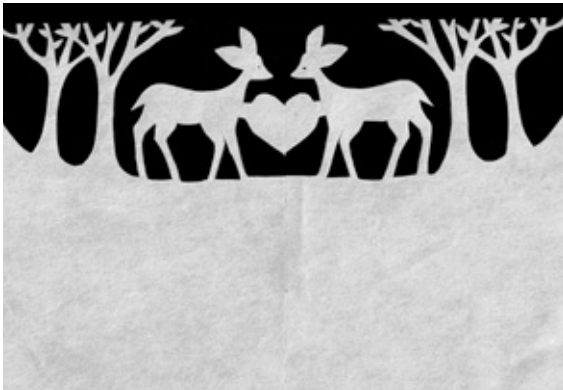


americaletter



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

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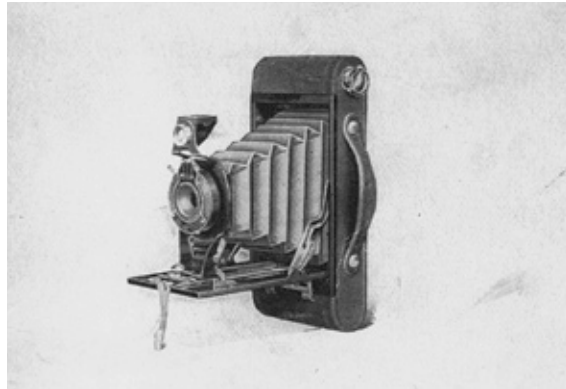


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ON THE COVER

Blowing Fresh, Karl Larsen, date unknown.
Oil painting. 36 × 40 in. *Gift of Karl Larsen,*
1991.040.001. Read about Karl's life on
pages 18-24.

America Letter

Winter 2021, No. 3

Published three times annually by the Museum of Danish America
2212 Washington Street, Elk Horn, Iowa 51531
712.764.7001 | www.danishmuseum.org

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*This internship is made
possible by the Scan
Design Foundation of
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To contact staff, use
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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

My husband's great-grandmother emigrated from Sweden as a young child with her family. Near the end of her life, she dictated a description of her early years spent in Sweden: the layout of their small farm, how their home was arranged, what resources they had available to support themselves. One detail stands out to me, especially – butter was one of the few farm products they could sell for cash, so only at Christmastime would the family indulge in using butter for their own consumption. This short memoir is only a few pages long, but it offers insight into a family struggling desperately to support itself and ultimately choosing to emigrate. Beyond the names, dates, and places, this personal account fills in the Why.

I share this example from my husband's family because I have no similar records from my own ancestors. Perhaps letters and diaries have been lost or discarded. Perhaps family members lived near enough that they didn't send letters. Perhaps those records did survive but were preserved through a different branch of the family. Perhaps they are in a museum collection somewhere, and I just don't know about it.

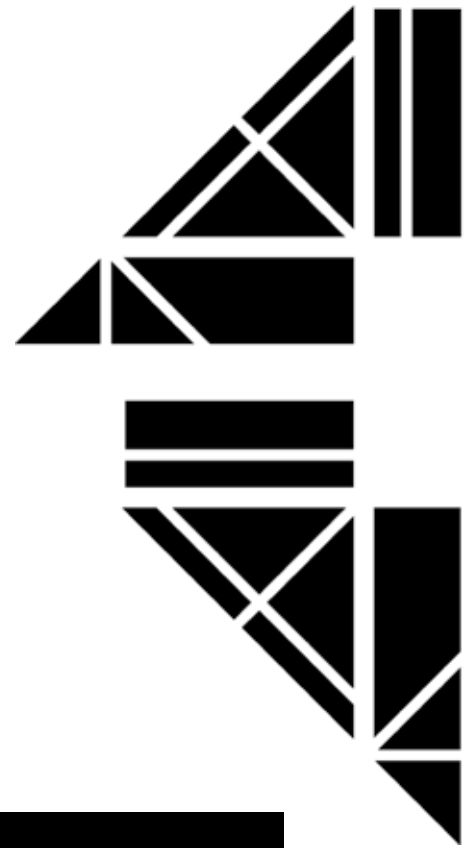
I sometimes wonder what tangible evidence will remain from our lives today. We have plenty of "stuff" – objects that are likely to outlive

us, and some of those items might be personal enough to represent our unique experiences. Our digital world, however, has taken over most of our photographs, correspondence, and casual conversations. What happens when the technologies we currently use to record and share our experiences become obsolete and inaccessible?

If you have ever felt the "eureka" moment of finding a cache of yellowed, handwritten letters, you know that tangible connection to the past can feel like a treasure chest. When the subjects in studio portraits are actually identified, those stern faces become people whose lives connect with our own. If you are fortunate enough to have a genealogist in your family, you can marvel at the details that can be reconstructed from a myriad of sources.

So maybe we should all do a favor for future generations. Write a few pages to a young relative, and print them on actual paper. Share a memory of a family event from decades ago. Label a group photo from a family reunion – and explain how everyone is related! Take some time to record your own experiences and reactions to the historic times we are living through today.

Someday, years into the future, someone will be very glad to get to know you better.



RESEARCH TOOLS

Our collections include many materials that might create a "eureka" moment in your own research. The Genealogy Center has some unexpected resources, such as high school yearbooks, membership lists from the Danish Brotherhood and Danish Sisterhood, and thousands of unique files for individual Danish immigrants. The archival collections include personal items like passports, travel documents, and correspondence. Within the artifact collections are photographs, objects carried from Denmark, and even clothing that immigrants wore on their journey. Many of these resources can be explored on our website, www.danishmuseum.org, in View Our Collection. Similar materials can be found in the collection of The Danish American Archive & Library in Blair, Nebraska.



By Tova Brandt

winterns

WINTER INTERNS!

We are grateful for funding and public health status to allow us to once again provide internship experiences for students and recent graduates this winter, both from the U.S. and Denmark. Though their time on staff may be short, their impact is large!

Frederikke Lund

Theodorsen, Communications
I am very excited to be joining the staff team at the Museum of Danish America as a communications intern until April 2022. I am doing this internship as a part of my Bachelor's program in English and Digital Marketing Communication from the University of Southern Denmark. If everything goes well, I will graduate in January 2022. My plan afterwards is to apply for a Master's program in Information Science and Cultural Communication at the University of Copenhagen.

Since I was a kid, I have always had a great interest in history and the stories old museum objects can tell about a person or a period in history. I am looking forward to learning a lot more about Danish history at the Museum of Danish America and learning a lot more about Danish America in general. So, this internship is the perfect opportunity for me to combine my personal interests with my studies in communication. I am very grateful for this opportunity, and I am excited to be learning a lot from the MoDA team.

Frederikke's internship is made possible through a grant from the Scan Design Foundation



Frederikke

Hannah Haack, Collections

As a recent college graduate and a long-time history buff, I am excited for the opportunity to join the Museum of Danish America as a Collections Intern. I love history and the objects behind it, and I am looking forward to helping others get the same joy from the past.

I have always enjoyed visiting museums, and I wanted to incorporate that interest in college and my future career. Last May, I graduated with High Distinction and University Honors from the University of Iowa with a Bachelor's degree in History, a minor in German, and a Museum Studies Certificate. After I graduated, I spent my second summer as a research intern for the Story City Historical Society. Here at MoDA, I am looking forward to learning more about Danish history and collections care from the highly-knowledgeable staff and through my intern project.



Hannah

SEE WHAT OUR INTERNS ARE WRITING ABOUT
danishmuseuminterns.tumblr.com

board of directors meeting

**OCTOBER 14 – 16, 2021
ELK HORN, IOWA**

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EX-OFFICIO

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John Mark Nielsen, Blair, NE

Nils Jensen, Portland, OR

After meeting virtually since February 2020, we were happy to welcome board members back to the museum for an in-person meeting once again. One of our board members commented that it was like a family reunion, and it truly was!

Members leaving the board were Dave Esbeck (San Diego, CA), Connie Hanson (Glendora, CA), Gerry Henningsen (Monument, CO), Randy Ruggaard (Hudson, OH), and Carl Steffensen (Houston, TX).

An important topic of discussion was the museum's 40th anniversary in 2023. An advisory committee has been organized to begin the planning process of how best to celebrate this important milestone in the museum's history.

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 10 – 12, 2022 in Tempe, AZ.



By Terri Johnson

exhibition calendar

current

TRADITION AND CHANGE: WEDDINGS IN DANISH AMERICA

Kramme Gallery
Through the end of 2021
*See the Virtual Tour, sponsored by
Dennis Andersen, at <https://bit.ly/3kSZvrX>*

PAPIRKLIP: A GLOBAL AND TIMELESS ART

Main Floor Gallery
Through May 20, 2022
*Sponsored by the descendants of
Nadjeschda and Niels Overgaard, who
inspired generations of the Overgaard
family to celebrate their Danish heritage*

THE VICTOR BORGE LEGACY AWARD: CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF MUSIC

Multimedia Room
*See the Virtual Tour, sponsored by
Dennis Andersen, at <https://bit.ly/3HyfvJv>*

coming

TATTOO: IDENTITY IN INK
May 27 - September 6, 2022

**ROGER NIELSEN
“CELEBRATING MY
HERITAGE”**
June 25 – November 4, 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*

Dubuque Museum of Art
Dubuque, IA
February 19 – June 5, 2022

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
Through March 7, 2022

**Swedish American
Museum**
Chicago, IL
March 25 – June 5,
2022

PAPIRKLIP: A GLOBAL AND TIMELESS ART

*Sponsored by the descendants of
Nadjeschda and Niels Overgaard, who
inspired generations of the Overgaard
family to celebrate their Danish heritage*

Norway House
Minneapolis, MN
June 9 – August 14, 2022



NEW videos every month at
youtube.com/c/nordiccuisine
Click “Subscribe”

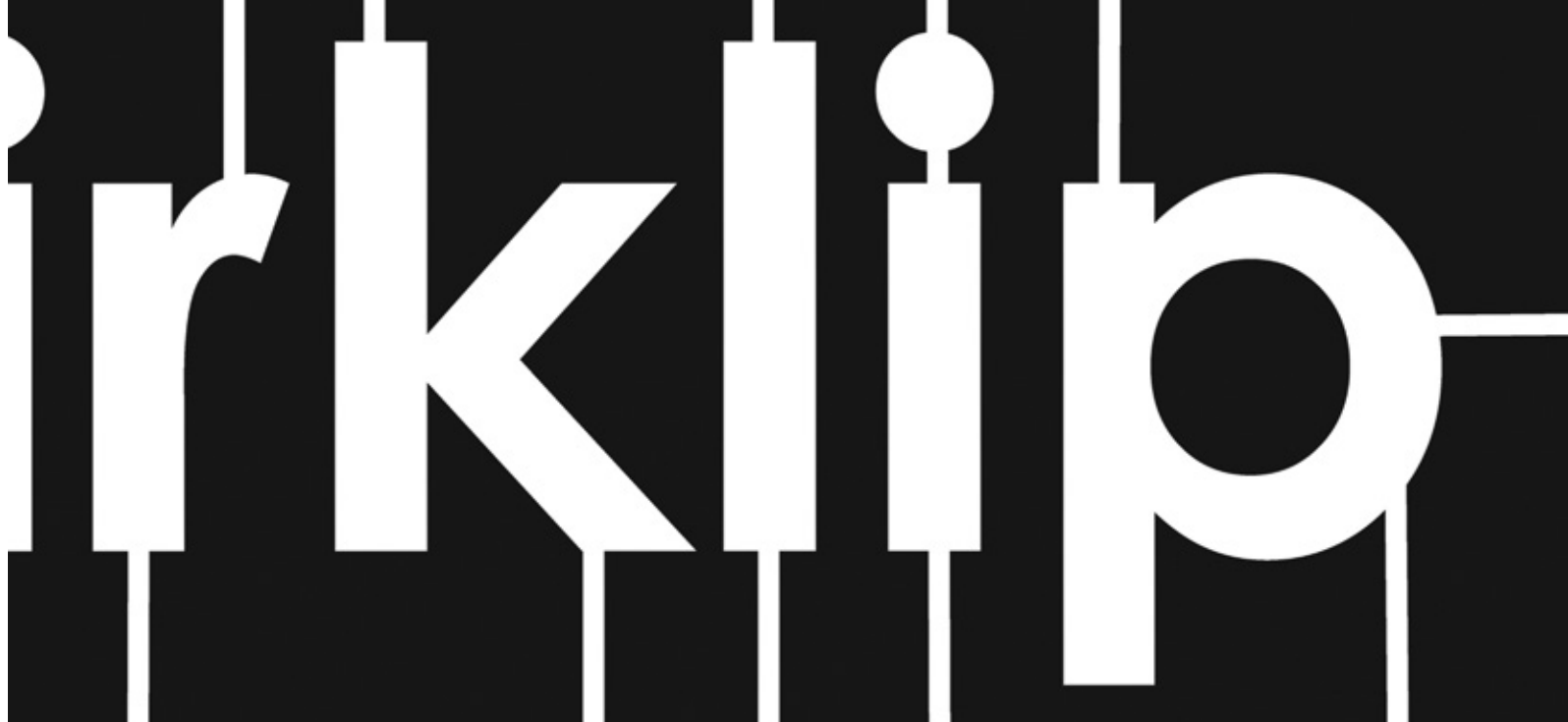
Photo by Soren F. Gammelmark

pop

exhibition on view thru may 20



By Diya Nagaraj



PAPERCUTTING IS AN ART FORM THAT DATES BACK THOUSANDS OF YEARS. REQUIRING VERY FEW TOOLS, IT IS VERY ACCESSIBLE. DIFFERENT CULTURES HAVE EXPLORED THE MEDIUM IN DIFFERENT WAYS, AS THE ABILITY TO FIND BEAUTY IN USING JUST PAPER AND SCISSORS APPEARS TO BE UNIVERSAL.

