



Danish American  
Archive & Library

FALL – 2025

Jottings  
NEWSLETTER

## Happy 15th anniversary!



**Executive Director  
Jill Hennick**

We've come a long way in 15 years. When Dana College closed, we found ourselves with no money and no place to house our collection. Only because we had John W. Nielsen's vision, Tim Jensen's level-headedness and Sandra Wigdahl's tenacity were we able to start plotting our course. To that we added responsible board members, committed volunteers, concerned friends and generous donors. Now we

find ourselves in our own building, with no liabilities, a growing endowment of over \$400,000 and a comfortable saving account. All our documents are in one place, and we have more volunteers than ever helping us with our archival work.

We're in an enviable position (especially in the non-profit world). However, that doesn't mean that we don't have any concerns for the future. We've lost most of the first-generation volunteers and donors. They tended to give large annual financial donations and to volunteer their time and talents as if they were still professional employees.

Our greatest concern and challenge is that our yearly general fund donations are no longer covering our yearly expenses. Our donations aren't stagnant – every year new people are introduced to the archive and become donors. However, the new donors are more likely to give at lower levels than those that had been committed to the Archive over many years. Ideally, we want recurring donations to



cover recurring expenses each year. If that could happen, anything additional would be available to fund more activities and services, or to increase our endowment.

We're at a place of concern, but not a place of alarm. Savings from prior years are available to cover months when our income doesn't meet our expenses. Because of our strong financial condition, the board can address financial challenges and implement any appropriate changes gradually. We have continued to operate in the black every year since becoming an independent organization.

The Archive provides valuable services. Many of the younger generation are used to carrying their documents in digital form in their back pockets. They can't conceive of cluttering their houses with actual photographs or hard copies of other materials. Rather than throwing such items in a storage unit or worse yet a garbage bin - never to see the light of day - families have donated their precious documents to the Archive where they can be preserved and shared with family members or researchers. Often people who were never interested before come to a time in their lives when they wonder about their ancestors – what did they look like, what were their interests and experiences? Were they anything like me? Only if we preserve those stories will answers be available for those questioning descendants.

When it becomes increasingly easy to manipulate documents electronically, it is comforting to touch something tangible from the past – a photograph, a handwritten letter, a certificate marking a milestone in someone's life. I've been one of the fortunate researchers who has "met" her great-grandparents through reading





translations of their hand-written Danish letters. That was only possible because a great-uncle had donated them to the Archive.

While we recognize the importance of processing the materials in the building, our priority has always been interacting with visitors and volunteers. Over the past 15 years, we have had 318 volunteers work 81,000 hours.



We have greeted 4,500 visitors from 46 states (only missing Delaware, Mississippi, Rhode Island and West Virginia), Washington D.C., Argentina, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Japan, Norway, and Tanzania. We've helped 2,100 researchers, in person and remotely, from 46 states (only missing Alabama, Alaska, Delaware and West Virginia), Washington D.C., Argentina, Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Japan, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Tanzania and Uganda.

We certainly have come a long way in 15 years. With your ongoing support, the DAAL will continue its mission of preserving the materials that tell us the story of so many Danish American families, organizations and institutions. "Tusind tak" to everyone who has helped us to save some of America's Danish heritage. ■



## Jottings Flashback – Spring 2011

This announcement appeared in the *Jottings* edition published after most of the dust had settled following the traumatic 2010 closure of Dana College and resulting hectic move of the Danish American Archive & Library to its new location.

### DAAL to Celebrate Grand Opening in October

After fifteen months of transition, uncertainty and growth The Danish American Archive and Library stands ready to launch what will probably be a series of activities this autumn extending over the entire month of October. Being celebrated will be not only the successful rescue and transfer of DAAL from its former location at Dana to its present, eye-catching location at 1738 Washington Street in Blair but also DAAL's status as a legally incorporated non-profit institution that has demonstrated its financial viability by maintaining itself for a full year meeting all operational expenses as well as accumulating funds to launch another year of operation and growth with an anticipated budget well over \$100,000.00. ■



Grand Opening, 2011. Left to right, foreground: Erna Berthelsen and Fritz Hansen; background: John Mark Nielsen and Mindy Rump

### New in the Digital Archive <http://archive.danishamericanarchive.net/>

Multiple additions to the Library portion of the Digital Archive, including translations of Danish texts, which are located in Repository → Library → Titles filed by Dewey Decimal System:

*Elk Horn in Iowa* by P. S. Vig (1901), a translation of Vig's history of the Danish settlement and church at Elk Horn, Iowa, from 1875 to 1900.

