



America Letter



The Danish Immigrant Museum

AN INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CENTER

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**Across Oceans, Across Time, Across Generations:
The Krogh Nielsen and Finsen Family**



Director's Corner

In the last *America Letter* (Winter 2009, XXII:3), I announced the comprehensive campaign, *Across Oceans, Across Time, Across Generations*, which we have been quietly working on for several years. To date, we have raised over \$9 million on the way to our \$15 million goal. Many of the gifts are deferred and designated for endowment growth; this has been the highest priority as we work to assure the museum has a firm financial foundation.

Another goal of the campaign is to expand the museum's outreach through our website and traveling exhibits. The *Victor Borge: A Smile Is the Shortest Distance* traveling kiosk exhibit and our redesigned website are two examples of our efforts to achieve this goal.

Already, you can go to our website and see a change. In the upper right-hand corner, you will find the Facebook logo and an invitation to visit our Facebook page. Please, do so! In fact, I invite you to become a fan of the museum. (Already, we have almost as many fans as the Danish Embassy in Washington, D.C.) You will be able to see pictures and read news of recent and upcoming museum activities.

Our next major exhibit is called *Sampling the Collection, A to Å*. Tova Brandt, our new curator of exhibitions, has designed an exhibit that highlights artifacts from our collection. There will be objects representing each letter of the alphabet, including the Danish letters, Ø, Æ, and Å. What's more, this exhibit is designed so

you can view elements of it online. After the exhibit opens in April we will add pages to our website, so you can discover the unusual and downright strange things we have in our collection, no matter where you live!

A major outreach from The Danish Immigrant Museum will occur from October through December of this year. Our museum is the national sponsor for the American portion of the National Danish Performance Team's world tour in 2010 and 2011. This is the gymnastics team of the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association. Beginning in Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, Georgia, and crossing the country to Portland, Oregon and Los Angeles, California, the team will perform in sixteen cities. The Danish Immigrant Museum is creating a traveling exhibit that will accompany the team on their U.S. tour. In addition, we plan museum events in each of the cities the team visits—an exciting opportunity to engage Danish-American organizations nationwide and to share our work here at The Danish Immigrant Museum.

As we work toward the goals of the comprehensive campaign, *Across Oceans, Across Time, Across Generations*, we

recognize that strategic planning needs to be ongoing. Consequently, I am pleased that the board of directors at the February 2010 board meeting in Tucson, Arizona, passed a motion to create a new strategic planning effort. We are fortunate to have staff and board members, both past and present, who are experienced in strategic planning. These individuals will work to establish broad goals as we look five and ten years into the future.

In closing, let me just reiterate this. We at The Danish Immigrant Museum often describe this institution as "Your museum in the heart of the continent." We may be located in the small town of Elk Horn, Iowa, but as Tova Brandt, curator of exhibitions, put it at the recent board meeting, "We are not a small museum!" Our efforts span the continent.

This, of course, happens because we receive support from you. Despite the economic downturn and because individuals have made provisions for The Danish Immigrant Museum in their estate planning, we have been able to maintain a level of programming that is exceptional. I am grateful to each of you for your ongoing support of our museum.

John Mark Nielsen
Executive Director

COVER PHOTO: A Danish pastor, Anne-Grethe Krogh Nielsen served The Danish Lutheran Church and Cultural Center of Southern California in Yorba Linda from 2004 to 2006. She and her husband, Søren Finsen, and their two boys decided to return to Yorba Linda in 2008. Their story of migrating between American and Danish culture begins on page 4.



Museum Partners with Danish Gymnastics Team

The NDPT, in collaboration with The Danish Immigrant Museum, will tour sixteen cities across the United States from October to December 2010.

The National Danish Performance Team (NDPT), the gymnastics team of the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association, is partnering with The Danish Immigrant Museum for the U.S. leg of their 2010-2011 world tour.

The NDPT will perform in

sixteen cities across the United States from October to December of this year, including Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Chicago, Minneapolis, Omaha, Portland and Los Angeles. This will be one of the most extensive U.S. tours in the team's history.

The Danish Immigrant Museum is collaborating with the NDPT in a number of ways. First, the museum is handling the financial

details of the U.S. portion of the tour. Also, the museum is creating a traveling exhibit about Danish gymnastics for display at each venue where the team performs. Further, museum staff members are planning outreach events in the sixteen communities on the tour.

"This is an opportunity for the museum to be a facilitator of program outreach to Danish-

American communities and the larger U.S. community," says John Mark Nielsen, executive director of The Danish Immigrant Museum.

The Danish gymnastics tradition is markedly different from that of American gymnastics. The NDPT's performance includes a combination of modern rhythmic gymnastics, dance, cheer, artistic vaulting, tumbling and acrobatics.

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Across Oceans, Across Time, Across Generations: the Krogh Nielsen and Finsen Family

by Eva Nielsen

In the age of plane trips, emails, work visas and green cards, when does the Dane in America become the Danish immigrant?

"I don't think we are immigrants yet," says Pastor Anne-Grethe Krogh Nielsen.

"Not yet," says Søren Finsen, her husband.

For now, though, Pastor Anne-Grethe, Søren, and their two boys, Kristian (12) and Mads (9) are at home in Yorba Linda, California. There, Anne-Grethe serves as pastor at The Danish Lutheran Church and Cultural Center of Southern California; Søren teaches language classes; and the boys are going to school, playing soccer, riding bikes and, well, growing up – Danish, certainly, and perhaps a little American too.

Immigrants, they are not. But in the past six years they have migrated between Danish and American culture quite a bit. "We are bicultural," says Pastor Anne-Grethe, searching for the right term.



Kristian (now 12) and Mads (now 9) were five and three-years old when they first came to Yorba Linda.

"We are residents. The last time we were just visitors."

By "last time," Pastor Anne-Grethe is talking about her first two and a half year stint as pastor of The Danish Lutheran Church of Southern California from 2004 to 2006. The family went home to Denmark after that, but returned to Yorba Linda in 2008 where, this time, Pastor Anne-Grethe is serving a five-year contract with the church.

Living and working abroad wasn't part of the couple's master plan. Søren and Pastor Anne-Grethe both grew up on Funen, he in Svendborg and she in Vejle-Allested. The two met in gymnasium (the Danish equivalent of high school) and married in 1991, just before Anne-Grethe accepted her first call to serve two small village churches near Billund in Jutland. Settled happily in the village of Ringive for fourteen years, Pastor Anne-Grethe says, "I had really never thought of moving."

Then, in 2003, she came across the opportunity to serve the congregation in Yorba Linda, California. The moment was right. Pastor Anne-Grethe says, "We could go, but still have the security of coming back to our jobs. The kids were three and five and weren't completely tied up in school yet...We talked with our parents – and they didn't like this, but saw that it was only two years and a good

opportunity."

The family moved to Yorba Linda, jumping right away into new jobs, new routines. Søren started a half-time position with the church, running a Danish language school. Mads went to morning pre-school and, Kristian, to kindergarten.

Pastor Anne-Grethe remembers dropping Kristian off on his first day, a little Danish boy who didn't speak English. "I drove away thinking, what am I doing? What kind of mother am I?"

Kristian recalls it this way (without a trace of a Danish accent): "It was kinda weird because everyone around me was, like, talking to me and being nice. I hadn't been the kid everyone liked before."

Of course, within months both boys were fluent and integrated. "At that age," says Pastor Anne-Grethe, "home is where your mom and dad are."

As for Pastor Anne-Grethe, she felt comfortable very quickly in her new position. The church has, says Pastor Anne-Grethe, about 600 active members. Part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), they just celebrated their church centennial in 2006 (with no less than Prince Joachim of Denmark in attendance). Sixty percent of the membership is of Danish heritage. Then there are all these Danish families who live in the L.A.



Pastor Anne-Grethe Krogh Nielsen and Søren Finsen with their boys at Zion National Park in Utah. Pastor Anne-Grethe says, "The U.S. is a different culture and that shows up in the church culture—it's a young country, a pioneer country. Here, there's still this sense of freedom and still this notion that the sky's the limit."

area who come creeping out of the woodwork for big church days like Christmas and Easter. But more on that later...

Pastor Anne-Grethe describes the congregation as, "a very gentle, friendly group. You feel a part of a big family so quickly. It's a mixture of all these people who all have a good story to tell."

And church culture in the United States, she has found, is very different from church culture in Denmark.

First off, in Denmark the church is a government entity, the Danish National Church. Employees of the church – pastors, organists, wardens – are civil servants, paid by the national government, whether or not anyone turns up to worship.

Religious education is part of the Danish school system. Confirmation classes are connected to school. During confirmation training in Denmark, Pastor

Anne-Grethe's students came to her for two hours every Wednesday during the school day. "Religious education," she says, "is left to the church. It is not done by families."

What Denmark has, then, Pastor Anne-Grethe says, is this: 85% of the Danish population are members of the Danish National Church, but only 2.1% of the Danish population attend church regularly outside of the big church holidays.

Church becomes "too easy, too distant" for people, Pastor Anne-Grethe says. "The idea of a national church is so nice and starts out so well. But when it becomes so much of an institution, the people aren't necessary to make it go."

In contrast, she continues, "At Yorba Linda we need volunteer work and committed people to make this organization work."

There are other cultural forces at play in Denmark,

keeping people away from worship. Pastor Anne-Grethe explains that there is a lingering Grundtvigian notion in Denmark that too much church isn't a good thing, you might become one of the holy ones!

(Here's some basic Danish church background. N.F.S. Grundtvig was the nineteenth-century Danish philosopher, teacher, writer, pastor whose ideas had an enormous impact on Danish culture. "It's an oversimplification," Pastor Anne-Grethe explains, "but Grundtvigian Danes tend to look upon life as a blessing...and it's good to party and sing and celebrate life." This is the camp in the Danish National Church known as the "Happy Danes." Meanwhile, there are also the "Holy" or "Gloomy Danes." This is another large group within the Danish National Church – a group influenced by pietism, popularly expressed through rules

like no dancing, card playing or drinking alcohol.)

"And," says Anne-Grethe, "Danes, in general, are a bit modest on the church front. In other respects they are not modest: they certainly feel they are the best in the world. But faith is a private matter. They are reluctant to show where they belong. And by going to church you are not anonymous."

