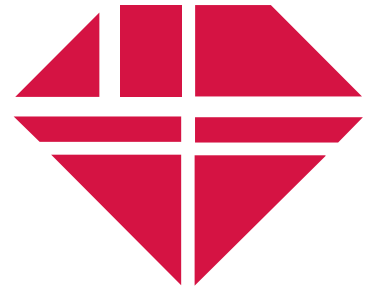


FALL  
2023

# MoDA magazine

A BENEFIT FOR MEMBERS OF THE MUSEUM OF DANISH AMERICA





- 06** Celebrating 40 Years | Event Overview
- 10** Calendar | Events
- 11** Exhibitions | Nature-Culture / Natur-Kultur
- 27** Guest Author | Danish-Americans and the Development of the Dairy Industry
- 33** Collections | The History Behind Crystal Springs Creamery
- 37** Exhibitions | Fabric of a Nation: Art Quilts and Immigration Stories
- 40** Calendar | Exhibitions
- 41** Guest Author | Elderberries
- 42** Intern Feature | Prairies: A Delicate Equilibrium
- 44** Education & Outreach | SPARK!
- 46** Heritage Builder | Garey and Sherry Knudsen
- 50** Guest Author | It Takes a Village
- 53** Staff | Introductions & Farewells
- 54** Thanks | Supporters & Friends
- 59** Recipe | Brændende Kærlighed

**COVER**

Featuring a milk pail, this cover of MoDA Magazine is inspired by nature and the ways in which Danes and Danish-Americans have impacted the world around them, especially the agricultural industry.



## DEAR MoDA FRIENDS,

As our 40<sup>th</sup> year draws to a close, we can look back on a busy and fulfilling year! We were able to gather with many of you in person across the country and in Elk Horn. We were able to mark this year with many accomplishments: new exhibitions, a special *Nordic Swan* installation on our grounds, new opportunities for youth programs, and a remodeled Visual Storage for our collection. You are reading another outcome of our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year—an updated format for our membership magazine. This is just one of an array of new benefits within our updated membership structure.

One of our goals for our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was to lay the groundwork for success in our *next* 40 years. Our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign focuses on projects that will have long-term benefits for visitor experiences, collection growth and interpretation, strong relationships with our national membership, and growing our endowment. We have secured nearly \$1.2 million toward these goals so far. If you would like to make a contribution to one of these goals, there is still time; we are accepting gifts and pledges for this campaign through December 31 of this year. Pledges can be fulfilled any time before December 31, 2025.

Throughout this anniversary year, I have had the opportunity to meet with people who have known MoDA for decades, as well as people who are just learning about our museum and what we do. I have described our mission to many

different audiences and shared examples of the variety of collections and stories that we preserve and share.

Notably, I had the honor of being invited to speak at the annual Rebild Festival in Denmark on July 4 this year. The Rebild Festival is known as the largest celebration of American Independence Day that takes place outside of the United States. I was invited to bring greetings from the Danes in America, one of the traditions of this festival that takes place in a lovely park just south of the city of Aalborg. I knew that I would be speaking to an audience that would include long-time museum members as well as people who have never heard of us. With that in mind, my remarks aimed to introduce our museum and our purpose to a diverse audience. I am pleased to share those remarks with you in these pages.

Thank you for your past support, your enthusiasm for our anniversary celebrations, and your commitment to our future success!



**TOVA BRANDT, M.A.**  
Executive Director

**Former MoDA interns gathered at Rebild for a reunion.**  
Image courtesy of Tova Brandt.



*Read Tova's Rebild Speech... »*



## DEAR FRIENDS AND HONORED GUESTS,

I am pleased to be with you today to bring greetings from the Danes in America. I will admit that I am not an obvious choice for this role, as my ancestors trace their roots to Norway, Ireland, and Germany—not Denmark. I am here today representing the mission and the vision of the Museum of Danish America, the national museum dedicated to the stories of Danish immigrants to the United States, the Danish-American experience, and the ongoing relationship between our two nations.

I am here today because 40 years ago a small group of Danish-American scholars recognized the need to actively collect, preserve, and share Danish immigrant and Danish-American history. They looked around and saw museums doing this work for Norwegian Americans and for Swedish Americans, but no one had organized a similar effort for Danish Americans. So, with that vision in mind, they set off to build a museum from scratch.

Forty years ago, they decided to locate this national museum in Elk Horn, Iowa—a rural community small in population but rich in Danish immigration history. In the heart of the Midwestern United States, Elk Horn is one of the towns that offered great opportunities for Danes arriving in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Newcomers could find a job with coworkers who could speak their language, attend a Danish-style folk school, and join a Danish Lutheran church congregation—all while becoming acquainted with American society. Elk Horn has never been a large community, but it has welcomed thousands of Danes over the years as immigrants, visitors, and tourists. Elk Horn and its neighbor, Kimballton, are now known as the Danish

Villages of Iowa, a place where Danish heritage is celebrated. Inspired by the community's effort to relocate a historic Danish Windmill to Elk Horn, the museum's site committee decided that this town would be a place where a new national museum could grow and thrive.

Building a museum from scratch is not easy—it takes a lot of friends, a lot of money, and a lot of patience. In 1994, the doors to the museum building opened to the public, and we have been welcoming national and international visitors ever since. We continue to be supported by national and international members, and we aim to send Danish-American stories out to reach you where you are—through YouTube and social media, traveling exhibitions, and publications.

As a museum, we are very proud of our collection of art, artifacts, photographs, and documents which has grown over 40 years to number 30,000 items—each of which tells a story. Among those 30,000 items are things you might expect: wooden trunks carried by Danish immigrants onto steamships as they journeyed to a new life in America; æbleskiver pans from families that held onto Danish cooking traditions; and military uniforms worn by Danish immigrants who volunteered to fight for their new nation.

We have some things in our collection that you might not expect like a Danish-made Principia bicycle that Danish journalist Lars Toft Rasmussen rode from San Francisco to Washington D.C. in 2012. During his six-week cycling adventure, he submitted stories to TV2 about the presidential election campaign of 2012 and how that campaign was viewed from small-town America, including Elk Horn, Iowa. After his ride—and after securing a new bicycle for himself—he donated the Principia to our museum.



**Principia Bike** Gift of Lars Toft Rasmussen, 2013.017.001



**Stone Age Knife**  
Gift of Arne Gammelgaard,  
1989.083.001



**Stone Age Knife**  
Gift of Arne Gammelgaard,  
1989.083.002



**Stone Age Scraper**  
Gift of Arne Gammelgaard,  
1989.083.003



Much older than the bicycle, we have a copy of the Christian IV Bible from 1633, the first official version of the Bible to be printed in Danish. According to the inscription inside the front cover, this copy of the Christian IV Bible was purchased by a Danish physician as a gift to his wife in 1664. The Bible was obviously treasured by its owners, enough to carry it with them when they immigrated to the United States. This was no small commitment since the Bible is 40 centimeters tall, 28 centimeters wide, and 15 centimeters thick. Bible scholars estimate that only 200 copies of the Christian IV Bible survive—and one of them is in our collection in Iowa.

Even older than that, our collection includes examples of Stone Age tools discovered on family farms throughout Denmark. When family members immigrated to the United States, they brought these ancient artifacts with them as a



Christian IV Bible Museum Purchase, 2011.040.091



*"This Bible have I bought in Copenhagen for 16 Rigsdaler and given it to my dear wife Cecilia Pedersdatter Fabricius as a New Year's gift. 1664 Gert Stalborg, Med. Doctor"*

Translated by Marius Bo Poulsen.

connection to their homeland and perhaps as a connection to people thousands of years ago who experienced their own migrations and created homes in new landscapes.

Stories of Danish America happen every day, and our museum exists to make sure that those stories will be remembered. As we gather here in Rebild today, we are part of that ongoing story. Today's printed program will make its way back to Elk Horn, Iowa and the museum collection, to be tangible proof of the Danish-American friendship we express today.

So, for the Danes in America, the Danish-Americans, and the Americans who share an interest in Denmark and Danish culture, I am proud to reaffirm the Museum of Danish America's commitment to our mission: to explore the Danish-American experience, the historic and modern influences of Denmark on the United States, and the continuing story of how a nation of immigrants shape American identity.

On behalf of the Danes in America and Americans of all backgrounds, Happy Fourth of July!

Guests gathered in the heather-covered hills and moorlands of Rebild National Park in Jutland, Denmark on July 4, 2023, to celebrate American Independence Day. Image courtesy of Tova Brandt.





# 40 years of danish roots and american dreams

*In 2022 and 2023, we packed up the MoDA van or boarded airplanes to visit museum members and friends around the country!*



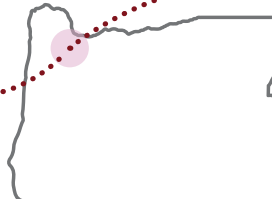
- NEW YORK, NEW YORK
- PORTLAND, OREGON
- DES MOINES, IOWA
- SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
- MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
- LITTLETON, COLORADO
- ELK HORN, IOWA
- MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
- OMAHA, NEBRASKA
- YORBA LINDA, CALIFORNIA



**DANMARK** *September 20, 2022*  
New York, New York

Museum staff and the Board of Directors pose for a photo in Portland.

The training ship Danmark docked in the New York Harbor.



**PRIVATE RECEPTION** *February 10, 2023*  
Nordia House | Portland, Oregon



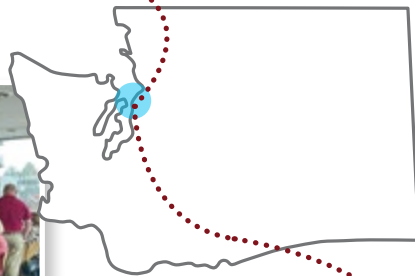


**AN EVENING OF SONG** *March 31, 2023*  
Luther Memorial Church | Des Moines, Iowa

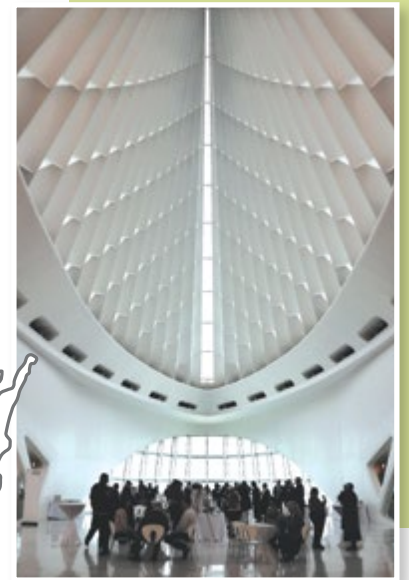


Young Concert Artists, Francesco Barfoed and Megan Moore, perform at An Evening of Song in Des Moines, Iowa.

**PRIVATE DINNER** *April 20, 2023*  
The Swedish Club | Seattle, Washington

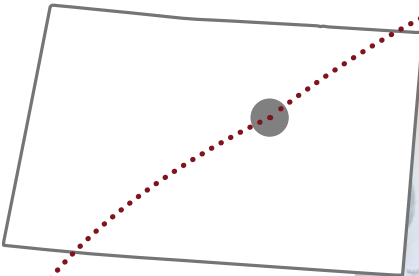


Tables of guests await supper at our Swedish Club event.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

**PRIVATE LUNCHEON** *May 21, 2023*  
Nissebo | Littleton, Colorado



An attendee poses in front of the Hygge banner exhibit and a traditional folk dress at the event in Littleton.



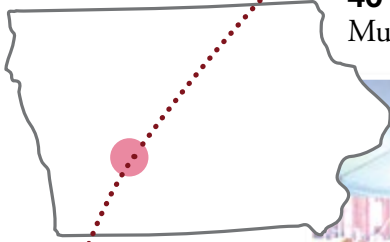
Executive Director Tova Brandt addresses guests at an event in Littleton, Colorado.

**PRIVATE RECEPTION** *April 30, 2023*  
Milwaukee Art Museum | Milwaukee, Wisconsin





**40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION** *June 24, 2023*  
Museum of Danish America | Elk Horn, Iowa



Dinner attendees raise their glasses during John Mark Nielsen's speech at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. Skål!



Terry Branstad, former Iowa governor, and Dennis Larson, the museum's attorney, raise their glasses in a toast.

*Our many 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events have been supported by contributions to our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign!*

**O**ur fundraising efforts have raised \$1.2 million for special projects: anniversary events around the country; ongoing development of the Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park; acquisition and exhibition of Danish ceramics; and growing the museum's Endowment.

There is still time to contribute to the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign with a gift or pledge by December 31, 2023. Call the museum's Development Department at 712.764.7001 or visit our webpage to learn about these fundraising goals.

Museum guests gather to view the midsummer bonfire at Sankt Hans Aften.



At the Hansen Council Ring, individuals roast snobrød and s'mores.



Scan the QR code to donate to our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign!



**A DANISH EVENING** *October 1, 2023*

Danish Lutheran Church & Cultural Center | Yorba Linda, California



The exterior of the Danish Lutheran Church and Cultural Center where the museum held an event on October 1, 2023.



The museum's traveling exhibition *New Nordic Cuisine* was on display at the event.

**AN EVENING AT JOSLYN CASTLE** *September 20, 2023*

Joslyn Castle & Gardens | Omaha, Nebraska

Joslyn Castle & Gardens, built in 1903.



While attending *An Evening at Joslyn Castle*, guests pose in front of the castle's fireplace.



Joslyn's conservatory was designed by Danish immigrant and renowned landscape architect, Jens Jensen.

**PRIVATE DINNER** *August 2, 2023*

Norway House | Minneapolis, Minnesota



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS





## event calendar

**LOCAL EVENTS**
**OCTOBER 2023**

- 19 BROWN BAG LUNCH - N.F.S. Grundtvig, Denmark's Catalyst for the Common Good with Edward Broadbridge | Elk Horn, IA
- 19-21 MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING | Elk Horn, IA

**NOVEMBER 2023**

- 7 SPARK! - Friendsgiving | Elk Horn, IA
- 16 BROWN BAG LUNCH - Danish Immigration to Argentina with Svend Buus | Elk Horn, IA
- 24 & 25 JULEFEST | Elk Horn & Kimballton, IA

**DECEMBER 2023**

- 5 SPARK! - Hygge Holiday | Elk Horn, IA
- 14 BROWN BAG LUNCH - Holiday Hygge | Elk Horn, IA

**NATIONAL EVENTS**

One or more representatives from the Museum of Danish America plan to participate in the following events:

**DECEMBER 2023**

- 1 DURHAM HOLIDAY CULTURAL FESTIVAL | Durham Museum, Omaha, NE

**FEBRUARY 2024**

- 15-17 MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING | Houston, TX

**APRIL 2024**

- 4-6 REBILD NATIONAL PARK SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING | Cincinnati, OH

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend events hosted by the Museum of Danish America. If you are an individual with a disability who requires accommodation, please email [info@danishmuseum.org](mailto:info@danishmuseum.org).

**ALL EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CHECK THE MUSEUM'S WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION.**



# NATURE / CULTURE

## NATUR • KULTUR

BY DIYA NAGARAJ

Albert Ravenholt Curator of  
Danish-American Culture

The environment is an ever-changing entity. From natural processes to human intervention, it is constantly being shaped and reshaped by different forces. For millennia, humans have relied on the natural world for food, shelter, clothing, and more. The environment has shaped human development as much as human development has shaped the environment. Today, from Greta Thunberg's Climate Strikes to the increasing visibility of 'farm to table' and 'locally grown' labels at businesses and grocery stores, there is an increased awareness of people's impact on the environment, both positive and negative.

Denmark's movement toward environmental sustainability has gained worldwide attention. It has not, however, always been an easy journey, although social trust in the government has facilitated the process. The exhibit *Nature-Culture / Natur-Kultur*, open through October 2024, explores historic and contemporary interactions between Danes, Danish-Americans, and the environment. From the urban world to areas of 'wilderness,' from wind energy to agriculture, it offers the opportunity to discover the ways in which Danes and Danish-Americans have used and shaped the environment around them.



Young activists push for stronger action on climate change in Denmark, 2019. Image courtesy of Klimastrejke - Fridaysforfuture Denmark Facebook.

### THE URBAN WORLD

As more people move to cities, urban areas face new challenges. With rising concerns around climate change and a desire to be 'sustainable,' cities in both Denmark and the United States serve as sites for experimentation and change. With growing populations in urban areas, new forms of transportation have emerged and fluctuated in popularity, forcing cities to adapt to accommodate new perspectives and needs.

Danish design extends beyond furniture and into urban planning

and architecture. Architects and planners combine form, functionality, and a focus on the human experience to adapt Danish buildings and cities to the changing climate and reduce their environmental footprint while improving the experience of residents. Partnering with American cities and private entities, Danish firms are bringing that same sensibility to an American context by addressing the human and environmental needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century cities.

From seaweed houses in Denmark to the timber homesteads and sod houses that many Danish immigrants built in America, the natural world has historically provided the building blocks for people's lives. Over time, new construction materials replaced organic matter, and nature took on a new role, providing inspiration or even a guiding measure for buildings.

Both Denmark and America are working to bring nature into urban settings. However, the concept of sustainability extends beyond the natural environment to the question of people's experiences within space. How can our built environment promote environmental well-being while simultaneously providing residents with the best possible living experience?

Today, new construction in Denmark must meet certain environmental impact standards. As of January 1, 2023, new construction must undergo a Life Cycle Assessment to evaluate its environmental impact over the next 40 years. Buildings larger than a certain size also have restrictions on their carbon dioxide emissions.



## MoDA

Architects and urban planners have taken different approaches to this question. Bjarke Ingels, the namesake of the Bjarke Ingels Group, is responsible for Amager Bakke, better known as Copenhill, a waste-to-energy plant and a recreational facility with a ski hill, as well as many other projects around the world. In 2011, he coined the phrase “hedonistic sustainability,” which argues that eco-friendly construction can, and should, still prioritize human pleasure.

