

americaletter



SUMMER 2021 | A BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE MUSEUM OF DANISH AMERICA

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ON THE COVER

Photograph of the Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park by 2021 Prairie Intern Wren Klump (Buena Vista University).

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!

director's corner

Our museum is dedicated to the stories and experiences of Danish immigrants, Danish Americans, and Danish-American communities. There is a lot to explore within those parameters, from the immigrant farmers who claimed homesteads on the Great Plains to the entrepreneurs of Silicon Valley.

It is also important to understand the context in which those Danish-American experiences take place. There is not – and never has been – a Danish bubble in which individuals could live their lives. Every Danish immigrant has arrived into a multicultural American society. Every Danish-American community has engaged with neighbors and neighboring towns of different backgrounds. The history of Denmark as a nation is filled with connections around the globe, and Denmark today is home to people of every background.

In this issue of the *America Letter*, we present articles that explore intersections of Danish and American culture from diverse perspectives. In discussing “Something Truly American,” Julia Jessen follows the Danish American Athletic Club (Chicago) on their 1936 tour of Denmark accompanied by Robert Whirling Thunder, a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin. Wanda Sornson’s article introduces us to individuals

who were enslaved within Danish territory, both in the Danish West Indies (now the U.S. Virgin Islands) and in Copenhagen.

In another article, Lise Kildegaard explores a literary intersection between Jens Jensen, the pioneering landscape architect who inspired our Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park, and Louis Jensen, the contemporary Danish author of *Square Stories*. She suggests that both Jensens offer lessons on “how to move through the world” and “how to treat the world.” Both the landscape and the literature reflect values that represent part of Danish experience.

Within the museum our staff has also begun to learn more about the landscape – specifically, the land on which our museum now sits and how different peoples have lived here over time. Like many organizations, we are learning how to acknowledge the indigenous people who were removed from this land in order to make room for European settlers. The area now known as Southwest Iowa is part of the ancestral homelands of both the loway (Iowa) and Otoe peoples; the Potawatomi (Pottawatomie), Ojibwe (Ojibwa), and Odawa

(Ottawa) peoples also lived in this region after being forcibly removed from their homelands. As part of our commitment to preserving and sharing stories of Danish immigration, we must recognize that Native American removal is part of the larger context for that history. Our staff working group is developing a Land Acknowledgment as a formal statement and also as a starting point to seek partnerships with indigenous peoples where it fits our mission.

As the Museum of Danish America, it is not our place to represent the voices of all immigrant groups, indigenous peoples, or underrepresented communities. However, Danish immigrants and Danish Americans have been impacted by historical events, by opportunities and challenges in many forms, and by their interactions with people and communities of all kinds. Likewise, Danish Americans have impacted others through their decisions, actions, and influence. All of those interactions and impacts fit squarely within our mission to tell a multi-faceted story of Danish America.



By Tova Brandt

staff news

Angela Stanford has been the museum's Registrar and Curator of Collections for 17 years. She has been a key contributor towards the museum's increased professionalism, especially in leading the institution through its first Accreditation process in 2016. Thanks to Angela's work, our museum enjoys a level of collections management that is the envy of many peers – in other words, we know what is in the collection, and know where to find each piece! Angela is moving away from southwest Iowa, but we look forward to staying in contact with her as a museum professional for years to come.

Jennifer Winters is retiring after more than 21 years with the museum as Bookkeeper. She has kept track of every penny going in and out of the museum, and kept a watchful eye over facilities maintenance as well. Her attention to detail has been an asset to the museum for many years and she will be missed! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement, Jenni!

FAREWELLS & hellos

Philip Wernsmann, Accountant
Phil brings to the museum 30+ years of experience in all aspects of the accounting spectrum: from job costing, accounts receivable and payables, to payroll for multiple state operations. We're happy to have him onboard!

Wren Klump, Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park Intern
Nothing beats Arizona heat like Iowa humidity. I thought I was leaving one extreme for a lesser one, but I have learned that Iowa's humidity is in its own category. I have worked heavy machinery and cared for animals in the dry desert I call home, but this is a new experience for me to be here learning about invasive plant species in the humid heat of Iowa.

Most of all I have learned the importance of this prairie from both a community and ecological standpoint here in Elk Horn. The natural beauty that this location has is a gem of its own and I am enjoying being able to continue the work to keep this place thriving.

Julia Jessen, Registrar

After working as an intern in collections and archives at the Museum of Danish America for the past year, I am excited for the opportunity to join the staff as Registrar. I love museum objects and the stories they tell, and I look forward to working with the exceptional MoDA team to continue the high standards of collections care and management at the museum.

I have been fascinated by museums since I was a child, and this interest has continued throughout my life. I received my B.A. in art history, journalism, and studio art with a museum studies certificate from the University of Iowa. After college, I grew my skills in communication and object-based learning as the Education Coordinator at the Stanley Museum of Art. In May 2020, I graduated from Syracuse University with master's degrees in art history and museum studies. Museums have had a huge impact on my life, and I hope my work at the Museum of Danish America can facilitate similar experiences for others.

board of directors meeting

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John Mark Nielsen, Blair, NE

Nils Jensen, Portland, OR

**JUNE 10-12, 2021
VIDEO CONFERENCE**

We anticipated holding the June meeting in Racine, Wisconsin, home to board member Eric Olesen and his wife, Lisa, but decided to meet virtually once again. Our president, Pete West, travelled from Denver to Elk Horn to participate on site, but all other board members zoomed into the meeting from across the country.

Major items on the agenda were giving preliminary approval to the 2021-22 operating and capital budgets and the election of five new board members.

We are happy to welcome to the museum family Mindy Brown (Littleton, CO), Michael Koehler (Rolling Hills, IL), Erik Nørkjær (Aulum, Denmark), John Rasmussen (Hicksville, NY) and Elizabeth Steffensen (Hoffman Estates, IL). Their 3-year terms will officially begin after the annual meeting October 16, 2021.

Current board members elected to a second 3-year term are Carol Bassoni (Gilroy, CA), Lars Matthiesen (Edmonds, WA), and Pete West (Denver, CO).

Plans are in the works for our annual October meeting in Elk Horn (finally!). *Stay tuned!*



By Terri Johnson

exhibition calendar

current

**TRADITION AND CHANGE:
WEDDINGS IN DANISH
AMERICA**

Kramme Gallery
Through the end of 2021

**BRUSHES & LENSES:
TWO GENERATIONS OF ART**

Main Floor Gallery
Through November 7

**THE VICTOR BORGE
LEGACY AWARD:
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
OF MUSIC**

Multimedia Room

coming

**PAPIRKLIP: A GLOBAL AND
TIMELESS ART**

Julefest – Spring 2022

TATTOO: IDENTITY IN INK

Tivoli Fest 2022 – October
2022

traveling

**ART NOUVEAU INNOVATION:
DANISH PORCELAIN FROM
AN AMERICAN COLLECTOR**

*Sponsored by The Danish Home of
Croton-on-Hudson and the Albert Victor
Ravenholt Fund*

Flint Institute of Arts

Flint, MI
Through November 28

NEW NORDIC CUISINE

*Major support for New Nordic Cuisine
comes from the American-Scandinavian
Foundation, Erik and Eva Andersen, and
the Estate of Erik Sorensen. **National tour**
sponsored by Cynthia Larsen Adams &
Gary M. Adams, Embassy of Denmark in
Washington, DC, O&H Danish Bakery, The
Danish Pioneer Newspaper, Humanities
Iowa, Nordic Council of Ministers, Iowa
Department of Cultural Affairs, Anna
Thomsen Holliday & Hal Holliday, and the
Honorable Lynette Skow Rasmussen &
Kurt Rasmussen.*

**Hjemkomst
Heritage Center**

Moorhead, MN
November 15, 2021 -
March 7, 2022



tradition and change: weddings in danish america

EXHIBITION ON VIEW IN THE KRAMME GALLERY
THROUGH THE END OF 2021

Whether an elaborate, multi-day affair with hundreds of people or a short trip to the courthouse, the beginning of a marriage is observed in a multitude of ways. For many Danish immigrants and their descendants, weddings serve as a way to keep cultural traditions alive, while simultaneously incorporating American customs.

Not every couple in the past married for love. Economic reasons, social pressures, and other factors sometimes played a role in the decision to wed. Regardless of the reason, the wedding was an important event that deserved to be acknowledged. Today, it is not uncommon for weddings to cost tens of thousands of dollars, but for many people, both past and present, limited means do not preclude celebrating to the fullest extent.

Tradition and Change: Weddings in Danish America explores weddings among Danes and Danish Americans and the ways in which traditions have been retained and adapted over generations.

This exhibition is made possible thanks to generous support from Museum of Danish America members.

A Legal Contract

Marriages are, of course, a celebration of love, but they are also legal contracts, subject to their own rules, regulations, and restrictions. It is important to remember that the right to marry has not always been equally granted. Many American states did not permit interracial marriage until the matter went all the way to the Supreme Court in 1967, and even then, Alabama's constitution continued to ban interracial marriage until it was struck down in 2000 with 60% of the vote. In 1851, the Danish government introduced civil marriages, which meant that people of different faiths could intermarry, something that was prohibited when the church was the sole arbiter of marriage; an ordinance extended the law to the Danish West Indies in 1874. For same-sex couples, Denmark fully legalized marriage in 2012 but had previously recognized them as registered partnerships starting in 1989, making it the first



By Diya Nagaraj

01. Ambassador Rufus Gifford and Stephen DeVincent are led into the main hall of the Copenhagen Town Hall by the mayor of Copenhagen for their wedding ceremony; *image courtesy of Peter Brinch.*



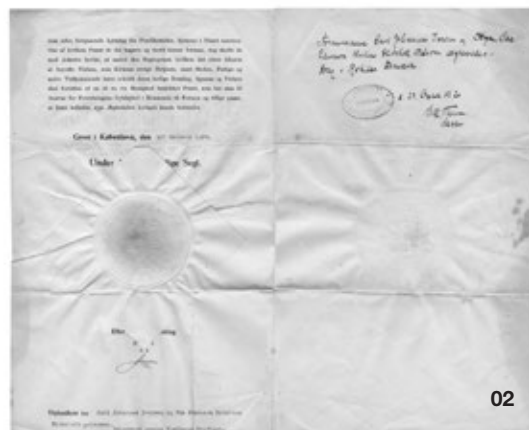
01

country to do so. Former U.S. Ambassador Rufus Gifford chose to marry his now-husband, Stephen DeVincent, in Denmark both because of the importance of the country to their lives and to recognize Denmark's place in history as the first country to legally recognize same-sex couples. In America, the Defense of Marriage Act federally defined marriage as between one man and one woman and it was not until 2015 that same-sex couples were finally granted the right to marry, although

many states had begun to legalize it earlier.