This is simply not the case at Yorba Linda. "We have a beautiful fellowship," says Pastor Anne-Grethe. "At Yorba Linda it's a nice worship experience. There's always a nice attendance, there are people to sing with you, you greet one another. At Yorba Linda it is, ironically, more Grundtvigian: he saw the congregation as a living source."

One of Pastor Anne-Grethe's challenges, then, is to reach those Danes living in the L.A. area – the ones who, in true Danish style, tend to attend worship only for the big church holidays. She says, "They have to be educated about what it means to be part of a church when the government is not in charge of funding. Danes do not even bring money to church, so it's a big step for every Dane to start 'buying in.'"

Also, Pastor Anne-Grethe says that the congregation is getting creative, making more opportunities for these families. One example: offering Danish language classes before Sunday services to entice

– Continued on page 6



The Krogh Nielsen and Finsen family were happily settled in Ringive, Jutland near Billund for fourteen years when they decided to take the position in Yorba Linda, California.

Krogh Nielsen and Finsen

continued from page 5

Danes to bring their families to class and to stay for worship and fellowship.

Now, back to the Krogh Nielsen and Finsen family.

Pastor Anne-Grethe and Søren returned to their jobs in Denmark after that first contract at The Danish Lutheran Church of Southern California. “Kristian,”

Pastor Anne-Grethe says, “was on the plane crying all the way back to Denmark.”

Søren and Pastor Anne-Grethe were happy to be back in Denmark – back with family and old friends. Kristian, for his part, says that it was “weird” returning to Denmark. “I hadn’t seen my friends in a long time. I didn’t know the language, I didn’t know what the people were like.”

Pastor Anne-Grethe says when the kids started school in Denmark, “They were appalled. The other children, they said, are making so much noise and calling teachers by their first names!”

Mads and Kristian had had a terrific school experience in Yorba Linda. In fact, Pastor Anne-Grethe’s descriptions of it might surprise Americans who are used

to hearing lousy reports about American education.

“Here [in the U.S.], you have an authority. Respect for teachers is not high in Denmark. Overall, there is a big problem with unadjusted students.”

She continues, “In the younger grades [in the U.S.] the parents are very strict. When we went home, the teachers were so impressed with our kids.”

Parents, she feels, have less connection to their children’s schooling in Denmark. “Parents are so involved here in the U.S. My mom and dad never went to soccer practice with us and here we go to all of them. We enjoy it. It’s a nice way of being part of your children’s lives... I like the fact that over here there’s a notion that WE as parents have the biggest impact on our kids. In Denmark many people do leave kids in school and

expect the school to bring them up.”

Søren, who was an elementary school math teacher in Denmark, points to other differences – including some areas where he feels American education falls short. In the U.S., he says, “They [Kristian and Mads] have a lot of homework. There’s a lot of repetition. And that gives you a lot of skills in that area. In Denmark you spend a lot of time sitting and talking with the kids as problems come up. There are trips to art museums and overnight trips where you see each other in another context. That matures the kids.”

He continues, “It’s easier to prepare kids for a test; it’s harder to teach how to be a person, how to cope with life. But then it’s a job for parents to do that.”

After a year, the family was still missing Yorba Linda. The Yorba Linda congregation was missing them too. Pastor Anne-Grethe says The Danish



Kristian, pictured here in Denmark, says that when he's in Yorba Linda he feels like an American.

Lutheran Church of Southern California has typically called Danish pastors for two-year contracts. But the church has wanted, has needed more consistency.

In the end, they found a way to bring the family back to Yorba Linda for a longer contract. And so, Pastor Anne-Grethe explains, this time, Kristian was crying on the plane all the way back to California.

Kristian says, "At first I was really sad because I had just gotten accustomed to life in Denmark. But then when I was back here I was happy to be back to the weather and the different kind of sports. I love playing soccer, but here there are other sports too – baseball, football, basketball."

Here's what Kristian says about the weather: "It's awesome! It's sunny all the time. I just love it!"

dragged on for a year and a half.

And that is something that modern migrants have to deal with. Making a move to accommodate a spouse's career poses challenges for the spouse who follows, even within the same country. But making that move into another country compounds the challenge. "You are always the person who walks a little behind," is how Søren describes it.

Throughout both their stays in the U.S. Søren has had a visa allowing him to teach language classes (currently he has thirty-five students). This time, with a longer commitment to staying in Yorba Linda, he is ready for something else, something that gives him his own identity separate from the church. Not that Søren is complaining, by the way. "How many fathers get to spend four years with their children?"

Happily, Søren's and Pastor Anne-Grethe's green cards came through in December of 2009, so he has more choices now. And he seems to have a lot in the works: Søren just started another language school in San Diego; he

has an export company where he is exporting golf equipment and he's looking for a position in the shipping industry.

Yet, he admits, that this new freedom is also disorienting. "Now it's for real. Now I can go out and feel more and more a part of this culture. That feels risky at my age."

Of course, the family remains deeply connected to Denmark. There are visitors all the time and so many ways to keep in touch across great distance.

Pastor Anne Grethe says, "The early immigrants and even the ones in the 1950s and 1960s...for them, it was another kind of immigration. You never knew when you left if you were ever going to see your family and your friends again. It is so different now; we Skype, we talk on the phone, and we email."

"Maybe we are global citizens," Pastor Anne-Grethe muses.

Kristian, a Danish boy who is at home in America, puts it this way: "I feel good in both places."



Søren, pictured here at the airport in Billund, Denmark, misses his friends and family in Denmark. "Maybe," he says, "I also miss living in a small country—the intimacy of it. Also, when you're among Danes there's a whole lot you don't have to explain."

New Exhibitions at The Danish Immigrant Museum

By Tova Brandt, curator of exhibitions

Sampling the Collection, A to Å

What are the weird, wonderful and sometimes wacky items in the museum's collections? And why does the museum have such a huge variety of artifacts? Come explore those questions in the new major exhibition, *Sampling the Collection, A to Å*.

Drawn exclusively from the museum collections, the artifacts, artwork, photographs, books, and documents in this exhibition may surprise you! For every letter of the alphabet – including

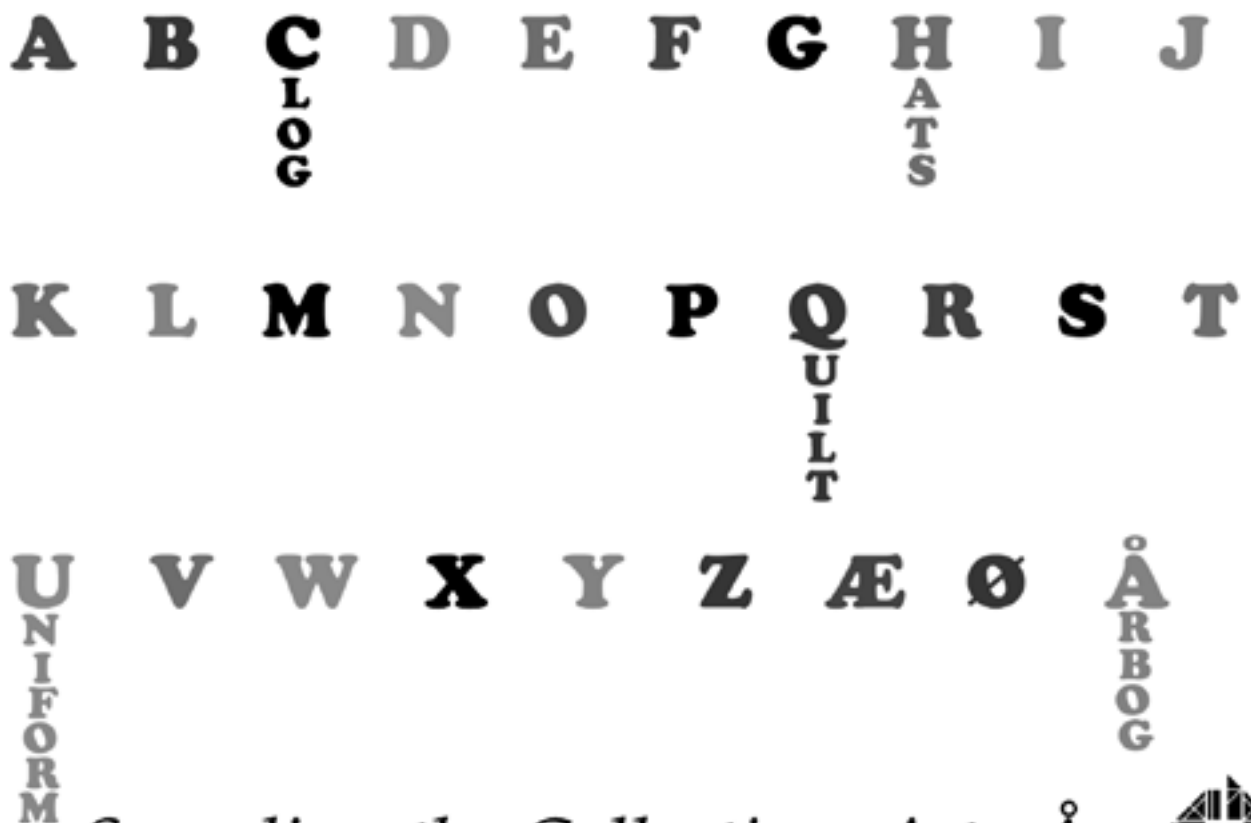
the Danish letters – there is a subject that can be explored through the museum collections. For example, "S is for Stone Age," is represented by Stone Age tools found on a Danish farm. "C is for Clog" will feature several different shapes and sizes for a seemingly simple shoe. "T is for Trunk," "U is for Uniform," and "Æ (of course) is for *Æbleskiver*." The museum owns over 35,000 artifacts and other materials; what would you pick if you were matching

alphabet letters to the museum collection?

The exhibition opened on Saturday, March 27 with a public reception on Sunday afternoon, March 28.

Sampling the Collection, A to Å will remain on view through early March of 2011. We invite everyone to come and journey through the alphabet with the collection.

Stay tuned for more information about *Sampling the Collection* on the museum's website, too!



