

americaletter

SPRING 2016 + ANNUAL REPORT | A BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE MUSEUM OF DANISH AMERICA



Two Iowa prairies serve as living legacies for the men they honor

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WHY “AMERICA LETTER?”

Letters that were written by immigrants to family and friends back in Denmark are called “America letters” by historians. These letters are often given credit for influencing people to come to America, because they were full of details of how good life was here. We call our newsletter *America Letter* because we also want to tell the good news about the museum and encourage people to join us!

A list of current board members may be found on page 9.

director's corner

On February 1, 2016 I celebrated my 65th birthday.

Anticipation of this milestone has long led me to consider stepping back from my role as Executive Director of our Museum of Danish America. I have concluded that the time has come to do so. My hope is to have realized this change no later than February 1, 2017.

This has not been an easy decision. I have been involved with the museum since its founding in 1983. Because of this long history, I want you to know that I look forward to being involved with the museum in some yet-to-be-determined capacity--but I am also looking forward to having greater time with my wife (who has already retired after 35 years of teaching high school English) and together exploring interests and opportunities that we share.

The museum's board of directors has been aware of my thinking. To address this, a succession planning committee was formed in 2014 that includes past and present board members. The committee has identified qualities and responsibilities the museum is looking for in a new director. These, as well as a time frame for the search, have been posted on our website. I invite all of you to visit the site and nominate any individuals who might merit consideration.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

The succession planning committee is casting a wide net for a new director. Notification has been published in the newsletter of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies, the academic organization that brings together faculty and students from the United States, Canada, and all the Nordic countries. Additionally, letters have been sent to the chairs of all the major universities that have Scandinavian programs or Scandinavian emphasis areas.

We are all motivated in finding the most qualified person to continue achieving the goals of our museum. Important qualities include knowledge of and an appreciation for the Danish-American experience and Danish history, culture, and language. Finding such a person will be difficult.

When I came into the executive director position, I had lived in Denmark on two separate occasions and had knowledge of Danish culture and Danish-American history and literature, but I did not have experience in fundraising, budgeting for an institution as large as the museum, or human resource administration. I had to learn on the job--just, as I suspect, the new executive director will have to do.

I had the benefit of serving on the museum's board of directors prior to assuming my position, and I had excellent mentors who eased the transition. Members of the board and I are committed to playing a similar role as we face the future.

The new executive director will begin his or her tenure in a stronger position than when I assumed the position in 2003. Financial challenges will continue--as they do for most non-profit institutions--but much has changed. Thirteen years ago we still owed money on the original construction of the museum, we had an endowment of just \$50,000, and we had deferred building maintenance that needed to be addressed. There were also staffing issues, and we lacked clear plans for the future. Recently, a local resident shared with me that 15 years ago he didn't think the museum would make it!

Working together we addressed these issues step by step. The Lauritzen Corporation provided the financial stability we needed to move forward. Timely and generous bequests from museum members and supporters helped (and continue to help) our situation. Board members developed a strategic plan that provided a road map for progress. We are now on the third plan and are already looking forward to developing the 2021-2025 plan.



By
John Mark
Nielsen

The job description for the position of Executive Director is available at www.danishmuseum.org/employment/executive-director.

We also began assembling a staff of devoted professionals who are team players. Their dedication and hard work have brought us to such a position that we are now applying for accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums. Most importantly, we have been able to do all of this because of the support we have received from *you*, our members.

My top responsibility now is to ensure that we have a successful transition of leadership. Your continued support is essential to this effort.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The board and staff have worked closely to establish a strategic plan for 2016-2020. The plan is divided into five major areas, with a total of 27 defined goals. Each goal includes a justification, timeline, benchmarks, and the resources necessary to achieve the goal.

The five major areas of focus are: **1.** continuing to grow our financial stability, **2.** maintaining and improving the museum's infrastructure, **3.** engaging and broadening our audience, **4.** building our collection with a special emphasis on post-World War II and contemporary

artifacts, and **5.** focusing on future development that will strengthen the Museum of Danish America.

Our strategic plans have provided helpful direction as we respond to an ever-evolving environment. When the museum was founded in 1983, we did not foresee the demographic shift in rural America. Elk Horn and the surrounding communities have seen a slow decline in population as farms have grown larger and families smaller. Nor did we anticipate the deregulation of the airline industry that changed America's travel habits. Interstate 80 was one of the nation's Main Streets, and many families took vacations by car. And no one in the early 1980s understood how the internet was going to impact the way we communicate with one another.

In response, we have placed greater emphasis on creating traveling exhibits and taking the museum to constituencies across the country. We have also expanded our online presence, through which we interact with many more people than we do on site.

Predicting the future isn't easy, but I believe we need to engage the best minds we can to provide

advice as we position the museum to meet coming challenges. A new long-range planning group is being formed with individuals who have expertise in financial forecasting and museum planning. Our membership in the American Alliance of Museums is an additional resource in this endeavor. Its Center for the Future of Museums monitors industry trends and provides a platform for sharing solutions.

Despite the challenges, we have all seen our museum grow and become stronger over the years. This has been due to your support, a dedicated board of directors, and a devoted and committed staff. It also arises from a vision to make the Museum of Danish America a first-class museum that celebrates the contributions Danes and Danish Americans have made (and continue to make) to the rich diversity of this great country. I have been privileged to be a part of this growth and change, and I look forward to continued involvement with our museum.

Finally, I thank you *again* for being a loyal and generous member, and I hope and trust that you will always take pride in and support our Museum of Danish America.

curatorial center named for james r. & cecilia christensen

At its annual February meeting, the board of directors officially named the recently-completed Curatorial Center in honor of James R. and Cecilia Christensen, the immigrant parents of Berniece Grewcock of Omaha, Nebraska.

Berniece's husband, William, is a long-time vice chairman of mining and construction operations at Kiewit Construction Company headquartered in Omaha. Given their relationship with the construction industry, the couple has always supported the museum's infrastructure needs--including significant gifts to pave the parking lot, re-roof the museum, upgrade the museum's HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) systems, remodel the kitchen area, and expand the mezzanine exhibit space.

Seeing that the museum needed more space if the collection was to grow, in 2011 they gave a gift that enabled the museum to retain an architect and begin planning for an expansion. After the Curatorial Center plans were approved, they again contributed generously to see that the building was completed.

In recognition of the fact that the Grewcock's generosity exceeded the amount the board of directors had established for naming rights to the new building, I approached the couple about naming the Curatorial Center in their honor. They, however, felt

it would be more appropriate to name it in honor of Berniece's Danish immigrant parents, James and Cecilia Christensen, because their story celebrated the Danish-American immigrant experience.

James R. Christensen was born Jens Rasmus Kristensen in 1891 in Brædstrup, Denmark. He immigrated in 1911, arriving eventually in Blair, Nebraska, where he studied briefly at Dana College. There he likely met the family of Cecilia Wissing. Her parents, Jens and Meta, had immigrated from Hover, Denmark, in 1906 with their five children--Cecilia being the second-oldest.

In 1917 during World War I, Jens, who had now changed his name to James, was living in South

Dakota, where he was drafted into the Army, though he did not see service in Europe. During this period, the Wissing family moved to Tower, Minnesota, in the midst of the Mesabi Iron Ore Range. It was there in 1920 that James and Cecilia were joined in marriage. They returned to Nebraska, where the couple farmed north of Omaha and where their two children, Berniece and James, were born. Cecilia died in 1974 and James in 1976.

The board of directors is pleased to name the museum's expanded facility the **James R. and Cecilia Christensen Curatorial Center**. Their story and that of their descendants is one of "Danish roots and American dreams."



James and Cecilia Christensen shortly after their marriage in 1920.



By
**John Mark
Nielsen**

UPDATES:

jens jensen heritage path

The journey of discovering a solution to the Jens Jensen Heritage Path's illegible pavers has been a long road with numerous bumps along the way. We are grateful for your patience and confidence that a lasting solution would be found and put into place this year.

We are excited to report to our donors that their pavers will be replaced with a lifetime guaranteed epoxy-filled engraving on new, granite-based pavers in time for Tivoli Fest 2016 (Memorial Day weekend, weather permitting.). Every effort will be made to maintain the existing paver placement within the flag plaza. Consider this your invitation to visit the museum and your paver.

We are excited to once again make the Jens Jensen Heritage Path a place to celebrate an occasion or achievement, recognize an individual or organization, or honor the memory of a loved one. Be watching for updated information about the new paver sizes and donation amounts along with character and line allowances.

aalborg akvavit

You can expect to see coveted Danish akvavit back on store shelves this summer! Arcus AS, owners of the Aalborg brand and sponsor of our national traveling exhibit *Skål! Scandinavian Spirits*, has recently signed an agreement with Sazerac Company for the nationwide re-import of Aalborg Taffel Akvavit and Aalborg Jubilaeums Akvavit. Sazerac will work with its distributors on a state-by-state basis to get products delivered throughout the U.S.



By
Deb
Christensen
Larsen

board of directors meets in vegas

FEBRUARY 11 - 13, 2016

When we decided to hold our February meeting in Las Vegas, a comment we often heard was “Board meeting in Las Vegas? Really?” But, we are strategic when choosing meeting locations. We do so to connect and reconnect with museum members and donors and to reach out to the Danish-American communities across the nation.

We have a connection in Las Vegas with Cami Christensen, Vice President of Operations at the Westgate Las Vegas Casino and Resort. Cami is an alumna of Elk Horn-Kimballton High School and Dana College and a member of the museum. Cami and her staff made our group feel more than welcome, and the accommodations for our meals and meetings – all held at the Westgate – were top notch.

Our three days of meetings began with the executive committee on Thursday afternoon. On Friday morning, before committee meetings commenced, Angela Stanford, Curator of Collections/ Registrar, gave the board an overview of the self-study that museum staff is doing as part of the American Alliance of Museums’ accreditation process. Friday continued with eight committee meetings and ended with a lovely reception that evening.

Along with each board meeting we host a social event to which we invite members of the museum as well as members of the Danish/ Danish-American community in the area. We are very grateful to Cami and her staff for hosting our event. It was a memorable evening! We connected with several old friends and made

some new ones as well. Chef Flemming Pederson was kind enough to provide kringle for the evening. He is the owner of *Chef Flemming’s Bake Shop* in Henderson, NV. The weekend concluded with a meeting of the entire board on Saturday morning.

The museum’s board of directors meets in February, June, and October. The October meeting is always held in Elk Horn, while the February and June meetings are held in a variety of locations across the country. Our June 9 – 11, 2016 meeting will be in **Kansas City, MO.**

The museum’s board of directors is a dedicated group working very hard to keep the museum moving forward. They also have a little fun along the way! If you think you’d like to be a part of this group, please contact us at the museum.

NEW BOARD MEMBER: DANIEL WARREN

Newest Board Member, Daniel Warren, was appointed to fill a one-year term last November. Daniel, born in Ringsted, Iowa, currently lives in Fairmont, Minnesota, right across the Iowa border. He is a certified financial advisor at Ameriprise Financial in Fairmont and also farms in Ringsted. A graduate of Luther College, Daniel also attended Wroxton College in England for a year of study. He enjoys traveling, skiing, farming and spending time with his family.



By
Terri
Johnson



Board members Pictured front row, l-r: Linda Steffensen, Bente Ellis, Vice President Tim Burchill, Treasurer Karen Suchomel, Secretary Carolyn Larson, Beth Bro-Roof, Dorothy Stadsvold Feisel, Mittie Ostergaard, David Esbeck. Back row: David Hendee, Jerry Schrader, Randy Ruggaard, Craig Molgaard, President Gary Knudsen, Ron Bro, Past President Dagmar Muthamia, Executive Director John Mark Nielsen. **Absent** Anna Thomsen Holliday, Brent Norlem, Carl Steffensen, Cindy Larsen Adams, Daniel Warren, Glenn Henriksen, Ole Sønnichsen, and Peter Nielsen.

meet our new intern



**ASTRID
KAALUND-
JOERGENSEN**

My name is Astrid Kaalund-Joergensen, and I am the new

Exhibits and Development Intern from Copenhagen, Denmark. I am 26 years old, and I grew up in the city of Roskilde, known for its Viking Ship Museum, Roskilde Cathedral and Roskilde Festival. I moved to Copenhagen when I was 19 years old to play elite volleyball and to eventually begin my studies.

I have a Bachelor's degree in History and Communication

Studies from Roskilde University. I wrote my Bachelor's thesis on the subject of cultural heritage, specifically on the Danish debate about whether or not to return the Icelandic sagas after Iceland became independent in 1944. I will finish my Master's degree in the fall of 2016, but first I got the amazing opportunity of learning and experiencing Danish-American immigrant heritage in Elk Horn – and for that I am grateful.

My main goal is to start a career within museum studies, and hopefully the forthcoming six months will be a good step towards that. I've previously worked at the Danish Ministry

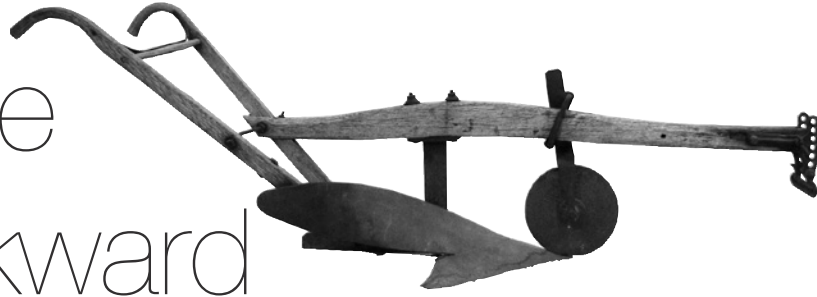
of Culture's Agency for Palaces and Cultural Properties, working with exhibitions, public relations, social media, and event planning. I have also been volunteering at the museum of The Church of Our Lady in Copenhagen.

This previous semester I was an intern at DR Historie (The Danish Broadcasting Corporation's history-editorial), where I wrote online articles and was a part of the production of a TV documentary about the history of the Danish penal code.

I look forward to exploring Elk Horn, the rest of Iowa, and getting to work on some of the interesting projects at the Museum of Danish America.

Astrid's internship is generously funded by the Scan Design Foundation in Seattle, WA.

running the plow backward



Nineteenth-century coincidences created unprecedented change in American landscapes.

The Louisiana Purchase brought enormous expanses of land into government ownership, just as the population of Europe and the United States began surging.

Society viewed prairies and forests as raw landscapes best developed into farms, ranches, lumber, and mines. Government policy facilitated privatization through various means of transferring title to families, railroads, and natural resource companies. The Homestead Act enabled people to easily acquire farms and ranches. With European living conditions grim and opportunity for personal advancement minimal, land lure pulled millions across the ocean to start a new life in America.

Iowa best illustrates how thoroughly human migration changed the land. In 1800 the future state was an unpeopled wilderness. About 85% of the land surface was tallgrass prairie, including immense wetlands. The rest was wooded river valleys. Elk, bison, wolves, bears, deer, and wild turkey abounded. Waterfowl

and passenger pigeons swarmed across the sky.

Less than a century later wildlife was gone. So was the prairie. Over 99% of former prairie acres had been transformed into cropland. Immigrants from many cultures, including Denmark, effectively used tools like those stored at the Museum of Danish America to turn the thick sod and prepare the world's richest soil for cultivation.

Although government policy and agricultural practice dictated that prairie was unproductive and useless, a stirring began in the minds of forward thinkers. One was landscape architect Jens Jensen (1860-1951) who grew up near the sea in Denmark and later lived in Chicago. He loved the rapidly vanishing prairie and remarked, "There is great similarity in the vastness expressed in the open expanse of the prairies and that of the sea."

