learn about the Danish immigrant landscape architect Jens Jensen. Students would also get "hands-on" experience in landscape design, as well as planting and maintaining trees and shrubs. Finally, they would gain an appreciation for volunteering, which is essential to our non-profit institution.

In the month of May both grant programs announced their recipients. The Danish Immigrant Museum's partnership project was awarded \$1,000 from each program in matching gift funding, the maximum amount awarded by both programs.

In tribute to Iowa's Arbor Day, Smith and his students got started. They planted three trees (Thornless Cockspur Hawthorns). The museum entrance site selected for the preliminary planting was in compliance with The Danish Immigrant Museum's Planting Plan for the Jens Jensen Heritage Park. The grants' requirements will be fulfilled during 2006.



Annie Greve, McKenzie Hansen, Shelby Bissen, Clint Smith, and Lisa Jessen proudly gather around a newly planted tree.

From A Curatorial Perspective . . .

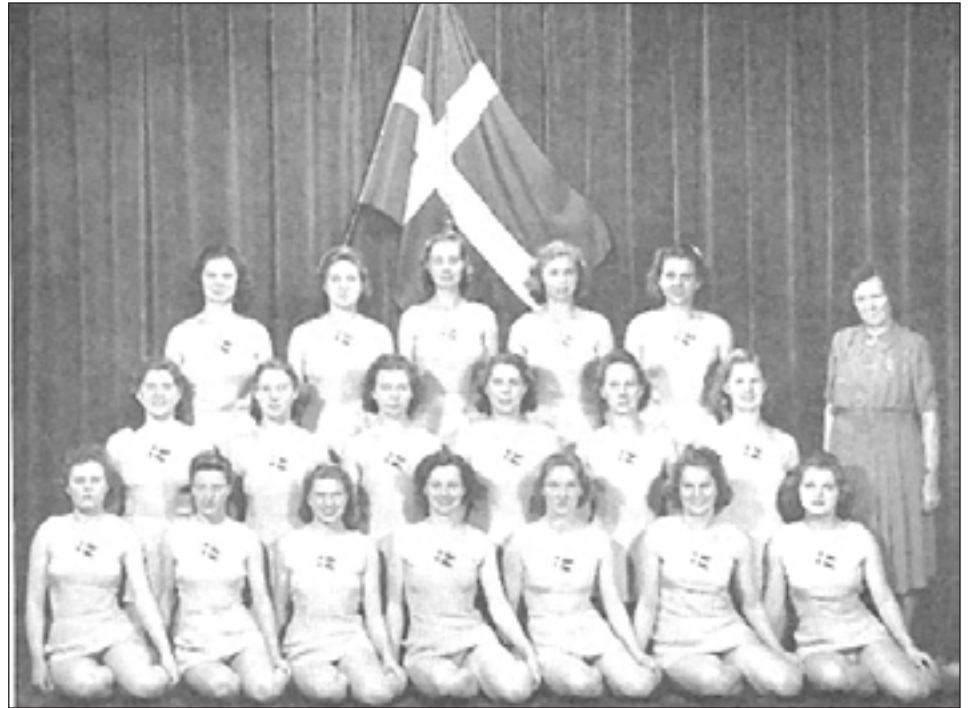
by Barbara Lund-Jones

Preparation for a major exhibit, such as “Form, Fitness, and Rhythm in Motion: The Danish Gymnastic Tradition in the United States,” involves many people and many kinds of contributions. Within the finished exhibit, these separate strands come together in a unified whole, but it is of interest to occasionally tease apart some of the contributory strands and explore their individual stories. We turn now to such a story.

Last fall, we learned that one of our founding board members, Signe Nielsen Betsinger, has a cousin who was a member of the Danish Gym Team, which toured America in 1947 under the direction of Erik Flensten-Jensen. Ms. Betsinger paved the way for an interview with her cousin, Signe Tromholt, who lives in Århus, Denmark. Helene Christensen, our Danish intern during 2005, conducted the interview January 4, 2006, shortly after her return to Denmark. Helene forwarded us a CD recording of the Danish language interview along with an English translation.

Many points were covered in the interview. Of particular interest is the contrast between Signe’s casual introduction to gymnastics and the powerfully motivating force it became in her life. This part of her story is relayed here in an edited version. Signe explains, “I was 17 or 18 when I began gymnastics, and when I traveled to America, I was in my late 20s. My involvement began by chance. I had never done any gymnastics. Then one day a good friend told me that I should come with her. In the beginning I was like yikes!!—gymnastics—that’s not for me, but I was very impressed with the good fellowship. My friend very much wanted me to join her, so I went with her. And the longer I was there, the more I enjoyed it. My sympathy for the culture within the gymnastics grew. It was wonderful to be with someone of the same age and I could feel improvement with my body. My body was doing well. . . .

“I was involved with AGF (Århus Gymnastik Forening/Århus Gymnas-



When she first started practicing Danish gymnastics, Signe (Berthelsen) Tromholt was drawn to the fellowship and community. Here she is in the front row, fourth in from the left. Anna Marie Lind Boerup (in street dress) is standing at far right.

tics Association). And I must say I was blown away. They were so skillful. And I wished with all my heart that I was able to join that elite team—then I would be the happiest girl in the world. And one year later I was able to join the team, then I had enough skills. I became so skillful that I was standing in front of the team directing them. Then I went to Copenhagen for a year to get the instructor education. After that I was at the Danmark Højskolen for Legemeøvelser (The National High School for Physical Education).

“It was during my time in Copenhagen that the Flensted-Jensen tour became relevant. My gymnast instructor in Århus [Anna Marie Lind Boerup] was among the elite in Denmark, and Flensted contacted her hoping she would lead the girls’ team in America, so it was obvious that I should join the team. She was with the team in America for approximately three months, but she was an elderly lady—in her sixties I believe, so she went home after three months. Then I became the girls’ leader for the rest of the tour.