Sampling the Collection, A to Å



In conjunction with the exhibition, *Sampling the Collection, A to Å*, the museum is offering a **Brown Bag Lunch Series** once a month. Starting in April, the public is invited to get a taste of Danish-American culture during the lunch hour free of charge. Bring your own sandwich, but we'll provide the coffee! Each program will begin at noon.

The first programs in the series are:

April 8: A to Å. Curator Tova Brandt offers an "armchair tour" of the new exhibition.

May 13: S is for Sustainability. Mike Howard, Trevor Schroeter and Lisa Riggs report on their recent trip to Denmark to meet with renewable energy companies and to explore how such technologies can be brought to Elk Horn.

June 17: M is for Midsummer. Learn about witches, brooms and the other traditions associated with Sankt Hans Aften, the Danish celebration of midsummer.

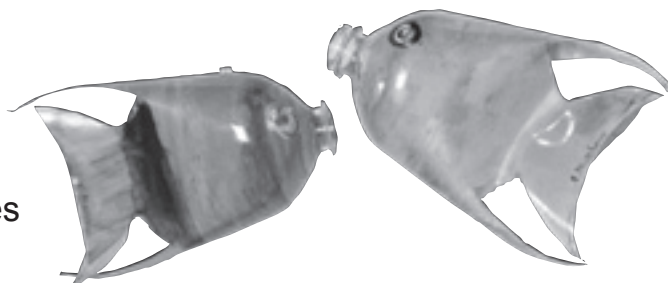
July 8: R is for Rebuild. The Rebuild Society organizes the largest July 4th celebration outside of the United States, taking place every year in Rebuild National Park, Denmark.

Danish-American Artist Series presents Evelyn Matthies

The newest exhibition in the Danish-American Artist Series features Evelyn Matthies of Brainerd, Minnesota. Dozens of examples of her work will be exhibited at the museum through July 11, 2010.

Her art covers a wide range of subjects and techniques from paintings of Denmark to woodcuts and fish prints on paper. The exhibition represents a retrospective of many influences and experiences in Matthies' life, including extensive travel, a passion for the natural world and collaborations with writers and other artists.

Matthies has been a lifelong artist and teacher with an artistic career spanning five decades and a teaching career of 30 years. She states, "I not only enjoy doing my own art, but get an incredible natural high from viewing other people's work, witnessing works in progress, and by being a part of the whole creative world of



The "flying fish" will be the focus of the hands-on workshop with Evelyn Matthies on May 30 at the museum.

music, theatre, dance, literature, poetry, sculpture and photography." She has taught over 8,000 students ranging in age from five to eighty-five and believes that art is all encompassing.

Museum visitors can meet the artist in person on Saturday, May 29, when she is giving a public gallery talk in conjunction with Elk Horn's Tivoli Fest activities. Matthies will also lead a hands-on workshop on Sunday afternoon, May 30. Both programs are funded in part by the Iowa Arts Council. Please contact the museum for more information about these unique opportunities.



Evelyn Matthies', "The Seaport", acrylic (32x22 inches).

The Collection Connection

By Angela Stanford, curator of collections

Henry Olsen Thompson was a first-generation American citizen. He was born in Omaha, Nebraska on December 27, 1874, shortly after his Danish immigrant parents arrived in the United States from Denmark. Henry was baptized the following February at St. Ansgars Kirke in Looking Glass, Nebraska.

Ole Christian Thomsen, Henry's father, married Marie Henriksen in 1873 in Vejle, Denmark, and the new couple sailed to the United States the following year. After working for 15 years in an Omaha brick factory, Ole and his family, which by then included six children, moved to a farm near Rosenborg, Nebraska.

In 1898, when Henry was 24-years-old, the United States entered into war with Spain. The

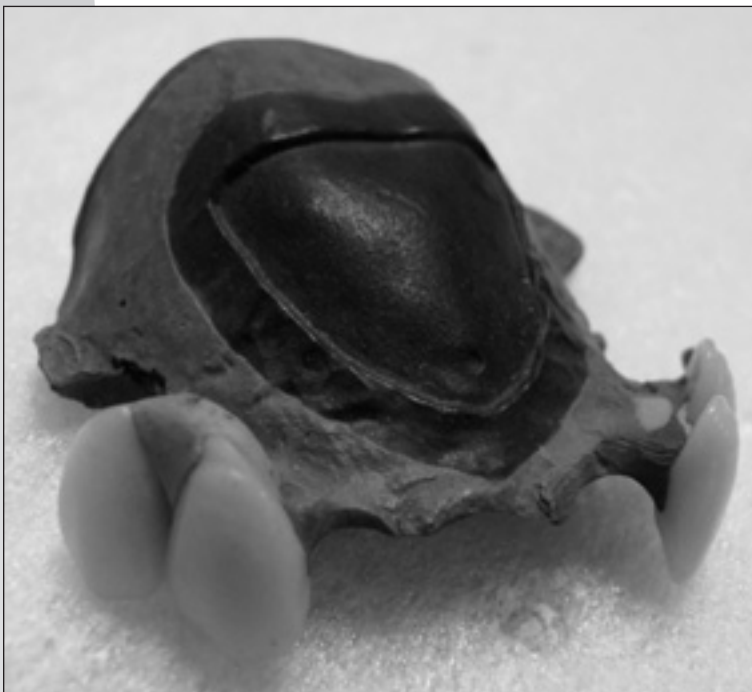
Spanish American War involved control over the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam, as well as Cuba. In the end, Spain relinquished control of all territory involved, and the United States emerged as a world power. Henry joined Company M of the First Nebraska Volunteers and served in the Philippines during the war.

When Henry returned home, he brought over 175 items that he had both used and collected during his service with him. Among this collection are his uniform hat and his bag with his name and company written on the white canvas—aged, but legible.

Numerous pieces of memorabilia illustrate Henry's experience in the war. There are musket balls and

bullet shells, rocks and sea shells, and even a pair of epaulets from a Philippine officer's uniform. A paper fan, rosary, and two buckeyes are included. Perhaps one of the most unique pieces is a partial set of dentures. The palette portion appears to be made of a leathery material with false teeth wired in on either side. All of these smaller items were stored in Henry's wooden trunk, which has the name "Henry O. Thompson," still visible on the lid.

This complete collection was donated to the museum, along with baptismal and confirmation certificates for Henry, by his grandson in 1999 and 2000. All items have been fully processed, including photographs, and are available to all members who have access to the museum's collection online via the "View Our Collection" link on the website. It is one of the museum's most unique groups of artifacts.



Henry Olsen Thompson, a son of Danish immigrants, returned from the Spanish American War with over 175 items he had either used or collected during his service. Donated to the museum by his grandson, Henry's collection includes both the expected—such as his bag (above right) – and the unusual, such as this partial set of dentures.

The Danish Immigrant Museum Recognized in Washington State Senate

On January 14, museum member and Washington State Senator Ken (Jake) Jacobsen introduced a resolution in the Washington State Senate recognizing The Danish Immigrant Museum and the importance of Danish immigrants in the state of Washington. Senator Jacobsen is originally from Dannebrog, Nebraska, but moved to Washington when he was a boy.

John Mark Nielsen, executive director of The Danish Immigrant Museum, and Bruce Bro, the museum's development director were present for the passage of this resolution along with former Washington State Senator Harriet Albertsen Spanel, who is the current president of the museum's board of directors. Mark Schleck, president and director of the Scan|Design Foundation by Inger and Jens Bruun and Mary DeLorme, grants and operations manager for the foundation, also attended. The Scan|Design Foundation has provided generous grants to The Danish Immigrant Museum to underwrite its Danish internship program.

Senate Resolution 8671

*By Senator
Jacobsen*

WHEREAS, The United States is a nation built by diverse peoples from all parts of the world and brought to our country their energy, skills, and a deep desire to build a better life; and

WHEREAS, Danish immigrants and their descendants have made a profound impact by furthering the proud democratic traditions that have defined the United States and made our country a beacon of liberty and progress to the world; and

WHEREAS, The Danish Immigrant Museum has faithfully carried out its mission to recognize and share the legacy of the Danish Immigrant experience while preserving the immigration story from Denmark and Northern Europe; and

WHEREAS, The Danish Immigrant Museum, founded in 1983, continues its campaign to better preserve and share the Danish-American experience through the use of state-of-the-art technologies, displays, and exhibits; and



Photo in the State of Washington Senate Chambers: (left to right) Mark Schleck and Mary DeLorme of Scan|Design Foundation of Seattle, Museum Board President and former Washington State Senator Harriet Albertsen Spanel, Senator Ken Jacobsen, Washington Lt. Governor Brad Owen, Museum's Development Director Bruce Bro and Executive Director John Mark Nielsen.

WHEREAS, The Danish Immigrant Museum works cooperatively with the Danish American Archive and Library at Dana College, the Danish Immigrant Archives at Grand View University, and the Danish American Heritage Society to better preserve the Danish Immigrant experience; and

WHEREAS, Several cities in the state of Washington, notably Seattle, Bellingham, and Enumclaw have long maintained their strong Danish traditions, and preserved the proud legacy of those Danish people who first came to the Pacific Northwest over 150 years ago and whose profound impact on the development of our economy and progress of our social values continues

today;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate does hereby acknowledge and honor The Danish Immigrant Museum; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to The Danish Immigrant Museum.

I, Thomas Hoemann, Secretary of the Senate, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Senate Resolution 8671, adopted by the Senate January 14, 2010.

THOMAS HOEMANN
Secretary of the Senate



From the Development Director: *Building a National Museum*

As I write this, I have been the development director for the museum for just over a year. What a year it has been! I don't think the experience

compares to anything I've done in my life.

Foremost, I have met so many wonderful museum supporters and made so many new friends! I have learned so much about Danish culture, my own Danish roots and I have discovered so many rich and wonderful places across the country where people celebrate their Danish heritage. I want to say *mange tak* to everyone who has made my experience so enjoyable!

I spent several weeks this winter meeting people in Southern California, working with Danish clubs in the area and collaborating with The Danish Lutheran Church and Cultural Center in Yorba Linda. I spoke to several groups and clubs about our future museum plans, our financial needs and why we are much more than a place in Iowa to house Danish artifacts. At the end of January we held a benefit luncheon to raise money for the Yorba Linda Church as well as the museum. We also conducted a three-day genealogy workshop led by my museum colleague, Michele McNabb. The feedback from the workshop was extremely positive and it was a great example of how we can bring the museum to other parts of the country.

