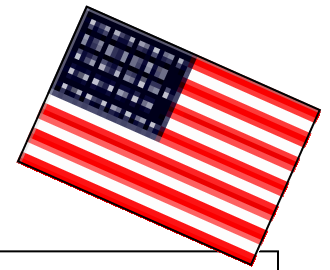


JOTTINGS



A publication of the Danish American Archive and Library

Jan. – May 2015

A HOME OF OUR OWN

The DAAL Board of Directors Votes to Purchase Our Current Building

Once in a while in the life of an organization, an offer comes along that's just too good to pass up, and this is one of those times for the Danish American Archive and Library. John Eriksen, owner of the building the DAAL currently occupies (and a Dane) has agreed to sell the building to us at a price that will allow us to thrive in it for years to come.



Looking toward the north, the more than 12,000 books in the library portion of the DAAL are shelved.

“Purchasing our own building will benefit us in so many ways,” says Executive Director Jill Hennick. “From the location on the main street of Blair to the way the interior is arranged, this building has proved to be a real asset for us.” The DAAL moved into the building located at 1738 Washington Street in October of 2010, after evacuating from the Dana College library before the college had closed the previous July. Since moving in, volunteers have devoted uncountable hours installing and populating shelves and file cabinets, creating work spaces, adding newly acquired collections, creating exhibits, hosting Danish American- and Dana College-related gatherings and welcoming researchers and other visitors. It took a full year and a half to get the majority of the boxes we brought out of Dana unpacked and the materials organized.

The long-term future of the DAAL has always been a concern for the board of directors. More than two years ago the board appointed a futures committee to look into our options. At that time, we were approached by Blair Public Library Director Gayle

Roberts with a proposal that we become part of a joint building project on land that the city owns. Preliminary figures showed that it would be to the DAAL's advantage to join in such a plan. Unfortunately as time passed, the costs rose and the amount of space we could afford became unworkable for us. When the opportunity to buy our current building arose, we felt we had to withdraw from the Blair library project and take advantage of an option that is so much healthier for our long-term prospects.

The members of the board and the volunteers are now looking toward a bright future for the DAAL. The Capital Campaign Committee that had begun raising funds for the library building project are now contacting donors who had pledged to that effort to see if they will redirect their donations to the purchase price of the current building. A broader fundraising effort will be launched shortly, and if all goes as planned, we hope to raise enough for the whole purchase price up front, freeing us from any mortgage payments and allowing us to direct our efforts toward improving and advancing the preservation of our priceless documents and books and making them available to the public. Plans are in place to increase the DAAL's visibility through exhibits and cooperative efforts with other institutions such as the Museum of Danish America in Elk Horn, Iowa, as well as several universities.

DAAL President Gary Madsen says, “Having passed this milestone, I believe the DAAL will continue to expand and be an asset to not only the city of Blair, but also the Danish American community throughout the country.”

Our efforts now are directed toward raising the funding to purchase our building, providing a secure place for the DAAL to flourish in the coming years, and toward increasing our endowment to ensure our long-term financial future. To help us with either effort, simply send your donation to the Danish American Archive and Library, 1738 Washington Street, Blair, NE 68008. Or you can donate by credit card by calling Jill Hennick at 402-426-7910. ■



The view looking south toward the front door shows the acid-free boxes in which precious family materials are kept.

FROM THE DANA ROOM

IN 1939, "ROYAL PAIR'S VISIT BRINGS THRONGS HERE"

By Ann Harms George

Between 1939 and 2009, three successive generations of Denmark's royal family visited Dana College: in 1939, Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Ingrid; in 1976, Queen Margrethe II and Prince Consort Henrik; and in 2009, Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Mary.

This issue describes the first visit – the headline above is from the April 20, 1939, issue of the Blair Pilot-Tribune – and the next two issues will describe the 1976 and 2009 visits.

Shortly after 3 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19, 1939, Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Ingrid of Denmark, who were on a goodwill tour of the U.S., arrived on the Dana College campus in "a long, low-slung dark green Cadillac," the next day's edition of the Blair Enterprise reported. They'd traveled from Omaha and were met on the outskirts of Blair by representatives of Blair, Dana, and Trinity Seminary.