*The First Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Racine WI*, a translation by Hans Skov Nielsen of P. S. Vig's original Danish *Den første skand. evang. lutherske menighed i Racine, Wisconsin: et omrids af dens historie gennem 75 aar*, a 75th anniversary retrospective of the Emaus (Danish) Evangelical Lutheran Church in Racine, Wisconsin.

*Danish Lutheran Mission in America before 1884* by P. S. Vig (1917) translated in 2005 by Edward A. Hansen

Under Repository → Library → Periodicals, *Lutheran Tidings*, an English-language publication of the DELC/AELC from 1934-1962. ■

## Featured Danish American Commemorative Wall Panels

<https://danishamericanarchive.com/danish-american-commemorative-wall-gallery/>

The Commemorative Wall at the DAAL was created to honor and remember Danish American individuals, families and institutions.

The Wall continues to grow. A limited number of panels are still available.

These two examples reveal how both institutions and families have made good use of smaller panels.

To see all of the panels, you have two options. The first is to stop by and view the exhibit in person. The second is to visit the Commemorative Wall Gallery on our website. ■

### Scandinavian Seminar

The Scandinavian Seminar was founded in 1949 by a group of Danish educators to provide international study abroad experiences for American students in Scandinavian folk high schools. These culturally immersive folk high school programs were modeled on the philosophy of Danish educator N.F.S. Grundtvig. Since then, the Scandinavian Seminar has been involved in many initiatives and projects in support of its founding principles — to share cultural understanding and educational experiences between the Nordic countries and North America.



### Christian C. Tranberg (1833-1934)

Christian Tranberg was born in Vamdrup, Denmark. The son of impoverished parents, he had only three years of schooling and was on his own by age thirteen. He worked as a farm laborer and served in the Danish Army. In the Dano-Prussian War of 1864 he entered the Navy and served as a marine aboard the frigate "Jylland." He was present at the Battle of Heligoland, a Danish victory.

In 1868 he married Helena Lund and they had five children. In 1893 the Tranbergs and two of their children immigrated to the United States where the other three children were already living. They settled on a farm near Kennard, Nebraska. He was made a Knight of Dannebrog by King Christian X in 1929.

Given by Chris Bohs and family

## Around the Archive

Our annual **Fall Volunteer Week** was very well attended this year, and a great deal of work was accomplished. Local volunteers welcomed 15 additional workers from Colorado, Indiana, Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin.

Pictured below are three of our Minnesota volunteers: Leon Neve, Margritt Rodriguez and Moses Rodriguez.



We served coffee, treats and memories to over 70 people during our 2025 **Kringle & Mingle**. This annual event is held during the Dana College Alumni and Friends Homecoming festivities. ■



# In The Stacks

## Travels of a Danish American Nurse

By Janice VonHeim

Won't you join me for a journey? Let's take a journey through the life of Ruth Inger Jorgensen, traveling from Denmark to Nebraska, Montana, California, Europe and back. Born on May 14, 1907, in Aarhus, Denmark, Ruth would serve in the Army Nurse Corps during WWII.

Ruth was the second of four daughters (Edna, Ruth, Lilly and Agnes) born to Hans Christian Jorgensen and Rosa Charlotte Johanne Schultz who were married in 1904. Her journey to America began in 1910 when the family immigrated to Lincoln, Nebraska. Hans farmed in Nebraska and later in Montana. When Ruth was 13, the Jorgensens' journey continued to California, where Hans ran the Jorgensen Funeral Home in Fowler until he retired.

When Ruth was 14, she was confirmed at the Danish Church in Selma, CA. After attending nursing school and working in local hospitals, she completed her BSN degree at the University of CA, Berkeley in 1943 at the age of 36.

Ruth volunteered and was sworn into the Army Nurse Corps as a 2nd Lieutenant on January 30, 1943. Her official dates of service were from 1-30-43 to 1-27-47, just about four years. After Basic Training she was in charge of recruitment for the Army Nurse Corps in Oakland, CA. The next leg of her journey took her to Camp White, Oregon, where she trained army nurses.

In December of 1945, Ruth's journey took her to Europe. She was stationed with the 78th Field Hospital in Mourmelon, France, as Chief Inspector for the US Army Hospitals in France. We learn nothing at all about her work in the hospitals, but rather her correspondence is descriptive of the places she saw while on leave.