Jensen advocated for the beauty of natural landscapes and incorporated native plants into his designs. He likely inspired others, including Iowa native Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), who articulated the concept of

ecological restoration. By visibly stating that prairies have function and beauty, Jensen, Leopold, and others began to slowly counter prejudice against natural systems. Some remaining scraps of prairie were protected and are cherished. Groups, such as the Nature Conservancy and Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, were created to protect and manage natural areas, but any expansion of prairie would require reconstructing it on land impacted by settlement.

Although the desire to restore prairies was voiced, no one knew how to do it. Knowledge came slowly. In 1933 John Curtis planted the first prairie restoration at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum in Madison, and in the 1960s Ray Schulenberg restored a prairie at the Morton Arboretum in Illinois.

DR. PAUL ARTHUR CHRISTIENSEN (1932-2007)

These early advocates may have inspired Iowa's prairie restoration pioneer, Paul Christiansen. His grandfather came to America from Slesvig-Holsten and his grandmother from Norway.



By
Rich
Patterson

01. Breaking plow owned and used by Jens T. Larsen on his farm southwest of Kimballton, Iowa. He and his wife Karenstine were a few of the first settlers of the Elk Horn and Kimballton areas, arriving about 1874 from Ærø, Denmark. Donor: Eivind Lillehoj. 2005.017.001. Also featured in the Winter 2015 America Letter article "Horti- & Agri- Culture."



“He realized the complexity of the prairie ecosystem and that it represents a natural heritage as well as a historical heritage.”

Dana Christiansen, speaking of his father, Paul.

02

Born in 1932 in rural Mitchell County, Paul graduated high school, did a stint in the Navy, and earned his PhD at Iowa State University, where he launched research on seeding and transplanting prairie plants. It led to a faculty position at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, where his research continued, focusing on restoring prairies along roadsides.

In 1988 his work helped establish the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund, which ensures that roadside vegetation is “preserved, planted, and maintained to be safe, visually interesting, ecologically integrated, and useful for many purposes.” Over the years Paul served on the boards or committees of several private and public conservation organizations.

“Paul taught several generations of Cornell students to understand and respect the extent to which

Iowa’s tallgrass prairie is an important part of our heritage. He inspired many to pursue careers in fields relating to our natural environment,” said Dr. Les Garner, former President of Cornell College.

Christiansen’s relationship with the nonprofit Indian Creek Nature Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa illustrates his prairie passion, energy, and knowledge. Founded in 1973 on an eroded farm covered with exotic weeds, the Nature Center was hosting school children for nature discovery. Director Rich Patterson wanted youngsters to experience prairie but lacked knowledge on how to create one. Christiansen provided technical information and intellectual encouragement in an era when society still viewed prairie as “weeds.” With his help the Nature Center “ran the plow backward” and restored a small prairie that was

gradually expanded to over 40 acres. Thousands of children now experience the waving prairie plants and feel the joy that stirred Jensen, Leopold, and Christiansen.

Jean Wiedenheft is responsible for managing Nature Center vegetation and met Paul years ago while a student at Cornell. “He helped expand the prairie in Iowa and throughout the Midwest by inspiring people to love the land. From the children who play in a sea of big bluestem grass to adults debating the merits of ecotype seed, he recognized that everyone’s relationship to the prairie was crucial for the survival of this unique ecotype. Paul cherished people who cared for the land. In doing so he made the concept of prairie accessible to everyone and encouraged it to be planted along roadsides and in yards. Today his book, *An Illustrated Guide to Iowa Prairie*

02. Paul Christiansen in 2006 at the dedication of an Eastern Iowa prairie named in his honor. ►

Plants, is my go-to resource,” she remarked. **03**

In 2006, in appreciation for his dedicated assistance and a year before his death, the Nature Center board dedicated the *Paul Christiansen Prairie*. It is open to anyone wishing to enjoy solitude and beauty.

Years ago, Nature Center Director Patterson, whose great-grandfather was born in Denmark, encouraged the Museum of Danish America to restore a prairie so visitors could experience what early immigrants found in Shelby County. Under museum Executive Director John Mark Nielsen’s leadership, the reconstructed Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park now envelops the museum in natural beauty.

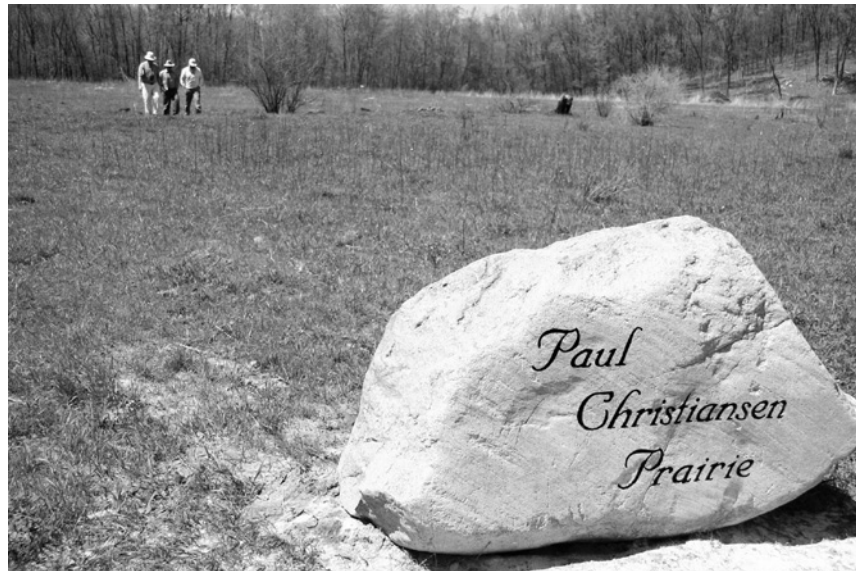
As a frustrated Jens Jensen watched prairie destruction, he remarked, “Here and there has been left something of the primitive that the plow has not turned under. It seems a pity, rather a stupidity, that some section of this marvelous landscape has not been set aside for future generations to study and love – a sea of flowers in all colors of the rainbow.”

Jensen would be proud that his work helped protect many native prairies and led to reconstruction of prairies at the Indian Creek Nature Center, the Museum of Danish America, and hundreds of other places. No doubt he’d also be pleased that homeowners and towns across the Midwest are incorporating native vegetation into their landscaping.

Both the Indian Creek Nature Center and the Museum of Danish America welcome visitors to stroll through their prairies and pause a moment to reflect on the vast wilderness of grass and wildflowers that greeted the pioneers who transformed it into today’s Corn Belt.

For 39 years Rich Patterson served as director of nature centers in Kansas and Iowa. His grandfather, Ander Pedersen (Andrew Patterson) was born in Nørre Vedby, Denmark, and his name is listed on the museum’s Danish Immigrant Wall of Honor. Rich and wife Marion own *Winding Pathways*, a business that encourages people to create wondrous yards.

Paul Christiansen’s legacy continues in his family line through his daughter-in-law, Liz Christiansen, who is the first director of the University of Iowa’s Office of Sustainability. She has 25 years of experience in recycling, waste reduction, green government, sustainability, outreach, and education in both the private and public sectors.



04

03. This book is available in our Design Store. See back cover for details. **04. An engraved boulder** marks the Paul Christiansen Prairie on the grounds of the Indian Creek Nature Center.

a growing collection

In 1985, just two years after officially becoming an institution, the Museum of Danish America began building an artifact collection. The very first donation, a single book, was the start of what has become a 35,000-piece collection of a wide range of materials – wedding dresses, paintings, trophies, furniture, housewares, and more.

Each year, the number increases as we focus on supporting our mission to “celebrate Danish roots and American dreams.” The wider the scope of our collection, the more effectively we can illustrate the lives of many generations of immigrants and their descendants, as well as the continuing relationship between Denmark and the United States.

One of the challenges of growing an artifact collection is finding the space to safely and professionally care for and work with it. Multiple buildings, and even a few homes, were used in

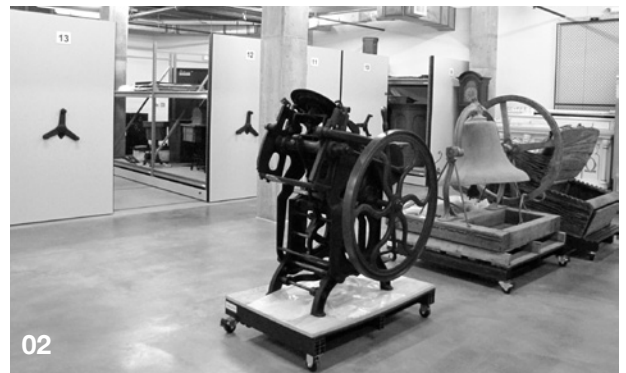
Elk Horn to store early donations prior to the museum building opening in 1994. Once collections were moved to the museum and separated between two primary storage rooms, those spaces quickly became overcrowded and required a stricter decision-making process when evaluating what new artifacts to add to the collection. We felt that if we could not properly store the collections being entrusted to us, we could not, in good faith, continue to take donations.

Because we did not want to miss out on key pieces, we decided to pursue a building addition. In the fall of 2014, the museum opened an 8,000-square-foot Curatorial Center. This building provided two additional storage vaults for housing our furniture and textile collections, as well as an exhibition prep room for packing and unpacking artifacts being shipped for traveling exhibits, for building mounts for artifacts before they go on display, and for

storage of additional exhibit cases and other supplies. Additionally, the new space included a dock and loading area and four staff offices and work zones.

In the spring of 2015, one of the existing storage spaces in the original museum building was renovated. It had previously been filled beyond capacity with a mixture of artifact types including furniture, framed art, letters and other documents, field plows, photographs, sewing machines, and immigrant trunks. The renovation allowed us to remove a few walls to create a larger space and to install racks for hanging framed art. Now, all framed art and all paper collections, including photographs, archival materials, and books, are housed in the same space.

One of the outcomes of the construction and renovation projects over the last few years has been the ability to more safely and efficiently store collections.



By
Angela
Stanford

01. All paintings are housed on hanging racks to prevent pieces from touching each other and causing damage. **02. The Main Vault** in the Christensen Curatorial Center has oversized mobile shelving and open floor space to accommodate large pieces like furniture, altar sets, plows, and more. ▶

All chairs are gathered in one place rather than scattered amongst multiple locations where they simply “fit” before. All paper collections are together, as are all textiles. When designing exhibitions, we can go to the dedicated space for immigrant trunks, consider all the sizes and types we have, and select the one that best fits our needs. Paper collections are stored alongside the photographs that often go hand-in-hand in telling a complete story. Collections are also stored much more safely, instead of being overcrowded, with better visual and physical access.

Secondly, each of our collections has room to grow now, and we no longer need to say no to an artifact that has a great history simply because it is too large. We also have all of our collections stored on site. Since opening the Christensen Curatorial Center, we have moved all objects out of off-site storage into the museum, and there are still open shelves to accommodate years of additions to the collection! Likewise, the storage space for the textile collection can expand safely without over-stuffing boxes. Larger new donations have been accepted, such as the meat counter from T.G. Muller’s

grocery store in Kimballton, Iowa – a heavy, ten-foot-long piece that would have been declined previously due to its size.

The collections will continue to grow, and that is a positive thing. While museum staff must continue to be responsible in selecting which acquisitions we accept so that we do not find ourselves needing more space in just a few years, our collections – with good planning and careful oversight – will be able to expand and be cared for according to the best professional museum standards. We can continue to use them to bring life to the stories we tell.



03. Permanent Storage Before Furniture and other large objects were crammed as closely as possible on available floor space and on tops of cabinets. Framed storage was also overcrowded at the back of the room. **04. Permanent Storage After** All paper and framed collections are housed in one room, with space to lay pieces out for examination and photography. **05. Textiles Before** Previously, textile boxes were located in a corner of an existing storage room and with no possible expansion. Boxes were also overstuffed. **06. Textiles After** With the addition of the South Vault, there is ample room for the textile collection to grow, and space for large tables to work with individual pieces.

new exhibits opening soon

SPORT FOR SPORTS' SAKE: ATHLETES AND ETHNICITY IN DANISH AMERICA

On view in The Kramme Gallery from April 23, 2016 through April 9, 2017

Have you trained your body to perform faster, stronger, better?

Have you been part of a team, working together to compete?

Have you cheered for a team that connects you to your home or your school?

Most of us have some personal experience with sport, but we don't often think about why it plays such an important part in our lives and in American culture

in general. As a simple definition, sport is a physical activity, governed by rules. All participants agree on the goals, the rules, and how to determine a winner.

But sport is much more than just a competition.

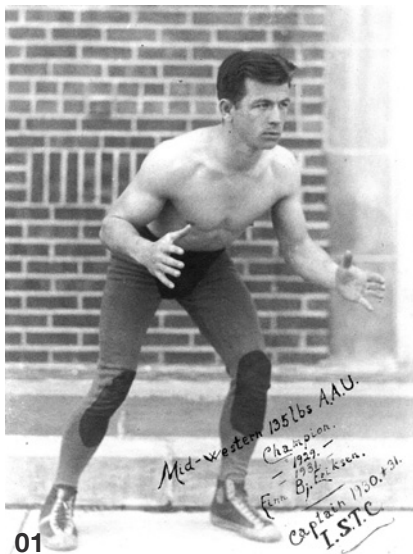
Sport can be fun. It can be stressful. It can bring a team together, and it can be a solo exercise. It can be entertainment for millions of people, or an event watched only by the participants. It can rally local pride. It can embody long-standing rivalries. It can inspire fitness and health. It can result in life-changing injuries.

All of those experiences and emotions are part of sport, and part of what motivates people to participate – whether as athletes, coaches, referees, or fans.

In *Sport for Sports' Sake* the museum explores examples of Danish Americans involved in a wide variety of sports – from the mainstream baseball and football to the lesser-known tug-of-war and gymnastics. For some of these athletes, the “Danishness” of their athletic efforts was a big part of their experience. For others, Danish heritage was a personal and family identity, not an element of their athletic life.

Watch the museum's e-newsletter and website for details of sport-related special events, including those on page 17.

The *Sport for Sports' Sake* exhibition and programs are made possible in part by a grant from Humanities Iowa and the National Endowment for the Humanities.



By
Tova
Brandt

01. Finn B. Ericksen, a wrestling star and later coach from Waterloo, Iowa. Ericksen was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 1982. 1987.001.001 – Gift of Muriel Bacon. 02. Some sports are solo undertakings, such as Lars Toft Rasmussen's six-week, 3,124-mile trip across the United States in 2012. His Principia bicycle, made in Denmark around 2005, is featured in the exhibition. Photo courtesy of Lars Toft Rasmussen.

ART BY GERT MATHIESEN

On view in the main floor gallery from May 21 through October 31, 2016

The Museum of Danish America is pleased to present the art of Gert Mathiesen (1951-2013) with an exhibition of 24 pieces of art. A renowned Danish painter, printmaker, and ceramicist, Mathiesen died prematurely at the age of 62. He was very prolific and left an extensive body of work: over 1,000 paintings on canvas, works on paper, linoleum, and ceramics. His art has been

exhibited and sold throughout the United States and Europe and can be found in corporate and private collections all over the world.

Gert Mathiesen first came to the United States in 1986 seeking adventure, and soon after began working as a potter in Martha's Vineyard. He travelled often throughout the U.S., Europe and South America, and branched out from ceramics to the world of mixed media painting and printmaking. Mathiesen spent most of his later years working in New York City. Using linoleum, woodcut, paint, and monoprinting techniques in distinctive ways,

Gert produced a large quantity of unique and powerful pieces of art in his own distinguished voice.

Mathiesen's art reflects his life: always maintaining references to his Viking roots and Danish heritage, his expressionistic vocabulary expanded and grew to embrace many different cultures and his appeal is universal.

