

JOTTINGS

A publication of the Danish American Archive and Library

January-April 2022

REVEALING THE REMODELED DAAL

Report by Executive Director Jill Hennick

The Danish American Archive and Library closed for remodeling last October and reopened this March. During that time our major goal was to install movable shelving on one side of the Archive to increase our storage space. This was a significant organizational challenge as it required moving a 13,000 volume library and a 3,500 box archive! Thankfully our volunteers were up to the task. They formed a talented and skilled “logistics team” that included laborers to move large numbers of books and boxes, interior designers, dismantlers of shelves, furniture movers, computer hardware inspectors, scrap metal transporters, and some very good dusters.

The interior of the DAAL now has the library on the east side with the books on one-sided shelving and the archival boxes on the new movable shelves on the west side. If necessary the movable section could be expanded in the future. This new configuration allowed us to create more flexible and open workstations to accommodate our varying numbers of workers and researchers on different days of the week. The extra shelving has also allowed us to tidy up the offices, store rooms and closets so we can use those spaces more efficiently. We said farewell to a lot of “clutter” by getting more materials onto a proper shelf. Initially our goal had been to sell all of our old, metal shelves, but as time passed we decided we could use most of them by filling up our extra wall spaces. A wall here and a wall there added over 180 feet of additional storage space! With the ever-increasing amount of material donations, we need to use every square foot of the DAAL wisely.



Library shelving on the left with Jill in the new archive shelving on the right..

Looking ahead we are planning on an electrical upgrade and the purchase of some additional furniture. This would include some quality office chairs for our work stations, and another couple of standing desks. The latter have proven to be especially useful and popular. Fortunately the DAAL has had donors who designated that their funds be used for just such purchases. In a sense our renovation will go on indefinitely as we continue to look for more and better ways to provide a worthy place to collect and preserve the historical documents of Danish America. ■

FROM THE DANA ROOM

Two Rare Record Albums

By Michael Hennick, Library Director

The JaShaNas

In the fall of 1966 three women began their higher education at Dana College. They were all music lovers and as freshmen they often gathered around the piano in the dorm or harmonized together in their rooms. Later in their college careers they began singing for various groups, organizations and churches. The trio acquired the name "JaShaNas" at the suggestion of Dana's president, Dr. C. C. Madsen. It was taken from the first two letters of their names: Janet Winkel, Sharon Boone and Naomi Kenyon. As juniors in 1969 they released a record album simply entitled *The JaShaNas*. The recording featured a selection of popular spiritual songs and show tunes accompanied by organ, piano or guitar. All three women went on to graduate with the Dana class of 1970.



Battle Hymn of the Republic
 Let There be Peace on Earth
 You Can Tell the World
 The Impossible Dream
 Count Your Blessings
 Sweetheart Tree
 Born Free
 --and more

Janet - Sharon - Naomi

1986 DANA COLLEGE CHOIR TOUR

When Lutheran immigrants from northern Europe settled in America they brought with them the music of their homelands. And at their colleges from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific Northwest they and their descendants have developed a reputation for excellence in choral music. The Dana College Choir was born out of that tradition and for more than sixty years, concert goes in the United States, Europe and the Orient have enjoyed the work of this outstanding musical organization.

The Dana College Choir traditionally presents the best examples of sacred choral music. Much of it is performed a capella but in recent years, accompaniments in various forms have been added.

Critics have praised the Dana Choir for its eagerness of purpose and sincerity as well as its technical skill. The precision of attacks and releases, full ensemble balance, blending of tone and diction are some of the qualities which continue to distinguish the work of the Dana College Choir.

The conductor of the Choir, Dr. Richard A. Palmer, was appointed to that position in 1984. He is a graduate of Wayne State College and the University of Illinois and previously served as choral director at the University of Texas at El Paso.

As a Christian liberal arts college, Dana is dedicated to the idea that growth in life comes through participation. The development and sharing of talents is an important part of the Dana experience and the Dana Choir is an outstanding example of that concept.