That’s how it went all the way through Mexico, Canada, Cuba and America.

All my adult life I have taught people gymnastics. It has really been a big part of my life. Then, too, my husband [Thorkild Tromholt] was with the team as a pianist. So, we shared our experiences. We knew each other from home. We were actually already engaged before we went to America. Thorkild’s involvement was the music. He composed music for the gymnastic team; his piece “40 Strofer” was especially suited for gymnastics and rhythmic practices. We did not use the major classical pieces. We used music that had sonority.”

Signe and Thorkild were married in Brooklyn, New York during the tour. The music that Thorkild Tromholt composed for the 1947 tour is featured in the exhibit. Tromholt’s music plays continuously in the background as visitors pass through the introductory panels. Signe’s photo album of the 1947 tour is displayed in a case along with several tour programs. Through Helene Christensen’s work, we have been able to integrate the Tromholts’ story into our exhibit.



Intern Katie Keil (left) and staff member Angela Stanford (right) clean the exhibits. Exhibit cleaning is a time-consuming, detail-oriented task.

Our American Museum Intern Bids 'So Long!'

By Katie Keil, Museum Studies Graduate Student, Eastern Illinois University

So long for now, but never goodbye. My internship in the Collections Department has ended and I want to take this opportunity to thank the museum board and staff once again for the opportunity to work with all of you and to learn the skills needed to advance within the museum profession. I enjoyed my seven months at the museum and in Elk Horn getting to know all of the Danes; you are very friendly people and I have made life-long friends. I also need to thank my housemate Helene Christensen for putting up with all my wacky American ways—especially my television viewing habits; it was great fun getting to know you.

As for the Collections Department, I am very proud of what staff member Angela Stanford and I were able to accomplish during my brief stint. With the extra set of hands, Angela and I were able to accomplish several projects that were impossible to do alone. In doing so, we made the artifacts and the storage areas more usable, better organized, cleaner, safer (for both personnel and artifacts), and have gained better intellectual control over the collection's holdings.

In addition to the daily departmental tasks, I was to do a special project during my internship in order to fulfill part of the requirements for my master's degree. I chose to clean several of the shelving units in Visual Storage that had collected a little of everything, but primarily archival materials and photos.

As a result of that project, the artifacts are now properly stored with other like

items—and visitors will have a cleaner view when looking into that area of Visual Storage. Better organization has also helped us gain some much needed storage space. As I rehoused the archival materials, I created a new finding aid, which lists the kinds of documents the collection contains and where they are located. This finding aid should prove useful to staff and researchers alike. We have even sent electronic copies of the finding aid to our Family History and Genealogy Center and the archives at Dana College and Grand View College so that they may refer their patrons to relevant materials held at the museum.

After that two and half month project was complete, I had a week and half left in my internship and I spent it cleaning. Boy, does that main floor sparkle! And, let me tell you, the refrigerator has a few less science projects growing in it these days.

With my internship requirements completed at the end of March, I moved back home to Eastern Iowa while continuing to look for a full-time position in the museum field. I also needed to study, with the goal of passing my comprehensive oral exam to earn my degree. I am pleased to announce that I did pass and will graduate with a master's in historical administration from Eastern Illinois University (Charleston, IL).

While I was sad to leave all of my friends at the museum, I am excited to be done with school and am looking forward to the future. Thanks again for all your kindness and I look forward to visiting Elk Horn again soon.

Museum to Participate in Iowa Museum Association Conference

In September of this year, the Iowa Museum Association will pair with the Association of Midwest Museums for a conference to be held in Davenport, Iowa. The sessions at this three day conference will discuss topics related to its title, "Building Bridges: Community, Collaboration, Celebration."

Collections Manager and Registrar Angela Stanford and Family History and Genealogy Center Manager Michele McNabb worked with Tova Brandt, Curator at the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, to plan a session which will be presented on Wednesday, September 27. This session will feature a panel discussion between three people. Representing The Danish Immigrant Museum will be Executive Director John Mark Nielsen. Vesterheim's Registrar Jennifer Johnston Kovarik will participate, as will Rita Lara, Director of the Oneida Nation Museum in Oneida, Wisconsin.

Ethnic museums face unique challenges to attract visitors from outside their own cultural groups, and to be relevant and viable in the communities in which they are located. Each museum participating in this panel discussion has developed related programming and the representatives will share this information with session participants.

Participating in this conference will create a larger range of exposure for us while educating others about the challenges ethnic museums face and the benefits they offer. The museum is a member of the Iowa Museum Association and is eager to support the organization by participating in this fall's conference.

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The Danish Immigrant Museum
2212 Washington, POBox 470
Elk Horn, Iowa 51531
712-764-7001 800-759-9192
FAX 712-764-7002
Eva Nielsen, editor

www.danishmuseum.org
email: info@danishmuseum.org

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Staff

Executive Director: Dr. John Mark Nielsen,
director@danishmuseum.org

Director of Development: Thomas Hansen,
developmentdirector@danishmuseum.org

*General Information & Inquiries About
Volunteering:* info@danishmuseum.org

Group & Special Tours: Terri Johnson,
secretary@danishmuseum.org

*Wall of Honor, Donations, Memorial Gifts
& Memberships:* Deb Larsen, develop-
ment@danishmuseum.org

Bookkeeping & Financial Inquiries: Jen-
nifer Winters, acctng@danishmuseum.org

Collections & Exhibit Questions:

Barbara Lund-Jones, M.Phil, curator@
danishmuseum.org

Artifact Donations & Museum Loans:
Angela Stanford, M.A., registrar@danish-
museum.org

Museum Shop: Jan Paulsen, giftshop@
danishmuseum.org

Donation of Books & Library Questions:
Michele McNabb, MLS, librarian@
danishmuseum.org

Genealogical & Translation Inquiries:
genealogy@danishmuseum.org

Volunteer Coordinator: Joyce Petersen

Custodian: Tim Fredericksen



Luncheon guests at the Tampa Board meeting join in singing the U.S. and Danish national anthems

February Board Meeting held in Tampa, Florida

The 72nd Regular Meeting of The Danish Immigrant Museum's volunteer Board of Directors was held on Saturday, February 11 in Tampa, Florida at the Embassy Suites Tampa-Westshore with board president Kai Nyby of La Porte, Indiana calling the meeting to order.