HISTORY

Prior to the invention of paper, people wrote on a variety of materials, including papyrus, clay tablets, vellum, parchment, silk, and even bones. Around 105 AD, the Chinese found a way to manufacture paper using tree bark and shredded cloth, which created a product that was cheaper and lighter than many of the previous options. While it was used for writing, it was also used for many other purposes, including wrapping and padding items, as well as creating stencils for textile printing, embroidery, and lacquerware.

By the fourth century, during the Han Dynasty, the art of papercutting emerged, with the oldest surviving piece dating to the sixth century. Legend has it that when Emperor Wu's beloved wife died, he was so devastated by her passing that he was unable to eat or sleep. Supposedly, someone created a papercut of her image which could be pasted in a window and illuminated by lantern light to bring him comfort, thus creating the first papercut art.

Slowly the art form spread from China, first to other parts of East Asia, reaching Japan by the seventh century. As knowledge of papermaking spread westward, so did the art of papercutting, reaching Turkey by the 1500s, where it was known as *kaat'i*. In Turkey it was primarily associated with book arts, as elaborate cutouts from paper (or sometimes leather) were pasted onto bindings of important texts using *cirisli muhallebi*, a paste of rice flour, book binder's paste, and milk.

The art of papermaking came to Europe as a result of Moorish trade with China; the first papermill was built in 1150. Soon, papercutting traditions followed, primarily with calligraphy relating to Quranic scripture. By the 16th century, papermaking and papercutting had spread across the continent, with *schere schnitte* emerging in present-day Germany and Austria. Although paper started as an expensive good primarily accessible to the rich, improved manufacturing made it cheaper and more widely available – however, some very high quality types of paper were, and still are, luxury goods.

German immigrants brought the art of papercutting with them to the United States during the colonial period, and it remains a major folk art tradition, particularly in parts of Pennsylvania. However, the colonists were not the first on the continent to embrace the art. In Mexico, *papel picado* emerged out of existing Aztec traditions of cutting religious figures out of paper. The paper made from *amatl* bark (a mix of pulp from fig and mulberry trees) was the consequence of the Spanish introducing thin paper called *papel de China*.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS

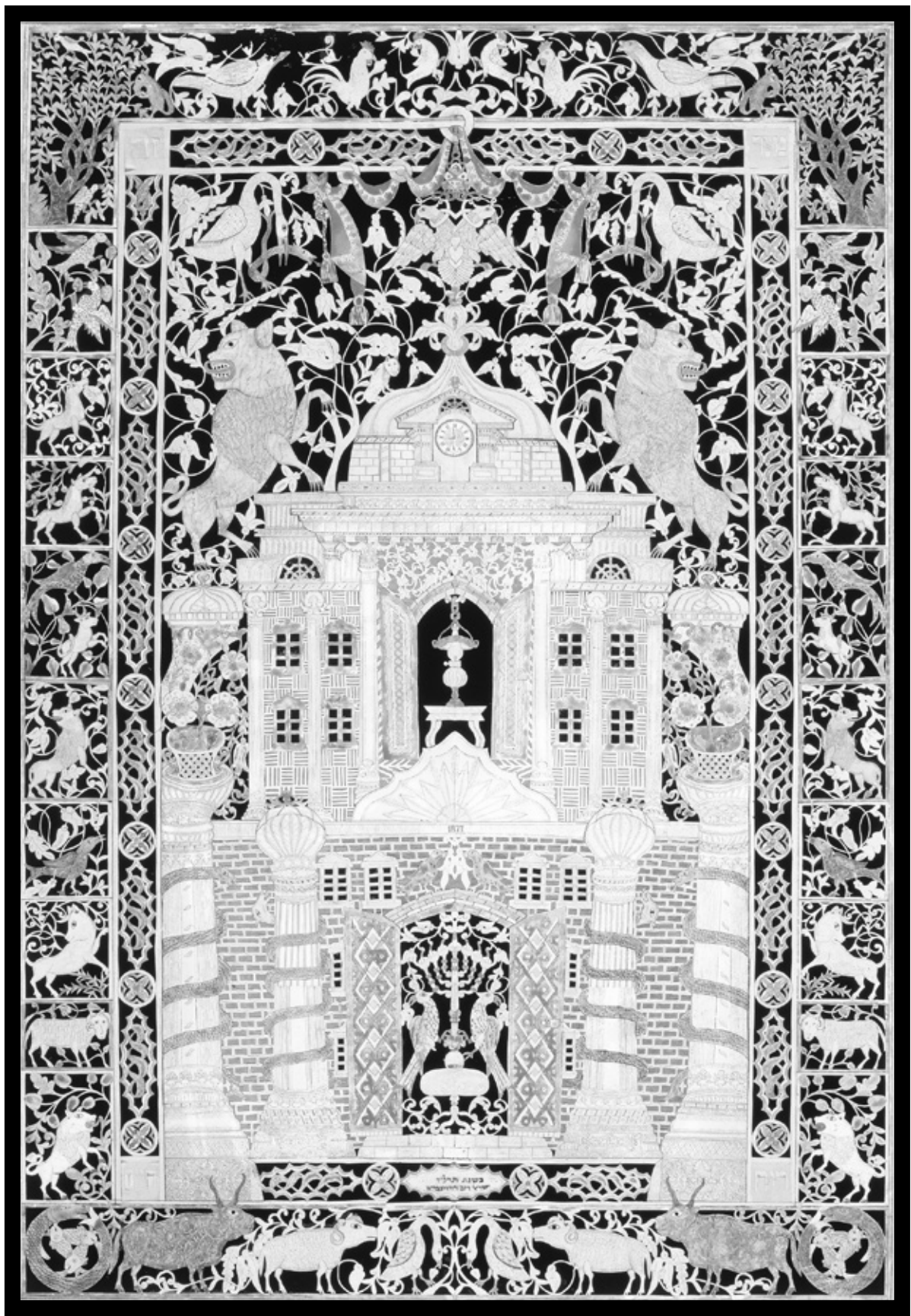
Around the world, different cultures and countries have developed their own styles of papercut art.

Jewish Papercutting

Papercutting as a Jewish tradition is first mentioned in a treatise by Rabbi Shem Tov ben Isaac ben Arduziel in the 1300s. Because of freezing temperatures, his ink froze, and so he chose to “write” by cutting letters into the paper instead. Jewish communities in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa all had papercutting traditions in the 18th century, suggesting a much longer history. The idea of adding an aesthetic dimension to sacred objects is an important part of the Jewish faith; the principle of *hiddur mitzvah* is based on the idea that the beautification of religious objects can enhance the ritual and create a more divine experience.

There are many different types of papercuts that emerged in Jewish communities. *Mizrachs*, which hang in households and face Jerusalem, often took the form of elaborate papercuts, and papercutting often adorns the *ketubah* (marriage contract). Historically, Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jewish communities had different styles, with Ashkenazi papercuts being more colorful and featuring more detailed elements, whereas Sephardic designs tended towards minimalism. Although traditional papercutting faded in the early 20th century, there has been a resurgence of the art form among Jewish communities around the world.

Symbolism is an important part of Jewish papercutting traditions. The primary symbols that commonly appear in papercut designs are the Torah or Menorah and columns that refer to the Temple in Jerusalem. Flora and fauna also carry important meaning. The lion is associated with bravery and power, birds with the human soul; vines symbolize the Hebrew people, and potted plants or trees represent the Tree of Life.



01

01. *Mizrab*, Israel Dov Rosenbaum. Podkamen, Ukraine, 1877 (date of inscription). Paint, ink, and graphite on cut-out paper. 30 ½ × 21 in. *The Jewish Museum, New York. Gift of Helen W. Finkel in memory of Israel Dov Rosenbaum, Bessie Rosenbaum Finkel, and Sidney Finkel, 1987-136*



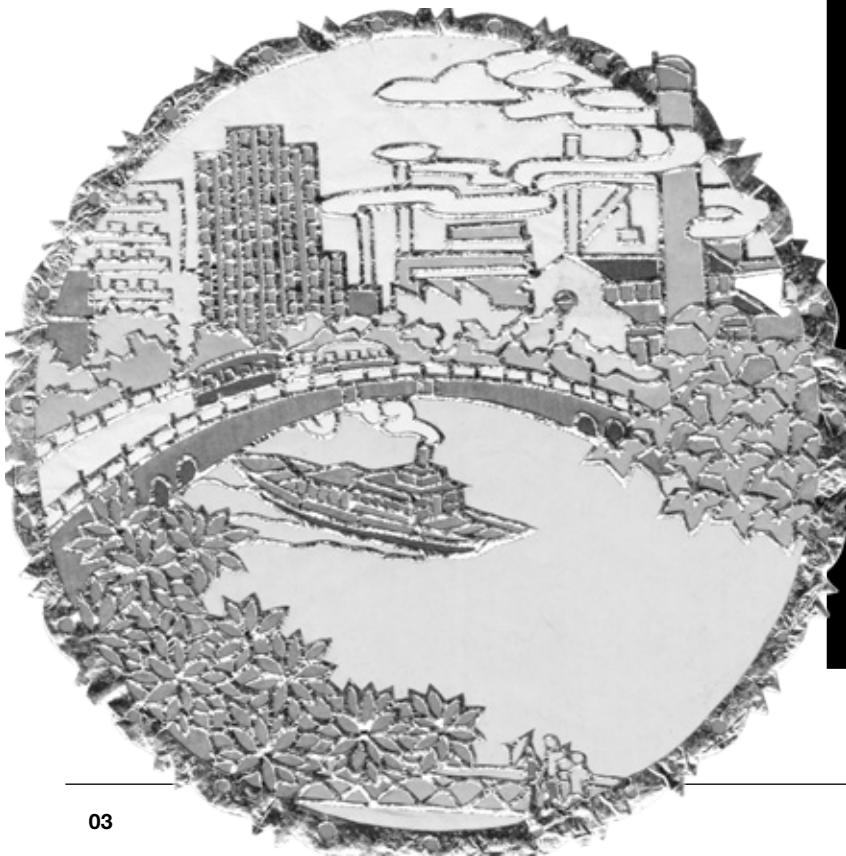
02

Chinese Papercutting

The Chinese were the first to develop papercutting and have explored the medium in a variety of different styles and forms. In 2009, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) added Chinese papercut to their list of the world's Intangible Cultural Heritage, given its history and cultural significance. Throughout the country, different regions have developed their own motifs and styles, all with their own unique characteristics.

Perhaps one of the most interesting things about Chinese papercut art is its role in politics. Given its significance as a traditional craft, it became particularly important during Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution, because it facilitated the sharing of political imagery and ideology. Not only were there designs featuring Chairman Mao's face and depicting scenes of current events, but there were also series of papercuts featuring workers that related to the Great Leap Forward and the idea of hard manual work bringing about industrialization. These were made in the Guangdong Province, far away from the capital, so it is unclear whether they were commissioned by the leaders or simply a way in which artists interpreted and responded to the events happening around them.

Within the Guangdong Province, however, there were also other styles of papercuts being developed. The city of Foshan was a craft center, and one of the papercut styles produced there featured multicolored paper and gold leaf to create an elaborate, elegant final product. Other pieces from other regions reflected animals, both real and mythical, yet others featured the zodiac or finely decorated Chinese characters. To this day, papercutting remains an important folk art, and Chinese papercuts are some of the most recognized around the world.



03

02. Papercut of Agricultural Labor, Unknown artist. Guangdong Province, China. 1966-1976. Collection of Cynthia McKeen. **03. Papercut of Cityscape**. Unknown artist. Foshan, Guangdong Province, China. 1966-1976. Collection of Cynthia McKeen.

Mexican Papercutting

As mentioned earlier, Mexican papercutting originated out of Aztec papermaking traditions. *Papel picado*, finely cut flags made from tissue paper, are the result of several different cultures intersecting – during Spanish colonialism, traders brought thin paper made from silk that was called *papel de China* (China paper). People quickly realized that the paper could be used to make beautiful crafts, including lamps and ornaments. The city of San Salvador Huixcolotla is often seen as the center of *papel picado* craftsmanship. Although it is not known precisely why the community began to create these paper flags, it seems that the new *papel de China* intersected with the existing indigenous paper art traditions and resulted in the colorful flags still seen today. Today, tissue paper is commonly used for these papercuts and they are still very visible during important festivals and as a cultural symbol.

The Aztec papermaking traditions have been retained by small communities in Mexico. *Amatl* (also known as *amate*) is paper made from the bark of ficus or mulberry trees. In their effort to convert people to Catholicism, the Spanish banned its use after the conquest due to the paper's association with traditional religious ceremonies and rituals. However, remote areas were able to preserve those skills, and it is now recognized as an important indigenous craft.

The Otomi people of northern Puebla are best known not just for their ability to make the paper but also the elaborate papercut figures made out of *amatl*. These figures are called *muñecos* (dolls) and are used in different rituals and ceremonies. Typically, the dolls are cut out of lighter *amatl* and then affixed to darker paper. Although shamans do still cut the *muñecos* used for religious purposes, the ones intended for the folk art market are not cut by religious leaders and therefore, are not considered sacred objects.