The royal couple didn't travel alone – their entourage, in a seven-car motorcade, included, among others, the Danish minister to Washington, D.C., a lady-in-waiting for Princess Ingrid, and a Danish navy aide for Prince Frederik. (Newspapers also noted that in Omaha and Blair they were accompanied by 75 Secret Service agents, Omaha police on motorcycles, "at least six state highway patrol cars," FBI agents, and plainclothesmen.)

On their drive through Blair they were greeted by many hundreds along streets decorated with American and Danish flags. Among them, according to the Blair Pilot-Tribune, were an estimated 900 schoolchildren waving the flags of both countries, "all anxiously awaiting a glimpse of the first royalty ever to visit Blair."

When the motorcade reached the campus, Prince Frederik and Princess Ingrid, described in the Pilot-Tribune as "Europe's handsomest and most democratic royalty," were greeted by a crowd estimated at two thousand.

As the couple entered Dana's Alumni Memorial Auditorium (since demolished) for a formal reception and program, they walked between two rows of saluting, uniformed Blair Sea Scouts. (The Sea Scouts are part of the Boy Scouts of America. Perhaps they were chosen as honor guards because Prince Frederik had been educated at the Royal Danish Naval Academy as well as at the University of Copenhagen; when he became King Frederik IX, in 1947, on the death of his father, King Christian X, he'd already attained the rank of rear admiral and had seen active service, according to Wikipedia.)

The program included several greetings, music by Dana's a capella choir, and the presentation of a basket of flowers by Marilyn and Mildred Siersbeck, the nine-year-old twin daughters of Dana President and Mrs. Lawrence Siersbeck, to Princess Ingrid. She invited them to remain on the stage with her, but they'd been rehearsed, so they curtsied and left.

Prince Frederik also brought greetings. He began reading in English from a prepared manuscript, but then, the April 20 Morning [Omaha] World-Herald reported, "... as he warmed to his subject he crushed the manuscript and spoke with gestures, in his native Danish tongue."

(In addition to newspaper clippings, the DAAL's Dana Room has a scrapbook assembled soon after the visit that includes the crumpled manuscript, the printed program, photographs and correspondence.)

A tree-planting followed the

reception. The prince was invited to shovel a symbolic spadeful of earth into a prepared hole, but then, to everyone's surprise, he continued to shovel. (Unfortunately, the tree, an oak sapling, didn't survive Nebraska weather.)

The third event was a Kaffeboard



Crown Prince Frederik admires his handiwork during the tree-planting ceremony. Crown Princess Ingrid stands next to UDELIC president N.C. Carlsen.

reception – which featured music by Dana students -- in the women's residence hall (later named Argo Hall). Princess Ingrid and Pastor N.C. Carlsen, president of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, were seated together, and the next day's Morning World-Herald included a photo of her pouring coffee for him.

After the Kaffeboard, the Hermes, the campus newspaper, wrote that

"... waving farewell, their Royal

(Continued Page 3)

Crown Prince Frederik (Cont.)

Highnesses hurried to their cars where they received loud applause and cheers from the crowd outside.” They and their entourage then returned to Omaha for a reception-musical at the Fontenelle Hotel (also since demolished), where Dana’s a capella choir again sang.

“Students,” the Hermes reported, “were indeed proud to entertain such royalty and this proved to be an occasion which shall never be forgotten.”

An alumnus who attended all three events –

Although there are many who attended both the 1976 and 2009 royal visits, we know of only one person who witnessed all three. In 1939 the late Dr. Paul Neve was a Dana student and member of the a capella choir that sang for Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Ingrid at Dana and in Omaha. In 1976, as professor of music and choir director, he directed the Dana Choir that sang for Queen Margrethe and Prince Henrik. And in 2009, as professor emeritus, he was present for the visit of Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Mary. ■

More about the Dana Folk Dancers

In response to the article about the Folk Dancers in the last Jottings, three Dana alumni have given us additional information about the group.