Even couples for whom the right to marry was already in place, certain legal requirements had to be met in order for their marriage to be recognized by the law. In Denmark, some requirements in the nineteenth century were that both parties be over 18, neither person was engaged to anyone else, the couple was not closely related, they were to be married in the church, and that they had the banns

publicly announced in church for three Sundays prior to the wedding so anyone opposed to the union had a chance to speak. In order to get around any of these requirements, a couple would need a *kongebrev*, or a letter of royal dispensation, which could be procured for a price. In the Museum of Danish America collection, there is a *kongebrev* giving permission for the marriage of Carl Iversen and Oda Kristine Petersen to take place. Carl Iversen was about to immigrate to the United States and did not have time for the required three weeks of reading the banns, so he paid 33 kroners for this letter of royal dispensation. It permitted the couple to skip the required waiting period and to be wed in a private home rather than the church. Artifacts like ordinances, certificates, and this *kongebrev* are one way in which it is possible to understand how laws have historically impacted and influenced marriage.



02

02. *Kongebrev* issued to Carl Iversen and Oda Kristine Petersen, 1920; 2008-117 – Gift of Grace Johnson

Fashion

Today, wedding fashion makes for a multi-billion-dollar industry and is often among the first things checked off an engaged couple's wedding planning list. Over the years, some wedding fashions have shifted significantly, while others have remained timeless and classic. Grooms' suits have changed subtly – lapels have grown and shrunk; patterns have gone in and out of style; trousers have widened and then narrowed. To this day, grooms' fashions range from elaborate suits with a vest, overcoat, suspenders, and top hat, to a more casual dress coat and dress pants.

The shift in wedding gowns is perhaps more obvious. Many dresses from the late 1800s and early 1900s feature high necks and long sleeves. They often were made as separate skirts and blouses, with a decorative belt to unify the outfit, making it appear as one piece. In the 20th century, fashions continued to change. Silk became increasingly popular, necklines deepened, and short sleeves also became more common.

The wedding dresses in the museum's collection are in a wide range of colors, from black to orange to white. Although today most dresses are white, that did not actually become a trend until Queen Victoria popularized the color for brides. Even as aristocracy increasingly chose white dresses, many commoners continued to wear colorful

dresses or traditional folk outfits and viewed white dresses as something only for richer people. In the 1800s and early 1900s, non-white dresses were somewhat common because, for many families, a dress that could only be worn once was not a financial possibility. Hence, their wedding dress was simply treated as "their best dress," a dress often made specifically for the wedding, but one that could be worn at later formal occasions as well. Particularly for families during the Great

Depression and the austerity measures of World War II, the decision to wear a non-white dress was, more often than not, an economic one.

Flowers were often an important accessory to the outfits, with some brides having elaborate floral decorations on their dresses or veils, whether made from real flowers or replicas. Orange blossoms as bridal florals emerged in ancient China, representing purity, chastity,



03. Bertha Marie Nelson and Andrew Chris Nelson on their wedding day; 1997.059.002 – Gift from all the grandchildren of Bertha Marie Nelson



and innocence. During the Crusades, the tradition arrived in Spain and spread through Europe; they became so popular that the phrase “to gather orange blossoms” meant “to seek a wife.” In the United States, orange blossoms were documented as a wedding tradition as early as 1828. Queen Victoria firmly established them as a wedding standard when she featured them in her 1840 wedding; etiquette journals from the time mandated that every bride include them.

Myrtle has been associated with love, fertility, and innocence from the ancients onwards. Queen Victoria was gifted a posy by Prince Albert’s grandmother, and the myrtle from it was planted on the grounds of Osbourne House. Her daughters incorporated it into their wedding florals, and the Queen’s granddaughter, Princess Margaret of Connaught, brought a cutting of the plant to Sweden when she married the future King

in 1905. From then on, it became common for royals to use myrtle in their weddings. So how did it come from Sweden to Denmark? Princess Margaret’s daughter, Princess Ingrid, married the Crown Prince of Denmark, Frederick, in 1935 and brought a sprig of the myrtle plant with her for her bouquet and to plant at Fredensborg Castle. Princess Ingrid’s wedding crown of myrtle remains in the royal collection to this very day.

Music

Music appears in many different forms at both wedding ceremonies and the subsequent reception, from hymns to custom-made sing-alongs. Today, a DJ often serves as the master of ceremonies for a reception, ensuring that everyone keeps to the planned schedule and guaranteeing all toasts and speeches are completed. However, traditional Danish weddings feature a master of toasts, who ensures that

the bride’s father is the first speaker and who coordinates the rest of the speeches, while also making sure all attendees are aware of any traditions in which they might be partaking.

Song sheets are a long-standing Danish wedding tradition. Using information about the couple and borrowing the tune of a well-known song, a songwriter (or family member) creates lyrics set to tunes that all the guests will know. Each guest is given a copy of the lyrics, passed along in a box often designed to reflect the couple in some way (i.e., a container that looks like a large box of chocolates or a radio). The newlyweds are then serenaded with the custom songs.

A common hymn featured at Danish and Danish-American weddings is *Det er så yndigt at følges ad* (*How Sweet to Travel the Road Ahead*), written by N.F.S. Grundtvig in 1855. The melody comes from an 1833 piece by Danish composer C.E.F. Weyse. Music is also an important part of dancing traditions, particularly the bridal waltz, or *brudevals*, featuring music composed by Niels W. Gaade for the 1854 ballet “A Folk Tale.” As the music plays, the newlyweds take the floor for their first dance, with all their guests gathering in a circle around them; the circle slowly tightens until everyone surrounds the couple. The *brudevals* replaces the traditional parent-child dances seen in many American weddings, although many families have chosen to mix



traditions and incorporate both a dance with parents and the *brudevals*.

Traditions

Many families have wedding traditions that have been passed down through generations. These are often important ways for people to feel connected to their family history and to their cultural heritage. There are several Danish wedding traditions that have not only survived through the years, but also were brought to America by immigrants and continue to be incorporated into Danish-American weddings as well.

One such tradition is that of the *æresport*, or gate of honor. It is an archway most

commonly formed of natural materials such as pine boughs and flowers through which the couple must walk. It is not only used for weddings, but anniversaries as well – a half *æresport* is sometimes seen at Copper Anniversary celebrations (12.5 years, a traditional Danish observance), and a full one for both the Silver (25 years) and Golden (50 years) Anniversaries.

The original Danish Lutheran Church's wedding ritual does not include "you may now kiss the bride" at the conclusion of the ceremony, although many officiants choose to add it today. However, there is still no shortage of displays of affection at Danish weddings. Apart from the expected kiss upon being declared officially



wed, the guests encourage the couple to kiss throughout the reception by either tapping on their glasses or stomping on the floor. If glasses are tapped, the newlyweds must stand on their chairs and kiss; if guests stomp on the ground, then they must kiss under the table. The new couple are not the only ones to partake in the kissing! When the bride leaves the room, all of the women in the room stand up and run up to kiss the groom. Similarly, when the groom leaves the room, the men in attendance do the same to the bride.

The guests not only participate in the kissing, but many weddings also include the tradition of the guests cutting socks and veils. Bouquet and garter tosses were not originally part of Danish wedding traditions. Instead, many weddings featured the groom's socks being cut off at the toe. The symbolism of this is debated – some say that it was to prevent him from chasing after other people or

05. An *æresport* was part of the silver anniversary celebration for Laurits and Anna Nielsen in 1941; 1991.175.090 – *Gift of Bernice Johnson*. **06. Andrea** admires the lipstick stains left on Peder when she returned to the room. *Image courtesy of Andrea and Peder Hansen.*

to remind him of his obligations to his new spouse (he would provide for the family so there were never holes in their socks), while others indicate that it was so that his new wife could demonstrate her darning skills. The bride did not escape the scissors either – her veil was cut apart, since, as a now-married woman, she was ‘no longer behind a veil of innocence’ and would not have any need for it. Today, the tradition continues, although the symbolism is perhaps no longer as central as it once may have been.

Food and Drink

Whether an elaborate six-course meal with paired drinks, or a simple spread with handheld options, food and drink are an important aspect of wedding day traditions. Typically, traditional Danish weddings feature a sit-down meal with multiple courses that can go on for hours. However, the more casual, American traditions of either buffet-style service or smaller snacks are seen in some Danish immigrant wedding traditions and in the weddings of their descendants.

Traditionally, toasts to the new couple are punctuated by cheers of “*Skål!*,” often with aquavit as the drink of choice, although other libations, such as wine and champagne, have been incorporated as well. Even if the feast is not complete by midnight, a pause is sometimes taken to ensure that the bride and groom can

have their first dance before the clock strikes twelve.

Perhaps the most recognizable part of a Danish or Danish-American wedding menu is the *kransekage*, a showstopping centerpiece made from layered rings of baked almond paste, decorated with icing and small flags. These are often made for large celebrations like weddings and major holidays like New Year’s. Although some couples opt for the more American tiered wedding cake, bakeries specializing in Danish treats are often asked to ship their *kransekager* nationwide for wedding celebrations.

Weddings Today

Through movies, television, and the internet, people around the world are constantly exposed to new wedding traditions that they can then choose to adapt into their own ceremonies and celebrations. A great example of this are wedding vows – traditionally, Danish weddings lack the individualized vows which feature in many American weddings. However, more and more couples in both countries are choosing to add that element of personalization to the ceremony as they affirm their commitment to each other. Additionally, attendants – bridesmaids, groomsmen, and flower girls – have gradually begun to appear in a number of Danish weddings, despite them not being a part of traditional customs.

One of the most high-profile Danish-American weddings in recent years was that of former U.S. Ambassador Rufus Gifford to his husband, Stephen DeVincent, in Copenhagen. As mentioned earlier, their decision to wed in Denmark not only reflected the close ties they felt to the country after living there for almost four years, but also the fact that the town hall in Copenhagen was the first place anywhere in the world to recognize same-sex civil unions. Their wedding highlighted the ways in which couples continue to blend traditions and serves as an excellent example of how cultures come together. A Danish friend served as toastmaster; the grooms had the toes of their socks cut off; and the couple cut their cake before midnight, all



07

07. Carl Steffensen adds decorations to the *kransekage* for the 2017 wedding of one of his daughters. The final *kransekage* featured the flags of Denmark, America, Eswatini (Swaziland), and Texas to honor the ancestry of the families of the bride and groom. *Image courtesy of Carl Steffensen.*

reflecting Danish traditions. The choice of late-night snacks for guests, however, reflected their American heritage: cheeseburger sliders!

The observance of weddings is one that transcends cultural, geographic, and religious divides. From fashion to food, to music to flowers, cultural norms and traditions play an important role in the ceremony and celebration. By viewing weddings through the lens of Danish America, it is possible to see how weddings were way for families to not only preserve cultural traditions from their homeland, but also a way to incorporate traditions from their new home in America.

FUN FACTS

The average cost of a wedding in the United States in 2019 was \$28,000. When separated by state, New Jersey had the highest average wedding cost, at over \$50,000!

Veils originated because the ancients thought that it would protect the bride from evil spirits. They've remained part of wedding fashion ever since.

