

america|letter

SUMMER 2017 | A BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE MUSEUM OF DANISH AMERICA

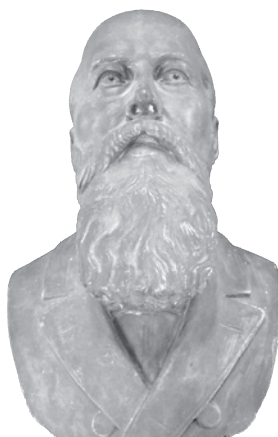


Sketch for the Scheherazade tapestry.
Gouache on paper, Björn Wiinblad, 1971.

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ON THE COVER

See if you can find this piece of the tapestry on page 12.

America Letter

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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 magazine *America Letter* because we also want to tell the good news about the museum and encourage people to join us!

To Contact Staff Use the prefix for the staff member shown after E:, followed by @danishmuseum.org.

director's corner

Hej allesammen!

I want to kick off this edition of the *America Letter* with a very important announcement. As of February 2017, our **Museum of Danish America is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums!** Fewer than three percent of museums achieve this honor! This has been a strategic goal for a long time, and we are very grateful to everyone who helped us achieve this crucial milestone in our institutional history. Allow me to share a quote from the site visit report:

“The Museum of Danish America appears to sit in blissful, rural isolation overlooking the rolling agricultural hills of Western Iowa. The building’s contemporary design references the Danish architectural roots of its founders and subjects – Danish immigrants to America. On closer inspection, the building and grounds, programs and exhibitions, and its staff, volunteers and board members slowly reveal depths of hidden strength, purposeful activity, and sophistication. All bear witness to the ability of the museum to evolve and address both new challenges and opportunities.”

It is that very ability to evolve and look ahead to the future that defines who we are as an institution. Being the national museum in a rural location means that we must reach out and be present wherever Danish America unfolds. We do this with our travelling exhibits, our strategic partnerships, and our online presence—and by having amazing individuals from all over the country serve on our board. Our vision is to preserve the immigrant story while simultaneously informing America about modern-day Denmark, strengthening the ties between our two countries, and being an active participant in the ongoing dialogue on what it means to be Danish, American, and Danish American.

The Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park is a perfect expression of the duality we must embrace. On one hand, the reconstructed landscape tells the story of the prairie that first faced the Danish settlers when they arrived in our part of Iowa. On the other hand, it demonstrates local sourcing and ecological sustainability, thus following the narrative of modern Danish values. As the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has stated, Denmark prides itself on being “one of the world’s leading countries when it comes to sustainable development.”

Another expression of this broader scope is apparent in our redesigned core exhibit, which opened in May. *Danish Roots, American Dreams* covers 14,000 years of history and takes our visitors on a tour from the earliest evidence of settlers in Denmark up to present day, while still honoring the unique material culture. Aside from telling a larger story, the new exhibit looks fantastic. With the help of our Scan Design Foundation interns and many experts from Denmark and America who contributed content, our Albert Ravenholt Curator of Danish-American Culture, Tova Brandt, has done an amazing job on the exhibit. Special credit goes to our Facilities Manager Tim Fredericksen for having painted walls and stained wood for a total of 167 hours (!) in preparation for the opening of the exhibit. It came together perfectly and makes our already gorgeous facility even better; we cannot wait for you to see it!

Whether you arrive at our museum for the first time, or you are one of our many repeat customers, our campus should fill you with a sense of pride and wonder. This entire project has only been possible because our community came together as one and decided that the Danish American story was too important to lose. It still is.



By
Rasmus
Thøgersen

ACTIVE PRESERVATION

Elsewhere in this edition of the *America Letter*, our Genealogy Center Manager, Kara McKeever, has a very informative piece on the role modern DNA testing can play. DNA research represents a very quantifiable way to learn more about your family history. Another, more qualitative and direct approach, is to interview your family members about their lives. Those of you familiar with the StoryCorps project will recognize the idea of having friends and family members interviewing each other.

In 2015 I sat down with my *Bedstemor* Connie—my only living grandparent—to interview her about her life. She was a child during the German occupation. Those dramatic stories are important because they weave her personal story into the much larger tapestry that was Denmark, Europe, and the world during one of the most chaotic and transformative times in recorded history. Her accounts of those dramatic events are already family legend, but I, personally, found that the best stories she told me were about basic things that she had never previously thought to share. How she would sneak off with her older sister and buy pastries with part of the salary she made at her first job. How she wasn't all that interested in my grandfather to begin with and didn't want to settle down. The time she was sent to the countryside to gain weight, and the importance of her first mittens. The best narrator of personal stories will always be the main character themselves.

Our staff and volunteers do great work sorting through the letters, diaries, and photographs we receive from you. A picture says more than a thousand words, but sometimes we do need a handful of words to go along to provide crucial context and information. I urge you to be proactive in this!

Recording your living family is obviously helpful if you wish to donate your history to our museum, but, more importantly, it can be a deeply rewarding experience for everyone involved. It shows interest and respect for the life they led, and I guarantee it will lead to unexpected similarities between their life and your own. Not only will you preserve the heritage of your family and pass the stories down to your own children, but you will also get to share precious moments with your parents or grandparents.

If you are a grandparent and want your children or grandchildren to interview you, but worry they don't have the time, let me refer you to my *Bedstemor* Connie's favorite phrase: "*Den tid der går godt, kommer ikke dårligt tilbage,*" which loosely translates to, "Time well spent won't come back to bite you." It will be worth it. Bribe them with kringle, if you must!

The Museum of Danish America will continue to play an active role in the preservation of our evolving Danish-American heritage and culture. Through your own efforts documenting your family history and your support of our museum, we hope you will do the same.

board of directors meet in new jersey

JUNE 8 – 10, 2017

The June meeting of the board of directors was held at the Danish Home in Edison, New Jersey. The “Home” is also the site of DANE – Danish Archive North East, and houses a wonderful collection of memorabilia and archival material. Staff members Angela Stanford and Kara McKeever met with a group to share their expertise in museum artifact collections care and genealogy.

Committee and board meetings were held at DANE, and when meetings adjourned we gathered for a picnic on Saturday afternoon with museum members, as well as members of DANE, the Danish Home Board, Danish Sisterhood Freja Lodge #36, and Brotherhood Thor Lodge #46.

Our board members are all ages, from all geographic locations, and walks of life. Terms are for three years, and you may serve two terms consecutively for a total of six. To find out more about how you may serve – perhaps not now, but sometime in the future – please contact us.

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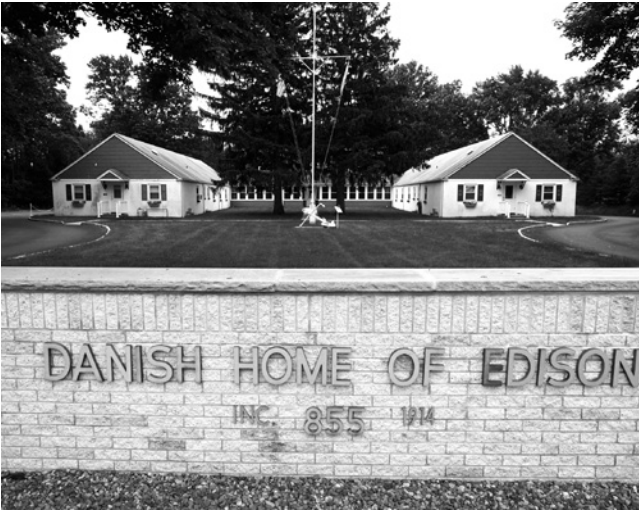
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By
**Terri
Johnson**

If you would like to learn more about becoming a member of the board of directors, please contact us at the museum.



Photos from board meeting and public reception courtesy of David Hendee, Omaha, NE.

bjørn wiinblad – elite and popular

Ebbe Mørk is a Danish journalist, editor, and author. He served as a culture writer for the Danish newspaper Politiken from 1966-2001 where he was also a daily essay editor and a dance critic for many years. He has been chairman of the Bartholin International Ballet Seminar in Copenhagen and a member of the Theater Council under the Ministry of Culture. He is the author of several books. Here, he reflects on the work of personal acquaintance and internationally acclaimed decorative artist Bjørn Wiinblad.

By nature, Bjørn Wiinblad (1918-2006) was a romantic. In Denmark one would, with a word from Danish Romantic poetry, call him “Nature’s merry son.” As an artist he was the rare combination of being at once elite and popular. He created simple, everyday objects for mass production, unique set designs for the world stages, exquisite posters, and elegant shapes in bronze, which in their sternness are in stark contrast to his lavishly decorated ceramics, often in blue on a light background.