Special thanks for this exhibition go to Pamela Smilow, an American-born artist and Gert's wife. The Museum of Danish America is working closely with Pam to prepare pieces for this exhibition and explore additional venues that might host the show.

exhibits on the road

SKÅL! SCANDINAVIAN SPIRITS

Swedish American Museum in Chicago, April 1 – June 19, 2016

Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, Iowa, August 12 – December 31, 2016

JENS JENSEN: CELEBRATING THE NATIVE PRAIRIE

Parker Historical Society of Clay County in Spencer, Iowa, April 1 – September 30, 2016



3. *Multicolored Tigers and Flowers*, Gert Mathiesen, acrylic on canvas, 52" x 89".

events calendar

Victor Borge Legacy Award Piano Recital

April 17, 2 pm
Bro Dining Room

Westward Journeys

Brown Bag Lunch
by Teresa Sward,
Western Historic Trails Center
April 14 at Noon
Bro Dining Room

Biking Through History: Iowa's Love Affair with Bicycling

by Leo Landis, Iowa State
Historical Museum
May 12, 6-8 pm
Bro Dining Room

Tivoli Fest

May 28 - 29
Elk Horn, Iowa

Museum Board Meeting

June 9 - 11
Kansas City

Icelandic Strength Contests: From the Vikings to the Present Day

Brown Bag Lunch by Stephen
Weiting, University of Iowa
June 23 at Noon
Bro Dining Room

Sankt Hans Aften Celebration

June 25, 5-10 pm
Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape
Park

CURRENT AND COMING EXHIBITS

Happy Danes on the Plains

Through April 10
Kramme Gallery

Sport for Sports' Sake: Athletes and Ethnicity in Danish America

April 23, 2016 - April 9, 2017
Kramme Gallery

Home: Sculpture by Dennis Andersen

Through May 8
Main Floor Gallery

Sense of Place: Photographs of the Danish Villages by Diana Velasco

Through April
Multimedia Room

Brimberg Photographs for National Geographic (1990- 2002)

May - December, 2016
Multimedia Room

Art by Gert Mathiesen

May 21 - October 31, 2016
Main Floor Gallery

MUSEUM VISITOR HOURS

Monday-Friday 9 am - 5 pm
Saturday 10 am - 5 pm
Sunday Noon - 5 pm

Business hours are
Monday-Friday 8 am - 5 pm

GENEALOGY CENTER

4210 Main Street, PO Box 249
May-October

Tuesday-Friday 9 am - 5 pm
Saturdays 10 am - 5 pm

November-April

Tuesday-Friday 9 am - 5 pm

Research assistance appointments
welcomed at 712.764.7008.

BEDSTEMOR'S HOUSE

2105 College Street
Memorial Day - Labor Day
1 pm - 4 pm

ADMISSION

Museum members FREE
with membership card
Non-member Adults \$5
Children (ages 8-17) \$2

Price includes one-day admission
to Jens Dixen Cabin, Jens Jensen
Prairie Landscape Park, Genealogy
Center, and Bedstemor's House.

All facilities are closed on New
Years, Easter, Thanksgiving, and
Christmas.

news from the genealogy center



A SCANDINAVIAN GENEALOGY RETREAT

sponsored by the Omaha Public Library and the newly formed Scandinavian Interest Group of the Greater Omaha Genealogical Society will be held on Friday, April 8, at the W. Clarke Swanson branch library. For one track I shall be presenting “Cyber Genealogy – Danish Style,” a hands-on look at online Danish websites and tips for utilizing them, even if your knowledge of Danish is non-existent. Registration is through the Omaha Public Library.

VISITING THE GENEALOGY CENTER THIS SPRING OR SUMMER?

Take a look at the small book truck in the lobby where duplicate or unneeded books are for sale at modest prices. There may just be something of particular interest to you! We also have a few picture frames at “can’t pass up” prices!

WISH LIST

We are always looking for additions to the Genealogy Center Collection. Our listing of “most wanted” titles in both Danish and English may be found on the museum webpage at www.danishmuseum.org/explore/genealogy/wish-list. We welcome donations of or toward these materials, but since this list changes frequently, please contact us at librarian@danishmuseum.org before purchasing or sending items so that we may avoid duplicates.

ARE YOU A DANISH IMMIGRANT OR LONG- TERM RESIDENT?

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

HAVE A FAVORITE DANE?

The theme for this year’s summer photo exhibit at the Genealogy Center is “My Favorite Dane.” If you have a favorite Danish relative whom you would love to commemorate, one who did something interesting (or notorious), or just a photo that has always appealed to you, we hope you will share it with us and tell us why it’s meaningful.

The display will run from Tivoli Fest through the end of October. For a submission form or further information contact michele.mcnabb@danishmuseum.org. Deadline for submissions is **Friday, April 22.**



By
**Michele
McNabb**

In the autumn of 1905 Danish immigrants Hans Christian Rasmussen and Christine Mortensen posed for their wedding picture shortly after marrying in Redwood Falls, Minnesota.

oops – i stumbled again!

SOME RESEARCH TIPS FOR THE NON-DANISH GENEALOGIST

Researching in a foreign language presents some unique problems when one isn't conversant with the language or its culture. Although by no means comprehensive, the following are some examples of pitfalls we've run across when researching in Danish records. Hopefully some of them may keep you from stubbing your genealogical toes:

- 1. ARCHAIC SPELLINGS** Just as in English the spelling of words has evolved over time. Some examples of older spellings are personal or place-names beginning with Kj- or Gj- (Kjirsten, Gjertrud, Kjøbenhavn, Nykjøbing, Gjentofte for modern Kirsten, Gertrud, København, Nykøbing, and Gjentofte).
- 2. INTERCHANGEABLE LETTERS** In older Danish the name "Poul," for example, might be spelled "Povl" or "Pow(e)l," "Louise" as "Lovise," or "Kjersten" as "Kiersten," with the pronunciation remaining the same. This also occurs in place-names: Kiøbenhavn, Gientofte. Another complication is the interchangeable use of "AA-" (found at the beginning of the alphabet) and "Å-", (the last letter in the modern Danish alphabet) for locations such as Aalborg, Aarhus and Aabenraa and names such as "Aage." You may have to look in two places in an

alphabetical list of names in order to find them.

- 3. SILENT LETTERS** You may find place names ending in "-bye" rather than the modern "-by," or personal names such as Margrethe and Thyge as variants of Margrete and Tyge, although the variants are still pronounced the same.
- 4. HANDWRITING VARIANTS** In older handwriting an "ø" was often written as "ö", in more modern script the "ø" is often indicated by a slanted line written over what looks like an "o". Handwritten double "s" often looks like "fs."
- 5. NON-DANISH ENTRIES** In the church books of southern Jutland (and in the German congregation in Copenhagen) entries are often written in Gothic German script rather than Danish (or alternate between the two, depending on who was entering the records); elsewhere, some Latin may be thrown in on occasion to show off the parish clerk's erudition. Occasionally, very fancy script or doodles may also make their appearance, making entries more difficult to read.
- 6. ABBREVIATIONS** are very common in handwritten records. Common ones you'll run across are "-dtr" for *datter* (daughter), "hmd" for *husmand* (smallholder), "gmd" for *gaardmand* (farmer), "hr."

for *herr* (a more formal term for a man higher up on the social scale). Similarly, it was common to place a horizontal line over a letter to indicate that it was a double letter, so that "Heningsen" with a line above the "n" is actually spelled "Henningsen." Also common is what looks like "=" at the end of a line, which is equivalent to our modern-day hyphen.

Other stumbling blocks involve words which have multiple meanings, depending upon the context in which they are used, or meanings which are now archaic. Some examples:

- *Pige*: the basic translation is "girl," but it can also mean a maidservant or an unmarried woman or spinster (derived from the fact that many single women spun in order to make a living).
- *Hus*: From the basic meaning of "house," the word can also be interpreted as "building," "residence," or "smallholding" (a place a *husmand* resided).
- *Jomfru*: While the basic meaning is "virgin." as in *Jomfru Maria* (Virgin Mary), it can also be a respectful term for an unmarried woman whose social standing is higher than a peasant, just as "herr" might indicate a male with an education or higher social standing.



- *Madmoder*: Literally, “food-mother,” this term is equivalent to the older use of “mistress” as the person in the household responsible for feeding the family and live-in servants.
- *Fruentimmer*: Often used to denote a single woman, the term can also be used disparagingly to indicate that a woman has had a child out of wedlock

A very useful guide to older Danish occupations is *What Did They Do? In Danish...*, by John E. Herl, which is available for sale through the museum store.

A few other things we’ve encountered that might provide a stumble or two:

▪ THE CHURCH YEAR

In church books dates are frequently given in terms of the church year, such as “the 15th Sunday after Trinity.” A helpful site for finding what date this actually was may be found at www.rmadsen.dk/kal/. It’s also useful to bear in mind that the church year began with Advent, in late November or early December, so a birth or death in late 1834, for example, might be recorded as occurring in the 1835 church year.

▪ ARKIVALIERONLINE

for those venturing into the digitized Danish church records, looking for church records in the City of Copenhagen you need to look under “Staden København” (City of Copenhagen) rather than under “København Amt” (Copenhagen County), at least at the time of this writing.

▪ LAND DESCRIPTIONS

Hartkorn: literally meaning “hard grain,” was used in land valuation records (see article elsewhere in this issue) which are difficult to describe in English equivalents, although they are similar to older English measurements such as bushels and pecks. Hartkorn was described in terms of volume, broken down into a *tønde* (barrel, abbreviated td.), *skæppeland* (skp.; 1/4 of a *tønde*), *fjerdingskar* (fjdk.; 1/12 of a *skæppeland*), and *album* (alb.; approximately 689.5 square meters). Another term you will run across is *Matrikelnummer* (Matr.nr.) which described a specific parcel of land. If you run across these numbers in connection with your family, they provide an entry point for finding out specifically where they lived in a given area at that time.

And lastly, a *caveat about spelling Danish words*. In US databases such as Ancestry and FamilySearch, one can get by searching for names with their American spellings, but when you turn to Danish databases, you have to get the spelling right, which means that you *have* to use the letters “æ,” “ø” and “å”! Looking for “Soren” or “Jorgen(sen)” in Danish censuses will very quickly yield null results, since the Danish names are spelled “Søren” and “Jørgen(sen).” If you don’t know how to make the Danish letters, the Genealogy Center has a tip sheet for doing so – it’s easy, so let’s get those names spelled correctly - also in your genealogical databases!

Some examples of how meanings change when words are not spelled correctly:

Øst = East, but Ost = cheese

Flåde = fleet,
but Flade = flat surface

Gade = street,
but Gåde = puzzle or
mystery

Båd = boat, but Bad = bath

Ko = cow, but
Kø = queue or line

Både = both,
but Bade = to bathe

hartkorn

MANORIAL SERVICES/OBLIGATIONS

“Hartkorn” was originally a common description for the payments the peasants provided in goods and services – so-called *landgilde* - to the manor estates. In the land registry books of the estates, the different payments were set in relation to one barrel of rye or barley that was “hard grain” (*hartkorn*) compared to oats, which were “soft grain.”

The circumstances at the different estates were different, but the norm for the usual calculations were as follows:

- 1 barrel of rye or barley 1 barrel hartkorn
- 1 barrel of grits or wheat flour 2 barrel hartkorn
- 1 barrel of wheat or peas 1 ½ barrel hartkorn
- 1 barrel of oats ½ barrel hartkorn
- 1 barrel of hops ½ barrel hartkorn
- 4 loads of meadow hay 1 bushel hartkorn
- 12 geese 1 barrel hartkorn

After the introduction of the absolute monarchy in 1660, the old land books were called in, and on the basis of these, a common land registry book was drawn up for all the properties in the country, the so-called *Matrikel* (land register book) of 1664, in which properties were taxed in hartkorn.

This taxation was soon shown to be unfair, since the assessments on the estates were rather diverse, and therefore in 1681 a plan was drawn up to create a Matrikel based on the yield capacity or quality of the soil – its *bonitet* – that was set relative to the local area and thus indicated the hartkorn that had to be paid.

According to its bonitet, arable land was classified according to its yield; meadows, grasslands and woods were taxed according to the yield they could produce, for example, the number of loads of hay, grazing, etc. Mills and other (skilled) trades were included and evaluated according to income, but the common description was still in hartkorn.

Though land measurements and map-making were deficient, this hartkorn taxation system was on the whole good in the beginning, but when used over a century and a half as the basis for the property tax in rural areas it gradually became more and more unfair due to improvements to the land and other factors.

Therefore, during the years 1806-1822 Denmark’s last matrikel was drawn up, but did not go into effect until 1844. The assessment of bonitet was at that time much more accurate and all arable land was given a rating between 1 and 24. The best land was taxed at 6 1/2 acres of land (about 28,000 square feet) contributing one (barrel of) hartkorn. On Lolland and Falster it was 9 4/5 acres of land, and in Ringkøbing County 45 acres of land yielded one (barrel of) hartkorn. The average for the whole country was 18 acres per barrel of hartkorn.

This evaluation didn’t take into account the location of the land, which, in connection with technical developments, led to the value of poorer land rising sharply due to its cultivation, access to transportation, and so on without bringing about any change in rates, and therefore no tax increase. The hartkorn tax system became outdated; in 1903 a law was passed establishing property taxes, which led to the complete abolition of hartkorn as the basis for national and parish taxes.



By
Michele
McNabb

named gifts

For a more permanent legacy at the Museum of Danish America, we are pleased to offer a variety of naming opportunities. Support our vibrant and sustainable institution and help to preserve your Danish heritage while ensuring that your generosity will be recognized for years to come.

A range of naming opportunities are available for individuals, families, organizations, and corporations, enabling donors to pay tribute to their relationship with the museum or to honor and recognize someone special in their lives.

Please contact Development Manager Deb Christensen Larsen for more details and to see which of these named gifts may be available to suit your wishes.