Dana College Choir 1985-86

Recorded during the 1985-86 concert season, this album features hymns and songs performed during the Choir Tour. Dr. Richard A. Palmer was in his second year as Director of the choir. He had also formed a smaller ensemble entitled New Day, which performs five of the songs on this record. This particular album features many examples of sacred choral music that always formed the core of vocal music at Dana. Eventually the choir was streamlined to form the Dana College Chorale, a group that broadened the choir's more traditional repertoire. New Day would continue performing in many venues for the next ten years. Dr. Palmer would remain a music professor at Dana until the college closed in 2010. ■



SIDE 1

I Will Praise Thee, O Lord Knut Nystedt
 Nearer, My God, To Thee arranged by R.A. Palmer
 Hodie, Christus natus est Healey Willan
 Antiphona de Morte Barne Silgedal
 The Lord's Prayer R.A. Palmer
 THE DANA COLLEGE CHOIR

SIDE 2

The New Day arranged by R.A. Palmer
 Fair Phyllis I Saw Sitting All Alone John Farmer
 Bless Us This Day Julie Knowles
 As I Outrode Anonymous
 It Was a Lover and His Lass John Rutter
 THE NEW DAY
 Go and Tell John Lloyd Plautsch
 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross Gilbert M. Martin
 THE DANA COLLEGE CHOIR

CHOIR PERSONNEL

Cathy Campbell
 Avoca, Ia
 Rebecca Cole
 Houston, Mo
 Mark Dickinson
 Plainview, Ne
 Krista Elline
 Omaha, Ne
 Jay Ellingson
 Renosco, Mo
 Angela Ferguson
 Omaha, Ne
 Katie Gaard
 Nevada, Ia
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 Paul Jensen
 Muskego, Wj
 Sonya Johnson
 Huntington Beach, Ca
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 Bluff, Wj
 Michelle Krenke
 Belvidere, Ne
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 Lohman, Mo

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Danish American
 Archive & Library

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IN THE STACKS

The Danish Pioneer at the Danish American Archive and Library

By Michael Hennick, Library Director

The Danish Pioneer (*Den Danske Pioneer*) is celebrating 150 years of publication, making it the oldest Danish newspaper in the United States. It began in Omaha, Nebraska in 1872 and moved to the Chicago area in 1958. The DAAL has six boxed collections and two family files with connections to the newspaper; following are some of the highlights.

The Archive has 54 large boxes containing issues of the *Pioneer* from as early as 1873 to the present day. In 2012 they were professionally digitized so that they can be viewed and searched online. To do so, visit the DAAL's website at danishamericanarchive.com and click on Digital Archive and then Danish Newspapers.

Hjalmar Bertelsen moved the paper to Illinois in 1958 and published it at his Elmwood Park Press. He would be the President and Editor of the *Pioneer* until his death in 1981. He and his wife Helene's four-box collection contains correspondence, documents, clippings, and photographs in various scrapbooks or files. These items cover half a lifetime at the center of activities and events in Denmark and Danish America. Bertelsen was a living bridge between Denmark and the United States.



Hjalmar Bertelsen holding issues from 1873 and 1976



Pioneer staff in Omaha from between 1902 and 1906; Simon Simonsen is on the extreme right

N. C. (Niels Christian) Nielsen came to the United States in 1884. He eventually settled in Cairo, Nebraska with his wife Sine and three children. For nearly forty years he regularly submitted articles and letters to *The Danish Pioneer*. These writings, as one of his great-granddaughters said, "were almost always about world history, government, war, politics and rants about the general disappointing state of the world." His archive box has copies of the pieces from the *Pioneer* and our English translations.

The file of Simon Simonsen has items from a young man who had learned to work in a press room at a Danish newspaper and then came to America in 1899. He was first employed by the Danish Lutheran Publishing House in Blair, Nebraska, but then got a job as a pressman for *Den Danske Pioneer* in Omaha. In 1906 he returned to Denmark and worked for Danish publishers in Copenhagen. Simonsen's collection includes two noteworthy photographs of the

Pioneer's staff during his time.

The DAAL also has the original panels of an exhibit entitled "*The Danish Pioneer: 125 Years in Words and Pictures.*" These Danish items were originally shown in Odense, Denmark in 1997, but also came to the Museum of Danish America in 1998. The panels contain documents, memorabilia and text about Danish immigration to America and the history of Danish-language newspapers, particularly *Den Danske Pioneer*.

It wasn't until the 1870s that large numbers of Danes began coming to North America. *The Danish Pioneer* began at that time as a newspaper to keep these newcomers informed about the wider world. As the decades passed the paper became a connecting link between various Danish American organizations and social groups, rather than a paper for Danish-speaking immigrants. Today the paper is primarily in English, but it remains a resource for all those interested in Danish culture and heritage on both sides of the Atlantic. ■



One of the panels from the exhibit *The Danish Pioneer: 125 Years in Words and Pictures*

The Danish American Archive and Library congratulates *Den Danske Pioneer/The Danish Pioneer*, and its current publishers and editors Elsa and Linda Steffensen, on 150 years of informing and connecting Danes in both the United States and Denmark. The DAAL is pleased to be able to collect and preserve these papers and all they reveal about the Danish experience in America.