At the conclusion of our events, it was evident that the Danish community in Southern California and The Danish Immigrant Museum

felt more connected than ever before. I believe there is a mutual feeling that by working together we can enrich each other's organizations.

Two weeks later, our board of directors meeting was held in Tucson, Arizona. Again, we enjoyed socializing with members of the Danish clubs of Tucson and Green Valley (just south of Tucson). On Sunday, February 14, we concluded our activities with a *Fastelavn* celebration with great food, traditional decorations, a talk by John Mark Nielsen, the museum's executive director, about the Danish history of *Fastelavn* and, of course, we broke open the barrel full of candy with the traditional black cat. Once again, we connected with the community and I think many of those in Tucson feel the benefits of the museum are accessible to them.

We at The Danish Immigrant Museum plan to continue this outreach all around the country. We are doing this not only to promote the museum, but also to promote and preserve Danish culture across America. Denmark is a small country and those of us with Danish roots represent a minority culture. Only a half of

one percent of the total U.S. population claims a Danish heritage. Danish culture is wonderful and unique; our mission at the museum is to preserve it, teach it to our children, grandchildren, and all who want to learn about it. Nationwide, Danish groups observe the Danish cultural holidays such as *Fastelavn*, *Grundlovsfest*, *Sankt Hans Aften* and *Julefest*. At the museum, we wish to participate with and hopefully enhance these observances while strengthening our connections with Danes across the country.

In June, we will hold our summer board of directors meeting in Chicago. We plan to offer another genealogy workshop and fundraising event there in conjunction with the meeting. Please contact the museum to reserve your place at these events. The fundraising banquet is planned for June 12 at the Des Plaines Elks Club. I encourage those of you in the Chicago area to attend—to support our museum and the Chicago area Danish groups and, most importantly, to celebrate our rich Danish culture! *Vi ses!*

Bruce Bro
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[bruce.dk.museum](https://www.facebook.com/bruce.dk.museum)

Annual Report 2009 Additions • Corrections

Every effort has been made to ensure that all information contained in the 2009 Annual Report of Contributions is accurate. We regret and apologize for any omissions, misspellings, or misplacements. Please contact the Development Department with any questions or corrections.

The listing under the "Order of Fanø" was incorrect in the 2009 Annual Report. Following is the corrected list of members and donors at this level. We are grateful for the support this membership level provides and apologize for our mistake.

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Order of Fanø • Under \$50

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Virgil & Marjorie Rohlf, Ankeny, IA
Werner & Anna Ronne, Salt Lake City, UT
Bill & Ann Roof, Avoca, IA
Hon. Consul Jon Rosenthal, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Merle Rounds, Council Bluffs, IA
Rita Ruggaard, Fountain Hills, AZ
Brenda Samuelson, Storm Lake, IA
Earl & Ruth Sande, Adel, IA
Honor Sanville, Westbrook, ME
Annemarie Sawkins, Shorewood, WI
Agnes V. Sayles, Boone, NC
Scandinavian Club of Albuquerque, Albuquerque, NM
Shira Scherb, Canoga Park, CA
Poul Schmidt, Myrtle Beach, SC
Ron & Ardyce Schmidt, Garland, TX
Eldo & Dee Schornhorst, Harlan, IA
Steven & Kathleen Schou, Dickinson, ND
Darrell & Bertha Schroeter, Exira, IA
Lori Schultz, Harlan, IA
Joann Adsø Scott, Canoga Park, CA
Peggy Scott, Mesa, AZ
Marjorie Selim, Creston, IA
Betty Sievers, Audubon, IA
James & Jane Simon, Ames, IA
Harlan & Clara Simonds, Harlan, IA
Robert & Susan Simpson, Castle Rock, CO
Arnold & Helen Skov, Alden, MN
Doris Skow, Santa Clara, CA
Selma Sloth, Gig Harbor, WA
Douglas & Linda Small, Reading, MI
Waldo Smeby, Mason City, IA
Doug & Jill Smith, Magnolia, IL
Edgar & Louella Smith, Moorhead, MN
Hon. Consul Christopher Smith, Macon, GA
Joan Smith, Boone, IA
Kevin & Sheri Smith, Neola, IA
Nancy Zuber & Delmar Smith, Roseville, MN
Darrell & Rosemary Soe, Elk Horn, IA
Carl & Gloria Sorensen, Glendale, CA
Dale Sorensen, Urbandale, IA
Erik Sorensen, Monroe, IA
Harold & Carol Ann Sorensen, Albuquerque, NM
Margaret Sorensen, Minden, NE
Richard & Carol Sorensen, Independence, MO
Thorvald Sorensen, Plymouth, IA
Vera Sorensen, Bartlett, IL
Matthew Schipper & Angela Stanford, Shelby, IA
E. Irene Starrett, Audubon, IA
Neoma Steen, Elk Horn, IA
Elsa Steffensen, Hoffman Estates, IL
Robert & Jacquelyn Stockwood, Sedalia, MO
Beverlyn Stoneking, Cushing, IA
Robert Storms, Omaha, NE
Will & Barbara Strauss, Mesa, AZ
Holger Stub, Medford, NJ
Evelyn Stumme, Waterloo, IA
Michael & Sharon Sullivan, Glenwood, IA
Jens & Gertrude Sundsted, Plentywood, MT
Ann Svendsen, Tyler, MN
Betty Svendsen, Grayslake, IL

Marion Svendsen, Cedar Falls, IA
A. Einar & Arlene Swanson, Las Cruces, NM
Barry & Marianne Swanson, Littleton, CO
Robert & Marilyn Swanson, Boulder City, NV
Stanley Swanson, Sioux City, IA
Charles & Jean Sweningsen, Boulder City, NV
Jeffrey Swingholm, Petersburg, WV
Joan Tange, Cedar Falls, IA
James Tarrant, Falls Church, VA
Linda Tellefsen, Brooklyn Park, MN
Ray & Judith Tharp, Central Point, OR
Neva Theede, Atlantic, IA
Dixie Thompson, Hoquiam, WA
James & Darlene Thompson, Fountain Hills, AZ
Axel & Lou Ann Thomsen, Ringsted, IA
Finn Thomsen, Aalborg, Denmark
Fred & Kathleen Thomsen, Eugene, OR
Joyce Thomson, Denver, CO
Fritz & Janice Tiarks, Harlan, IA
John & Gitte Toben, Marietta, GA
Larry & Charlotte Travis, San Antonio, TX
Mike & Lis Trent, Sun City West, AZ
James & Gerd Tuchscherer, Lino Lakes, MN
Ardis Tuttle, Newell, IA
Cade Ullerich, Ames, IA
Suzanna Valadez, Northridge, CA
Ronald & Suzanne Vallez, San Jacinto, CA
Tom & Suzanne Van Bockern, Sioux Falls, SD
Jon & Mary Van Gerpen, Moscow, ID
E. P. & Doris Van Houtan, Williston, ND
Leona C. Vaughan, Yuma, AZ
Ruth Veigel, Grants Pass, OR
William & Marion Vierow, Saco, ME
Brooke Vimtrup, Burbank, CA
Trent & Dawn Vis, Urbandale, IA
Jeanette Voetmann, Sioux City, IA
Lester & Letty Vognsen, Wesley Chapel, FL
Winston & Linda Wade, Payson, AZ
Michelle Waghorne, Lapeer, MI
Gail Walker, Phoenix, AZ
Wynter Walker, Sylmar, CA
Karen Wallen, North Hills, CA
Merle Walling, Polson, MT
Robert & Helga Wallner, Duluth, MN
Henry & Madell Walter, Elk Horn, IA
Evelyn Ward, Greeley, CO
William & Doris Warrick, West Des Moines, IA
Wayne & Peggy Wegwart, Lexington, NC
Bruce & Ester Westling, Saint Louis, MO
Dick & Joan White, Lincoln, NE
Rosalie Wiand, Pulaski, WI
Carol Wilcox, Atlantic, IA
Carl & Alice Wilhelm, Columbus, NJ
Park & Marion Williams, Omaha, NE
James & Janelle Willis, Aplington, IA
Sandra Willis, Villa Ridge, MO
J. Roger & Annette Wilson, Harlan, IA
Sid & Sharon Winchell, Atlantic, IA
Elaine Winkler, Plymouth, MN
Marjorie Wise, Council Bluffs, IA
Phyllis Wittrup, Lakewood, CO
Richard & Marilyn Wittrup, Scituate, MA
Don & Phyllis Witzel, Palmer, AK
Gail Andersen & John Witzel, Edina, MN

Danish Canadian Conference in Winnipeg

This year's Danish Canadian Conference will be held at the beautiful and historic Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg from May 27 through 30, 2010.

The conference host, The Danish Canadian Club of Winnipeg, has chosen the theme Human Rights, due to the new national museum now being built in Winnipeg. As usual,

Friday will be devoted to the Danish Canadian National Museum with an audiovisual presentation. The Federation of Danish Associations in Canada will hold its annual general meeting Saturday morning with reports from all the Danish organizations across Canada. At the banquet Saturday night there will be entertainment and dancing. Sunday morning there will be

a visit to the historic legislature, followed by a typical Danish lunch at the Scandinavian Centre with Danish beer and snaps. It promises to be yet another great conference.

The Fort Garry Hotel has been part of the Winnipeg skyline for over 90 years and was built in the style of the Park Plaza Hotel in New York City. It is situated in the heart of downtown Winnipeg and

is just minutes away from all major attractions. The hotel's airport shuttle costs \$20 one-way.

Rooms at the Fort Garry Hotel are \$139, single or double occupancy. The registration fee is \$220 per person. Deadline for registration is April 27. For further information please contact Ms. Helle Wilson at 204-837-8537 or at danishcanadianclub2010@gmail.com

Thank You Businesses and Organizations

These businesses and organizations have contributed annual memberships of at least \$100. We recognize their generosity and support in each newsletter during their membership.