Jan Gehl, a Danish urban designer, wrote the seminal text *Life Between Buildings*, first published in 1971. Like Ingels, he was interested in the human use of space. His writing was heavily influenced by Jane Jacobs, an American journalist. Writing about Jacobs, Gehl said, “Fifty years ago she said... learn from reality. Look out of your windows, spend time in the streets and squares, and see how people actually use spaces, learn from that, and use it.” His book explored the importance of designing public spaces centered on the lived experience of the people who use them. One of his primary goals is to make urban areas more bike and pedestrian friendly. He worked with New York City on a study of Times Square, discovering that pedestrians made up 90% of traffic, yet a mere 10% of space was allotted for them. In 2014, the Norwegian firm Snøhetta redesigned Times Square based on Gehl’s recommendations, eliminating significant vehicle traffic. Gehl demonstrated the way in which environmental and human sustainability intersect—by prioritizing the needs of the people who used the space, it was possible to prioritize more sustainable modes of transportation, encouraging

more people to walk or bike and experience the space differently.

Denmark is known around the world for how it has become a bike-friendly destination, particularly in its cities. According to Morten Kabell, former Mayor of Copenhagen for Mobility, Climate, and Urban Development, “There is no such thing as Danish bike culture.” While he acknowledges that a culture has developed around cycling today, he points out that the widespread use of, and value placed on, bicycles is the result of an urban planning policy that was set in motion in the 1970s. By reorienting the city towards alternative transportation—roads with fewer lanes for cars, separated cycling lanes, pedestrian walkways, and designated bridges for cyclists and pedestrians—it created a situation where pedestrians and cyclists felt safer and were thus more likely to opt for bikes versus cars. Additionally, cycling became a more efficient way of traveling within the city when compared to driving.

While the historical development of American cities has resulted in greater sprawl and a high reliance on cars, there has been growing interest in making alternative transportation, particularly bicycles, a more competitive option for people. Hoboken and Jersey City, New Jersey



**Skt. Kjelds Kvarter is a Copenhagen neighborhood. Copenhagen has used it as a testing ground for climate resiliency measures that will be expanded through the rest of the municipality.** © State of Green.



**Crowne Plaza Copenhagen Towers was given the 2010 EcoTourism Award. Some of its technologies include having 2000 m<sup>2</sup> of solar cells (the largest building-integrated installation in Northern Europe) and the first groundwater-based heating and cooling plant in Denmark. It is also carbon dioxide neutral.** © State of Green.



**As part of Gehl’s study, New York City stopped traffic at Times Square for a period in 2008-2009 for “Broadway Boulevard,” an experiment focusing on pedestrians. The photo on the left shows Times Square before the study, and the image on the right was taken during the study. Image courtesy of the New York Department of Transportation.**



recently completed a protected bikeway that joined the two cities, featuring a high traction surface and high visibility for safety.

One program that has made the jump across the Atlantic Ocean is Cycling Without Age, which was founded by Ole Kassow in Denmark in 2012 to address the fact that older people, or those with mobility assistance devices like wheelchairs, are often excluded from the bicycle experience. Using custom cargo bikes from Christiania called trishaws, volunteer drivers could take seniors out for rides, build new connections, and create fun experiences for everyone involved. Today, there are over 2,700 Cycling Without Age

chapters in 52 countries, including many across America. Some of the American chapters are also adapting the program to meet the needs of their specific community. Tony Desnick, coordinator of the Twin Cities chapter, originally partnered with senior homes but adjusted his approach in order to serve people who lived alone during COVID and lacked accessible transportation to the grocery store or to medical appointments. Realizing that many minority communities were still being excluded from the program, he is now forming connections with refugee community leaders and apartment buildings with large proportions of refugees to see how Cycling Without Age can meet their needs.



**Ole Kassow with rider Thorkild Thim.**  
Image courtesy of Mikael Colville-Andersen.

*Nature/Culture article continues on page 16*

## SEAWEED AND SEAGRASS

A common refrain about environmental sustainability is to reduce waste and to think carefully about the materials used for everyday objects. Some architects, designers, and engineers are now looking to the past for inspiration.

On the island of Læsø in Denmark, many houses feature thatched roofs made of eelgrass, a type of seagrass. First utilized on the island in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, eelgrass roofs still survive on 36 houses.

The creation of these roofs was considered a woman's work—they would collect the eelgrass from the shore, dry

it, and weave it together. It was made of several layers and was one meter thick. Over about a year, the roof would solidify, becoming an excellent insulator that was also fireproof and waterproof.<sup>1</sup> About 150 years ago, almost every home on Læsø had an eelgrass thatched roof, but the practice slowed through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and would have been lost if not for some local craftspeople taking a renewed interest in the practice.

In North America, some indigenous people used seagrass for food, a practice still prevalent among the

Comcaac people who live along the Gulf of California. In New England, many colonists used dried eelgrass as house insulation until the 1830s, and houses from as early as 1683 have been found with intact eelgrass insulation. Samuel Cabot created Cabot's Quilt, dried eelgrass sandwiched between paperboard, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which was marketed both as a sound and thermal insulator for houses. Supply became increasingly challenging, and the company abandoned the product by 1942.<sup>2</sup>

**A seagrass-roofed house from Laesø, now on display at the Frilandsmuseet outside of Copenhagen.**







**Kathryn Larsen with her seagrass pavilion in 2019 (right) as well as her bioplastics, made using seaweed (above).** Images courtesy of Kathryn Larsen.

Although eelgrass faded from popularity as new insulators like fiberglass and mineral wool appeared on the market, architects and designers today are finding new inspiration in those old homes. Accessible and affordable, eelgrass absorbs carbon dioxide and resists rot and fire. It is also a good insulator, with insulative properties equivalent to mineral wool, and can last up to 300 years if maintained properly. The eelgrass that is used naturally detaches from the seafloor at the end of its lifecycle and washes up on shore. As it decomposes on shore, it releases greenhouse gases and can be expensive for cities and countries to clean each year. Therefore, repurposing the washed-up seagrass has many benefits for both people and the environment.

As people on Læsø began to rediscover their own material heritage, other people around Denmark took notice and began to draw on their old traditions for new ideas. The

architecture firm Vandkunsten created the “Modern Seaweed House” after winning a competition in 2012 to create a modern vacation home reinterpreting the eelgrass-thatched buildings on the island. They used eelgrass both as an insulating material and as cladding on the exterior face of the building. Eelgrass was also stuffed into panels used on the ceiling. Through the process, they discovered that the eelgrass created excellent acoustics for the building.

Established in 2010, the Danish company Søuld utilizes eelgrass to create acoustic panels for use in building construction. The company was formed from the Læsø Tangbank, a project shaped through the partnership of several governmental institutions and donors to protect the seagrass roofs on the island and better understand the history of the material and technique. Today, Søuld takes sustainably gathered eelgrass fibers and



compresses them into panels that can be easily installed in homes or businesses. Their acoustic panels are intended to have a circular life cycle, meaning they do not need to be thrown out once they have been used for several years. The factory takes them back and shreds them for use in new products—the material never has to enter the landfill.<sup>3</sup>

Kathryn Larsen, a Copenhagen-based architect, has been experimenting with both seagrass and seaweed in her work, drawing on old techniques and uses for the materials and combining them with 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge. Interested in making construction and design more sustainable, she has created eelgrass panels and experimented with different binders and construction methods. She has also been exploring ways



in which seaweed can be utilized in design, in the form of both seaweed bioplastics and seaweed paints. These bioplastics offer an alternative to fossil fuel-derived plastics and will break down in soil after only a few months and without the same adverse environmental impacts.

Kathryn's seaweed paints are another way in which Danish history is influencing modern research. A historical paint called "mosfarve," featuring Irish moss and a type of seaweed combined with powdered chalk and water, was used in centuries past. Painted onto ceilings, the biggest advantage was that it could be easily wiped off and repainted, something that was very useful when indoor soot was a major concern. She is working on developing a modern version of this paint using new natural pigments and finding ways to extend its life. She also worked with Søuld on a paint for their acoustic eelgrass panels; eelgrass will absorb moisture, and paint formulations must be carefully designed to limit oil and water. One was inspired by mosfarve, and another was more like a stain which used seaweed glue and honey with natural pigments.<sup>4</sup>

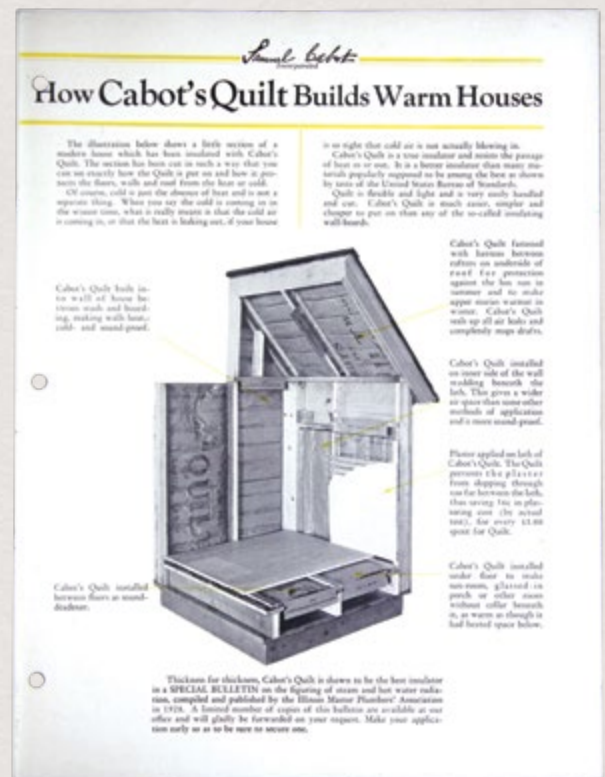
One of the limiting factors with seagrass is that natural seagrass habitats have been in decline since the 1930s. The first major problem was a significant wasting disease that hit nearly 100 years ago. Now, coastal construction projects, rising water



A volunteer helping to collect eelgrass seeds off the coast of Virginia that can then be used to restore other areas to native eelgrass habitats. Each spring, volunteers don wetsuits and help to collect the shoots, which are stored in tanks until they release their seeds in July. The seeds are then spread in active restoration areas in October. Image courtesy of The Nature Conservancy.

temperatures, runoff, and pollution have caused significant losses of seagrass meadows. Since the late 1990s, projects have been underway on both sides of the Atlantic to restore eelgrass meadows in coastal areas. In the United States, a team in Virginia led by Robert Orth began to explore ways to reintroduce eelgrass into the bays on the state's coast. They started to sow eelgrass seeds and, between 1999-2013, over 50 million seeds were sown in an almost 400-acre space. Today, the eelgrass meadows cover almost 4,700 acres of the seafloor.<sup>5</sup>

In Denmark, almost 90% of eelgrass had been lost since



A page from an advertising booklet for Cabot's Quilt, showing the benefits of using the eelgrass-based insulation. Collection of the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, so researchers were interested in restoring those habitats. Apart from their ability to absorb carbon dioxide, eelgrass meadows provide important



ecosystem services including coastal protection, water purification, and a habitat for other marine life. In 2013, researchers visited Orth's Virginia-based eelgrass project to learn from their experiences and to see how it could translate to a Scandinavian context.<sup>6</sup> While it has been a slow process to adapt the techniques learned in Virginia to the unique context of Danish waters, there has been increased success. For example, a restoration project in Horsens Fjord started just a few years ago and has seen a 7,000% increase in eelgrass density. The area that was

transplanted has already expanded by 30%.<sup>7</sup>

The story of seagrass shows how old techniques can find new life as architects and designers seek to look to the past for inspiration on sustainable construction.

As researchers in Denmark and the United States continue to collaborate to restore former eelgrass habitats, the opportunity for additional exploration of seagrass as a construction material will continue to grow.

<sup>1</sup> "Material," *Sould*, accessed July 14, 2023, <https://www.sould.dk/material>.

<sup>2</sup> "Eelgrass Insulation," *Archipedia New England*, accessed March 30, 2023, <http://www.archipedianewengland.org/eelgrass-insulation/>.

<sup>3</sup> "Material," *Sould*, accessed July 14, 2023, <https://www.sould.dk/material>.

<sup>4</sup> Kathryn Larsen, "Client Success Story: Seaweed Paint for Sould at Building Green 2022," News, Studio Kathryn Larsen, December 14, 2022, <https://kathrynlarsen.com/news-studio-kathryn-larsen>.

<sup>5</sup> David Malmquist, "Seagrass Restoration Goes International," News, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, June 11, 2013, [https://www.vims.edu/newsandevents/topstories/archives/2013/seagrass\\_denmark.php](https://www.vims.edu/newsandevents/topstories/archives/2013/seagrass_denmark.php).

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.vims.edu/newsandevents/topstories/archives/2013/seagrass\\_denmark.php](https://www.vims.edu/newsandevents/topstories/archives/2013/seagrass_denmark.php)

<sup>7</sup> Birgitte Svennevig, "Finally, the Eelgrass is Coming Back," Press and News Room, Southern Denmark University, March 21, 2022, <https://www.sdu.dk/en/nyheder/forskningsnyheder/endelig-breder-aalegraeset-sig>.

## ENERGY IN ALL ITS FORMS

Whether energy generation relies on drilling, mining, or renewables, the growing global population indicates increased demands for energy. In the United States, coal and natural gas remain two major sources of energy. However, other sources are on the rise. In Iowa, wind turbines generate enough electricity to power 2.5 million homes, and California's solar energy generation could power over 9 million homes.

Denmark intends to transition to 100% renewable energy for electricity and transportation by 2050, achieving carbon



**Poul la Cour's former research center has been converted into a museum about his work. The early version of the wind turbine that he developed once stood on top of the building.**

Image courtesy of Diya Nagaraj.

neutrality by the same year. Renewables currently provide 67% of Denmark's electricity. Wind provides the majority of electricity, but biomass and solar energy also contribute. Recently, rising energy prices, due to the crisis in Ukraine, led people to shift their usage in order to lower their bills. The Danish government postponed the closure of fossil fuel-based power plants in late 2022, anticipating energy shortages from the ongoing war.

Today, Danish and American businesses, governments, and public sectors collaborate frequently to share best practices, policy, and technological innovation around energy, with both sides having the opportunity to learn from one another.

Denmark is perhaps best known for its wind energy industry, and it is difficult to envision Denmark's relationship to the environment without considering wind power. In the 1880s, Poul

la Cour, an inventor and teacher at the Askov Folk School, began to experiment with wind energy and wind turbines. Although wind energy did not become popular in Denmark until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, his work, as well as the work of the students who trained under him, ensured that Denmark was ahead of the curve when wind began to be seen as a viable energy alternative.

Today, 50% of Denmark's electricity comes from wind, and they export their expertise, equipment, and skills around the world. In the United States, Vestas, a Danish company, is the second-largest supplier of turbines, behind General Electric. Even Siemens, a German company, has a wind energy department with Danish roots as they acquired a Danish company and still have bases in Denmark.

European colonists brought windmill technology for grinding grain and sawing wood to





**The Gedser wind turbine, designed by Johannes Juul in 1957, is significant in the development of modern turbine technology. It fed directly into the grid, and many of the elements still feature in contemporary turbines. NASA studied it in 1975 as the U.S. looked to build their own wind energy capacity.** © Electricity Museum, Bjerringbro.

America. In Ohio, Charles Brush created a wind turbine in 1888; it could supply enough electricity for most of the lights and motors in his home for 20 years. As federal programs brought electricity to rural America, the use of windmills became less common. During the oil crisis of the 1970s, global interest in alternative energy grew. Denmark's existing base of knowledge enabled them to take advantage of the movement and expand their commercial wind energy program. The United States also incentivized renewable energy resources during this time, leading to California's "Wind Rush" in the 1980s. In 1987, 90% of California's new wind energy-related installations came from Danish companies.

Denmark also utilizes energy from biomass, which includes materials like straw and wood, as well as

#### What is Power-to-X?

Currently, power generated from renewable sources cannot be stored and must be put directly into the grid. The ability to convert renewable energy into other fuels opens new possibilities for storage and use. The "X" in Power-to-X represents the type of energy to which the excess electricity from renewable energy is converted.

waste-to-energy, which takes waste products and converts them into energy. The most common waste-to-energy practice is the burning of non-recyclable trash, which limits landfill use. There is interest in capturing this wasted heat and harnessing its energy. In processes like wastewater treatment and electricity production, heat is created, but its energy is wasted. By capturing the wasted heat, it is possible to redistribute it to heat homes and businesses. District heating systems, where heat is generated at a central plant and distributed through underground pipes, are a hallmark of Danish cities and make shifting heating sources much easier. Many American cities also have district heating systems, including St. Paul and Denver.

A big catchphrase in the world of renewable energy today is "Power-to-X." Denmark is currently in the process of creating the largest Power-to-X project in Europe. Esbjerg, a port city, will be home to



**Charles Brush's 1888 wind turbine, capable of supplying enough electricity for most of the lights and motors in his home for 20 years. It was 60 feet tall and weighed about 80,000 pounds.** Image courtesy of The Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.



**"The hearthstone of the poor—waste steam not wasted." Harper's Weekly, Feb. 12, 1876.** Library of Congress.

a facility that converts energy from offshore wind farms to ammonia. Due to its nitrogen content, ammonia can be used by farmers as fertilizer; cargo ships can also employ ammonia as a fuel source. The process of turning wind energy into ammonia generates heat, and that heat will be captured and used by the district heating system. The heat produced should be adequate to cover about one-third of the city's households. Projects like this create circular economies—where the by-products and waste of one process can be used as part of another necessary process.