On an undated card to her sister, Ruth voiced her delight with seeing their homeland again. "Last week Holland via Brussels, Antwerp - and tomorrow listen - I go to Denmark - the great day at last.

Should arrive Wed. Have only 7 days, which is hardly adequate to cover so much territory, but it is all that our tour allows - and they will be 7 wonderful days." On another card Ruth wrote, "Denmark is lovely quite (illegible) as I had remembered and to meet our family again has been more than a pleasure! We are so much like them."

After the war ended, Ruth notified her family that she would be back in the states in seven to nine days. Ruth left Europe on a journey lasting ten days at sea, arriving on November 15, 1946. This is quite the contrast to how we view travel today, when we count on arriving at our destination in a few hours and knowing at exactly what time our relatives will arrive.

Ruth was at home in California for a few months, when she and her parents took a six-month journey to their native land of Denmark in March of 1947. They attended the July 4th celebration at Rebild Park along with 50,000 others including the King, Queen and Ambassadors. The park was purchased by Danes in the United States. In an additional note from the Jorgensen family, it is stated that a story about this can be found in *National Geographic* magazine. One can see the backs of Hans' and Rosa's heads in one of the photos of the crowd.



Ruth worked as the Director of Nursing Service at Fresno General Hospital. Then, after this wonderful career of service, Ruth's journey came to an end at the age of 74. She died on November 28, 1981, in Santa Barbara-Goleta, California, and was buried in Selma, Fresno County.

It has been a pleasure to have you along for the journey through Ruth's colorful life. It was a privilege to read through her materials which I gathered from only one of over 150 boxes in the Jorgensen family's collection at the DAAL. ■

# From The Dana Room

## Remembering the Santa Lucia Celebrations

*By Karen (Nelson) Hansen*

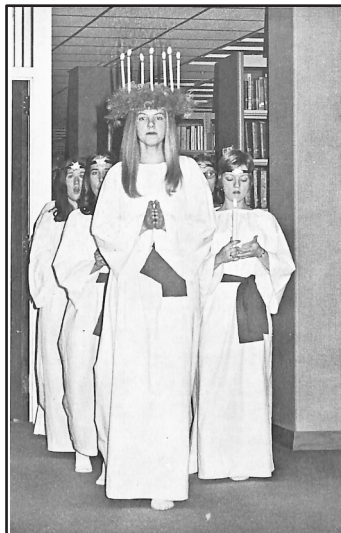
Can you imagine 5,000 people coming to the Dana Campus on one weekend? Over the last 15 years, the streets and pathways of Dana have been still. The Student Center, the Performing Arts Center and the Chapel have been silent. There was a time, though,



from the late seventies to the early nineties when the first weekend in December brought as many as 5,000 visitors to the campus. The weekend was filled with

choir and band music, smorgasbords, storytelling, Scandinavian arts and much more. It was Dana's gift to areas in Nebraska, Iowa and beyond. These were the "Sights and Sounds of Christmas" at Dana.

One very special part of those festivities was the Santa Lucia ceremony. A little history: Santa Lucia was a Christian maiden martyred in the 3rd century. Christianized Vikings in Scandinavia heard about her death, and the story grew to depict her as a shining figure crowned with a halo of light. She became a favored symbol of the Nordic peoples as her saint's day fell on December 13th when daylight began to increase with the gradual ending of the long, dark northern winter. There are many aspects to the Santa Lucia celebration including the image of the young daughter of the family wearing a crown of greenery and lighted candles as she



greet the family with breakfast pastries.

In 1961 the Santa Lucia legend was woven into Dana's Christmas celebration. A "bride" wore the candle crown and was escorted by six or more maidens who processed through various venues as they sang favorite Christmas carols in Danish. Over the years, the venues included Alumni Memorial Auditorium, the stairway beside the Danish Christmas tree in the Student Center, and even the Durham Museum in Omaha. For nearly forty years Santa Lucia and her court ushered out the dark of Dana's winter and welcomed in the light. Many Dana ladies were privileged to be part of the honored celebration. Selected groups from several decades are pictured in this story to remind us all of one more memory of the life that was Dana. It is a memory of how thousands, yes thousands, of visitors came to the campus over those decades to bid an end to the cold dark of winter and look forward to the promise of



increasing light as seen in Santa Lucia's halo of candles. File this warm memory with so many others that made Dana our own special light. ■



*Left column:  
1961, 1974;  
right column  
1982 and  
1993.*



**Danish American  
Archive & Library**

Jill Hennick, Executive Director  
1738 Washington Street, Blair, Nebraska 68008  
Telephone: (402) 426-7910  
E-mail: [info@danishamericanarchive.com](mailto:info@danishamericanarchive.com)  
Hours: 8am-3 pm, Monday-Friday  
*A 501(c)(3) corporation funded by free-will donations*



# ARCHIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORT – JULY-OCTOBER 2025

**VOLUNTEERS:** 2,300 hours by 57 volunteers from California, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York, Ohio and Wisconsin.