Current naming opportunities include:

MUSEUM

Main Level Gallery
Front Circle Entrance
Flag Plaza
Concourse
Future Core Exhibit Addition
Individual Exhibit Spaces \$25,000
Future Exhibit Space \$250,000
Contemporary Artist Exhibit
Traveling Display
Main Vault \$50,000
South Vault \$25,000
Visual Storage
Permanent Storage
Conference Room
Offices – Upper North Wing
LEGO Play Area

JENS JENSEN PRAIRIE LANDSCAPE PARK

East Council Ring \$25,000
Amphitheater \$100,000
Country Lane \$15,000
Pergola \$25,000
East Museum Terrace \$150,000
Introductory Interpretive Feature
\$15,000
Interpretive Signs \$10,000
Benches & Picnic Tables \$2,500
Trees (Mature with Bronze Plaque)
\$5,000
Trees (Young with Stake) \$1,000
Shrubs \$500

MUSEUM CAMPUS SITES

Bedstemor's House
Genealogy Center

ENDOWED POSITIONS

\$1,000,000

Librarian
Research/Translation Manager
Curator of Collections/Registrar

PROGRAMMING & EVENT SPONSORSHIPS

Website \$2,500
E-Newsletter, per month \$200
Videos
Brown Bag Lunch
Dinner and a Movie
Sankt Hans Aften \$250
Tivoli Fest
Julefest



By
Deb
Christensen
Larsen

Named Gifts Achieved To see a list of those who are currently honored with a plaque or signage at the museum and Genealogy Center, visit www.danishmuseum.org/get-involved/recognition/naming-opportunities

memorials

SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 – FEBRUARY 16, 2016

Through various funds, gifts have been received in memory of:

Delbert Andersen	Alfred & Asta Iversen	Eric & Joan Norgaard
Dr. Kenneth N. Andersen	Andrew & Gladys (Rasmussen) Jensen	Frances Jensen Norton
Ruth Hansen Boast	Bill Jensen	Clifford P. Oleson
Arvid Bollesen	Craig Jensen	Elinor Olsen
Dan Bonde	Henry & Alma Jensen	Oluf & Vera (Paulsen) Olson
Charles E. R. Boye	James & Dagmar Jensen	Anna M. Pedersen & Niels M. Pedersen
Charlie Brehm	Janell A. Jensen	Gordon Pedersen
Robert Warren Brown	Russell P. Jensen	Lilly Pedersen
David Byrd	Hans & Carrie Jersild	Hans & Ivy Peitersen
Jens T. Carstensen	Charles Christian Johnson	Allen & Clara Petersen
C. Clifford Christensen	Ronald N. Johnson	Dale Petersen
Max Christensen	Doc Jim & Minnie Jorgensen	Mr. & Mrs. James Petersen
Karl Christensen	Ranny & Rhoda Kelloway	Norma I. Petersen
Jens & Elna Christophersen	Evelyn Kjestina Jessen Kelso	Else Pitcher
Glen Clemson	Tage Ketelsen	Poul & Elie Steffensen
Magnus & Esther Cryberg	Hans Kiehn	Delbert Rasmussen
Robert Allen Eagen	Mogens Kiehn	Gary Rosenboom
Dave Esbeck	Eric Carsten Kloth	Andrew & Rosa Rosenkild
Hans & Mathilde Farstrup	Ruth Ellen Kromann	Winfred M. Ross
Mrs. Hannah Friis	Robert K. Lackey	Kevin Ruggaard
E. W. Frost	Marius Landbo	Knute Ruggaard
Harvey H. Greve	Frederik Emil Larsen	Viola Sander
Carma M. Hansen	Paul Christian Larsen	Albert Martin Jensen Schjodt
Clifford K. & A. Veola (Schjodt) Hansen	Paul M. & Johanne Larsen	Ann L. Slaughter
Emil Hansen	Richard Larsen	Kenneth Sorensen
Ethan L. Hansen	Donna Lee Larson	Harriet Albertsen Spanel
John P. & Annie Hansen	Dorothea Laursen	Delbert L. Steen
Mads Lauritsen Hansen & Christina Rattenborg Hansen	James Beckwith Lindberg	Eg Sten
Herbert Hjortsvang	Merton A. Lund	C.A. Stub & Anna Juhl Stub
Emery Hoegh	Richmond Lynn	Jan Thiesen
Hans & Genevieve Hoiberg	Cayman Marie	Axel Thomsen
Sally Hoppe	Valborg Henriksen McKinzie	Svend Waendelin
Joan Ida Hudziak	Elsie Rasmussen McNabb	Walter Westergaard
Ahlmann "Al" Iversen	Patricia Ann McNabb	Norman Wittrup
	Hans Thyge Nielsen	John & Mary Belle Witzel
	Virginia Nielsen	Carl Wiuff & Valborg Andersen
	Marilyn & LeVern Nielsen	Wiuff

new additions to the wall of honor

SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 – FEBRUARY 16, 2016

The Danish Immigrant Wall of Honor provides families and friends with a means of preserving the memory of 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 to the growing repository of family histories at the museum's Genealogy Center. You can find a list of the immigrants on the Wall of Honor at danishmuseum.org.

The information below includes the immigrant name, year of immigration, location where they settled, and the name and city of the donor.

LAURA JORGENSEN COMER
(1890) Dagmar, Montana – Amy Christensen, Billings, MT; Greg & Merna Rierson, Casper, WY

KIRSTEN MARIE OLESEN HØGILD (1909) Westby, Montana – Gerda Christensen, Plentywood, MT

JOHN (JOHAN) C. KOFOED
(1905) West Branch, Iowa – Karen Suchomel, West Branch, IA; Chris Kofoed, West Branch, IA

in honor

SEPTEMBER 17 – FEBRUARY 16, 2016

Through various funds, gifts have been received in honor of people or special events.

Dale Andersen
Muriel Bacon
Danish Club of Tucson
Aage & Kamma Grumstrup

Chester J. Holland
June Elaine (Jensen) Holman
Lena Humber
Kenneth & Edie Jensen
LeRoy B. Jensen
Ann Jespersen
Niels W. & Ingrid H. Jorgensen

Bill & Gloria Layton
Elsie Rasmussen McNabb
Poul & Benedikte Ehlers Olesen
The Roge and Egeland families
Angela Stanford's work at the
museum
Minna Williams



Compiled by
Deb
Christensen
Larsen

new members

SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 – FEBRUARY 16, 2016

The Museum of Danish America is pleased to identify the following 67 individuals and 7 organizations as its newest members:

Donna Archer, Altoona, IA
Sanne Bagby, Atlanta, GA
Carol Baker, St. Paul, MN
Kristen Bellur, Bakersfield, CA
Matt Bennett, Carmel, CA
Paul & Barbara Birkeland, Cloquet, MN
Molly Bogh, Highland, CA
Marilyn Buckelew, Tucson, AZ
Christopher & Carolyn Carradine, Malibu, CA
Paul & Shirley Christiansen, Mill Creek, WA
Steve Christophersen, Clarkston, MI
Judy Collins, Eugene, OR
Cole Custer, Harlan, IA
Dania Society of Chicago, Niles, IL
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #29, Seattle, WA
Danish Cultural Center of Greenville, Greenville, MI
Arnold & Alanna Fenske, Winona, MN
Christine Finkle, Tumwater, WA
Marjorie Foss, Hampton, IA
Chris Fredericksen, Elk Horn, IA
Garry & Louise Fredericksen, Indianapolis, IN

Friends of Scandinavia, Raleigh, NC
Bruce & Brigid Hansen, Plymouth, MN
Carolyn Hansen, West Branch, IA
Lell Harboe, Zirconia, NC
Michael & Ann Hawks, Buckeye, AZ
Nancy Henrickson, Kendall, NY
John Hester, Hackettstown, NJ
Alicia Hodgdon, Whittier, CA
Ida Jensen, Aalborg, Denmark
Keith Jensen, Troy, IL
Wanda Johansen, Rice Lake, WI
Thor & Darlene Jondahl, Libertyville, IL
Ellen Jordahn, Nederland, TX
Keast Auto Center, Harlan, IA
Jill Kolling, Minneapolis, MN
Elaine Hinnah & Paul Konopacki, Eureka, MO
Gary & Leonore Kopitzke, Spring Hill, FL
La Charlotte – Caniglia Pastry (Jeremy & Jacqueline Caniglia), Omaha, NE
Ronald & Mavis Lebeck, Audubon, IA
Chris & Deborah Lokke, Cedar, MN
Tom & Mariam Mackey, Cedar Rapids, IA
Kathleen Magrew, Maple Grove, MN
Julia McKeever, Defiance, IA
Steen Metz, Sanibel, FL
Gene & Terri Meyer, Atlantic, IA
Keeli Nelson, Lawrence, KS
Byron & Alis Olsen, Saint Paul, MN

Finn Petersen, Horsens, Denmark
Niels Petersen, Peel, AR
Ron Petersen, Fairview, OR
Susan Petersen, Lincoln, NE
Todd Petersen, Volo, IL
Larry Peterson, Pella, IA
Alan & Alicia Pitcher, Clearwater, KS
Paul Pitcher, Reading, PA
Jeffrey Rasmussen, Racine, WI
Ketty Rasmussen, Mesquite, TX
Mark & Nancy Ratner, Glencoe, IL
Betty Reiman, Maple Grove, MN
Elaine Rietz, Brookings, SD
John & Carol Rudisill, Des Moines, IA
Shelby County Historical Society & Museum, Harlan, IA
Charles & Gwynn Siemen, Lexington, KY
Richard & Dorothy Stilling, Porter Ranch, CA
Steven & Diana Svendsen, St. Marys, GA
Laura Thomsen, Overland Park, KS
Donna Thorne, Abilene, TX
John & Connie Vandercreek, Great Lakes, IL
Niels Ole & Esther Volhøj, Bindslev, Denmark
Marcia Wessels, Lincoln, NE
Jane Wilder, East Flat Rock, NC
Patti Wojahn, Las Cruces, NM

thank you, organizations

SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 – FEBRUARY 16, 2016

These 83 organizations have contributed memberships or gifts-in-kind of \$100 or more or have received complimentary memberships in recognition of exemplary service to the museum. We acknowledge their generosity in each edition of the *America Letter* during their membership.

A & A Framing (Annette Andersen), Kimballton, IA
Andersen Windows (Sarah Andersen), Bayport, MN

Answers (Frank R. Tighe), Atlantic, IA
Aalborg Aquavit (Arcus AS) (Christer Andre Olsen, Business Area Manager), Hagan, Norway

Atlantic Friends of The Danish Immigrant Museum, Atlantic, IA

Membership in the Museum of Danish America is a meaningful gift for any occasion. As a museum member, the recipient will enjoy year-round admission, the *America Letter* newsletter three times a year, a 10% discount in our Design Store, and reduced translation and research fees at our Genealogy Center. ►

BIEN Publishing Inc. (René Gross Kærskov, Publisher), Pacific Palisades, CA

Boose Building Construction (Marty & Connie Boose), Atlantic, IA

Carroll Control Systems, Inc. (Todd Wanninger), Carroll, IA

Cedar Valley Danes, Cedar Falls, IA area

Christopher Ranch LLC (Donald & Karen Christopher), Gilroy, CA

Copenhagen Imports (Jorgen Hansen), Phoenix, AZ

Country Landscapes, Inc. (Rhett Faaborg), Ames, IA

Danebod Lutheran Church, Tyler, MN

Dania Society of Chicago, Chicago, IL area

The Danish American Archive and Library, Blair, NE

Danish American Club in Orange County, Huntington Beach, CA area

Danish American Club of Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI area

Danish Archive North East, Edison, NJ

Danish Brotherhood, Heartland District Lodges, Iowa-Minnesota & surrounding states

Danish Brotherhood, Pacific Northwest Lodges, Washington area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #1, Omaha, NE area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #14, Kenosha, WI area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #15, Des Moines, IA area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #16, Minden, NE area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #29, Seattle, WA area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #35, Homewood, IL area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #56, Lenexa, KS area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #144, Dike, IA area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #268, Junction City, OR area

Danish Brotherhood Lodge #283, Dagmar, MT area

Danish Brotherhood Centennial Lodge #348, Eugene, OR area

Danish Club of Tucson, Tucson, AZ area

Danish Cultural Center of Greenville, Greenville, MI

The Danish Home, Chicago, IL

Danish Home for the Aged, Croton-On-Hudson, NY

Danish Mutual Insurance Association, Elk Horn, IA

Danish Sisterhood Dagmar Lodge #4, Chicago, IL area

Danish Sisterhood Lodge #20, Kenosha, WI area

Danish Sisterhood Ellen Lodge #21, Denver, CO area

Danish Sisterhood Lodge #102, Des Moines, IA area

Danish Sisterhood Lodge #176, Dike, IA area

Danish Sisterhood Lodges, Heartland District, Iowa-Minnesota & surrounding states

Den Danske Pioneer (Elsa Steffensen & Linda Steffensen), Hoffman Estates, IL

Elk Horn Lutheran Church, Elk Horn, IA

Elk Horn-Kimballton Optimist Club, Elk Horn & Kimballton, IA area

Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, Solvang, CA

Exira-Elk Horn-Kimballton Community School District, Elk Horn, IA area

Faith, Family, Freedom Foundation (Kenneth & Marlene Larsen), Calistoga, CA

Friends of Scandinavia, Raleigh, NC

Gamle Ode (Mike McCarron), Minneapolis, MN

Hacways (Helene & Nanna Christensen), Hals, Denmark

Hansen Interiors (Torben & Bridget Ovesen), Mount Pleasant, WI

Harlan Newspapers (Steve Mores & Alan Mores), Harlan, IA

Hastrup & Co A/S (Lars Hastrup), Hornbæk, Denmark

Henningsen Construction, Inc., Atlantic, IA

House of Denmark, San Diego, CA

Independent Order of Svithiod, Verdandi Lodge #3, Chicago, IL area

Keast Auto Center, Harlan, IA

Kirsten's Danish Bakery (Paul & Kirsten Andersen Jepsen), Burr Ridge, IL

Knudsen Old Timers, Yorba Linda, CA area

La Charlotte – Caniglia Pastries, Jeremy & Jacqueline Caniglia, Omaha, NE

Leman USA (Steen Sanderhoff), Sturtevant, WI

Main Street Café (Sune & Barbara Frederiksen), Berea, KY

Marne Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn, IA

Nelsen and Nelsen, Attorneys at Law, Cozad, NE

O & H Danish Bakery (Eric Olesen), Racine, WI

Old Ballard Liquor Co. (Lexi), Seattle, WA

Olsen, Muhlbauer & Co., L.L.P., Carroll, IA

Outlook Study Club, Elk Horn, IA area

Oxide Design Co. (Drew Davies), Omaha, NE

Proongily (Cynthia McKeen), St. Paul, MN

The Rasmussen Group, Inc., Des Moines, IA

Rebild National Park Society, Southern California Chapter, Los Angeles, CA area

Red River Danes, Fargo, ND area

Ringsted Danish American Fellowship, Ringsted, IA area

Royal Danish Embassy (Lars Gert Lose, Minister Counselor), Washington, DC

Scan Design Foundation by Inger & Jens Bruun, Seattle, WA

Scandinavian Heritage Foundation, Portland, OR

Scherers Architectural Antiques, Manuel & Jeri Herrera, Lincoln, NE

Shelby County Historical Society & Museum, Harlan, IA

Shelby County State Bank, Harlan and Elk Horn, IA

Symra Literary Society, Decorah, IA

Did you know? Families, groups, clubs, or businesses can sponsor exhibits, events, free admission days, our website, Brown Bag Lunch programs, or the entire Brown Bag Lunch series! Contact us to discuss the possibilities that await you.

a letter from the president

Again, it is an honor and a privilege to serve on the board of the Museum of Danish America. It is not often that a board made up of such a large number of people, representing vast geographical areas, can be on the same page 99% of the time. I feel the museum is so successful because of the dedicated staff and the common mission among board members and staff to preserve our Danish culture and heritage. The sign of any stable and successful organization is the ability to show continued improvement year after year. Each new year has brought forth new ideas for exhibits and geographic outreach to display those exhibits.

It is hard to believe that another year has passed. 2015 has come to a close, and now we are well into 2016. We, as a board, will face some challenges as the year progresses. However, I am confident that the board and staff will meet those challenges and forge ahead, just as we have met challenges in the past. A few of the challenges and opportunities are as follows:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RETIREMENT As many of you are aware, Executive Director John Mark Nielsen is scheduled to retire in February of 2017. John Mark has been the “face” of the museum for many years. He began serving as the Executive Director in July of 2003. Prior to his selection as the Executive Director, he served as a board member of The (then-named) Danish Immigrant Museum. It goes without saying that John Mark has established many, many contacts during his tenure as the Executive Director. His Danish background and ability to speak the Danish language has opened many, many doors. However, beyond those attributes, his tireless dedication to the success of the museum has been the hallmark of his tenure. John Mark will be difficult to replace.

SEARCH COMMITTEE As a board, we are in the process of reaching out to various venues in order to generate applicant leads for the Museum of Danish America Executive Director position. We have a search committee composed of past and present board members. The members serving on this committee are as follows: Former board members are Lowell Kramme from Des Moines, Iowa, Marc Petersen from Omaha, Nebraska, and Lynette Rasmussen from Des Moines, Iowa. Current board members are Vice President Tim Burchill from Jamestown, North Dakota, Past President Dagmar Muthamia from Long Beach, California, ex-officio member Dennis Larson from Decorah, Iowa, ex-officio member Kristi Planck Johnson from Bethesda, Maryland, and myself as President. Our goal is to begin candidate interviews during the fall of 2016. On behalf of the Museum of Danish America Board of Directors, I wish John Mark the best as he begins another chapter in his life.