Diamond engagement rings are not a new trend – they first appear in the historical record in 1477, when King Maximilian I of Germany offered a diamond as a vow when proposing to Mary of Burgundy.

The trend of men wearing wedding rings did not become commonplace until World War II, when many married men wanted a way to remember their partners when they left for war.

Traditionally, the bride is to stand on the left of the groom. This was so that the groom's right hand would be free to hold a sword and fend off any other potential suitors! Thankfully, now most people choose to voice their objection, rather than have a duel.

events calendar

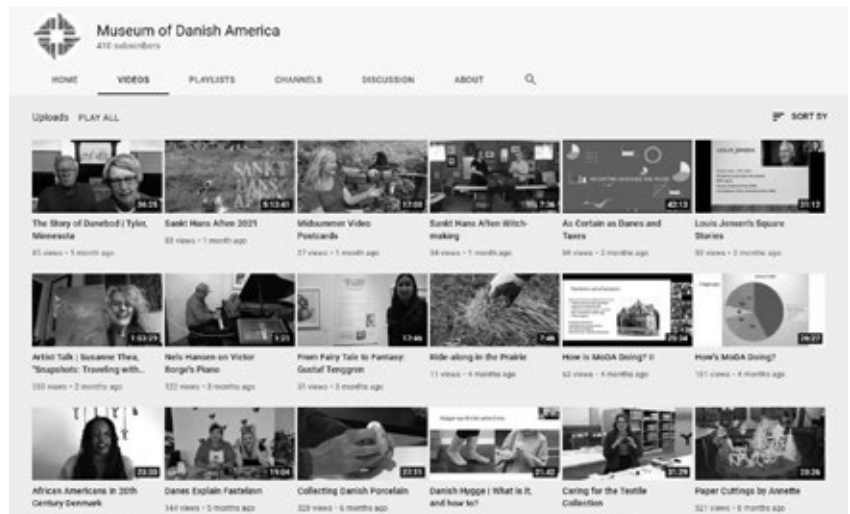
The following includes both events happening at the Museum of Danish America and events which will be attended by one or more representatives from the museum - subject to changes. Keep up with the goings-on (and other interesting content) by following us on Facebook and Twitter!

SCANDINAVIAN DAY
Vasa Park, South Elgin, IL
September 12

BROWN BAG LUNCH
Archives A to Z
Cheyenne Jansdatter
September 23

BOARD & ANNUAL MEETINGS
Elk Horn, IA
October 14-16

JULEFEST
November 26-27



watch & learn

MANY PROGRAMS AND EVENTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE TO WATCH ON THE MUSEUM'S FACEBOOK PAGE AND YOUTUBE CHANNEL.

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DANISHMUSEUM | WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/DANISHMUSEUM

“something truly american”

**ROBERT WHIRLING THUNDER AND
THE DANISH AMERICAN ATHLETIC CLUB**

The *M.S. Pilsudski* set sail from New York on May 19, 1936, charting a course for Copenhagen, Denmark. Among the passengers were approximately 30 young Danish Americans and one Ho-Chunk man, Robert Whirling Thunder, also known as Robinson Johnson. This group would spend the next month on an exhibition tour through 30 different Danish cities, dancing and performing in front of thousands, as representatives of the Danish American Athletic Club (D.A.A.C.).

Leaders and members of the D.A.A.C. dreamed of organizing a trip to Denmark since the club's inception in 1922.¹ It would be a homecoming and a way to demonstrate, through gymnastics and folk dancing, how they maintained Danish practices and values in America. They also wanted to show their homeland, in the words of club member Jack A. Rye, “something truly American.”²

To do this, the group reached out to Whirling Thunder. He worked with members for months, teaching them multiple Native dances and leading them in their performances throughout Denmark (Fig. 1). This cross-cultural interaction between Danish, Danish-American, and Ho-Chunk provides a small window into the complexities of cultural performance as well as the stereotypes, expectations, and ideas projected onto different cultures. The research presented here seeks to illuminate aspects of this trip that have not received attention and help make the record more accurate. This research also connects to broader efforts by the Museum of Danish America to discuss Native history and culture as it relates to Danish America.

1 “Excursion to Denmark” pamphlet, accession file 2010.045, Museum of Danish America records.

2 “Narrating Danish Chicago Through Memories and Interviews,” *Danish American Cultural Life in Chicago* exhibition folder, Museum of Danish America records.



By Julia Jessen



“This will be
the first known
invasion of
Scandinavia by
American Indian
folk dancers.”

-St. Louis
Globe-Democrat
(St. Louis, Missouri),
May 17, 1936

Fig. 1 Photograph of Bert Madsen, Chief Whirling Thunder, and Carl Frandsen performing the Blood Brother Dance in Grindsted, Denmark, June 26, 1936. 2000.028.004, *Gift of Jack Rye, in memory of Aage Curt Rye & Karen Iversen Rye*

WHIRLING THUNDER

Robert Whirling Thunder was 34 when he traveled to Denmark with the D.A.A.C. (Fig. 2).³ Originally from Tomah, Wisconsin, he was a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation, referred to at the time as the Wisconsin Winnebago Tribe. Whirling Thunder was from the Thunder clan, the chieftain clan of the Ho-Chunk, but would not have been recognized as a traditional chief by the tribe. He may have been considered a ceremonial chief, and he used this title to further his business.⁴

The Ho-Chunk are based and have their point of origin in Wisconsin; their traditional lands include parts of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois.⁵ As a result of forced removal westward, there is also a Ho-Chunk reservation in Nebraska, known as the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. Despite federal efforts aimed at cultural destruction, Ho-Chunk culture continues to thrive today with language revitalization efforts, continued song, dance, and storytelling traditions, and the opening of the Ho-Chunk Museum and Cultural Center in 2020.

At the time of the trip, Whirling Thunder was living and working in Chicago as an instructor for the Chicago Park District, teaching topics including archery, handicraft, and Indian lore. He was granted a leave of absence from this position to make the trip to Denmark; while abroad, he studied Denmark’s recreational projects.⁶ He was well known for his work with the parks department and Boy Scouts, his skill as a speaker, and his leadership role in the Indian Council Fire, serving as President and Vice President.⁷

In presentations sponsored by the Indian Council Fire, Whirling Thunder spoke on and demonstrated Indian Sign Language, the Brave Heart Dance and other dances, flute calls, and Native storytelling at schools, clubs, men’s and women’s organizations, and private gatherings. One appreciative event organizer wrote,

“To see and hear Chief Whirling Thunder in his program of Indian lore is a distinct treat, as he gives an unusual insight into the old Indian life. His sincerity of manner, colorful appearance, dignified presentation, and graceful gestures, combine to make a program of outstanding effectiveness. I am happy to commend it.”⁸

³ Passenger list for return trip from Copenhagen Denmark on the M.S. Batory on July 23, 1936, arriving at the port of New York on August 1, 1936.

⁴ Bill Quackenbush, phone conversation, March 3, 2021.

⁵ “About Ho-Chunk Nation,” Ho-Chunk Nation, <https://ho-chunknation.com/about/>.

⁶ “Chicago Indian Couple Go to Visit Denmark,” *Tushkahomman, the Red Warrior*, May 26, 1936, 3.

⁷ Marion E. Gridley, ed., *Indians of Today* (Chicago: Indian Council Fire, 1947), 91.

⁸ “Chief Whirling Thunder: Winnebago Indian,” Redpath Chautauqua Collection, Special Collections, University of Iowa Libraries.

This quote illustrates how his non-Native audience perceived him and how many believed he was conveying a past way of life rather than ongoing cultural traditions.

Though he marketed himself in a way that appealed to White society's taste for the stereotypical "Noble Savage" figure, Whirling Thunder also subverted dominant society's demands of assimilation by making his living through the sharing and teaching of his Ho-Chunk heritage. In the 1930's, economic hardship due to the long-term effects of U.S. governmental policies caused many Ho-Chunk to use cultural performance as a way to earn income.⁹ Understanding this cultural performance economy is complicated, as white audiences could interpret performances in a way that reinforced their own racist ideologies and views of history, yet the Ho-Chunk were also in control of their dances and how they represented their culture.¹⁰ For Whirling Thunder, as an Indigenous representative at home and abroad, how he portrayed himself helped dispel viewers' understanding of the "Vanishing Indian"; he presented himself as a thoroughly modern man while also working to preserve and share his culture.

Chicago

In the early 20th century, most Danes were living in cities, with Chicago having the largest concentration.¹¹ City life lent itself to faster assimilation into American society, but the Danish community and organizations in Chicago helped maintain traditional culture. The Native population of Chicago also grew steadily in the 20th century due to a combination of federal Indian policy and the desire of Native peoples for greater opportunities.¹² Many wanted to maintain their cultural identity and ties to their homes and extended families, rejecting total assimilation.¹³

For both groups, community and community-based organizations were important in preserving cultural ties and traditions. Multiple organizations served Native peoples in Chicago, including the Indian Council Fire, which provided services to Native Americans in the city as well as Native culture-related programming for non-Native audiences. For Danish-Americans, the D.A.A.C. served as a space of instruction in Danish recreation, including multiple sports, gymnastics, and

9 Abigail Markwyn, "I Would Like to Have this Tribe Represented': Native Performance and Craft at Chicago's 1933 Century of Progress Exposition," *American Indian Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (Summer 2020): 343.

10 *Ibid.*, 346.

11 "Settling in the Cities" *Danish American Cultural Life in Chicago* exhibition folder, Museum of Danish America records, pg. 82.

12 Janusz Mucha, "From Prairie to the City: Transformation of Chicago's American Indian Community," *Urban Anthropology* 12, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 1983): 337.

13 *Ibid.*, 338.

Fig. 2 Photograph of Whirling Thunder in Grindsted, Denmark, June 26, 1936. 2000.028.003, *Gift of Jack Rye, in memory of Aage Curt Rye & Karen Iversen Rye*

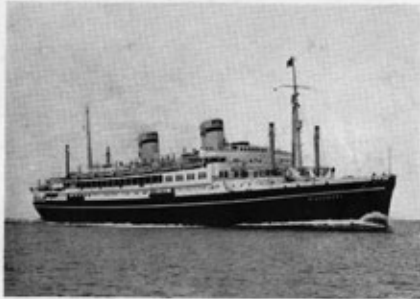


Fig. 3 Excursion to Denmark Pamphlet, 1936. *Accession File, 2010.045, Gift of the Danish American Athletic Club*

EXCURSION
TO DENMARK

Sponsored by
DANISH AMERICAN ATHLETIC CLUB
OF CHICAGO

SUMMER 1936



with the New Modern

M. S. "PILSUDSKI"

From New York

May 19th, 1936

Direct to Pier in Copenhagen

GDYNIA-AMERICA LINE



Fig. 4 Photograph of the D.A.A.C. folk dancing group at Neils Bukh gymnastics school in Ollerup, Denmark, 1936. 2000.028.005, *Gift of Jack Rye, in memory of Aage Curt Rye & Karen Iversen Rye*

folk dancing, as well as a place for new immigrants and their families to gather. It also facilitated bringing gymnastics and folk dancing teams to the U.S. and sending teams to Denmark.