Wiinblad never hid the fact that he had been inspired by the Chinese blue and white porcelain that was exported to Europe in the 1600s and 1700s, as well as by the more rustic pottery of the Dutch Delft workshops from the same period. Both became collectibles to him, and they decorated his home, The Blue House, in a suburb of Copenhagen. The Blue House held a wealth of what Wiinblad, in his role as collector, called “moments of creation.” These “moments” stretched from Egyptian and Roman glass to pre-Columbian jars and exquisite ceramics by the best of his contemporaries.

Indeed, diversity is a characteristic represented in the whole of Wiinblad’s life and work. He loved splendor and diversity as much as simplicity in form. His talent was a never-ending stream of ideas controlled by a musicality in his mind that made him compose in unmistakable shapes and colors. His works always had an appeal to the spontaneous joy of life and never made claims to be perceived as profound and analytical art.

When he was once taunted by a more elitist critic, he said, somewhat hurt but very honestly, that he would be happy if his work would one day be seen as exactly on-par with the popular, everyday, and ornamental ceramics that came from the Delft workshops.

BEGINNINGS

In the first years of the Second World War (1940-1945), when Denmark was occupied by Germany, Wiinblad was accepted into the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts after having been educated as a typographer. It was first and foremost his obvious drawing talent that gained him entry, and if one sees some of these early, rather large pencil drawings, which are technically sublime, one notices a clear inspiration from the best of Cubism - serious lines, very different from those he started to cultivate already in his first gallery exhibition in 1945.



By
Ebbe Mørk for the Museum of Danish America
Translated in part by Peter Hansen, Scan Design Intern

This debut exhibition enjoyed a very positive reception. One of the leading Danish critics at the time wrote: “Bold in the use of technique, surprising in ornamental fantasy, and cheerful in the choice of subject. A characteristic of his decorative perception is the joy in filling out the surface until the bursting point with a multitude of baroque, wide-swinging figures which bring dramatic oppositions in lines and colors without getting out of balance...”

The same could have been written about his very last works.

Wiinblad was popular from his first moments on the art scene. But one is not to forget that in the post-war years, the predominant portion was of “Danish Design.” The term arose in step with cutting-edge architects such as Finn Juhl, Hans Wegner, and Børge Mogensen, who were all stern in their lines and definitely not bold in their colors.

In Denmark, it was the ceramics factory Nymøller that initiated the first mass production of Wiinblad’s everyday objects. However, it was the German company Rosenthal that, in 1957, launched the

coming years’ worldwide sales successes, especially in glass and porcelain. Here, a close and lifelong collaboration and familiar friendship formed between Phillip Rosenthal, his wife Lavinia Rosenthal, and Wiinblad. This led to international connections, particularly with the American department store Niemann Marcus, whose Christmas catalog had Wiinblad on its covers for many years. One year he designed something as ordinary as playing cards, two sets in a box, and they were sold from coast to coast in the thousands.



01. The Blue Dining Room in Wiinblad’s home and studio, *The Blue House* Photo by Ole Akhøj. ▶

Lavinia Rosenthal accompanied Wiinblad on promotional trips; I personally remember them from a session in Bloomingdale's in New York, where Bjørn charmed everyone. He was also something of a performer. He loved the theater in all its expressions: drama, opera, and ballet. They were art forms he had been raised with. In his childhood and younger years, he had an uncle who was one of Denmark's leading theater critics, and this "Uncle Emil" frequently took his nephew to performances.

THE STAGE

Combined with a spiritual capacity and capability of affecting a dramatic situation, his drawings led Wiinblad to stage design. If you try to capture a certain style in Wiinblad's art, you discover that there is more than just a faint hint of Rococo in his designs for the stage. The word *rocaille*, characterizing the ornaments and asymmetric figures of this graceful style, is suddenly drawn out of its historical context and becomes of current interest in his works. Oriental fervor and artistic idiom also play a role. These are rare for a Danish artist—exuberant, almost extravagant. But Wiinblad was a gifted narrator in form and colors, a highly imaginative storyteller from Hans Christian Andersen's own country, after all.

Wiinblad started his stage career in the light and merry genre of ballet, where his flair for the piquantly decorative more than once added color to the show. He took his first ballet steps in Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens. The more than 150-year-old Pantomime Theater performed a ballet by August Bournonville (1805-1879), the father of the Danish classic ballet tradition (today known as "*Konservatoriet*," and mostly performed in a more abbreviated form). Here, Wiinblad brought us back to the same rehearsal rooms where Degas painted his impressions of ballet training.

Later on, the culmination of Wiinblad's devotion and love for the dance came in his designs for

"The Nutcracker" at the Royal Danish Theater in Copenhagen in 1971. (*Editor's note:* This was the first ballet transmitted directly on Danish national television.) Here he displayed a veritable Christmas tale with his special flair for appealing to children from the stage. Without in any way cutting out the deeper drama of the ballet, he peopled the stage with dolls and toys, mice, and tin soldiers on horseback. When her dream takes little Clara into the Flower Waltz, she is placed in the petals of a huge flower where she sits, watching the dancing flowers.



02. Phillip Rosenthal, left, and Bjørn Wiinblad

Many more remarkable performances followed around the world. One of his biggest tasks for the stage came as early as 1965 with William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for the opening of the Dallas Theater Center, built by Frank Lloyd Wright. One needn't be familiar with the performance to recognize that all the sketches for sets and costumes are masterpieces.

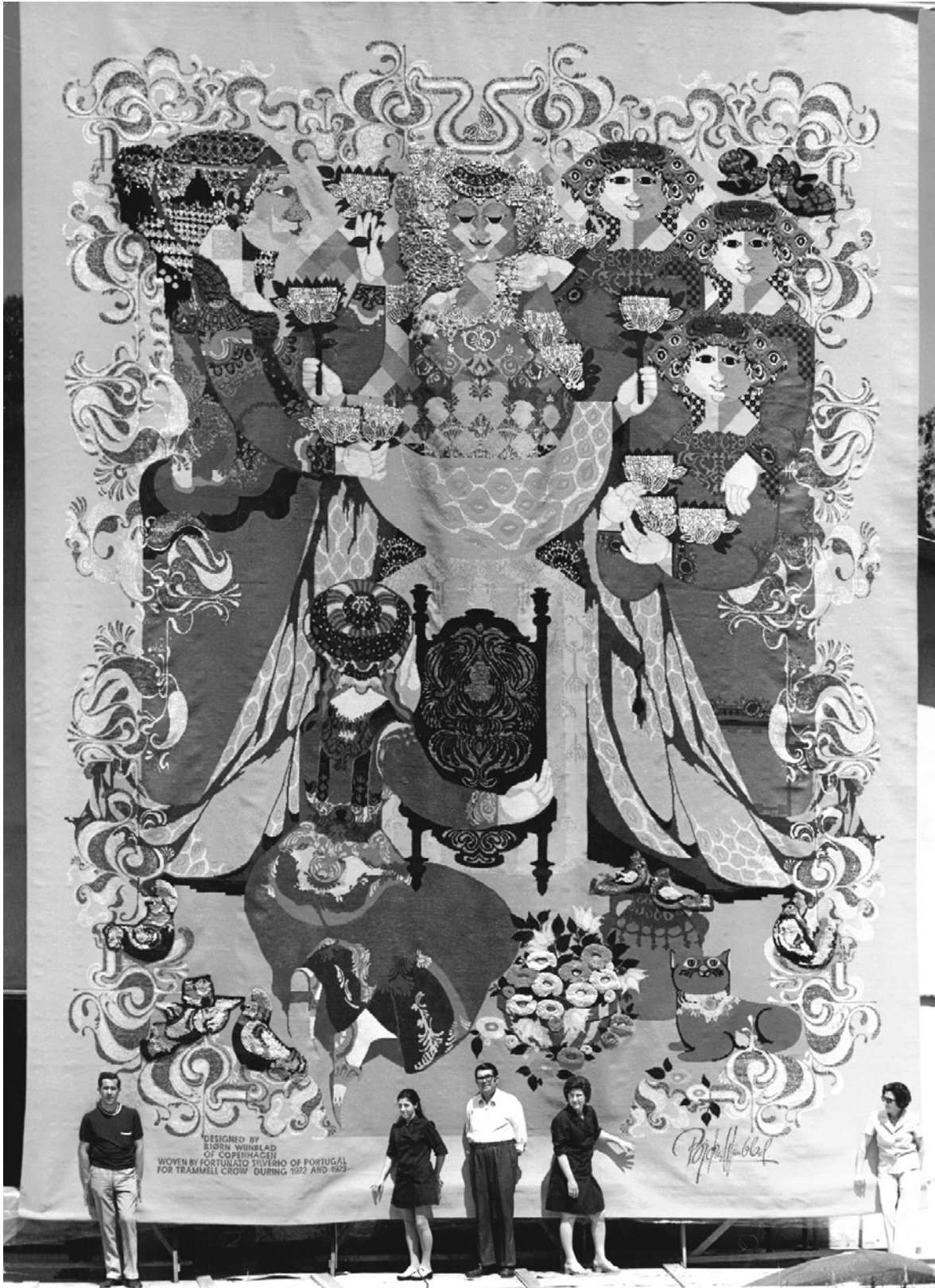
In an introduction for a published collection of lithographs from *The Tempest*, Wiinblad wrote: "For me *The Tempest* is a wonderful story, a fairytale... in my sets and costumes I am inspired equally by the play and by the stage and room where the performance has to take place... to transfer the audience into another world... In contrast to the islanders, who are people of the elements in contact with spirits, are real people, gentlemen of the world... in costumes of the period in which we have placed the play."