JOTTINGS FLASHBACK

Reprinted from the May 2012 edition

DAAL Hosts *The Danish Pioneer* Exhibit

On April 16th the DAAL proudly debuted *The Danish Pioneer - Connecting an Immigrant Community*, an exhibit that was funded by the Nebraska Humanities Council and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. The DAAL partnered with the current owners of *The Danish Pioneer*, as well as with the Danish Immigrant Museum in Elk Horn, Iowa, for historical content and development of the exhibit.

The Danish Pioneer was founded in Omaha in 1872 by Danish immigrant Mark Hansen, with financial support from Edward Creighton, and is the oldest continuously published Danish-American newspaper in the United States. Five tall panels tell the story of *The Danish Pioneer* using photographs and text to trace the newspaper from its beginnings in Omaha in 1872 to the current publication based in Chicago. Viewers can see for themselves how the style and content of the newspaper evolved over time, and come face-to-face with the people who shaped its history. The DAAL holds the most complete collection of *The Danish Pioneer* in existence today.

The exhibit has provided an excellent opportunity for the Archive to reach out to a large segment of the Danish American community.

Due to a prominent article that appeared in the *Omaha World-Herald* about the exhibit and ongoing efforts to digitize *The Danish Pioneer* and other Danish American newspapers, several individuals have visited or contacted the Archive. Approximately 860 people have seen the display in Blair, Chicago and Elk Horn, and many more are expected to visit the exhibit at Dannebrog, Nebraska, June 1-4, St. Paul, Nebraska, June 9-17, and Minden, Nebraska, June 18-30. Discussions are ongoing to make the exhibit available to additional venues in the near future. ■



FEATURED DANISH AMERICAN COMMEMORATIVE WALL PANEL

This is the first in a series that will feature one of the panels from the Danish American Commemorative Wall. The manufacturer is working on the first set of 20 panels. The next deadline is August 26, 2022. Thus far, sponsors have highlighted Danish ancestors, Danish American institutions, and non-Danes who benefited the Danish American community. With each panel designed individually, the variety will draw viewers to the exhibit. ■

For information about creating a memorial for the wall, please contact Jill at the DAAL.



Phil and Florence (Spease) Larsen

A. Philip "Phil" Larsen was the son of Dr. C. B. and Abelone (Nielsen) Larsen, immigrants from Denmark in the early 1900s. Phil was born on the Dana College campus in the Kline house where his family resided during Dr. Larsen's professorship at Dana College and Trinity Seminary. The house was later replaced by the Dana Hall of Science. Phil enlisted in the Army Air Corps and attended Dana College until he was called to serve in WWII. He graduated from UN-Lincoln and taught at Oakland, Nebraska, where he met Florence, a fellow teacher. They were married in 1951 and moved to Blair where Phil owned construction and real estate businesses, dutifully assisted by Florence. Phil was a talented woodworker and Florence a gifted china painter, each having handcrafted many unique gifts for family and friends. Phil and Florence were very involved in community and other organizations, such as the former Dana College, the DAAL and the Oaks Indian Mission.

Given by their children, in-laws and grandchildren:

Diane and Gary Madsen
Keith and Lori Larsen
Lorene Larsen
Joseph and Rachel Evans

Lars and Julie Madsen,
Cole and Elodie
Leif and Amanda Madsen,
Brenna and Reese
Jakob Larsen

VOLUNTEERS: 1015 hours by 34 volunteers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio and Wisconsin.

VISITORS: 46 visitors from Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, and Nebraska.

USERS: 53 users from California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Denmark, Germany and email.

ACQUISITIONS

Materials:

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. We appreciate your financial donations to support the processing and storage of your materials.

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 Leon & Alice Neve (St. Paul, MN)
 Mark Olsen (Redondo Beach, CA)
 Julie Rohlfing (Blair, NE)
 James Ruden (Littleton, CO)

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 DAAL by giving a minimum of \$600 per year (given monthly, quarterly, or yearly according to the donor's preference). Those at the Founder's Level give at least \$2,000 per year. An added benefit of being part of the 50/100 club is receiving one donation acknowledgment for tax purposes in January reflecting a yearly total of all donations, rather than getting a separate acknowledgment for each financial contribution. These donations are part of the General Fund.