Grand View Danish Immigrant Archives, Des Moines, Iowa
A & A Framing (Annette Andersen), Kimballton, Iowa
AmericInn of Elk Horn, Elk Horn, Iowa
Andersen Windows (Sarah Andersen), Bayport, Minnesota
Answers (Rick Tighe), Atlantic, Iowa
Atlantic Friends of The Danish Immigrant Museum, Atlantic, Iowa

Audubon Family Chiropractic (Douglas & Nichole Olsen), Audubon, Iowa
Carroll Control Systems, Inc., Carroll, Iowa
Cedar Valley Danes, Cedar Falls, Iowa area
Dana College Library Archives, Blair, Nebraska
Danish American Club in Orange County, Huntington Beach, California

Danish American Club of Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #14, Kenosha, Wisconsin
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #15, Des Moines, Iowa
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #16, Minden, Nebraska
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #56, Overland Park, Kansas
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #75, Albert Lea, Minnesota
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #84, Lincoln, Nebraska
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #126, Los Angeles, California
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #144, Dike, Iowa
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #219, Webster, Iowa
Danish Brotherhood Vestens Stjerne Lodge #268, Junction City, Oregon

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #283, Dagmar, Montana
Danish Brotherhood Centennial Lodge #348, Eugene, Oregon
Danish Sisterhood Lodge #176, Dike, Iowa
Danish Club of Tucson, Tucson, Arizona
Danish Ladies Relief Society, Castro Valley, California
Danish Mutual Insurance Association, Elk Horn, Iowa
Danish Vennelyst Club, Omaha, Nebraska
Den Danske Klub, Denver, Colorado
Den Danske Pioneer (Elsa Steffensen & Linda Steffensen), Hoffman Estates, Illinois
Des Moines-Winter-Atlantic Memorials (Lana Leander), Des Moines, Iowa
Elk Horn Lutheran Church, Elk Horn, Iowa

Elk Horn Pharmacy, Elk Horn, Iowa
Elk Horn-Kimballton Community School, Elk Horn, Iowa
Elk Horn-Kimballton Optimist Club, Elk Horn, Iowa
Faith, Family, Freedom Foundation (Kenneth & Marlene Larsen), Calistoga, California
Guldsmedemester Helle Jørvad (Goldsmith), Ringsted, Denmark
Harlan Newspapers, (Steve Mores & Allan Mores), Harlan, Iowa
Heartland District of the Danish Sisterhood Lodge, Johnston, Iowa
Heartland District of the DBIA, Ventura, Iowa
Henningsen Construction, Inc., Atlantic, Iowa
Kessler Funeral Homes, Inc., Audubon, Iowa
King of Kings Fishing Guide Service & Lodge, Anchor Point, Alaska
Knudsen Old Timers of The Danish Lutheran Church, Glendale, California
Leman USA, Sturtevant, Wisconsin
Liberty Labs, Inc., Kimballton, Iowa
Marge's Hair Hut (Kent & Marge Ingerslev), Elk Horn, Iowa
Marne & Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn, Iowa
NE Gen Comm Danish Brotherhood, Omaha, Nebraska
Nelsen & Nelsen, Attorneys & Counselors at Law, Cozad, Nebraska
Nelson Machine & Forge (Steve Nelson), Marne, Iowa
O & H Danish Bakery (Eric Olesen), Racine, Wisconsin
Olsen, Muhlbauer & Co., L.L.P., Carroll, Iowa
Proongily (Cynthia & John McKeen), St. Paul, Minnesota
Rebild National Park Society, Southern California, Glendale, California
Red River Danes, Fargo, North Dakota
Ringsted Danish American Fellowship, Ringsted, Iowa
Scan | Design Foundation by INGER & JENS BRUUN, Seattle, Washington
Shelby County State Bank, Elk Horn, Iowa
Sons of Norway (Solglimt Lodge #1-547), Cedar Falls, Waterloo & Waverly, Iowa
Symra Literary Society, Decorah, Iowa
The Danish Inn, Elk Horn, Iowa
The Rasmussen Group, Inc., Des Moines, Iowa
The Viking Club of Orange County, Seal Beach, California
World Cal, Inc., Elk Horn, Iowa

Board Member Named Honorary Consul

Lynette Rasmussen, corporate counsel for The Rasmussen Group, Inc. of Des Moines, Iowa, has been appointed Honorary Consul for Denmark in Des Moines, Iowa by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. She began official duties on March 1, 2010.

Rasmussen is a member of The Danish Immigrant Museum Board of Directors, serving as chair of the development committee. She inherits the Honorary Danish Consul position from Lowell Kramme of Des Moines, a former member of the museum's board of directors.

In her role as Honorary Danish Consul, Rasmussen will give consular assistance to individuals, firms and institutions that have dealings with Denmark. She will also issue passports, distribute necessary applications and instructions, certify and verify documents and represent Denmark at official functions.

"I look forward to being able to promote trade and investment between Denmark and the United States. In addition, I am happy to support and foster the Danish-American community and Danish-American institutions and organizations," she says.

Rasmussen's predecessor Lowell B. Kramme of Des Moines had held the consul position since 1996. "Lowell has done a wonderful job in his role as the Honorary Danish Consul," Rasmussen says. "I endeavor to follow his example in my dealings with both the Danish and American communities."

The United States is Denmark's largest non-European trading partner.



Lynette Rasmussen began her duties as Honorary Consul for Denmark in Des Moines, Iowa on March 1.

Denmark, which is self-sufficient in energy, has as its primary exports industrial machinery, chemical products, furniture, pharmaceuticals and food products. The United States' exports to Denmark include aircraft, computers, machinery and instruments.

New Members November 1, 2009 – February 11, 2010

The Danish Immigrant Museum is pleased to identify the following individuals as its newest members. Museum membership is achieved in various ways – through gifts, complimentary or annual gifting. We do appreciate your support.

Niels Andersen, St. Louis, Missouri
Jim & Sarah Bengtson, Clinton, Iowa
Dennis & Linda Berge, Atlantic, Iowa
Arnie & Lorraine Bintner, Exira, Iowa
Mitch & Becky Bintner, Castle Rock, Colorado
Sheryl Birk, Anita, Iowa
Terry & Cynthia Birk, Reno, Nevada
Jana Boettger, Harlan, Iowa
Jon Borgman, Harlan, Iowa
Justin & Julie Bro, Chandler, Arizona
Rebecca Bro, Chandler, Arizona
James & Jytte Clark, Beaver Creek, Ohio
Danish Windmill Corporation, Elk Horn, Iowa
Den Danske Klub, Denver, Colorado

Des Moines-Winterset-Atlantic Memorials (Lana Leander), Des Moines, Iowa
Dale Eriksen, Fort Collins, Colorado
April Esbeck, Iowa City, Iowa
David & Susan Toft Everson, Kansas City, Missouri
Shawn & Renee Gessert, Harlan, Iowa
Peter & Nancy Gilbert, McKinney, Texas
Otto and Kirsten Gotzsche, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Yvonne Skov Grønlund, Roskilde, Denmark
Hasse & Lena Hansen, Costa Mesa, California
Helle Hovman-Olsen, Copenhagen, Denmark
George Jacobs, Columbus, Ohio
Jack Jensen, Oak Brook, Illinois
Phillip & Paula Z. Kirkeby, Palo Alto, California
John Kristensen, Monrovia, California
Anne-Grethe Krogh Nielsen, Yorba Linda, California

John Lauridsen, Ames, Iowa
Billy & Kim Marples, Elk Horn, Iowa
Jesper & Hanne Michaelson, Palatine, Illinois
Pinkie Nyegaard, Eugene, Oregon
William & Beverly Owings, Sun City West, Arizona
Flemming & Bente Pedersen, Junction City, Oregon
Dwain & Ellen Schmidt, Rodney, Iowa
Mark & Linda Smith, Jacksonville, Florida
Patricia Stack, Yorba Linda, California
Linda Stagg, Omaha, Nebraska
Will & Barbara Strauss, Mesa, Arizona
Eric & Tasha Unkenholz, Rapid City, South Dakota
Mike & LeAnn Walker, Waverly, Iowa
Todd & Diane Zygmuntowicz, Troy, Michigan



Museum supporter Gunver (Gwen) Berg

Gunver Berg Remembered

Gunver (Gwen) Berg, a Long Grove, Illinois resident and an ardent supporter of The Danish Immigrant Museum, passed away peacefully in her sleep on December 5, 2009. Gwen is survived by her husband of 64 years, Anton (Tony) Berg and her son Steve Berg.

Born in Los Angeles in 1918, Gwen grew up in

Withee, Wisconsin, at the home of her grandparents. She attended Grand View College and the Gregg Business College, marrying Tony in 1945 at Luther Memorial Church in Des Moines, Iowa. Gunver worked as a corporate secretary throughout her career. She gave generously of her time as well, volunteering for the Kildeer Community Club,

the Long Grove Historical Society and the Vernon Area Public Library, among others. Members of The Danish Immigrant Museum for over twenty years, Gunver and Anton Berg's names can be found on the Leadership Society Plaque at the museum. Gunver's legacy will sustain the viability of The Danish Immigrant Museum.

Memorials November 1, 2009 – February 11, 2010

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

Bertha Lund Andersen
Gunver "Gwen" Marie Berg
Margaret & Harold Bodholdt
George Bonnesen
Irene Boose
Sanna and Victor Borge
Ivy Else Brenton
Laura and Niels Bro
Silva J. Christensen
Phyllis Davis
Melvin & Wilfred Eskov
Hans & Mathilde Farstrup
Agnes Gronborg

Linda Hamm
Kathryn Ann Hansen
Jens & Anna Holland
Martin T. Holst
Eric Thomas Jacobson
Dean Jessen
Henry & Dagmar Jessen
Alvin Johnson
Leonard & Clara Johnson
Niels W. & Ingrid H. Jorgensen
Josephine K. Lapke
Herman Steen Larsen
Christine & Benny Larsen
Dorothea June Laursen
William Lewis
Eivind Lillehoj
Loved Ones

Elsie McNabb
Patricia McNabb
Earl & Helga Mikkelsen
Peter C. Nelson
Virginia Nielsen
Edith Nielsen
Eric & Joan Norgaard
George Norman
Caroline Olsen
Mr. & Mrs. Anton Olsen
Beverly Paulson
Leroy Pedersen
Edith Petersen
Mabel L. Petersen
Henry Christian Peterson
Delbert Rasmussen
Carl Rasmussen
Charlie John Rasmussen

Earl Rasmussen
Erik B. Rasmussen
Lis Rassmussen
Louise Jorgensen Byriel Rattenborg
Victor Schmidt
Duane M. Skow
Richard Gye Sorensen
Ellen Nyholm Staack
Mayme Sundsted and Jorgen
Kristine Sandahl Swanso
JoAnn Thielen
Arthur Thompson
Jack Jensen Unkenholz
Manuella Werner Wendel
Walter Westergaard

New Additions to the Wall of Honor November 1, 2009 – February 11, 2010

The Danish Immigrant Museum's Wall of Honor provides families and friends with a means of preserving the memory of or honoring those who emigrated from Denmark to America. Over 4,500 immigrants are currently recognized on the Wall. Their stories and the stories of their families contribute importantly to the growing repository of family histories at the museum's Family History and Genealogy Center.