Hans Hermansen, a Folk Dancer from 1968-1972, in an e-mail from Racine, Wisconsin, writes that the Dancers’ new costumes “came to Dana in 1970. They were created by Inga Hermansen [his mother] from pictures of costumes from the various regions of Denmark. Then she was commissioned to make more that were presented when the Queen [Margrethe II of Denmark] was visiting the campus. The trip to Milwaukee was in November, 1971, when Denmark was the featured country at the International Folk Fair.”

In a phone conversation, Paul Johnson of Fremont, Nebraska, a 1976 graduate, recalled that when he joined the Dancers in 1973 they were accompanied by a pianist, which limited their outdoor performances. While participating in a folk festival in

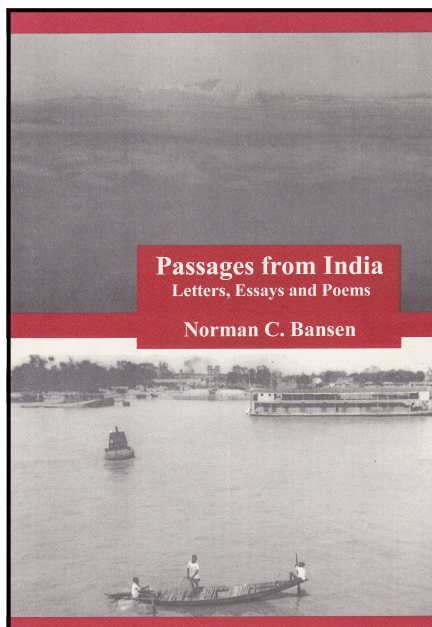
McCook, Nebraska, the Dancers saw a group performing German dances with an accordionist. Paul subsequently asked Dana friend Mark Grorud, who had an accordion, to give him lessons, and then Mark let him borrow it to accompany the Dancers. When Mark graduated, the *Dana Review*, the alumni magazine, included an article asking if anyone had an accordion to donate to the Dancers – and a reader generously contributed one.

And in Blair, Dr. Richard Jorgensen, Dana professor emeritus, notes that the photo of the Dancers performing on the campus dates from 1960. Our thanks for these additions to the history of this group. ■

PASSAGES FROM INDIA ON SALE!

**The professor as a young man
Get to know Norman Bansen –
one of the Danish-American
community’s leaders – in
*Passages from India: Letters,
Essays and Poems.***

At just \$10 plus \$4 shipping and



handling, this wonderful book is a bargain over the \$19.95 cover price. (Nebraska residents add 7% sales tax.)

Act soon. Just call 402-426-7910 to order or by e-mail at info@danishamericanarchive.com

Passages From India

By Norman C. Bansen

Reviewed by Catrine Kyster Giery

Norman C. Bansen, the author of the book *Passages from India: Letters, Essays and Poems, 1944-46* is closely intertwined with the Danish-American community and the effort to document and share its history and culture. Bansen, who passed away in 2004, was a long-time professor at Dana College in Blair, Nebraska. He was instrumental in establishing the Museum of Danish America, located in Elk Horn, Iowa, and was named a Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog in 1970. Supporting Bansen’s importance are also 73 acid-free boxes containing his letters, essays and poems which can be studied at the Danish American Archive and Library in Blair. Knowing Bansen’s later role in the Danish-American community is one of several aspects which make *Passages from India* a worthwhile read and an interesting document attesting to Danish-American as well as Danish-American-Indian history. In this book, the reader gets to know young Bansen in the 1940s as he encounters both the colorful world of India and interacts in the multi-ethnic world of the U.S. Army. Reading the book, it is easy to imagine that the author’s time in India stimulated his interest in learning about different cultures as well as his understanding and appreciation of the importance of members of different cultures getting to know each other. Bansen writes: “I look for the day when there’ll no longer be patriotism as we know it today. True patriotism, as I see it, is love for one’s own country and love of other nations, too. Yes, I’ll miss India and the cool verandahs of mission houses, walks through Indian villages, and the sound of ripening rice rustling in the October breezes that blow over the paddies.” In 1939, Bansen came to Dana College as a freshman from California; however, in 1942, WWII temporarily interrupted his studies. Bansen joined up and was sent to India where he served as a captain at a U.S. Army hospital. The insights that he shares in this book – the administrative work of an officer in the army, the daily life in the living quarters, his interactions with the Indian workers at the base, other Indians as well as