ART FOR PRINT

Wiinblad's posters have been naturally influenced by his love of theater. Specifically, as a poster artist, his ability to catch people's attention is displayed in a clear and steady line. Oftentimes his posters served charitable causes, e.g. Alzheimer's Disease, the hearing and visually impaired. In connection with the Special Olympics, he drew a figure in a wheelchair where the wheels rotated like the Olympic rings. Here it was the simplicity of the idea that caught on.

In his many book illustrations, he showed himself as a well-read person. In a big and collected works edition of *One Thousand and One Nights (Arabian Nights)*, he found material which suited his imaginative "oriental" style especially well. A series of the images were produced as large tapestries; the largest measures 32' 9" x 22' 11", woven in Portugal. They were originally hung at the Dallas Apparel Mart.





04

04. *Fifth Theme*, tapestry in woven wool, 1972-73. The largest tapestry in Wiinblad's Scheherazade series for the Dallas Apparel Mart shown just after its completion in 1973. Pictured are the weaving mill owners and the weavers responsible for transferring Wiinblad's gouache to a weaving cartoon.

HIS LEGACY

On the whole, Wiinblad came to influence a series of international spaces: The Hilton Hotel in London, The Flower Restaurant and The Garden Room in Chicago, The Mermaid Bar in Dallas, The Mariposa Room in Houston, the tea restaurant in Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan, and Hotel d'Angleterre in Copenhagen. The group of sculptures *The Gossips*, which consists of four 5' 6" tall women cast in bronze, still stands in the bar in Hilton Anatole in Dallas. He is represented with works in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, as well as innumerable other places around the world.

It was a joy to have Bjørn as a friend. I knew him for more than 40 years until his death in 2006 at almost 90 years old. He was one of the most generous and loyal people I have known. He loved parties and traveling. Year after year he invited a circle of friends to the famous Salzburg Festival and the Bayreuth Festival or - the Händel Festival in Karlsruhe.

His dinner parties in The Blue House in Lyngby always started in the workshop, where a big calendar revealed all appointments and orders for new works. He shared what he was working on, always convinced that this was going to be the best he had ever done. There was always music in the house, and he could actually himself sit at an

old piano and play movements from Mozart sonatas. There were flowers everywhere in the house. The table setting was with antique Chinese plates and dishes; the glasses were of his own design, or pulled from his collections. There were seldom more than a dozen people at the table in the dining room, where the ceiling was decorated with his own tiles. He was a warm host.

The last "party" in The Blue House was Bjørn's funeral, a sunny June day when all his friends from Denmark and abroad were gathered in celebration of that long, rich life - champagne to the last.



The traveling exhibition "The Whimsical World of Bjørn Wiinblad," produced by the Arken Museum of Modern Art (Ishøj, Denmark) and organized for an American tour by our museum, is open at the **Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle** July 28 - November 5, 2017. This article and the exhibition's tour was made possible through the generosity of Fabrikant Mads Clausens Fond - Danfoss. Exhibition support also received from the Albert V. Ravenholt Fund, Seattle, Washington, Iowa Arts Council, Des Moines, Iowa, and The Danish Home, Croton-on-Hudson, New York. Additional tour support from the American-Scandinavian Foundation, New York, New York.

05. Playing cards designed by Wiinblad for Nieman Marcus.

not the usual suspects

Cups and saucers, Christmas plates, drinking glasses, vases, and candlesticks – these are the typical things one thinks of when imagining pieces made of glass, porcelain, stoneware, and similar materials. The collection here at the Museum of Danish America certainly boasts many examples of all of these “usual suspects.” In fact, there are more than 170 figurines and over 630 commemorative plates in the permanent collection. That’s a lot of breakables!

There are plenty of examples of other ways these materials have been used. Read on for just a few!

A disc-shaped pin made of porcelain features the blue outline of a Viking ship. Measuring a little more than an inch in diameter and trimmed in gold at the outer edge, it is marked on back with raised letters “BING & GRØNDAHL.” A small brass pin is affixed to the porcelain on back. Rita Hansen, a longtime resident of Kenosha, Wisconsin, owned this

pin. Rita’s parents Christian and Olivia had emigrated separately from Denmark and later married and had two daughters. Both Rita and her sister Kirsten took Civil Service exams and were called into government work in Washington, DC for a time. Rita also served in Iceland, Sweden, and Denmark. She made several trips to see family, each time returning with trinkets and heirlooms.

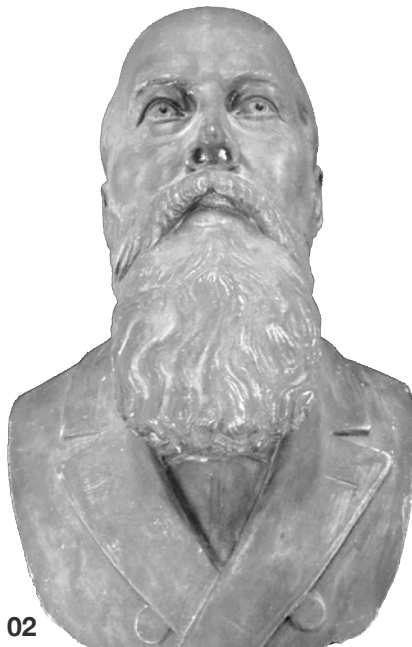
Jes Smidt was a Danish immigrant who travelled in 1882 on the S.S. *Geiserand* and settled first in Clinton, Iowa and later in Milltown, Wisconsin. A woodcarver and cabinet maker, Smidt also did some painting and sculpture work. This plaster bust is one of his works, dating from around the mid-1880s to early

1890s. It features Frederik Lange Grundtvig, son of Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, the famous Danish priest, writer, and founder of the folk school movement. Frederik Lange, following in his father’s footsteps, became pastor of a church in Clinton in 1883. There he struck up a friendship with Smidt, thereby positioning himself to be one of Smidt’s artistic subjects.

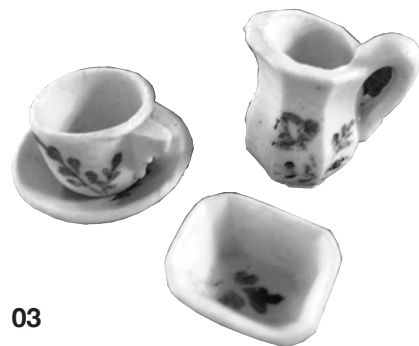
A child’s tiny ceramic tea set came to the museum in 1989. It includes a teapot, cream pitcher, sugar bowl, and four sets of cups and saucers. White and decorated with purple flowers, this set belonged to the donor Catherine Hyatt when she was five years old. Hyatt’s parents, Fred and Margaret, emigrated from Denmark and settled in Omaha, Nebraska where Catherine remained throughout her life. She was educated as a nurse and kept many heirlooms that documented her family.



01



02



03



By
Angela
Stanford

01. Pin 2009.031.018 Donor: Rita Neergaard Hansen. This little Viking ship pin was likely purchased as a souvenir on one of Rita’s trips to Denmark. **02. Bust** 1989.149.003 Donor: Ed Pedersen. Jes Smidt sculpted this 20” tall bust of F.L. Grundtvig during their years in Clinton, Iowa. Smidt also carved a number of church altars, including one in the museum’s collection. **03. Tea Set** 1989.125.055a,b,h,i Donor: Catherine Hyatt. This miniature tea set dates from around 1911. The pitcher shown here only measures about 1 1/4” tall.

Fishermen often used glass weights in the shape of balls because they are shiny and reflect the light, luring fish to their nets. These glass weights, and several more in the collection, were used for that purpose. Colored in variations of blues and greens, all of these weights were brought to the U.S. from Denmark. These pieces range in size from about 2 3/4" in diameter to more than 4".

Artists paint on a number of surfaces – canvases, wood, plastic, and even porcelain tiles. This tile, measuring about 3" square, features an illustration of Dybølle Mølle in Denmark. The donor's parents, Louis and Ellen, immigrated separately from one another, and settled in New York. They and their children returned to Denmark for visits, and in 1958, the donor bought this as a souvenir.

From plates to fishing weights to children's toys, the artifact collection is well populated with fragile objects with a range of sizes and materials, intended uses, and varied histories.