Thursday's Executive Committee meeting and Friday's general committee meetings provided opportunity to discuss the various areas of The Danish Immigrant Museum at greater length. In addition, Mr. Vern Henricks of Hartsook Companies gave an informative presentation to board and staff members of the Campaign Readiness Review and Assessment recently conducted for the Museum.

An enjoyable Saturday luncheon was also held at the Embassy Suites with nearly 70 people in attendance. Dr. John Mark Nielsen, executive director, read greetings from Honorary Consul Arthur

R. Savage who was unable to attend the Luncheon. Anne Brewer of The Danish Suncoast Club and Vibeke Falzon of The Danish Club of Sarasota also shared the podium with Dr. Nielsen and presented the audience of museum members and friends with an overview of their activities in the area. After much conversation during a delicious lunch and dessert, Dr. Nielsen gave a presentation about the Museum much to the delight of everyone.

Thank you to all who attended the luncheon and for welcoming us to Tampa, Florida. We are especially grateful to Anne Haubrich, Jorgen Graugaard, Vibeke and Joe Falzon, Alice Madsen Burak, and Consul Savage for their assistance. We also would like to thank Danish Sisterhood Sunshine Lodge #181 and its members for inviting us to their monthly meeting on Sunday, February 12.

Wall of Honor – January 1, 2006 – April 30, 2006

Gudrun Houmann Andreasen, Betty Kuessow, Kenosha, WI

Jorgen Vinther Hansen, *Jorgen Hansen, Tucson, AZ*

Christian E. Kringel, *Mary Lou Johansen, Iowa City, IA*

Ane Marie Madsen Larsen, *Raymond & Shirley Burkett, Des Moines, IA*

Jens “Julius” Larsen, *Evelyn Husser, Portage, MI*

Christian P. Nelsen, *Dianne Nielsen, Kimballton, IA*

Jorgen Nissen Petersen, *Bill & Tammy Bieroth, Mt. Home, ID, Joanna & Kiron Going, Bountiful, UT, Dean & Judy Kapperman, Wellington, CO, Phyllis Kosky, Elk Horn, IA, Rusty & Patty Kosky, Newell, IA, Howard & Esta Petersen, Wellington, CO, Lloyd & Murriel Petersen, Kimballton, IA, Ricci & Sheila Petersen, Wellington, CO, Terry & Vicki Petersen, Mound City, MO, Thomas & Jennifer Petersen, Exira, IA, Tony & Roxanne Petersen, Kimballton, IA, Trace & Lisa Petersen, Atlantic, IA, Trent & Tammy Petersen, Indianola, IA, Troy & Cheryl Petersen, Elk Horn, IA, Jack Riss, Denver, CO, Mike & Laura Riss, Pleasant Grove, UT, Paul & Brynn Riss, Rio Linda, CA, Shirley Riss, Bountiful, UT, Scott & Jana Smith, Kimballton, IA, Sandi & Kent Zitek, Wellington, CO*

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MEMORIALS

January 1, 2006 – April 30, 2006

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

Bena Andersen

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***Visit our museum website at www.danishmuseum.org
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☐ Holger Danske Endowment/Planned Gift Opportunities

☐ The Wall of Honor

☐ Send me/us a schedule of your upcoming exhibits and activities

***Please complete and return to: The Danish Immigrant Museum, 2212 Washington St,
PO Box 470, Elk Horn, IA 51531-0470***



2006 Christmas Card

The Danish Immigrant Museum is very excited to announce the 2006 Christmas Card including a photograph from Sisse Brimberg.

Sisse Brimberg, a Danish-born photographer, has been with *National Geographic* since 1976. Her photographic studies of Denmark include *National Geographic's* "In Search of Vikings" (May 2000) and "Civilized Denmark" (July 1998). Sisse's photographs have been exhibited worldwide, including a long-standing exhibit at The Danish Immigrant Museum. Her ability to capture truth and beauty on camera has won her worldwide recognition, including first prize from the National Press Photographers Association for her reportage on migrant workers, "Picture Story of the Year."

This is the museum's 18th Annual Christmas Card and the seventh year for the Annual Keepsake Ornament. We hope you will make this year's card and ornament a traditional part of your Christmas holidays.

Order your cards today – \$1.00 each

HOW TO ORDER:

BY MAIL: Completely fill out the order form and mail

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FAX: Completely fill out the order form below and fax your information to (712) 764-7002

WEBSITE: Most of the items in the catalog are also on our secure website at www.danishmuseum.org

BY PHONE: 1-800-759-9192 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
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SHIPPING: We ship by US mail and UPS. Delivery normally takes 7-10 business days. One, two or three day UPS delivery service is available on request. Please call for pricing and details. For delivery to Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, USA Possessions and foreign countries, please call for pricing and details.

SHIPPING CHARGES: \$6.50 First Item; \$1.00 each

additional item. Christmas Cards (10 per pkg.); 1-5 pkgs. \$6.50; 6-10 pkgs. \$7.50; 10 & Over \$8.50

DISCOUNTS: Membership dollars and contributions help the museum broaden and strengthen its education programs to share and preserve The Danish Immigrant Museum for generations to come. In appreciation, all current members of The Danish Immigrant Museum receive a 10% discount on Museum Shop purchases.

The Danish Immigrant Museum has extensive collections of artifacts, as well as special annual and traveling exhibits. The magnificent half-timbered museum building is located on a 30-acre site on the edge of Elk Horn, Iowa, just six minutes from Interstate 80.

Your purchase helps support The Danish Immigrant Museum and its programs.