Chicago, as a multicultural space, provided a background for the months-long collaboration between the D.A.A.C. and Whirling Thunder. Though Danish Americans and Native Americans faced vastly different circumstances within dominant society, both groups carved out their own space within the city, living modern lives while retaining cultural traditions.

Danish Reception

Despite the ongoing economic effects of the Great Depression, all of the approximately 30 D.A.A.C. participants were able to save up the \$250 (about \$4,800 today) needed to afford the trip. They ended up receiving some money back, at the end of the tour, from ticket revenue (Fig. 3).¹⁴ Working with Professor Niels Bukh of the College of Gymnastics in Ollerup, Denmark, the group organized the 1936 trip over a period of about two years. This adventure was remembered by D.A.A.C. in later years as “the greatest moment of our existence...It was a triumph for the Danish Americans as a whole, but in particular to our second generation.”¹⁵ The D.A.A.C. “Indians,” to whom Whirling Thunder taught the dances, included Anker Jensen, Carl Frandsen, Karen Else Andersen, Harriet Rye Petersen, Laurits Madsen, Jack A. Rye, Vita Lund, Fred Marker, Aage Friis, and others, some of whom performed with more than one exhibition team.

The Native dance team performed three dances on the trip: the War Dance, the Swan Dance, and the Blood Brother Dance. The male War Dance and female Swan Dance are still popular dances for contemporary Ho-Chunk. The Blood Brother dance may have been a different dance that Whirling Thunder retitled or an existing dance that he adapted into a version meant for entertaining a non-Native crowd.¹⁶ The Ho-Chunk were familiar with presenting these kinds of performances for tourists at venues such as the Stand Rock Indian Ceremonial in the Wisconsin Dells area.¹⁷ Whirling Thunder also worked in this area and may have taught similar dances to the D.A.A.C. performers.

A teepee and other items were used to set the scene for their performance (Fig. 4). Whirling Thunder briefly explained the significance of each dance before it was performed by the “Danish-American Indians,” who appeared in Native regalia. While Whirling Thunder’s regalia was likely traditional, the rest

¹⁴ “Narrating Danish Chicago Through Memories and Interviews,” *Danish American Cultural Life in Chicago* exhibition folder, Museum of Danish America records.

¹⁵ “Danish American Athletic Club: 1922-1947” program, Museum of Danish America Archives, 1947.

¹⁶ Bill Quackenbush, phone conversation, March 3, 2021.

¹⁷ Sarah Anne Stolte, “Performance, Gestures, and Poses in Postcards of Ho-Chunk in Wisconsin Dells,” in *Recasting Commodity and Spectacle in the Indigenous Americas* (London: University of London, 2014): 120.

of the group wore a combination of styles, possibly Ojibwe, Ho-Chunk, and Menominee (Fig. 5). Ho-Chunk traditionalists would not have supported this cultural appropriation by the Danish Americans. As they were performing an ocean away in Denmark, Whirling Thunder may not have seen this as an issue, but he likely did not advertise this to others.¹⁸

By the end of the tour, the exhibition teams had performed for about 70,000 people. Whirling Thunder and the Native dance performance were particularly popular with the Danes. While audiences appreciated the performances of the Danish-inspired gymnastics and folk dancing teams, the Native dances were seen as unique and dramatic.

A newspaper article from the *Lolland-Falster Social-Demokrat* from June 10, 1936 recorded the excitement of the Danes for the arrival of the D.A.A.C. teams to Nakskov. The reporter wrote that the crowd wondered what the visitors would look like, if there was a real Indian with them, and if he would have a scalp hanging from his belt. The reporter went on to describe disappointment at the Danish Americans looking more-or-less like ordinary people and surprise that, instead of feathers, a tomahawk, and a scalp, Whirling Thunder wore “light summer dress.”¹⁹ Whirling Thunder’s presence on the trip challenged the Danes’ preconceived notions of who a Native person was and how they could look (Fig. 6).

When thinking of Native peoples, many Danes drew on images from Wild West shows, art of the American West, and the popular culture image of an Indian. This figure is usually depicted in Plains-style dress, often on horseback, and is stuck in a mythic past.²⁰ The language of newspaper articles describing the performances illustrate this, using words such as “wild” and “primitive.”²¹ Some of the Danes reacted to Whirling Thunder and his wife in a way that also reinforced this view. Club member Jack A. Rye recalled that, while staying with local host families on the trip, more than one host inquired about their eating and sleeping habits, “wondering whether they ate raw meat and slept on the ground.”²²

Denmark and Indians

The Danish American Athletic Club wanted to show the Danes something they could not see within their own country,

18 Bill Quackenbush, phone conversation, March 3, 2021.

19 “The Visit of the Danish-Americans in Nakskov Yesterday,” *Lolland-Falster Social-Demokrat*, June 10, 1936.

20 Stolte, “Performance, Gestures, and Poses in Postcards of Ho-Chunk in Wisconsin Dells,” 115.

21 “The Danish-American Indian Dancers,” *North Jutland Social Democrat*, June 9, 1936; “The Rolling Thunder Gives a Show in Native American Dance at the Rebild Party,” *Aftenbladet*, May 26, 1936.

22 “Narrating Danish Chicago Through Memories and Interviews,” *Danish American Cultural Life in Chicago* exhibition folder, Museum of Danish America records.

Fig. 5 Club member Lauritz Madsen dressed as a Plains Indian in Grindsted, Denmark, June 1936. 2000.028.002, Gift of Jack Rye, in memory of Aage Curt Rye & Karen Iversen Rye



Fig. 6 Photograph in front of the D.A.A.C. building in Chicago before departing on the trip to Denmark, May 16, 1936. Whirling Thunder is at the front left with his wife Marion next to him. 2000.028.006b, Gift of Jack Rye, in memory of Aage Curt Rye & Karen Iversen Rye

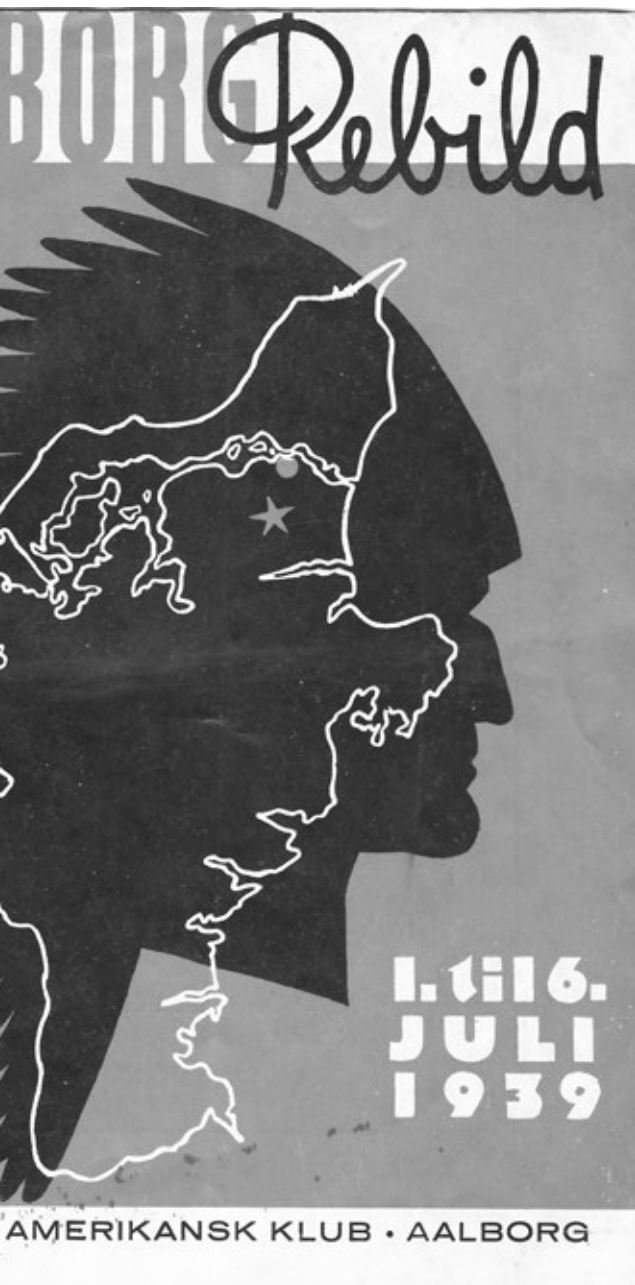


Fig. 7 Rebild Festival Program, 1939.
1986.129.006, Gift of Kate Lauritsen

“something truly American.”²³ Native peoples have been used as a symbol representing America since Europeans first stumbled upon the continent, an ironic choice considering that many American policies targeted Native peoples in an effort to remove them from their lands, weaken cultural bonds, and force them to assimilate to dominant culture.²⁴

Multiple Rebild Festivals over the years have also featured a component relating to Native peoples. This event, held annually in Rebild, Denmark and celebrating America’s Independence Day and returning Danish-Americans since 1912, sometimes used the popular iconography of an Indian to symbolize America (Fig. 7). When the D.A.A.C. group performed at the Rebild festival, Whirling Thunder was named Aalborg’s Mayor for a Day in one of the festival’s traditions. Usually, the recipient of this title is Danish-American; Whirling Thunder is one of few persons of color to have received this award.

For Danes, their view of Native peoples is perhaps not as loaded as that of Americans, due to geographic distance. Stories of Vikings traveling to America but not remaining to colonize are used by some to justify a closer bond between Native peoples and Scandinavians, believing that their cultures share a mythic past.²⁵ Today, there is a powwow culture in Denmark where some draw on this belief. At these powwows, Danes wear regalia in the Northern Plains style, dance Native dances, and play and sing in drum circles.²⁶ European powwows can be complicated events, as they can demonstrate interest, appreciation, and admiration for Native cultures but can also veer into offensive stereotypes, ignorant performance, or focus only on Native peoples of an imagined past.

The D.A.A.C. Native dance performance represents a complicated negotiation of cultural identity. The D.A.A.C. performance was problematic in its inaccuracies, generalizations, and cultural appropriation, and some, if not many, Native peoples may have found it offensive. However, it also exposed Danes to a contemporary Ho-Chunk man who worked throughout his life to broaden understanding of Native peoples and exercised his own agency in how he did this. Whirling Thunder navigated White expectations while maintaining control over the way he presented himself and the performances he led, retaining his autonomy and confronting long-held stereotypes.

Thank you to the Cultural Resources staff of the Ho-Chunk Nation and family members of Robert Whirling Thunder, who were generous with their time and information.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ James H. Howard, “The Native American Image in Western Europe,” *American Indian Quarterly* 4, no. 1 (Feb. 1978): 33.