*Nature/Culture article continues on page 20*





**Offshore wind is an important part of Samsø's energy generation. Samsø is now 100% supplied by renewable energy sources, and inhabitants are CO2 neutral.** © Singapore Management University's BSM Scandinavia.

**SAMSØ** In 1997, the Danish Ministry of Energy announced a competition open to any island interested in becoming fully energy self-sufficient. They wanted to support innovative ideas and create a trial community that could set the stage for a country-wide shift toward renewable energy. Samsø submitted a proposal and was selected. However, winning the competition did not provide any financial support, as the island was expected to demonstrate that a shift towards renewables was possible without significant outside financial investment.

Samsø native and environmental studies teacher Søren Hermansen became the project's first, and for a while, only hire. Understanding that one of the major benefits of

island life was the sense of community, he wanted to tap into that sentiment. Over time, he was able to engage a few prominent figures to become more active and involved, which galvanized the residents to take more notice and participate.<sup>8</sup>

Wind energy has become one of the key energy sources for the island, and the onshore capacity from 11 turbines is enough to meet demand. The offshore wind farms were established to balance out the use of fossil fuel on the island for vehicles and for the ferry that connects it to the rest of the country. A key part of building their wind energy capacity was forming a cooperative with shares, where island residents bought shares to support the installation and now receive

a check based on generation and the going rate for electricity.<sup>9</sup> Today, 90% of the wind turbines on the island are locally owned.<sup>10</sup>

Another key feature of Samsø is their use of biomass for energy generation, especially heating. Previously, most furnaces were oil-burning and relied on fossil fuels. Today, the island has installed several new district heating systems. By burning straw or wood chips, they do not have to utilize fossil fuels. Although there are still some carbon emissions, the thought is that it can be considered carbon neutral since the plant matter can regrow. There is also a large solar installation on the island that is supported by biomass for low-light days.



The project staff offered free audits to businesses and individuals seeking to lower their energy bills and participate in the shift. When evaluating a local shop, they found that lowering the nightly temperature while the store was shut during the fall-early spring would automatically save significant money and energy. The building would save on heating costs, and the refrigerators and freezers would not have to work as hard through the night to maintain their temperature. A study found that just a one-degree reduction in nightly temperature led to almost 10% savings on the heating bill.<sup>11</sup> The golf course also wanted to be involved and found a way to recycle water,

thus saving on one of the most expensive and intensive parts of maintenance. They have also explored using sheep to maintain parts of the course and utilizing seaweed algae as a fertilizer to maintain the greenery. Instead of grass, a microclover was allowed to spread—it reduced the need for water and limited weeds while providing the same aesthetic as grass.<sup>12</sup>

The initial phase of the project was successful, and they were able to generate more renewable energy than they consumed. However, the team knew that the work was not done. Currently, their focus is on the continued elimination of fossil fuels, from transportation to the handful of houses

that still use oil-burning stoves. Samsø hopes to be completely fossil fuel-free by 2030. So far, 50% of cars are electric, and one of the ferries to the island is now powered by biogas.

They don't want to just follow 'best practice' but also look at 'next practice,' to have a forward-thinking approach to their green transition. In 2007, they built the Energy Academy, which serves as a demonstration of sustainable building as well as a community meeting spot. Søren Hermansen is the director, and they host visitors from around the world, from politicians to schoolchildren. Although all new construction on the island is low energy, the Academy building goes above and beyond those standards. The building has zinc cladding, a rainwater toilet, solar arrays, natural air circulation, and ventilation that is set on a timer and uses natural light to minimize lighting needs.<sup>13</sup>

The island has been recognized with many awards and honors for their work in transitioning away from fossil fuels with significant community buy-in. From the European Union RESponsible Island prize to being recognized as a Climate Leader as part of the United Nations Global Climate Action Award, an island of less than 4,000 people has taken center stage in international discussions about climate change and the energy transition.



**Søren Hermansen, Director, outside of the Energy Academy. The building is designed to maximize efficiency, from using natural ventilation and passive solar heating, to rainwater for toilets.** Image courtesy of Diya Nagaraj.

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth Kolbert, "The Island in the Wind," *The New Yorker*, August 28, 2008, <https://atmos.washington.edu/~bitz/111/readings/NYorkerWind.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Energiakademiet, *Energy Academy* (Samsø: Energiakademiet, undated).

<sup>11</sup> Jan Jantzen, Michael Kristensen, and Toke Haunstrup Christensen, "Sociotechnical Transition to Smart Energy: The Case of Samsø 1997-2030," *Energy* 162 (2018): 21, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/304608656.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> "Green Golf Club on Samsø," Energiakademiet, 2020, accessed March 2, 2023, <https://energiakademiet.dk/en/green-golfclub-on-samsoe/>.

<sup>13</sup> K.J. Fields, "Renewable Energy Provides Self-Sufficiency to an Island in Denmark," *Architect Magazine*, May 12, 2009, [https://www.architectmagazine.com/technology/renewable-energy-provides-self-sufficiency-to-an-island-in-denmark\\_o](https://www.architectmagazine.com/technology/renewable-energy-provides-self-sufficiency-to-an-island-in-denmark_o).



## THE NATURAL WORLD

The desire to protect and preserve nature is not a new trend. Europeans and Americans began to perceive the wilderness as something worth protecting in the 1800s. The 19<sup>th</sup> century Danish Lutheran pastor N.F.S. Grundtvig, who connected nature to spirituality, influenced many Danes and Danish Americans. Animals, birds, the ocean, and other natural elements frequently appeared in Grundtvig's sermons and songs.

Denmark's transition to an agricultural country affected almost every corner of the land. Therefore, for many in Denmark, the perception of nature is sometimes different from that in America, where large tracts of land have been preserved to keep them as 'wild' as possible. It is important to note that Indigenous peoples, particularly in America, have been changing and shaping the landscape for thousands of years. Therefore, the word 'wilderness' often has connotations of pre-human landscapes, but in this instance it is used to denote landscapes that represent pre-industrial agriculture and are mostly undisturbed by modern human development.

Given how much of the Danish landscape has been changed by human activity, the concept of 'wilderness' is a nascent idea. Denmark established its first National Park in 2008, 136 years after Yellowstone in America and 99 years after the first European National Park. Unlike in the United States, Danish parks are a mixture of public and private land ownership, so some land is actively used by farmers and homeowners. However, there is growing scientific interest in reducing cultivated spaces to support native species.

Among American parks, there are small hints of Danish influence. Lassen Volcanic National Park in California, for example, was named after Peter Lassen, a Danish immigrant, ranchero, gold prospector, and creator of one of the California Trail cutoff routes.

Indiana Dunes National Park, located on the shores of Lake Michigan, has a more hidden but extremely important Danish connection. H.C. Cowles was a crucial figure in both the scientific understanding of and the fight to preserve the Dunes. While studying at the University of Chicago, he was exposed to the work of Danish scientist Eugenius Warming, a founder of the field of ecology and the author of a plant ecology textbook in Danish. Desperate to read ahead in class and learn more, Cowles taught himself Danish and became fascinated with Warming's discussion of plant communities.

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8,7,8,7

**Most Wondrous Is Of All On Earth**  
Danish Folk Melody  
N.F.S. Grundtvig.

1. Most won-drous is of all on earth The king-dom Je - sus  
2. In - vi - si - ble as mind and soul, And yet of light the  
3. Its se - cret is the Word of God, Which does what it pro -  
4. Let foes a - gainst the king-dom rage With ha - tred and de -

found-ed, its glo-ry, peace and precious worth No tongue has fully sound-ed.  
fountain, its bright-ness shines from pole to pole Like lights from lofty mountain.  
pos - es, Which low-ers mountains high and broad And clothes the waste with roses.  
ri - sion, God crowns its reign from age to age, And brings it to fru - i - tion

5. Its glory rises like the morn  
When waves at sunrise glitter,  
Or like in May the verdant corn  
As birds above it twitter.

6. It is the glory of the King  
Who bore affliction solely  
That He the crown of life might bring  
To sinners poor and lowly.

7. And when His advent comes to pass  
The Christian's strife is ended,  
What here we see as in a glass  
Shall then be comprehended.

8. Then shall the kingdom bright appear  
With glory true and vernal  
And bring His saved a golden year  
Of peace and joy eternal.

N.F.S. Grundtvig.

**N.F.S. Grundtvig (translated into English), "Most Wondrous is of All on Earth." The lyrics, particularly verse 5, emphasize the view of the earth as "God's kingdom," highlighting different elements of natural beauty.** Image courtesy of Hymnary.org.

**Audience at the 1917 Indiana Dunes pageant, attended by 25,000 people. The Prairie Club, of which Jensen and Cowles were both members, organized a 1917 pageant to support dune preservation.** Image courtesy of Prairie Club Archives, Westchester Township History Museum.







**A pitcher plant (right) at a bog in Indiana Dunes (above).** Images courtesy of the National Park Service.



This interest led him to conduct graduate research on the plants found on the sand dunes around Lake Michigan. He developed the theory of ecological succession, which states that communities of flora and fauna shift over time. Cowles became one of the earliest American scientists to use the word “ecology” and was continuously influenced by Warming’s work. Cowles’s work

launched a movement to preserve the Dunes, and it became the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in 1966 and Indiana Dunes National Park in 2019. Another prominent figure in conservation efforts was Danish immigrant and landscape architect Jens Jensen. From the influence of Eugenius

Warming to the activism of Jens Jensen, the preservation of the Dunes shows how Danish thought and Danish immigrants played a role in protecting the American landscape.

*Nature/Culture article continues on page 24*



## REWILDING

The Mols Rewilding Project is a study on improving ecosystem health and species diversity through the introduction of large herbivores. Rewilding and restoration are often used interchangeably. However, while rewilding can be thought of as one form of restoration, restoration and rewilding in practice often look quite different. Both processes focus on improved biodiversity and ecosystem health, although the measures for health are not necessarily the same. Oxford Reference defines rewilding as “the large-scale management of an ecosystem to reinstate natural processes and reduce human intervention



**An Exmoor pony (above) and Galloway cattle (next page) at the Mols Rewilding Laboratory.** Because they are not technically 'wild,' Danish law requires researchers to treat them like livestock in terms of oversight and care.

Images courtesy of Diya Nagaraj.





so that ultimately ‘nature can take care of itself.’ It typically involves the reintroduction of indigenous species that previously filled key ecological roles in maintaining the historical ‘wild’ landscape or seascape.” Restoration tends to take a more hands-on approach, whereas rewilding seeks to remove humans from the equation by focusing on natural processes that allow an ecosystem to renew itself.

An important characteristic of rewilding is an openness to substitution. Jens Christian Svenning, a Danish expert on rewilding, often discusses “megafaunas,” which are large animals that are key in ecological food webs, whether herbivores or carnivores and omnivores. There has been a significant loss of megafauna over the last few thousand years—from the loss of aurochs, a cattle-like species that died out in Denmark over 2,000 years ago, to the threat of extinction for animals like rhinoceros and tigers.<sup>14</sup> In certain environments, it is not possible to reintroduce

the precise species that used to live there, so scientists involved in rewilding are often open to substituting other species that serve similar ecological functions.

In the case of the Mols Rewilding Project, Galloway cattle and Exmoor ponies were chosen as the reintroduced large herbivores. Galloway cattle, originally from Scotland, have thick coats that make them a hardy breed suited to outdoor life, and they are distantly related to the extinct aurochs. Exmoor ponies are one of the oldest breeds, dating back to the area now known as England before the Ice Age. Large herbivores help to control invasive species and can help nutrients move through the ecosystem, thereby creating healthier natural spaces for other species to thrive.

Part of the guiding principles for the Rewilding Mols project is a “reactive management strategy,” which attempts to allow natural processes to guide management rather than human policy guiding natural processes. This means that they allow the animals to live as wild a life as possible, where food availability determines population rather than pre-determining the number of animals. Thus far, results have been promising, but more time is needed to better understand the impact that these herbivores have on the landscape and other species.

One challenge to the project being fully ‘wild’ is current government regulations.

Currently, the government designates the ponies and cattle as livestock, despite them living very different lives to an animal on a farm, meaning they are subject to the rules of the Animal Welfare Act. As a result, animals that normally would have died because of food shortages or an illness are instead removed from the herd and treated as needed. In addition, the level of oversight required is significant as all animals must be accounted for each day.

Rewilding Mols has been a source of major controversy in Denmark. Some members of the public feel that the animals are neglected, leading to issues with trespassing and improper feeding of the animals. There have been claims that animals are being starved and that the GPS trackers, which help researchers monitor their movement and account for their whereabouts, are harming them. For the scientists at the site, the ongoing debates about animal welfare have consequences for their work, as people entering the property to give food to the animals affects their grazing behavior, which in turn affects the ability to draw conclusions about the efficacy of the rewilding process.

However, not all rewilding happens through human intervention. Sometimes animals naturally reintroduce themselves as they search for new territory and feeding grounds. For the past 200 years, Denmark has lacked large predators, with the last sighting of a wolf reported





**Auroch skeleton found in a bog near Vig, Denmark. Aurochs were the last native herbivore to live in Denmark, dying out in the region over 2,000 years ago (over 7,000 years ago for Zealand and Fyn). Image courtesy of the National Museum Denmark.**

in 1813. However, in 2012, there were occasional sightings of male wolves that had wandered north of their traditional territory in Germany. In 2017, a female wolf appeared in the country, and a pack was formed, marking the return of the species to Denmark.<sup>15</sup>

Wolves have been notorious in Europe for finding ways to carry out the rewilding process on their own. As the population has grown in

Germany, they have formed new packs in France, the Netherlands, and Belgium—today, continental Europe has over 12,000 wolves. Unlike in other parts of Europe, wolves that live in Denmark face a significantly higher mortality rate and not from natural causes. By 2020, only one-third of the 27 wolves recorded in Denmark remained. While four were known to have gone south to Germany, the rest either died or disappeared. Only one was confirmed to have died of natural causes, and the remaining wolves are thought to have been killed illegally by hunters, who view the wolves as competition for deer. Typically, wolves in the wild will live 6–8 years, and sometimes up to 13 or more. In Denmark, the life expectancy for a wolf is closer to two years, despite being a protected species.<sup>16</sup>

Like debates around the wolf reintroduction project in Yellowstone, some Danish farmers have feared the loss of their livestock, particularly sheep. For the most part, wolves have relied on deer as prey, although there were some cases of them

eating sheep in winter. To help prevent potential conflict between the wolves and farmers, the Danish government has created a plan that provides farmers with the financial resources to establish fencing to create an effective barrier between wolf packs and their livestock.<sup>17</sup>

This ongoing challenge can be attributed to the differences between American and Danish land management policies. In America, the creation of completely federally owned National Park land created a natural reserve for the reintroduced wolves. As their habitat has expanded, they are more likely to have hostile encounters with landowners, but their initial territory was entirely protected. Due to high rates of private land ownership and Danish national parks consisting of both public and private land ownership, it has become more difficult to control and monitor interactions between humans and wolves in Denmark.<sup>18</sup> In both countries, the shifting relationship between people and predators creates a bumpy road to coexistence.

<sup>14</sup> Rewilding itself can take multiple forms. Some advocate for “Pleistocene rewilding,” which seeks to reintroduce megafauna that were lost from areas during the Pleistocene period 13,000 years ago. One scientist proposed introducing large African and Asian mammals to western parts of America to replicate the species that used to exist. While that particular idea faced significant pushback, Pleistocene rewilding raises the important question of how far back you should look when determining what species the ecosystem is missing. Some important ecological hotspots developed after the Pleistocene, so these are challenges that must be considered when determining what species should be reintroduced to maximize benefit and minimize potential harm. Humans were also still evolving during the Pleistocene, so there is more influence of human behavior on the landscape after that period — which means that a focus on Pleistocene-era ecosystems represents a time with minimal human intervention and change. There have been some explorations of Pleistocene-era rewilding in Russia and the Netherlands, but other successful rewilding projects have been carried out that used a later time period as a benchmark for species reintroduction. For example, for the successful reintroduction of bison and wolves to the Yellowstone region, scientists used pre-1800s as a measure of what the ecosystem would have looked like when healthy, which represents a pre-industrial agriculture habitat, rather than pre-human contact.

<sup>15</sup> Patrick Barkham, “Denmark Gets its First Wild Wolf Pack in 200 Years,” *The Guardian*, May 4, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/may/04/denmark-gets-its-first-wild-wolf-pack-in-200-years>.

<sup>16</sup> Patrick Barkham, “The Mystery of Denmark’s Vanishing Wolf Pack – Are Hunters to Blame?” *The Guardian*, June 6, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jun/06/the-mystery-of-denmarks-vanishing-wolf-pack-are-hunters-to-blame>.

<sup>17</sup> “Mobile Fences Must Prevent Wolf Attacks,” *Nørd News*, October 7, 2020, <https://nord.news/2020/10/07/mobile-fences-must-prevent-wolf-attacks/>.

<sup>18</sup> Denmark recently established the Stråsø Nature National Park in 2021, which is in an area of importance to the wolf populations. While the resulting effect on wolf populations and human-wolf conflict remains to be seen, the hope is that it will limit conflict with farmers and hunters while also providing a safe habitat for the wolves to become more established. In order to further support the wolf packs, access to the park is sometimes restricted during the breeding season to ensure that there are no major disruptions during that key time.



## FROM FARM TO FORK

Agriculture is significant to both Danish and American history, identity, and future development. Many Danish immigrants and their descendants in America made their living as farmers. Even those not directly involved with the industry often brought with them knowledge that helped improve agriculture, particularly dairying, within their new communities. Dr. Nina Boberg-Fazlic and Dr. Paul Sharp explore this idea of knowledge spillover in their article on page 27.