GENEALOGY CENTER MANAGER AND LIBRARIAN RETIREMENT John Mark is also conducting a search to replace Michele McNabb, who will be retiring in June of 2016. Michele has been with the museum and the Genealogy Center for close to 14 years. She has been a critical resource for folks who are museum members and others who are searching their family trees. The center houses many resources that prove to be a real asset for those doing Danish family research. Her ability to speak and read the Danish language has been a real asset for the museum and individuals doing genealogical research. Her dedication to the museum and the center is appreciated. On behalf of the Museum of Danish America Board of Directors, I wish Michele the best in her retirement.



By
Gary
Knudsen

NOTE: A complete job description can be accessed on our website at www.danishmuseum.org/visit/about/employment.



NEW BOARD MEMBERS I want to welcome the following new board members: David Esbeck, San Diego, California; Randall Ruggaard, Hudson, Ohio; Ole Sønnichsen, Bjert, Denmark; Carl Steffensen, Houston, Texas; Peter Nielsen, Naples, Florida; and Daniel Warren, Fairmont, Minnesota.

OUT GOING BOARD MEMBERS I want to thank the following board members for their dedication and support of the Museum of Danish America: Dan Christensen, West Des Moines, Iowa; Kristi Planck Johnson, Bethesda, Maryland; Kenneth Larsen, Calistoga, California; Henrik Rasmussen, Springfield, Illinois; Eric Smitsdorff, Germantown, Wisconsin; and Mark Strandskov, Mount Pleasant, Michigan.

HATS OFF TO VOLUNTEERS To those of you who have volunteered, either as board members for the museum or Genealogy Center, I want to extend a huge thanks. It is hard to imagine what the Museum of Danish America would be today if it were not for the help of many volunteers over the years. The expertise of former and current board members, as well as many volunteers is invaluable. The hours of volunteer service would add up to the thousands. According to a recent government study, 62.6 million Americans (25.4 percent of the adult population) volunteered in 2013 providing 7.7 billion hours of service valued at \$173 billion. The study found that the average number of hours Americans volunteered was 32.1. To quantify the financial value of these volunteers is nearly impossible. According to the study, many charities use an industry standard of \$23.07 per hour (2014) to calculate the monetary value of their volunteers. Thus, the median American, who volunteered 32.1 hours in 2014, gave approximately \$740.55 to charity. The Museum of Danish America will certainly need the continued support of volunteers to fulfill the mission and goals established in our strategic plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN The Museum of Danish America Board of Directors has spent the last year in development of a new strategic plan. The new plan covers the years from 2016-2020. The intent of a strategic plan is to provide guidance for staff and volunteers as we move forward from year to year. The plan consists of a statement of our mission, core values and vision for the future. Goals are established along with timelines and benchmarks and needed resources to accomplish our goals. I have emphasized to our board that a strategic plan is a dynamic document. In other words, it is not something that is static that we put on the shelf once it is developed. I will encourage our board committees to take some time at each meeting to review portions of the plan that apply to them. If something needs to be changed in the plan, we can react to it sooner rather than later.

REBILD: THE DANISH AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY It was a real pleasure last spring to be able to “rub shoulders” with fellow Danes at the Rebuild Annual Meeting held in Omaha, Nebraska. The attendees were bused to Elk Horn and Kimballton for a tour of the towns and the museum. It was very uplifting to hear the positive comments made by Rebuild members about the Museum of Danish America. Sometimes I think we are so close to the activities and services provided by the museum that we can't see the forest for the trees. What a great facility and staff we have that can generate such positive reviews of something very close to our hearts.

board of directors

The Board of Directors is a special group of men and women who have unselfishly dedicated themselves to the preservation of their Danish American heritage and the mission of the museum. They join an elite group of individuals who, over the past 32 years, have worked to build and maintain a museum of which all Danes, Danish Americans and the American public can be proud.

Participating at their own expense, the board members come together three times a year to share their skills and experience in providing oversight to the administration of the museum and to develop ideas and plans that will contribute to its continuing vitality. It is the practice of the board to meet each February and June in different locations around the

United States so that they may share and celebrate Danish heritage with those Danish Americans who may not otherwise be able to link directly with the museum. In 2015, the board held its February meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, and its June meeting in Portland, Oregon, with election of new board members. The October board meeting was held in Elk Horn, Iowa. The museum's annual meeting was held in Elk Horn with new board members assuming their office; outgoing members present and participating.

Without the dedication, energy, and support of a strong, team-oriented Board of Directors, the museum staff would not be able to work effectively in managing the day-to-day operations of the Museum of Danish America.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SERVING IN 2015

Cynthia Larsen Adams, *Littleton, CO*
Ronald Bro, *Cedar Falls, IA*
Beth Bro-Roof, *Cedar Rapids, IA*
Tim Burchill, *Jamestown, ND*
Dan Christensen, *West Des Moines, IA*
Bente Ellis, *San Jose, CA*
David Esbeck, *San Diego, CA*
Dorothy Stadsvold Feisel, *St. Michaels, MD*
David Hendee, *Omaha, NE*
Glenn Henriksen, *Armstrong, IA*
Consul Anna Thomsen Holliday, *Houston, TX*
William (Bill) Jensen, *Urbandale, IA*
Kristi Planck Johnson, *Bethesda, MD*
Garey Knudsen, *Hutchinson, MN*
Kenneth Larsen, *Calistoga, CA and Harlan, IA*
Carolyn Larson, *St. Paul, MN*
Cynthia McKeen, *St. Paul, MN*
Craig Molgaard, *Missoula, MT*
Dagmar Muthamia, *Long Beach, CA*
Peter Nielsen, *Naples, FL*
Brent Norlem, *Monticello, MN*

Marian (Mittie) Ostergaard, *Mission Viejo, CA*
Henrik Rasmussen, *Springfield, IL*
Randy Ruggaard, *Hudson, OH*
Jerry Schrader, *Elk Horn, IA*
Flemming "Eric" Smitsdorff, *Germantown, WI*
Ole Sønnichsen, *Bjert, Denmark*
Carl Steffensen, *Houston, TX*
Linda Steffensen, *Hoffman Estates, IL*
Mark Strandskov, *Mount Pleasant, MI*
Karen Suchomel, *West Branch, IA*

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Jon Borgman, *Harlan, IA, Endowment*
Nils Jensen, *Portland, OR, Development*
Dennis Larson, *Decorah, IA*
Clark Mathisen, *Omaha, NE, Endowment*
Kai E. Nyby, *LaPorte, IN, Development*
Marc Petersen, *Omaha, NE, Endowment*
John Mark Nielsen, *Blair, NE, Executive Director*

who we are

MISSION STATEMENT

The Museum of Danish America celebrates Danish roots and American dreams.

CORE VALUES

We are:

- ◆ **Inspirational:** We honor the vision, ambition and diligence of Danish-American achievers, and we seek to inspire future generations by telling their stories.
- ◆ **Deeply rooted:** We treasure our Danish heritage, and we are deeply committed to our local American communities.
- ◆ **Focused on the future:** We realize that to keep the past alive, we must always remain part of the future.

VISION

- ◆ To be widely recognized as the world's leading compiler and communicator of the history and inspirational achievements of Danish Americans.
- ◆ To turn the museum and the villages of Elk Horn and Kimballton into one of Iowa's top destinations for tourists, educators and local family excursions - and to support other local communities featuring Danish-American history.
- ◆ To be widely recognized as a thought leader and trendsetter in the international museum industry, constantly featuring new and inspiring experiences for worldwide audiences through innovative exhibits, events, publications and online media tools.

staff & interns

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John Mark Nielsen, Ph.D.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

Terri Johnson

ALBERT RAVENHOLT CURATOR OF DANISH-AMERICAN CULTURE

Tova Brandt, M.A.

CURATOR OF COLLECTIONS & REGISTRAR

Angela Stanford, M.A.

GENEALOGY CENTER MANAGER & LIBRARIAN

Michele McNabb, M.A., M.L.I.S.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Deb Christensen Larsen

DEVELOPMENT/SOCIAL MEDIA ASSOCIATE

Nicky Christensen

ACCOUNTING MANAGER

Jennifer Winters

BUILDING & GROUNDS MANAGER

Tim Fredericksen

DESIGN STORE BUYER

Joni Soe-Butts

COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT

Chelsea Jacobsen

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Kathy Pellegrini

GENEALOGY & LIBRARY ASSISTANT

Wanda Sornson

WEEKEND STAFF

Terri Amaral

Rochelle Bruns

Beth Rasmussen

Rodger Rasmussen

PLANNED GIVING CONSULTANT

Paul Johnson

BEDSTEMOR'S HOUSE STAFF

Rochelle Bruns

Trudy Juelsgaard

Barbara Larson

Jen Neville

Doug Palmer

Jill Raysby

David Thurston

DANISH INTERNS

Niels-Peter Gade, *Aarhus University, Denmark (Exhibits)*

Ida Jensen, *Copenhagen University in Aalborg, Denmark (Genealogy Library)*

Charlotte Keimig, *Copenhagen University, Denmark (Collections)*

Johannes Svend Brask Kristoffersen, *Copenhagen University, Denmark (Exhibits and Development)*

AMERICAN INTERN

Jennifer Olsson, *Johns Hopkins University (Inventory Assistant)*

a year of success

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2015 AT THE MUSEUM OF DANISH AMERICA INCLUDE:

- ◆ *The Simple Gift of Walnut Grove*, a film by John Richard and produced by the museum, has won numerous awards, including “Best Short Documentary” at the Nordic International Film Festival in New York City and “Best Documentary” at the Chicago Reel Shorts Film Fest, one of the nation’s leading film festivals focused solely on short films.
- ◆ *Skål! Scandinavian Spirits* - presented by Aalborg and Linie Aquavits and underwritten by Arcus AS of Norway, representing the first time an exhibit we initiated has received support from an international corporate donor.
- ◆ Reached a population of over 250,000 through visits to the museum, traveling exhibits, social media, and programs and presentations around the country.
- ◆ Along with the Heartland Chapter of the Rebuild National Park Society, hosted the Society’s annual meeting in Omaha and Elk Horn, including a special reception at the First National Tower.
- ◆ Participation in numerous festivals and events from the Orange County International Street Fair and *December Nights in Balboa Park* in California across the country to *Grundlovsfest* in Croton-on-Hudson, New York and including the long-running Danish-American festival in Greenville, Michigan.
- ◆ Continued our partnership with the Petersen House Museum in Tempe, Arizona.

EXHIBITS

The museum continued its active exhibits program in 2015.

- ◆ *Skål! Scandinavian Spirits* - Organized by our museum, this exhibit also represents the first cooperative effort by all six of the major Scandinavian-American museums.
- ◆ *Glass and Mosaic by Helle Scharling-Todd*, a Danish immigrant artist from Southern California.
- ◆ *Home: Sculpture by Dennis Andersen*, a sculptor from Atlanta, Georgia, and former board member.

- ◆ *Happy Danes on the Plains* - An English version of an exhibit created by Danish curator Henrik Bredmose Simonsen exploring how Danish immigrant culture has been maintained over several generations.
- ◆ *Sense of Place: Photographs of the Danish Villages by Diana Velasco*, a Danish photographer who created the exhibit as a part of an artist-in-residence project funded by the Iowa Arts Council.
- ◆ *Nude Vases, Cubist Faces: Modernism at Rookwood Pottery* - Following its display in Elk Horn, this exhibit organized by our museum with guest curator Annemarie Sawkins, Ph.D., was open through March 1, 2015 at Iowa’s oldest cultural institution, The Dubuque Museum of Art in downtown Dubuque.
- ◆ *Danish Modern - Design for Living* - Our major exhibit of over 50 items of Danish Modern furniture and household wares and occupying over 1,500 sq. ft. completed its nationwide tour, closing at the Figge Museum in Davenport, Iowa, on June 21, 2015.
- ◆ Eight of the museum’s traveling exhibits were hosted by fifteen different venues in nine states and reached an audience of over 30,000.

COLLECTIONS

Among the many valuable artifact donations in 2015, the museum received the following:

- ◆ Diary of Chris Fredericksen, who describes his passage on the Lusitania; donated by Rick Fredericksen, of Norwalk, Iowa.
- ◆ Meat-counter from T.G. Muller’s grocery store in Kimballton; donated by the Heritage Society of Kimballton, Iowa.
- ◆ Jacket, tie, and hat worn during the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta by a co-host for Danish dignitaries; donated by Klaus Langkilde, Winston, Georgia.
- ◆ Two 8’x4’ panels that include the original pastel study by the Danish-American artist, professor and pastor, F.W. Thomsen, for the *Tower of the Four Winds* located in Black Elk-Neihardt Park in Blair, Nebraska; donated by John Thomsen, Brooklyn, New York.
- ◆ Air tunnel model to determine structural support for the Tower of the Four Winds; donated by James Iversen, Decorah, Iowa.



By
John Mark
Nielsen



GRANTS

- ◆ Albert Victor Ravenholt Fund
- ◆ Eric and Joan Norgaard Charitable Trust
- ◆ Humanities Iowa
- ◆ Iowa Cultural Affairs
- ◆ Iowa Tourism
- ◆ Iowa West Foundation
- ◆ National Endowment for the Humanities
- ◆ Scan Design Foundation
- ◆ State Historical Society of Iowa

exhibitions

In 2015 the museum's galleries expanded to provide additional space to share art, artifacts, and stories.

Suitably, the first exhibition to fill that newly-enlarged space was *Skål! Scandinavian Spirits*, an exhibition that reached beyond Danish culture to explore the pan-Scandinavian traditions of beer and aquavit. The *Skål* exhibition is a collaboration between the Museum of Danish America and five other Scandinavian-American museums, all of whom will host the exhibit in turn. So if you missed it in Elk Horn, stay tuned for the chance to see it in other parts of the country.

The *Skål* exhibition not only marked a milestone in gallery space and partners, but also in attracting international support from Aalborg and Linie Aquavits, and publishing a companion book that is a museum best-seller.

A smaller version of the exhibition is also touring the country, and might be coming to a festival or Danish club near you!

While launching *Skål!* on the road, we also concluded the tour of our previous major traveling exhibition, *Danish Modern: Design for Living*, and rotated through seven other exhibitions in the museum's galleries. Our menu of traveling displays brought Danish-American stories to communities from coast to coast. In total, traveling exhibitions appeared in 18 different locations in 10 states, reaching an audience of 30,000 people.

GRADUATE STUDENT INTERNS

In addition, the museum continues to benefit from the work of graduate student interns. Danish interns were again sponsored through a grant from the Scan Design Foundation, Seattle, Washington, and American interns were funded by grants from the Historical Resource Development Program through the State Historical Society of Iowa.

Whether you visit Elk Horn in person or not, we hope that all members can enjoy the museum's exhibition program through gallery installations, traveling displays, virtual tours, or through the pages of the *America Letter*.