²⁵ Tara Browner, “Tradition, Appropriation, and Mimesis: American Indian Style Pow-wow Singing and Dancing in Denmark,” *American Studies in Scandinavia* 43, no. 2 (2011): 78.

²⁶ “Why do Danes practice powwow dancing and singing?” http://www.powwows.dk/eng/en/eng_why.html.

collection connection

I joined the staff of this museum in 2004 – freshly out of grad school and secretly a little worried that maybe I didn't actually know what I was doing and everyone would find out. But thankfully, I knew more than I realized and learned a lot more. I'm proud of the work I've done and the positive impact I've had on the collection and the museum as a whole. Being here has afforded me the opportunity to grow professionally and personally in ways I never imagined when I started, and the relationships I've developed are ones I will always hold dear.

I can't tell you how much I love what I do and how perfect of a fit this work is for me – I was born to be a registrar. As some of you know, I am leaving the Museum of Danish America and beginning the next chapter of my career in mid-August. I am starting my own independent contracting business called Advanced Museum Services, where I'll be working with collections held by a variety of entities including museums, corporations, and private individuals. While it is incredibly hard to leave Elk Horn, I am very excited to see what my next adventure brings.

As I catalog my last artifact and complete my last shelf of inventory in Visual Storage, it seems appropriate to focus my final *America Letter* article on my favorite artifacts. Throughout our complete inventory project, I've had my hands on nearly the entire collection, so I know it well. We have some really wonderful pieces; it is tough to narrow down my list, but I'll share a handful of those I most enjoy.



BICYCLE As a cyclist, I have spent literally thousands of miles on my own bicycles. The owner of this Principia rode across the entire U.S. on this bike, a feat I intend to accomplish one day. By the time this is in print, I will have ridden across the State of Iowa 19 times on RAGBRAI, so I have a deep understanding of the physical, mental, and logistical challenges presented by a long cycling event. I am inspired by this object to keep pushing myself toward the goal of a cross-country ride. *Principia bicycle ridden across the United States in 2012. Donated by rider Lars Toft Rasmussen, 2013.017.001.*



CANDLESTICK Before coming to MoDA, I had not heard of Danish artist Bjørn Wiinblad, but I have since fallen in love with his art. This and so many other pieces in our collection simply make me smile. Wiinblad's whimsical, happy style is unique, clever, and fun. This particular object also incorporates a horse, which elicits memories of learning to ride on my grandparents' farm when I was a child. I have always shared my grandpa's love of horses, so this candlestick is not only beautiful art but also a fun connection to him. *Bjørn Wiinblad carousel horse candlestick, ca. 1974. Donated by Karen J. Beall, 2013.001.001.*



By Angela Stanford



WEDDING DRESS Anyone who knows me well knows I love sparkly things, so perhaps that is why this object has always been a favorite. This gorgeous dress features detailed beadwork that twinkles in the light. I can only imagine the hours spent designing and crafting this dress with such care and precision, and I am reminded of the limited experience I've had in quilting, where patience and detail are so important. *Wedding dress worn by Bertha Marie Nelson in Brayton, Iowa in 1912. Donated by Harriet J. Spanel, 1997.059.001.*



BEDSTEMORS HOUSE Certainly the largest artifact in the collection, this structure is filled with beautiful and unique original details. It has a warm feeling when you step inside – it has survived through many generations, and that history and life, and the lives of so many former residents, are important to share. I have often thought I could happily live there, though I would have to wear gloves to touch anything inside – so I suppose it isn't such a practical residence after all! *Built in 1908, Bedstemors House spent the first 82 years of its life as home to many immigrant families and their descendants and has been a museum for the past 31 years. Donated by Bedstemors, Inc, 1990.060.*



PSALM BOOK This book has always attracted my attention, both because it connects to my own faith and also because its velvet cover is purple – my favorite color! Published in 1904, Laura Hansen of Racine, Wisconsin received it as a gift just a few years later. It was likely a significant gift, since it was cared for and passed through the family so carefully. *Psalm Book, published in the Danish language by the Danish Lutheran Publishing House in Blair, Nebraska. Donated by Harry C. and Ellen Jensen, 1997.108.020.*



SAMPLERS A set of artifacts that I love to show during vault tours are these two samplers made 110 years apart by girls in the same family line. In 1730, at the age of 11, Maren Budtz Landsperg made the vertical sampler seen here. In 1840, Maren's great-granddaughter Mathilde Marie Landsperg made the horizontal sampler at the age of 10. Maren never met Mathilde, having died 40 years before Mathilde was born, yet needlework skills were shared across those generations. Receiving the "newer" sampler helped us craft a broader and deeper story about the maker of the "older" sampler, simply by connecting her in a tangible way to her great-granddaughter. One of the things I love most about my job is making people from years past "real," making them more than just faces in black-and-white photos or names on old documents. These objects help do that. *1730 sampler, 1994.182.037. 1840 sampler, 2013.029.001. Both donated by Lene Flindt Graff.*

In looking back at our records, I have personally worked with more than 1,000 donors, cataloged more than 6,500 new artifacts into the collection, inventoried at least 15,000 pieces, and worked with almost 1,200 loaned objects. We have also completed numerous projects related to the management and care of our collections. My proudest: the first complete inventory ever done here (which took 11 years), achieving first-time accreditation through the American Alliance of Museums, and starting the American Intern Program in 2005. Other tasks, programs, and relationships, which are impossible to count, have made this job unforgettable and special.

Being a part of MoDA has been one of the biggest blessings of my life. I look forward to seeing what new successes the future brings. Thank you all – board members, staff, volunteers, members, donors – for allowing me such a wonderful 17 years. I have been honored to care for this collection and to be invited into your lives.

REFLECTIONS FROM PAST PARTICIPANTS IN OUR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

where are they now?

Julie Andersen Moelgaard

In the middle of a blizzard, my seven-month-long internship at the then-called Danish Immigrant Museum in Elk Horn, Iowa began. Due to the blizzard I spent the first three days at the director's and his wife's home, before the museum could open and my internship could officially begin. Having just arrived from Denmark, it was a bit overwhelming to be "locked up" in a house in a new country with your boss. But I soon learned that the hospitality and open arms which I met in the house of John Mark and Dawn Nielsen were not unique but characteristic of the whole staff of the museum and its volunteers.

During my internship I spent three days a week in the collections department, where Angela Stanford introduced me to the important work of museum objects, and two days a week in the archive. Among other things, I translated notes and letters from

immigrants and got a unique look into the foundation and development of Danish-American culture. Furthermore, I also developed cultural workshops for students and attended meetings across the country. In short, I had the opportunity to learn all the facets of museum work and how its relevance is played out in local and national communities. The seven months in rural Iowa went quickly by, and when I left Elk Horn in the middle of a heatwave, I left with my suitcase full of memories and a professional interest in cultures crossing borders.

My interest in history, cross cultural meetings, and communication have maintained a big part of my life ever since – privately, as well as professionally. A year after my internship, I did a fieldtrip to Solvang, California and Elk Horn, Iowa to study the different developments of

the villages. Today I live in the historic town of Roskilde with my husband and two children, have a Ph.D. in history, and work at the Department of History at one of the five Danish universities. My research and teaching fields have shifted from Danish-American culture to Danish-German culture, but the meeting between cultures and the moving of people in a historical context has remained the core of my work.



the story of hans jonathan

SLAVERY IN DENMARK

Genealogy continues to be a fascinating area of discovery. Several months ago, a box of books was donated to the Genealogy Center. As we were sorting through them, I stumbled across a book titled *The Man Who Stole Himself: The Slave Odyssey of Hans Jonathan*. The author was Gisli Palsson from Iceland. Because the name seemed to be Danish, I decided that I just had to read this book. In the United States we have racial problems, stemming from our past history of slavery, which dominate the news media. This book's title made me wonder what were, if any, Denmark's connections to slavery.

The story of Hans Jonathan starts when he was born on the Caribbean island of St. Croix in 1784. He was subsequently taken to Denmark by his owner when he was about 12 years old. Not knowing much about the Danish Virgin Islands and the slave trade, I turned to the internet.

The first article mentioned the Danish slave trade during the Viking Age in raids on England where slaves were captured. This was abolished in the 10th century once Denmark became a Christian country. In other

articles the Danish transatlantic slave trade was explained. In 1671 Denmark-Norway ran a transatlantic slave trade until January 1803 when the 1792 law to abolish the slave trade came into effect. But an illegal trade in Africans continued. Until 1848 when slaves in the Danish West Indies were emancipated, slavery in the Danish West Indies continued.

These islands in the Caribbean became colonies of Denmark from the 1660s. The three islands were Saint Thomas, Saint John and Saint Croix. In St. Thomas a fort was established and called Fort Christian after the King. A town eventually emerged and was called Charlotte Amalie after the Queen and becoming a major shipping port. The products shipped to Denmark included tobacco, raw sugar, and some cotton. Because most of the land on St. Thomas had become cultivated, St. John was annexed in 1718. Because Danes did not want to go to the West Indies to work, and the natives were not good at the hard work, the importation of slaves from Africa was started.

By 1733 St. Thomas and St. John were completely cultivated, so Denmark bought the island of St. Croix. By the mid 1750's, 64 sugar plantations were operating, worked by African slaves. By this time, sugar had become the main export. Around this time the population included 2,000 whites and 14,000 slaves.²

So where were these slaves coming from? Denmark had established colonies on the Western African coast (Guinea) in an area that became known as the Gold Coast and the Slave Coast. The Danish port was named Christiansborg. Portugal, Spain, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Denmark were all involved in the transatlantic slave trade.



By Wanda Sornson

This trafficking of slaves followed a triangular pattern in the Atlantic from Africa to the West Indies to Europe.



Goods from Europe were carried to West Africa to be traded for slaves. The slaves were carried to the West Indies where they would be auctioned off or put to work on sugar plantations. In the West Indies sugar, coffee, and tobacco were bought to take back to Europe. The Danish West Indies possibly had the largest slave auctions in the world.

in 1792 by his owner, Henriette Schimmelmann. Being a genealogist, I wanted to find proof of his having lived in Copenhagen, so I turned to the census. Hans came to Copenhagen too late for the 1787 census, and the next available census was in 1801. I searched the transcribed censuses for Copenhagen in 1801 and found his in the city of København.

This was the world that Hans Jonathan had been born into. Hans was taken to Copenhagen

Samtlige personer i husstanden (All persons in the household)

København, København (Staden), Sankt Annæ Øster Kvarter, Sankt Annæ Øster Kvarter, Matr. 71 (fortsat), 395, FT-1801, A5028

Navn:	Alder:	Status:	Stilling i familien:	Erhverv:	Fødested:
Henriette f Schæffer Schimmelmann	48	Enke		E e H.L.E.S.	
Ernst Carl Schimmelmann	20	Ugift		Moder H.S.	
Michael William	21	Ugift		Tiener	
Hans Jonathan	17	Ugift		Tiener (neger)	
Nicolai Hansen	30	Ugift		Kusk	
Niels Bentsen	26	Ugift		Gaardkarl	
Sabina Helena (neger)	40	Ugift		Kammerpige	
Emiliane Regina (neger)	36	Ugift		Kammerpige	
Christiane Jacobsen Schlengrich	26	Ugift		Husholderske	
Inger Frederiksdatter	30	Ugift		Kokkepige	
Juliane Sophie (neger)	17	Ugift		Stuepige ?	