Thank you for shopping at the Museum Store.

Please use this form when ordering your 2006 Christmas Cards & Museum Shop Items from the enclosed catalog:



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The Health-Bounce Trampoline

The Health-Bounce trampoline is an invention of George Nissen, who is regarded as the father of modern trampolining. During the 1920s Nissen became a skilled gymnast as a result of training opportunities in his junior high and high school. He went on to study at the University of Iowa, where he won three intercollegiate national champion-

ships in gymnastics and tumbling. He was particularly drawn to tumbling and was fascinated by the rebound possibilities he observed in the netting used by circus acrobats.

In the mid-1930s George Nissen and his coach Larry Griswold put together the prototype of the modern trampoline. It was originally designed as a training



The Health-Bounce trampoline was invented for senior citizens. Misato Ikegami of FuntekUSA, which manufactures and markets some of Nissen's inventions, donated this trampoline to our current exhibit.

From Our Development Director...

By Thomas Hansen

Since the founding of The Danish Immigrant Museum in 1983, we have been blessed by the generosity of members and donors throughout the U.S., Denmark, and several foreign countries. Membership gifts and contributions, large and small, have greatly assisted us in fulfilling our mission to "share the legacy and continuing influence of Danish culture as realized in the experiences and contributions of Danish immigrants, their descendents and Danes living in America." **To all of our members and donors, we thank you for thinking of us and for your continued partnership.**

We are pleased to inform you our annual membership continues to grow both across the country and across age levels. Currently, our membership and donor total is 2,512. Having an expanded annual support base is one of our important ongoing strategic goals and we are happy to be moving in a positive direction. Deb Larsen, Membership Coordinator/Development Associate, and I especially appreciate the generous membership recruitment assistance of our national Board of Directors and the dedication of museum staff and volunteers who encourage people to join us.

I am normally reluctant to single out individual contributions; however, we have in recent weeks been the recipients of several major gifts and grants in support of our 2006-2007 Exhibit Series, our programming and educational outreach. We are grateful to Gerald and Patricia Bonnesen Blake of Ankeny, Iowa for their generous gift in honor of Carl and Elsie Bonnesen, Elk Horn, Iowa.

Patricia's parents were long-time supporters of the museum and, until their passing in 2004 and 2005, continued to volunteer their time welcoming visitors. We also want to acknowledge the Endowment Funds of Southwest Iowa for their grant of \$1,000 to assist with publicity and promotion of The Danish Immigrant Museum.

Recently, we have received two major bequests from the estates of Leonard and Lenora Madsen, Kansas City, Missouri and from Marion J. Walker, Solvang, California. Leonard and Lenora Madsen, former residents of Audubon, Iowa, had throughout their lifetime a special relationship with us, having been generous members and having placed their grandparents on our Wall of Honor—a concept that Leonard helped to establish.

A few weeks ago, we were surprised to learn of a wonderful gift in honor of the late Marion J. Walker and her brother, Anker Johnson, Solvang, California from the trustees of the estate. More information will follow in the next issue of our *America Letter*.

As we seek to end our fiscal year on August 31, we encourage you to renew your membership when it comes due and hope you will support our annual Summer Appeal. On behalf of our Board of Directors, staff and volunteers, thank you very much for your generosity. Come and visit us and see our new and interesting exhibits.



tool to aid Nissen in his tumbling. He took it to a YMCA camp where he was instructing children in sports. He intended to use it to practice his tumbling, but the invention proved so popular with the camp's children that Nissen began to envision much larger possibilities for the invention. He gave it the name trampoline, an anglicized version of *el trampolin*, the Spanish word for diving board. He sold his first trampolines by taking them to gymnastics exhibitions.

In 1941 George Nissen and Larry Griswold went into business together, founding the Griswold-Nissen Trampoline & Tumbling Company in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Following the end of World War II, Nissen took over the company and worked tirelessly in the promotion of the trampoline. His company expanded to include a range of gymnastic equipment and was, at one point, one of the world's foremost gymnastic equipment suppliers. The company was acquired by another firm in a merger in 1972 and ceased to exist by the early 1980s.

Nissen continues his activities as an inventor. Now 92, he is still making refinements to his most popular invention, the Spaceball trampoline. He invented the Health-Bounce trampoline in his late 80s, working with FuntekUSA, which manufactures and promotes his inventions. The Health-Bounce trampoline was invented for senior citizens and for therapeutic work, such as aiding the rehabilitation of stroke victims and working with autistic children.

You can see one of Nissen's Health-Bounce trampolines in our new exhibit, "Fitness, Form, and Rhythm in Motion: The Danish Gymnastic Tradition in the United States."

Pamela Parker Welcomed as Museum Shop Manager

I appreciate this opportunity to introduce myself as your new museum shop manager, Pamela Madsen Parker. I grew up in Kimballton around the Blacksmith Shop with two brothers and a neighborhood of kids. I graduated from EH-K High School in 1985 and, shortly after, moved to Atlanta, Georgia where I completed Dental Assistant School. It didn't take long for me to realize the city life was not for me!

In early 1987, I moved back to Kimballton, married Doug Parker of Elk Horn and have resided here in Elk Horn ever since. Doug is employed at

Liberty Labs, Inc. north of Kimballton as a calibrations specialist. We have two children—Mallory is 15 and Nolan is 12. In 1990 after having my first child I decided to always work in Elk Horn: Mallory and Nolan keep us very busy and active with sports! We adore living here with all of our immediate family surrounding us.

I worked at the museum from 1997-1999 in development with Thomas Hansen. I am honored to have the opportunity to work at the museum once again and have big goals to make the Museum Shop more attractive, more inviting and more overflowing with Danish items!



Pamela Parker, a Kimballton native, is our new gift shop manager.