ON-SITE GALLERY EXHIBITIONS IN 2015

Danish Children Growing Up American
September 27, 2014 - April 4, 2015

Exploring Danish Happiness
October 2014 - April 2015

Photography by Diana Velasco: Two Nationalities
November 28, 2014 - March 15, 2015

Curator's Choice: Art from the Permanent Collection
March 28 - May 10, 2015

Skål! Scandinavian Spirits
April 24 - October 25, 2015

Glass and Mosaic by Helle Scharling-Todd
May 23 - September 30, 2015

Home: Sculpture by Dennis Andersen
October 22, 2015 - May 8, 2016

Happy Danes on the Plains
November 27, 2015 - April 10, 2016



By
Tova
Brandt

TRAVELING EXHIBITIONS IN 2015

Danish Modern: Design for Living

Figge Art Museum, Davenport, Iowa

Nude Vases, Cubist Faces: Modernism at Rookwood Pottery

Dubuque Museum of Art, Dubuque, Iowa

Happy Danes on the Plains

Danish Lutheran Church and Cultural Center,

Yorba Linda, California

Racine Heritage Museum, Racine, Wisconsin

Luck Historical Society, Luck, Wisconsin

Danish Cultural Center, Greenville, Michigan

Danish Sisterhood Lodge #15, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Danish Sisterhood Lodge #21, Denver, Colorado

Denmark October 1943

Nordia House, Portland, Oregon

Danish Gymnastics in America

Danish Club of Washington, DC

Jens Jensen: Celebrating the Native Prairie

House of Denmark, San Diego, California

Carnegie Library, Perry, Iowa

Schleswig-Holstein: Turmoil on the Danish-German Border

Germanic-American Institute, St. Paul, Minnesota

Danish American Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Danebod Folk School, Tyler, Minnesota

Søren Kierkegaard: The Global Dane

University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa

Exploring Danish Happiness

Danish American Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Skål! Scandinavian Spirits

Nordic Heritage Museum, Seattle, Washington

Danish Home, Edison, New Jersey

Nordia House, Portland, Oregon

collections

The year 2015 brought to the museum's curatorial collections a total of 646 new artifacts. These pieces join the larger permanent and education collections in supporting the museum's mission and in illustrating the many stories of Danish immigrants, their descendants, and the communities, groups, and individuals that make up Danish America.

Thank you to our members and donors for your continued and kind support.

ARTIFACT DONORS

Michael Abildtrup, West Des Moines, IA

Jerry Andersen, Chicago, IL

Nancy Carriel, Northfield, MN

Borge M. Christensen, Rochester, MN

Nyla Christensen, Rapid City, SD

Danish Home for the Aged, Croton-on-Hudson, NY

Danish Windmill Corporation, Elk Horn, IA

Lois Eagleton, Umpqua, OR

Roger Essenburg, Fountain Hills, AZ

First Baptist Church of Elk Horn, IA

Rick Fredericksen, Norwalk, IA

Birte Gerlings, Omaha, NE

Marlene Hansen, Harlan, IA

Glen Haselbarth, Minden, NE

Mary Hubbard, Albert Lea, MN

Anna Huber, Cary, NC

Tiffany Ikkala, Copenhagen, Denmark

James Iversen, Decorah, IA

Betty Jacobsen, Chicago, IL

Robert Jensen, Apalachin, NY

Kristi Planck Johnson, Bethesda, MD

Estate of Jens Kjær, Kansas City, MO

Lisbeth N. Kohloff, Golden, CO

Loeymae Lange, Sun City, AZ

Klaus Langkilde, Winston, GA

Jeanette Lillehoj, Kimballton, IA

Inger Lundbaek, Mill Valley, CA

John Vogt Masengarb, West Saint Paul, MN

Birgitte Molvig, Chico, CA

John Mark Nielsen, Blair, NE

Sofie Krøgh Nielsen, Risskov, Denmark

Liv Norderhaug, Brookfield, WI

Rich Patterson, Cedar Rapids, IA

Beth M. Pearson, Eldridge, IA

Adrienne Petersen, Kimballton, IA

Dave Potratz, Spencer, IA

Merle Rasmussen, Huxley, IA

Mary Ann Richmond, Chestertown, MD

Robert Skene, Webster City, IA

Carl Steffensen, Houston, TX

John Thomsen, Brooklyn, NY

Robert Wetzels, Kansas City, KS

Robert Wilson, Kentwood, MI

Claus Windelev, Seattle, WA



By
Angela
Stanford

genealogy center

2015 was certainly a busy and growth-filled year for the Genealogy Center! We added nearly 500 new immigrant information folders to our in-house files, in addition to digital images of and indexes to the church books from several local Danish Lutheran churches.

Digitized newspapers and many of our Special Collections holdings were moved into a new temperature-controlled home in the main museum building, allowing us to expand the library collection into the vacated space.

Over 450 books and other materials were added to the collection, so the rearranged shelves are rapidly filling. Scan Design Foundation intern Ida Jensen assisted by entering newly donated materials and also helped organize our new storage room. Staff and volunteers – who donated over 2,300 hours of their time in 2015 – completed 43 translation projects and 50 paid research projects, in addition to working with walk-in patrons and responding to email research questions.

Our summer photo display, *Golden Danes*, put together by volunteer Donna Thomas, celebrated the lives of over 100 Danish immigrants who lived to the century mark or beyond, and in the process we also gathered information on many Danish-American descendants who also reached this age.

For Julefest Genealogy Center Assistant Wanda Sornson created a very attractive display about traditional Danish Christmas cookies, samples of which and their recipes could be enjoyed during that celebration.

In 2015 we received and/or processed donations from the following individuals and institutions:

John Richard Andersen, Verona, WI
 Leonard Andersen, Sioux City, IA
 Rosalie Andersen, Harlan, IA
 Kasper Andreassen, Copenhagen, Denmark
 Anonymous
 Karen Friedmann Beall, Santa Fe, NM
 Diane B. Beaman, Bath, SD
 Anne Birdsall, Floyd, IA
 Syletta Zachreis Freeman Birk, et al., Søby - Ærø, Denmark
 Michael Jon Bithorn, Tallahassee, FL
 Susan Brodersen, Jacksonville, FL
 Nancy Hansen Chew, Council Bluffs, IA
 Neal Christensen, Highlands Ranch, CO
 Nyla Christensen, Rapid City, SD
 Rolf Christensen, Gloucester, Ont., Canada
 Diana Christiansen, Tucson, AZ

Rosa Clemesen, Exira, IA
 Jill K. Crooker, Park Ridge, IL
 Milton Crum, Helena, MT
 Danish Soldier's Club, Calistoga, CA
 Lars Davidsen, Aarhus, Denmark
 Richard Denne, Houston, TX
 Barry Edmonds, East Hampton, CT
 Larry & Janis Fajen, Elk Horn, IA
 First Baptist Church of Elk Horn, IA
 E. Lee Fitzhugh, Lakeside, AZ
 June Haas, Kimballton, IA
 Jerome Hagstrom, Olathe, KS
 Hamlin Lutheran Church, Exira, IA
 Anne-Mette Kobberoe Hansell, Drexel Hill, PA
 Glen Haselbarth, Minden, NE
 Elaine Hasleton, Salt Lake City, UT
 Barbara K. Hein, Prescott, AZ
 Judy Hill, Exira, IA
 Mary Leeper Hubbard, Albert Lea, MN
 Mollie Ingwers, St. Joseph, MI
 William P. Jones, District Heights, MD
 Svend Jorgensen, Genoa City, WI
 David M. Jorgenson, Rochester, MN
 Magne Juhl, Viborg, Denmark
 Viola Kilworth, Exira, IA
 Jeanette Knudsen, Elk Horn, IA
 Lisbeth Neergaard Kohloff, Golden, CO
 Diane Kratz, Farwell, MN
 Neva Langgard, Guthrie Center, IA
 Elizabeth L. Larsen, Cupertino, CA
 Kenneth Larsen, Calistoga, CA
 Luanne Larson, Council Bluffs, IA
 Jens Birk Lauridsen, Maarslet, DK
 Jeanette Lillehoj, Kimballton, IA
 Ellie Ludvigsen, Castle Rock, CO
 Inger Lundbaek, Mill Valley, CA
 Richard G. Macdonald, Tremont, IL
 Jeanette Matteson, Weeping Water, NE
 Michele McNabb, Atlantic, IA
 Sean & Laurie McNabb, Salt Lake City, UT
 Kimberly M. Meurer, Atlantic, IA
 John Mark Nielsen, Blair, NE
 Stanley Nielsen, Monona, WI
 Liv Norderhaug, Brookfield, WI
 Robert Ostergaard, Plymouth, MN
 Gaetha Pace, Wiser, ID
 Judith Page, Madison, WI
 Pola Ericksen Peters (family of), Omaha, NE



By
 Michele
 McNabb

Lise Petersen, Frederiksberg, Denmark
 Mary Lou Petersen, Bettendorf, IA
 Patricia M. Peterson, Council Bluffs, IA
 Margit Andersen Pickering, St. Cloud, MN
 Rod Quanbeck, Milford, IA
 Suzanne Rasmussen, Kirkman, IA
 Barbara Roberts, Eugene, OR
 Ann S. Rodda, Tuam, Ireland
 Erik F. Rønnebeck, Fredericia, Denmark
 Birgitte Saltorp, Burnaby, BC, Canada
 Kenneth Sand, Prairie du Chien, WI
 Nancy Sand, Kimballton, IA

Robert Simonsen, Topeka, KS
 Diane J. Skov, Lacey, WA
 Sonoma County Public Library, Santa Rosa, CA
 Charlotte Sorensen, Exira, IA
 Marie Louise Sorensen, DeKalb, IL
 Hal Sornson, Omaha, NE
 Carl Steffensen, Houston, TX
 Leo & Gayle Stuart, Walnut, IA
 Ron S. Vig, Holdrege, NE
 Joan M. Tomlinson White, Lincoln, NE
 Phyllis Wittrup, Lakewood, CO
 Nina York, Christianstad, Virgin Islands

volunteers

In 2015 volunteers at both the museum and Genealogy Center contributed a total of 2,995 hours, compared with 3,206 in 2014. Individual volunteers logged from 2.5 hours to 644, and though we said “farewell” to a few of our volunteers this past year for a variety of reasons, we gained 3 new ones!

Our volunteers help with a number of tasks including assisting staff with greeting visitors, data entry, indexing, mailings, translations, research, and events such as the Brown Bag Lunch Series and the annual board meeting held in October. We also now have volunteers helping with the Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park.

Staff could not do what we do on a daily basis without assistance from our devoted volunteers - every hour of time volunteers give is deeply appreciated.

The following are volunteers for whom we have **documented** hours in 2015.

MUSEUM

Annette Andersen
 Rosalie Andersen
 Virgil & Joyce Christensen
 Rosa Clemsen
 Jean (Tina) Hansen
 Peggy Hansen
 Chet & Marj Holland
 Jeanette Lillehoj
 Earl Madsen
 Steven Olson
 Dawn Nielsen
 Clara Pedersen
 Wava Petersen
 Joanne Potts
 Karen Rafferty
 Elva Rasmussen
 Howard Sorensen

GENEALOGY CENTER

Marilyn Andersen
 Bent Christensen
 June Haas
 Ralf & Inga Hoifeldt
 Connie Johnson
 Jeanette Knudsen
 Erik Høgsbro Østergaard
 Susanne Rasmussen
 Nancy Sand
 Lene Sepstrup
 Charlotte Sorensen
 Karma Sorensen
 Gayle Stuart
 Donna Thomas
 Carolyn Wittrup

We also want to recognize members of the **Atlantic Chapter of the Friends of The Danish Immigrant Museum** who have been long-time supporters and donors. The organization provides us with delicious cookies to serve to museum guests during our annual celebrations of Tivoli Fest, held the weekend preceding Memorial Day, and Julefest, held the weekend following Thanksgiving.

Its members include Norma Andersen, Ramona Andersen, Marty & Connie Boose, Janet Bornholdt, Mary Ann Christensen, Jack & Eileen Denne, Clayton Ellingson, Dean & Verna Esbeck, Gene & Kathleen Eyberg, Ed & Ileen Furne, Marcella Gaines, Calvin & Phyllis Hoegh, Chet & Marj Holland, Doris Jensen, Betty Lillard, Fern Lindvall, Merlin & Sonya Mikkelsen, Beverly Nelson, Delores Nelson, Bob & Frances Nelson, Glenn & Joan Ohms, Helen Petersen, Darrell & Bertha Schroeter, and Nadine Williamson.



By
 Terri
 Johnson

Condensed Financial Statements Years Ended August 31, 2015 and 2014

Condensed Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets - Modified Cash Basis

	2015	2014
Assets		
Cash and Investments.....	4,215,242	3,803,680
Inventory	101,819	72,672
Property and Equipment (Net).....	4,774,678	4,681,110
Total Assets	<u>9,091,739</u>	<u>8,557,462</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accrued Payroll Taxes	13,415	76
Lines of Credit	178,500	35,000
Contracts Payable.....	0	423,359
Note Payable.....	0	335
Total Liabilities	<u>191,915</u>	<u>458,770</u>
Net Assets	<u>8,899,824</u>	<u>8,098,692</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>9,091,739</u>	<u>8,557,462</u>

Condensed Statement of Revenue and Support, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets - Modified Cash Basis for Years ended August 31,

	2015	2014
Support and Revenue		
Contributions and Support.....	1,748,543	1,234,784
Admissions and Program Fees	18,678	18,820
Gift Shop Revenue (Net).....	47,476	42,188
Investment and Other Income.....	425,661	907,023
Total Support and Revenue.....	<u>2,240,358</u>	<u>2,202,815</u>
Expenses		
Program Services	861,462	768,620
Supporting Activities	577,764	505,892
Total Expenses	<u>1,439,226</u>	<u>1,274,512</u>
Change in Net Assets	<u>801,132</u>	<u>928,303</u>
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	<u>8,098,692</u>	<u>7,170,389</u>
Net Assets - End of Year	<u>8,899,824</u>	<u>8,098,692</u>

endowment

The Museum of Danish America's endowments provide the opportunity for members to perpetuate their contributions and at the same time help guarantee the museum's long-term financial viability. Current market value as of December 31, 2015, was \$3,996,092.08.

bequests

In 2015 the museum received \$67,238.51 in bequests – \$20,713.42 (31%) has been invested in the museum's endowment funds, and the balance \$46,525.09 (69%) has been, or is being used, for special projects and programming. The Museum of Danish America gratefully acknowledges the following estates, trusts and individuals:

Marianne K. Festersen, Omaha, NE
Earl Fries, Des Moines, IA
Rita Neergaard Hansen, Kenosha, WI
Carl Johan Larsen, Owatonna, MN
Norma (Larsen) Wilson, Red Oak, IA

merit of recognition

THE MUSEUM OF DANISH AMERICA PERMANENTLY RECOGNIZES TWO GROUPS OF FRIENDS AND MEMBERS WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES THROUGH OUTSTANDING SUPPORT, BOTH WHILE LIVING AND IN THEIR ESTATE PLANS.

LIFETIME LEGACY GIVING

Five categories reflect all cumulative donations of \$25,000 and greater from individuals or their estates, foundations, trusts, and organizations. These names are inscribed on a large plaque at the museum's entrance.

