

# museum of danish america

**E-NEWS** | MARCH 2015



## film about danish immigrant wins festival

“The Simple Gift of Walnut Grove,” a short film created by John Richard and produced by the Museum of Danish America won the Grand Prize at the 11th annual Siouxland Film Festival in Sioux City, Iowa on Saturday, February 28. This year over 85 films from eight countries and the U.S. were entered. The Siouxland Institute of Film selected the 33 films that were shown over three days. Winners were chosen by audience members who voted after the screenings.

The film is about the life of an early 20th century Danish immigrant named Hans Hansen, as told by his son, 96-year-old Walter Hansen. Hans emigrated from Denmark to the United States in 1899 and built a farm out of the native timber he found alongside a marginal piece of land on the Cedar River near West Branch, Iowa. The film shows daily in the Multimedia Room (lower level) at the museum.

One festival attendee, Tim Bottaro, commented about the film, “Run away hit with the audience. This film is proof you don’t need a car chase scene or special effects to win an audience over.”

For his work, John was awarded a \$500 cash prize and the “Siouxie” trophy. You can watch a 3-minute preview of the film at <http://www.bocceballfilms.com/>.



## danish inn restaurant closing; for sale

Elk Horn’s popular [Danish Inn Restaurant](#) is closing its doors this week, the owner announced on February 25. The restaurant and its Danish cuisine offerings have been an important part of the community for over 30 years.

In their statement the owners explained, “The high cost of providing quality food and service has made it impossible for us to continue. We want to thank all of our loyal customers and friends that we’ve made from coast to coast and will miss seeing you.”

In the days following the announcement, the restaurant has been swarmed with diners hoping to have a final taste of the business’s iconic fare. Due to the influx of patrons, the restaurant ran out of food each day and had to turn diners away.

The property is [listed for sale](#), along with the Danish Villages’ recently closed newspaper office. Cafe Copenhagen, which was featured in December with the Inn on the Danish television show [Spise med Price](#), has also closed up shop this winter. Places to eat in Elk Horn presently include Coffee Girl\*, the Country Store, Larsens Pub, and The Flour Mill\*.

*\*Businesses opened within the year.*



## brown bag lunch programs resume in march

Programs begin at 12 noon in the Bro Dining Room and are FREE to the public. Bring your own lunch – we'll provide the coffee! Videos from a few past presentations can be [found on YouTube](#).

### MAR 19

#### **Confirmation: Coming of Age in Denmark and the U.S.**

Michele McNabb is the manager of the museum's Genealogy Center. This presentation is based on the photo exhibit from 2013. *Sponsored by Danish Sisterhood Lodge #15 (Wisconsin)*

### APR 16

#### **Community Conversation**

Museum staff invite you to learn about and contribute to the museum's next strategic plan for the years 2016-2020.

### MAY 14

#### **Coal Mining in Iowa**

While not as familiar in Southwest Iowa, coal mining is part of the history of this state. Doug Wilson will share the story of this little known part of Iowa industry.



## curator's choice: art from the permanent collection

ON VIEW MARCH 28 – MAY 10

What are some of the past favorites and new treasures in the museum's art collection? Enjoy works by Danish and Danish-American artists – paintings, prints, sculptures, and more!

*At left:* "Jesus the Light of the World" stone bust by Gutzon Borglum. Borglum's most recognizable work is Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. Borglum, born March 25, 1867, was the son of Danish immigrant parents.



## exhibition catalog crowdfunding effort successful

The museum's recent online fundraising effort met and exceeded its goal on February 28. Thanks to the generosity of 196 wonderful people (many not previously connected with the museum), we will be producing an expanded catalog for the national traveling exhibition *Skål! Scandinavian Spirits*. The 72-page, full-color volume will include recipes, essays, and photos. If you didn't reserve a copy through Kickstarter, we expect the finished product to be available in late April! See details of the project at <http://kck.st/1zv4Tze>. The exhibit is on track to open at the Museum of Danish America on April 24.



## golden immigrants

The 2015 Genealogy Center photo exhibit will celebrate Danish immigrants who reached 100 years of age or more. We are looking for photographs – youthful as well as old -- and stories. Deadline for submissions is **April 17**. The exhibits are archived [on our website](#). [Submission/permission forms may be obtained here](#).