Museum Shop Gets a Facelift

The museum's gift shop is getting a facelift and a brand new look! Cynthia McKeen, a store designer originally from Exira, Iowa who now lives in St. Paul, Minnesota, has designed a true Danish look for the shop. She has provided the funds for this wonderful gift in celebration of her late mother, Ethel Peterson. Cynthia has also given generously of her time and talents to help Pam Parker, the new museum shop manager, arrange the store in a more light, spacious and sophisticated look.



Cynthia McKeen (left), a store designer, is donating funds and talent to help update the museum gift shop's look. She's here with Pamela Parker, the new gift shop manager.

Volunteer spotlight:

The Danish Immigrant Museum held its annual volunteer banquet on April 25th at the Elk Horn Lutheran Church with approximately 120 people in attendance.

The theme of this year's banquet was "A Helping Heart Shows a Loving Hand." Larsen's Catering of Elk Horn catered the meal. The awards ceremony for winners of the Essays in Moral Courage contest served as entertainment. John Mark Nielsen, executive director, presented checks to six area students with first place winners in the 9th & 10th and 11th & 12th grade categories reading their essays. Both got a rousing round of applause!

Volunteers achieving 1,000 hours of volunteer service received an engraved clock and their name on the volunteer plaque of honor. Jeanette Knudsen and Charlotte Sorensen were recognized this year as well as Jimmie Kelgor who has reached 4,000 hours and received a third star on the plaque.

Two of our very dedicated volunteers passed away last year. Barbara Lund Jones remembered Alice Simonsen who spent many hours helping in the collections department. Michele McNabb spoke about Delores Connelly who was a great asset to the Family History and Genealogy Center. Both have been missed very much by their friends and colleagues.

Finally, a big thank you to Ron and Mary Bro who helped serve the meal, bus tables and clean up afterwards. They came to the museum the day before and staff put them to work on various projects. Mary helped Deb with paperwork in the Development Department. Ron brought along his toolbox and fixed some chairs and tables in the Bro Dining Room and also assembled the Health-Bounce Trampoline that has been donated for the gymnastics exhibit.



The winners of the 2006 Tribute to the Rescuers Essay Contest are recognized. Standing in front (left to right) are Brittany Zornes, Abby Jacobsen (first place 11th/12th), and Corey Kautz. In the back are Aaron Nissen (first place 9th/10th) and Dr. John Mark Nielsen. Not pictured: James Andersen, Whitney Nelson.

Tribute to the Rescuers Essay Contest: 2006 Winners

April and May are significant months to remember the Danish experience during World War II and the five long years Denmark was occupied by Nazi Germany. On April 9, 1940, the German military invaded Denmark, and it was not until May 6, 1945 that the Danish people were finally liberated. The winners of this year's Tribute to the Rescuers Essay Contest focused on this dark period in world history.

Aaron Nissen, a 9th grader at Audubon High School, wrote about Knud Dyby, a member of the Danish resistance. His essay "The Boats: Knud Dyby's Story" took first place in the 9th-10th grade category. Abby Jacobsen, an 11th grader at Elk Horn High School, submitted the winning essay in the 11th-12th grade category, entitled "The White Rose." Her essay focused on a group of Austrian young people who published *The White Rose*, an underground newspaper critical of the Nazis. The group members were eventually tracked down, caught and executed. First place winners received prizes of \$750 each.

James Andersen and Whitney Nelson, both 9th graders at Audubon High School, won second and third places with their essays, "The Rescuers of Denmark" and "More Than Just a Girl." Two 11th grad-

ers from Elk Horn High School received second and third place awards. Brittany Zornes' essay was entitled "Passport to Safety" and Cory Kautz wrote about Oskar Schindler. Second place prize winners received \$500 prizes and third place winners, \$250. Joni Madsen and Randy Spies, both teachers at Audubon High School, and Linda Peterson, a teacher at Elk Horn High School, received gift certificates of \$50 for the purchase of resource materials for their classes.

This year's contest was made possible by a gift from the Eric and Joan Norgaard Charitable Trust of Northbrook, Illinois. In addition to making the awards possible, the trust also provided funds for "toolkits" containing books, videos and learning materials about Denmark during World War II and the rescue of the Danish Jews in 1943. These toolkits went to high schools that serve Dannebrog, Nebraska; Viborg, South Dakota; Tyler, Minnesota; and Ringsted, Iowa. Teachers at these schools are encouraged to incorporate the materials into their classes and students from these schools will again be invited to participate in next year's contest. If you teach in a town with Danish heritage and are interested in the essay contest or toolkit, call The Danish Immigrant Museum for more information.

The Boats: Knud Dyby's Story

Aaron Nissen, Audubon High School

9th & 10th Grade First Place Winner in Essay Contest

There are many instances in our lives when we must make the choice between what seems right because the majority of people are doing it and what is truly right. One of these instances is when Germany invaded Denmark on April 9, 1940. Most Danish people knew that the Nazi German cause was wrong, but the government wasn't about to try and fight Germany's massive army. There were those few who risked everything to do what was right; they resisted the Germans using various forms of sabotage and cunning. One of the leaders in the resistance was a Danish police officer named Knud Dyby.

Knud Dyby was born on March 28, 1915. Although he came from a poor family, his parents enrolled him in a private school. In 1935, Knud completed his compulsory service in the military. He served in the King's Guard, guarding King Christian X at the many castles and in parades. There didn't seem to be much threat of Germany invading Denmark at the time, so Knud didn't have to serve in the military very long.

After Dyby finished his military service, he applied for a job in the police force. King's Guardsmen were highly respected and regarded, so on June 24, 1940, Knud's application was accepted. His main duties at the time were to keep the civilians from performing anti-German acts, such as personally attacking soldiers. They also had to prevent sabotage in German controlled factories where Danes still worked. One of Knud's duties as a policeman was to report when English planes flew over Denmark on bombing raids. When the Danish policemen learned that Nazi intelligence was intercepting the reports to prepare for defense, the police started reporting trucks backfiring in the night; the Germans never caught on, and their anti-aircraft gunners lost sleep.