04

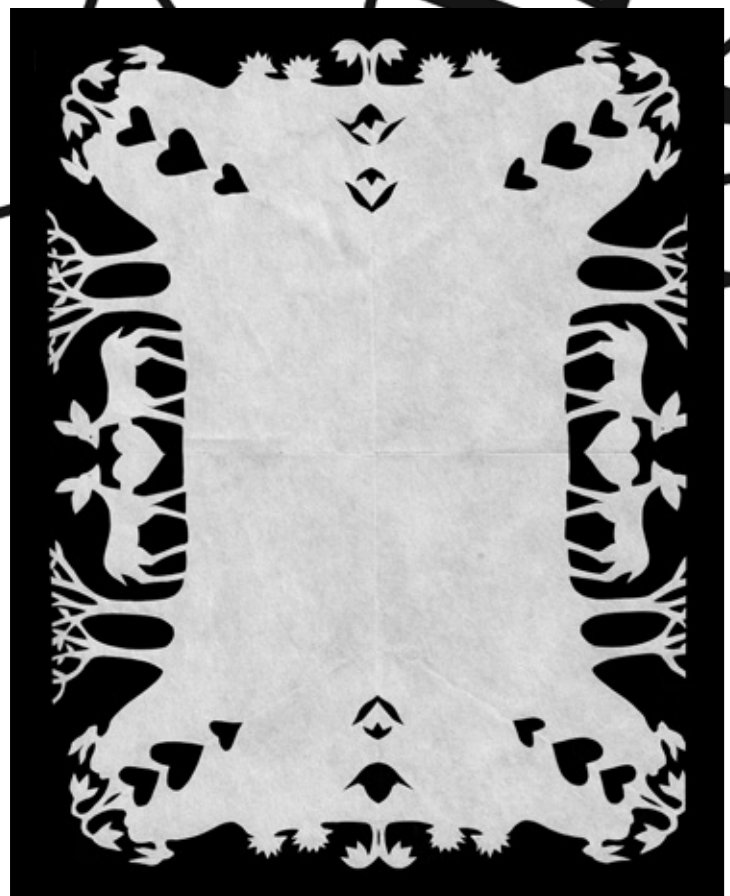
04. *Amatl* doll, Unknown Artist. Cut *amatl* paper. Mexico, 1970s. Collection of Cynthia McKeen.

Scandinavian Papercutting

The most famous Scandinavian papercutting artist in history is likely Hans Christian Andersen. Though best remembered for his beloved fairytales, he was a man of many talents, enjoying a singing career, time as a dancer, and then a hobby of creating beautiful and elaborate papercut pieces. When paying social visits, he would entertain the people gathered by beginning a papercut as he started telling a story. As his story came to an end, he would unfold the paper on which he had been working to reveal the finished papercut - much to the amazement of the guests. There is no indication that Andersen ever sold these pieces; instead, they were frequently given as gifts to friends and guests, particularly children.

In Denmark, the Easter tradition of the *gækkebrev* is one that has lasted from the time of Hans Christian Andersen to the present day. While the precise history remains unknown, it was certainly a part of the culture by the 1800s. Originally associated with the *vintergæk* (snowdrop flower), the name also refers to the fact that it is a letter intended to tease and trick (*drive gæk med*). Sent anonymously with a poem in the center, signed only with dots corresponding to the number of letters in the sender's name, the recipient must try to guess from whom the letter came. If they can guess correctly by the time Easter arrives, the sender owes them an Easter egg, but if they fail, they owe the sender an Easter treat. Initially, it was sent as a romantic, flirtatious gesture, but nowadays, it is sent between friends or to children as well.

Today, there are many artists who explore the tradition of papercutting art in a variety of forms. One of the biggest names in contemporary papercutting is Bit Vejle, whose large, intricate cut paper designs have been shown around the world. She started creating pieces as a teenager and used to hide her works under the rug to avoid drawing attention to them; they served as an escape and a form of therapy for her chronic illness and the associated pain and exhaustion. However, a little over 12 years ago, a friend discovered her work and convinced her to step into the limelight, leading her to show her work around the world and create the Museum for Papirkunst, dedicated to paper art in all its forms.



05

05. *Gækkebrev*, Cynthia McKeen. Cut paper. United States, 1993. Collection of Cynthia McKeen.



06

Papercutting in America

European immigrants brought with them folk art traditions from their home countries, including papercutting. Silhouette portrait papercuts were popular during the colonial period and remained an important way for people to document themselves and loved ones prior to widespread access to photography. More decorative, non-portrait forms of papercutting also thrived in the country, particularly in Pennsylvania, where German and Swiss immigrants brought *scherenschnitte* with them.


Today, a variety of artists have continued to showcase the diversity of the medium. Many of them are descendants of immigrants, carrying on long-standing cultural traditions. Annette Andersen of Kimballton, Iowa is the daughter of two Danish immigrants and began to explore cut-paper designs starting in the 1980s. Some of hers are based

upon patterns, but she has also designed her own patterns over the years. Her cut-paper mobiles, which she refers to as “whimsical,” are playful items, because “the Danes have a knack for taking everyday objects and turning them into objects of joy.”

A fellow Danish-American artist, Cynthia McKeen, has been exploring the medium of paper in a variety of ways for over 40 years. It was her grandmother who taught her the art of *papirklip*, and she embraced the art form, creating elaborate papercuts of Hans Christian Andersen’s fairytales and even continuing the *gækkebrev* tradition. Her company, Proongily, uses a painstaking die-cut process to bring her designs to life – combining more modern technology and Danish innovation with a centuries-old art form.

Kara Walker is one of the best-known contemporary artists involved in the art of papercutting, primarily

06. Alabama Loyalists Greeting the Federal Gun-Boats from Harper’s Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated), Kara Walker, 2005. Offset lithography and silkscreen. 39 × 53 in. Courtesy of Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York.



silhouette work. Her works confront issues around slavery, racism, and gendered violence, asking viewers to face sometimes difficult narratives and truths. By playing with stereotypical caricatures in her work, she toys with “misrepresenting misrepresentations,” as “the whole gamut of images of black people, whether by black people or not, are free rein in my mind.” In *Harper’s Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated)*, the artist adds silhouettes of figures to the original illustrations, adding people and moments that were often left out of history. Her images, standing apart from the original illustrations, act as a bridge between the past and the present, reflecting on the way that the history of race can still influence contemporary society.

CONCLUSION

Whether via a small devotional object or a large-scale museum installation, artists through the centuries and around the world have explored and continue to explore the possibilities of creating art with just paper and a blade. For many people today, papercutting is an important way to preserve cultural traditions that have been passed down through generations, but it can also serve to challenge histories, norms, and stereotypes. The art of papirklip has been around for over 2,000 years, and despite differences in names and styles in different languages and cultures, it remains a truly global and timeless phenomenon.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP


papirklip and hygge with torben

Online, Sunday, January 30

Skill level: Beginner and beyond

Create wonderful paper-cut beings with Danish paper cutting artist Torben Jarlstrøm Clausen via Zoom on Eventbrite. Torben has had several workshops in Denmark, Japan, and in the US. In this online workshop the participants can experience the very best of cutting paper – namely, the moment when the paper is unfolded and the magic occurs. Participants will also be exploring the paper cut artwork of renowned storyteller Hans Christian Andersen and will hear about Torben Jarlstrøm Clausen’s own journey to becoming a paper cutting artist.

Tickets are \$5 for MoDA members; \$10 for the general public. Registration required at <https://bit.ly/Papirklip>



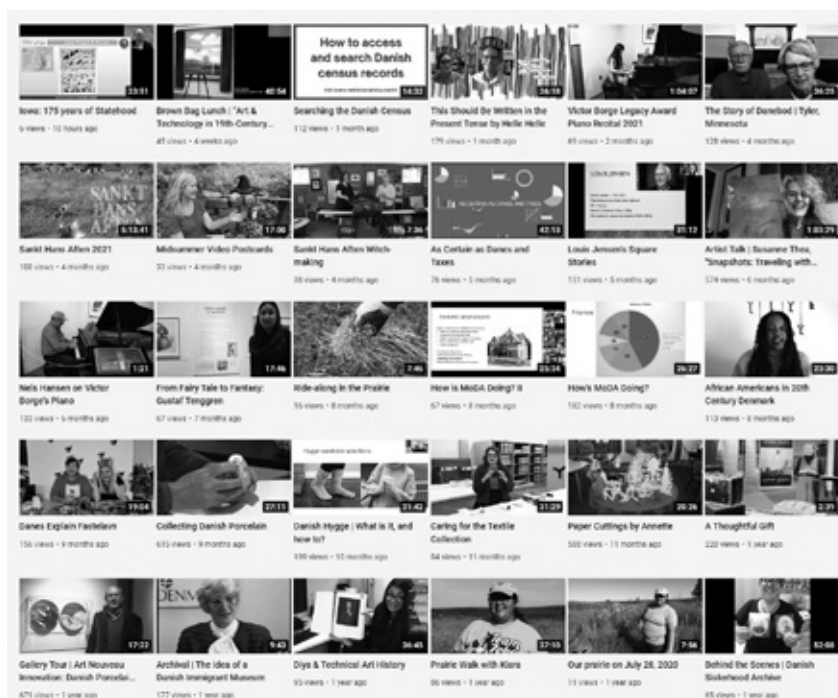
Gift of Torben
Jarlstrøm Clausen,
2018.034.001

watch & learn

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

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DANISHMUSEUM

WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/DANISHMUSEUM



read together

NATIONAL DANISH BOOK CLUB & LITERARY EVENT SERIES

<https://northwestdanish.org/nationalbookclub/>

Explore a selection of Danish literature in English translation with a new, nationwide book club! Each month a celebrated Danish author is selected and discussed in a virtual setting via Zoom. Book Club Discussions are moderated by Faculty Associate Nete Schmidt from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Former Danish lecturer, Désirée Ohrbeck, facilitates the accompanying Literary Events. Current and classic works of Danish literature are read and discussed, accompanied by author and special guest interviews. The Zoom events continue each month until May 2022.

Participating groups: Scan Design Foundation, Museum of Danish America, Northwest Danish Association, National Foundation for Danish America, National Nordic Museum, American-Scandinavian Foundation, University of Wisconsin – Madison, University of Washington Scandinavian Studies Department

MARK YOUR NEW CALENDAR:
Tivoli Fest will be May 27-28, 2022.

karl christian larsen

A CHANGED ART

It is still in enough of the recent past that someone as young as, say, 34, can remember a time when communication to and from far-away loved ones was days-long (mail) or cost-prohibitive (landline phone calls).

For many, an annual Christmas letter was a way to efficiently share, en masse, news from the past year in one, succinct greeting. A certain amount of technical know-how was required in order to print, copy, and organize the mailing, not to mention decent writing ability.

Just as social media can serve as someone's highlight reel today, annual Christmas letters often painted a rosy picture of a family's milestones and achievements. Job changes, school awards, vacations, and leisure activities – that sort of thing. Later, with low-cost photo printing and desktop publishing, images were even included.

But way back in 1932, a Danish immigrant with a young family began an offbeat, custom greeting tradition so popular that in the mid-1980s, the mailing list had grown to over 400 addresses, and now at least 40 are part of a museum collection (ours).

Karl Christian Larsen was born May 9, 1889 in a small, old town on western Zealand, of which he

spoke fondly throughout his whole life. His parents, Frederik Anders and Bodil Line Johansen, were a classically Danish combination of a fisherman and a farmer's daughter. They weren't wealthy, but Karl's intelligence helped carry him through his early years. In an autobiographical article, he credited the elderly ladies in his neighborhood (retired educators) for teaching him to read and write relatively early, giving him a head start in academics.

After finishing school at age 14, he apprenticed at a general store some miles away from home, working hard for room and board, only seeing his parents for one day every three months, and suffering for over three years until he could bear the owner's brutality no more. After that, he moved around in shopkeeping until age 21, when a Danish American he had befriended loaned him some money to go to the United States. He arrived in November 1910:

“It was a strange moment when I saw the Liberty Statue the first time - wonderment - fear - anticipation and happiness. I felt this was a new and important chapter in my life opening up. After landing, we were all ushered into a very enormous room where emigrants from other countries sat around waiting. It was a conglomeration of a dozen different nationalities. We sat around for five or six hours, then we were taken aboard a ferry over to Ellis

Island. There was a long, two-storied building. We marched up to the entrance. We were all tired, and there was a door with stairs leading straight up - at the top of a huge American flag. At the doorway two ugly, large guards were standing. We were in a hurry to get up the stairs, when one of the guards hollered: ‘Hey, you sons of bitches, take off your hat. This is the United States’ flag.’

Well, that was my welcome. We came up and were examined by doctors - our eyes, mouth, heart, etc. At last I came to a desk. A man in a uniform sat there. He said, ‘How much money do you have?’ I knew that I was supposed to have 25 dollars, but I was short. I understood his English and answered in English, ‘Seventeen dollars and fifty cents.’ He looked at me and gave me a half smile, ‘What nationality?’ ‘Danish’ I answered. So he said, ‘You’re supposed to have 25 dollars, but since you’re a Dane and can speak a little of the lingo, I’ll let you in.’ So, that’s how I came to the U.S.A.”