## intern and genealogy blogs

Interns at the Museum of Danish America keep a blog about their experiences at [danishmuseuminterns.tumblr.com](http://danishmuseuminterns.tumblr.com). There is also a Genealogy Center blog for genealogy and family history-related tidbits: [danishmuseumgenealogy.tumblr.com](http://danishmuseumgenealogy.tumblr.com).



## new danish interns

### CHARLOTTE KEIMIG, 23

I am the newest Collections Intern at the Museum of Danish America. In Denmark, I live in an apartment just outside of Copenhagen, but I actually grew up in small suburb called Frederikssund.

I just finished my Bachelor's degree in History from Copenhagen University, and have, until my internship, been working and trying to save up some money. Back home, I have a part-time job at an auction house. My job is to help customers get their antiques evaluated--which I am slowly learning to do myself. In this business, you come across some peculiar stuff but also beautiful artwork. I am specifically fascinated by the Danish Modern furniture.

My plan is to start on my Master's degree, in History as well, in the summer of 2015. In my education I have been focusing on World War II, and more specifically, on the Holocaust. The 20th century is of great interest to me. I also took some minors in American and British History, where I found the Cold War very fascinating.

With the internship at the museum, I am hoping to learn more about the psychology behind the Danish emigration to America and the whole concept of pursuing the American Dream. I will be completing my internship on June 30.



### JOHANNES SVEND BRASK KRISTOFFERSEN, 26

I am the newest Exhibits and Development Intern from Copenhagen, Denmark. I am a graduate student in History at the University of Copenhagen. My Bachelor's degree is in History from the University of Copenhagen with a minor in Near Eastern Archeology and Southeast Asian studies. My historic interest is quite wide. In my studies I have so far been focusing on the British Empire in the 19th to early 20th centuries, but my interest in general is on this time period. I especially find the different cultural encounters interesting, which is why working on emigration history is appropriate.

Prior to coming to the museum, I was working at the Danish Museum of Technology as part of the national museum educational program. Here I was teaching a wide variety of subjects to classes visiting the museum, from kindergarten to college student.

Besides working at the museum, I have also been working at a local bookstore in Copenhagen. In addition to being a clerk in the store, I have had the extra challenge of starting and participating in the management of social media. On top of that I have hosted events in and out of the store. Last but not least, I have been working for the Danish Cancer Society in the Prevention and Awareness Department. Here I was assisting the secretariat and the accounting staff in different tasks.

In my internship at the Museum of Danish America, I will be working on the Skål! Scandinavian Spirits exhibition and other smaller exhibitions while also assisting in the planning and execution of different events. My internship will end at the end of July. This is my first visit to the U.S., and I am looking forward to fully experiencing American culture.



## public radio shares danish immigrant story

In this, the centennial year of the historic sinking of the Lusitania ocean liner, Iowa Public Radio's Rick Fredericksen told of his Danish immigrant grandfather's journey to America 108 years ago with the help of a newly-translated diary. Find the story (with audio and diary excerpts) [on IPR's website](#). The museum is grateful to have helped Rick discover this piece of history and plans to share more about it in a future *America Letter*.



## cultural frontrunners and california travels

The Museum of Danish America's Executive Director, John Mark Nielsen, and Albert Ravenholt Curator of Danish-American Culture, Tova Brandt, will be in California from Sunday, March 1 through Wednesday, March 4 for The Cultural Frontrunners biannual meeting, to visit with museum members, and to meet with a future featured artist, Helle Scharling-Todd (to be exhibited May 23 – September 30, 2015).

The Cultural Frontrunners is a network of people across the country dedicated to promoting contemporary Danish culture, values and issues in the United States on a voluntary basis. The network was founded in 2005 by the Danish Embassy and the Danish Consulate General in New York and currently counts approximately 60 members. Every other year, members meet to exchange ideas and knowledge about Danish culture.

The Cultural Frontrunners will meet in Solvang, CA for three days of exciting programming with a wide variety of speakers, workshops and dialogues. Among the keynote speakers are Eric Nelson, Chief Executive Officer at the Nordic Heritage Museum, Bonnie Yochelson, curator of a grand-scale new exhibition about Danish photographer and social pioneer Jacob Riis, and "foodie" Kalle Bergman, Editor-in-Chief of the food magazine *Honest Cooking* as well as chief of the NORTH festival, who will talk about the New Nordic Food-trend.