04



05

04. Weights 1987.089.004 Donor: Lulu Johnson, 1996.178.002a,b Donor: Sterling Shreve. The blue fishing weight on the right side of the photo was found along the beach of the North Sea by the donor's mother, Anna. The one seen at the upper left still has its netting attached. **05. Tile** 2015.049.004 Donor: Birte Gerlings. This tile is one of a set of twelve. Other tiles feature figures in folk costumes, Danish landscapes and wildlife, and even the Little Mermaid.

nordic light: paintings by hanne støvring

ON VIEW THROUGH OCTOBER 31

Washes of blues and greens swim across the canvas. Human forms are anonymous in their features, yet universal in their emotions. In one painting, sunshine and misty clouds seem to co-exist. In another, bold reds and yellows pulse with the energy of urban life.

These are the works of Hanne Støvring, a Danish artist currently living and working in New York City. Born in 1978, her creative roots are on the island of Bornholm, where her studio has been located for many years. But her work with the National Gallery of Denmark (*Statens Museum for Kunst*, or SMK) took her to New York, where she directs the American Friends of SMK. Her work within the art world still leaves time for her own artistic creation, and New York City has provided a new influence in the character of her art.

“The pearl of the Baltic Sea - Bornholm - is the home of my inspiration, my stroke and my special light. Summer after summer, I have been sitting on the rocks, the grass, by the sea, in the sand...but most of all in my studio in Gudhjem. Now my studio is in New York – but I still paint life stories, relations and moods in the light of the sun, the moon and the stars... and the city. Human figures move in and out of my canvasses... large, small, young and old - everyone tells the stories and is a part of the Nordic senses and my Danish culture.” – Hanne Støvring

A variety of Hanne's works will be on view at the Museum of Danish America, both those created in the Nordic sunlight and those reflecting a metropolitan flair. She was at the museum in person to open the exhibition, presenting a Brown Bag Lunch program on Thursday, June 22, and a gallery talk on Saturday, June 24.



By
Tova
Brandt

01. *What you want is out there – go for it.* **02.** *You will never know the true value of a moment until it becomes a memory.* **03.** *Secret awakening.*

danish roots, american dreams

NEW CORE EXHIBITIONS NOW OPEN!

New look, new stories, and more photographs and artifacts from the museum's collections – just a taste of what you can expect next time you visit the museum. The new core exhibitions, *Danish Roots, American Dreams*, are now open and ready to welcome visitors of all ages and all backgrounds!

The installation of “Danish Roots, American Dreams” is supported by major gifts from the following:

Humanities Iowa
Glen & Rosa Clemens
The John & Audrey Kofoed Family
Nils & Kathleen Jensen
Danish Sisterhood Lodge #15
(Milwaukee, Wisconsin)



gallery exhibitions in 2017

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

Extended through September 4

***Nordic Light: Paintings by
Hanne Støvring***

June 24 – October 31

***Denmark: America's Smallest
and Biggest Ally***

September 30, 2017 –
September 3, 2018

Home-Grown Art

November 24, 2017 –
June 10, 2018

**EXHIBITIONS ON THE
ROAD IN 2017**

Skål! Scandinavian Spirits

American Swedish Historical
Museum, Philadelphia, PA
Through – September 17

American Swedish Institute,
Minneapolis, MN
November 11, 2017 –
January 7, 2018

***The Whimsical World of
Bjørn Wiinblad***

Nordic Heritage Museum,
Seattle, WA
July 28 – November 5

**NEW BANNER
EXHIBIT ADDED**

Our newest pop-up exhibit,
Hygge, will debut at Greenville,
Michigan's Danish Festival on
August 18. This exhibit was made
possible through the generosity
of Cynthia Larsen Adams & Gary
Adams of Littleton, CO. To rent
this or another exhibit for display
in your community, contact Tova
Brandt.



01. and 02. Sport for Sports' Sake.

events calendar

ART INSTALLATION

Visitors are welcome to participate in the construction and installation of Anni Holm's artwork, "Assimilätus Möbilis," at the museum. Project support in part by a grant from the Iowa Arts Council.

August 14-18, 10 am-4 pm

BROWN BAG LUNCH

ART AND IMMIGRATION

by Anni Holm, a Danish immigrant artist living in West Chicago, Illinois. She will be in residence at the museum this week, completing an art installation in the museum's galleries. Her residency is supported in part by a grant from the Iowa Arts Council.

August 17, Noon
Bro Dining Room

EXHIBIT PREVIEW EVENT

"DENMARK: AMERICA'S BIGGEST AND SMALLEST ALLY"
September 29, 5-7pm

BROWN BAG LUNCH

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

by Paul Johnson, CFP® professional under contract with the museum to assist its donors with planned giving. He will explain some of the mysteries behind different ways that we can support the causes and institutions we care about.

October 19, Noon
Bro Dining Room

"VOICES OF ELLIS ISLAND"

by actor and storyteller Pippa White
October 19
Cottonwood Barn, Kimballton

DINNER AND A MOVIE

THE IDEALIST

Danish film (with English subtitles) about a journalist in the 1980s who starts to investigate a cover-up of nuclear material involved in a 1968 B-52 crash near the Thule air force base in Greenland. Based on a true story.
November 2, 6-8:30pm
Kimballton Town Hall

BROWN BAG LUNCH

IOWA IN WWI

by Leo Landis, curator for the State Historical Museum
November 16, Noon
Bro Dining Room

JULEFEST

November 24-26
Danish Villages

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 to 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 House, Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park, Genealogy Center, and Bedstemor's House.

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

switching places, new faces



NAN DREHER

The Museum of Danish America has seen some big changes in the last six months – we welcomed a new director, received museum accreditation, and are working on changing the core exhibit. I have also made a big change! I was introduced to you in the summer 2016 edition of the *America Letter* as the part-time administrative assistant, but in December, I accepted the full-time position of Design Store Manager. I have loved working for the museum and have especially enjoyed getting to know our Danish interns and the members of the museum.

ERICA FAHN

I would like to introduce myself as the new administrative assistant at the Museum of Danish America. As a third-generation Danish American, currently in the process of learning a little Danish, this position is more than a job for me. In fact, I hesitate to even use the word “job.” It’s much more than that. It’s a calling. An assignment from those who have gone before me.

To live the American Dream as my great grandmother, Anna Katharine Jensen, had hoped for her descendants – yet honoring our Danish Roots by telling her story and the story of every other Danish American that made their way to this country - is not a job. It’s a debt I owe to my ancestors. To be a part of telling their stories to the next generation is humbling to say the least.

In honor of my great grandmother, my husband, our 14-year-old daughter, and I are welcoming a 15-year-old Danish exchange student into our home in Harlan on August 7. Her name is Anna Ellegard Bornhøft. She is coming to us from Roskilde and will stay with us for 10 months.



I am passionate about understanding who we are, where we came from, and where our roots lie — which is why I am incredibly thankful for the opportunity to share the vision and mission of the museum with every new face I meet in the museum or in my personal life.

P.S. Erica has another tie to Danish America - her husband's grandmother, Esther Marie Bonnesen, received the first four-year degree ever awarded by Dana College in May 1922. Dana College was founded by Danish immigrants in 1884.

transfer day on st. croix

Jennifer and I had the pleasure of visiting the U.S. Virgin Islands earlier this year as part of the Rebuild National Park Society's* annual meeting. The meeting was held on St. Croix to coincide with the centennial celebrations for Transfer Day. March 31, 2017 marked the 100-year anniversary of the transfer of the islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John—formerly known as the Danish West Indies—from Denmark to the United States.

Highlights from the trip included a wonderful evening of musical performances at the Island Center and an unforgettable visit to *Skoleskibet Danmark*, a full-rigged ship. The undeniable beauty of St. Croix, dominated by white sand, lush forests, and the azure ocean certainly added to our enjoyment. The main event, however, was the official Transfer Day Celebration.

We had a great day on the harbor in Christiansted in the shadow of Fort Christiansvaern, where the Dannebrog was ceremonially replaced by the Stars and Stripes as the national anthems of the two countries played. A parade was held and dignitaries from near and far gave presentations at the event. Of special interest was the address given by Danish Prime Minister Lars Lykke Rasmussen.

Danes had been present in the Virgin Islands since 1666 and officially formed a colony on St. Croix in 1672. The Danish West Indian Company struggled, for a number of years, to make the colonial venture a profitable one. The islands were largely lawless, and commerce was plagued by constant political turmoil and shifting political alliances of the colonial powers in Europe. In addition to this, piracy was

common at the time, and the area was then, as now, plagued by storms and hurricanes.

Slave trade—and the use of slave labor—became part of the Danish West Indian Company's business in 1674. It wasn't until July 1848, when the Danish Governor-General of the Virgin Islands, Peter Von Scholten, was faced with a slave revolt, that all slaves on the Danish Virgin Islands were emancipated.