Today, the relationship between people, food, and the land on which it is produced is ever-evolving. The New Nordic Cuisine movement emphasizes ingredients and their sourcing and seasonality. Companies like Too Good to Go, founded in Denmark, are working to address issues around food waste. There is a greater awareness about where and how food is grown. For example, the majority of eggs sold in grocery stores in Denmark are now cage-free because of consumer pressure to shift to higher welfare standards.

Danish and Danish-American farmers face similar challenges. The average farm size is increasing, and smaller farms are often pushed out of the market. Both countries increasingly consider the environmental impacts of farming—from air and water pollutants to carbon emissions and animal welfare. Denmark hopes to double pork production, using half the land and without increasing emissions. However, debates about how additional pigs will impact soil and water health continue, and some wonder if shifting away from meat consumption is a better solution. In America, some Danish-American farmers have utilized government programs to add technology like solar panels



Cows “dancing” on Økodag (Organic Day), a day where the grass-fed cows are released onto the pasture after spending winter indoors. The festival began in 2005, organized by Organic Denmark, and today, farms across Denmark open their gates to visitors for a designated day in April to celebrate organic farming in the country. Image courtesy of Diya Nagaraj.

to help meet their energy needs without relying on fossil fuels.

Within Denmark, perspectives vary greatly regarding best sustainability practices—some farmers feel they can continue to reduce their environmental impact while others voice concerns that raising livestock will never be truly ‘sustainable.’ Some suggest people should eat less meat and choose only the highest welfare standard available when they consume it. In fact, a growing number of people choose to limit or avoid animal products entirely for sustainability and welfare reasons.

Denmark has one of the highest shares of agricultural land use, with over 60% of the country used for agriculture, compared to 45-50% in America—yet the sector only accounts for a small fraction of their gross domestic product. This has led to many debates about land

use and the political influence of the agricultural sector.

The cultural influence, however, remains, even as fewer and fewer people are involved with the farming sector. Pork and dairy production remain a major part of Danish identity because of the way that Denmark has historically marketed itself abroad. As a result, researchers are constantly trying to find ways to reduce the environmental footprint of animal husbandry. From researchers at Aarhus University – Foulum experimenting with clover protein for pigs to replace imported soy to the Cattle Crossroads project at the University of Copenhagen, there is a strong interest to better understand the cultural, environmental, and economic dimensions of livestock production and land use in Denmark.

*Nature/Culture article continues on page 26*



Currently, researchers are testing out alternative protein sources for pigs to reduce reliance on imported soy. Clover is a particularly promising protein source as it is an effective feed supplement and the by-product from production can be used as cattle feed. Images courtesy of Diya Nagaraj.



**TOO GOOD TO GO** Around the world, food waste is a major problem. Globally, about 1.3 billion tons of food is wasted each year. If food waste was a country, it would have the third largest carbon footprint, behind only China and the United States. The economic loss attributed to food waste is around \$750 billion. Here in the United States, 119 billion pounds of food is wasted per year, and according to Feeding America, almost 40% of food in the United States goes to waste every year.<sup>19</sup>

Many food banks and other organizations addressing issues around hunger work directly with farmers, grocery stores, and other companies to help save food that would otherwise be thrown away. In 2015, a group of friends in Copenhagen decided to find a way to address this problem after seeing the leftover food at a buffet end up in the trash at the end of the night.

The resulting product was Too Good to Go, a phone application that connects consumers with restaurant and food retail businesses that need a home for food that would otherwise be wasted.<sup>20</sup>

By 2016, the app had been launched, and by 2017, it had expanded to several European countries and even into New York City. Since then, other American cities have jumped on board, including Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, and Chicago. In 2023, it launched in Atlanta and the state of Texas, and the app is constantly looking for more markets.

The app allows businesses to list their surplus food, usually in the form of a ‘surprise bag.’ Customers can search for restaurants and stores in the area that have products available and pick whatever sounds best to them, paying for it through the app and

picking it up during a set window. Usually, the cost is \$4-\$10, although that varies between cities and businesses. The contents of the ‘surprise bag’ are just that—a surprise! A bakery may include pastries and loaves of bread; restaurants may include packaged meals, and grocery stores often include fresh produce. Some users have even received full cakes and pints of ice cream through the app! The application does allow customers to filter the list based on dietary restrictions and type of surprise bags, i.e., meals, bakery, etc. The customer can purchase heavily discounted food while the business can avoid throwing away leftovers at the end of the day. Therefore, the problem of food waste is significantly limited, making it a win-win-win.

In 2023, Too Good to Go is experiencing its first profitable year month-to-month. Apart from support from investors, they generate revenue in two ways: each business that registers on the site pays a yearly subscription fee, and they take a small commission from each sale made through the app. They are a certified B-Corp and have received accolades around the world—from the German Ecodesign Award and the Nordic Council Environment



**A person picking up their cafe surprise bag.** Image courtesy of Too Good to Go.



Prize to being named to the Time100 Most Influential Companies 2022.

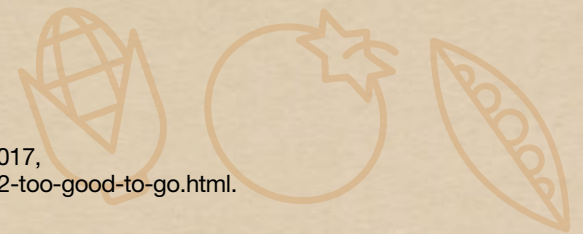


The Too Good to Go app, showing what restaurants have surprise bags available to rescue.

Almost 80 million meals were saved in 2022; since they launched in 2016, they have saved almost 200 million. Over 60 million people have downloaded the app around the world. They have grown exponentially and continue to explore new ways to stop food waste at the source. For example, one of their 2022 initiatives was the “look-smell-taste” label added to manufacturer’s labels on grocery items. This encourages people to not rely strictly on the ‘best-by’ date, as those are not always an accurate reflection of whether the food is safe to consume.

Kellogg’s, best known for their cereal, has begun to add these labels on their products sold in Europe— they are one of over 400 brands that have agreed to do so.<sup>21</sup>

Moving forward, the company continues to expand around the world and is now trying to address questions of food waste earlier in the food production process, work with lawmakers in different countries on policy-based solutions to food waste, and engage young people through school programs.



<sup>19</sup> “Food Waste and Food Rescue,” Feeding America, accessed June 30, 2023, <https://www.feedingamerica.org/our-work/reduce-food-waste>.

<sup>20</sup> “Six food waste apps to watch: #2: Too Good to Go,” Rabobank, December 27, 2017, <https://www.rabobank.com/en/raboworld/articles/six-food-waste-apps-to-watch-2-too-good-to-go.html>.

<sup>21</sup> “Impact Report 2022,” Too Good to Go, accessed March 2, 2023, <https://www.toogoodtogo.com/en-gb/download/2022-impact-report>.

## CONCLUSION

Humans have constantly shaped the natural world, in ways both big and small. From our Stone Age ancestors who began to domesticate plants and animals to the highways and rail tracks that crisscross the landscape today, the relationship between people and the environment has grown and evolved over time. The environment has shaped human development—from dictating where people settled, to what they ate, to how they built their homes; it continues to be a significant cultural force, from the religious teachings of N.F.S. Grundtigg to the lyrics of “America the Beautiful.”

In Denmark, among Danish immigrant and Danish-American

communities in America, and with institutional and governmental collaboration, there is a growing awareness of the significance and fragility of the relationship between people and the world

around them, coupled with a growing desire to rethink and strengthen the relationship between nature and culture for the past, present, and future of the earth.



In 2019, Director General of the Danish Energy Agency (DEA), Kristoffer Bottzauw, and Chair of the California Energy Commission, David Hochschild, signed a memorandum of understanding to collaborate and work together towards energy efficiency. Image courtesy of the Consulate General of Denmark Silicon Valley.



## DANISH-AMERICANS & THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE

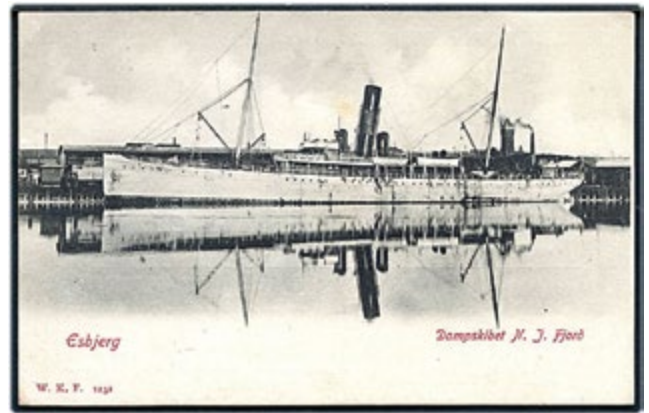
# Dairy Industry

BY  
NINA BOBERG-FAZLIC  
& PAUL SHARP

Relatively small groups of migrants can make a large difference to the country they settle in, as is well known from the story of the industrious Protestant Huguenot refugees who were persecuted and forced to leave by the French Catholic government in the 17<sup>th</sup> century or the Jewish émigrés who fled Nazi Germany in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The migrants who left Denmark and Danish-speaking parts of northern Germany in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century made important contributions to the development of the United States culturally and scientifically, of course, but also economically. Specifically, areas where Danes settled became more specialized in dairying and used more modern methods, and their impact can, in fact, still be detected in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Initially, the Danes who arrived in the United States were mostly Mormon and Baptist religious refugees. However, as the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, immigrants were increasingly impoverished and landless, fleeing economic hardship and looking for opportunities and land abroad; many were from the servant-like class of “tyender,” or anyone who lived in the household of their employer, who were heavily discriminated against and who were only given the right to vote in Denmark in 1915.

During this time, emigration was not an accessible solution for many Danish citizens, and it took some time before emigration became a common practice. The world before steam shipping made it expensive to migrate, and few could afford the trip. Thus, only 14,000 Danes emigrated between 1820 and 1866. Following 1866, the numbers increased.



Steam Vessel “N.J.Fjord,” Esbjerg, ca. 1900.  
Photo: F. Baunsgaards samling.

Many left northern Schleswig after Denmark lost the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein to Prussia in 1864, and others migrated from 1865 on as the Danish government became less liberal regarding religion. As wages increased in Denmark and transportation costs fell, migrating became more affordable. Emigration from Denmark increased dramatically from the late 1860s, with around 158,000 leaving for the U.S. between 1868 and 1900. According to Kristian Hvidt, a historian and expert on Danish emigration, two-thirds of those who left Denmark knew exactly which settlement they were headed to and just one-third had a ticket to New York, from where they either stayed or moved on. Of the roughly 88,800 emigrants who knew where they would go, Hvidt argues that they were likely pulled to the U.S. by personal contacts—Danes sent generally positive letters back home and sent money or purchased tickets for their friends and family to join them.



Edvard Petersen’s painting, *Emigrants at Larsen’s Square*, depicts Danish emigrants saying goodbye to their relatives and leaving for America. Larsen’s Plads was a site in the Port of Copenhagen from where many Danish people left for America. Edvard Petersen. *Udvandrere på Larsens Plads*. 1890, ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus.



## MoDA

Moreover, railroad companies would buy large areas of land in the U.S. and finance construction by selling off plots along the planned tracks, thereby ensuring future customers. They advertised heavily, distributed pamphlets, and sent previous migrants to be agents in Denmark, as did U.S. and State governments. There were special newspapers for emigrants with information on emigration and the U.S., and Danish-American organizations such as Dansk Folkesamfund, or the Danish People's Society, also played a role in the spread of information. Returning emigrants also acted as a source of information.

Danish immigration peaked in 1882 when 11,000 Danes arrived in a single year, many of whom were small farmers and laborers who sought land and jobs in the interior areas of America; it was to be in rural areas where they were to have one of the greatest impacts. Few would return to Denmark, perhaps only around 10%, but the continued contact between the small communities of Danish Americans and their mother country would go on to bring a revolution in at least one part of rural American life: the mechanization of the production of butter. In the 1880s, Denmark became the largest butter exporter in the world, supplying industrialized Britain with much of the food necessary to maintain its workforce.

The story of Danish-American dairying in the United States has very modest beginnings—it began with Truels Slifsgaard, a tenant farmer in Grundy County, Iowa who immigrated to the U.S. in 1869. There was already the cooperative Fairfield Creamery in Cedar Falls, but this was some distance away, and the skim milk he received back was sour and not very useful for feeding pigs, which was an increasingly common practice among Danish farmers. Disappointed with his results, he corresponded by mail with his father, Jeppe, a merchant in southern Jutland, from whom he learned about remarkable developments in Denmark and in particular the use of a new



An advertisement from Burlington & Missouri River R.R.Co. for “millions of acres” of land in Iowa and Nebraska. Burlington & Missouri River R.R.Co. Buffalo, NY, Commercial Advertiser Printer House, 1872, Collection of the Library of Congress.

machine, the steam-powered automatic cream separator, which was to radically change the production of butter.

At the same time as some Danes were migrating to the United States, Danish agriculture was rapidly developing. Early improvements related to breeding, feeding, and a scientific approach to dairying. Many important innovations came out of the work of docent Niels Johannes Fjord at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural College in Frederiksberg, near Copenhagen. He presented the first results of his work with centrifuges in 1879 and established an Agricultural Economic Experimental Laboratory in 1883. Among other important innovations was Fjord's invention of



Sculpted by American Dennis Smith, this piece of art symbolizes his great-grandmother, Kristina Beck, who emigrated with her parents from Saltum in Vendsyssel to Utah in 1868. The statue depicts the girl facing a strong wind as she looks out across the North Sea. *Amerikakaj*, Dennis Smith, 2000, Copenhagen.





JEPPE SLIFSGAARD, FREDSVILLE, IA.  
81 Aar. Den ældste danske Mejerimand i Amerika  
i Sommeren 1908



The Danish Creamery founded by Jeppe & Truels Slifsgaard and Niels Blom in Fredsville, Iowa. Image courtesy of Dr. Paul Sharp and Dr. Nina Boberg-Fazlic.

Jeppe Slifsgaard reclining in a chair in Fredsville, Iowa. The caption reads “81 years. The oldest Danish dairyman in America in the summer of 1908.” Image courtesy of Dr. Paul Sharp and Dr. Nina Boberg-Fazlic.

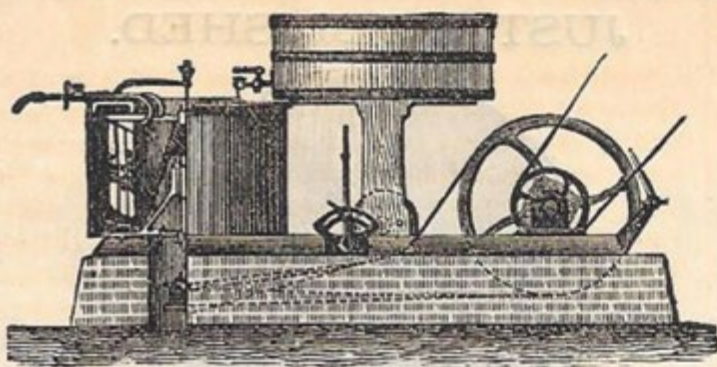
a control centrifuge for assessing the butterfat content of milk, which meant that it became possible to pay for milk by quality as well as quantity. Danish agriculture also became associated with the production and export of bacon as pigs’ diets benefitted from the more efficient separation of cream from milk.

The true breakthrough came with the invention of the separator. The principle that cream could be separated using centrifugal force was discovered in Germany in 1864, but important refinements were made in the, only recently Danish, Duchy of Holstein in 1876. The first practical and commercially sold separators based on this design were produced by rival companies, the Danish Burmeister & Wain and Swedish Alfa Laval firms in 1878/1879. In 1881, there were already 90 separators in use in Denmark, and by 1887, the number had risen to about 2,200. The centrifuge made it possible to use milk that

had been transported over longer distances to be processed in a central production facility which led to massive productivity gains. Cooperatives, or voluntary associations of Danish individuals, sprang up to take advantage of this possibility. Danish agriculture witnessed extraordinary success, outcompeting traditional leaders in the sector such as the Dutch and the Irish. Within a few years, Denmark had captured a significant share of the important UK market for animal foodstuffs—almost 50% of butter imports by the First World War. In fact, Denmark is still considered an “agricultural superpower,” and dairy production is still dominated by a massive Danish-Swedish cooperative, Arla, which traces its roots back to the developments of the 1880s.

Although American agriculture was also experiencing an exceptionally dynamic development path founded in science and a stream of biological innovations, it lagged behind

GUEST AUTHOR | ARTICLE



## ADVANTAGES:

- Largely Increased Amount of Butter.
- Great Saving of Ice.
- Improved Quality of both Butter and Skimmed Milk.
- Economy of Room and Reduction of Expense in Conducting the Creamery.

**DANISH-WESTON CENTRIFUGAL MILK SEPARATOR.**  
WILL SAVE ITS COST IN THREE MONTHS.

New Milk fed in, and Cream and Skimmed Milk drawn off continuously.

Over One Thousand in Constant Use.

**PHILADELPHIA CREAMERY SUPPLY CO. (Limited.)**

Send for Descriptive Pamphlet.

1140 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa.

An advertisement from the Philadelphia Creamery Supply Co. enumerating the many benefits of the Danish-Weston Centrifugal Milk Separator. Image courtesy of Dr. Paul Sharp and Dr. Nina Boberg-Fazlic.



## MoDA

Denmark in terms of dairying. For example, the Babcock test from 1890, which could measure the butterfat content of milk, is often highlighted by historians of American agriculture as an important innovation, but this was preceded by Fjord's invention. However, American dairying was not to be left behind for long.

The first separator's arrival to the U.S. is incredibly well-documented. After corresponding with his struggling son, Jeppe Slifsgaard eventually decided to go to the U.S. with a Burmeister & Wain automatic cream separator together with Niels Blom, a dairy technician. They arrived in Cedar Falls in the summer of 1882, but the machine was held up by customs in New York because they did not know if it was made of iron or steel. Customs finally decided it was made of steel, charged \$93 in duties, and it became the first separator in the United States.