He took a train to Chicago then carried on to the Danish enclave of Racine, Wisconsin. There he found enough manual labor to earn room and board, and he again worked in shops. It's during this time that he says, “I found I had artistic talents” and wanted to go to art school. He had only begun saving for the tuition when he was laid off in Racine. So, he went to Chicago to attend school anyway, with the meager funds



By Nicky Christensen

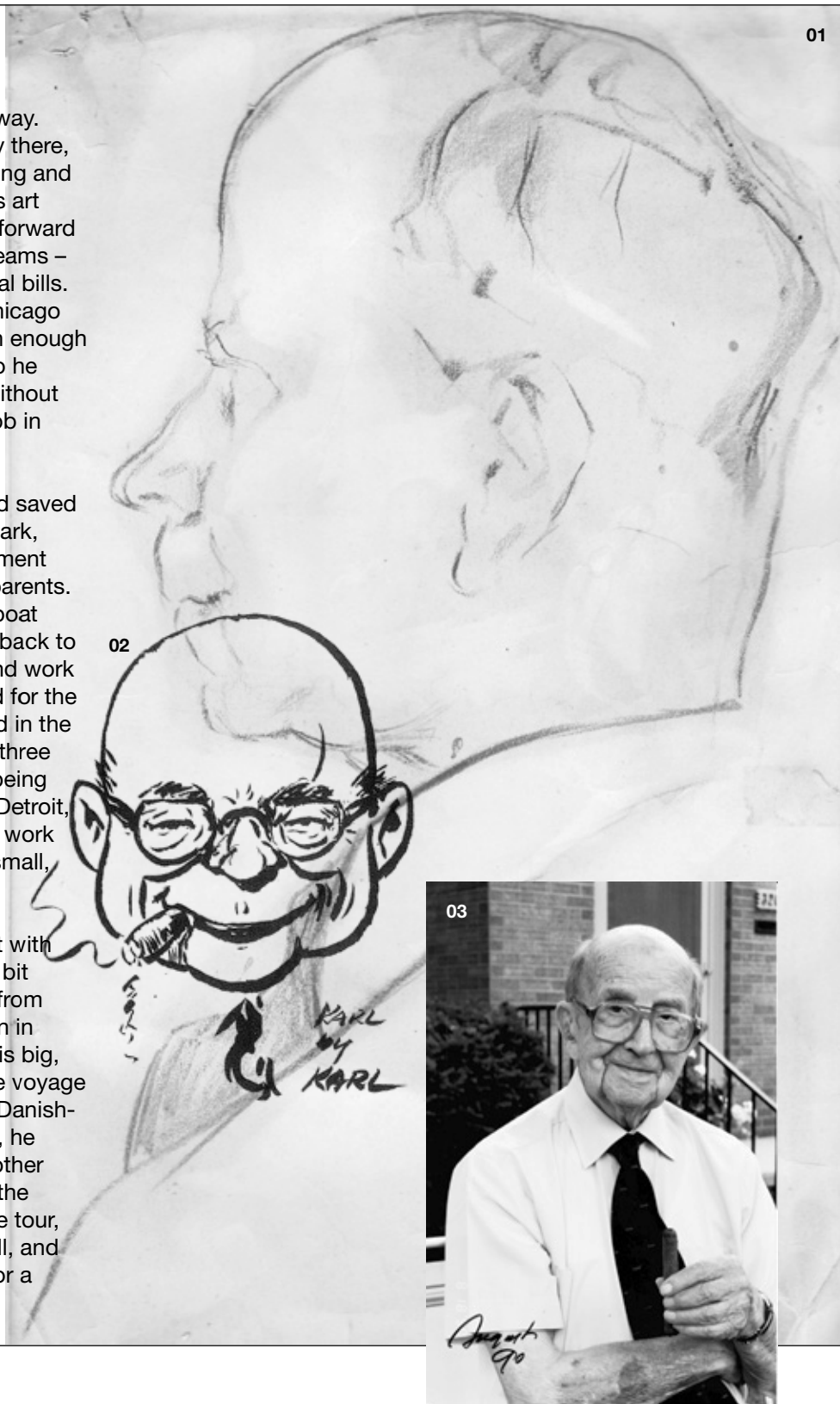
* In a news article pondering his death, his neighbors said it was five. From commentary by Marion Tuttle Marzolf for Larsen, Karl (1986) *Sketches of My Life*, The Bridge: Vol. 9 : No. 2 , Article 6.

“People ask him the secret of his long life, and he jokes that he ‘stayed away from wine and women.’ When pressed he will add, ‘Not all the time.’ Actually he exercises daily, 45 minutes in the morning and 15 at night, smokes at least three cigars a day* and enjoys good food and drink as much as the next man. People regularly mistake him for someone 20 years younger.”

he had managed to put away. But after only his third day there, he fell ill with food poisoning and was hospitalized. All of his art school money – all of the forward momentum toward his dreams – went to pay for the medical bills. He tried to find work in Chicago retail, but he couldn’t earn enough income to afford to eat, so he returned, penniless and without an art degree, to his old job in Racine.

By December 1916 he had saved enough to return to Denmark, where he put a down payment on a house for his aging parents. In June 1917, through U-boat infested waters, he came back to the States, choosing to find work in Detroit, learning to weld for the war effort. He was enlisted in the U.S. Army but spent only three months stateside before being discharged. Returning to Detroit, he was at last able to find work sketching cartoons for a small, monthly publication.

But it was his involvement with a Racine singing group, a bit of luck, and another loan from a friendly Danish American in June of 1921 that led to his big, professional break. On the voyage to tour Denmark with the Danish-American Singers Society, he had made caricatures of other passengers. Members of the Danish press, covering the tour, learned of his drawing skill, and it led to an offer to work for a



01. Self portrait, Karl Larsen, 1924. Graphite sketch on paper. *Gift of Karl Larsen, 1993.090.001.* **02. Karl by Karl,** before 1987. **03. Karl,** August 18, 1990. *Gift of Jim Iversen, 2009.020.001.*



“For though my hometown has changed color, my face, my mind is not as before either. But my heart will feel, until I die, my joy for my childhood in old Skælskør.”

Copenhagen newspaper. Karl said he produced over 400 drawings in four years, “sketching any famous person who entered Danish soil” and attending legal and government proceedings.

During this time period, he started dating an “office girl” at the newspaper – who also turned out to be from a wealthy family, much to his surprise. Her father was Peder Anders Pedersen (1869-1937), a managing director of Georg Jensen Silversmiths who had earlier made a fortune building the first power stations in Denmark.

Karl wed Ellen “Tut” Ravnborg Pedersen on May 3, 1924 in Nørresundby, Denmark and with only their own money, left to make their home in America. Karl started illustrating for advertisements and operated his own studio from 1925-1960. In at least one instance, he sketched a crime suspect in a kidnapping. The Larsens started a family, purchased a house, and lived a happy and modest life together until cancer and diabetes took Tut in 1967.

In 1935 Karl had met “the most famous Danish man in the U.S.,” William Knudsen, a Ford Motor Company innovator and WWII general. Karl decided to write a biography of his fellow Detroit-linked Danish friend – all in rhyme, with illustrations. “Bill” ordered 100 copies for \$25,000, and Karl hand-colored each book over the course of three months – 6,000 pages worth – finishing the publication in 1946. Two copies of the privately printed volume, *Here I Come! A True and Very Interesting Description of Wilhelm’s Marvelous Adventures in America*, exist in the public trust at the Benson Ford Research Center and the University of Virginia Library. *OCLC# 21469154* Karl also created a coat of arms for Knudsen, to go along with a portrait of the general, which was to hang in Frederiksborg Castle in Hillerød, Denmark.

Following his retirement and with his two daughters, Kirsten (1925-2018) and Grete, grown, Karl started to paint “in earnest,” in a style he called old fashioned and impressionistic. He painted with watercolors in the fall and winter and oils in spring and

summer. There were plenty of female nudes. He was active with a Detroit artists’ group, the Scarab Club, and the Danish Brotherhood.

He went back and forth to Denmark often. Karl so loved his hometown of Skælskør that in the early 1980s, he commissioned a bronze cast of third-generation Dane and sculptor Marshall M. Fredericks’s “Nordic Swan and the Ugly Duckling” as a fountain in the Skælskør downtown – still there today. (There are actually eight examples of this sculpture, including in Rochester Hills, Michigan, Greenville, Michigan, and the Danish Embassy in Washington, D.C.) Skælskør City Museum exhibited Karl’s paintings in 1989.

At age 97, he had promised his friends to make it to 100. Six years later the newspaper headline read, “Renowned artist found dead at 103; homicide suspected.” Because of his sense of humor, anyone who knew him may have thought it a joke. However, evidence of a break-in

04. Marshall Fredericks poses with Karl Larsen in front of “Nordic Swan and the Ugly Duckling” (Hans Christian Andersen Fountain) in Skælskør, Denmark, July 9, 1984.
Courtesy of the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum.

and bruising on his body led to likely one of the only homicide investigations about a 103-year-old. On his 101st birthday, he had been beaten and robbed (including two paintings) while outside smoking a cigar. In the end, it was determined that Karl had died naturally of a heart attack in that late August of 1992.

It is clear from his autobiography how much he enjoyed relationships with many groups of friends. Karl gave several interviews over his lifetime, making this article a breeze to concoct. Indeed, it was probably his proclivity for storytelling that helped garner him such a wealth of renown. He said he made it to 97 thanks to his good sense of humor, understanding, having enough funds to get by, and his creative hobbies – saying he was, “rich in my love for art.”

Our museum holds some of his paintings, drawings, caricature sketches, letters, and 40 of his unique personal greeting cards.

Karl began his annual Christmas card tradition in 1932, the same year his second daughter was born. His cards use a theme from the past year. Please enjoy this selection of greetings from our collection, which help you get a better sense of the man beyond the facts, and even the highlight reels, of his life.

To see more, use View Our Collection to search “Karl Larsen”: <https://danishmuseum.pastperfectonline.com> Cards appearing on the following pages are gifts of Jim Iversen.



date unknown
2009.020.005

Sources: Museum of Danish America’s archives and staff
Larsen, Karl (1986) *Sketches of My Life*, The Bridge: Vol. 9: No. 2, Article 6.
Detroit Free Press (Detroit, Michigan), 04 Oct 1944, Wed: Page 1 | 27 Jan 1946, Sun: Page 4 | 1 Sep 1992, Tue: Page 3 | 2 Sep 1992, Wed: Page 16.



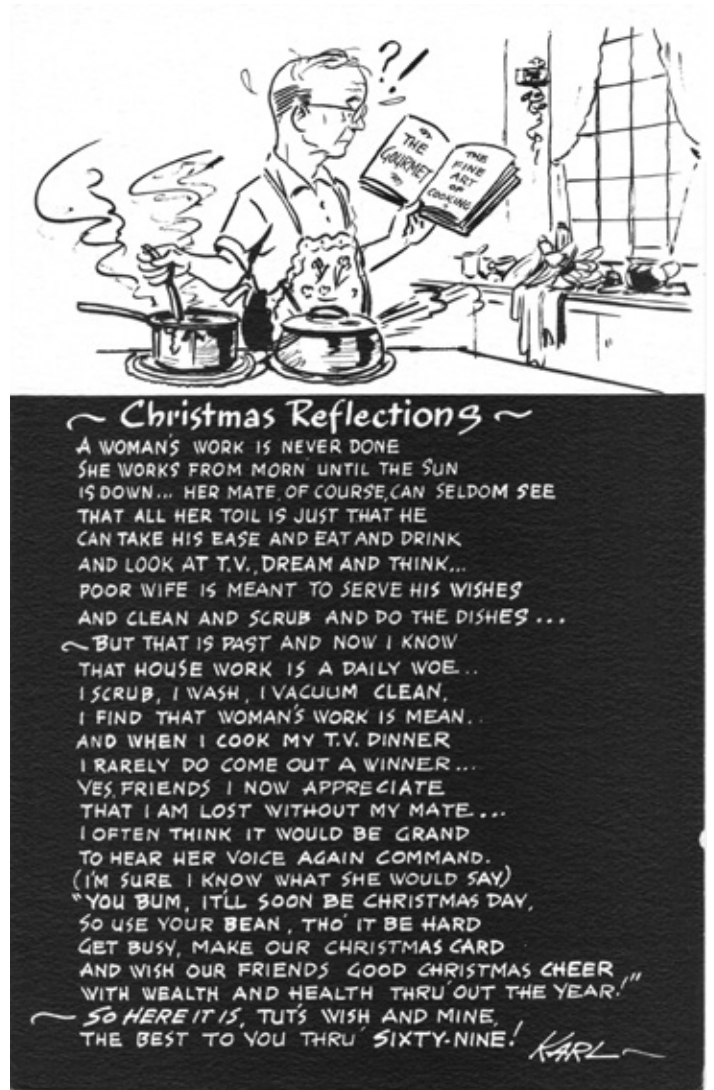
1938
 2009.020.004



1948
 2009.020.026



1952
 2009.020.028



1968
 2009.020.007



1976
 2009.020.023



1987
 2009.020.017

early, sturdy pioneers

STORIES FROM THE DANISH IMMIGRANT WALL OF HONOR

This edition, I'm sharing the story of early, sturdy pioneers James and Christine Morgenson, who left Denmark for America in 1869. As with the first Danish immigrant settlers during America's western expansion, their story reflects determination, resiliency, and economic opportunity, and their experiences forever enriched the community in which they settled.