Leading up to the meeting, the public conversation in Denmark had revolved around the idea of an apology. Should Denmark officially apologize for engaging in slavery and slave trade more than 150 years ago?



Curious about the history of the U.S. Virgin Islands? It is just one part of the long military relationship between Denmark and the United States. Our exhibit "Denmark – America's Smallest and Biggest Ally" will open on September 30.



By
Rasmus
Thøgersen

*The Rebuild National Park Society is a Danish-American friendship organization. Since 1912 it has held a July 4 weekend festival in Denmark that serves as a homecoming for Danish-Americans. ►

01. *Skoleskibet Danmark* Full-rigged ship

The locals I spoke to were less concerned about this apology. Rather, they echoed the sentiment expressed by the U.S. Virgin Islands Governor Kenneth E. Mapp in his Transfer Day speech. Economic development, access to education, and voting rights for Virgin Islanders were the dominating themes. They are looking to the future and seem much more interested in building a prosperous economic relationship with modern Denmark than dwelling on a highly regrettable past.

The challenge for Prime Minister Rasmussen was to address the history of Danish slavery and slave trade while simultaneously moving the conversation forward—something I believe he did quite well.

With permission from the Prime Minister's Office, we have chosen to print the speech in its entirety on the following pages. It represents a historic landmark in the joint history of our two countries and is worth a read. I especially want to point out two things from his speech.

Firstly, the use of historic resources to reconcile our joint histories. Prime Minister Rasmussen refers to a project

by the Danish National Archives. "*The Danish West Indies – Sources of History*" is a website containing millions of documents that were scanned in 2013-2016 in preparation for the project. The outcome is an impressive combination of traditional conservation methods, large-scale digitization, and storytelling. The purpose was to commemorate the centennial of the transfer and provide broad access to the historic records.

I already mentioned the Governor-General Peter Von Scholten. His story was the one I remember growing up with in Denmark. While he certainly did a lot of good, including the introduction of universal schooling on the islands in 1839, the true heroes were those who openly rebelled against tyranny and oppression. This project by the Danish National Archives ensures that their stories are preserved and available to read online. This is what our memory institutions—libraries, archives and museums—can do. We collect, preserve, and maintain the true record of what took place. Which, in turn, allows us to connect with those who came before in an honest and open way. I encourage you to visit and explore the website ([https://](https://www.virgin-islands-history.org/en/)

www.virgin-islands-history.org/en/) and take a look for yourself. It is impressive in both scope and execution.

In addition to facing the past with open eyes, Prime Minister Rasmussen committed over \$140,000 annually through the Danish Finance Act of 2018 for 10 students from the University of the Virgin Islands to study for a semester at Danish universities. These scholarships will fund both tuition and living costs and are bound to change some lives in very positive ways. Here at the museum, we experience the fantastic benefits of having our Scan Design Foundation Danish interns living with us as they learn about our museum, the United States, and themselves. I, myself, am the product of what happens when a young person decides to travel to another country to see what is out there.

Best of luck to those students who will make the journey to a Denmark that is radically different from the country that sold their islands 100 years ago. They will learn, exchange ideas, and build lasting relationships with their Danish peers. I hope they will combine the best of both of our countries and make the world a better place.



02. Fort Frederik Fort Frederik, also known as Frederiksfort, is a U.S. National Historic Landmark in Frederiksted, USVI. It was built between 1752 and 1760 by Denmark-Norway to defend the economic interests of the natural deep water port of Frederiksted and to ward off pirates. **03. 25-member Copenhagen brass band**

transfer day address

ST. CROIX, MARCH 31, 2017

Your excellency, Governor Mapp.
Your excellency, Secretary Zinke.
Your excellencies.
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is an honour for me to be here today. And a great pleasure to visit your beautiful island for the third time.

My wife and I have been greeted by sincere hospitality from the moment we arrived. For this, I am truly grateful. We are very pleased to be back.

On this exact day – a hundred years ago – the Stars and Stripes of America replaced the Danish Dannebrog as the official flag for the Virgin Islands.

A hundred years. It is a long time ago.

But the preceding years under the Danish flag are not forgotten. Neither in Denmark nor at the Virgin Islands.

Still today city names such as Frederiksted and Christiansted remind us of our common past. And so do the many houses and buildings, that still bear the marks of Danish presence.

I'm pleased, that thousands of my fellow countrymen visit your beautiful island every year – and this year in particular.

They feel a special bond of friendship with you and your home. So do I, as I stand here on this historic day. A touch of common destiny that time cannot erase.

But although we share a common past – we have not always shared the same story about that past.

When I was a child – the popular Danish story about the West Indies, was a romantic one. Exotic islands. Peaceful coexistence.

I even remember the tales of the Danish king, who was the first in the world to ban slave trade. A pioneer of humanity, we were told. A hero.

But most of you were told and lived a different story. The true story.

A story of how slavery continued after the ban. How too often conditions only improved on paper. And of how many of your ancestors continued to suffer.

The true heroes were the men and women who stood up to the injustice.

Over the years our history has been explored and questioned.

And today we can study the millions of historic documents and pictures from the Virgin Islands. They are now available online thanks to the Danish National Archives. Many of them so precious, they have been proclaimed as world heritage by UNESCO.

Sure, it is important to get the facts right.

But I suggest we also look somewhere else: In our hearts and minds.

I suggest we ask ourselves: Is there any justification for suppression? Any argument for treating people brutally?

We all know the answer.

The answer is no!

There is no justification – what so ever – for the exploitation of men, women and children that took place in these islands under Danish flag.

There is no justification for slavery. It is unforgiveable.

Unforgiveable.

It is a dark and disgraceful part of Danish history.

So when I search my heart. My mind. There is no doubt: The true heroes of the past are the men and women of the Virgin Islands who defied suppression.



By
Prime Minister
Lars Løkke Rasmussen



They were not given their freedom. They took it back. Led by brave souls. Who risked their own lives to set their fellow countrymen free.

Men like General Buddhoe.

Who led the rebellion of 1848. Riding on a white horse. Fighting for emancipation. Imprisoned. Deported. But at the end successful – fulfilling his mission.

Fierce women like Queen Mary, Queen Agnes and Queen Mathilda.

Who rebelled against the appalling living conditions, healthcare, education and wages. Imprisoned in Denmark, right next to the Danish parliament!

Patriots like David Hamilton Jackson.

A teacher and idealist. Who dedicated his life to improve the conditions for the people of St. Croix. By peaceful but passionate means.

The story goes, that when David Hamilton Jackson once criticized the Danish Governor in a harsh tone, the Governor replied by calling Jackson a dreamer.

This was probably meant as an insult – but isn't it rather a badge of honor?

Only when we dare to dream of a brighter future will the beacons of freedom be at sight.

This was the case for Mr. Hamilton Jackson. And that is the case for us all.

Dear friends.

We must acknowledge that what happened in the past has affected where the islands are today. We cannot undo the past. What we can do is to improve the future.

Only by freeing ourselves from the nightmares of the past can we make our dreams of the future come true.

This is the lesson from the true heroes of the past. Despite overwhelming obstacles, their ideals of liberty, equality and dignity prevailed.

Today, the people of Denmark and the people of the Virgin Islands share common historic bonds.

Today, we share the same view of history.

And today, we share the same heroes.

And hopefully, we shall also share a bright future.

Tomorrow, I will make a visit to the University of the Virgin Islands, where I will launch a five year scholarship program.

It is my hope, that this new program will pave the way for further development in both our countries. And bring new hope and opportunities to young people in the Virgin Islands.

The youth of our countries are the future. They must keep their dreams alive. Take destiny into their own hands.

Just as the heroes of the past did. And this time around, we will not hold them back. We will push them forward.

I wish you all a meaningful and memorable Transfer Day.

Thank you.



04. Transfer Day Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen with U.S. Virgin Islands Governor Kenneth Mapp.

dna testing: an exciting new tool for family history research

By now you've seen the ads for DNA tests, or heard of someone who has taken one. Maybe you've even had your own DNA tested (are you as Scandinavian as you thought?). DNA testing is becoming more and more popular, and that's a good thing, because the larger DNA databases grow, the more accurate and useful their tests become. Still, many of us have a lot of questions. What does my DNA test tell me? Which is the best test to take? How accurate are the results? Is this really worth doing?

There are several reasons why you might want to take a DNA test. One is to see the likelihood for various medical conditions inherent in your genetic makeup. Not all tests offer this option, and it tends to be a little more expensive than an ancestry test. You also might just want to see your ethnicity broken down into those intriguing percentages—just how Scandinavian are your genes? Are there any surprises? Maybe you want to find a birth parent or biological relatives. You might even want to dig deeper and figure out those blank spaces and brick walls on your family tree that your research hasn't overcome. Different DNA tests are better for each of these goals.