Listed here are the recognized immigrants, their year of immigration, city and state named as their principal place of residence and donor(s) placing the name on the Wall of Honor.

If you would like to memorialize a family member or friend

by adding their name to the Wall of Honor, contact Debra Christensen Larsen, development associate.

FLEMMING VEDSTED PEDERSEN (1969) Junction City, Oregon, by Flemming & Bente Pedersen, Junction City, Oregon

ROSA PEDERSEN SEPPALA (1921) Buffalo, South Dakota, by Pearl P. Swank, Poplar, Montana

BENTE TRAMPEDACH SØRENSEN (1965) Junction City, Oregon, by Flemming & Bente Pedersen, Junction City, Oregon

THORVALD (HAAHR) WAD (1912) Audubon County, Iowa, by Shawn & Renee Thysen Gessert, Harlan, Iowa

Welcome Morten and Malene New Scan|Design by Inger & Jens Bruun Foundation Interns

Malene Vitus Østergård

"Of course, because of the snow, we may not be able to land," said the pilot on February 4, 2010, and we circled in the air over Omaha for ten more minutes. I crossed my fingers and hoped for the best...

My name is Malene Vitus Østergård and I am one of the two new Danish interns at The Danish Immigrant Museum. I am a graduate student from the University of Copenhagen, where I have a double major in Danish language and rhetoric. I will divide my time between the museum's Family History & Genealogy Center and the development department, where I will be working closely with Michele McNabb, Bruce Bro, and Debra Christensen Larsen. At the FHGC I will be doing research on Danish Baptists and focusing on material for the museum's webpage. Another big project will be in the development department, where I will be working with electronic social networking activities such as Facebook and YouTube.

During my internship I will participate in the annual Rebild meeting in Minneapolis, attend the board meeting in Chicago, and help the museum staff at the Petersen House Museum in Tempe, Arizona. And then, of course, I'll be working on the good old Elk Horn tradition: Tivoli Fest.

I have been around the world and done different things, including dairy farming for a year in

New Zealand and studying at the University of Arizona. I have been a competitive swimmer and hiked in the French Pyrenees, but I have never been to Elk Horn!

Besides work at the museum I am starting up conversational Danish classes, where we'll get together to speak Danish and have a good time. On the weekends I hope to take road trips to discover parts of the U.S. I have never seen before. In the longer term I would like to visit Solvang in California.

From my airplane window I looked down at the runway, where six snowplows had just finished cleaning. "We now have permission to land," said the pilot, and so we did. In total contrast to a rough landing on the runway, my personal landing here in Elk Horn at The Danish Immigrant Museum has been absolutely perfect!

Morten Birkerød Tofte

Morten Birkerød Tofte is a graduate student in modern culture and cultural dissemination at the University of Copenhagen. He is interning at the museum in the exhibition department under the supervision of Tova Brandt, curator of exhibitions, until the beginning of June.

While at the museum

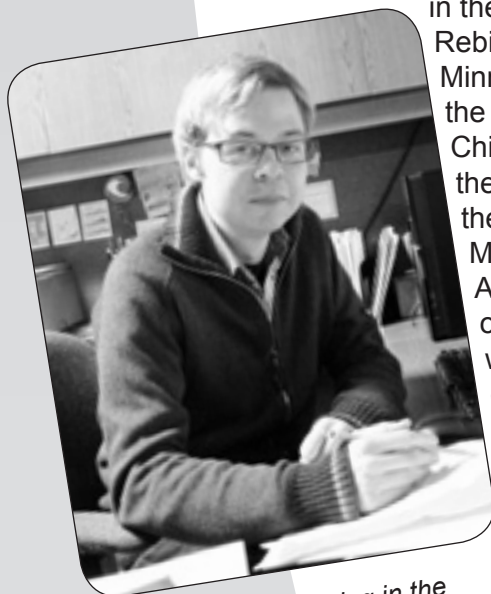


Intern Malene Vitus Østergård will divide her time between the museum's FHGC and the development department.

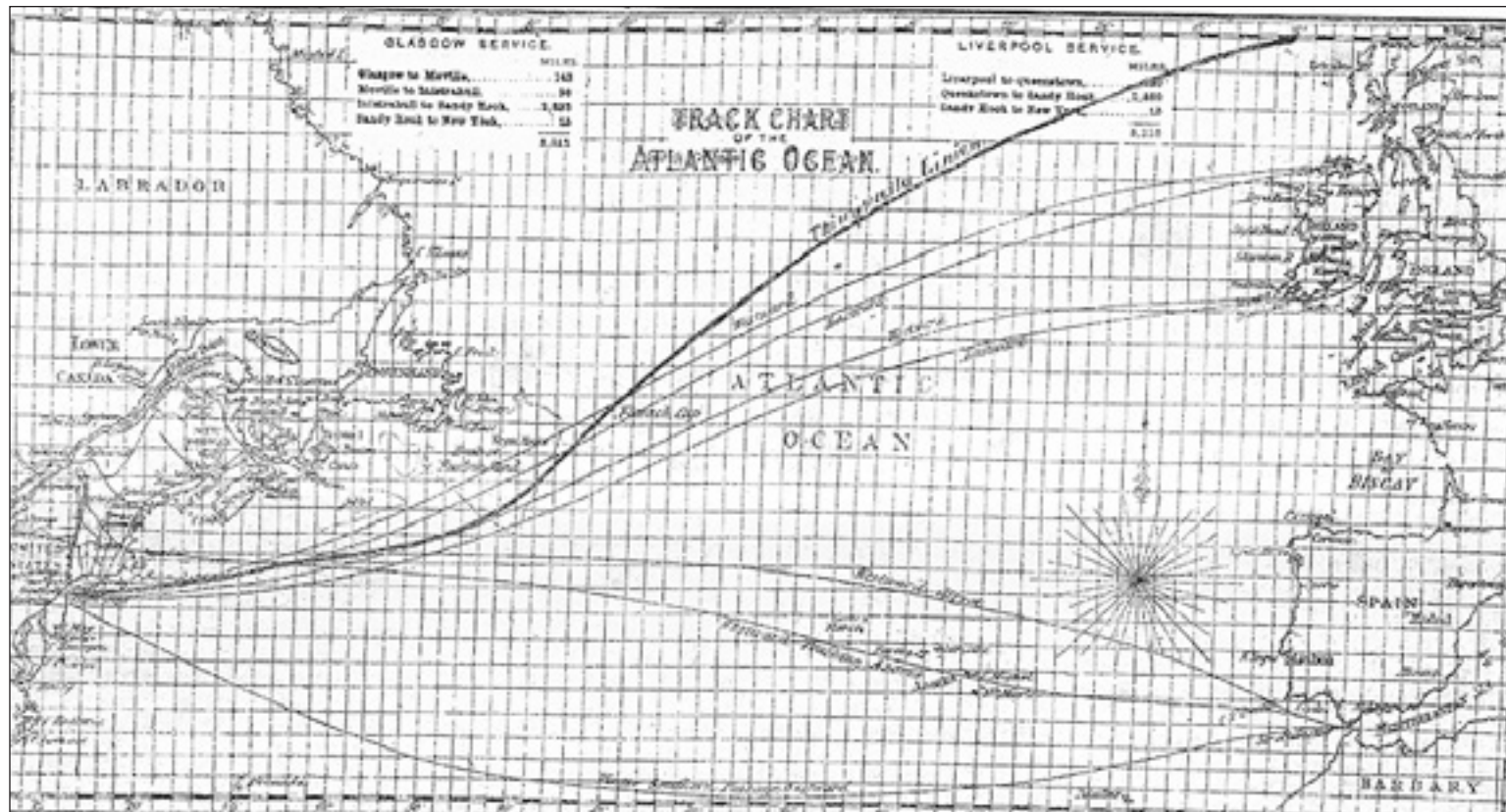
Morten will help in preparing and installing the museum's new temporary exhibition, *Sampling the Collection, A to Å*, which opens March 27, taking down the recent exhibition, *Victor Borge: A Centennial Celebration*, and rearranging the museum's exhibition galleries.

Born and raised in Odense on Funen, where his parents and younger brother still live, Morten has been living in Copenhagen since 2004. In 2007-08 he spent ten months in Paris, France, while studying at Université Paris 7 Denis Diderot. Being somewhat of a big city person Morten is finding it a totally new, interesting, and rather pleasant experience for him to be living and working in the small midwestern town of Elk Horn with its quiet streets, snow-covered fields and wide open spaces.

Morten is very interested in museums and museum work and is excited to gain hands-on experience as an intern at The Danish Immigrant Museum.



Morten Tofte is interning in the exhibition department this spring.



Thingvalla Line routes.

A First-Person Account of the Last Voyage of the Danmark, 1889

With the exception of the organized Mormon companies, Danish immigrants and businessmen wishing to come to North America had to travel to their destinations via

a third country, usually Germany or Great Britain, until 1879. This necessitated a multi-stage journey involving ships, wagon carts, trains and frequent delays before

the major part of the journey even began.

The establishment of the Scandinavian Thingvalla Line in 1879 strove to make the emigration experience less stressful and costly, advertising that emigrants could communicate with ship's personnel and did not have to worry about their luggage being transferred multiple times from point of embarkation to destination.