50/100 FOUNDER LEVEL

Phil* & Florence Larsen (Blair, NE)
 John W.* & Elizabeth Nielsen (Blair, NE)

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 Becky Bryant (Dubuque, IA)
 Borge M. Christensen (Rochester, MN)
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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.

Erna Berthelsen
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 W. Clayton Nielsen*
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 Joan Sorensen
 Deb Schou Wood ■

Endowment Fund

The endowment fund is an investment in the future of the Archive. Some named funds have been established in memory of loved ones. The balance in the endowment follows. Figures are rounded to the nearest \$500 and are listed at historic cost.

Ada Stokes Jeppesen Fund	\$100,000
Deloris Hansen Bengtson Fund	62,500
Oscar & Dody Johnson Fund	13,000
Bernhard & Marilyn Erling Fund	10,000
John T. & Virginia (Lippincott) Beck Fund	7,500
Rev. Aster & Ruth Neve Family Fund	7,500
Dagmar Vasby Fund	7,000
Martin & Else Andersen Fund	4,000
Earl Jensen Family Fund	4,000
Rev. Sigurd D. & Dorothy M. Petersen Fund	2,000
Rev. C.I. Jerry Lund Fund	1,000
Subtotal of named funds with balances over \$1,000	218,500
General Endowment Fund	117,500
Total Endowment Funds	\$336,000

OLD BOOK ON THE SHELF

The Reverend Beryl "Gus" Knudsen published the novel . . . *And a Time to Dance* in 1992. He writes in the preface: ". . . I frequently am filled with a sense of gratitude to God because I was privileged to be raised and nurtured in the Danish Lutheran Church in America. That church embodied a special kind of piety, the practice of which was unique and life-enriching. . . . My intention in writing this fictionalized history has been to personify through the lives of imaginary characters the ninety-year life span of the Danish Lutheran Church in America." ■



...And A Time to Dance

A novel based on the life of the Danish Lutheran Church in America



by Beryl "Gus" Knudsen

Contact Information

Thank you for your interest in the Danish American Archive and Library. All members enjoy three issues of the *Jottings* newsletter each year and reduced program service fees. The newsletter is mailed in January, May and September. Please keep your contact information current.

OLD ADDRESS see label on reverse, *or*

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Name(s) _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If not permanent: __ Temporary from __/__(month/year) to __/__(month/year)

__ Seasonal (repeat every year) from ____ (month) to ____ (month)

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Additional information _____

AROUND THE ARCHIVE

The volunteers have returned to the DAAL in full force this spring. Most days we have one or two “regulars” working; but on Tuesdays and Thursdays, our traditional busy days, as many as twelve may be here for the morning. In late April we had a week for volunteers who live some distance away to spend two or three days working on translation and obituary projects.

The work of organizing, digitizing and cataloging the large amount of material from the Danish Home in Croton-on-Hudson, New York continues. The last issue of the *Jottings* gave more information about this large collection. Of course, this is not the only collection waiting to fully enter the catalog. It remains a long slow process to carefully and correctly add items, be they books or archival boxes, to the DAAL.

Helping walk-in visitors and doing research remotely for those with inquiries is a daily activity for the staff. In what is hopefully a post-pandemic world, we are expecting a lot of visits and interest in the DAAL this summer.

Two Danish interns from the Museum of Danish America, Sarah Olivia Scott Nielsen and Frederikke Lund Theodorsen, visited us twice while they were in the United States. Sarah used some of our materials for her exhibit on the Danish Mormons. Also from the Museum, Diya Nagaraj, Curator of Danish-American culture, used items from our Alfred Maack Petersen boxes for an exhibit. Petersen worked with refugees after the Second World War.

Jill and our volunteer Bob Schmoll gave a presentation to the Blair Rotary Club in April about the DAAL, Dana College and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The DAAL mourns the loss of our long-time friend and supporter Phil Larsen of Blair, Nebraska. Phil and wife Florence will have a panel on our Commemorative Wall. See our column on the Wall in this issue to learn more about the Larsens. ■



Julie Johnson, Arvin Hernes and Stephany Sanborn enjoy the reorganized workspaces.

PARTING SHOT



This World War II era photo is from the Jepsen-Smith genealogy collection donated by Carol Prussa. The note on the back of the photo says, *“This is what I drive now. That is me and my crew when we were in Tennessee on maneuvers.”* ■