During the calendar year of 2015, the board of directors was pleased to add the names of

Aalborg and Linie Aquavits, Arcus AS, Hagan, Norway
(Bronze)

First Baptist Church, Elk Horn, IA *(Bronze)*

Irving & Elizabeth Jensen Foundation, Sioux City, IA
(Bronze)

And in addition, we acknowledge the following four donors for having achieved a new level of lifetime giving:

William & Berniece Grewcock, Omaha, NE *(Diamond)*

Peter Kiewit Foundation, Omaha, NE *(Gold)*

Poul Olesen & Benedikte Ehlers Olesen, Eugene, OR
(Silver)

Albert Victor Ravenholt Fund, Seattle, WA *(Platinum)*

DIAMOND \$1,000,000

Wayne Alwill Estate, Manning, IA

Anonymous

William & Berniece Grewcock, Omaha, NE

Bruce R. Lauritzen Family, Omaha, NE

PLATINUM \$500,000

Gunnar Horn, Omaha, NE

Albert Victor Ravenholt Fund, Seattle, WA

Norma (Larsen) Wilson, Red Oak, IA

GOLD \$250,000

Anonymous

Mervin Bro, Scottsdale, AZ

Marianne K. Festersen Estate, Omaha, NE

Peter Kiewit Foundation, Omaha, NE

Roy J. & Rita Neergaard Hansen, Kenosha, WI

Richard Hellman, Oceanside, CA

State Of Iowa

SILVER \$100,000

Dennis J. Andersen, Atlanta, GA

Anonymous (2)

Anton & Gunver M. Berg, Dekalb, IL

Esther "E.J." Carlson Estate, Columbus, OH

Carl Aage Christensen, Denver, CO

Edna M. Christensen, Atlantic, IA

Tom & Jan Christensen, Bettendorf, IA

Elk Horn Lutheran Church, Elk Horn, IA

Asta Forrest, Fountain Hills, AZ

Charles & Joanne Frederiksen, Ames, IA

Stewart & Lenore Hansen, West Des Moines, IA

Roy & Patricia Hougen, Ames, IA

Iowa West Foundation, Council Bluffs, IA

James D. & Margery Iversen, Ames, IA

Clyde & Emma Johnson, Omaha, NE

Martha Jorgensen, Audubon, IA

John & Audrey Kofoed, West Branch, IA

Lowell & Marilyn Kramme, Des Moines, IA

Reola Lerager, Wichita, KS

Lutheran Brotherhood, Minneapolis, MN

Herbert C. Madison, Washington, DC

Adelaide M. Madsen Estate, Cedar Rapids, IA

A.P. Møller And Chastine Mc-Kinney Møller Foundation,
Copenhagen, Denmark

Mark & Lori Nussle, Palos Park, IL

Folmer & Vera Nyby, Michigan City, IN

Poul Olesen & Benedikte Ehlers Olesen, Eugene, Oregon

Olga S. Olsen Estate, Watertown, SD

H. Rand & Mary Louise Petersen, Harlan, IA

John I. Petersen Estate, Kimballton, IA

Scan Design Foundation, Seattle, WA

Harriet Albertsen Spanel, Bellingham, WA

E. Irene Starrett, Audubon, IA

Chrystal Hemmingsen Willis Wagner Estate, Seattle, WA

Wilber Williamson, Des Moines, IA



By
Deb
Christensen
Larsen



BRONZE \$25,000

Aalborg and Linie Aquavits, Arcus AS, Hagan, Norway
 Anonymous (2)
 Norman C. Bansen Estate, Blair, NE
 Mogens & Cindy Bay, Omaha, Nebraska
 Elna N. Bellows, Edina, MN
 Harold W. & Lois M. Berg, Ogden, IA
 Egon & Diana Bodtker, Salem, OR
 Sanna And Victor Borge Memorial Fund, New York, NY
 Marie A. Budolfson Estate, Ames, IA
 Cedar Valley Danes, Cedar Falls, IA Area
 Jack & Barbara Christensen, Yankton, SD
 Lamont & Lois Christensen, Elk Horn, IA
 Dolores G. Connelly Estate, Atlantic, IA
 Country Landscapes, Inc., Ames, IA
 R. James & Janet Borge Crowle, Saint Michaels, MD
 Danish Brotherhood In America, Highlands Ranch, CO
 Danish Mutual Insurance Association, Elk Horn, IA
 Ane-Grethe Olesen & Rory A.M. Delaney, Wayzata, MN
 Gordon, Mary Lou & Janice Esbeck, Tipton, Iowa
 Ramona L. Esbeck, Ames, IA
 Sally og Gordon Faber, Urbandale, Iowa
 First Baptist Church of Elk Horn, IA
 J. Emory & Edna Fredrickson Estate, Elk Horn, IA
 Margaret Louise Gee Estate, West Des Moines, IA
 Marilyn Andersen Gift & William Gift, Des Moines, Iowa
 Alf & Lili Gregerson, Ridgefield, WA
 Caroline L. Hansen, Harlan, IA
 Walter & Vesta Hansen, West Branch, Iowa
 Alma O. Hartvigsen Estate, Harlan, IA
 Henningsen Construction, Inc., Atlantic, IA
 Stanley & Helen Howe, Muscatine, IA
 Humanities Iowa, Iowa City, IA
 Vern E. Hunter, Fargo, ND
 Al & Bridget Jensen, Houston, TX
 Cornelius C.J. Jensen Estate, Edmonds, WA
 Irving & Elizabeth Jensen Foundation, Sioux City, IA

Nils & Kathleen Jensen, Portland, Oregon
 Roland & Joan Jensen, Ankeny, IA
 Iver (Whitey) & Lis Jorgensen, Burnsville, Minnesota
 Robert S. Kroman Estate, Elk Horn, IA
 Kulturministeriet, Copenhagen, Denmark
 Kurt K. & Joy Larsen, Oneonta, AL
 Richard Ledet, Des Moines, IA
 Leonard K. & Lenora J. Madsen Estate, Kansas City, MO
 Marne & Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn, IA
 Carl & Marilyn Mehr, San Diego, California
 Inez M. Mortensen Estate, Omaha, NE
 Dagmar Muthamia, Long Beach, CA
 Einar Schultz Nielsen, Tustin, CA
 Hans Thyge & Valborg Nielsen, Denver, CO
 John Mark & Dawn Nielsen, Blair, Nebraska
 Ruth Herman Nielsen Estate, Omaha, NE
 Irene A. Nissen Estate, Cedar Falls, IA
 Eric & Joan Norgaard Charitable Trust, Northbrook, IL
 Kay Esbeck North, Ames, IA
 Kai E. & Melody Starr Nyby, Laporte, IN
 Erik & Jackie Olsen, Glenbrook, NV
 Glenn & Mary Ellen Olsen, Atlantic, Iowa
 Peter & Irma Ørum, Saint Charles, IL
 Marc & Carlene Petersen, Omaha, NE
 The Rasmussen Family, Des Moines, Iowa
 Eugene Robinson, Pensacola, FL
 Anelise Sawkins, Minneapolis, MN
 Shelby County Community Foundation, Shelby County, IA
 Shelby County State Bank, Harlan, IA
 Ava Simonsen Estate, Audubon, IA
 Harold L. Sorenson Estate, Exira, IA
 Wilbur C. Sorenson Estate, Exira, IA
 Lemuel & Edith Sprow Estate, Mound, MN
 Janet M. Thuesen, Falls Church, VA
 Svend & Lois Toftemark, Eugene, OR
 Erik & Lissi Vange, Palatine, Illinois
 Marion J. Walker Estate, Solvang, CA

For More Information on *Lifetime Legacy Giving* or *Heritage Builders*, contact John Mark Nielsen, Executive Director; Deb Christensen Larsen, Development Manager; or Paul Johnson, Planned Giving Consultant (402.201.7024). You may also call the museum at 800.759.9192. Your inquiry will be treated confidentially.

THE HERITAGE BUILDERS

Over the past 32 years, the Museum of Danish America has accomplished much because of special friends and members who have provided for the museum in their estate plans. During 2015 six new Heritage Builders were added to the plaque, and they are **indicated in bold**. With their permission while living or through the permission of their estate's executors, the names of *Heritage Builders* are permanently inscribed on a plaque in the museum.

Dennis J. Andersen, Atlanta, GA

Anonymous (5)

Anne Bansen*, Ferndale, CA

Norman C. Bansen*, Blair, NE

Constance Boggild*, Delray Beach, FL

Victor Borge*, Greenwich, CT

Judy Brehm, Blair, NE

Marie Budolfson*, Ames, IA

Borge & Lotte Christensen, Tucson, AZ

Charles R. Christensen*, Omaha, NE

Edna M. Christensen*, Atlantic, IA

Myrvin F. & Anne C. Christopherson, Decorah, IA

Dolores Gregersen Connelly*, Atlantic, IA

Lydia Sorensen Eriksen*, Waterloo, IA

David Esbeck*, Des Moines, IA

Gordon R. & Jan Esbeck, Tipton, IA

Howard Esbeck*, Ames, IA

Ramona Esbeck, Ames, IA

Asta Forrest*, Fountain Hills, AZ

J. Emory* & Edna Frederickson*, Elk Horn, IA

Charles & Joanne Frederiksen, Ames, IA

Earl* & LaVena Fries, Des Moines, IA

Margaret Gee*, West Des Moines, IA

Gertrude Gronbeck*, Washington, D.C.

Caroline Hansen*, Harlan, IA

Hans Hansen*, Des Moines, IA

Laura E. Hansen*, Irwin, IA

Rita Neergaard Hansen*, Kenosha, WI

Rosa Hansen*, Hampton, IA

Alma Hartvigsen*, Harlan, IA

Richard Hellman*, Oceanside, CA

Anna Marie Hjuler*, Audubon, IA

Susanne Hohlen, Monticello, MN

Gunnar Horn*, Omaha, NE

Roy E. & Patricia Hougen, Ames, IA

Joy Ibsen, Trout Creek, MI

James D. & Margery Iversen, Ames, IA

Genevieve Jensen*, Plainview, NE

Ruth Jensen*, Ames, IA

Agnes Johnson*, Garden City, MI

Clyde* & Emma Johnson*, Omaha, NE

Paul & Liz Johnson, Fremont, NE

Martha Jorgensen*, Audubon, IA

Mogens H. Kiehn*, Scottsdale, AZ

Joy S. Larsen, Oneonta, AL

Folmer* & Reola Lerager*, Wichita, KS

Harald Hans Lund*, Higganum, CT

Tom Lund, Harlan, IA

Adelaide Madsen*, Iowa City, IA

Rudolph* & Margaret Madsen*, Racine, WI

Keith N. McFarland*, New Brighton, MN

Helga Mikkelsen*, Waverly, IA

Inez M. Mortensen*, Omaha, NE

Ruth Rasmussen Nelson*, St. Cloud, MN

Einer Schultz Nielsen*, Newport Beach, CA

Jens Nielsen*, Newell, IA

Karen Madsen Nielsen*, Junction City, OR

Margaret A. Nielsen*, King City, OR

Ruth Herman Nielsen*, Omaha, NE

Raymond* & Irene Nissen*, Cedar Falls, IA

Eric* & Joan Norgaard*, Glenview, IL

Folmer & Vera Nyby, Michigan City, IN

Caroline Olsen*, Minneapolis, MN

Olga S. Olsen*, Watertown, SD

Marian E. (Mittie) Ostergaard, Mission Viejo, CA

Dorothy C. Pedersen*, Omaha, NE

Archie Petersen*, Harlan, IA

John I. Petersen*, Waterloo, IA

Lois Petersen*, Atlantic, IA

Peyton* & Lucia Respass*, Omaha, NE

Ava Simonsen*, Audubon, IA

Bodil Sorensen*, Kirkland, WA

Harold L. Sorensen*, Exira, IA

Howard & Karma Sorensen, Elk Horn, IA

Halvor Strandskov, Osterville, MA

Carol Svendsen, Denver, CO

Margaret Syring*, St. Paul, MN

Nancy J. Walden, Omaha, NE

Sandra Wunder, Omaha, NE

*Deceased

special appeals

During the course of each year, the Museum of Danish America invites its supporters to make contributions to special appeals. The individuals, organizations, or foundations listed below contributed to these appeals in 2015 (and reflected in the Honor Roll of Contributors). Donors to the Summer Appeal and End-of-Year Appeal are included in the Honor Roll of Contributors.

VICTOR BORGE LEGACY AWARD

R. James & Janet Borge Crowle, Saint Michaels, MD
Michael & Sanna Feirstein, New York, NY
William & Carol Gordean, Saint Michaels, MD
Mort & Marcia Hoffman, Warrington, PA
Terri Johnson, Manning, IA
Lowell & Marilyn Kramme, Des Moines, IA
Deb Christensen Larsen, Harlan, IA
John Mark & Dawn Nielsen, Blair, NE

CURATORIAL CENTER

Community Heritage Society, Kimballton, IA
Irving & Elizabeth Jensen Foundation, Sioux City, IA
Consul Bruce R. Lauritzen, Lauritzen Corporation,
Omaha, NE

ENDOWED CURATOR POSITION

(Albert Ravenholt Curator of Danish-American Culture)

Albert Victor Ravenholt Fund, Seattle, WA

ELIM CHILDREN'S HOME PROPERTY

Earl Madsen, Elk Horn, IA
Folmer & Vera Nyby, Michigan City, IN
Poul & Benedikte Ehlers Olesen, Eugene, OR
Harriet Albertsen Spanel, Bellingham, WA

ENDOWMENT

Marianne K. Festersen Trust, Omaha, NE
(in special memory of Hans Frederick Festersen)
Earl Fries Estate, Des Moines, IA
Rita Neergaard Hansen Estate, Kenosha, WI
Norma (Larsen) Wilson Estate, Red Oak, IA

EVENTS

Sankt Hans Aften

Shelby County State Bank, Harlan & Elk Horn, IA

EXHIBIT PUBLICATION

Skål! Scandinavian Spirits

Donors to the online campaign through kickstarter.com are recognized with bold print in the Honor Roll of Contributors.

TRAVELING EXHIBITS

Skål! Scandinavian Spirits

Aalborg and Linie Aquavits, Arcus AS, Hagan, Norway
Albert Victor Ravenholt Fund, Seattle, WA
American Swedish Historical Foundation, Philadelphia, PA
Danish Sisterhood Lodge #15, Burlington, WI
Irene Schmidt, Atlantic, IA
The American Scandinavian Foundation's Finnish Fund &
Helen Lee & Emil Lassen Fund, New York, NY

GENEALOGY CENTER

Sylletta Freeman Birk, Søby, Ærø, Denmark
Carol Brigandi, Omaha, NE
Larry & Janis Fajen, Elk Horn, IA
Merlyn & Jeanette Knudsen, Elk Horn, IA
Suzanne Gilbert & Brian McNabb, Los Angeles, CA
Michele McNabb, Atlantic, IA
J. Lloyd & Janis Pientok, St. Francis, WI
John & Deborah Powers, Austin, TX
Virgil & Charlotte Sorensen, Exira, IA

GRANTS

Collections Department

National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, DC

Curatorial Center

Iowa West Foundation, Council Bluffs, IA
State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, IA

Internships

Danish Interns

Scan Design Foundation, Seattle, WA

MADSEN HYGGEHJØRNE

Jerry & Carolyn Madsen Larson, Saint Paul, MN

MUSEUM PUBLICATION

Iowa Economic Development Authority, Des Moines, IA

STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN DENMARK

Anonymous

Monthly E-News We are looking for individuals, businesses, or organizations to help us cover the costs of our new email system. Contact the Development Department to bring another month of updates to our 5,000+ subscribers for \$200.

wall of honor

The purpose of the Museum of Danish America, among other things, is to tell the continuing story of the Danish immigrant experience and influence in America and the evolving story of Danish-American heritage.

As a way of paying tribute, the Danish Immigrant Wall of Honor was established in 1992 listing the name of an immigrant, their year of entering the United States, and their place of settlement.

The immigrants' stories and family histories, if available, are part of the growing repository at Museum of Danish America's Genealogy Center.