Being a policeman, Dyby had access to all of the illegal newspapers banned by the Germans. He was supposed to discard them, but instead he gave them to anyone who dared to take them. He

knew that the people needed to know the truth about how the Gestapo, the Nazi police, treated people and what the concentration camps were like in order to save lives. Dyby also made contact with leaders of resistance groups such as *Holger Danske* (named after a mythic person who came to Denmark when the nation greatly needed him), *Frit Danmark* (Free Denmark), *Dansk Samling* (Danish Unification), *Studenternes Efterretningstjeneste* (The Students' Intelligence Service), and others.

At first there was little resistance to the Germans even though most Danes were anti-German and especially anti-Nazi. Most of the protests were not against the Germans but against the Danish government for yielding too quickly. As the Danes grew angrier about food shortages and growing restrictions, the resistance became fiercer. Sabotage on German controlled factories became common. The Danish police persuaded the factory guards to "disappear" or turn the other way while the act of sabotage was taking place. "We did as much as possible to make life miserable for the Germans," Dyby remembers satisfactorily.

On September 29, 1943, when it became known to the Danes that the Germans were going to round-up the Danish Jews and ship them to concentration camps, the Danes decided that this had to stop. Knud Dyby was a Christian and wasn't acquainted with many Jews, but he knew right from wrong; he knew the Jews didn't do anything to deserve the concentration camps. Dyby learned of Hitler's genocidal plan to kill all Jews in Europe through the illegal underground newspapers.

One of Dyby's main jobs was to obtain firearms and explosives for the resistance. He taught many young men how to shoot firearms. The resistance groups started heavily sabotaging railways and railroad equipment; they also investigated and killed Danes who informed the Gestapo, the Nazi police.

When the Danish people learned that the Germans were going to arrest

all Jewish people and send them to concentration camps, Rabbi Marcus Melchoir announced to those present at the synagogue that they must go into hiding and tell every Jew they knew about the impending danger. The Torahs had already been hidden by Lutherans in the crypt of Trinity Church a few blocks from the synagogue. In a short amount of time the Jewish population in Denmark was in hiding. The Danes helped by taking in Jews or helping to hide them. These peaceful people now united to defy the enemy. "*Det kan man ikke,*" or "*Det kan due ikke vaere bekendt,*" were phrases used meaning "This is not acceptable."

When Sweden agreed to accept the Jewish refugees, the Jews were carefully escorted to fishing boats and other ships to make the journey across the Øresund, the body of water between Denmark and Sweden. The first family that Knud helped was the Jacobsen family. Dyby and his fisherman friend Bernhard Ingemann-Andersen, known as Aage, negotiated the fare for the Jews with the fishing boat skippers. Dyby helped to free many people including Børge Outze, founder and editor of the underground *Information* newspaper.

Of Denmark's 8,000 Jews, approximately 7,500 of them escaped to Sweden. Only 284 were captured; most of them were too old or ill to go into hiding. Only around 100 of those captured perished. They fared far better than Jews in any other part of Europe thanks to the Danish people's good hearts.

I greatly admire all of the Danish people who helped to get the Jews to safety. They did what was right even though it was difficult and they could've been killed for doing it. I think I would have done the same as my Danish ancestors. I try to do what is right in my day-to-day life even when the choice is difficult. In school, I try to stick up for the kid being bullied. The Danish people who saved the Jews serve as a great example to me: they had the right morals and were caring enough to do what was right.

The White Rose

**Abby Jacobsen, Elk Horn-Kimballton Community High School
11th & 12th Grade First Place Winner in Essay Contest**

Hans and Sophie Scholl and Alexander Schmorell demonstrated moral courage by standing up for what they believed and not for what Hitler believed. In the summer of 1942, Hans and Alexander got together with their friends sharing the same ideals and interests of the same subjects in school and found that they were all disgusted with Adolf Hitler, the Third Reich, and the Gestapo. Hans and Alexander were soon joined by Christoph Probst, a married German soldier, Willis Graf, and later Sophie joined them. They all formed the White Rose including Kurt Huber, a popular philosophy professor. Hans, Alex, Jurgeon Wittenstein, and Christoph drafted the leaflets and Sophie got the stamps and papers. The White Rose wrote seven leaflets telling people what Hitler was doing and how it was wrong.

On February 3, 8, and 15 of 1943 Hans, Alex, and Willis led the most dangerous of all the White Rose activities. They used tar and paint near the university in Munich, saying "Down with Hitler," "Hitler Mass Murderer," and "Freedom (White Rose)." Then one day Hans and Sophie decided they wanted to go to the university and hand out leaflets to the students, so they dropped stacks of leaflets throughout the corridors. They thought it would be silly not to leave the few extra documents, so Sophie went up the marble staircases and threw up 80 to 100 on top of the kids coming out of the classrooms. Sophie and Hans were seen by Jakob Schmidt, a Nazi party member, who became a Nazi hero by capturing them. On February 22, 1953 Hans, Sophie and Christoph were executed by the guillotine. The other members were beheaded later. In the end this changed many people's lives by making people see that the Nazis weren't good people: the way they treated people was bad and what they believed was also bad.

Some people thought that all the Germans had something to do with Hitler, but

that was wrong. Personally, that's what I thought, too. I thought that the Germans were all Nazis and that all of them wanted to get rid of the Jews and do what Hitler wanted them to do. But the people in the White Rose were also Germans, and they hated Hitler. The White Rose changed the world and their reputation. Hans, Sophie, Christoph, and Alexander and the rest of the team became famous. They stuck up for their rights and beliefs. Since they were Germans, they would have to have a lot of gumption to do that. That's how it changed the world. If it weren't for them, I'm sure the world would be really different right now. For an example, if the White Rose hadn't helped out the Jews and sent out leaflets telling people what Hitler was doing, there would have been a lot of Jews who died and everyone would have believed Hitler.