First, understand that your DNA makeup is not a complete picture of your ancestry—far from it. You don't have bits of DNA from every single ancestor on your family tree. Each parent only passes on 50% of their DNA to their child, and siblings share 50% of their DNA with each other. Segments are passed on at random, so while having more children increases a person's chances of passing on more DNA, segments are lost generation to generation.

Say you have a distant Irish ancestor. Your brother's DNA test might show a small percentage of Irish. Your DNA test might show none. If you inherited no Irish DNA, you obviously aren't going to pass it on to your descendants. Of course, that doesn't change the fact that you have an Irish ancestor and so do your children.

Recently I attended a workshop where genetic genealogist Diahann Southard explained DNA this way: Imagine taking all the records you have on your family (or records you theoretically *could* have on your family, say, binders and binders of records), dumping them into a large bag, and pulling out sheets of paper here and there. That's your DNA record—it's incomplete, but telling.

While it doesn't solve all our problems or spell an end for genealogy research, DNA tests have become another tool for genealogists. You can see why testing more people in your biological family is useful—especially older generations, and/or people who have no living parents. Their DNA has segments that you didn't inherit.

Most of the DNA testing companies offer DNA matches. They can show you who else in their database shares some of your DNA, and they can *estimate* how that person is related to you. This is where genetic genealogy gets really interesting. You still need to do the research to figure out the exact link to your fourth cousin, with whom you share a third great grandparent. Do you know who that great-great-great grandparent is? Maybe your fourth cousin does. Maybe, by comparing your family trees, you can figure it out. Maybe at the very least, you'll get one more clue.



By
Kara
McKeever



If you get really into this, there are DNA tests that trace only your direct maternal line (mtDNA) and tests that trace only your direct paternal line (YDNA, only males can take this test). Both of these tests are narrow and deep, and can be really helpful if you know just what you're looking for. But most people will be interested in autosomal DNA testing, which is the type of test you've probably been hearing about and seeing ads for. It's a broader and shallower test, but it can still potentially help you fill in your family tree back to about six generations. The autosomal DNA test can match you to cousins, and give you clues to the geographic origins of your family lines—your ethnicity profile.

If you think about it, you might see an issue with those ethnicity percentages so popular in advertisements for DNA. How do you define distinctly Scandinavian DNA? For that matter, how do you define Scandinavia? We all know those Vikings got around. We all know that borders change and people migrate. Each testing company decides for itself how it will define ethnic regions. It gathers samples from people today living in those regions, and tests your sample against its own pool for that region. This is why different testing companies will give you different ethnicity results. That doesn't mean your results aren't going to be interesting or worthwhile. While our definitions of places and ethnic groups are fluid, your DNA as a scientific record is not. Pieces of your ancestors are right there in your DNA—we all know that, but when you really think about it, isn't it mind-blowing?

While you really can use DNA testing as another tool to find your ancestors, it has also been used successfully by people searching for biological living relatives. Of course this can be a delicate matter, but warm reunion stories are out there. Again, the test is one more tool available to understand ourselves and our family history.

So if you want to take an autosomal DNA test, which one should you take? As of this writing, here are your options:

AncestryDNA: www.dna.ancestry.com

Family Tree DNA: www.ftdna.com

MyHeritage: www.myheritage.com/dna

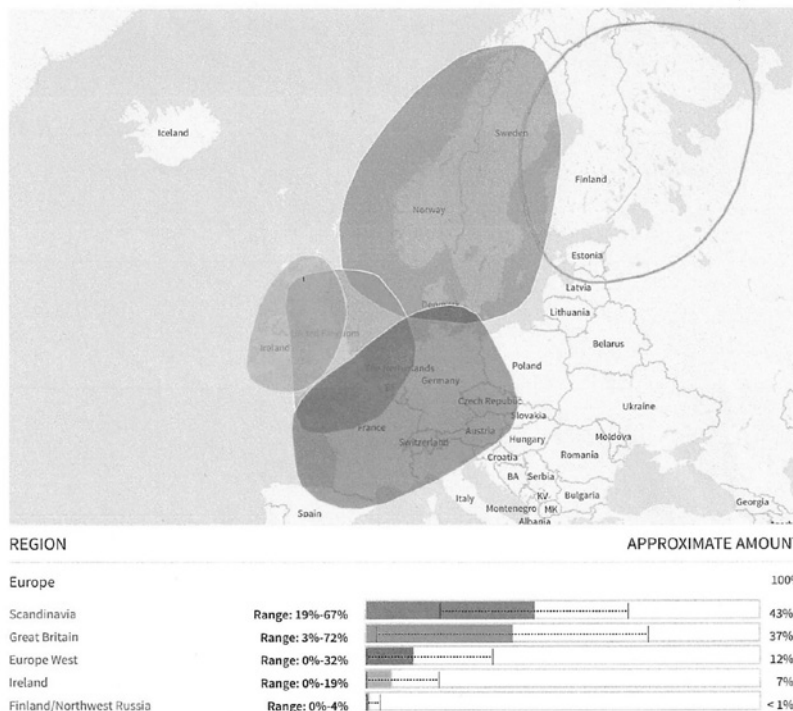
23andMe: www.23andMe.com

The National Geographic Project (National Geographic): <https://genographic.nationalgeographic.com>

Living DNA: www.livingdna.com/en-us

In general, each one of these tests can be useful, and each one is growing its database daily. I won't endorse one here, but as you research for yourself, remember—the bigger the DNA pool, the better. And if you want to discuss DNA testing further, feel free to call us at the Genealogy Center. We are far from experts, but happy to share what we know.

DNA testing will only continue to grow and improve, and it will be exciting to see its influence on genealogy in coming years. While you're gathering your family documents and photos to leave for future generations, you might consider taking a DNA test as well. Future descendants might thank you for it.



01

01. Ethnicity break down An ethnicity break-down from Ancestry.com.

afgangsliste and tilgangsliste

Tracking Danish ancestry has become much easier with the use of computers and websites such as *Arkivalier* and *Dansk Demografisk*. These sites have made it possible to view the images of the actual church records and to read handwritten or transcribed census records. It is comparatively easy to find birth, confirmation, marriage, and death records online as compared to contacting a source in Denmark or traveling to Denmark to find records.

However, when trying to track an ancestor's residency in Denmark in the early 1800s, it must be noted that there was a period of time for which there were no census records. While the vital records were recorded in the church books during that time, there were no recorded Danish census records from 1801 to 1834. This was the problem encountered recently when doing a research project.

After repeated searches for one Ole Nielsen, the search was becoming rather frustrating. The extended family of this Ole Nielsen was found in the county of Randers, which narrowed the search somewhat. A marriage record for Ole had been found in Tved Parish in 1826 which identified his wife,

but this marriage record gave no background information for Ole except that his age was 33 years old, and he was a farmhand. Ages can vary in different records, but it would appear that Ole was born in the late 1700s, probably between 1792 and 1796.

It is common knowledge that there is no such thing as a "unique" name either in Denmark or the U.S. This was also true for Ole Nielsen in Randers County. Using the patronymic naming system, Ole's father's first name should have been Niels. There were still several boys named Ole Nielsen born between those years. And several men named Ole Nielsen were found in the 1834 census in Randers County. When researching some of these names, it was found that they had characteristics that would not fit with the Ole Nielsen who was the object of this research project. An 1860 census was found naming an Ole Nielsen living in Ebeltoft Parish, he was 67 years old, a widower, and his occupation was that of laborer. No connection other than age could be made to the right Ole Nielsen. At this point, it seemed the research had to be ended.

But wait — there was another set of records in the church books that researchers often overlook. The early church books contained the "Afgangsliste" and "Tilgangsliste" records. These were the records of people who were transferring out of one parish and moving into another parish. Knowing that the marriage record stated that Ole lived in Agri Parish and was married in Tved Parish, a search was begun of these transfer records. While not every move of Ole's was located, the following list gives an idea of how often he did move. The parish named first is the parish within which the record was located.

1815 – into Ebeltoft from Draaby, age 22 (Tilgangsliste)

1816 – into Draaby from Ebeltoft, age 26 (Tilgangsliste)

1817 – out of Draaby, going to Agri, age 24 (Afgangsliste)

1817 – into Agri, from Draaby, age 24 (Tilgangsliste)

1822 – out of Agri, into Draaby, age 27 (Afgangsliste)

1826 – into Tved from Agri, age 33 (Tilgangsliste)

1831 – out of Tved going to Begtrup (Vistoft parish), age 36 (Afgangsliste)



By
Wanda
Sornson



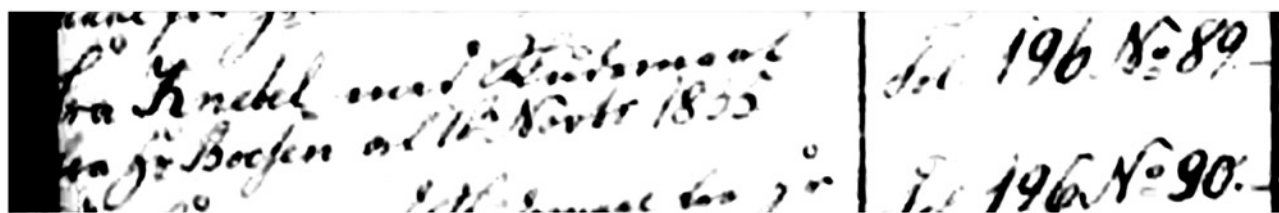
In each of these records, Ole's occupation was recorded as a farmhand or servant. This indicated that he did not own land and was moving about, working for others. (The recorded ages are evidence regarding the inconsistency of reporting ages.) It was decided to try finding another 1834 census in this area for Ole Nielsen. Fortunately, Ole Nielsen showed up – he was living in Knebel Parish, identified as a 40- year-old widower working as a servant. All of the parishes mentioned so far were located in Mols District of Randers County, so Ole was not traveling great distances to find work.