Tucked inside the Morgenson's Wall of Honor files is a typewritten document, "The Life Story of Christine Olsen and James Morgenson (a.k.a. Jen Morgen Jacobsen). It is written by the Morgenson's granddaughter, Ms. Vendla M. Rozsa, who was born and raised close to her grandparents. She shares stories "that Grandfather loved to tell on those long, hot, summer evenings when we would sit out on the lawn as we tried to get a few cool (for Kansas) breezes." The document recounts the journey and experiences of her Danish immigrant grandparents who claimed their homestead on the Great Plains of America.

THE EARLY YEARS

James Morgenson was born Jens Morgen Jacobsen (1844-1939) in Kirke Hylling, Sjælland, Denmark. At seven years of age, he started his education in a thatched-roof, one-room schoolhouse. He served in the Danish Navy and trained as a blacksmith under the tutorship of his father, who was a Master Blacksmith. James got his

Masters Papers and worked as a journeyman for a while.

In 1869 he and his sweetheart, Christine Olsen (1844-1929), whose family lived in Copenhagen, decided to marry. But, obtaining the consent of Christine's parents was another matter, so they eloped. The newlyweds heard of the opportunity to get government land in America, and just a few months after marrying, they and a group of friends departed Denmark excited by the prospect of "free land" in America, economic opportunity, and adventure. The newlyweds left Denmark with 1,200 Kroner (about \$300 at that time), plus their passage paid by Christine's family.

When James and Christine arrived in America in 1869, no immigration center had as yet been built on Ellis Island. The Morgensons and friends must have landed in lower Manhattan at the Castle Garden depot. Immigrants with proper documents were admitted to the United States quite swiftly and easily.

WESTWARD BOUND

The Morgensons made their way westward by train to the Great Plains of the Midwest, settling in Junction City, Kansas.

The Morgensons never warmed a chair for long. Once settled, they

Passed in 1862, the **Homestead Act** accelerated the settlement of the western territory by granting to any adult citizen, or intended citizen, 160 acres of surveyed public land (which had been taken from indigenous people) for a minimal filing fee and 5 years of continuous residence on that land. Many Danes took advantage of the law.

Castle Garden, now known as Castle Clinton National Monument, is a circular sandstone fort located in Battery Park, in Manhattan, New York City. Built from 1808-1811, it was America's very first immigration station, (precedes Ellis Island) and is believed to have processed 8 million immigrants from the 1850s up until the 1890s.

looked for work. James quickly got a job working on the Union Pacific Railroad, and Christine worked in a restaurant. It was at this time, according to Vendla's accounts, that James changed his name. "Fellows on the railroad called grandfather "Jake," and he did not like that, so he changed his name to James. I do not know where he got the name Morgenson, but James, of course, is Jens anglicized."

HOMESTEAD CLAIM IN LINCOLN COUNTY, KANSAS

The Morgensons heard about a group of Danes who had settled farther west in the Spillman Valley

Continued on page 34

By Shelli Larson



collection connection

There are many kinds of gift-givers during the holiday season: those that give the perfect sentimental gift based on a special memory; those that prefer to give practical and useful gifts; the adventurers who give experiences; the procrastinators who pick up a gift on the way to the party; those that send a gift belatedly; and others. Each has their own special way of demonstrating how much they care to family, friends, and loved ones. The Museum of Danish America has examples of some of these types of holiday gifts and gift-givers in the collection. They demonstrate that thinking of others is a holiday tradition spanning time and location and can provide inspiration for gift-giving today.



Throw Pillow, prior to 1936, *Gift of Hedvig Andersen Carlson*, 1989.078.001

This throw pillow was a Christmas present from Hedvig Andersen Carlson to her father Julius Albert Andersen. Julius worked as a creamery operator in South Dakota and Minnesota after he emigrated from Denmark. The pillow is composed of ribbons Julius received from dairyman and creamery conventions he attended and a pin in the center, encouraging the viewer to, "Stand by Your Home Creamery." The ribbons range in date from 1902 to 1931. Hedvig was able to create a gift that commemorated her father's years of creamery work as well as the bond between father and daughter through her thoughtful handiwork.

Camera, ca. 1910s to 1920s, *Gift of Verner Jensen*, 2002.104.001a

In 1921, Hans Jensen gave his fiancée Helga this No. 2-A Folding Autographic Brownie Camera. It was the first Christmas gift he gave her after the two immigrated to Viborg, South Dakota. Hans thought the camera could be used to take photographs "of how things were in America" to send to relatives back in Denmark. The camera marked the couple's first Christmas in the U.S. but also stayed with them throughout their lives as the only camera the two ever owned. Helga was very careful when handling the object, but she also used it often over the years, including in 1949, when the Jensens traveled back to Denmark on their only return visit. Through the lens of this first holiday gift, the special moments of Helga and Hans's lives were captured.



By **Julia Jessen**



Doll, ca. mid 1930s, *Gift of Ruth Martinsen Character*, 1997.025.001a

Detail of the bite on Grethe's left arm

Ruth Martinsen Character received this doll, named Grethe, as a Christmas gift from her parents in 1937. The following year, Ruth's mother crocheted a dress and pantaloons for the doll. A few years later in 1942-43, Ruth knitted an additional garment for Grethe, an undershirt. Evidence of the doll's interaction with Ruth's baby brother, Olaf, exists in the form of tooth marks on the doll's left arm. Grethe traveled with Ruth when she immigrated to the U.S. on May 16, 1955 from Esbjerg, Denmark, eventually settling in Sioux City, Iowa. Although Grethe was given to Ruth, the doll holds memories of other family members through her handmade clothing and even the bite mark on her arm.



These objects are just a few examples of gifts from MoDA's collection, but they hold great significance for the people and moments they represent. Special gifts have a way of remaining impactful over time; these continue to tell their stories today, reminding us of our own family and friends and the ways we demonstrate love to one another.

what's in a name?

At the Genealogy Center, we often get requests from people looking for a specific person; however, they often are not sure of the actual name of that person. Sometimes the name is an Americanized version of a Danish name or a name that has been considerably changed from the original name. For example, when we see the name of John, which we know was not a common name in Denmark in earlier years, we know immediately that the Danish name was probably Jørgen, Johannes, or even Hans. Another example is the name of Smith. Again, not a common name in Denmark, so we can be fairly certain that the name was either Smidt, Schmidt, Smid or something similar. These are rather easy assumptions that we can make when starting a research project. But once in a while, we get a name that takes some research time before we reach a given name in Denmark.

Such was the case with Maddes Smidt. His name was placed on the Wall of Honor at the museum. The only information received at the Genealogy Center was his name, his wife's name, the place of settlement, and an immigration year. At the Genealogy Center, we usually take some time to research people who are on the Wall of Honor to find more information and especially to find their birth place in Denmark – if we can. As with all of the research we do, we document our findings with the actual documents that support our conclusions.

STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
IOWA B83

1 PLACE OF DEATH
County Shelby State IOWA
Township Jackson or Village _____
City Jacksonville No. _____ (If death occurred in a hospital or institution give its name instead of street and number. - Do. How long in U. S. if of foreign birth.)

2 FULL NAME Maddes Smidt
(a) Residence, No. Jacksonville Ia (b) Ward _____ (If non-resident give city or town and State)

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3 SEX Male 4 COLOR OR RACE white 5 Single, Married, Widowed, or Divorced (write the year) widowed

6a If married, widowed, or divorced
HUSBAND of Anna M. Hansen
(or) WIFE of _____

4 DATE OF BIRTH (month, day, and year) Feb. 6, 1858

7 AGE Years 73 Months 0 Days 2 If less than 1 day, hrs. or min.

8 Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, weaver, bookkeeper, etc. retired farmer

9 Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, saw mill, hotel, etc. farm

10 Date deceased last worked at this occupation (month and year) 1881/1/15 11 Total time (years) spent in this occupation days

12 BIRTHPLACE (city or town) Svendeborg Denmark
(State or country) _____

13 NAME Mathias Smidt

14 BIRTHPLACE (city or town) Svendeborg Denmark
(State or country) _____

15 MAIDEN NAME unknown

16 BIRTHPLACE (city or town) unknown
(State or country) _____

17 INFORMANT Miss Julia M. Peterson
(Address) Jacksonville Ia

18 BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL
Place Jacksonville Date Feb. 11, 1931

19 LICENSED EMBALMER Arthur Jensen No. 2372
(Address) Jacksonville

20 FILED confidential 19 31

21 DATE OF DEATH (month, day, and year) Feb. 8, 1931

22 I HEREBY CERTIFY That I attended deceased from Feb. 8, 1931 to Feb. 8, 1931
I last saw him did not see him alive death is to have occurred on the date stated above, at 6:45 p.m.

The principal cause of death and related causes of importance in all cases were as follows: Cerebral hemorrhage (Date of onset) _____

Contributory causes of importance not related to principal cause: _____

Name of operation _____ Date of _____
What test confirmed diagnosis? _____ Was there an autopsy? Yes
23. If death was due to external causes (violence) fill in also the following: Accident, suicide, or homicide? _____ Date of injury: _____
Where did injury occur? _____ (Specify city or town, county, and State)
Specify whether injury occurred in industry, in home, or in public place: _____

Manner of injury: _____
Nature of injury: _____

24. Was disease or injury in any way related to occupation of decedent? If so, specify: no
(Signed) Jeremy Ringold
(Signature) Harlan, Ia

(COVER)

The 1931 death certificate was made out in the name of **Maddes Smidt**.

The 1930 U.S. Federal Census listed him as **Mathaus Smith** in Jackson, Shelby, Iowa. Are we sure that this is the same person as Maddes Smidt who died in 1931? The ages and location certainly fit. This document gave an immigration date of 1879.

Name:	Mathaus Smith [Mathaus Samith]
Birth Year:	abt 1859
Gender:	Male
Race:	White
Birthplace:	Denmark
Marital Status:	Widowed
Relation to Head of House:	Father-in-law
Home in 1930:	Jackson, Shelby, Iowa
Map of Home:	View Map
Dwelling Number:	2
Family Number:	28
Age at First Marriage:	27
Attended School:	No
Able to Read and Write:	Yes
Father's Birthplace:	Denmark
Mother's Birthplace:	Denmark
Language Spoken:	Danish
Immigration Year:	1879



By Wanda Sornson

Going back ten years, what name is used to identify our man in the 1920 U.S. Federal Census? Here we have 60 year old, **Mattie Smidt**. Birth year and living place do agree and he is now married to "Anna." However, his immigration date is given as 1883.

Name:	Mattie Smidt
Age:	60
Birth Year:	abt 1860
Birthplace:	Denmark
Home in 1920:	Polk, Shelby, Iowa
House Number:	Farm
Race:	White
Immigration Year:	1883
Relation to Head of House:	Head
Marital Status:	Married
Spouse's Name:	Anna Smidt
Father's Birthplace:	Denmark
Mother's Birthplace:	Denmark
Native Tongue:	Danish
Able to Speak English:	Yes
Occupation:	Retired Farmer

By the way, the Iowa State Census of 1915 added another given name – it identified him as **Madis Smidt**. It also stated that he had been in the U.S. and Iowa for 32 years, thus making his immigration year 1883 which agrees with the 1920 census. And earlier yet, in 1905 Iowa Census, his name was recorded as **Madder Smith**.

Let's go back a few more years to the 1900 U.S. Federal Census. Now we find **Madds Smedt** living in Polk, Shelby, Iowa. This census gives a birth month and year, which we now find as February 1858 rather than the 1859 previously recorded, as well as an immigration year of 1880 and a marriage year of 1881.

Madds Smedt in the 1900 United States Federal Census

Name: Madds Smedt
 Age: 42
 Birth Date: Feb 1858
 Birthplace: Denmark
 Home in 1900: Polk, Shelby, Iowa
 Sheet Number: 8
 Number of Dwelling in Order of Visitation: 142
 Family Number: 143
 Race: White
 Gender: Male
 Immigration Year: 1880
 Relation to Head of House: Head
 Marital Status: Married
 Spouse's Name: Annie Smedt
 Marriage Year: 1881
 Years Married: 19
 Father's Birthplace: Denmark
 Mother's Birthplace: Denmark
 Years in US: 20
 Naturalization: Naturalized

The 1910 census, though not documented here, gave another possible surname – his name was **Maddie Smitt**.

Now let us try the 1925 Iowa State Census, the census that will give his parents' names. Herein his name was recorded at **Maddes Schmidt**.

Name:	Maddes Schmidt
Age:	65
Birth Year:	1860
Birth Place:	Denmark
Residence Date:	1 Jan 1925
Residence Place:	Polk, Shelby, Iowa, USA
Race:	White
Gender:	Male
Relation to Head:	Father
Marital Status:	Widowed
Father:	Peter Schmidt
Father Birth Place:	Denmark
Mother:	Anna Schmidt
Mother Birth Place:	Denmark
Parents' Marriage Place:	Denmark

This does give us a clue as to what his Danish surname actually was. He indicated that his father's name was Peter *Schmidt*.

We now have the surnames of Smidt, Smedt, Smith, Smitt, and Schmidt to work with as well as the given names of Maddes, Mathaus, Mattie, Madds, Madis, and Madder, as well as two immigration years. And people wonder why it takes so long to do genealogy research!