**(Continued Page 4)
Passages From India (Cont.)**

Westerners living in the area – are unique as they provide a different perspective on the war than many other published WWII accounts which focus on combat. Bansen’s war was relatively peaceful – mostly, the constant daily enemy was the weather. However, Bansen, driven by curiosity and an open mind, takes every opportunity to explore. His visits to locations with Danish history are especially interesting to read as these aspects of history are not very well-known and Bansen describes them vividly. Such visits include the Assam Colony of the Lutheran Santal Mission of the Northern Churches, a mission which was supported by the two Danish church branches in the United States as well as the Lutheran churches of Denmark and Norway, and Serampore, a Danish settlement known as Frederiksnagore from around 1755 to 1845.

In the book, Bansen refers to himself as a Danish-American but at other times as a Scandinavian from California and as an American. His ethnic self-identification seems inclusive, relational and fluent, not traditional and stringent. Signs of “Danishness” include sometimes using Danish words in his letters to his family back home, longing for Danish Christmas hymns, enjoying a special comradeship with other Americans of Scandinavian descent, and referring to Danish culinary habits. However, Bansen is also very proud of being an American and writes highly of the way that Americans treat Indians. He is also fascinated by the variety of ethnic groups who are present in the U.S. Army: “I always enjoy thinking about all the different nationalities represented in groups such as the one last night. One must acknowledge the fact that therein lies America’s greatness. Among the men last night there was a Jew, a German, one of English descent, two Virginians, descendants of French Huguenots; among the women two Canadians, one Irish, one English, and a German, a Norwegian, a Swede and one of Scotch descent. Wonderfully conglomerate America!” With this attitude, Bansen went on to become a very influential person who helped propel the Danish-American community forwards. ■



DANISH BROTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD MEMBERS TOUR THE DAAL

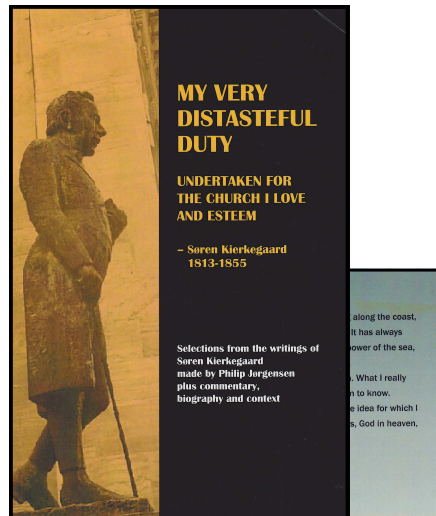
On May 13, the DAAL became the first stop on a bus tour of the area’s Danish establishments. Conceived and planned by DAAL volunteer George Madsen, the tour, called *Celebrate Your Danish Heritage*, included 35 members of the Danish Brotherhood and Danish Sisterhood lodges from the Omaha and surrounding areas. Starting from Lincoln and Omaha, they traveled to Blair and the DAAL. Board member Tim Jensen spoke to the group about the history of the Archive, how we came to be in this location, and what kinds of materials we collect and preserve here. The participants then were invited to walk through the shelves of materials and books, see the Dana Room, and in a couple of cases look up the collections belonging to their forebears. Finally they had coffee, served in Danish porcelain cups, Danish kringle and home made Danish cookies. One participant was overheard to say, “I feel so Danish!”



Dr. Timothy Jensen spoke on the history and contents of the DAAL.