The last transfer record found for Ole was in 1835. A copy of that record and a translation can be found below.

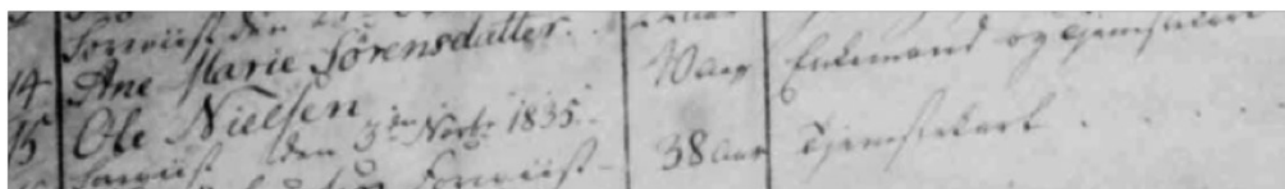
While very interesting in tracking Ole's movements, none of these records indicated in which parish Ole may have been born. They were important in that they did indicate that Ole stayed within the district of Mols during his adult life. A search was made at FamilySearch for a death record for Ole Nielsen. No death record appeared, but an 1838 birth record appeared for a child whose father was named as Ole Nielsen in Ebeltoft Parish.

Using *Arkivalier*, the actual birth record was found for this child, with very surprising results. This illegitimate child, named Ane Dorthe Nielsdatter, was born to a widow, Dorthe Sophie Rasmusdatter, and widower, Ole Nielsen. The child died before being baptized publicly in church. But this information gave new life to the search for Ole.

Looking back at the 1860 census that had been found earlier, it became clear that in 1860 Ole was living with the same woman who was named as the mother of the baby born in 1838. The 1860 census also listed Ole's birthplace as Ebeltoft. Because using Ole's name did not result in the finding of census records, the name of Dorthe Sophie Rasmusdatter was used. The results indicated that she had lived in Ebeltoft her whole life. In the 1840 census she had a foster child named Nels Olesen living with her. It can be presumed that this was the son that Ole had with his wife in 1828. Looking again at the birth record of the female child, Dorthe Sophie Rasmusdatter's deceased husband was named as Jens Sørensen Kok. Looking again at the birth record of Ole's wife, Dorthe Cathrine Rasmussdatter, it was noted that her father's name was Rasmus Kok, but no family connection could be proven.



01



02

Tved Parish, Mols District, Randers County , Kontraministerialbog 1833-1839. **01. Image #158/159:** Transfer into Tved coming from Knebel Parish, 1835, age 40. **02. Transfer #15:** Ole Nielsen, 40 years old, widower and farmhand. From Knebel with his character reference book from Mr. Boesen on 1st November 1835 (Fol. 196, No. 89)

It could be possible that Ole and Dorthe Sophie had previously known each other, and having his son as a foster child explained why Ole occasionally moved back into that parish. Throughout the years of 1845, 1850, and 1860, Ole and Dorthe continued to share the same household. From the 1845 census and forward, the birthplace of each person was recorded. Ole's birthplace was Ebeltoft, and the birth record showed that he was born in the year of 1793 on August 12. Ole Nielsen passed away in Ebeltoft Parish in 1875 at the age of 82 years.

This is just one example that indicates how necessary it often is to use records in addition to birth, death, and censuses to find elusive ancestors. These transfer records indicated that Ole never left the District of Mols in Randers County. Being a farmhand, he probably would have only temporary residences; but there had to be some reason or reasons why he never left that immediate area within the district of Mols. And the reasons were that he had been born in Ebeltoft, and his son lived there.

Ole returned there to live out his life with his companion, Dorthe Sophie Rasmusdatter, who had been the foster mother of Ole's son. Following the *afgangsliste* and *tilgangsliste* records made it possible to track and find the exact Ole Nielsen who was the object of this research project.

new additions to the wall of honor

JANUARY 14, 2017 – MAY 31, 2017

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 www.danishmuseum.org.

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

**OTTO JENSEN & MARIE
POULSEN JENSEN** (1890 | 1925
or 1926), Albert Lea, Minnesota –
Pearl Swank, Poplar, MT

BODIL KATRINE MADSEN (1924)
Laurel, Nebraska – Linda Madsen,
Billings, MT; Merle Nielsen, Cody,
WY

JENS KRISTIAN MADSEN (1924)
Laurel, Nebraska – Linda Madsen,
Billings, MT; Charles Madsen,
Worland, WY

**KRISTEN & INGER
(MIKKELSEN) MADSEN** (1923
| 1924) Laurel, Nebraska – Linda
Madsen, Billings, MT

POULINE MADSEN (1924) Laurel,
Nebraska - Donna Hausmann,
Butte, NE

ELISABETH MORTENSEN (1958)
San Jose, California – Bente Ellis,
San Jose, CA

HANS MARTIN NIELSEN (1913)
Vinton, Iowa – Wanda Lastovka,
Belle Plaine, IA; Dan Lastovka,
Belle Plaine, IA

**MARINUS NIELSEN &
FREDERIKKA POULSEN** (1907
| 1907) Albert Lea, Minnesota –
Pearl Swank, Poplar, MT

**JENS POULSEN & KJERSTINE
(CHRISTINA) HANSEN** (1899 |
1901) Appam, North Dakota –
Pearl Swank, Poplar, MT

SOREN FRIIS (SAM) POULSEN
(1907) Albert Lea, Minnesota –
Pearl Swank, Poplar, MT

ARNE CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN
(1958) – Bente Ellis, San Jose, CA

BIRGIT MARGRETHE SABO
(1965) Lakeland, Florida – Robert
& Birgit Sabo, Lakeland, FL

ANDREW PETER SVENDSEN
(1884) Woodbine, Iowa – Linda
LaFleur, Albany, OR



By
Deb
Christensen
Larsen

memorials

JANUARY 14, 2017 – MAY 31, 2017

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

Darlene Elouise Andersen,
Avoca, IA

Ray Christensen

Ray Christensen, beloved
announcer for WCCO Radio-
Minneapolis

Donald L. Clausen, Orlando, FL

Alf Moody Eastergard

Hans & Mathilde Farstrup

Priscilla Hansen

Ellen Westergaard Jackson

Carol Jorgensen, my wife

Donald "Buck" King

Nita Larson

Clark Mathisen and his dedicated
service to the museum

Rigmor Mattsen

Connie Moeller

Moe Nielsen

Tom Paulsen, Clyde Hill, WA

(former museum board member)

Scott Pettit

Hans Christian Rasmussen (Karen
Aldredge's father)

Myrtle M. Schroeder, Appleton, WI

Erik Sorensen, Knoxville, IA

Theodore William "Ted" Stenberg

Aleen Weaver

in honor

JANUARY 14, 2017 – MAY 31, 2017

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

Martin Armbrust, Danish intern
Muriel Bacon's happy and proud
occasion of sharing with the
museum all the memories of
her wedding dress since she
first wore it June 1, 1939,
and recently gifting it to the
museum

Genealogy Center

Layne & Kristy Hansen's birthdays

Peter Hansen, Danish intern

Ralf & Inga Hoifeldt

Dorothy Kerkhoff's birthday

Lee Anne Lack's 8 Danish
immigrant grandparents

John Mark Nielsen's retirement

Staff and Museum's American

Alliance of Museum's

accreditation

new members

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The Museum of Danish America is pleased to identify the following 65 individual memberships and 2 organizations as its newest members:

Niels Aagaard, Vojens, Denmark
JoAnne Amoura, Omaha, NE
Eddie & Arlene Andersen,
Rochester, MN
Christopher & Maria Genné
Anderson, Minneapolis, MN
Caroline Bader, Jamestown, NY
Bryan & Ann Brace, Volga, SD
Dorothy Butler, Oskaloosa, IA
Michele Caskey, Mount Pleasant, WI
Thomas Cheek, Akron, OH
Harold & Rosemary Christensen,
Pearland, TX
Stephen Painter & Jesse
Christensen, Brooklyn, NY
Robert & Anneliese Festersen
Crawford, Lake Forest, IL
Danish Luncheon Club of Los
Angeles, CA area
William Derrenbacher, Riverside, CA
Al & Nan Dreher, Kimballton, IA
Mike & Juanita Erickson,
Elk Horn, IA
Magda Esbeck, Elk Horn, IA
Amanda Ginn, Lancaster, CA