Here was Hans Jonathan, 17 years old, unmarried, with an occupation of a tiener (servant) and identified as (neger) which is Danish for negro. The next available census is the 1834; and, of course, by that time Hans had fled Denmark. He ran away when his owner refused to let him join the military to fight the English in 1801. Schimmelmann won a court case that stated that Hans was her property, that he was not a free man.

This raised the next question: Were there other slaves in Denmark at that time? And the answer was – Yes! Here are some examples of censuses from <https://ddd.dda.dk/> :

København, København (Staden), Klædebo Kvarter, Klædeboderne, No. 6 - 1. Familie, 13, FT-1787, B5764

Navn:	Alder:	Status:	Stilling i familien:	Erhverv:	Fødested:
Hans Wilhelm Gulbrand	43	Gift	husbond	Doctor medic.	
Johanna Christina Storm	43	Gift	hustru		
Lars Christensen	42	Ugift		Tjener	
Carl Christian Black	25	Ugift		Kusk	
en neger, udøbt ellers kaldt Andreas – a Negro, unbaptized otherwise called Andreas	19 !!	Ugift - unmarried	ei bevist – not proven	Min Eiendom allsaa?? ingen anden nærings vej - My property also, no other way	

København, København (Staden), Hof & Militæretaten, Nyboder 2.Divisions 7.Matroskompagni, Løvegade 1, 1213, FT-1787, B5763

Navn:	Alder:	Status:	Stilling i familien:	Erhverv:	Fødested:
Friderich Stibolt	37	Ugift - unmarried	Hosbonde	Pr.Lieut.ved Comp.	
Jacob-kaldet men har ingen daab,da han er en Neger og Hedning – called but he has not been baptized, as he is a Negro and gentile	20	Ugift - unmarried	Som Tiener – his servant		

København, København (Staden), Snarens Kvarter, Snarens Kvarter, Matr. 16, 64, FT-1801, A5027

Navn:	Alder:	Status:	Stilling i familien:	Erhverv:	Fødested:
Johanne Frideriche Hage	40	Enke - widow	Huusmoder	Egne Midler – her own funds	
Christiane Arnette Hage	12	Ugift	hendes Datter		
Martha Hage	4	Ugift	hendes Datter		
Eva Høyer	19	Ugift	Huusjomfrue - housekeeper		
Ane Margrethe Møller	19	Ugift	Tjenestepige – servant girl		
Isack (Neger)	16	Ugift	??	Slave hos Hage – slave of owner, Hage	
Amalia (Negerinde) (Negro inside?)	17	Ugift	??	Slave hos Hage	

København, København (Staden), Vester Kvarter, Vester Kvarter, Matr. 140, 528, FT-1801, A5022

Navn:	Alder:	Status:	Stilling i familien:	Erhverv:	Fødested:
Gertrud Marie Greis	50	Enke - widow		Lærerinde - teacher	
Inger Cathrine Westgaard	20	Ugift		Tj. Pige - servant girl	
Peder Armstrøm	29	Ugift - unmarried		Plantør S.Croix – Planter in S. Croix	
Edvard ((Elvard Neger))	11	Ugift		See Armstrøm	

These censuses came from the years 1787 and 1801, when Denmark was still involved in slavery. Using the word “neger” rather than a given name when searching resulted in many, many censuses in København. However, when I tried that word in searching any other county in Denmark, there were no results. I also tried that word in the 1834 census for København, and there were no results. It would seem that slaves only existed in Copenhagen and only in the censuses of 1787 and 1801.

In 1792 Denmark had passed a bill banning the slave trade, but this did not end slavery. The ban did not become effective until 1803. In Denmark the claim is that Governor General Peter von Scholten gave the slaves their freedom in 1848; however, in the U.S. Virgin Islands the story is that a revolt in 1848 with slaves threatening to burn St. Croix to the ground caused Von Scholten to grant their freedom immediately.

Thus ends the world of slavery in Denmark. But it was not the end of the story for Hans Johathan. He had escaped to Iceland and on February 28, 1820 he married Cathrine Anthonsdatter in Hals I Hamarsfirdi. Two children followed this marriage: Ludvig Stephen on May 26, 1821 and Hansine Regine on August 4, 1824. You can learn the rest of his story in the book *The Man Who Stole Himself: The Slave Odyssey of Hans Jonathan*.

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jensen

SQUARE STORIES IN THE PRAIRIE LANDSCAPE PARK AT THE MUSEUM OF DANISH AMERICA

In the summer of 2021, a selection of Square Stories by Danish author Louis Jensen began to be exhibited out in the Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park at the Museum of Danish America. What will happen when these very small stories get out and about and set up a new residence inside the big park? How will the park help us read the stories? Will we see the stories differently when they get outside their books? How will the stories change how we see and experience the park?

JENSEN #1 IS JENS

The Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park at the Museum of Danish America celebrates the legacy of the Danish immigrant who revolutionized landscape architecture in America. During an era when most landscape design relied on imported plants and European traditions, Jens Jensen advocated for the use of native and naturalized plants. He famously included wildflowers, native grasses, and native trees in the public parks and school campuses he designed, and the way he planted them made them look as though they had always belonged there. His plans for parks and other communal spaces were as welcoming to the human inhabitants as they were to the native plants. The designs often included both intimate gathering places like council rings and grottoes, and grander, open places where visitors could find a larger vista revealed. Balancing the intimate with the grand, Jensen's landscapes encourage visitors to wander, and they also encourage them to stop and see.

I know first-hand how a Jens Jensen landscape design can help connect the intimate and the grand, because I travel daily the various paths and the beautiful vistas of the Luther College campus where I teach. Jensen designed that landscape before he set off for the Park District in Chicago, and I have come to love the cottonwoods and the burr oaks that anchor the open spaces of the campus, the witch hazels and the coneflowers that soften its edges. I meet students at the council ring; I lift my eyes to the hills above the Oneota valley.

With the installation of the Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park in 2012, MoDA created a lovely and dynamic place that honors Jensen's philosophy of *how we should move through the world*—with attention and close-up observation, and with clear, distant vision. The 30+ acre park provides welcoming and intimate spaces—a council ring, a Friend's Walk, a picnic area. And it provides a grander long view—of the green, rolling hills of Iowa, and the big blue sky above.

The park also honors Jensen's philosophy of *how we should treat the world*. With the efforts to restore the prairie ecosystem, the park is designed to establish habitat for wildlife and for pollinators, and to increase plant diversity. The Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park is more than a museum campus, and more than a backdrop for the buildings, significant as they are. The park is itself its own lesson, and it has something to teach us.



By Lise Kildegaard
Professor of English
at Luther College

F jensen

JENSEN #2 IS LOUIS

The Danish author Louis Jensen published more than 90 books, including something in just about every genre you can imagine. He wrote poetry, novels for adults, several varieties of memoir, young adult and middle-grade fiction, creative nonfiction, picture books, easy readers, short stories, and at least one novel that could be called a murder mystery. While he wrote for both adults and children, his works for younger audiences brought him the most acclaim. His numerous awards and honors included the Nordic Children's Prize (1996), the Hans Christian Andersen Stipend (1998), and the Gyldendals Store Børnebogspris (Gyldendal's Big Children's Book Prize) (2009). In 2010 and again in 2016, he was nominated for and made the short list for the Hans Christian Andersen Award, which is often called the Nobel Prize of children's literature.

In 2002, Jensen's literary achievements were recognized by the Danish National Arts Foundation when he was added to the roster of the "Statens Kunstfond Hædersydelser"—the list of Danish artists and cultural figures who receive state support in the form of a yearly stipend in recognition of their contributions to culture. This roster of 275 artists includes many with international reputations, like author Peter Høeg, poets Pia Tafdrup and Henrik Nordbrandt, and filmmakers Jørgen Leth and Lars Von Trier. Few of the artists who have been chosen for this honor are known primarily for the art they have made for children. Louis Jensen joins Cecil Bødker, Bjarne Reuter, and the illustrator Dorte Kallebæk in the small group of artists recognized by the state for primarily their contributions to children's literature.

SQUARE STORIES

In 1992, Louis Jensen published *Hundrede Historier*, a collection of 100 very, very short stories, which became the first volume of what was to become his Square Story project. Each is just a few sentences long, and they are arranged one to a page, in the shape of a square. The stories are sequentially ordered: the first begins *En gang var der*, or "one time there was;" and the second begins *En anden gang var der*, a second time there was; all the way up to "a hundredth time there was." The book is big, with lots of white space around the small square of text on each page, and the illustrator Lillian Brøgger has added a two-page spread of illustration for every ten stories. This first volume became the pattern for the life's work that was Jensen's Square Story project—a series of ten volumes of 100 stories each, and a final book with just one story (and more than 100 pictures). He published the final volume in 2016—24 years and 1001 stories.

Jensen's 1001 Square Stories are wildly diverse. Some are hilarious and silly, some are darkly humorous, some are lyrical and sweet—and some are deeper and more profound than you might imagine a very, very short story could be. Many of the stories include characters that are familiar to us from fairy tales and folk tales—kings and queens, witches and trolls. Others turn inanimate objects into protagonists—a wagon wheel, a frying pan, a ten-penny nail. Still others narrate the surprising adventures of alphabet letters, numbers, and books.

While the Square Stories are difficult to categorize, the alert reader may notice that even Jensen's quirkiest stories allude to and take their place within

well-known literary traditions. Some stories, like the 7th story about the black frying pan, follow familiar narrative patterns, like the bildungsroman. Some stories remind us of concrete poems or other experiments with form. Reading them, we hear echoes of fairy tales and quest narratives, H. C. Andersen, the brothers Grimm. We find connections to the absurd poetry of Danil Kharms, and the playful, metafictional experiments of those other fabulists named Louis—Lewis Carroll and Jorge Luis Borges. What Louis Jensen has done in his 1001 Square Story project is entirely innovative and new, and it also participates in the creative work of other great literature that has gone before.

Whether an individual Square Story is silly or serious, comic or tragic; whether it gestures toward classic literature or toward postmodernist experiments with metafiction; each story is teaching the reader something about *how to move through the world*. Sometimes that is an explicit lesson shared in the story, as in the 314th story about an innovative snail.

A three hundred and fourteenth time there was a snail. It grew tired of its slow snail pace and so it bought a little wagon with wheels and a cheerful little flag. Now it moved quickly through the grass: Hooray! But the other snails shook their heads in their snailhouses: how stupid to drive on wheels! For the best thing in the whole world is to go at a snail's pace.