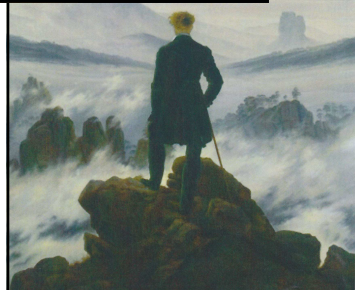
From Blair the tour continued to Elk Horn, Iowa, and the Museum of Danish America where they toured, had lunch and shopped. The last stop on the tour was Kimballton, Iowa, a small town of roughly 350 people that prides itself on its Danish customs, traditions, and ethnicity. The DAAL was happy to host this event, and we invite all those who attended to return often. ■

MY VERY DISTASTEFUL DUTY Undertaken for the Church I Love and Esteem --Soren Kierkegaard 1813-1855 Reviewed by Dr. John W. Nieslen



Stylistically the reader may have some initial difficulty with the editor’s arrangement of original text and scholarly commentary, but when he has become accustomed with this challenge, he will find a trove of information and gratifying material. Here are aspects of Kierkegaard that are less known and therefore satisfying to discover. The book is a good addition to anyone’s shelf of Kierkegaard material.

The author/editor, Philip Jorgensen was a student of Howard Hong at St. Olaf and is a retired Lutheran pastor. The book is available for \$18 from the author at 403-381-7378 or from the St. Olaf bookstore at 507-786-3048. ■



VOLUNTEERS: 2,399 hours by 40 volunteers from Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, and Texas.

VISITORS: 34 visitors from Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, and Denmark.

USERS: 22 users from Arizona, Idaho, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Carolina, and Denmark.

ACQUISITIONS

The following are the donations of materials we have received from January through April. The Archive could not continue to document the history of Danish Americans without these wonderful materials including complete family collections, photos, books, periodicals, music and obituaries.

Materials:

Laura Ann Andersen Allen (Avoca, IA)
 Fran Anderson (Omaha, NE)
 Erna Berthelsen (Albert Lea, MN)
 Betty Hansen (Northfield, MN)
 Frederick J. Hansen (Wichita, KS)
 Verlan & Helga Hanson (Blair, NE)
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 Dody Johnson (Iowa City, IA)
 Paul Johnson (Fremont, NE)
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 Joan "Jody" Sorensen (Richardson, TX)
 Larrie Stone (Blair, NE)
 Sandra Wigdahl (Blair, NE)

FINANCIAL REPORT

Capital Campaign:

Funds in the Capital Campaign will be used for a permanent home for DAAL.

Frederick J. Hansen (Wichita, KS)
 Clayton & Lila Nietfeld (Greeley, CO)
 Folmer & Vera Nyby (Michigan City, IN)

Memorials:

Memorials are part of the General Fund

Ernie Anderson
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 Andrea Neve (Minneapolis, MN)
 Rev. Aster Neve
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 Paul Neve on his birthday
 Lori Jones (Texarkana, TX)
 Dr. Paul & Lela Neve
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 Robert & Martha Christiansen (Tempe, AZ)
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 Robert & Martha Christiansen (Tempe, AZ)

Honoraria:

Honoraria are part of the General Fund.

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 Phil & Florence Larsen (Blair, NE)
 Alvina Hjortsvang on her birthday
 K. Joyce Mynster (Council Bluffs, IA)
 Gary & Diane Madsen's 40th Anniversary
 Phil & Florence Larsen (Blair, NE)
 Kathy Meldrum
 Laura Meldrum (Musella, GA)
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 Sarah Meldrum (Lowell, MA)

General Fund:

All donations are placed in the General Fund unless otherwise specified. Those who give through the 50/100 Club are listed in each issue of Jottings.

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FINANCIAL REPORT (cont.)

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Larrie Stone (Blair, NE)
Sandra Wigdahl (Blair, NE)

Endowment:

The goal of the endowment fund is to reach such a level as to sustain DAAL operations on the interest. Currently, all earnings are being rolled over. The endowment includes named funds and a general fund.