**VISITORS:** 167 visitors from Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin and Denmark.

**RESEARCHERS:** 62 researchers from Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, Denmark, and email/phone/Facebook.

## 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.**

Deborah Biorn (Saint Cloud, MN)  
Blair Public Library (Blair, NE)  
Ginny Blood (Burnsville, MN)  
Heidi Bowles-Ellis (Saint Joseph, MI)  
Sandy Carmichael (Blair, NE)  
Rolf Buschart Christensen (Ontario, Canada)  
Karen Clements (Blair, NE)  
Danish Home for the Aged (Croton-on-Hudson, NY)  
Nancy Davis (Carroll, IA)  
Ellen Fisher (Fox Lake, WI)  
Hannah Furlong (Chicago, IL)  
Chris Gehringer (Omaha, NE)  
Goshen Public Library Friends (Goshen, IN)  
Susan Hettinger (Bennington, NE)  
Julie Huettelman (West Lafayette, IN)  
Jim Jensen (Columbia, TN)  
Larry Jorgensen (Littleton, CO)  
Richard & Delores Jorgensen (Poy Sippi, WI)  
Joan Krogh (Blair, NE)  
Torben Krontoft (email)  
Lorene Larsen (Omaha, NE)  
Keith & Lori Larsen (Blair, NE)  
Nancy B. Larsen (Milwaukee, WI)  
Lutheran Family Services (Blair, NE)  
Gary & Diane Madsen (Omaha, NE)  
Barbara & Don Meduna (Monument, CO)  
Museum of Danish America (Elk Horn, IA)  
John Mark & Dawn Nielsen (Blair, NE)  
Lisa Nielsen (Fairfield, PA)  
Liv Paulson Norderhaug (Chanhassen, MN)  
Larry & Palma Plume (Evergreen, CO)  
Corinne Robinson (Minneapolis, MN)  
St. Andrew the Apostle Church (Sierra Vista, AZ)  
Hollie Siebler (Omaha, NE)  
Sandy Sonderup (Blair, NE)  
Carol Svendsen (Denver, CO)  
Glenn Wachter (Blaine, MN)  
Melba Waggoner (Bothel, WA)  
Warren Watson (Elk Horn, IA)

## Financial report

### Memorials

Jack Beal  
Lois Beal (Bothell, WA)  
John H. Christensen Dana College class

of 1954  
Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)  
Paul Emanuelson  
Karen Emanuelson (Royal Oak, MI)  
Sherry Forrest  
Kyle & Georgann Collier (Council Bluffs, IA)  
Chuck Forrest (Omaha, NE)  
Kathryn Goodall (Omaha, NE)  
Arvin Hernes  
Lois Beal (Bothell, WA)  
David Knutson Dana College class of 1968  
Carol Knutson (Preston, MN)  
Bee Krantz  
Lorraine Jensen (Bloomington, MN)  
Roger Olson  
Lois Beal (Bothell, WA)  
Phil Pagel  
Lorraine Jensen (Bloomington, MN)  
Arthur F. & Ruth P. (Rasmussen) Nelson  
Deborah (Nelson) Biorn (Saint Cloud, MN)  
Karen Hoyle (Laguna Niguel, CA)  
Alan Nelson (Berkley, CA)  
Fredric Nelson (Havertown, PA)

## Honoraria

Betsy Anderson  
Lorraine Jensen (Bloomington, MN)  
Sybille Bartels for excellence in teaching at Dana  
Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)  
Diana Brown for excellence in teaching at Dana  
Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)  
Myrvin Christopherson  
Larrie Stone (Ames, IA)  
Kay Ferguson for excellence in teaching at Dana  
Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)  
Hugh & Jane Hunt  
Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)  
Don & Joyce Jorgensen  
Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)  
John Mark & Dawn Nielsen  
Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)  
Jan Potter for excellence in teaching at Dana  
Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)