Over the years, the Cultural Frontrunner network has facilitated a great number of Danish events across the country – e.g. Danish film festivals, design and graphic art exhibitions, happenings and tributes to the Danish heritage society in the U.S. The network includes diplomats, consuls, artists and individuals with a specific interest in Danish art as well as well-established cultural institutions in the U.S. Cultural Frontrunners is coordinated and maintained by the Embassy of Denmark in Washington, D.C., in close cooperation with the Danish Consulate General in New York.



## new book: journey to the new world

**ACTOR CHRISTIAN ZANGENBERG'S USA TOUR OF 1907**

An opening reception and book launch was held on Thursday, February 19 at The Theatre Museum at The Royal Theatre in Copenhagen for the new exhibit and book *The Journey to the New World: Actor Christian Zangenberg's USA Tour of 1907*.

The book consists of seven essays written by several generations of researchers from both Denmark and the United States. The Museum of Danish America's Executive Director, Dr. John Mark Nielsen, contributed a chapter to the book regarding Zangenberg's visits to Danish Americans in Iowa and Nebraska. Nielsen's research and content drew from resources at our Genealogy Center, at the Danish American Archive & Library, and the [Digital Library of Danish American Newspapers and Journals](#).

For information and to order the book (available only in Danish) [visit the website](#) or contact [info@teatermuseet.dk](mailto:info@teatermuseet.dk).

## help wanted

The Genealogy Center is looking for several individuals to join our dedicated volunteer staff interested in doing data entry and proofreading of special project databases. A familiarity with Excel and/or photo editing, an ability to pay attention to detail, and a commitment to work 3-4 hours a week are the necessary requirements. Training will be provided. [Contact Michele](#).

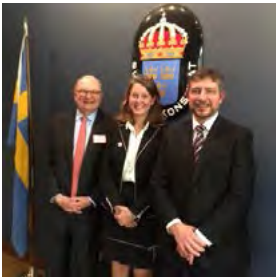


## new honorary consuls

### MINNESOTA | NORTH DAKOTA | SOUTH DAKOTA

On February 10, Rikke Dierssen-Morice, *left*, took over the responsibility as honorary consul in Minneapolis after being appointed by Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II on December 19, 2014. Rikke replaces consul Anelise Sawkins, *right*, who retires after 19 years in the position. Deputy Chief of Mission, Lars Bo Møller, who visited Minneapolis with Consul General Jakob Andersen of Chicago, presented the appointment and dismissal certificates, respectively, at a large reception attended by the local Danish community, representatives from the local business community – Danish and American - and local officials.

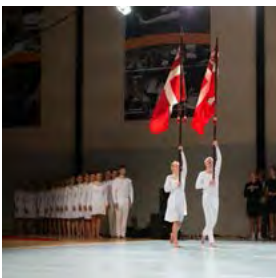
Rikke is of Danish heritage and is deeply involved in the thriving Danish community in Minneapolis, including the Danish-American Center. She is a partner in the law-firm, Faegre Baker Daniels, LLP, and has represented several Danish companies with U.S. operations. As consul, Rikke will represent Danish interests and assist Danish citizens in both Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Rikke can be reached at Rikke.Morice@FaegreBD.com. [Rikke and her family were featured in our Spring 2011 America Letter.](#)



### WISCONSIN

On February 11, Annemarie Sawkins, *middle*, took over responsibility as the new honorary consul in Milwaukee. Annemarie was officially appointed by her Majesty Queen Margrethe II on December 19, 2014, and replaces consul Barry James, who has been assisting Danish citizens in the state of Wisconsin in the position for 32 years.

Annemarie's Danish heritage and long-time involvement in the local Danish community, as well as her deep ties to the business and arts communities in Wisconsin, places her in a great position to represent Denmark in the state. As Annemarie puts it: "Advancing the interests of Denmark – promoting the culture, connecting the people and opening doors to new businesses or expanding existing ones – is what I am prepared to do." Annemarie can be contacted at annemariesawkins@yahoo.com or 414-962-7926.