DELORIS HANSEN BENGTON FUND
REV. C.I. "JERRY" LUND FUND
REV. ASTER & RUTH NEVE FAMILY FUND
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GENERAL ENDOWMENT FUND

Dody Johnson (Iowa City, IA)
In memory of Rev. Dick Jensen
In memory of Rev. Karen Capel
In honor of Dorothy Wright's 95th birthday
The Zahrt Family Fund of Schwab Charitable
(San Francisco, CA)

50/100 Club:

The name of the 50/100 Club was inspired by the idea that if 100 members gave \$50 per month, most of our operating expenses would be met. Members sustain the DAAL by giving a minimum of \$600 per year (given monthly, quarterly or annually according to the donor's preference). Those at the Founders Level give at least \$2,000 per year. An added benefit of being part of the 50/100 Club is receiving one donation acknowledgement for tax purposes in January, reflecting a yearly total of all donations, rather than getting a separate acknowledgement for each financial contribution. These donations are part of the General Fund.

50/100 FOUNDER LEVEL

Luther & Doris Kloth (Wauwatosa, WI)
Phil & Florence Larsen (Blair, NE)
John W & Elizabeth Nielsen

50/100 GENERAL

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Legacy Builders:

These donors have named DAAL in their estates (* indicates deceased). If you are not on this list but should be, please contact Jill Hennick at 402-426-7910 or Paul Johnson at 402-201-7024.

Erna Berthelsen
Judy Brehm
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Michael and Jill Hennick
Russell P.* and Esther A. Jensen
Tim & Sharon Jensen
Julianne Johnson and Judy Pollack
Oscar* & Dody Johnson
Paul & Liz Johnson
Lorene Larsen
Phil & Florence Larsen
Gene & Nancy Lindblad
Gary & Diane Madsen
John W. & Elizabeth Nielsen
LeVern* & Marilyn* Nielsen
Larry & Palma Plume
Joan Sorensen

◆ Last winter the DAAL was pleased to add the private library of Dr. P.M

AROUND THE ARCHIVE

Mitchell to our collection. Phillip Marshall Mitchell (1916-1999) was a renowned scholar of Danish and German literature with more than 400 published writings. We received 230+ works of mostly Danish literature and literary criticism. This has greatly expanded our holdings in those areas, especially from the mid to late twentieth century.

◆ On Tuesday, March 24, a group of staff and volunteers from the DAAL traveled to the University of Nebraska at Omaha archive to tour their expanded and renovated space.

UNO has been a helpful partner to the DAAL since the signing of a mutual community cooperation agreement in 2011. We very much enjoyed meeting up with our friends on the UNO archive staff and seeing their wonderful new space!

- ◆ *The Danish Children Growing Up American* photo exhibit continues its successful showings. Beginning in October through the end of December the exhibit will be on display at the Denver, Colorado, public library. The timing for that display is fortunate, since the Danish Sisterhood's national convention is scheduled in Denver for three days in mid-October. After the Denver showing, the exhibit travels back to Nebraska and the University of Nebraska at Kearney in January 2016.
- ◆ Articles about the DAAL have appeared in two successive issues of *The Danish Pioneer*, the country's oldest continuously published Danish American newspaper. Board members Chris Gehringer and Tim Jensen wrote the articles—Chris about how the DAAL is preserving her family papers, and Tim about a remarkable couple, Lloyd and Muriel Neve, and their equally remarkable collection. You can see the articles on the Pioneer's web site at www.danishpioneer.com.
- ◆ We are delighted to welcome back for the summer Kate Garrett, who just completed her freshman year at Ohio State University. Kate first began volunteering as a freshman in high school and has evolved from volunteer, to intern, to part-time employee. Kate works as an assistant to Executive Director Jill Hennick.
- ◆ Several volunteers from outside Nebraska came to work at the DAAL the week of April 27. Colorado, Texas, Ohio, Nebraska and Iowa were represented. Milestones were reached when Jody Sorensen, and Dody and Julie Johnson finished entering all the obituary information into a database, and Helga and Verlan Hanson finished entering all the information from the Danish Brotherhood record books into a database. Each of these projects took roughly 20 years to complete, and each will make the information more readily accessible. Our thanks to our volunteers who work so tirelessly to make the information contained in the Archive available to as many people as possible. ■

Would you like to help?

Please cut out this card and send it in with your tax-deductible contribution.

A check for \$ _____ is enclosed. (Please make payable to the Danish American Archive and Library.)