Through all of these documents in the United States, we definitely are not getting any closer to what was this man's actual name in Denmark. What we need is a passenger list which hopefully will also give us a possible location in Denmark. We have three immigration dates with which to work: 1879, 1880, and 1883. So we search immigration lists for several combinations of the name Maddes Smidt in the years 1879-1880, and we find nothing. Looking back at the censuses, we see that his first child was probably born about 1886. Not many people got married several years before the birth of the first child; therefore, the marriage date of 1881 as found in the 1900 census is most likely not accurate.

Using the immigration date of 1883, several passenger lists were found, all originating in Hamburg, Germany. Some of these indicated the person was from Slesvig, the area of Denmark that was under German control from 1864 to 1920. Finally, one passenger list was located for an M Schmidt that actually stated he was from Denmark. This is the passenger list found:

New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957	
Arrival Date:	20 March 1882
Birth Date:	1859
Age:	23
Gender:	Male
Ethnicity/ Nationality:	German
Place of Origin:	Germany
Port of Departure:	Antwerp, Belgium
Destination:	United States of America
Port of Arrival:	New York, New York
Ship Name:	Rhynland
Search Ship Database:	Rhynland
: Math Schmidt - Mar 1882 - New York, New York Antwerp, Belgium - Male - Rhynland	
Source Citation: Year: 1882; Arrival: New York, New York; Microfilm Serial: M237, 1820-1897; Microfilm Roll: Roll 448; Line: 31; List Number: 314	

M.M. Schmidt, 24, laborer, Denmark

Name: M M Schmidt
 Gender: Male
 Ethnicity/ Nationality: German
 Age: 24
 Birth Date: abt 1858
 Place of Origin: Germany
 Departure Port: Hamburg, Germany
 Destination: USA
 Arrival Date: 24 Apr 1882
 Arrival Port: New York, New York, USA
 Ship Name: Australia

Are we 100% sure this is the correct person – **no**; however, of the several possible passenger lists for a man with this name, this is the only one that identified him as coming from Denmark.

With this information, a search was made for a man that fit this description in Denmark. His death certificate stated that he was born in Gronebæk, Slesvig, on 6 February 1858. Checking our Danish place names, we find that Grønebæk is a place name in Haderslev County, which was part of Slesvig. It is in the parish of Jels. A search made in the church

books for that parish in 1858 and 1859 revealed no birth records for our person.

It was decided to do a search of the Danish censuses of 1860 to see if we could find a man named Peter Schmidt with a one or two-year-old child. The 1860 census did reveal just such a family:

Haderslev, Frøs, Gram (Slesvigske), Vester Lindet, Et Hus, 318 (8), FT-1860, D7050

Navn:	Alder:	Status:	Stilling i familien:	Erhverv:	Fødested:
Peter Christian Schmidt	30	Gift	Inderste Daglejer		Mølby, Oksenvad Sogn, Haderslev Amt
Else Margrethe f. Ebbes	40	Gift	Hans Kone		Aske, Malt Sogn, Ribe Amt
Jens Petersen Schmidt	8	Ugift	Barn		Mølby, Oksenvad Sogn, Haderslev Amt
Elsebeth Jensen Schmidt	3	Ugift	Barn		Skibelund, Nustrup Sogn, Haderslev Amt
Mathisen Schmidt	1	Ugift	Barn		Skibelund, Nustrup Sogn, Haderslev Amt

Searches for the same family in the following years produced no results. But they did show up in the 1870 and 1880 censuses of Ribe County in Denmark. This was quite fortunate because the counties in Slesvig had no censuses for the years following 1860.

Ribe, Ribe, Kalvslund, Kalvslund, -, 5, FT-1870, D8872

Navn:	Alder:	Status:	Stilling i familien:	Erhverv:	Fødested:
Peder Kristian Smidt	40	Gift	Huufader	Leichuus- og arbejdsmand	Mølby, Oxenvad Sogn, Slesvig
Else Margrethe Ebbesen	50	Gift	Huusmoder		Askov, Malt Sogn
Elsebeth Jensen Smidt	12	Ugift	Datter		Nustrup?? Sogn
Mathias Smidt	10	Ugift	Son		Nustrup?? Sogn
Ane Magdalene Smidt	8	Ugift	Datter		Osterlinnet Sogn, Slesvig
Pederea Margrethe Smidt	7	Ugift	Datter		Kalvslund

And in 1880:

Ribe, Ribe, Kalvslund, Kalvslund, En Gaard, 9, FT-1880, C0749

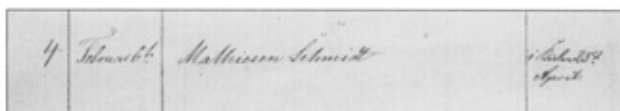
Mathias Smedt 20 Ugift Tjenestekarl Nustrup Sogn i det Slesviske

This is our man! The two censuses also prove that he did not immigrate until after 1880 and all three censuses agreed upon his birth place as being Nustrup. All we have to do now is find the birth document, which we did:

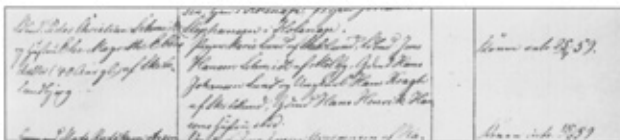
Danish church registers (source: Arkivalieronline, <http://www.sa.dk/content/dk/ao>); viewed November 2021

Nustrup Parish, Gram District, Haderslev County, Kontraministerialbog: Male births 1850 - 1866

Image #33: Birth/baptism of Mathiesen Schmidt, 6 February 1859



Male birth #4. Born February 6th, **Mathiesen Schmidt**, Baptized in church on 25th April. Parents: laborer Peder Christian Schmidt and wife Else Magrethe Ebbesdatter, age 40 of Skibelundbjerg.



Sponsors: spinster Marie Lund of Skibelund; laborer? Jens Hansen Schmidt of Mølby; farmer Hans Johansen Lund, and bachelor Hans Kragh of Skibelunde, farmer Hans Henrik Hansenn's wife, of the same place. Note: the mother was churched on 25/4 '59.

Now we have an exact name for our immigrant: he was given the name of **Mathiesen Schmidt** on his baptism date.

It always makes me wonder, when I am trying to find a person's exact name - couldn't they just have asked the person how to spell his name? It often gets lost with the many records and the many transcriptionists that pass the name along. *But*, it is always very satisfying when we reach the actual given name of an immigrant!

gertrude gronbech

Gertrude Alsager Gronbech was my aunt, my mother's sister. She was born in 1908, one of four daughters born to Herman Kristian Gronbech (1897-1949) and Christina (Alsager) Gronbech (1876-1943). Herman was a native of Bornholm, Denmark and immigrated to the United States in 1891. Christina was the daughter of Norwegian immigrants.

Herman attended Iowa State Agricultural College in Ames, Iowa and obtained a degree in butter making and creamery operation. Of special interest to the family is that George Washington Carver was a student in the same class as Herman. A picture shows them standing with others in the class. Herman worked in creameries in central Iowa and operated a creamery of his own for a few years before farming a small acreage near Jewell, Iowa, where they raised their family. They named their farm Sunny Hill. Herman became a United States citizen in 1897.

An interesting incident about Gertrude's farm life was that when she was 15 years old, she rode one of their horses from Jewell to the veterinarian clinic at Iowa State College in Ames, 20 miles from Jewell. The horse needed to have some work done on its teeth. Then she rode the horse back home, a total of 40 miles in the same day. Quite a feat for a 15-year-old girl! Another interesting story is that when her father bought his first car, a Whippet, Gertrude took him out to a field on their farm and taught him how to drive.

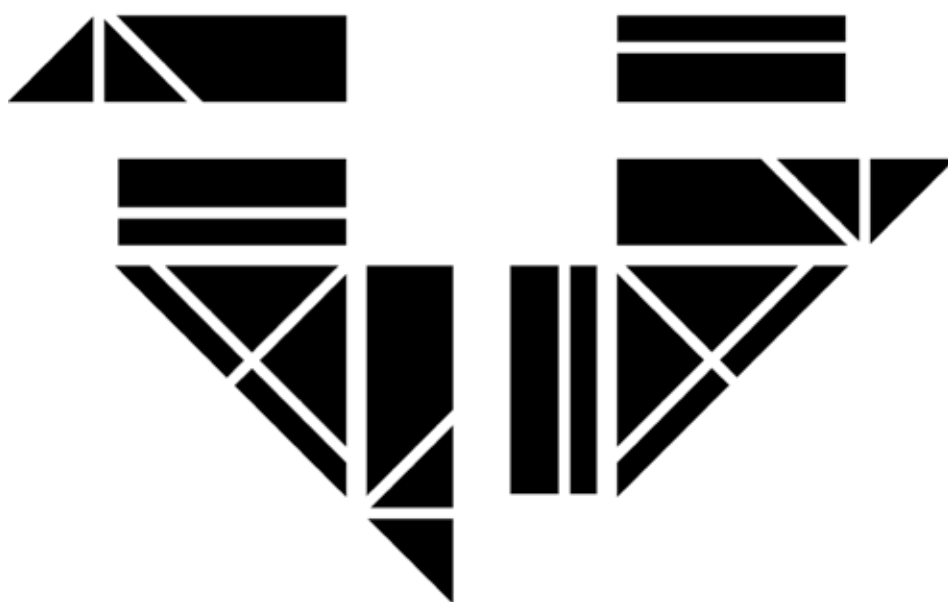
Gertrude attended high school in Jewell and in Ames, where she participated in many activities. After high school she attended Iowa State College for two years. She then taught in a one-room country school. Returning to Iowa State College, she majored in Consumer Economics, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in 1937. After teaching Home Economics in Iowa high schools for three years, she continued her education and received a second bachelor's degree in Home Economics Education in 1941.



Following graduation Gertrude held several positions, including working with the Bureau of Home Economics with the United States Department of Agriculture and doing research for the National Resources Planning Board. In 1947 she took a position with the Agricultural Council in Copenhagen, Denmark, where she had several responsibilities, including reviewing manuscripts on trade talks, working with the World's Poultry Congress, and other conferences. Back in the United States she worked with the Foreign Agricultural Service and the University of Maryland Extension Service before returning to the United States Department of Agriculture as an Agricultural Economist, authoring and co-authoring a number of publications as a part of her work. She continued her work at the USDA until she retired.

Gertrude enjoyed traveling, both for work and for personal experiences. She visited families and family heritage sites in Denmark and Norway. She also encouraged family members, especially nieces and nephews, to do the same; she provided names and places to family members for their travels. Gertrude kept in touch with numerous family members and friends throughout her life, both by letter and by personal visits. She would stop by for a visit and soon be on the phone making contact for her next visit, to

By Roy Hougen
Ames, Iowa



make the most of her time in the area. Since she had no car, and public transportation did not work for her visiting schedule, she would see who would be available to give her a ride to her next destination. She wanted to keep in contact personally, if possible. She also attended many international conferences of Agricultural Economists.

Gertrude was frugal in nature, living in a one-room apartment, keeping only what she needed for her wellbeing. But she was very giving with her time and assistance for others. When friends or family came to Washington, D.C., she would show them around to the Capitol, museums, concerts, and other attractions. She was generous with her contributions to causes she felt were worthy.

Gertrude was especially proud of her Scandinavian heritage. When she learned that The Danish Immigrant Museum (now the Museum of Danish America) was to be in Elk Horn, Iowa, she supported it financially, as did other members of the extended Gronbech family. When she died in 1986, money from her estate was placed in a trust for the museum to mature in 2021. She would be pleased to see that the museum has now become recognized as a national and international treasure.

The charitable remainder trust realized from Gertrude's estate will make a significant impact on the museum. Thanks to the thoughtful planning of Gertrude's heirs, this trust will support immediate museum needs, provide start-up funding for projects in the next two years, and contribute to long-term financial support through the museum's endowment.

Continued from page 25

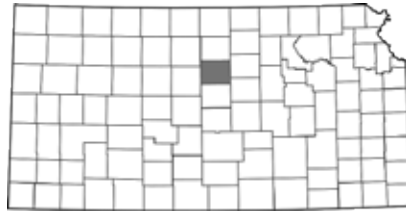
in Lincoln County, Kansas. James, along with two friends, decided to investigate. They filed claims in the Government Land Office in Junction City. James filed for 160 acres plus a timber claim for planting ten acres of trees. A friend, Lars Peter Nielsen, filed for 160 acres north of his, and friend Peter Jensen filed for 160 acres west of his.

The three friends took the train from Junction City to Salina, Kansas, and then walked the Northwest Trail to the Spillman Valley in Lincoln County in the summer of 1870. It took them three days to walk the 50 miles. The men were directed to the Block House on Bacon Creek, where government officials showed them the exact location of their claims: north of Little Timber Creek, not far from where it joined the Spillman Creek. All claims were adjoined and carefully marked with corner stones.

After these legal details were attended to, the men hurried back to Junction City, full of excitement and big plans for the future. They worked the rest of the year and purchased a covered wagon, a cook stove, three bushels of corn, two bushels of potatoes, a sack of flour plus a few other foods, a small amount of clothes, a yoke of oxen, a cow and a calf, and a few pieces of furniture. On May 8, 1871, they left for their homestead claim in Lincoln County (Denmark), Kansas.

The journey was long and endless.