Jeppe and Truels Slifsgaard then established "The Danish Creamery" in 1883 with Niels Blom running it at the place where Fredsville, Iowa was later settled. They used the Burmeister & Wain separator for 11 years, although it was somewhat high maintenance since it had to be sent back to Denmark for repairs. Other creameries were established using a similar model in the local area, and the Danish Creamery was eventually bought up by the farmers and became a cooperative. The U.S. patents for the Burmeister and Wain separator, called the Nielsen separator after its inventor, were sold to an American firm and given the name "Danish Weston" and after some modification "Reid."



Employees pose for a photograph at a dairy cooperative in Gørding, Denmark. Collection of Gørding Andelsmejeri.

The Danish Creamery in Fredsville was not the first Danish creamery in the US. In 1874 - 1875, the first creamery was established in Clarks Grove, Minnesota, which is a mere 100 miles from Fredsville. Clarks Grove was a Danish Baptist colony founded in 1863—both the creamery and town were founded by Lars Jørgensen Hauge. The creamery struggled for years with low prices for butter, but things began to change when Hauge spent some time at Thorbygaard, Funen in Denmark in the summer of 1887. There, he saw a creamery with a centrifuge running on steam power. Hauge came back to Clarks Grove in 1889 and started giving his famous "Butter Sermons." In these sermons, he advocated for dairying on Danish principles. These sermons were said to have an impact on the cooperative dairying in Minnesota, but some suggest this story may have been exaggerated.

Professor Theophilus Levi Haecker, the son of German migrants and an expert butter maker, became familiar with the Danish community in Clarks Grove while working on an extensive survey of dairying in Minnesota in 1892. According to an interview with Haecker, he was so impressed while conducting his survey that he worked on promoting the Danish system of butter production around Minnesota. In 1892, there were four cooperative creameries in Minnesota. When Haecker retired in 1918, there were 630. This is illustrative of the ways in which best practices spread from Danish community to Danish community.



The creamery in Clarks Grove, Minnesota, the nation's first Danish creamery established in the U.S. and a model for cooperative dairying. Image courtesy of Dr. Paul Sharp and Dr. Nina Boberg-Fazlic.



In combining U.S. census data with information from agricultural censuses, it was found that areas with more Danes were associated with greater specialization in dairying and more advanced dairying technology before the First World War. In fact, the association between areas populous with Danes, largely located in the Midwest, and dairying can even be detected after the Second World War. This was not primarily a story of expert migrants bringing benefits to their destination country but rather one of the spread of knowledge and technology from abroad—existing migrant communities played an important role. The occupation of the new arrivals can be seen in Danish emigration registers, which reveal that very few of them were dairy specialists. More important seems to have been the information channel which can be investigated using the Digital Library of Danish American Newspapers and Journals maintained by the Museum of Danish America.

Like other immigrants, the Danes established their own foreign language press. The digital library provides plenty of evidence of the spread of information about dairying in Denmark and the progress of Danes in the U.S. However, it was not all smooth sailing as an article from *Dannevirke* dated December 26, 1888, elucidates: “What we most need is a Danish dairy. We should really start with that in the spring. And it is probably best if

we start from scratch. The reason is that a dairy was actually started a couple of years ago, and it is still waiting and freezing without a roof over its head.” The accounts given in the newspapers are not of a detailed scientific nature, but they did play an important role in describing developments in Denmark, and in particular the importance of installing a cream separator, which did not necessitate advanced technical skills and was most relevant for the typical farmer. Scientific writing also traveled between Denmark and the US, and there are even examples of Danish-American creameries in the United States publishing their accounts in the Danish agricultural press.

In other branches of agriculture, although Danes were receptive to new ideas, they were more followers rather than innovators. Danish-Americans were extremely important to American dairying, and not just for small-scale cooperative agriculture. For example, when it was established by Viggo F. Jensen from Southern Jutland in 1900, the Continental Creamery Company in Topeka, Kansas was the largest creamery in the world. American agricultural magazines and bulletins contained frequent references to the Danish dairy sector, and Danish scientific discoveries were quickly adopted in the US; for example, Dane Bernhard Lauritz Frederick

**A postcard of the Continental Creamery Co., the largest creamery in the world in Topeka, Kansas.** Image courtesy of Dr. Paul Sharp and Dr. Nina Boberg-Fazlic.



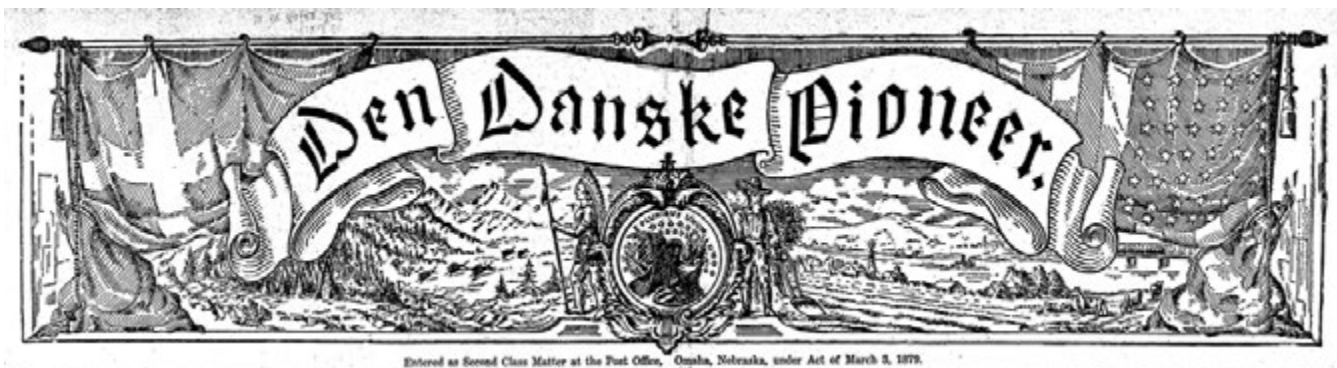


Bang's method for testing bovine tuberculosis was already widely used in Wisconsin in 1896, and later around the country. Danish-Americans acted as "brokers" spreading information between the two countries, something that was eventually institutionalized as Danes took important positions within American agriculture, government, and academia. This spread of knowledge was supported through various publications.

What might one take from all this? Along with the rise of populist movements, there has been increasing adoption or encouragement of various measures to combat immigration. One popular suggestion is so-called "point systems," whereby potential immigrants are assessed based on a number of criteria, including age, educational attainment, language, etc. Such systems have already been adopted in Australia and Canada and have been proposed by both U.S. and UK politicians. Another popular point of contention has been "chain migration," i.e., immigrants coming to a country due to family connections, which in the U.S. constitutes a far larger proportion of total immigration than those entering on green cards. The Danish Americans were usually poor and often

refugees from religious persecution or war. Thus, it is difficult to determine which immigrants are "desirable" ex-ante—the host country may benefit from immigration even decades after the first arrival.

Concerns similar to those of today were of course also present in the past. Ironically, in a report that came out in the wake of the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, which established quotas by nationality, the Head of the U.S. Department of Agricultural Economics at the Massachusetts Agricultural College, Alexander E. Cance, discusses how difficult it is to know which migrants are "desirable." He falls into the trap of assuming that previous generations of migrants were the "right" migrants, specifically mentioning the large number of Scandinavians in agriculture and inferring that "some of the very best of our farmers are immigrants of the first and second generation." He concludes with a warning against importing cheap labor to the countryside since he believed this would hurt rural living standards and delay the process of assimilation without realizing that discriminating against poor, rural migrants would have meant that the Scandinavians he praises would not have arrived in the first place.



The heading of *Den Danske Pioneer*, the oldest Danish-language newspaper published in the United States. Like other newspapers, *Den Danske Pioneer* was influential in the dissemination of information about dairying and the progress of Danes in the U.S. Image courtesy of the Museum of Danish America from its free, online digital library of Danish American Newspapers: <https://box2.nmtvault.com/DanishIM/>.



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**Dr. Paul Sharp** is an economic historian who focuses on the agricultural and economic history of Denmark. He heads the Historical Economics and Development Group at the University of Southern Denmark.



the history behind

# CRYSTAL SPRINGS CREAMERY

BY DELANEY SCHURER

*Registrar*

**For decades,** Crystal Springs Creamery was the creamery of the Danish Villages of Elk Horn and Kimballton, Iowa and was situated mere miles from the Museum of Danish America. Known locally as the Kimballton Creamery, Crystal Springs Creamery was established in 1890 when it was realized there was a need for a creamery. Peter Hansen, the original manager, had previously worked at a creamery in Pennsylvania and attended Elk Horn College. However, by 1922, Hansen had moved to Canada, and Marius and Peter Nielsen took over management. Until 1924, all business was conducted in Danish rather than English. From 1926 on, John I. Petersen served as the creamery's manager.

To finance the cooperative, 50 farmers each paid \$12 to join. If the farmers could not pay all \$12 in cash up front, they could pay for their share by delivering the milk until an equivalent amount of labor credit had accumulated. By the end of the first



month of operation in 1891, \$1,000 was divided amongst the farmers in payment for the milk. By the end of the year, that monthly payment had grown to \$8,000, reaching a total amount of \$80,000 in its first calendar year.

By 1917, the creamery began to sell shares for \$20; they were able to sell 456 shares, held by 135 shareholders. In 1937, a 5% interest was put on shares, but the shares were never sold for more than \$20.

For the first two years of operation, there was no standard for grading or testing the milk. This meant that there was no way to adjust compensation for quality, so farmers sold whole milk to the creamery with a set pay per 100 pounds. By 1893, the Babcock

COLLECTIONS

CRYSTAL SPRINGS COOPERATIVE CREAMERY CO.  
KIMBALLTON, IOWA





test was introduced, which allowed for an estimation of fat content; this changed how farmers were compensated for milk. Instead of a set pay per pound, farmers were paid for their milk's butterfat content. Some were unhappy with this change as they were no longer paid the same for the same quantity of milk.

When the creamery first opened its doors, all transportation was conducted by horses and wagons. Thus, only a small area of Iowa could receive deliveries. By the time Crystal Springs Creamery was sold in 1965, there were new trucks that delivered to 14 counties and served 1,500 patrons on 40 routes. Production of butter increased from thousands of pounds to millions of pounds



1. Acidity Flask:  
2014.055.098



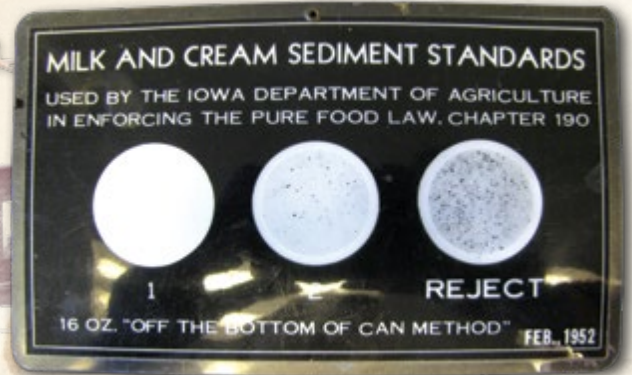
2. Resazurin Test:  
2014.055.100a-b



Crystal Springs Creamery Brand butter box.  
Museum accession, 1990.060.692



4. Sediment Standards Chart:  
2014.055.107





per year, and steel replaced the old cream separator and wood churns. The high quality of butter and the fact that butter could be manufactured without ever being touched by human hands was a source of pride.

In 1965, Crystal Springs Creamery permanently closed its doors, and the building was sold. Following its closure,

equipment from Crystal Springs Creamery was housed at the General Store Museum in Kimballton. When the museum closed in 2014, they reached out to the Museum of Danish America, and pieces that were deemed appropriate were transferred and accessioned into the museum's collection. Many of these items are visible in Visual Storage, and several are highlighted throughout this article.

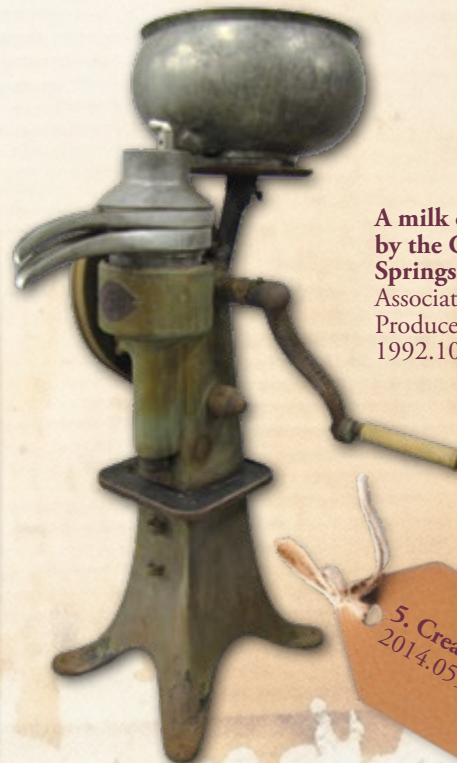
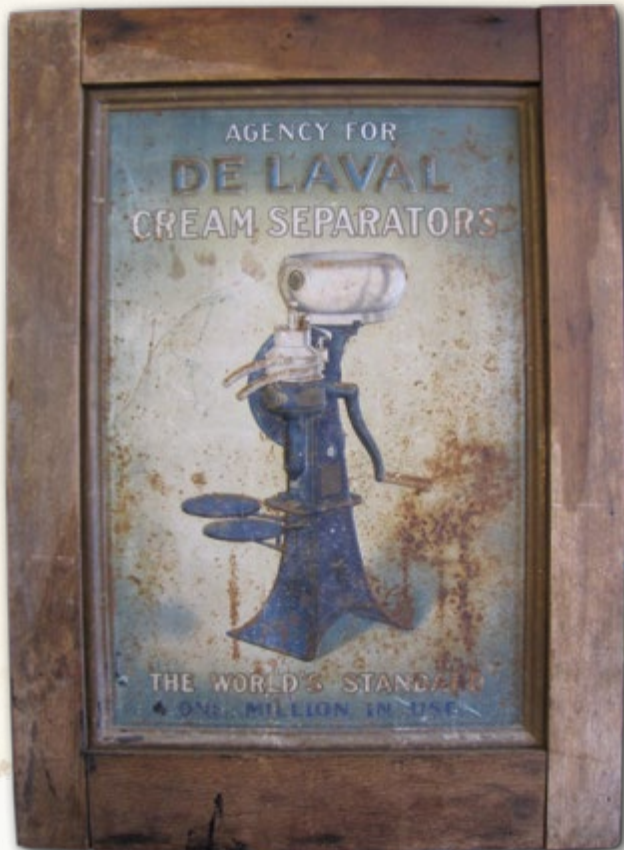


3. Brine Hydrometer: 2014.055.101



6. Thermometer: 2014.055.057

COLLECTIONS



A milk can used by the Crystal Springs Creamery. Associated Milk Producers, 1992.106.001a



5. Cream Separator: 2014.055.109-110

All numbered artifacts are donations from the Community Heritage Society in Kimballton, Iowa.



**1. ACIDITY FLASK:** The acidity of milk needs to be tested—if the acidity is too high, it reduces the quality and heat stability of the milk, making it harder to ship and keep. There are two types of acidity that are found in milk, natural and developed. Natural acidity is the level of acidity naturally present in milk while developed acidity is acidity that has formed through lactic acid buildup from bacteria. Both are tested together to determine the milk's overall acidity.

**2. RESAZURIN TEST:** A Resazurin Test examines the sanitary quality and consistency of raw milk—the test works by adding Resazurin to raw milk, which turns the milk blue. Once the test is applied, the milk must rest for an hour, and bacteria in the milk can reduce the blue color from blue to pink or even back to white. The quantity of bacteria in the raw milk can be determined by the color change—the least amount of deviation from blue is deemed best.

**3. BRINE HYDROMETER:** The brine hydrometer measures the percentage of salt present within the milk or cream. Different dairy end products need varying salinities ranging from 10% to 25%. Therefore, salinity needs to be tested and adjusted before it can be turned into different dairy products.

**4. SEDIMENT STANDARDS CHART:** This chart is a visual aid to determine how much sediment is acceptable in milk by using a sample taken from the bottom of a can of unstirred milk.