Or to pay by credit card:

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Thank you for your ongoing support of the Danish American Archive and Library

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 'S REPORT

As you can see from the lead story in



Jill Hennick

Jottings, a lot of work has gone into making the best choice for the long-term future of the DAAL. Frankly, gathering all the information we needed to make an intelligent decision occupied much

of our time for nearly a year. But that wasn't the only thing going on during the past several months. Progress has been made on all aspects of our daily operations including:

—Hosting our fourth intern, Nancy Hansen, who came to us from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Nancy took a collection that had only a cursory organization through the entire process of sorting, coding, indexing and digitizing.

—Regarding digitizing, two of our volunteers, Matt Petersen and Marty Koefoed, have greatly expanded our information technology with automatic backup and off-site storage, additional scanners, and additional computer work stations. And we have begun to tap the potential of the Alfresco system that

enables us to organize scans and office documents. This will also allow volunteers to work remotely, which will vastly increase the amount of materials that are processed.

—Our extended hours have enabled us to accommodate out-of-town or out-of-country researchers and other visitors. Recently, Linda Steffensen, editor of *The Danish Pioneer* newspaper, and her mother visited.

—Ralf and Inga Hoifeldt of Urbandale, Iowa, recently finished translating the diaries of Jens Dixon, an early UELC missionary who traveled all over, even going as far as Australia. Other volunteers who translate for us are retired Dana College professor Arvin Hernes, and Jens and Eileen Simonsen of Oakdale, Nebraska.

—Retired Dana College professor Gene Lindblad, former alumni director Ann George, and former Dana College employee Joan Krogh continue organizing of the massive Dana College collection. The DAAL is truly where Dana College lives on.

—We were contacted by a young playwright and actor living in Minnesota who requested the rights to write a screenplay based on the Lur Publications book, *Boats in the*

Night. We have retained a lawyer to look into copyright issues that would be involved before we make a decision.

—Our visibility and relationships continue to grow several ways. President Gary Madsen gave presentations for the Blair Rotary and the Danish Vennelyst Park Association in Omaha. The Blair chapter of the AAUW held their annual international dinner in the Archive at which Tim Jensen spoke.

—Board members Chris Gehringer and Dave Johnson, and planned giving consultant Paul Johnson attended the closing banquet for the Rebild Society gathering in Omaha on April 25. DAAL brochures were included in welcome bags distributed to Rebild Society attendees by the Museum of Danish America.

—Finally, a delegation from the DAAL visited the newly expanded University of Nebraska at Omaha archive. UNO has long been a supportive friend to the DAAL.

We will continue to work on the big decisions, as well as the more routine. New people continue to come in, projects continue to progress, and relationships continue to grow.



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THE EASIEST GIFT YOU'LL EVER MAKE!

By Paul Johnson, Planned Giving Consultant

It's a fact that most donors neglect to leave part of their estate to charity. This is hardly surprising since most Americans die without a will. But even among donors who have a will, most still do not leave anything to charity. Why is this so??

My guess is that many donors think that planned giving is complicated and costly. While this certainly can be true in some circumstances, for many, planned giving can be quite simple, and cost little or nothing. Most people don't even need to change their wills. If you have savings, investments or life insurance that has beneficiary designations, all you need is to complete a Beneficiary Change form provided by the financial institution. Those who are married would typically list charities among their contingent (secondary) beneficiaries.

So, how much should you leave to charity?? The more appropriate question is "how much do you want to leave to charity?" For some, it makes more sense to start by asking how much you want to leave to your heirs. I usually recommend stating your intentions as a percentage of the asset rather than a specific dollar amount since you usually don't know what the value of the asset will be in the future.

What makes this kind of gift easy is that 1) it just takes one form, 2) you don't have to pay anything to make this change, and 3) the gift is only complete when you know (for a fact!) that you won't need it. In other words, it's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

Estate gifts like this are critical to the future well-being of many non-profits such as DAAL. If you have any questions, please give me a call at 402/201-7024. Tusind tak!



Paul Johnson, Planned Giving Consultant for the DAAL and MoDA.

Paul Johnson is a CFP® professional under contract with DAAL to assist its donors with planned giving.