They saved many people's lives because they made some of the Germans feel as if their job was to do something for the Jews or to make things right. Maybe some of the Germans got out of the Hitler youth group to help and carry on the White Rose even though they knew it was illegal.

This inspires me because I believe they did the right thing, and I knew what the Nazis did was wrong because killing innocent people is wrong. Back then it shouldn't have been allowed, and Hitler shouldn't have been ruler of Germany. The people of Germany must have had a lot of confidence. I'm really glad that there were some Germans who weren't on Hitler's side. In the fourth leaflet it says, "Hitler was not talking of the almighty but the fallen angel from hell, which is Satan (the fourth leaflet)." Back then I would believe them, even if I had to die from believing something different. Hitler probably wouldn't change my mind. I go by what I believe, not what people tell me.

Last summer I went on a mission trip to Chicago to play with little kids.

While spending time with them, I'm sure I changed some part of their lives and maybe I made them think that someone does care. The group that I was with did things for them like pick weeds around their playground. My group also went to the nursing home nearby and we split up and I was with three or four people and we swept, washed the trash traps and cleaned the mop boards. The third stop we made was to a homeless shelter and the guys who were in my group pulled weeds while the girls played games with the children, including their parents. When we left, a little boy wanted to go with us, and he held on to one of the girls in my group. He wanted to go so badly with us, he didn't want to stay in the homeless shelter, and I could tell from there that he wasn't as grateful as I thought he would be to be in that shelter and to have a home. But it's different for people because I do have a home and I am grateful, but his family had nothing.

I know that I have changed some people's lives and it makes me feel good that I did it. The White Rose did the same thing for the Jews. They did so much for them but what I did was quite different. They saved people's lives; I only helped them.



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FAMILY HISTORY & GENEALOGY CENTER

STAMTRÆ

genealogy@danishmuseum.org

News from the Family History & Genealogy Center

Wish List

As we work toward making our research library a truly national collection, we would like to greatly expand our collection of microfilms of Danish-American newspapers and church records. These are expensive resources, but ones that are durable and invaluable for research. The following are some of the newspapers we would like to add:

Minnesota:

Danske ugeblad (Tyler) – 1932-1939, 7 reels (\$210)

Danske Amerikaner (Minneapolis) – 1895-1896, 1 reel (\$30)

Danske ugeblad (Minneapolis) – 1931-1945, 3 reels (\$90)

American (Askov) – 1917-1961, 14 reels (\$420)

Nebraska:

Stjernen (St. Paul) – 1885-93, 3 reels (\$210)

Kirke-bladet (St. Paul) – 1884-1893, 1895-1896, 3 reels (\$210)

Den danske pioneer (Omaha) – 1887-1888, 1894-1923, 1926-1948, 1950-1959, 39 reels (\$2,760)

Dansk luthersk kirkeblad (Blair) – 1896-1920, 10 reels (\$700)

Wisconsin:

Danskeren (Neenah) – 1892-1894, 1899, 1899-1907, 1909-20, 9 reels (\$630)

Dansk luthersk kirkeblad (Racine) – 1879-1884, 1 reel (\$70)

Iowa:

Danish Villages Voice (1 reel from 7/2002-12/2003; \$73.50)

Other items on our wish list include the following:

- Back issues of *The Danish Sisterhood* magazine (any year)
- Pre-2000 issues of *Bien*, the weekly Danish-language newspaper published in California
- Vols. 1-15 (1916-1939) of the *Danish Brotherhood Magazine*
- *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)
- Microfilm of the 1928/29 Chicago city directory (\$149)
- Old city directories for Racine and Chicago, as well as other communities with significant Danish populations

Contact Michele at 877-764-7008 or librarian@danishmuseum.org if you would like to donate, adopt or assist in purchasing any of the above items.

Are You a Danish Immigrant or Long-term Resident?

Many Danes have immigrated to the US since WWII, have been exchange students or resided in this country for longer periods of time. We would like to have some information in our library on more recent immigrants or long-term residents from Denmark. If you would be willing to fill out an Immigrant Information Form or distribute it at meetings of your local Danish-American organization, contact Michele at the FHGC for copies.



Activities and News from the

Family History & Genealogy Center

MUSEUM MEMBERS have now had access to **HeritageQuest Online™** for a little over a year. We currently have 226 subscribers to this popular collection of genealogical databases. Although there have been occasional problems in logging on (inevitable, given the number of types of operating systems out there), most have been quickly resolved. To facilitate communication it would be helpful if subscribers added librarian@danishmuseum.org to their address books. And please, if you change email addresses, let us know so we can keep our records updated!

THE FHGC WILL BE OPEN all day both Saturday and Sunday of TivoliFest and will once again host travel films of Denmark. This year's photo display, "There is No Place Like Home," is shaping up very nicely with many interesting images of Danish and American homes having been submitted. The display will stay up through the end of June in the lobby of the FHGC.

THIS SUMMER MARKS THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY of the establishment of the library as a separate Museum department. We have grown from an all-volunteer workforce supervised by curator Barbara Lund-Jones in the mezzanine of the main Museum building to nicely-appointed separate premises on Main Street with an accredited librarian-manager, Michele McNabb. Aside from her, however, volunteers still comprise the backbone of the library's labor force. We hope to commemorate our first decade during Family History Month in October with some special events. Stay tuned!

NEW ITEMS OF GENEALOGICAL INTEREST in the Museum shop and at the FHGC include *What Did They Do? In Danish...*, a dictionary of Danish occupational terms for family historians, and a handy guide-sheet to citing online historical sources.



LABORS OF LOVE from the Family History & Genealogy Center

In the last issue of the *AL* I reported that FHGC volunteers put in over 3,700 hours of work in 2005. Many of those are put in here in the library, but a number of volunteers live far away from Elk Horn and I'd like to introduce you to several of them.

BARBARA (BARNER) SULLIVAN is a native of Montana and currently lives in Ft. Collins, Colorado.