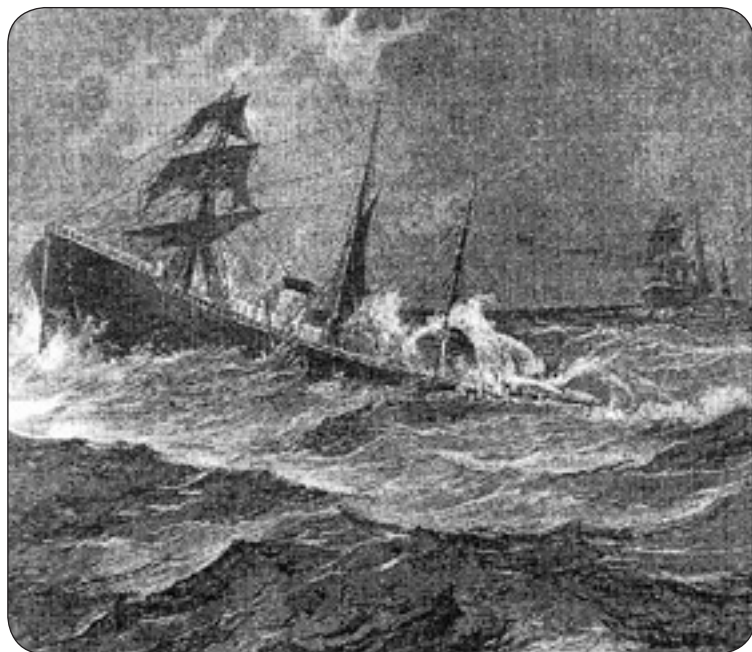
However, throughout its existence the company was plagued by numerous shipping disasters. For one, in August of 1888 two of their ships, the *Geiser* and the *Thingvalla*, collided; the *Thingvalla* sank and many lives were lost.

A larger ship, the *Danmark*, was subsequently purchased, making its maiden voyage in early 1889 and returning to

Scandinavia in March of that year. Its second journey, however, ended when it sank in the mid-Atlantic after a propeller screw broke.

Of the nearly 700 passengers on the *Danmark*, only a few accounts of that ill-fated journey are known to have survived. Among them is a series of letters and a journal written by Just Knudsen Justesen (born in Veerst Parish in Ribe County in 1866), a young man who was on his way to join his half-brother in America.

Magne Juhl, M.D. of Viborg visited the museum last summer. Upon his return, he forwarded an article he had published with Justesen's letters in *Fra Ribe Amt*, the publication



The *Danmark*'s second journey ended when it sank in the mid-Atlantic after a propeller screw broke.

— Continued on page 18

Last Voyage

of the Ribe County Historical Society, in 2000. Dr. Juhl kindly gave us permission to translate and publish the narrative, which provides a vivid account of the beginnings of one immigrant journey and the unexpected turn it took.

Here we want to share part of Just's story—excerpts from a letter to his parents that include his description of a few normal days at sea as well as the events leading to the evacuation of the *Danmark*.

Though Just boarded the *Danmark* in Copenhagen, the ship took on passengers in Oslo (then called Kristiana) and Kristiansand in Norway before crossing the Atlantic. The following letter was written in St. Miguel, one of nine islands that comprise the Azores, a Portuguese archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean.

St. Miguel, April 11, 1889

Dear Parents:

Since I am now on firm ground again I want to tell you how our trip has gone from Kristiansand in Norway to here.

Tuesday, March 26th. *We left Kristiansand at five o'clock in the morning. The weather was clear and a little windy. In the afternoon the wind got stronger and the ship rocked so that the fore and aft rails went clear down to the water. Much of the time the waves came over the front of the ship and it was difficult to keep one's balance most of the time. But I enjoy being on deck and seeing the mighty rough ocean. For awhile I did not feel too well, but it got better after I threw up a little. There were some Norwegians who had a church service before bedtime.*

Wednesday, March 27th. *The weather was rough during the night. It rocked so much that we almost fell out of our berths. Today it is not too bad. I was worried about getting seasick, so I stayed in my berth most of the day; then one does not feel anything. We passed the Shetland Islands between five and ten o'clock this evening.*

Friday the 29th. *There is only a slight wind today, but sometimes it is a little foggy. Clear weather in the afternoon. We sang a*

continued from page 17

few songs, both hymns and patriotic songs, at the back of the ship as it was getting dark. The ship was lying still for some time, due to some engine trouble, they said.

Saturday the 30th. *Today there was a strong wind. The ship rocks so that it is difficult to stand up on deck and one wave after another is hitting the ship, so one has to be careful not to get soaked when one is on deck. For a while around noon we did not move due to problems with the engine again. Meanwhile, they hoisted three sails, and there were also sails up on the first day on the North Sea.*

Monday, April 1st. *The weather is pretty good today and the sails are back up again. There was somewhat of a scuffle when the Norwegians had their evening devotions. It took a long time. Then there were some journeymen, the kind you would consider to be common peasants, who started singing songs, and the musician started blowing his flute, and the Norwegians wanted all of them to stop, according to the regulations which state that no disturbances may occur when there is a church service taking place. I do not quite understand those Norwegians, but they must be something like the Danish Mission People. They have devotions both morning and evening. All of them appear to be just common working people, and I believe that is what they are. During their devotions they alternate between singing, reading, speeches and all kinds of prayer. I do not understand much of this, but I could not be a party to disturbing them. If one cannot stand listening to them, then one can always go away.*



Just Knudsen Justesen (born in Veerst Parish in Ribe County in 1866), a young man who was on his way to join his half-brother in America, survived the last voyage of the *Danmark*.

Tuesday the 2nd. *This morning the weather is almost like it was yesterday. The wind got stronger during the day and the waves got bigger in the afternoon. The waves washed in over the front of the ship. It is impressive watching the Atlantic Ocean in all its might break its huge waves against the bow of the ship, and the big ship rising and then returning, now the one end and then the other end. It is almost like a gigantic cradle. Much of the time it was difficult to keep one's balance. There were many who fell when they tried to walk, and one could not stand still without hanging on to something. I stood for some time at the rear of the ship. Sometimes it went clear down to the water's surface, and then it would rise again so that the propeller came up above the surface. It then sprayed up high and the sun created a rainbow in all colors. Only now do I understand why Denmark is said to be a wave-shaped country, because the waves were sometimes as high as small hills, and this was not even a real storm. Toward evening we saw a large steamer with two stacks*

passing us.

Thursday the 4th. It is really windy today. A man from Møn lost his wallet last night, and it was probably stolen. There was nothing in it except for a few crowns and the brass claims token for his baggage. About 4:00 in the afternoon the propeller shaft broke. It shook so that it could be felt all through the ship. The crew members thought we had lost the propeller, but unfortunately, it turned out to be worse than that. The ship was really drifting now and the crew got busy getting all the sails up to get a little control over it. Rumors quickly spread and people became worried about how it was going to end, but all crew members said that there was no danger, which very few actually believed.

Friday the 5th. It was said that they had worked all night trying to remove the propeller. The water came in so fast that many were wet

clear up to their chests. The chief machinist was killed last night. They said that a piece of iron had fallen on his chest while he was working with the propeller. It is being hinted that he did it on purpose because the problem with the machinery was all supposed to have been his fault. Everyone was very depressed. Life vests had already been issued to many. I do not believe that there is much danger yet, but I am prepared for the worst. While we were having dinner the captain sighted a steamer, which he immediately hailed from the bridge. This changed people's attitude in an instant. Everyone was elated and happy and immediately wanted to go up to see the unexpected rescuer. Soon distress signals were sent up from the Danmark; they were acknowledged by the other ship and they ended up taking us in tow. The name of the ship is the Missouri and it is an English cattle transport. It was three o'clock before

they finished coupling the ships together. It then started towing us, and we were told that they were going to St. John, Newfoundland. It was not blowing as hard as yesterday, but there were still some big waves.

Saturday the 6th. In the room where I was sleeping we were awakened by some nervous passengers who said that we were going to be transferred to the Missouri, and the crew had started throwing some of the load overboard on the aft of the ship, which seemed a little mysterious. But the

ones from the crew that we talked with said that there was no danger. It was just to be able to pump some water from a small room. Near us almost everyone had their duffel bags ready and slept fully dressed and with their boots on the rest of the night. They quit throwing things overboard at one o'clock last night. We then heard only some wild rumors until nine o'clock this morning. Then all the passengers were ordered to get ready to transfer to the Missouri, and we could only take the clothes with us that we were wearing. We were quite calm about it, and I believe that most of the young people were willing to help with the rescue and make sure to get women, children and old people taken care of first before thinking about ourselves. I helped first with getting the lifeboats out, and then I helped getting food brought up from the hold and into the boats. The food was placed first in the bottom of the boats and then the people. They were steadier when there was some ballast in the bottom. Many of the women were not too eager about getting into the boats; it did not seem very pleasant with the boats bobbing up and down, and they were flung from the ladders into them. But they had to leave, and whether they wanted to or not they had to tear themselves away from the ladders when the boat was at its highest point, then they were caught by the brave sailors and placed in the bottom of the boat almost before they knew of it. Many of the passengers, especially the Norwegians, were used to the sea. They were a great help in the lifeboats, since there were not enough crewmen to man the oars. Hans Askjær and I were among the last passengers to leave the ship, and thus we were able to take our duffel bags along. It was 2-3:00 o'clock when the last crew members left the ship. And there was Denmark's largest ship floating as a wreck on the waves of the Atlantic Ocean

with the lifeboats surrounding it like nutshells.

Women, children and families among the Danmark's passengers continued on to America on the Missouri, but several hundred men—including Just—had to spend a few weeks in the Azores before they were picked up by a German ship, the Wieland, and continued their journey to New York. Coincidentally, it was the Wieland which had also rescued passengers from the above-mentioned Geiser-Thingvalla collision the year before.

Just Justesen's Later Life

As it happened, Just's father died in Denmark on the very day of the shipwreck. A good neighbor in Veerst asked Just to return home since his mother was left alone to run the family store. And so Just did, caring for his mother and her sister, Marie Hjort, who also resided with him.

Just married twice, residing in Veerst until his death on April 24, 1948. His first wife, Ane Nielsen Bork, died on August 23, 1904, and two of their three children died that same year from tuberculosis. Just married a second time to Ane Dorthea Sørensen, with whom he had seven children.