It's good to slow down, these snails remind us. Other stories make clear that it is also good to wander and roam, to take an unexpected path, to reach a place with a long view, and to arrive home again.

Jensen's stories also instruct us in *how to treat the world*. Many of the stories describe a harmonious relationship between nature and the built environment, like the 79th story about a family of swallows:

A seventy ninth time there was a town swallow named Sophus who lived in a hole in the wall of the church tower. It married a country swallow named Sophie, and together they had seven small blue eggs. Out of each and every egg came a beautiful swallow baby, and because they grew up in the church tower, they all sang just like church bells.

In one of my favorite stories, a bird communicates with a tree:

A sixth time there was a tree and a little bird. They were good friends and they often talked together. The little bird would fly up high above the tree top and look all around. Then it would fly down again and sit with the tree and report everything it had seen. And then the tree would tell the bird all the strange things its roots could see down deep in the earth. In this way they both grew wise. And one time in a hundred, they were so filled with wonder, they both fell silent for a long while.

Both the tree and the bird in this story pay close attention to the specific environment where they have their natural being—the bird in the sky and the tree deep in the earth. They learn what they can from observing what is above and what is below, and then they meet in the middle to share. The result is wisdom and wonder.

01. Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park
at the Museum of Danish America

JENSEN + JENSEN= SQUARE STORIES IN THE WILD

What will happen now that Louis Jensen's Square Stories are released from the confines of their books and installed alongside the welcoming paths and the beautiful vistas of the Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park this summer?

I have some experience bringing the Square Stories out into the open. For several years, I have been reading and translating Jensen's remarkable stories and sharing them with audiences old and young. As a college professor, I have traveled around in Denmark and in my own country to share the Square Story project—in classrooms in Chicago, Minneapolis, and Albuquerque and in my own college in Iowa. I've brought the Square Stories to share with college students who are studying postmodernism and microfictions, and also with second graders who are still holding fat pencils and learning to spell. Everywhere I have accompanied these little stories out into the world, they have been met with such pleasure: because they are funny, because they are beautiful, and because they do what all good poetry does—they unfold new space in our minds and our imaginations, and maybe in our hearts, too.

Meeting the Square Stories out on the prairie may help us re-imagine what is native and what is wild. It may help us pay closer attention to nature, both what we can see close by and near, and what we see far out on the horizon. Perhaps we'll learn from both the stories and the landscape how to move through the world and how to treat it. Perhaps, like the bird and the tree, we'll learn something altogether new and different, and that will fill us with wonder.

Further reading:

The historian J. R. Christianson posted this essay about Jens Jensen's landscape design at Luther College: <https://www.luther.edu/campus/landscape/>

My essay on Louis Jensen, "At Home in an Astonishing World: The Square Stories of Louis Jensen," can be downloaded from *The Bridge: The Journal of the Danish American Heritage Society* (<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/thebridge/vol37/iss2/111/>)

In this podcast, recorded during Louis Jensen's visit to Luther College in 2008, Jensen and I discuss the Square Story Project, and he reads from his work: *Conversations by Luther College*: podcast. <https://itunes.apple.com/us/itunes-u/conversations-conversations/id407054074?mt=10>

This introduction to Jensen's work, including the Square Stories, includes an interview with Jensen, translated into English: "The Wondrous Beauty of Life," *Scandinavian Library Quarterly*; 37:1, 2004 https://www.ibby.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Louis_Jensen.pdf



02. Louis Jensen with Lise Kildegaard, translator, and Lillian Brøgger, illustrator, at the celebration hosted by Gyldendal for the publication of the eleventh and final volume of Square Stories; Copenhagen, 2016

the sailing suitcase

STORIES FROM THE DANISH IMMIGRANT WALL OF HONOR

In this first-person account, we meet a California-based career “dairy man” Dane who crossed the ocean in 1955 at age 28. Carlo Christensen, a living immigrant, creatively tells of his journey, revealing his motivation, experiences, emotions, and impressions of the new country.

Carlo’s story, “The Story of the Sailing Suitcase,” combined with items he gifted to the museum, make history come alive and help us understand the immigration experience.

“The Story of the Sailing Suitcase”

by Carlo Christensen
November 20, 2006

Once upon a time, there was a young man who decided the time had come to venture across the ocean and explore the adventures and possibilities of the new world.

A fair-sized suitcase was bought in the city of Svendborg, Denmark. At the same time, a Norwegian Ocean Line ticket was purchased as well.

The departure time was set for November 6, 1955 from the Free Harbor in Copenhagen. The suitcase was decorated with various identification stickers and loaded in the so-called *bagasjerom* on the *MS Oslofjord*. Here it remained until we reached the destination: New York City on November 14, 1955.

We had stopped in Kristiansand, Norway in the late evening of November 6. We took onboard a few Norwegians and their suitcases.

The first few days on board were pleasant and uneventful. There was plenty of entertainment: gym hall, swimming pool, movie theaters, dance halls, etc. My roommates were two Danish exchange students of my age, and an older gentleman with terrible, stinking feet. Our small cabin had two bunk beds, and the ventilation was not the best. But compared to the conditions of immigrants of earlier times, we had it made.

On the fourth day of the journey, we ran into a fierce November storm with waves as high as three or four-story homes. Everything that was not tied down was flying all over the place, and a lot of passengers got seasick. Fortunately, it did not bother me or my suitcase. Early morning on the last day, we saw several seagulls and flying fish and,

through the fog, the majestic Statue of Liberty, as well as, on the shore, an unending stream of car lights.

On the New York Pier #42, my two cabin buddies and I were met by an exchange-student cousin of mine. With her help we checked in our suitcases at the Greyhound bus station and then went out sightseeing. And what an overwhelming sight it was for three farm boys from the old country!

Late in the day we boarded Greyhound buses: one headed to upstate New York; the other and I heading west, as so many immigrants had done before us. Obviously we enjoyed the varied landscape along the way, and we were really impressed with the Pennsylvania and Ohio Turnpikes. One thing that sticks in my mind was the signs along the roads. Every 10-15 miles we would see the sign “BURMA SHAVE.” I never found out what it was, but assume it must have been a brand of shaving cream. The bus stopped at small depots for short rests every two hours. We soon found things called hamburgers, fries, and chocolate milk. These became our sustenance for the rest of the trip. We also discovered what restrooms were - but found it strange that this was the name for toilet.

In Chicago my buddy headed toward the Pacific Northwest, and



By Shelli Larson

I went west toward Iowa. The bus reached Woodbine, Iowa in the middle of the night. Contrary to what my uncle had told me, there was absolutely nobody to meet the bus at the general store. The bus driver tapped sleeping me on the shoulder and said, "here you get off."

So out I went, into the pitch-dark town in a blistering snowstorm. I carefully dug some warm clothing out of my suitcase and wandered aimlessly around town. Finally, I saw a dim light and found the fire station/post office and entered a small, warm, hallway lobby. It felt mighty good, and my faith in America was then restored. Around six in the morning, a maintenance man showed up, and he cheerfully called my uncle, Magnus, and said, "Hey, there is a kid here looking for you, so come and get him."

Half an hour later Magnus showed up in a shiny, new Oldsmobile - the prettiest thing on wheels I had ever seen. When we arrived at the farm, Magnus yelled to his wife, "Lois, Lois come here, this one can talk."

I then, in my best schoolbook British said, "Hello, I am very pleased to be here."

As had happened earlier to my family and others who my uncle had sponsored, I was welcomed with open arms.

My stay at the Woodbine farm was sheer pleasure. I was treated to sightseeing in the countryside, roller skating in Missouri Valley, and a country music concert in Omaha - Hank Williams, I believe - a little man with a great voice, a big hat, and an even bigger guitar. I got to milk cows



**DANISH IMMIGRANT
WALL OF HONOR
Column 30 Row 40**

Carlo Christensen
1955 Glendale, California

the old-fashioned way, feed the hogs, hunt squirrels and even ride horses. The latter did not last too long as the horse was livelier than the old, heavy, and faithful plow horses I was used to. It sent me simply flying through the air and landing on the ground in disgrace. But, all good things come to an end, and after a super nice visit in beautiful Southwest Iowa, we again put my suitcase into the belly of a westbound Greyhound bus.

The journey through Nebraska, Wyoming and Utah was thoroughly enjoyable from my vantage point at the upper-front windows of the bus, but it was

rather eventless. Salt Lake City was, and is, beautiful. Then came the seemingly endless miles of the far West, a tip of Arizona, Nevada with the lights of Las Vegas, and finally the sign that said, "Welcome to California." But what a disappointment: the endless miles of the Mojave Desert. *Where are the palm trees, the orange groves, the warm beaches, and the snow-covered mountains?*

Well, when several more bus hours had passed, the promised land began to appear around San Bernardino. After another hour through busy streets with car lots and more cars - new and used - than I had ever dreamed of, the bus finally pulled in to the destination: the Greyhound Station in downtown Los Angeles. Here I was met by my parents, my sister, and my brothers. Following a short freeway trip, we were at home in Glendale.

The suitcase had survived ups and downs, ins and outs, and was then, for a while, utilized as clothing storage. As time went by and our accommodations grew, it ended up in the attic, totally forgotten.

It came to mind again when I saw the row of immigrant luggage at the museum in Elk Horn, Iowa during an October board meeting. Down the suitcase came, was dusted off and opened - and what a wealth of good memories it contained! Pamphlets, brochures,

and old letters galore, a true treasure. And now, with a bit of luck, after a long and faithful service, it has found a well-deserved spot in final retirement at the Museum of Danish America.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born June 22, 1927 to Julius P. and Helga D. Christensen, Carlo was raised in the farming community Als in East Jutland, Denmark. He attended a country elementary school and worked as a farmhand while attending high school, then as a creamery operations apprentice. After serving in the Royal Danish Army from 1948-1950, he attended Ladelund Dairy College in Brorup, Denmark and became a supervisor at a small Danish co-op creamery on the island of Fyn.

At 28 years of age, Carlo decided it was time to see and experience more of the world. He left November 4, 1955 from

Copenhagen and arrived in New York November 11, 1955. Here, as other family before him had done, he headed to the golden west: sunny California.

It took Carlo little time to realize that it was in America he wanted to stay, so he took the responsibilities required, as well as the advantages offered. After working 11 years in the dairy industry in Denmark, it was natural for Carlo to pursue the same trade in the U.S. Carlo worked in all phases of the creamery/food business at the Knudsen Creamery Company of California in Los Angeles and eventually got into middle management. He continued his studies at Glendale City College, Loyola University L.A., and the University of California - Davis, studying management and dairy science. In all, Carlo spent 29 years with Knudsen Creamery, and later, 13 years with the

supermarket chain Ralphs, in its creamery department. He retired in 1997, ending a 53-year career in the dairy industry.

Carlo married November 2, 1957 to Barbara Peto of Los Angeles. They had four sons: Richard, Gary, Mark, and Glen. Barbara passed away in 2006.