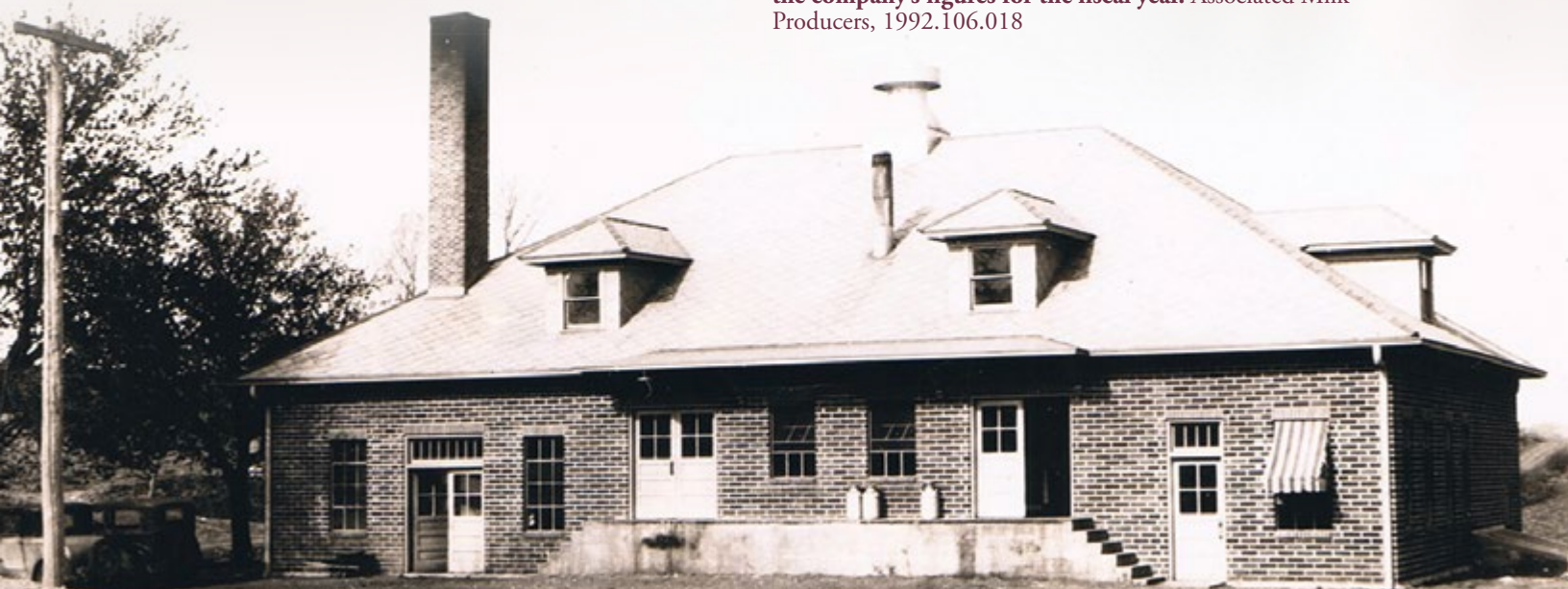
**5. CREAM SEPARATOR:** Cream separators made creameries more efficient by using centrifugal force to easily separate the cream from the skim milk. Cream would flow from one spout while the skim milk would flow from the other. The cream separator Crystal Springs Creamery used was from De Laval in New York and is currently on display in the agriculture section of the exhibit *Nature-Culture / Natur-Kultur*.

**6. THERMOMETER:** This thermometer was used in the pasteurization process, which involves heating milk to high temperatures for a short period of time. This kills harmful bacteria and microbes in the milk, making it safer to drink as well as extending its shelf life.



**Creamery Photo.** Gift of Eldon Ericksen, 1989.058.001

**Crystal Springs Creamery Company brochures which contain a Secretary's Report, a list of board members, and the company's figures for the fiscal year.** Associated Milk Producers, 1992.106.018





# exhibitpreview:

## Fabric of a Nation: *Art Quilts and Immigration Stories*

Quilting began as a method of layering fabric for protection and warmth. By 1360, it developed into an art form as well. To this day, it remains a popular pastime for many people and one that is often passed down from generation to generation. Quilts are often much more than simple pieces of cloth stitched together. For those who make them, they represent hours of time, thought, and labor. For those who admire them, every element tells a story—from the fabric used, to the techniques, to the final design.

On November 24, 2023, the museum will open a new exhibition, *Fabric of a Nation: Art Quilts and Immigration Stories*, which explores three different journeys to the United States through the lens of textile arts. This exhibition will be open to the public through May 12, 2024.

One group of quilts explores the story of Danish immigration to the United States, drawing from the museum's permanent collection. The peak of Danish immigration was in the late 1800s to 1920, with many people coming to seek land and economic opportunity. Although immigration has since slowed, Danish immigrants have continued to make the journey to America, often for education or jobs.



**Tucson Sector 2009-2010, 253 deaths**  
Verni Greenfield of Portland, Oregon  
*Arizona Historical Society, TS 2020.1.10*

One of the highlighted pieces is a quilt entitled "The Day I Became a Citizen" by Lotte Christiansen. In her words, "This quilt is a physical manifestation of a day I shall never forget: the day I became an American citizen." Transferring photographs, documents, and congratulatory notes from friends and family to fabric, Lotte showcased her personal connection to the journey of citizenship. On one side, she also included a map of

the United States, stitched out of different fabric pieces gifted to her by her friends symbolizing "the living quilt of many backgrounds and origins that make up the people of my new country."

The exhibition will also feature quilts from the Migrant Quilt Project, based out of Arizona, which is currently touring the state of Iowa. These pieces share the stories of those who come to America by trying to cross the



southern border, specifically the Border Patrol's Tucson Sector, which contains most of the state of Arizona. Each year, a different group of quilters gathers to create a piece to honor and remember those who died on the journey, utilizing scraps of fabric left behind in the desert. Each quilt lists everyone who died while trying to make the journey that year—including names, if possible, but “desconocidos,” or unknown, for those whose names are unknown.

These quilts serve as documentation and a reminder of the human impact of immigration policies, with the creators seeking to build compassion for and a better understanding of the humanitarian crisis at the border. In 1994, the United States government implemented a “Prevention Through Deterrence” approach to border policy by adding increased infrastructure that would force migrants trying to cross the border into harsh, dangerous landscapes. The hope was that fewer people would attempt to make the journey, but it also resulted in a drastic rise in migrant deaths.

Since 1994, the bodies of around 4,000 migrants have been found. Quilts have been created every year since 2000 - 2001, which is when the Pima County Coroner began to note the names of those who died. Each piece is unique, reflecting the vision of the different creators as well as the different materials that are found. One was created in the pattern of the American flag, and another arranged stamps in the form of crosses, with the stamps representing some of the countries from which the migrants left.



**The Day I Became a Citizen**

Lotte Christiansen  
Gift of Borge M. Christiansen  
In Memory of Birthe Lotte  
Christensen - 2019.023.006

*Fabric of a Nation: Art Quilts and Immigration Stories*  
is sponsored by Timothy and Christine Burchill.





**Tucson Sector 2018-2019, 137 deaths**  
 Reilly Zoda and Gerry Murano of Tucson, AZ  
*Arizona Historical Society, TS 2020.1.19*



**Violence Endured by Hmong People Following US Withdrawal from Laos**  
 Late 20<sup>th</sup> century  
*Collection of Linda Gerdner*

The final migration journey that will be explored in the exhibition is that of refugees who resettled in America, particularly the Hmong people and their embroidered story cloths. Story cloths are a more recent textile tradition that emerged out of a combination of two existing traditions—oral storytelling and embroidery and textile arts. The Hmong lived in southeast Asia, especially Laos. During the Vietnam War, conflict spilled into Laos, which was neutral at the time. The American government did not want to send in U.S. troops because that would violate the terms of neutrality; instead, the CIA and American government provided money, training, and support to the Hmong so that they would fight against the communist forces in a guerrilla war. When Laos fell to the communists, the Hmong had

to flee and ended up in refugee camps in Thailand.

In the camps, people needed to earn an income. Someone had the idea of combining their oral history traditions with embroidery to create story cloths that illustrated their history, customs, and folktales. One powerful piece speaks to the violence that the Hmong experienced after the American government pulled out of the region—it depicts attacks on villages, the execution of anyone considered a traitor, and people using whatever they could to help them cross the Mekong River into Thailand.

By bringing together quilting traditions that represent three different immigration stories, the

goal of this exhibition is to serve as a reminder of the common humanity of those who have come to the United States, whether in 1821 or 2021. Although the method by which people have arrived in America may differ, the stories behind them remain important, compelling, and a reminder of America's enduring reputation as a land of opportunity. By using art quilts, a familiar medium for many museum visitors, to share these narratives, the hope is for people to understand and appreciate the differences in journeys to America while also recognizing the common threads that connect every group of people who have come to the country since its founding.



# exhibitions

2023 - 2024

OCT

NOV

DEC

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FEB

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APR

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1

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**■ Nature-Culture / Natur-Kultur**  
 KRAMME GALLERY  
 JUNE 22, 2023 - NOVEMBER 3, 2024

**■ Nature-Culture / Natur-Kultur**  
 MULTIMEDIA ROOM  
 JUNE 22, 2023 - NOVEMBER 3, 2024

**■ 40 Years of Collecting: Highlights  
 from the Permanent Collection**  
 MAIN FLOOR GALLERY  
 NOVEMBER 25, 2022 - NOVEMBER 5, 2023

**■ Fabric of a Nation: Art Quilts  
 and Immigration Stories**  
 MAIN FLOOR GALLERY  
 NOVEMBER 24, 2023 - MAY 12, 2024

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### JENS JENSEN PRAIRIE LANDSCAPE PARK

Open daily, sunrise to sunset



## *Elderberries*

*Clusters plucked from hedgerows  
sag my shirt front cradle,  
paint the cotton purple.*

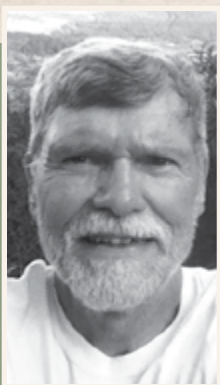
*Last time I passed they shone  
as bright and creamy flowers  
that lit green fields in Iowa.*

*They take me back to Denmark  
where bushes bloomed in summer  
and hyldebær warmed our winters*

*as fragrant soup, hot dark and sweet  
with icebergs of whipped cream,  
and sugared islands of brown grated rye.*

*A taste of Midwest soil  
and breezes from the Baltic Sea.*

*Finn Bille, 2021.*



Finn Bille, born in Nørresundby in 1942, has immigrated three times to the U.S. He attended high school and university in Copenhagen and college and graduate school in California and Georgia. A poet based in Chattanooga, TN, Finn has published four books of poetry and numerous poems in a variety of publications, notably *The Bridge*, the journal of the Danish-American Heritage Society. *The Bridge's* editor, Julie Allen, has described Bille's *The King's Coin* as ". . . a sensually and emotionally rich contribution to the literature of hyphenated identity." Bille's *The King's Coin* and short story "A Marzipan Christmas" are available for purchase at the museum's Design Store.



# PRAIRIES:

A DELICATE EQUILIBRIUM

BY JAZ BRUNS



## MEET JAZ

*Jens Jensen Prairie  
Landscape Park Intern*

Hello! I'm Jaz Bruns, the Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park Intern. I am from Phoenix, Arizona, and I spent the summer working with Tim Palmer on prairie management and other plant-related work. These past few months have been enchanting as I've had the privilege of immersing myself in the plants and nature around me. Being entrusted with maintaining the prairie's beauty and life has been an honor beyond measure. As I leave Elk Horn to return to the University of Missouri-Columbia, I carry the lessons I've learned, the friendships I've forged, and stories that will continue to inspire me.

*With its sweeping vistas of vibrant colors and delicate flowers, the prairie landscape attracts many admirers.*

However, beneath this alluring exterior, a concealed conflict unfolds—a battle between native and invasive plant species that shapes the very fabric of this unique ecosystem. Amidst this natural beauty, plants like crown vetch and purple loosestrife hold a dual identity—captivating in appearance yet capable of disrupting the prairie's delicate equilibrium. On the other hand, championing native varieties, such as the golden alexander and coneflower, amplifies the prairie's visual splendor and nurtures its longevity and vitality.





1.

**1. Crown Vetch (*Securigera varia*):**

*A Deceptive Ally*

Lauded for its soil rehabilitation prowess and erosion control benefits, crown vetch has found favor in roadside plantings and disturbed areas. Its charming pink and white flower clusters paint picturesque scenes, masking the underlying threat it poses. Its aggressive spread forms dense patches that outcompete native plants, diminish biodiversity, and disrupt the prairie's innate balance.



2.

**2. Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*):**

*Temptation at the Water's Edge*

The purple loosestrife, with its gorgeous purple blooms, casts a spell over wetland areas, drawing admirers into its alluring embrace before divulging its harmful tendencies. Flourishing in moist conditions, this invader outshines native wetland plants, endangering the habitats of native wildlife and unsettling the wetland ecosystem.



3.

**3. Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*):**

*A Well-Meaning Intruder*

Although red clover may provide multifaceted benefits, such as soil enrichment and livestock fodder, these benefits are countered when considering the prairie's native integrity. Its rapid expansion disrupts open spaces and displaces indigenous flora.



4.

**4. Golden Alexander (*Zizia aurea*):**

*Gilded Pride of the Prairie*

The golden alexander stands as a radiant emblem of the prairie, its golden umbels adding a touch of elegance to the landscape. Beyond its visual appeal, this native species is pivotal in supporting local pollinators and wildlife, fortifying the prairie's equilibrium, and fostering a thriving ecosystem.



5.

**5. Coneflower (*Echinacea*):**

*A Testament to Tenacity*

With its regal purple and pink petals, the coneflower embodies the prairie's resilience when confronting challenges. Its beauty graces the landscape and attracts many pollinators, thus enriching the ecosystem. By embracing the coneflower and other native companions, the prairie improves its adaptability and stability over time.

The prairie's appeal goes further than aesthetics, intertwining with the intricate web of life it sustains. However, this allure faces a threat from invasive plants like crown vetch and purple loosestrife. Understanding the gravity of these invaders is essential for conserving biodiversity and ecological harmony. By embracing native plants like golden alexander and coneflower while exercising prudence with non-native species, we become stewards of the prairie's diversity, charm, and resilience for future generations. Together, let us safeguard this distinctive landscape, securing its enjoyment and benefits in the years ahead.





# SPARK!

CULTURAL PROGRAMMING  
*for* PEOPLE WITH MEMORY LOSS

BY ALISSA LACANNE

*Youth & Community Educator*

**T**he cake is in the oven, and slices of different apple varieties are being passed around to taste test. Some take in the smell of the apple spice shaker while some talk about their favorite apple recipes, but all attention is on the senses and the memories they “spark.”

## What is SPARK!?

On this first Tuesday of the month, baking and eating play a small part in MoDA’s new SPARK! program, a free monthly cultural event for people with early-to mid-stage memory loss and their care partners. Programs are designed to keep participants actively engaged in their communities by providing experiences that stimulate conversations, provide peer support, and inspire creativity.

After the success of the “Meet Me at MoMA” program at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City, research was conducted at MoMA and at the original partner organizations of the SPARK! Alliance; this research showed the benefits of SPARK! participation for all involved. The Museum of Danish America represents the first museum in Iowa to join the SPARK! Alliance after MoDA staff completed trainings in early 2023 to learn more about those with memory loss and how to engage participants in lively discussions, object-handling, and other multi-sensory activities.



**SPARK! attendees spent time learning about the Jens Jensen Prairie Landscape Park from Jaz Bruns, the prairie intern, in July.**





## The SPARK! Alliance

The SPARK! Alliance is a network of museums, nature centers, and cultural centers committed to the inception, development, facilitation, and sustainability of cultural programs for people with memory loss and their care partners. These programs focus on life-long learning, providing quality-of-life experiences while living in the moment, and inspiring creative expression through engaging the senses. The goals of this program are to promote healthy aging, engagement, and socialization, and to provide joyful experiences to this growing population. Alzheimer's disease alone affects more than 5 million Americans, impacts more than 15 million care partners, and is the sixth leading cause of death in the nation.

## Creating Memories for Participants and Caregivers

The focus of every SPARK! program is to kindle joyful experiences while living in the moment and inspiring creative expression. While it cannot cure or reverse memory loss, SPARK! experiences provide both short and long-term benefits for everyone in attendance. Whether the memory of a visit to the museum remains with someone for a moment or a year, our goal is for that memory to bring a smile to the faces of all participants. SPARK! is not an acronym—it's something that happens when engaged in a stimulating and engaging experience—SPARKing a moment together—living in the moment.

SPARK! programs often include a coffee break to give participants and caregivers an opportunity to socialize.

Whether it be singing along to classic show tunes, taking a walk out to the prairie, or learning about objects in the museum's collection, all of these ideas start a conversation—from “I met Johnny Cash once,” to “the museum sure has changed a lot since I used to volunteer here.” SPARK! is quality time for all participants, and museum staff appreciate what this program means to them as well—SPARK! offers something for everyone.

## Join us for SPARK!

SPARK! programs are held at the Museum of Danish America on the first Tuesday of every month from 10 - 11:30 a.m. Each monthly program is unique, includes a variety of topics, and is free for families and/or care partners to attend. Registration can be made by calling the museum at 712.764.7001. The museum is grateful for the financial support from the Shelby County Health Foundation and the Shelby County Community Chest—this support empowered us to begin our program in May 2023.



In June, Diya Nagaraj, the museum's Albert Ravenholt Curator of Danish-American Culture, led SPARK! participants on a guided tour of the exhibition *40 Years of Collecting: Highlights from the Permanent Collection*.





# Garey & Sherry Knudsen

BY AMELIA JUHL

*Communications Specialist*

Like many people who grew up in and around the Danish Villages, Garey and Sherry Knudsen trace their family roots to Denmark. Garey Knudsen, the son of Danish immigrants Chris J. Knudsen and Gladys Anna Petersen, was raised on a farm south of Jacksonville, Iowa. Growing up, Garey attended Jackson #8 through 5th grade before enrolling at Elk Horn. Life was simple and routine; “my youth was made up of going to school, doing farm work, playing sports, and trapping fur-bearing animals.” In high school, Garey was involved in madrigal, mixed chorus, junior and senior plays, and the Future Teachers of America. He lettered in football and track, served on the prom committee, and was a senior class officer.

Sherry Sue Knudsen (née Jensen), the daughter of Clinton Jens Jensen and Lyria Christina Clausen, was born in the Atlantic Hospital and raised in Elk Horn. For Sherry, “[growing up in Elk Horn] was always so much fun! We had large family gatherings at Christmas and on birthdays. These times are great memories. I also enjoyed going to school, roller skating, and attending Sunday school and Luther League.” Sherry also kept busy with basketball, Pep Club, Color Guard, and the prom committee.



**A recent photo of Garey and Sherry.** Image courtesy of Garey and Sherry Knudsen.

Both of Danish descent, they grew up with a strong connection to their Danish heritage by partaking in Danish celebrations and eating Danish food; æbleskiver, frikadeller, pebernødder, rødkål, pickled herring, and medisterpølse were always served on Christmas. They also grew up surrounded by the Danish language as Sherry’s grandmother and mother spoke Danish to one another, and Garey’s grandfather and father spoke it at home.