Following Just's return from America his half-brother, Martin Lebek Petersen Søndergaard, whom he had intended to visit when he made that fateful voyage in 1889, also returned and settled in Glud.



An early advertisement for the Thingvalla Line.



Stamtræ –

Danish Roots, American Branches

News from the Museum's Family History & Genealogy Center

By Michele McNabb, librarian
genealogy@danishmuseum.org

Wish List

The complete FHGC book wish list has migrated to the museum's website. Find it by clicking on the Library & Genealogy tab and scrolling down to Donations & Wish List. Donation instructions can be found on the webpage too.

Help needed:

- **Danish Methodist Churches and congregations.** The FHGC is looking for directories or histories of originally Danish congregations. Please contact Michele McNabb to donate such items.

- The first president of the Danish Brotherhood in America, **William Frederik August Wind** (1834-1892), was a resident of **Racine, Wisconsin**, for several decades. The FHGC is searching for additional family information and/or photographs.



Website/ Database Updates

An updated and expanded list of useful websites for genealogical research may be found on the Genealogical Resources drop-down page.



Congratulations!

Shortly before Valentine's Day a young man came into the FHGC with some Danish words written on a piece of paper and asked for assistance in pronouncing them. Our volunteers helped him out and then remarked that the words looked like a marriage proposal. Yes, that was the case, the young man said. Our volunteers, being romantic souls, asked if he would let them know what the answer was and he agreed to do so. Later that day he popped in again, with a big smile on his face: the young lady had said yes! Congratulations are in order, Steven Olson and Curator of Exhibitions Tova Brandt!

Miscellaneous

- If you are **planning a reunion**, please keep the museum's Family History and Genealogy Center in mind when making copies of reunion booklets and souvenirs. Remember that they become historical artifacts as soon as the event is over!
- **Family Websites:** Do you have a publicly-accessible webpage for your Danish ancestry? If so, tell us! The FHGC is compiling a list of URLs for use both in the FHGC and on the museum website.

Activities and News

When the phone rings at the FHGC, one never knows what the question will be on the other end. Several unusual requests received this winter included:

What is the meaning of the Danish word *barselpotte*? -- According to the online dictionary of the Danish language (<http://ordnet.dk/ods/>) the word is actually *barselpotte*. This is an archaic term meaning a pot or pail used to carry food to a woman who had recently given birth. In older times new mothers were supposed to "lie in" for a period of 14 days or so, during which time neighbors and friends brought food for her and the family.

Another call concerned a children's rhyme that a patron had learned from a Danish grandparent. She was interested in teaching it to her own grandchildren, but wanted to get it right. Research showed that the rhyme comes from the first words of the verses of a Hans Christian Andersen poem, *Pandebe*n! - *Godt det gror*, first published in 1845. I'm sure many readers will find the rhyme familiar:

*Pandebe*n

*Øjeste*n

Næsetip

Mundelip

Hageflip

Dikke, dikke, dik!

The words to the poem, which has been set to music, may be found at <http://www.ugle.dk/pandebe.html>, among other places.

- **A New Day:** Beginning May 1, 2010 the Family History & Genealogy Center will be open on Thursdays! FHGC summer hours will thus be Tuesdays through Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

- A series of **workshops on Danish genealogy** was held at the Danish Lutheran Church & Cultural Center in Yorba Linda, California, from January 28 through 30. Plans are in the works for a similar series to be held in Chicago in conjunction with the museum board meeting in

June. A list of topics and upcoming speaking engagements can be found in the Library & Genealogy section of the website under Workshops and Talks.

- **Fall workshops in Denmark:** several workshops on finding Danes who have emigrated to the U.S. and their descendants in American sources have been scheduled for this fall in Copenhagen, Viborg and Aarhus, as well as on Bornholm. Further details will be posted in the Workshops and Talks section of the website as well as on the calendar.



"Generations" photo exhibit picture.

We are looking for photographs for "Generations," this year's **FHGC photograph exhibit**, which will feature 3-, 4- or 5-generation photographs that include

a Danish immigrant. The immigrant can be the oldest, the youngest or anywhere in between in the group. If you have a photograph that fits this criterion, we'd love to include it. Contact

Michele McNabb for a photograph release form or to indicate if such a photo exists in a book you've donated. The deadline for submissions is May 1, 2010.

Museum Board Holds February Meeting in Tucson

The museum's board of directors held its eighty-fourth regular meeting February 12 through 14 at the Doubletree Hotel Reid Park in Tucson, Arizona with seventeen of the twenty-two board members in attendance.

Tucson board member Mia Hansen was instrumental in selecting the meeting site as well as organizing several of the social events. Friday evening museum members from the Tucson area as well as the Danish Club of Tucson gathered with board members and staff for an informal social hour. The board meeting ended with a casual luncheon on Sunday, followed by a *Fastelavn* celebration hosted by the Danish Club of Tucson.

Two important actions taken at the meeting were the forming of a committee to review the bylaws and the forming of a strategic planning committee.



David Asher of the Danish Club of Tucson presents a donation gift to Bruce Bro and John Mark Nielsen. Bro broke open the barrel, let out the cat and was crowned King of Fastelavn. Marilyn Buckelew, club president, holds the stuffed black cat. Pictured from left to right are Asher, Bro, Buckelew and Nielsen.

Dana College Sold to a For-Profit Educational Corporation

On March 16, 2010, Dana College officials in Blair, Nebraska, announced that the college was being sold to a for-profit corporation. According to the press release prepared by the college, the new corporation, known as the Dana Education Corporation (DEC), will provide vision and direction for the curriculum.

The Dana College Corporation, owned by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), will be reorganized as the Dana Education Foundation (DEF). This foundation will continue to preserve the heritage of Dana College through support of the Danish American Archive and Library, campus ministry, alumni affairs and local community events.

Dana College is one of two existing post-secondary institutions founded by Danish immigrants, the other being

Grand View University in Des Moines, Iowa. The original institution in Blair was Trinity Theological Seminary, founded in 1884. Following the creation of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1896, the seminary and college in Blair merged with the first Danish folk high school in America, founded in 1878 and located in Elk Horn, Iowa. The name Dana College came into use in the early years of the twentieth century.

Faculty and alumni at both Dana College and Grand View University were instrumental in the founding of The Danish Immigrant Museum in 1983. One of the many reasons the museum is located in Elk Horn, Iowa is that it is midway between the two campuses.

Representatives of the Danish Immigrant Archive-Grand View University, the Danish American Archive and Library located on the Dana College campus, and the museum meet quarterly. The three organizations coordinate preservation efforts, seminar classes visit the museum regularly, and the museum has hired students for summer internships.

The staff and board of directors of The Danish Immigrant Museum look forward to working with the administration of the newly created Dana Education Corporation and the governing board of the Dana Education Foundation in celebrating the relationship between Denmark and United States.



Vacation in Denmark and Support The Danish Immigrant Museum

Benedikte Ehlers Olesen, a member of The Danish Immigrant Museum's Board of Directors, and her husband Poul Olesen are offering their Danish summer home for rental at a reduced price—and all proceeds will be donated to The Danish Immigrant Museum.

- Located in the middle of Jutland, a 10-minute drive from Viborg, two hours to Skagen to the north, two hours to the German border to the south, one hour to the North Sea on the west, and one hour to the Kattegat on the east.
- 45-minute drive to Århus, and 40-minutes to Aalborg.
- Views of the Limfjord from most rooms in the house.
- Three bedrooms—two with queen-sized beds and one with

two bunk beds. It sleeps six adults comfortably, but can sleep a total of eight.

- Two bathrooms with showers and one has a hot tub.
- Kitchen with refrigerator, oven, and microwave.
- Flat screen television and DVD player.
- Five minute drive to shopping: bakery, butcher shop, bank, post office.
- The house is available for rental in 2010 for a minimum of \$1,000 a week. (Usually, it costs around \$3,000.) In 2011 the cost will rise to a minimum of \$1,250 a week.

*Interested individuals should contact the museum
at 1-800-759-9192.*

MUSEUM 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:

Monday-Friday 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am-5:00 pm

Sunday 12:00 noon-5:00 pm

BUSINESS HOURS

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

FAMILY HISTORY & GENEALOGY

CENTER HOURS

May-Oct.: Tuesday-Friday

9:00 am-5:00 pm

Saturday: 10:00 am-5:00 pm

November-April:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

10 am-4 pm

**All facilities are closed on New Year's Day; Easter Sunday;
Thanksgiving; Christmas**

(Local weather conditions may cause occasional closures.)

NEW!

in the Museum Shop

This is just a taste of new spring items in the shop. Go online at www.danishmuseum.org or email us at dkgift@metc.net

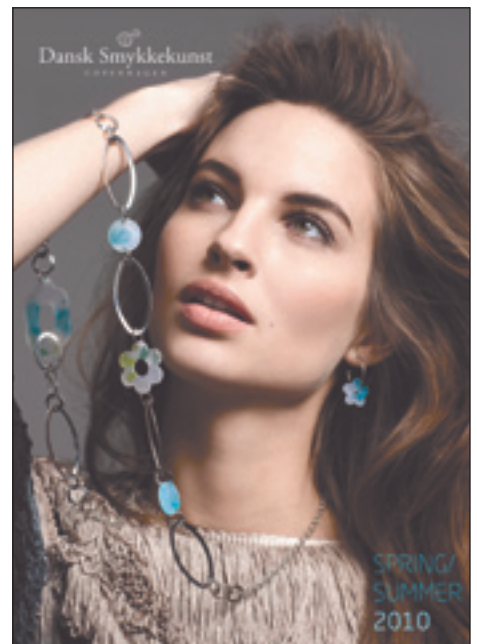


Imported from Denmark, Fiduz® wine dispenser for boxed/bagged wine.

- Table stand catches drops
 - Cold pack ensures a cooler temperature
- Great design, several colors
• **Simply original !**



Jewelry made with vintage Danish postage stamps!



Soft and highly absorbent, woven from cotton and bamboo fibers.

Bamboo/Cotton Towels, 18"x26"
Dishcloths, 12"x10"
Chef's Side Towels, 12"x29"

Over 40 designs to choose from!



Dansk Smykkekunst Copenhagen
New Spring/Summer Collection
The fall collection was one of our top sellers!