Today, Carlo lives in Glendale, CA. His Danish-American heritage winds through many of his relationships. He has been a member of most of Southern California's Danish-American organizations, a board member of many, and president of some, including: The Danish Lutheran Church of LA, now Yorba Linda; Danes Worldwide; Ollerup and Ladelund Alumna; and the Rebild National Park Society. Carlo served on the board of directors of the Museum of Danish America from 2004-2010.



new additions to the wall of honor

FEBRUARY 19 – JULY 21, 2021

The Danish Immigrant Wall of Honor provides families and friends with a means of preserving the memories of those who emigrated from Denmark to America. More than 4,600 immigrants are currently recognized on the Wall. Their stories and the stories of their families contribute to the growing repository of personal histories at the museum's Genealogy Center. You may find a list of the immigrants on the Wall of Honor at www.danishmuseum.org.

The information here includes the immigrant's name, year of immigration, location where they settled, and the donor's name and location.

**ANDREW (ANDERS)
CHRISTENSEN** (1884) Hardy,
NE – Eldon & Sally Petersen,
Colleyville, TX

CLAUS GEBHARD CLAUSEN
(1905) Elk Horn, IA – Garey &
Sherry Knudsen, Hutchinson, MN
& Darwin Clausen,
La Crescent, MN

**THOMAS CHRISTIAN JELLINGE
(JELLINGER)** (1907) Seaton, IL –
Susan Jellinger, Des Moines, IA

SOREN "SAM" JENSEN (1913)
Waterloo, Iowa – Andrea Jensen,
Ann Arbor, MI

NIELS PETER NIELSEN LANG
(1888) Blair, NE – Carter & Beverly
Rogers, Tempe, AZ

JENS NORGARD (1902)
Hebron, IL – Jim Norgard,
Hebron, IL

Object ID 2006.062.018a

This is the sailing suitcase used by Carlo Christensen when he emigrated from Denmark to the U.S. in 1955.

The suitcase is wood covered by thin metal, painted brown, and held together on the edges and corners by tacks. Attached to the suitcase's hardened leather handle is a tag with an image of three ocean liners; Carlo's travel information is on the back.

Various stickers are visible on the suitcase. Carlo's suitcase came to The Danish Immigrant Museum (Museum of Danish America) in 2006 along with many other treasures. Here it is kept with protection and care.

By Deb Christensen Larsen



memorials

FEBRUARY 19 – JULY 21, 2021

Through various funds, donors have provided gifts in memory of:

Bill Andersen
Viola F. (Mell) Brannen, Ellen
Andersen Odell, Anna
Rasmussen Andersen (1865-
1944)
Ardys Askelson
Donald Dean Beasley
Brothers Anton (Tony), Robert
(Bob) and Harold Berg
Anton Berg, my father, and Robert
E. Berg, my uncle
Mr. and Mrs. Folmer Bonnesen
Janet Bornholdt
Janet Bornholdt, my sister
Robert W. Brown
Cecily Castenskiold
Marie Petersen Chobot
Axel & Marie (Bonnerup)
Christensen
Joyce Christensen of Galena, IL
Joyce & Virgil Christensen
Ray Christensen
T.K. Christensen
Virginia Christensen, Past National
Secretary, Sisterhood of America
The Christensen's: George & Ollie,
Clarice & Lloyd, Virgil & Joyce
Glen Clemsen
Marie Jensen Durand
Effie Mestad Enger
Cora Sorenson Fagre
Hans & Mathilde Farstrup
Anne & Iver Fogdall
Harriette Foster, Lodge 15
Milwaukee, WI
Chuck Fredericksen, Ames IA
C F Frederiksen
Charles Frederiksen
Charles Frederiksen, my cousin
Charles F. Frederiksen
Chuck Frederiksen

Erling J. Grumstrup
Bent & Lydia Hansen
John P. & Anine Hansen
Hansen Family: Martin, Jesse,
Roger/Keith
Maynard Hansen, a very proud
Danish American!
Ingrid Hansen, Past National
Treasurer, Sisterhood of America
Hartvi & Alma Hartvigsen
Wayne Bruce Haverland
Melba Hendee, a proud daughter
and granddaughter of Danish
immigrants
Irene Louise (Hansen) Hogan
Marj Holland
Spencer Holland
Spence Holland, my brother
Henrik Holmskov, Lodge 15
Milwaukee, WI
Penny Jacobsen
Lyria & Clinton Jensen
Russell P. Jensen
Jenny Jensen, Chairman of the
History Gathering Committee
and 1st National Historian,
Sisterhood of America
Ralph Jensen, husband of
Lou Ann Jensen Lodge 15
Milwaukee, WI
Charles Wagner Jensen, my father
Soren "Sam" Jensen, my paternal
grandfather
Ruth & Herbert Jeppesen
Raymond & Ann Jespersen
Iver Jorgensen
Iver Jorgensen, our good friend
Iver "Whitey" Jorgensen
Iver Lorenz Jorgensen
Whitey (Iver) Jorgensen
Karen Kadgihn
Pastor Carsten Christian Kloth,
former pastor of Danish Lutheran
Church, Elk Horn, IA

Rev. Harald "Knutie" & Ruth Viola
"Ole" Knudsen, my parents
John Kristensen
Kurt Klarskov Larsen
Paul & Johanne Larsen
Chris Laursen
Bent Lerno & his Mum, Martha
Dorothy E. Lund's 100th birthday
Clark Mathisen, my father
Valborg Henriksen McKinzie
Elsie Rasmussen McNabb
Karen Molgaard
Mary Mommer
Franklin Mosdal
John Nielsen
John W. Nielsen
John Wolter Nielsen
Marvin Nielsen
Nancy Nyholm, Past National
Secretary, Sisterhood of America
William A. Olsen, my husband &
member of Brotherhood Detroit
Lodge
Flemming V. Pedersen
Martin Pedersen
Niels M. Pedersen
Ardis Petersen
Peter & Anna Rattenborg
Michael Routhe
Mads & Inger Samdaj
Leroy Sand
Marie Sorensen
Marie Louise Sørensen
Marie Louise (Eve) Sørensen
Zola Sornson
Zola V. Sornson
Barbara Stenberg
Alvin Einar Swanson
Einar Swanson
Einar Swanson, our dear friend
Patricia Thisted
Elvera "Vera" L. Thorne
Nels Peterson Toft, my great
grandfather
Capt. Lars E. Toftemark

Ruth Anderson Turney
Judy Walden
Walter Westergaard
Richard D. Wittrup, my brother
Lorraine Zembinski, Past
National President, Sisterhood
of America, and Lodge 15
Milwaukee, WI

in honor

FEBRUARY 19 – JULY 21, 2021

**Through various funds,
donors have provided gifts
in honor of people or special
events.**

Karl Bonnesen
The 10th Anniversary of the
Victor Borge Legacy Award
William & Judy (Hansen)
Campfield
In appreciation for use of
facilities for a reunion of
several members of the Elk
Horn High School Class of
1950
Jan & Larry Fajen
The use of your facilities for
our “friend gathering”
John Koch and Danish heritage
The creative and dedicated
MoDA staff
Museum of Danish America
John W. Nielsen, D. Phil.
Angela Stanford
Jennifer Winters

jens jensen heritage path

FEBRUARY 19 – JULY 21, 2021

**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: May
and October.**

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

Arlie Askelson, Indian Hills, CO
Carlo Christensen, Glendale,
CA
Christine Douglas, Goodyear,
AZ
Kay Cameron & Dennis Gray,
Winston-Salem, NC
Dick & Joann Hemp, Reno, NV
Jens & Kathleen Hoffding-
Jensen, Rockford, MN
Steve & Mary Holmes, Polk
City, IA
Doug & Janet Johnson, West
Des Moines, IA
Chris & Lisa Kofoed, West
Branch, IA
Gary & Diane Madsen, Omaha,
NE
Opal D. Marcussen Trust,
Adair, IA
Dorothy Overgard, Lakewood,
CO
Inger Russell, Taylorsville, UT
Judith Smith, Antioch, IL

new members

FEBRUARY 19 – JULY 21, 2021

The Museum of Danish America is pleased to identify the following 70 individuals as its newest members:

Jon Adams, Elk Horn, IA
Bjorn Erik Andersen, Croton on Hudson, NY
Liv Andersen Charbonneau, Westport, CT
Martha Arnum, Raleigh, NC
Julie Blake, Bay City, TX
Bill & Cindy Brewbaker, Indianola, IA
Paul Bro, Claremont, CA
Rochelle Cox, Isanti, MN
John & Jeannine Criss, Leawood, KS
Mary Doherty, Moraga, CA
Denise Flory, Cedar Falls, IA
Brian & Mary Anne Fontaine, Thompson, CT
Elizabeth Gallucci, Richfield, MN
Jane Groth, Raytown, MO
David Hansen, Bethany, MO
Gerald & Francine Hansen, Milwaukee, WI
Lynette Hansen Short, Omaha, NE
Richard & Joann Hemp, Reno, NV
Jon & Debra Jacobsen, Council Bluffs, IA
Susan Jellinger, Des Moines, IA
Lillian Jensen, Cardiff by the Sea, CA
Honorary Consul John Jespersen & Katherine Jespersen, Kansas City, MO
Kevin & Kim Jessen, Joice, IA
Walter & Lauren Killam, Omaha, NE

Dr. C. Eve Jensen Kimball, Wyomissing, PA
Richard Knudsen, Brentwood, TN
Eric Kochendorfer, Denver, CO
Douglas & Stefanie Kramer, Earling, IA
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FEBRUARY 19 – JULY 21, 2021

These 69 organizations have contributed memberships or gifts-in-kind of \$100 or greater or have received complimentary or reciprocal memberships in recognition of exemplary service to the museum. We acknowledge their generosity in each edition of the *America Letter* during their membership.

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Elk Horn-Kimballton Optimist Club, Elk Horn & Kimballton, IA
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Slippery Jacks

Danske Asier

1/2 bu. large cucumbers

Peel and cut in half lengthwise. Scrape out centers. Sprinkle salt on each layer and let stand 3 to 5 hours. Drain well. Pat cucumbers dry.

In each quart jar put:

1 head dill	6 small pickling onions, peeled
1/2 to 1 tsp. mustard seed	1/8 to 1/4 tsp. alum powder
3 to 6 peppercorns	

Bring to boil:

2 qt. vinegar
1 qt. water
4-1/2 to 5 c. sugar
1 Tbsp. mixed pickling spice tied in cheesecloth

Add hot syrup to jars and seal. Process for 5 minutes in water bath.

Sharon Nielman
Lodge 125
Detroit, Michigan

The Sisterhood Archive includes at least four recipe books, including this one. Here, we're sharing a handy recipe for preserving cucumbers - referenced in the book's index as "Slippery Jims" but titled "Slippery Jacks" on the recipe. Whichever nickname for James you prefer, we hope you enjoy this submission from Sharon Nielman of Lodge #125 (now defunct), Detroit.



DANISH SISTERHOOD
TREASURES



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