Elaine Grantham, Atlantic, IA
Karen Grover, Kansas City, MO
Dale & Julie Hammons,
Inver Grove Hts, MN
Layne & Kristy Hansen, Harlan, IA
Donna Hausmann, Butte, NE
James & Tera Herald, Lebanon, OH
Stig & Marie Jacobsen, Edina, MN
Mary Sarle & Robert Jennings,
Venice, FL
Jerome & Hope Jensen,
Audubon, IA
Dorothy Kerkhoff, Audubon, IA
Constance Klein, Lincoln, CA
Linda LaFleur, Albany, OR
Leonard Larsen, Ames, IA
Dan Lastovka, Belle Plaine, IA
Charles & Jean Lauder, Hastings, MN
Linda Madsen, Billings, MT
Michael Michelsen, Anoka, MN
Ruth Murphy, Philadelphia, PA
David & Julia Nester, Spicer, MN
Darrell & Joan Nielsen,
Springfield, SD
Daryl & Tammy Nissen, Elk Horn, IA
Hans & Birgitte Nørmølle,
Chicago, IL
Niels & Cynthia Petersen,
Newcastle, WA
Bruce & Calla Poldberg,
Kimballton, IA
Alex & Karen Pope, Austin, TX

Bob & Mary Anne Rennebohm,
Clive, IA
Michael & Sharon Richardson,
Salinas, CA
Robert & Birgit Sabo, Lakeland, FL
Kevin & Karla Sandberg, Gering, NE
Dina Scheel, Tacoma, WA
Jane Schierup, Fenton, MI
Belita Schindler, Austin, MN
Judy Seifert, Elgin, IL
Paul Sindberg, Oakwood Hills, IL
Linda Skouby, Columbia, MO
Skovsøen Danish Language Village,
Bemidji, MN
Joan Sorensen, St. Paul, MN
Lars & Brenda Sorensen,
North Bend, WA
Hanne Støvring, New York, NY
Leon C. & Mary Swanson, Clinton, IA
John Thomsen, Brooklyn, NY
Glenn Vaad, Longmont, CO
Mark & Sharon Vasicek, Ankeny, IA
Dennis & Jodi Walz, Otho, IA
Karin Schoen Wasler,
Los Angeles, CA
Robert & Carol Watson, Overland
Park, KS
Warren & Nancy Watson, Elk Horn, IA
Joe Whetatone & Janet Wedlock,
Beaufort, SC
Rob & Pam Wilson, Kentwood, MI

thank you, organizations

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These 85 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
Arcus AS (Christer Andre Olsen, Business Area Manager), Hagan, Norway
Atlantic Friends of The Danish Immigrant Museum, Atlantic, IA
Boose Building Construction (Marty & Connie Boose), Atlantic, IA
The Cabin at Old Irving (Harry Nyholm & Maria Nyholm, Chicago, IL
Carroll Control Systems, Inc. (Todd Wanninger), Carroll, IA
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
Danish American Athletic Club, 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 #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
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #268, Junction City, OR area
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #283, Dagmar, MT area
Danish Brotherhood Centennial Lodge #348, Eugene, OR area
The Danish Canadian National Museum, Spruce View, Alberta, Canada
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 Luncheon Club of Los Angeles, Inc., Los Angeles, CA area
Danish Mutual Insurance Association, Elk Horn, IA
Danish Sisterhood Dagmar Lodge #4, Chicago, IL area
Danish Sisterhood Lodge #15, Burlington, 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 Lodge #185, Cleveland, OH area
Danish Sisterhood Lodges, Heartland District, Iowa-Minnesota & surrounding states
Danish Sisterhood Lodges, Nebraska/Colorado Districts, Lincoln, NE & Denver CO areas
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
Fajen Construction (Larry Fajen), Elk Horn, IA
Friends of Scandinavia, Raleigh, NC
Hacways (Helene & Nanna Christensen), Hals, Denmark
Hansen Interiors (Torben & Bridget Ovesen), Mount Pleasant, WI
Harlan Newspapers (Steve Mores & Alan Mores), Harlan, IA
Henningsen Construction, Inc. (Brad Henningsen, Vice President), Atlantic, IA
House of Denmark, San Diego, CA
Independent Order of Svithiod, Verdandi Lodge #3, Chicago, IL area
Kirsten's Danish Bakery (Paul & Kirsten Andersen Jepsen), Burr Ridge, IL
Knudsen Old Timers, Yorba Linda, CA area
Landmands Bank (Rod Rowland, President) Audubon, IA
Main Street Market, Panama, IA
Marne Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn, IA
Nelsen and Nelsen, Attorneys at Law, Cozad, NE

Did you know? Families, groups, clubs, or businesses can sponsor exhibits, events, free admission days, our website, Brown Bag Lunch programs (including online videos for applicable presentations), or the whole Brown Bag Lunch series! Contact us to discuss the possibilities that await you: 712.764.7001 or deb.larsen@danishmuseum.org. ►

O & H Danish Bakery (Eric Olesen),
Racine, WI
Olsen, Muhlbauer & Co., L.L.P.,
Carroll, IA
Outlook Study Club, Elk Horn, IA area
Oxide Design Co., (Drew Davies),
Omaha, NE
Petersen Family Foundation, Inc. (H.
Rand & Mary Louise Petersen),
Harlan, IA
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,
Washington, DC
Scan Design Foundation by Inger &
Jens Bruun, Seattle, WA
Scandinavian Trade Association (Tom
Mortenson), Detroit Lakes, MN

Shelby County Historical Society &
Museum, Harlan, IA
Shelby County State Bank, Harlan
and Elk Horn, IA
Symra Literary Society, Decorah, IA
Skovsøen Danish Language Village,
Bemidji, MN
The Village Café (James Uren),
Elk Horn, IA
TK Petersen (Thorvald K. Petersen)
Santa Monica, CA
Vasa Order of America, Omaha Lodge
#330, Omaha, NE
Winding Pathways (Richard & Marion
Patterson), Cedar Rapids, IA

jens jensen heritage path

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The Jens Jensen Heritage Path is a place to celebrate an occasion or achievement, recognize an individual or organization, or honor the memory of a loved one. Twice a year the pavers will be engraved and placed within the Flag Plaza – October and May.

These individuals have
contributed a paver in the sizes of
small, medium or large.

Tom & Ann Christensen, Colorado
Springs, CO
Kay Roberta Cameron & Dennis Gray,
Murphy, NC

Brigham Hoegh, Atlantic, IA
Nancy Porter, Iowa City, IA
Janet Schroeder, Cedar Rapids, IA
Mark & Karen Stacey, Omaha, NE
John Thomsen, Brooklyn, NY

Paver order forms can be found at www.danishmuseum.org/get-involved/recognition/commemorative-bricks

koldskål

INGREDIENTS:

4 egg yolks
1 liter (1/4 gal) plain yogurt (~3.5% fat)
1 liter (1/4 gal) buttermilk
2 tbsp cane sugar
1 vanilla bean + 1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp lemon juice

DIRECTIONS:

Step 1: Use a hand mixer to whisk the egg yolks and sugar into a light and fluffy mixture.
Step 2: Scrape out the vanilla seeds from the vanilla bean. Mix the vanilla seeds with one tablespoon of sugar.
Step 3: Whisk the vanilla seed together with the egg yolks.
Step 4: Whisk the yogurt with the egg yolks. Add the yogurt a bit at a time (1/3 each time) and whisk well in between.
Step 5: Finally add the buttermilk and mix it well together. Flavor with lemon juice.
Step 6: Keep the buttermilk soup/Koldskål in the fridge. You can leave the empty vanilla beans in the bowl – it still has much great flavor.



Cold buttermilk soup might not sound very delicious. The name of the dish, *koldskål*, literally translated to “cold bowl” doesn’t do a lot to sell it either. But trust the Danes on this one! It is the go-to summer dessert in Denmark, and more than 3 million gallons are consumed each year.

Koldskål can be eaten as-is, but it is often paired with the sweet biscuits known as *kammerjunker*. They can be hard to come by in the U.S., so we suggest granola or Nilla Wafers as a substitute. We highly recommend making your own *koldskål* with children or grandchildren (Get them hooked while they’re young!), but it would also work well as an unexpected dessert at your next dinner party.

Koldskål This is a traditional Danish dish served in the summertime either as a dessert, breakfast, or even as a light dinner on a warm summer evening. Serve this refreshing dish cold with your choice of topping.



museum of
danish america

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