Listed here are the names of the immigrants placed on the Wall in the year 2015:

CONRAD JOHANNES ERIKSEN (1881) Lawrence, Kansas – Conrad Dale Eriksen, Fort Collins, CO

CHRISTIAN JACOBSEN (1906) Britt, Iowa – Patrick & Jill Morelli, Seattle, WA

JOHN (JOHAN) C. KOFOED (1905) West Branch, Iowa – Audrey Kofoed, West Branch, IA; Karen Suchomel, West Branch, IA; and Chris Kofoed, West Branch, IA

LAURITS JACOB KRISTENSEN. CAPTAIN (1941) San Francisco, California – Kaj E. Kristensen, San Francisco, CA

MARTIN JENSEN ODDE (1904) Thermopolis, Wyoming – Virginia Odde, Thermopolis, WY

JOHANNA MATILDA OLESEN (1884) Shelby County, Iowa – Shirley Heilesen Doonan, Alexandria, MN

NIELS OLSEN & KAREN ANDERSEN OLSEN (1881) & (1882) Ruthton, Minnesota – Alvin Barentsen, Powers Lake, ND; Shirley A. (Svendsen) Christiansen, Mill Creek, WA; Kitty L. (Svendsen) Mercie, Marshall, MN; Robert Olsen, Arden Hills, MN; Laura M. (Thomsen) Stransky, Durango, CO; Maren A. Stransky, Durango, CO; Darrel Svendsen; Randy Svendsen, Minneapolis, MN; Steven M. Svendsen, St. Marys, GA; Paul D. Thomsen, Tyler, MN; Anita J. (Thomsen) Young, Eden Prairie, MN

WILLIAM SVENDSEN & MARIE JENSEN

SVENDSEN (1878) & (1869) Tyler, Minnesota – Alvin Barentsen, Powers Lake, ND; Shirley A. (Svendsen) Christiansen, Mill Creek, WA; Kitty L. (Svendsen) Mercie, Marshall, MN; Robert Olsen, Arden Hills, MN; Laura M. (Thomsen) Stransky, Durango, CO; Maren A. Stransky, Durango, CO; Randy Svendsen, Minneapolis, MN; Steven M. Svendsen, St. Marys, GA; Darrel Svendsen; Paul D. Thomsen, Tyler, MN; Anita J. (Thomsen) Young, Eden Prairie, MN

JEPPE THOMSEN & BODIL MARIE PETERSEN

THOMSEN (1893) & (1894) Viborg, South Dakota - Alvin Barentsen, Powers Lake, ND; Jerome C. Jorgenson, Minot, ND; Marty L. Jorgenson, Minot, ND; Eric Thomsen, Plainfield, IL; Leon R. Thomsen, Naperville, IL; Lowell A. Thomsen, Tyler, MN; Marvin L. Thomsen, Pipestone, MN; Paul D. Thomsen, Tyler, MN; Joyce E. (Thomsen) Stransky, Durango, CO; Laura M. (Thomsen) Stransky, Durango, CO; Maren A. Stransky, Durango, CO; Carole A. (Thomsen) Wiese, Worthington, MN; Anita J. (Thomsen) Young, Eden Prairie, MN

THOMAS JEPSEN THOMSEN

(1894) Tyler, Minnesota - Jerome C. Jorgenson, Minot, ND; Marty L. Jorgenson, Minot, ND; Eric Thomsen, Plainfield, IL; Leon R. Thomsen, Naperville, IL; Lowell A. Thomsen, Tyler, MN; Marvin L. Thomsen, Pipestone, MN; Paul D. Thomsen, Tyler, MN; Joyce E. (Thomsen) Stransky, Durango, CO; Laura M. (Thomsen) Stransky, Durango, CO; Maren A. Stransky, Durango, CO; Carole A. (Thomsen) Wiese, Worthington, MN; Anita J. (Thomsen) Young, Eden Prairie, MN



By
Deb
Christensen
Larsen

memorials

The Museum of Danish America is the grateful recipient of gifts made in memory of deceased friends and relatives.

Delbert Andersen
Hakon Andersen
Judy Andersen
Dr. Kenneth N. Andersen
Lillian Feddersen Barnard
Henning Kildalh Bitz
Ruth Hansen Boast
Dan Bonde
Dorothy Pedersen Book
Charles E. R. Boye
Charlie Brehm
Max R. Brodersen
Robert Warren Brown
Bendix & Ida Bruun (Brown)
David Byrd
Byriel Family
Carma Marie
Jens T. Carstensen
C. Clifford Christensen
Clarice Christensen
Cliff Christensen
Karl Christensen
Lloyd Christensen
Max Christensen
Virginia Christensen
C. Arthur Christiansen
Elna Marie Christophersen
Jens & Elna Christophersen
Glen Clemens
Elna Nelson Crick
Magnus & Esther Cryberg
Jens Jorgensen Danger
Robert Allen Eagen
Edith Eastergard
Augusta Mae Eiermann
Dave Esbeck
Hans & Mathilda Farstrup
Hans Frederick Festersen
Mrs. Hannah Friis
E. W. Frost
Stella Gibson-Flansburg
Bernal Gregersen
Harvey H. Greve
Ila Hagen

Karen Haigh
Andrew Hansen
Clifford K. & A. Veola (Schjodt) Hansen
Ethan L. Hansen
John P. & Annie Hansen
Mads Lauritsen Hansen & Christina Rattenborg Hansen
Stanley Hansen
Thorvald Hansen
Mogens Hempel
Herbert Hjortsvang
Emery Hoegh
Hans & Genevieve Hoiberg
Merlin J. Holland
Sally Hoppe
Valdemar E. Hoppe
Joan Ida Hudziak
Ahlmann "Al" Iversen
Alfred & Asta Iversen
Marion Iversen
Johannes Jaeger
Andrew & Gladys (Rasmussen) Jensen
Arne C. Jensen
Bill Jensen
Craig Jensen
Ellen Jensen
Elmer Jensen
Eugene T. Jensen and father
Harald C. Jensen
Henry & Alma Jensen
James & Dagmar Jensen
Janell A. Jensen
Oluf Jensen
Rhonda Jensen
Russell P. Jensen
Yvonne Jensen
James Jepsen
Hans & Carrie Jersild
Charles Christian Johnson
Donald E. Johnson
Ronald N. Johnson
Iver & Marie Jorgensen
Doc Jim & Minnie Jorgensen
Sylvia Juhl
Karen Margrethe Thomsen-Kadgihn
Jimmie Kelgor
Ranny & Rhoda Kelloway
Evelyn Kjestina Jessen Kelso

Tage Ketelsen
Hans Kiehn
Mogens Kiehn
Kathryn Kline
Christian R. Kloster
Eric Carsten Kloth
Mathias B. Kolding
Dennis Krogsgaard
Ruth Ellen Kromann
Kuhres – Rasmussens of Warren, PA
Robert K. Lackey
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Kurt Klarskov Larsen
Paul C. Larsen
Paul M. & Johanne Larsen
Richard Larsen
Donna Lee Larson
Nita Larson
Dorothea Laursen
Marvin P. Laursen
James Beckwith Lindberg
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Harald Hakon Madsen
Dr. Paul O. Madsen
Cayman Marie
H.C. Mathison
Mary Julienne Jensen McDonald
Valborg Henriksen McKinzie
Elsie Rasmussen McNabb
Patricia Ann McNabb
Ib Melchior
Soren Miller
Lucille Nelsen
Larry A. Nelson
Carl Nielsen
Hans Thyge Nielsen
Jim Nielsen
Marie Nielsen
Marilyn & LeVern Nielsen
Maynard Nielsen
Tom Nielsen
Virginia Nielsen
Eric & Joan Norgaard
Frances Jensen Norton
Clifford P. Oleson
Elinor Olsen
Mary Bethel Olsen
Ole & Marie Olsen
Oluf & Vera (Paulsen) Olson
Raymond Paulsen

Anna M. Pedersen
Gordon Pedersen
LeRoy Pedersen
Lilly Pedersen
Niels M. Pedersen
Hans & Ivy Peitersen
Pola Peters
Adolf & Marie Petersen
Allen & Clara Petersen
Dale Petersen
Darwin Petersen
Harry & Frances Petersen
Mr. & Mrs. James Petersen
Norma I. Petersen
Ruth Petersen
Else Pitcher
Delbert Rasmussen
Junior Marion Rasmussen
Lynn Richmond
Gary Rosenboom
Andrew & Rosa Rosenkild
Winfred M. Ross
Charles E. Routhie
Kevin Ruggaard
Knutte Ruggaard
Albert Martin Jensen Schjodt
Egon Simonsen
Catrine Buhl Skow
Christian A. Skow
Harold C. Skow
Ann L. Slaughter
Rosemary Soe
Hans Sorensen
Kenneth Sorensen
Oluf Peter Edvard Sorensen
Delbert L. Steen
Neoma Steen
Poul & Elie Steffensen
Eg Sten
C.A. Stub & Anna Juhl Stub
Larry Svendsen
Emma Hansen Swendiman
Christen Moeller Sweningsen
Jan Thiesen
Axel E. Thomsen
Peter Thomsen
Ethel (Larson) Torneten
Al Traaseth
Ardis Tuttle
Svend Waendelin
Walter Westergaard
Norman Wittrup
John & Mary Belle Witzel
Carl Wiuff & Valborg Andersen Wiuff

in honor

The Museum of Danish America receives many contributions as gifts to honor beloved family members and friends on special occasions. In 2015 the following people were honored:

Dale Andersen
Muriel Bacon
Jens & Elna Christophersen
Jim & Janet Borge Crowle's 50th anniversary
Schleswig-Holstein exhibit at the Danish American Center,
Minneapolis, MN
Danish Club of Tucson
Lillian Eggers
Esther Frost
Aage & Kamma Grumstrup
Stew & LeNore Hansen
Deborah Jensen Hjortsvang
Chester J. Holland

June Elaine (Jensen) Holman
Miles Jeffry Hommel
Lena Humber
Kenneth & Edie Jensen
LeRoy B. Jensen
Christian & Laura Jepsen
Niels W. & Ingrid H. Jorgensen
Yvonne & Daniel Larsen
Bill & Gloria Layton
Lisa, Lori & Lana
Michele Christine McNabb's birthday
Mettie Miller
Maerete Nieto's birthday
Folmer & Vera Nyby's 65th wedding anniversary
Poul & Benedikte Ehlers Olesen
The Roge and Egeland Families
Angela Stanford's work at the museum
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 Steven & Cynthia Shove, Gig Harbor, WA
 Renee Showalter-Hanson, Minnetonka, MN
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 Betty Sievers, Audubon, IA
 James & Jane Simon, Ames, IA
 Arnold & Helen Skov, Alden, MN
 Doris Skow, Santa Clara, CA
 Jim Sleister, West Burlington, IA
 Shirley Small, Fremont, NE
 Edgar & Louella Smith, Moorhead, MN
 Edna Smith, South Dayton, NY
 Gerald & Diane Smith, Gregory, SD
 Randall & Marie Smith, Lincoln, NE
Marc Solondz, Livingston, NJ
 Carl & Gloria Sorensen, Glendale, CA
 Dale Sorensen, Clear Lake, IA
 Jorgen & Gerda Sorensen, Eugene, OR
 Margaret Sorensen, Grand Island, NE
 Martin & Linda Sorensen, Lombard, IL
 Richard & Carol Sorensen, Independence, MO
 Robert & Nerita Sorensen, Walnut, IA
Sandra Sothman Tighe, Atlantic, IA
 Peter & Karolyn Spirup, Oregon City, OR
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 Ruth Steffensen, Paradise, CA
Kenneth Steiness, Phoenix, AZ
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David & MaryAnn Stokes, Livonia, MI
 Arlene Stork, Arlington, NE
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 Joan Tange, Cedar Falls, IA
 Mabel Terry, Muscatine, IA

Mary Thomas, West Allis, WI
 Finn Thomsen, Aalborg, Denmark
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 Fritz & Janice Tiarks, Harlan, IA
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corrections

Every effort has been made to ensure that all information contained in the 2015 Annual Report of Contributions is accurate. We respectfully regret and apologize for any omissions, misspellings, or misplacements. Please contact the Development Department with any questions or corrections.

in remembrance

Washington State Senator Harriet Albertsen Spanel, originally of Audubon, Iowa, passed away in early February 2016. Among her many other accomplishments, Harriet was a Past President of the Museum of Danish America.

In the span of just a month, the museum also suffered the loss of two other former board members, namely Arvid Bollesen of Tustin, California and Bill Jensen of Des Moines, Iowa. Our heartfelt condolences to their families.



harriet's authentic danish rye bread

Recipe of Harriet Albertsen Spanel from Arnbjorn Lomstein of Strib, Middelfart, Denmark

In 1983, I carried the sourdough starter home in a glass jar in my carry-on bag!

1. Bring 1 liter of water to a boil and add 500 grams of whole rye grain and 500 grams of slightly-crushed rye.
2. Cool to lukewarm, then add sourdough starter, 3 T. salt, 500 grams of ground rye, 500 grams of regular wheat (white) flour, and 1 liter of lukewarm water.
3. Mix it well, cover with cloth, and set away for 16 – 24 hours.
4. Take out sourdough for next time! Keep it in jar in the refrigerator.
5. To the rest, add and mix thoroughly ½ liter of malt beer (1 bottle plus water to make ½ liter), lukewarm, and 1 kilogram of ground rye.
6. Prepare 3, 2-liter pans. Form dough in pans with a spoon and raise for 2-3 hours (I actually put it in a barely-warm oven, since my house isn't always that warm!)
7. Bake on a low rack for 1 ¾ hours at 180C (about 355F). Brush tops with water for the first 15 minutes. Butter top when removed from oven.

NOTES: Use only wood or glass bowls and utensils - never metal. Whole rye is not always easy to find. I buy it at my local food coop or from the local organic mill (my neighbor used to own it, which was convenient). I crush the rye grain in my blender to get it. I used to use Elephant or Giraffe Danish beer, but don't find it anymore, so I use a local brew!

Membership Notice Please note the expiration date of your membership on the mailing label. Non-member 2015 donors receive a copy of this issue and Annual Report in acknowledgement of their generosity. We invite their membership.

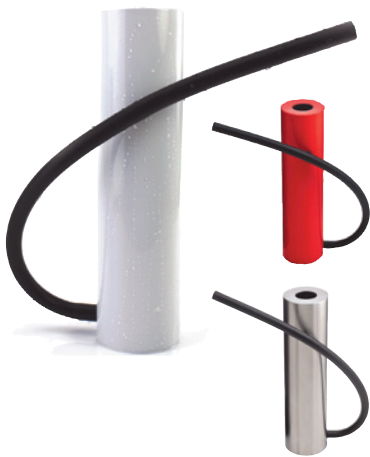


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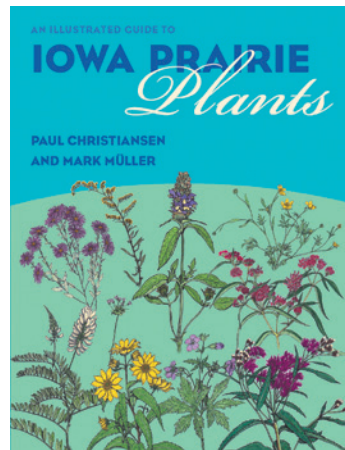
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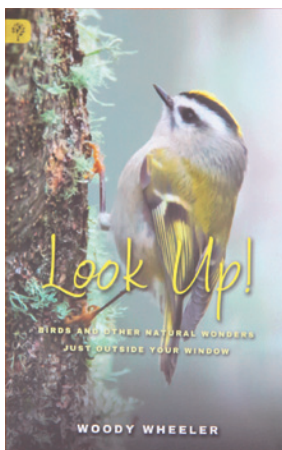
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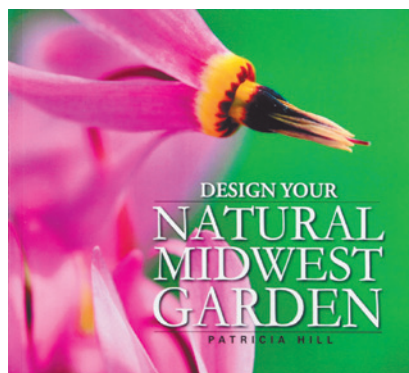
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