## Endowment Fund:

Myrvin Christopherson for the Myrvin & Anne Christopherson Fund  
Richard & Delores Jorgensen for the Rev. Sigurd D. & Dorothy M. Petersen Fund

## 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.**

Timothy Barnes (Omaha, NE)  
Dennis Barten (Manning, IA)  
Erna Berthelsen (Albert Lea, MN)  
Charities Aid Foundation  
Paul & Becky Christensen (San Luis Obispo, CA)  
Nancy Davis (Carroll, IA)  
Chris Gehringer (Omaha, NE)  
Joe H. & Rose Jean Hansen (Des Moines, IA)  
Carl & Julie Huettelman (West Lafayette, IN)  
Lynda Jeppesen (Oak Park, IL)  
Julie Johnson (Columbus, OH)  
Alice M. Jorgensen estate  
Don & Joyce Jorgensen (Ripon, WI)  
Richard & Delores Jorgensen (Poy Sippi, WI)  
Jean Kaldahl (Port Townsend, WA)  
William J. Krause II (Columbia, MO)  
Lee Anne Lack (Minneapolis, MN)  
Toni Lawson (Green Bay, WI)  
Anne Lystbaek & Bill Watson (Lafayette, CO)  
Wyman & Laurie Nelson (Blair, NE)  
Brian Nevermann (Des Moines, IA)  
Dorothy Olson (Blair, NE)  
Skip Pedersen (Omaha, NE)  
Ted Pedersen (Duluth, MN)  
Kathryn Ryan (Beaver Dam, WI)  
Bob & Judy Schmoll (Omaha, NE)  
Russ & Caroline Schoneweis (Taft, CA)  
Karen Taylor (Springville, IA)  
Debi Verlaney (Bellevue, NE)  
Marjorie Wahlgren estate  
LeRoy Wigdahl (Omaha, NE)

## Thrivent Choice/YourCause Gifts:

Vicki Dunkle (Blair, NE)  
Lee Anne Lack (Minneapolis, MN)  
Skip & Dorothy Pedersen (Omaha, NE)

## 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 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. (\* indicates deceased)**

Erna Berthelsen (Albert Lea, MN)  
 Becky Bryant (East Dubuque, IL)  
 Myrv & Anne\* Christopherson (Decorah, IA)  
 Arlene & Neil Grover (Zumbrota, MN)  
 Roger Hanson (Roseville, MN)  
 Michael & Jill Hennick (Blair, NE)  
 Daniel L. Jensen (Columbus, OH)  
 Dody Johnson\* (in our hearts)  
 Julianne Johnson & Judy Pollock\* (Columbus, OH)  
 Chuck & Joyce Jorgensen (Blair, NE)  
 Gene\* & Nancy Lindblad (Blair, NE)  
 Barbara Meduna (Monument, CO)  
 Vordyn Nelson (Marshall, TX)  
 John Mark & Dawn Nielsen (Blair, NE)  
 Lisa Nielsen (Fairfield, PA)  
 Jay Planalp (Loveland, CO)  
 Palma & Larry Plume (Evergreen, CO)  
 Scott & Colleen Rasmussen (Omaha, NE)  
 Sandy Sonderup (Blair, NE)  
 Joan Sorensen (Richardson, TX)  
 Carol Svendsen & Jay Mead (Denver, CO)  
 Nick Temali (Mahtomedi, MN)  
 Ron & Vicki Vig (Holdrege, NE)  
 Deb Schou Wood (Bloomington, MN)  
 Sandy Wunder (Eaton, CO)

**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  
 Judy Brehm  
 Borge M. Christensen\*  
 Myrv & Anne\* Christopherson  
 Bernhard\* & Marilyn\* Erling  
 Kathryn (Olsen) & Milbern Goetz  
 Lois Girtz Halley\*  
 Frederick "Fritz" J. Hansen\*  
 Roger J. Hanson  
 Michael and Jill Hennick  
 Russell P.\* and Esther A. Jensen  
 Tim\* & Sharon Jensen  
 Ada Jeppesen\*  
 Lynda Jeppesen  
 Julianne Johnson and Judy Pollock\*  
 Oscar\* & Dody\* Johnson  
 Paul & Liz Johnson  
 Alice M. Jorgensen\*  
 Lorene Larsen  
 Phil\* & Florence\* Larsen  
 Carol Madsen Larson\*  
 Gene\* & Nancy Lindblad  
 Gary & Diane Madsen  
 George Madsen\*  
 Ronald D. Johnson\* and Bodil Strom Muller  
 Brian Nevermann  
 Howard Nicholson\*  
 John W.\* & Elizabeth\* Nielsen  
 LeVern\* & Marilyn\* Nielsen  
 Lisa Nielsen  
 W. Clayton Nielsen\*  
 Arthur\* & Mary\* Pedersen  
 Larry & Palma Plume  
 Joan Sorensen  
 Don \* & Marjorie\* Wahlgren  
 Deb Schou Wood ■