Her father was born in Denmark and came to Minnesota with his parents and siblings in the late 1800s. She said that she did not learn to read or speak Danish while growing up, but enjoyed visiting Danish relatives and learning about Danish customs. Barbara volunteered so that she could help add to the databases that staff and library visitors use. She has entered data from many Danish Brotherhood lodges and is currently inputting names of land-owners from historical Shelby County plat maps.



Barbara Sullivan

KENNETH AND CAROLYN SAND reside in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, in the summer and Florida in the winter. Ken, a retired history teacher, high school principal and businessman,



Kenneth & Carolyn Sand; Ken makes the windmills when he's not entering data for the library.

is the son of Danish immigrants Anders and Petrea (Pedersen) Sand. Carolyn is of German descent, and is also a retired teacher. She also works as an interpretive guide at the Villa Louis Historic Site in Prairie du Chien. Both enjoy traveling. Ken has been to Denmark three times and Carolyn twice. They find volunteering for the Museum a "small way to honor the Danes and the memory they leave for future generations." Carolyn has input data from many Danish Brotherhood lodges, including some of the large ones such as Racine, and has indexed periodicals and other material. Currently she is updating lodge records and Ken is working on plat map corrections.

OUR NEWEST AND MOST DISTANT VOLUNTEER is Erik Høgsbro Østergaard, who initially became acquainted with the Museum as a patron. Erik lives near Roskilde, Denmark,

where he is employed with NovoNordisk A/S. His paternal grandfather was a Lutheran minister in Michigan for several years, where his father spent his teenage years before returning to Denmark. Eric originally contributed several family histories to the library, and then decided to become a volunteer. He researches inquiries for us at the regional archives outside of Copenhagen, assists with interpreting old handwriting, and serves as a resource person for questions we can't find answers to. During a trip to the US this past March he visited Elk Horn and held an in-service session for local volunteers on useful Danish online genealogical resources.

TWO OTHER VOLUNTEER MILESTONES should be mentioned.

Mae Petersen, one of the founding volunteers of the Family History & Genealogy Center, celebrated her 80th birthday on May 12th. Although she has threatened to retire, we hope to entice her to stay until cloning technology has been perfected, since her background knowledge of this part of Iowa and local families is extensive and invaluable. Mae also looks up material at the Shelby County Courthouse in Harlan when necessary. Sadly, we had to say farewell to **Dolores Gregersen Connelly** about the time the last issue went to press. Dolores had been an FHGC volunteer since 2000, shortly after her return to Iowa from living in Hawaii. Her unsurpassed enthusiasm and assistance with various library and patron projects continued even after she was hospitalized this past winter. She passed away on January 17th. May her memory always be honored!



An Immigrant Heritage in Bloom

When Edward K. Andersen returned from a visit to his family in Denmark in 1928 he brought with him a small memento of his home in Lidstrup, near Tingsted on the island of Falster. Hidden in his shaving kit was a small cutting from his mother's Queen of the Night cactus. Andersen potted the cutting, which thrived in its Iowa home. By 1981 it was a sturdy barrel-shaped plant that produced pale pink daisy-shaped blossoms on stalks every 2-3 years. The

cactus has been cared for by Edward's daughter, Doris Christensen, since his death in 1998. She, in turn, has passed on cuttings to other family members on special occasions. The barrel of the plant has sprouted a number of offshoots in the past 25 years. It blossoms irregularly, with the flowers usually opening in the evening and lasting for 24 hours. A photograph of it in bloom was submitted as a 4-H project by one of the younger Andersen family members and won a first-place ribbon.

Andersen with his 53-year-old Danish Queen of the Night cactus in 1981.

Danish Cartoons Rankle Muslims Worldwide

Many Danes and Danish-Americans reacted with disbelief at scenes of the Danish flag being burned in the streets of Europe and the Middle East. This was in reaction to the publication of twelve cartoons in *Jyllands-Posten* on September 30, 2005. Following is a brief timeline of events leading up to and following the publication of these cartoons.

October 2004: Publication of *The Koran and the Prophet Mohammed's Life* by Kåre Bluitgen. This was a book for young teenagers and families. Bluitgen hoped to inform his readers about the faith of a significant minority in Denmark. He had difficulty finding an illustrator because of the tradition of not depicting the Prophet Mohammed.

September 17, 2005: An essay appears in the major Copenhagen daily, *Politiken*, entitled "Deep Anxiety over Criticism of Islam." The editorial explored how attempts to be sensitive to minorities can lead to a kind of self-imposed censorship. The difficulty Bluitgen had finding an illustrator was cited as one example among many.

September 30, 2005: Flemming Rose, cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*, publishes twelve cartoons depicting how

Danish cartoonists might caricature the Prophet Mohammed. Rose was responding in part to the essay that had appeared in *Politiken*.

October 14 and 15, 2006: 3,500 people protest peacefully in Copenhagen, objecting to the nature of the cartoons.

October 27, 2005: Police investigation begins under Section 140 of the Danish Criminal Code (prohibits public ridicule of the dogmas of worship of any lawfully existing religious community in Denmark).

January 6, 2006: Regional prosecutor determines criminal code was not violated.

January 2006: Two Danish Muslim leaders meet with the leader of the Arab League and the Egyptian Grand Mufti. They circulate three additional cartoons that were not published in Denmark.

January 30, 2006: *Jyllands-Posten* publishes apology.

February 19, 2006: "Why I Published Those Cartoons," an editorial by Flemming Rose, appears in *Jyllands-Posten* (available at www.jp.dk).



Kåre Bluitgen's book that began the controversy.

March 2006: Formation of *Democratic Muslims*, led by Omar Shah (Afgan-Dane), Fathi El-Abed (Palestinian-Dane), Naser Khader (Syrian-Dane), Member of Parliament from the Social Democratic Party. The overwhelmingly positive response to this organization by the Danish Islamic community suggests the radical elements are a small minority.

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.)