## national danish performance team in the us

The National Danish Performance Team is in America! The group of 28 top-level gymnasts from Denmark, aged 18-28, devote one year of their lives (with no pay!) to be ambassadors for Denmark and to help young people make better lifestyle choices. The team performs, does workshops, and educates young people at all levels with hands-on interaction.

- 3/6 Louisiana, New Orleans, John P. Lyons Center, 7 pm
- 3/14 Georgia, Atlanta, Centennial Olympic Park, 11 am
- 3/14 Georgia, Atlanta, Marietta Middle School, 7 pm
- 3/18 Kentucky, Berea, Berea Community School, 7 pm
- 3/19 Kentucky, Berea, Berea College, 7.30 pm
- 3/23 Kentucky, Richmond, Eastern Kentucky University, 2 pm
- 3/24 Kentucky, Rockcastle, Rockcastle County Middle School, 7.30 pm
- 3/28 Maryland, College Park, University of Maryland, 3 pm

## danish party in cincinnati

The Scandinavian Society of Cincinnati is having a Danish Party with a Danish buffet dinner on Saturday, **March 14** at the Manor House Restaurant at Maple Knoll Village in Springdale, OH. Cash bar and cocktails begin at 4:45 p.m. and a Danish presentation will be held at 7 p.m.



## hope chest blog

[The Hope Chest](#) is a blog that blends facts with a fictional storyline and characters to honor the legacy that the 12 founding women of [The Danish Home of Chicago](#) have made culturally and historically as well as within senior care communities. Check it out and subscribe to receive the entries by e-mail.



## university exhibit features danish cooking videos

The University of Iowa's Old Capitol Museum in Iowa City, Iowa just opened an exhibit called "The Land Provides: Iowa's Culinary Heritage." The exhibit showcases a range of objects that relate to cooking and agriculture in Iowa's early years of statehood, with a distinctly immigrant perspective. Last October, a representative from the Old Capitol Museum filmed former Museum of Danish America Intern Marianne Frøsig Sørensen preparing a number of traditional Danish dishes in Elk Horn. Sørensen is trained as a chef and describes herself as a "foodie." She prepared bread, meats, salads, condiments, sandwiches, and desserts for the camera. The exhibit will run through **August 1**, but those not able to see it in person can view the video footage online at <http://bit.ly/landprovides>.



## danish cedar falls: the immigrant experience

The first known Danish immigrants arrived in Cedar Falls, Iowa in 1855, and by 1871, made up ten percent of the city's population. Cedar Falls quickly became the second largest Danish community in Iowa, after Elk Horn. The Cedar Falls Historical Society has opened an exhibit called "Danish Cedar Falls: The Immigrant Experience" that will run through **December 6**. Visit the exhibit to discover how Danes shaped Cedar Falls through their traditions, businesses, churches, and civic organizations. From folk tales to needlework, several programs are scheduled to complement the exhibit. [Click here for the program guide](#).

### ANOTHER DANISH EXHIBIT IN CEDAR FALLS

The traveling exhibit "Søren Kierkegaard: The Global Dane" will be on display at the Rod Library at the University of Northern Iowa through **March 15**.



## fiddle camp to feature renowned danish instructor

Registration is now open for the first West Denmark Fiddle School to be held on the shores of Little Butternut Lake near Luck, WI on **June 14-18**. Harald Haugaard's West Denmark Fiddle School is modeled after Harald's extremely popular fiddle school in Breklum, Germany. It is an intensive study for people of all ages who share an interest in music based on Scandinavian and Anglo/Celtic traditions. In a beautiful setting, fiddlers are encouraged to explore their own musical expression and potential in a supportive environment. [More information here](#).



## exhibit featuring danish architecture in dc

On the heels of its summer blockbuster BIG Maze, the Danish-founded design firm BIG (Bjarke Ingels Group) returns to the National Building Museum with a behind-the-scenes look at its creative process. The exhibition, "HOT TO COLD: an odyssey of architectural adaptation," is open until **August 30** and takes visitors from the hottest to the coldest parts of our planet and explores how BIG's design solutions are shaped by their cultural and climatic contexts. More than 60 three-dimensional models will be suspended at the second-floor balconies of the museum's historic Great Hall.