As fate would have it, Garey and Sherry’s relationship would begin “on a snowy night in Elk Horn after a basketball game. Sherry was walking home after playing basketball, and I was walking to my grandparent’s house. I noticed her and figured a good way to get her attention would be to lob a snowball at her. The rest is history. We dated through high school. I went off to college at Dana, and she worked at Harlan at the hospital. I traveled home on weekends to maintain the connection. Sherry later worked at Clarkson Hospital in Omaha, so we were always pretty



# Family Tree

Images courtesy of Garey and Sherry Knudsen.

**Peter Nissen**  
November 10, 1845 – January 9, 1910  
PATERNAL GREAT GRANDFATHER

+  
**Macdalene Nissen (née Cellosen)**  
May 3, 1845 – September 24, 1914  
PATERNAL GREAT GRANDMOTHER



**Johanna Marie Petersen (née Jensen)**  
February 1, 1848 – March 30th, 1929  
MATERNAL GREAT GRANDMOTHER

+  
**Martin H. Petersen**  
1836 – December 13, 1918  
MATERNAL GREAT GRANDFATHER

**Jorgen Knudsen**  
February 12, 1885 – November 25, 1969  
PATERNAL GRANDFATHER

+  
**Marie Knudsen (née Ericksen)**  
July 31, 1879 – July 18, 1964  
PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER



HERITAGE BUILDER

**Claus Gebhart Clausen** + **Hanna Clausen (née Christensen)**  
March 3, 1885 – March 21, 1918     January 1, 1887 – September 19, 1973  
MATERNAL GRANDFATHER     MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER

**Clinton Jens Jensen** + **Lyria Christina Jensen (née Clausen)**  
October 22, 1916 – June 3, 2001     January 29, 1918 – December 5, 2005  
FATHER     MOTHER



**Chris J. Knudsen** + **Gladys Anna Petersen**  
June 19, 1910 – February 12, 1982     December 2, 1915 – December 21, 1991  
FATHER     MOTHER  
(Pictured posing in front of his father)



Garey's father and grandparents traveled aboard the U.S.S. Grant when they immigrated to America in 1913.



**Sherry Sue Knudsen**  
(née Jensen)



**Garey Knudsen**

Garey and Sherry's senior photos from 1964 and 1965, respectively. Images courtesy of Exira-Elk Horn-Kimballton High School.



close geographically.” Gary and Sherry were united in marriage on August 12, 1967, at the Elk Horn Lutheran Church.

Gary further connected with his Danish heritage by attending Dana College, which was a “great experience.” Originally, he had not planned to attend college, but his high school principal encouraged him to go, and his name was sent to Dana by the church. After graduating from Dana with a degree in social science and education, Gary taught in Oakland, Iowa before obtaining his master’s at Northeast Missouri State University and serving as the Vice President of Student Support Services for Ridgewater College until he retired in 2004. Meanwhile, Sherry ran an in-home daycare for teacher’s children for 28 years.

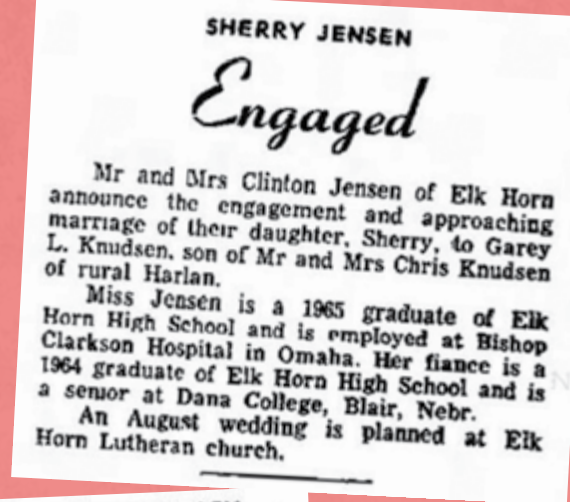
In 2012, the Knudsens were fortunate enough to travel to Denmark. “[Sherry and I] spent time in Copenhagen and traveled to Als. We spent time with a cousin who showed us the countryside where my dad was born and baptized and where Grandpa worked as a farmhand and mill operator. The house where my dad was born was still standing, as was the mill house.” The Knudsens felt connected to Denmark and, according to Sherry, it “so much made [them] think of Elk Horn and how people welcome you and invite you in for coffee. It was just a warm feeling.”

In 2023, the Museum of Danish America celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, but the couple can still remember “when Elk Horn was given the museum over the Twin Cities in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Some people thought it was wonderful; some people thought it would never work in such a small town, but it’s been quite successful. [The museum] is something we’ve grown up with as it has always been a part of our background. Every time we’re in Elk Horn, the museum seems impressive and hosts so many fun events.”

*The museum is a testament to the “strength of the Elk Horn and Kimballton communities. I knew that was a good basis for it. I’m just so proud of it, especially being in my hometown. It means a lot to me, and it’s grown very nicely.”*

The couple has lived in Hutchinson, Minnesota since 1972, but if they still resided in the community, they would be “participating in the Brown Bag Lunches and going to the Annual Victor Borge Legacy Award. We’d be

An article announcing Gary and Sherry’s engagement. The Harlan Advertiser, 1967.



MR AND MRS GARY KNUDSEN  
**Jensen-Knudsen united at Elk Horn ceremony**

★ELK HORN.— Sherry Jensen, daughter of the Clinton Jensens of Elk Horn, and Gary Lee Knudsen, son of the Chris Knudsens rural Harlan, were united in marriage on Saturday, Aug. 12 at 7:30 p.m. at the Elk Horn Lutheran church. The Rev. Henry N. Hansen performed the double ring ceremony before an altar decorated with candelabra and bouquets of white and blue sprayed mums. Aisle pews were decorated with aqua blue and white candles and greenery.

A column describing Gary and Sherry’s wedding ceremony. The Harlan Advertiser, 1967.



Gary and Sherry on their wedding day at the Elk Horn Lutheran Church. Image courtesy of Gary and Sherry Knudsen.

volunteering” Although the Knudsens may not be able to attend on-site events as regularly as they would like, their impact is still felt.

Over the years, the Knudsens have taken advantage of some of the services the museum offers; “the museum offers a lot of opportunity if people look into it,” says Gary. Their families are listed on the Wall of Honor, which is a way to memorialize families and friends who immigrated to America from Denmark. Gary and Sherry’s





**The mill house where Gary's grandfather, Jorgen Knudsen, worked. The Knudsen's were able to visit in 2012.** Image courtesy of Gary and Sherry Knudsen.

families are seven of 4,400 immigrants recognized on this memory wall and kept in the growing repository of family histories at the museum and its Genealogy and Education Center.

The Knudsen's have contributed to the museum in more ways than one. In addition to being members of the museum since 1994, the couple volunteered their time and knowledge when Gary served on the board from 2012 to 2018. Gary said the couple's "real involvement started as a need for the museum to have support. Somebody asked if I'd ever be interested in serving on the board. The rest is history." Gary served as the Vice President and President of the Board of Directors; "I was just asked if I would serve, and I volunteered... Dagmar [Muthamia] was serving as President, and she came and asked if I would be willing to sit in as a Vice President. I said I'd be more than willing to help out. She said, 'Of course, you know serving as Vice President, your name will be up for President.' I said okay—we'll let the chips fall where they may, and I really enjoyed serving on the board."

Gary served as the Board President during a time of great change and accomplishment; during Gary's time on the board, the museum was able to establish "enhanced partnerships with Rebild and DAAL and better linkages and communications among those organizations. We were able to purchase the ELIM property, and the Christensen Curatorial Center was finalized while I was on the board. In 2017, the museum was accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, which only 3% of all museums are. [I] had the opportunity to sit in on a focus group from that accrediting agency. [The museum] went through [the evaluation] with flying colors. We also introduced a self-

evaluation document for the board where they were asked to take a hard look at themselves and what their goals were. I met many wonderful people—everybody on that board clicked and focused on Danish heritage and the preservation of Danish heritage. It takes cooperation and coordination among staff and board members to achieve any and all goals. MoDA has been blessed with both competent staff and board members."

Monetarily, their first gift to the museum was made on October 1, 1989. It was a modest gift as the couple were putting their three children through college, but a donation of any amount is a substantial and meaningful gift. They have continued to routinely support the museum since then and have become Lifetime Legacy Givers which is something that Gary says

*"just happened over time. If we didn't [give] and others didn't, we would all lose that Danish heritage. It's important to maintain that."*

Their most influential gift was when they chose to become Heritage Builders and decided to give notice and signed documentation that they would provide for the museum in their estate. Gary noted that this decision "came to the surface when we were going through estate planning with our attorney, and they asked if there were particular or special organizations [we] wanted to put on [our] estate or will. The museum came to the top" of that list.

Due to the generosity of people like Gary and Sherry, the museum is able to sustain itself for years to come, and "it means a lot" to them that they have impacted the museum in such a large way; "it's good for future generations to keep the legacy [of Danish heritage] alive."



**Gary's headshot from when he served as the museum's Board President.** From the Museum of Danish America.



it takes a

# village

DÉSIRÉE M. OHRBECK

The Museum of Danish America is located in the small town of Elk Horn, Iowa, which was founded by newcomers—and its survival depended on them, too.

“You look so Danish,” I say to the man on the bench painted to look like Dannebrog, the Danish flag.

“Well, my name is Larsen,” he answered with an American accent far removed from what I imagine his Danish ancestors sounded like. I spent a week in Elk Horn this past summer. I had never been to the Midwest, let alone the small town of Elk Horn, a town that filled me with astonishment everywhere I turned.

The first thing that caught my eye when I arrived in Elk Horn was a giant windmill, like those scattered around my home country of

Denmark—albeit in a much better condition than the ones I grew up around. I learned about Harvey Sornson’s “impossible dream,” which is now a very real and visible attraction that serves as an ode to the town’s dedication to making impossible dreams come true.

Elk Horn and its sister village, Kimballton, are special, very special. I was born and raised in Denmark, and I have worked in four different countries and visited various American states and cities. In all my travels, I have never encountered anything like the small towns of Elk Horn and Kimballton. Most people look very Danish—in fact, they look more Danish than the Danes of

**The first Danish Folk School in America was founded in Elk Horn, Iowa in 1878.**  
This photo was taken in 1916. Donor unknown, 1990.060.430



*Members of Folk School at Elk Horn, Iowa, 1916*







**Désirée M. Ohrbeck** served as a Danish Lecturer at the Scandinavian Studies Department at the University of Washington from 2010 - 2016.

She is a columnist for the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* and a frequent contributor in Danish media, both on TV and radio. She has written op-eds, commentaries, and essays for *Politiken*, *Berlingske Tidende*, and *Jyllands-Posten*. Désirée is currently working on finishing a historical fiction novel loosely based on her grandmother.

Visit her blog: [www.desireeoehrbeck.com](http://www.desireeoehrbeck.com).

Denmark do nowadays. The flowerpots and flag poles have Danish and American flags flying, even the benches on Main Street are painted in Dannebrog's colors. Yet, it is not the windmill, the Museum of Danish America, Bedstemor's House, the Norse Horse Tavern, Kringle Man Pastries, Danish Countryside Vines & Wines, nor any of the other businesses in the town that make the Danish Villages what they are—it is the people who live there that imbue it with this sense of shared heritage.

When I arrived in Elk Horn on a Monday night, I hurried to the library to attend a lecture about Elk Horn and its origin. I gained an understanding of the rich history and the background of the town, including the immigrants and the place they came to. It was awe-inspiring to learn about the hard work these people put into starting a new life while living in quarters dug out from a hillside. That hard work, I am sure, is at the core of the people living in Elk Horn and Kimballton today. The tenacity that existed within these Danish immigrants shaped each new generation and made the Danish Villages what they are today.



**The interior of T.G. Muller's home in Kimballton, Iowa. T.G. his wife, Mette Overgaard Muller, their daughters, Dagny and Gudrun, and his niece, Thyra Rasmussen, are pictured.** Gift of Muriel Muller Bacon, 1994.297.001

Walking down Main Street, it is easy to picture a bustling town where people got around in buggies, a time when gusts of wind would turn dirt roads into a dusty haze. I imagined the street lined with stores where a bell would chime when someone entered. I heard the click-clack of women's boots on the wood floors. I could almost see the men wearing black stove top hats greeting women in full skirts.

GUEST AUTHOR | ARTICLE







**Local Butcher Shop in 1920. Pictured left to right: Folmer James, Chris Christensen, Lars Hansen, Eric Hansen, Hans Hansen, and Chris Petersen.** Gift of Hans Hansen, 1990.060.386

I was given a tour of the Genealogy & Education Center on Main Street—it was as if I was walking into hundreds of stories just waiting to be read. I could sense the families talking and sharing their intricate ties to each other and to others in town. Running my fingers over the volumes was a testimony to how many stories are tied to Danish American heritage and how vital the Museum of Danish America and the Genealogy & Education Center are to telling that story. My head was spinning thinking about what this town is made of and how many stories are out there just waiting for someone to read them.

While visiting, I learned about the active community working to create awareness for the Danish Villages to attract visitors to events and attractions. Scratching at the surface, I came to understand that Elk Horn and Kimballton are much more vibrant than they appeared at first glance. From reading the *America Letter*, now *MoDA Magazine*, I learned about how the museum is embracing, honoring, documenting, and respecting Danish traditions and culture while attracting edgy artists and focusing on a heritage that has changed over time—Danish immigrant stories of today are vastly different from those of a hundred years ago. Times change, people's lives change, and the community is adapting to stay relevant in an ever-changing world. This is how a society survives, and this is how the Museum of Danish America will sustain its platform, maintain its relevance, and ensure its strong connection to not just Danish Americans but to Americans in general.

Once, Danish immigrants settled in Elk Horn and Kimballton. They did things differently; they created and shaped the towns into what they became. To survive, Elk Horn and Kimballton are



**Henry, George, and John Petersen in front of the Elk Horn Hotel.** Gift of Ardis Petersen, 1990.060.405

dependent on newcomers. Some will put down roots and do things a little differently than what has been done before. Some will visit, but everyone will bring something new to town. The old and the new do not have to oppose each other. They can link hands to ensure a thriving community respects and honors the towns' rich culture and heritage while embracing a new future with diverse mindsets. After all, that is what America was initially founded on.



**Elk Horn's Main Street, 1915.**  
Donor unknown, 1990.060.1130



**Elk Horn's Main Street, 2023.**



# staff introductions



## **DELANEY**

*Registrar*

Delaney Schurer joined MoDA staff in January 2023 as a Curatorial Assistant. With Julia Jessen's departure, Delaney accepted the role as our new Registrar. She has already accomplished so much in her short time at the museum, and Visual Storage speaks to her capabilities. Delaney, we look forward to seeing you thrive in your new role!



## **MARIUS BO POULSEN**

*Scan Design Intern*

My name is Marius Bo Poulsen, and I am the Genealogy and Education Center's intern. I'm from Roskilde, Denmark, the home of the Viking Ship Museum, Roskilde Cathedral, and the royal tombs.

For the next few months, I will be translating letters and reviewing the Center's resources! I will also be lending a hand with our upcoming exhibition, *The Fabric of our Nation: Art Quilts & Immigration Stories*.

I obtained my bachelor's degree in American Studies from the University of Southern Denmark and am currently pursuing a master's degree in International Security and Law. When I heard previous MoDA interns talk about their experiences at the museum, I jumped at the opportunity to intern here.

On a personal note, I love learning about history and enjoy going to the gym and watching soccer, football, basketball, and hockey! I hope to take a road trip down to Kansas City to watch an NFL game or travel to Chicago to watch soccer and see Messi in the flesh!

I'm really happy to be at the museum, and I look forward to meeting everyone and getting to know them better. Having heard so much about the Midwest, I look forward to learning more about the culture and the people who call it home.

## **NOTES OF THANKS:**

### **SHELLI**

*Development Associate*

Shelli Larson, who joined Deb Christensen Larsen in the loft as a Development Associate in January 2020, retired in June 2023. During her time at the museum, she was instrumental in reinventing our Membership Structure and Sponsorship opportunities. Shelli was a dynamic, eager, and skilled employee known for her grace, warmth, and affable nature. Shelli, thank you for reminding us that tomorrow is always the beginning of something new.



### **JULIA**

*Registrar*

Julia Jessen, a member of the collections department since 2020 and the museum's Registrar since 2021, left in late June to pursue new opportunities. During her time on staff, Julia elevated standards for objects and their care and helped facilitate and oversee the Visual Storage Project. She brought a unique academic and personal perspective to museum programs. Her warm personality, gentle nature, and strict but fun reminder emails about food in galleries are dearly missed.

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**To email a staff member**, use the format `firstname.lastname@danishmuseum.org`



## New Additions to the Wall of Honor

MARCH 1, 2023 – AUGUST 31, 2023

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. Over 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 and Education Center. You may find a list of the immigrants on the Wall of Honor at [www.danishmuseum.org](http://www.danishmuseum.org).

The information below includes the immigrant's name, year of immigration, location where he/she settled, and the name, city, and state of the donor.

**MAREN ANDERSEN** (1890)

Rawlins, WY – Don & Maren Manuello, Sterling, CO

**ELLA GERDA KIEFFER JAKOBSEN** (1955)

Fargo, ND – Jenny Mackinzie, Fargo, ND

**JORGEN DAHM JAKOBSEN** (1955)

Fargo, ND – Jenny Mackenzie, Fargo, ND

**CHRISTEN BLACH JENSEN** (1890)

Rawlins, WY – Don & Maren Manuello, Sterling, CO

**KARLO JØRGENSEN** (1882)

Jacksonville, IA – Erik P. Lillehoj, West Friendship, MD

**BARTEL LARSON** (1869)

Shelby County, IA – Dorothy Eyberg, Arispe, IA

**JENS NIELSEN** (1889)

Battle Creek, IA – Eileen Whittemore, Saucier, MS



Back Left: Karlo Jørgensen rejoins his sweetheart, Johanne Bjørn Jensen, on the Wall of Honor.