Vendla shares her Grandfather's account, "The wagon was heavily loaded. Water was scarce, and the poor



Map of Kansas highlighting Lincoln County

oxen and animals were at times almost unmanageable. When they reached the Solomon River and the oxen discovered water, they made a dash for the river bottom. There seemed no end to the amount of water they could drink. When they finally decided they'd had enough, and the wagon handler urged them on, the schooner with its load had already sunken so far into the sandy river bottom that it was impossible for the oxen to pull it out. What was to be done? The little party, for the first time, was stuck. The men unloaded the wagon, carried everything across the river, and gave the oxen another attempt at the empty wagon. They made one dash and were out of the water. Relief! The schooner was reloaded, and after camping there overnight, they started on the trail again."

The journey was about 100 miles by modern highway, but goodness knows how far it must have been by wagon trail up hill and down. The party reached their homestead claims a little over three months from the time they left Junction City.

LIFE ON THE GREAT PLAINS

When the Morgensons finally reached Spillman Creek, they found several Danish families who welcomed the new couple into the Danish community with help and comfort. One of the families invited James and Christine to

stay with them until their own dugout could be built. They lived to be good neighbors and friends for many years.

To "prove up" a homestead, pioneers had to build on it. James started on a dugout, a cave-like area carved out of the earth, right away. Using spades and shovels, he dug into the side of the creek and covered the exposed roof area with small logs, brush and twigs.

Life was hard on the Great Plains. The soil was uncultivated prairie, and plowing and sowing was very hard work. The Morgensons started raising crops for their own food and to sell, so that they could get cash for their provisions. Probably, some of the corn and potatoes they brought with them that first year were planted.

All homesteaders had to endure the hardships and uncertainty of prairie life. During the Morgenson's first summer, they had a huge rain which flooded the creek and their cow and calf drowned. This was their first serious setback. But, a neighbor friend who was an excellent shot kept them supplied with meat – buffalo, jack rabbits, prairie chickens, wild geese, ducks, and squirrels. The early settlers got along well by helping one another, sharing the work that had to be done.

They lived in the dugout for about two years until, with the help of some of the neighbors, they could build a two-room log house with logs from trees of the creek. The roof of the log house was built with closely laid tree branches and covered with red clay from a nearby hill. Here, four children

were born: Olaf J., H. Louis, Theodora (Dora), and Julius. Adolph P. and Hilma were born later in their first frame home. They built a barn, farm sheds, and a chicken house. Their water was supplied by a windmill and the well was used for cooling milk, butter, and cream that was lowered down in covered containers by a rope, about 10-12 feet. They had a cave for cooling and storage, and it doubled as a tornado shelter.

Imagine the cooking and housekeeping! On laundry days, clothes were boiled for 15-20 minutes, then rinsed twice. That's a lot of water to carry in, carry out, and clothes to be hung outdoors in all kinds of weather. Then the clothes were brought inside and almost everything was ironed, and usually the good things were starched.

For the first year, James worked as a stone mason. He did some of the stonework on the first County Courthouse in Lincoln, Kansas, about ten miles away. For a time he stayed there during the week and walked home for Saturday evening and Sunday, bringing what provisions he could carry. Later, he helped to build dwellings in the Denmark, Kansas, community by using the native limestone rocks from the nearby hills and sand from the river. In 1875, he was foreman when the stonework for the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark, Kansas, was readied for the building.

These sturdy pioneers who came to cultivate and earn a living on this wild, "new land" endured the hard prairie life which included floods and droughts,

grasshoppers and chinch bugs, prairie fires and crop failures, hot winds and winter blizzards.

Vendla shares an account, "A time James and a neighbor went to run some errands with a wagon and oxen. On the way home in the early evening, a huge fierce blizzard suddenly blew up. A bewildering, blinding snow was whirling everywhere. The roads were poor and poorly marked and soon they were lost. They decided to let the oxen go, maybe they could instinctively find their way home. After a time the oxen stopped and would absolutely go no further. The men decided to stay where they were until morning. When daylight came, they realized they were on top of their own dug-out!"

GOOD TIMES

But there were good times, too. The Morgensons had frequent get-togethers where they would share what little they had. Get-togethers took the form of coffee parties to celebrate birthdays, baptisms, confirmation, and anniversaries. They all liked to dance – young and old alike. There were frequent dance parties in the hay loft of a large barn. Plays were put on for entertainment. Family and friends gathered for huge dinners on Sunday after church services. The center of the Danish community was the Lutheran Church, where the Morgensons were faithful members. The Morgensons were active, public-serving, church-oriented people.

James and Christine were very interested in education. Their priority after basic needs of food and shelter was taking care of the best education they could manage for their children. Vendla shares, "With intense interest



The Danske Evangelist Lutheran Kirke (Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church) This solidly built church has withstood the test of time. It stands today at the crossroads of Denmark, Kansas. It was added to the National Register in 1991. *Photo: Gift of Selma Sloth, 1988.004.029.*

and encouragement, James and Christine's children were well educated."

LATER YEARS

James and Christine lived on the homestead a little over 40 years. In 1911 they retired from the farm and bought an acre of land next to their son, Adolf, and wife, Olga, parents of Vendla, and built a home in Vesper, Kansas. They lived there for 16 years. Vendla recalls, "It was a nice house with garden, orchard, barn, chicken house, and garage. The house had running water, supplied by a gasoline engine, bathroom, gas lights – very modern for Vesper,

In 1875, the **Denmark, Kansas**, settlement boasted a store, a blacksmith shop, a school and a post office. Census reports indicate a steady population increase in and about the Denmark settlement between 1875 -1885. Many of these settlers were born in Denmark but emigrated from Iowa, Ohio, Wisconsin and Illinois and most of the settlers were farmers. The expansion of railroads caused Denmark, Kansas, to boom. By the 1920s the town boasted two schools, a church, a mercantile store, a community hall, a post office, a hotel, a bank, a creamery, a telephone exchange, a grocery store, a lumber yard, a barber sharp, a restaurant, two grain elevators, garages, and blacksmith shops.

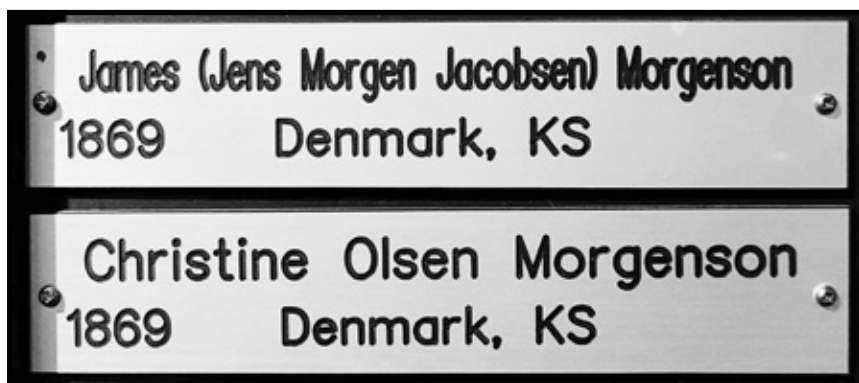
Kansas!" These were busy, happy days. James and Christine participated actively in the cultural and spiritual life of the community.

In 1920, James and Christine celebrated their golden wedding anniversary, and all of the children and several of the grandchildren were present. They had a service in the church. Traditional Danish wedding songs were sung and a couple speeches "in English" were shared. Refreshments were served. It was a very happy and special time.

As the years passed, "their steps became slower, their eyes dimmer, the humor not so calm or cheerful," recalls Vendla. In 1928, due to Christine's ailing health, the house was sold and James and Christine moved to Elk Horn, Iowa, to live with their daughter, Dora. Christine died in 1929 and is buried in Denmark, Kansas, beside their daughter, Hilma. She

was 85 years old. James died in 1939 and is buried in Elk Horn, Iowa. He was 95 years old. Vendla proudly explains, "Because times were 'very hard' in those days, Grandpa insisted on a simple burial at Elk Horn. He was buried next to his son-in-law, the Reverend Carl Olsen. Later, Aunt Dora was buried there, too. This is but one example of Grandpa Morgenson's magnanimous and sensible spirit."

The names of James and Christine Morgenson are inscribed for posterity on the museum's Danish Immigrant Wall of Honor. Their story is one of thousands of stories filed at the museum, and it helps us understand the Danish immigration experience, particularly the sturdy pioneers' experience at the time of westward expansion in America.



Column 58, Rows 13 and 14

new additions to the wall of honor

JULY 22 – NOVEMBER 16, 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.

JACOB CHRISTOFFERSEN

(1901) Chicago, Cook, Illinois –
Cynthia C. Tidwell, Corrales, NM

RICHARD JULIUS DALBY

(1914) Battle Creek, Iowa – Eileen
Whittemore, Saucier, MS

GRETHE (GRETE) MADSEN

JENSEN (1909) Audubon Co.,
Iowa – Bertha Schroeter, Exira, IA;
Clayton Winther, Goodyear, AZ;
Craig Winther, Villisca, IA; Simone
Selders Nazzal, Antelope, CA;
Malorie Winther; Quentin Sickles;
Norma Rae Winther Wolfe, Adrian
& Avery, Kellerton, IA; Garrett,
Tanaya Winther & Kash; Julie
Winther Krauth, Massena, IA;
Joni Petersen, Surprise, AZ; Lori
Schroeter Blessington, Lake View,
IA; and Amy Schroeter Fellows,
West Des Moines, IA

**JENS JULIUS WINTHER &
INGER MARIE JOHANNE**

JENSEN (1902) (1907) Audubon
Co., Iowa – Bertha Schroeter,
Exira, IA; Clayton Winther,
Goodyear, AZ; Craig Winther,
Villisca, IA; Simone Selders
Nazzal, Antelope, CA; Malorie
Winther; Quentin Sickles; Norma
Rae Winther Wolfe, Adrian &
Avery, Kellerton, IA; Garrett,
Tanaya Winther & Kash; Julie
Winther Krauth, Massena, IA;
Joni Petersen, Surprise, AZ; Lori
Schroeter Blessington, Lake View,
IA; and Amy Schroeter Fellows,
West Des Moines, IA

PETER W. LEWIS (1874)

Woodbine, Iowa – Lawrence
Faylor, Missouri Valley, IA

ULLA RASMUSSEN MCGEE

(1966) Southbury, CT – Fredrick C
McGee, Southbury, CT

MAREN LAURITSEN WINTHER

(1919) Audubon Co., Iowa –
Bertha Schroeter, Exira, IA;
Clayton Winther, Goodyear, AZ;
Craig Winther, Villisca, IA; Simone
Selders Nazzal, Antelope, CA;
Malorie Winther; Quentin Sickles;
Norma Rae Winther Wolfe, Adrian
& Avery, Kellerton, IA; Garrett,
Tanaya Winther & Kash; Julie
Winther Krauth, Massena, IA;
Joni Petersen, Surprise, AZ; Lori
Schroeter Blessington, Lake View,
IA; and Amy Schroeter Fellows,
West Des Moines, IA

By Deb Christensen Larsen



memorials

JULY 22 – NOVEMBER 16, 2021

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

Arlan Andersen
Milo & Mildred Andersen, my
grandparents
Inez Jorgensen Benjes
Harold W. Berg
Tony Berg
Robert Henry Bergstrom
Mr. Victor Borge from a devoted
fan in Norway
Melinda Brown's parent's 70th
wedding anniversary
Anegrethe Christensen
Don Christensen
T.K. Christensen
Hans & Mathilde Farstrup
Chuck Frederiksen
Spencer Holland
Spencer L. Holland, my father
Roland & Anitra Jensen
Anna Matilda Jensina Jensen, my
mother
Kenneth R. (Kenn) Johnson
Iver Jorgensen
Iver L. Jorgensen
Iver "Whitey" Jorgensen
Iver "Whitey" Jorgensen, my dad

Whitey Jorgensen
Orville Kerkhoff, my dad (Nan
Dreher)
Tage Ketelsen
Verne Kline
Irene Larsen
Janis Nielsen Lustgraaf
Anne George McNeely
(Enumclaw, WA)
J. Brent Norlem
Glenn Ohms
Erik Olsen
Russ Overgard
Russell G. Overgard
Berger Rasmussen
Hans Christian Rasmussen
Reimert Ravenholt
Evelyn Rechtenbach
Mema Rierson
Axel & Rose Skelbeck
Soren & Violet Sorensen
Erik W. Struckman, my son
Karen (Andersen) Waite
Karen Waite, my grandmother,
and in honor of her Danish
ancestry

in honor

JULY 22 – NOVEMBER 16, 2021

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

Annegrethe Christensen
Dorothy Kerkhoff, my mom (Nan
Dreher)
Marlin Nelson
The museum and its staff for the
"Brushes & Lenses, Fabric &
Steel: Two Generations of Art"
exhibit

jens jensen heritage path

JULY 22 – NOV 16, 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.