## ENDOWMENT FUND

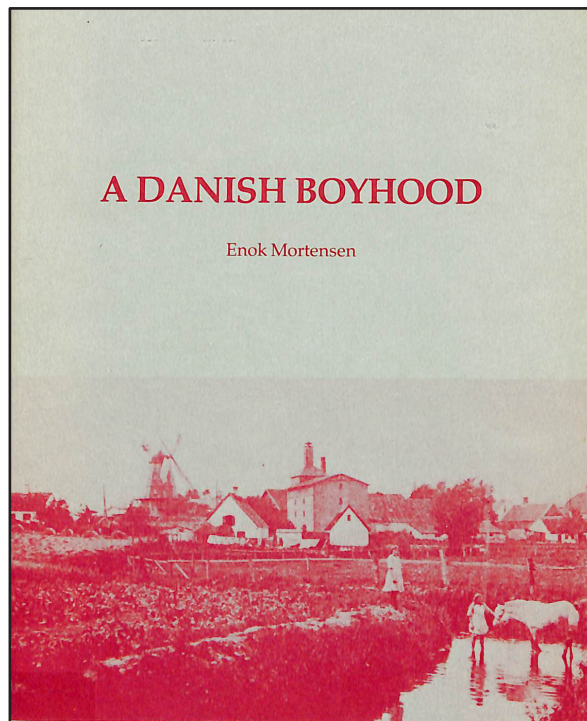
The endowment fund is an investment in the future of the Archive. Named funds have been established in memory of loved ones. Figures include realized earnings accumulated in each fund since the original donation. The figures are listed at historic cost and are rounded to the nearest \$500.

Ada Stokes Jeppesen Memorial Fund	128,500
Deloris Hansen Bengtson Memorial Fund	101,000
Oscar & Dody Johnson Memorial Fund	17,000
Bernhard & Marilyn Erling Memorial Fund	13,000
Rev. Aster & Ruth Neve Family Memorial Fund	10,500
Dagmar Vasby Memorial Fund	10,500
John T. & Virginia (Lippincott) Beck Memorial Fund	9,500
Martin & Else Andersen Memorial Fund	7,000
Earl Jensen Family Memorial Fund	5,500
Rev. Sigurd D. & Dorothy M. Petersen Memorial Fund	5,500
Maryann & Jerry Lund Memorial Fund	3,500
Agnete (Ahlefeldt-Laurvig) Temali Fund	3,000
Myrvin & Anne Christopherson Fund	2,000
Subtotal of named funds with balances over \$1,000	316,500
General Endowment Fund	98,500
Total Endowment Funds	415,000

## Old Book on the Shelf

### Enok Mortensen – A DANISH BOYHOOD

Enok Mortensen published his "collection of reminiscences" entitled *A DANISH BOYHOOD* in 1981. He writes that he was inspired to do so because "it struck me how different the life style of my childhood must seem to young people now, and not least to young Americans, and that it might be worthwhile sketching a picture of that far-away world." Born in 1902, Mortensen revisits the scenes of his childhood and adolescence up until the time that his family immigrated to America in 1919. He presents an interesting portrait of Danish life in a small village at that time, including home and religious life, parents and relatives, school and working days, friends and siblings, holidays and travel, and all of it colored by a host of local characters. Mortensen went on to become a Lutheran pastor, teacher, writer and lecturer in the United States. ■



---

## Parting Shot



### **The 1924 Sahl family Christmas from Battle Creek, Iowa**

Olga, seated, Jens holding Elmer, Jens Jr. and Emmet on the floor, “Besta” Kiertzner in the rocker, and Einar Rasmussen, the hired man, at the tree.

The Jens and Olga Sahl collection at the DAAL contains three Christmas photographs and 29 letters that the couple exchanged during their courtship in 1913. Olga was living in Battle Creek, Iowa while Jens was working in Dawson, Minnesota. The letters were written in Danish, but have been translated into English by DAAL volunteers. Jens and Olga were married in 1916. They lived their lives in Battle Creek and raised seven children.■