## Jens Jensen Heritage Path

MARCH 1, 2023 – AUGUST 31, 2023

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.

Bruce & Claudia Denny, Tulsa, OK

David & Sandra Gardner, Walworth, NY

Steven & Laurie Hoifeldt, Ames, IA

Marcia Jante & Louis Nielsen, New Berlin, WI

Carol Schmidt, Naperville, IL

Kathe Weihs, Council Bluffs, IA



Engraved pavers on the Jens Jensen Heritage Path which honor, recognize, and celebrate individuals.



## New Members

MARCH 1, 2023 – AUGUST 31, 2023

The Museum of Danish America is pleased to identify the following **131** households and **4 non-profit organizations** as its newest members:

Ann Charlotte Gavel Adams, Seattle, WA  
John P. Andersen Sr. & Stacey Andersen, Haslet, TX  
Bruce & Tina Andersen, Audubon, IA  
Joyce Andersen-Bennett, Omaha, NE  
Liz Anderson, Omaha, NE  
Adriana Augustine, Evergreen, CO  
Erik F. Badger, Chicago, IL  
Gurli & Lea Becker Slater, Augustenborg, Denmark  
Maurice & Janelle Bell, Madison Heights, VA  
Jim & Angela Bengston, Jr., Clinton, IA  
Mark & Tracy Benjes, Craig, NE  
David & Sally Ann Benson, Bigelow, MN  
Corey Blackburn, Seattle, WA  
Mike & Becky Block, Elkhorn, NE  
Rachel Borzi, Minneapolis, MN  
Lauri & Rick Boysen, Atlantic, IA  
Deb Wilson & Peg Brenden, Saint Paul, MN  
Heather Broehm, Canistota, SD  
Chris & Sheila Christensen, Wessington Springs, SD  
Jim & Rose Christensen, Shoreview, MN  
Mitchell & Samantha Christensen, Omaha, NE  
Peter Christensen, Villa Rica, GA  
Roger Christensen, Anita, IA  
Sharon Christensen, Slater, IA  
Tim Christensen, Estacada, OR  
Orla & Maria Christiansen, Cumberland, RI  
Judy Cole, Neligh, NE  
Iris Dahlberg, Centennial, CO  
Danish American Center, Minneapolis, MN  
Danish Heritage Preservation Society, Danevang, TX  
Danish Sisterhood Freden Lodge #12, Moodus, CT  
Marta & Richard Dempsey, Bellevue, NE  
Julianne Dharna, Saint Louis, MO  
Emily Edgar, Laramie, WY  
Pam & Jay Erickson, Stillwater, MN  
Todd & Heidi Eriksen, Iowa Falls, IA  
Jeff & Susan Fugl Estee, Grand Rapids, MN  
Julie Fellows, Tempe, AZ  
Robert & Iantha Folkman, Brigham City, UT  
Laura Forslev, Apple Valley, MN  
Sara Frisk, Broomfield, CO  
Rebecca Greve, Plattsmouth, NE  
Camille Jensen-Guion & Edward Guion, Wind Point, WI  
Carol Hansen, Sac City, IA  
Eric Hansen, Chicago, IL



New members and newlyweds Mitchell & Samantha Christensen.

Kimberly Hansen, Elgin, IL  
Nathan Hansen, Blue Grass, IA  
Robert & Joyce Hansen, Dunkerton, IA  
Chad Harris, Kansas City, MO  
Kevin & Michelle Heckman, Guthrie Center, IA  
Sandy & Mike Herrera, Mount Pleasant, WI  
Andrew & Tammy Holtum, Faribault, MN  
Jill Hughes, Des Moines, IA  
Paul Hye, Chatham, NJ  
Derric & Irma Iles, Missoula, MT  
Bruce & Jane Jensen, Omaha, NE  
Fran & Ron Jensen, Eagle Mountain, UT  
Jan Jepsen & Cynthia Sheely, Centennial, CO  
Muriel Johnson, Highlands Ranch, CO  
Steven & Susan Johnson, DeKalb, IL  
Mary Jones, Our Town, MA  
Cheryl & Dave Kapka, Garner, IA  
Mary Kirby, Rockaway Beach, OR  
Hanah Konzen, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Annelise M. Kromann, Des Moines, WA  
Bente Kruse, Nakskov, Denmark  
Carolyn Kundel, Roland, IA  
John & Monica Kurtz, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Francine Lang, Christiansted, Virgin Islands  
Daniel & April Lange, Royalton, MN  
Patricia Lange, Sibley, IA  
Carol Larsen, Cordova, NE  
Karen Larsen, Spokane, WA  
Lorene Larsen, Omaha, NE  
Christa Lassen-Vogel, Lafayette, CO  
Kassidy Law & Brenden Swaney, Omaha, NE  
Casady & Kevin Lease, Johnston, IA  
Eric LeFaber, Cheney, WA  
Chuck & Megan Lewis, Grand Rapids, MI  
Cheryl Madsen, Minneapolis, MN  
Ann Cary Hevener & Kabir Mahadeva, Ponte Vedra, FL  
Susanne & Michael Mead, Omaha, NE  
Anders & Jennifer Melberg, Lindenhurst, IL

THANKS



## MoDA

Dave & Michelle Mills, Omaha, NE  
Gert Mogensen & Fiona Maxwell, Malone, WI  
Sheryn Morris, Los Angeles, CA  
Brian Nevermann, West Des Moines, IA  
Lani Nielsen, Fort Collins, CO  
Caley Jansen & Stuart Nielsen, Seattle, WA  
Beverly & Wayne Noelck, Hawarden, IA  
Nordic Culture Clubs, Moorhead, MN  
Carol Novak, McHenry, IL  
Harold & Leslie Noyes, Golden, CO  
Jessica Andersen & Jeremy Nuttall, Anita, IA  
Judy Obrecht, Harlan, IA  
Erik Tyr Rask Odderson, Kirkland, WA  
Matthew & Alyson Olesen Horton, Racine, WI  
Henry Olson, Irwin, IA  
Anna Orens, Denver, CO  
Kirsten Ann & Allan Pack, Anacortes, WA  
Hans Christian & Carrie Becker Petersen,  
    Augustenborg, Denmark  
Sally L. Petersen, Greeley, CO  
Tom & Jennifer Petersen, Exira, IA  
Melanie Phoenix, Santa Rosa, CA  
Frederick & Rebecca Raab, Boone, IA  
Alis Rasmussen, Mililani, HI  
Norlan & Lois Rasmussen, Audubon, IA  
Karen Rasmusson & Hans Langsjoen, Fargo, ND  
Mette Rea, Stockbridge, VT

Karin Roberts, Los Alamos, NM  
Charles & Rosemary Roe, Salt Lake City, UT  
Mary & Dale Ronna, Milford, IL  
Jenny Rupp, Marion, IA  
Timothy & Edie Scheffel, Cibolo, TX  
M. Robert & Mary Ann Scott, Ankeny, IA  
Brett & Erica Seelman, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Andrew Skouby, Mentor, OH  
Katherine Skouby, Highland Heights, OH  
Megan Skouby, Mebane, NC  
Susan Smith, Amarillo, TX  
Glenn & Terrie Sorensen, Clive, IA  
Steven & Sandra Sorenson, Waunakee, WI  
Chad Stadvold, Sioux City, IA  
Evan & Kelly Stange, Kansas City, MO  
Carna & Chris Steimel, Chester, VA  
Karen Stenquist, Draper, UT  
Bruce & Joan Swanson, Las Vegas, NV  
James & Denise Madren Timberland, Ames, IA  
Sean Timberland, Ames, IA  
Laurie Towne, Fort Dodge, IA  
Sue Uland, Lincoln, NE  
Don & Charlene Uldbjerg, Saco, ME  
Jeffrey West, Denver, CO  
Stacy West, Denver, CO  
Debra & Russell Weyers, Mount Pleasant, WI

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## In Honor

MARCH 1, 2023 – AUGUST 31, 2023

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

Melvin Boose  
Susan T. Brown  
Dana Topp Claussen  
Benedikte Ehlers  
Janice Evans  
Elisabeth Danzer Gormsen  
Ellen Lodge #21 and Denver Danes  
Inga Hoifeldt's 90th birthday  
Ralf & Inga Hoifeldt, Happy birthday(s) and thanks  
    for all you have done!  
Ralf & Inga Hoifeldt, Urbandale, Iowa  
Paul F. Jensen  
Soren Jensen Family  
Leonard Carstenson Johnson  
Lowell Kramme, for his service to the Museum.  
My uncle Earl Madsen's 100th birthday.  
MoDA Staff



Lowell Kramme, far right, pictured with his wife, Marilyn, and Anders Bo Rasmussen and wife Kristine Elisabeth Mulbjerg at the museum's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary event on June 24, 2023.

John Mark Nielsen and Tova Brandt, who have led the museum with distinction.  
Shirley Norlem  
Anders Sand



## Thank You, Charitable Organizations

MARCH 1, 2023 – AUGUST 31, 2023

These 43 'charitable' organizations have contributed memberships or are reciprocal memberships. We acknowledge their generosity in each edition of the *MoDA Magazine* during their annual membership.

American Swedish Historical Museum,  
Philadelphia, PA  
Atlantic Friends of The Danish Immigrant Museum,  
Atlantic, IA  
Danebod Lutheran Church, Tyler, MN  
Danes Hall of Waupaca, LLC, Waupaca, WI  
The Danish American Archive and Library, Blair, NE  
Danish American Athletic Club of 1922, Chicago, IL  
Danish American Center, Minneapolis, MN  
Danish American Heritage Society, Elk Horn, IA  
Danish Brotherhood Lodges, Heartland District,  
IA & MN  
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #15, Des Moines, IA  
Danish Brotherhood Lodge #35, Chicago, IL  
Danish Brotherhood Polarstjernen Lodge #283,  
Dagmar, MT  
The Danish Canadian National Museum, Spruce  
View, Alberta, Canada  
Danish Club of Tucson, Tucson, AZ  
Danish Heritage Preservation Society, Danevang, TX  
The Danish Home, Croton on Hudson, NY  
The Danish Home Foundation, Chicago, IL  
Danish Sisterhood of America, USA  
Danish Sisterhood Lodge #3, Davenport, IA  
Danish Sisterhood Dagmar Lodge #4, Chicago, IL  
Danish Sisterhood Freden Lodge #12, New Haven, CT  
Danish Sisterhood Dronning Margrethe Lodge #15,  
Milwaukee, WI  
Danish Sisterhood Katherine Lodge #20, Kenosha, WI  
Danish Sisterhood Ellen Lodge #21, Denver, CO

Danish Sisterhood Lodge #102, Des Moines, IA  
Danish Sisterhood Flora Danica Lodge #177,  
Solvang, CA  
Danish Sisterhood Hygge Lodge #188, Enumclaw, WA  
Danish Sisterhood Heartland District,  
Iowa & Minnesota  
Danish Sisterhood Pacific Northwest District,  
Oregon & Washington  
Elk Horn-Kimballton Optimist Club, Elk Horn &  
Kimballton, IA  
Elk Horn Lutheran Church, Elk Horn, IA  
Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, Solvang, CA  
Federation of Danish Associations in Canada,  
Gloucester, Canada  
Knudsen Old Timers, Glendale, CA  
Nordic Culture Clubs, Moorhead, MN  
Outlook Study Club, Elk Horn, IA area  
Proongily, Saint Paul, MN  
Red River Danes, Fargo, ND area  
Ringsted Danish American Fellowship, Ringsted, IA  
Scan Design Foundation, Seattle, WA  
Scandinavian Studies, University of Washington,  
Seattle, WA  
Shelby County Historical Society & Museum,  
Harlan, IA  
Symra Literary Society, Decorah, IA

TAK



**Knudsen Old Timers Organization (1939-present),  
former employees of Knudsen Dairy, founded in 1919.**

**The drill team for Danish Sisterhood Dagmar Lodge  
#4 of Chicago, Illinois.** Gift of the Supreme Lodge of  
the Danish Sisterhood of America. 2016-210.004.004.



## Memorials

MARCH 1, 2023 – AUGUST 31, 2023

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

Harvey Andersen  
Ramona Andersen  
Ramona Andersen,  
my 1<sup>st</sup> babysitter  
Elsie Baker  
Harry H. Birkholm  
Paul & Gyriha Blinkilde  
Andy Boettger  
Janice Bradley, of Danish  
Sisterhood Lodge #100  
Janice Bradley, DSS Lodge #100  
Ron & Mary Bro  
Ron Bro  
Ronald Bro  
Ronald Dean Bro  
Uncle Ron Bro, in honor of all he  
has done for the museum over  
the years.  
Robert W. Brown  
In loving memory of my aunt  
Erma Jensen Carpenter, who  
was always proud of her  
Danish heritage.  
Jens Thuroc Carstensen  
Paul M. Cash  
Carlo Christensen  
Carlo Christensen, Glendale CA  
Clarice Christensen  
Eilar S. Christensen  
Ove C. Christensen  
Richard S. Dalby  
Carol Christine Thuesen DeYoung  
Chris & Thora Eriksen  
Janice Evans  
Janice Evans, Powder Springs, GA  
Sally Faber, my wife  
Hans & Mathilde Farstrup-1903  
Lillian J. Frandsen  
Evelyn & Carl Frost  
Birte Geijsbeck  
Birte Geijsbeek, in loving  
memory of a dear friend. Love,  
Sonja, Kirsten, Allan, and family  
Einar Graff  
Stew Hansen  
Preben Hjortlund, In loving  
memory of my Danish cousin.

Alvina Hjortsvang  
Edna Faaborg Jacobsen  
Edna Jacobsen, in loving memory.  
Edna Jacobsen, wife of Dick  
Jacobsen.  
Aunt Edna Faaborg Jacobsen,  
so that her energy can be  
shared as it will benefit the  
museum and its visitors.  
Edna Jacobson  
Paula Jakobsen  
Greta Jakobsen Algeo  
Thyra Jakobsen Nagel  
Nancy L. Jensen  
Rose & Maynard Jensen  
Betty Jensen Thielen was very  
proud of her Danish heritage.  
Iver & Marie Jorgensen  
Jaque Jorgensen  
Donald & Edith Kaarup  
Karen Kadgihn  
Bernard Kaltoft  
Donna Koch  
Russell & Joan Lange  
Marius & Elise Larsen  
Ruth Jensen Larsen, Past  
President of Danish Sisterhood  
PNW District.  
Anna Laursen  
Barbara Laursen  
John P. & Metta K. Laursen  
Robert Laursen  
Donald Lenef  
Kathryn Knudsen Littlejohn  
Dorothy E. Lund  
Marvin & Lydia Madsen  
Christine Martens  
Clark Mathisen, former MoDA  
board member and my father.  
Effie Mestad Enger (mother)  
Peter L. Miller, Marcus, IA  
Laina Molbak, my wife.  
Alger J. Nielsen  
Elizabeth Nielsen  
Donald M. Olson  
Laurie Packer  
H. Rand Petersen

Ragna Yeilegaard Reid  
Andrew & Rosa Rosenkild  
Leroy Sand  
Earl Schell  
Lene & Preben Sepstrup  
Axel Skelbeck, Secretary-  
Treasurer Emeritus, Danish  
Brotherhood in America  
1904-1986.  
Roger Sorensen  
Flemming Sørensen  
Emmert & Neoma Steen  
Shirley Stelter  
Paul Terkelsen  
Chris Thogersen  
Lillie Sorensen Thompson  
(1923-2003)  
Capt. Lars E. Toftemark  
Fred Townsend  
Robert Wallner  
Evelyn (Olson) Ward  
Walter Westergaard



In memory of Ron & Mary Bro.



# brændende kærlighed “BURNING LOVE”

SERVES 5 - As suggested by our previous Danish Intern, Emmelie Krag Adolfsen

## MASHED POTATOES

- 3 lb. potatoes
- 1 cup milk
- 5 tbsp. butter
- Salt

## TOPPING

- 1 lb. bacon, diced
- 2 onions, finely diced
- Chopped parsley

## SIDE

- Pickled beets

Peel the potatoes and cut them into small pieces. Put the potatoes in a saucepan and cover them with water. Do not salt the water. Boil the potatoes until they are tender, about 20 minutes.

While the potatoes are boiling, fry the diced bacon until crisp in a frying pan. Add the diced onions and fry them until they become soft, transparent, and a little golden.

Pour the boiled potatoes into a large bowl or stand mixer and whip them until they become mashed potatoes. While whipping the potatoes, add the milk and butter stepwise. Continue whipping until all the milk and butter are mixed with the potatoes. Add salt to taste.

Serve this dish with the mashed potatoes as the base and the bacon and onions as toppings. Garnish with chopped parsley. You can also serve pickled beets with *brændende kærlighed*.







museum of  
danish america

2212 WASHINGTON STREET  
ELK HORN, IA 51531  
@DANISHMUSEUM

01.



FRONT



BACK

Glædelig Jul  
og Godt Nytår

INSIDE GREETING

02.



**01. Annual Christmas Cards:** With envelope(s). Single #4401, \$3; Pack of 10 #4400, \$20. **02. Porcelain Ornament:** Includes red ribbon for hanging. #4402, \$18. **More to see online:** [www.danishmuseum.org/shop](http://www.danishmuseum.org/shop). **Order by phone, 712.764.7001, weekdays 9 am – 4 pm. Members receive a 10% discount!**