Amy E. Christensen, Billings, MT
Carole Christensen, Adair, IA
Judith Green, West Des Moines, IA
Kelly Green
Jeffrey Hancks, Moline, IL
Louis Nielsen & Marcia Jante, New Berlin, WI
Marilyn, Eleanor, Kristine Schaeffer, Kansas City, MO
Shelly Wright

new members

JULY 22 – NOVEMBER 16, 2021

The Museum of Danish America is pleased to identify the following 62 individuals and 2 organizations as its newest members:

Laura Abbene, Williamsburg, VA
Jean Astrop, Atlanta, GA
Frans & Kiersten Bay, Odense, Denmark
Helen Risom Belluschi, Palm Desert, CA
Karen Larsen Bullis, Kingsville, MD
Tom & Holly Johnson Carr, Chicago, IL
Carole Christensen, Adair, IA
Bettie Cochran, Olympia, WA
Lawrence Faylor, Missouri Valley, IA
Fredsville Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls, IA
Grand View University, Des Moines, IA
Jeffrey Hancks, Moline, IL
Kathryn Harris, Shenandoah, IA
Jason & Heather Hauser, Walker, MN
BJ Havens, Queensbury, NY
Jessica Holtum-Schwier, Fountain, MN
Susan Jacobsen, Yorba Linda, CA
Ellen Janiec, Joliett, IL
JoAnn Johnson, Cedar Falls, IA
Kris Johnson, Sequin, TX
Kurt & Barbara Johnson, Audubon, IA
Mitchell & Trisha Jorgenson, Walker, MN
James & Sheryl Krueger, Blair, NE
David & Denise Levy, Omaha, NE
Julie Lewis, Madison, WI
Christy Overgard MacLear, Aspen, CO
Terry Marcussen, Adair, IA
Astrid Mikkelsen, Akrehamn, Norway
Amy Nelson, Washington, DC
John & LeAnn Nielsen, Aurora, CO
David & Jessica Northwick, Norwalk, IA
Beverly Nykiel, Downers Grove, IL
Lowell & Patricia Penning, Le Mars, IA
Mary Nell & Barry Petersen, Denver, CO
Ed & Sandra Richmond, Omaha, NE
Marilyn Schaeffer, Kansas City, MO
Deborah Schwartz, Northfield, IL
Richard & Linda Shinofield, Minneapolis, MN
Cherie Shown, Napa, CA
Holly Klotz & David Simpson, Des Moines, IA
M.B. Sorensen, Georgetown, KY
Thomas & Karen Sorensen, Bellevue, NE
Sara Turner, Oakdale, CA
Kristine Uravich, Las Vegas, NY
Philip & Chris Wernsmann, Coon Rapids, IA
Wes & Mary Jenelle Wolfe, Omaha, NE
Kathleen Zabel, Tampa, FL

organization associates

JULY 22 – NOVEMBER 16, 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.

Aalborg and Linie Aquavits, Arcus AS, Hagan, Norway	The Danish Canadian National Museum, Spruce View, Alberta, Canada	Greater Omaha Genealogical Society, Omaha, NE
American Swedish Historical Museum, Philadelphia, PA	Danish Club of Tucson, Tucson, AZ	Hacways (Helene & Nanna Christensen), Hals, Denmark
Atlantic Friends of The Danish Immigrant Museum, Atlantic, IA	The Danish Home, Croton-On-Hudson, NY	Wayne Hansen Real Estate, LLC, Elk Horn, IA
Audubon Family Chiropractic (Douglas & Nichole Olsen), Audubon, IA	The Danish Home Foundation, Chicago, IL	Harlan Tribune Newspapers, Inc. (Joshua Byers, Publisher), Harlan, IA
Carroll Control Systems, Inc. (Todd & Jalynn Wanninger), Carroll, IA	Danish Mutual Insurance Association, Elk Horn, IA	Henningsen Construction, Inc. (Brad Henningsen, Vice President), Atlantic, IA
Country Landscapes, Inc. (Rhett Faaborg), Ames, IA	Danish Sisterhood Dagmar Lodge #4, Chicago, IL	House of Denmark, San Diego, CA
Danebod Lutheran Church, Tyler, MN	Danish Sisterhood Lodge #19, Tacoma/Olympia, WA	Kirsten's Danish Bakery (Kirsten & Paul Jepsen), Hinsdale, IL
Danes Hall of Waupaca, LLC, Waupaca, WI	Danish Sisterhood Ellen Lodge #21, Denver, CO	Knudsen Old Timers, Glendale, CA
Danish American Athletic Club of 1922, Chicago, IL	Danish Sisterhood Lodge #102, Des Moines, IA	Landmands Bank (Troy Wessel, President), Audubon, IA
The Danish American Archive and Library, Blair, NE	Danish Sisterhood Flora Danica Lodge #177, Solvang, CA	Main Street Market, Panama, IA
Danish Archive North East (DANE), Edison, NJ	Danish Sisterhood Danske Damer Lodge #185, Cleveland, OH	Marne Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn, IA
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #1, Omaha, NE	Den Danske Pioneer (Elsa Steffensen & Linda Steffensen), Hoffman Estates, IL	Midwest Groundcovers LLC (Craig Keller & Christa Orum-Keller, Vice President), Illinois
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #14, Kenosha, WI	Elk Horn Lutheran Church, Elk Horn, IA	Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls, IA
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #15, Des Moines, IA	Elk Horn-Kimballton Optimist Club, Elk Horn & Kimballton, IA	Nelsen and Nelsen, Attorneys at Law, Cozad, NE
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #16, Minden, NE	Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, Solvang, CA	Northwest Danish Association, Seattle, WA
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #35, Homewood, IL	Faith, Family, Freedom Foundation (Kenneth & Marlene Larsen), Harlan, IA	Olsen, Muhlbauer & Co., L.L.P., Carroll, IA
Danish Brotherhood Polarstjernen Lodge #283, Dagmar, MT	Federation of Danish Associations in Canada, Gloucester, Canada	Oxen Technology, Harlan, IA
Danish Brotherhood Lodges, Heartland District, Iowa-Minnesota	Fredsville Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls, IA	Petersen Family Foundation, Inc. (H. Rand & Mary Louise Petersen), Fort Dodge, IA
Danish Brotherhood Centennial Lodge #348, Eugene, OR	Grand View University, Des Moines, IA	Esper A. Petersen Foundation, Grayslake, IL

Proongily (Cyndi McKeen), St. Paul,
MN
The Rasmussen Group, Inc. (Sandra
Rasmussen and Kurt & Lynette
Rasmussen), Des Moines, IA
Rebild National Park Society,
Southern California Chapter, Los
Angeles, CA area
Red River Danes, Fargo, ND area
Ringsted Danish American
Fellowship, Ringsted, IA
Royal Danish Guard Society,
Chicago, IL
Scan Design Foundation, Seattle,
WA
Shelby County Historical Society &
Museum, Harlan, IA
Shelby County State Bank, Harlan,
IA & Elk Horn, IA
Supreme Lodge of the Danish
Sisterhood of America
Symra Literary Society, Decorah, IA
Upward Mobility (Susan Vitek),
Hinesburg, VT

NEW SERVICE STRUCTURE AND FEE PLAN

Beginning January 1, 2022, the services offered by the Genealogy Center will be moving to all package options, rather than the current system of pay-by-the-hour.

There will be five package options for patrons: Introductory, Basic, Standard Family, Brick Wall, and Heritage – with flat fees for all. The expectations for each package will be much clearer than they are now, by specifying what the focus will be and how much information the research will attempt to cover.

The hourly system will remain for services rendered within the Genealogy Center. Also, additional hours may be purchased to supplement packages, but the expectation is that these extra hours will be five or fewer. These hours would be purchased, for example, to find a single record or document.

Deposits will still be required with the research request forms, and the rest of the payment will be invoiced once research is completed, to account for any additional charges that may accrue during the project. Packages and other fees will continue to be priced for members and non-members. If you are interested in becoming a member, you can sign-up on the museum's website.

DONATING SOMETHING?

Hello friends, family, and members of the museum,

We write today to thank each and every one of you for your donations to the museum, be they monetary, artifact, document, or book donations. We could not exist without you and would not have the rich collections we do. On a daily basis we care for several types of collections, a process which includes cataloguing. For each item of these collections, we document descriptions, written content, creators, and we even photograph or scan some items to be available online in the View Our Collection database (<https://danishmuseum.pastperfectonline.com>). Once catalogued in our system, they are safely tucked away for preservation in acid-free boxes, tissue paper, and/or put on a shelf in a stable environment, to be kept for people in the future to get a peek into the past. All this care takes an intensive amount of time and patience, and we love to do it, because, as museum professionals, it is our purpose.

As is evident to us in recent months, you, too, have been enjoying discovering and digging through your own family heirlooms, documents, photos, and books during the pandemic. While we are incredibly passionate about collecting and caring for items related to Danish America, our collection needs are specific. We encourage you to contact us first with your donation offers via email, phone, or regular mail. Attaching photos also helps us determine the extent of the materials you are offering. To fit within our collections policy, everything must first be reviewed by our Collections Committee.

Our most important job as collections custodians is spending time with the artifacts, documents, and books you have entrusted to us. When you contact us ahead of time, we can get donor information, history, and the necessary forms signed up-front, which helps us be more efficient. Our review process helps us ensure that we are accepting and caring for items that are not already represented in our collections. Remember that space is finite, and the museum has approximately 16,000 objects, almost 10,000 photos, 500 archival collections, and 8,000 books. Of course, we wish we could take everything, but it is important that we collect carefully and sustainably to preserve the past of Danish America.

Tusind tak, *Your Faithful Collections Team*



By Amanda Skellenger



By Cheyenne Jansdatter



There is a new exhibit in the Genealogy Center's lobby, focusing on farming and homesteading.



School groups have returned! Here, Collections Intern Hannah Haack gives a peek at the "trunk program," which features a special collection of objects which may be handled.



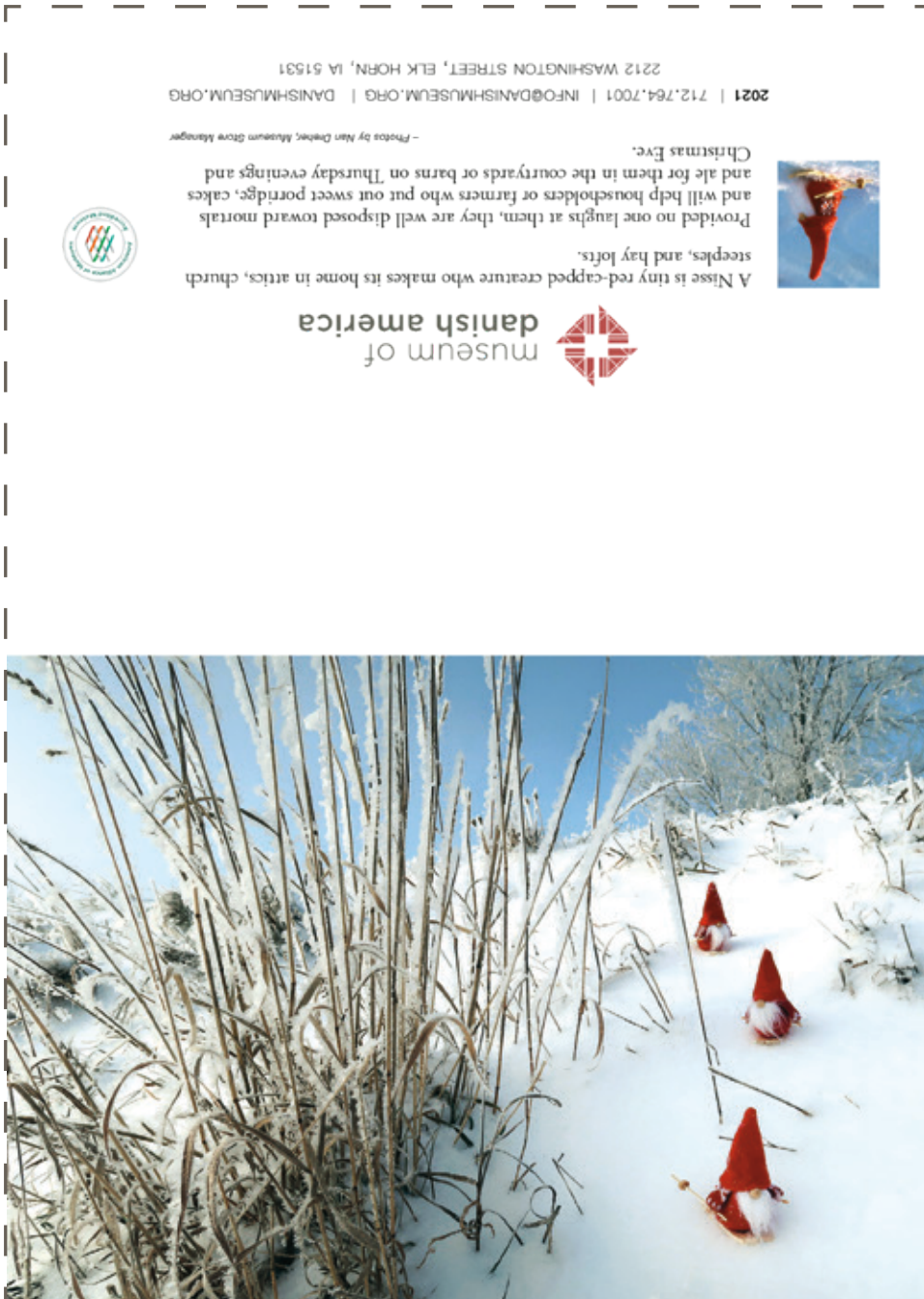
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01



02

Ornament front



A Nisse is a tiny red-capped creature who makes its home in attics, church steeples, and hay lofts.



Ornament back

01. 2021 Annual Christmas Card, with envelopes. Pack of 10, #6140, \$20. Individual, #6141, \$2.50. **02. 2021 Annual Porcelain Ornament**, with red ribbon. #6139, \$18.

Members receive a 10% discount! More to see online: www.danishmuseum.org/shop. Orders by phone to 712.764.7001, weekdays 9 am - 4 pm.