

Interview of Sonja Walker by H.B. Simonsen  
Transcript reviewed and corrected by H.B. Simonsen  
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[SPEAKER\_00]: What is your full name?

[SPEAKER\_00]: My name is Sonja Sandal Hansen Walker.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I was born here in Tyler in 1942.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And two years after I was born, we moved, my family moved right up here across the street from the church.

[SPEAKER\_00]: My father, Folmer Hansen, Folmer Utah Hansen, had been born in Tyler in 1900.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And his parents...

[SPEAKER\_00]: came from Denmark in the 1880s, I think.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And his father had been a teacher, who is also known as a storyteller, Eventyrmanden.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And his wife, Frederikke, who I suppose she would be my bedstemor, but she never got to be a bedstemor.

[SPEAKER\_00]: She died when my father was 10.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And so it's very...

[SPEAKER\_00]: another story.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Okay.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And my mother had been born in Askov, Minnesota in 1918.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And was out of high school by 16 and working as a nanny or something in for an old teacher.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But then she came one summer to the højskole, which was the girls program, you know, it is Danebod Folk School in Danish.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And my mother was also bilingual.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And she was actually

[SPEAKER\_00]: extremely good at writing in both languages, reading and writing in both languages.

[SPEAKER\_00]: My dad couldn't spell.

[SPEAKER\_00]: He was one of those left-handers they made to be right.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So it was my mother who did the writing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But she taught at the Børneskole.

[SPEAKER\_00]: That was a parochial school with the church.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And my father had attended that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: He had also grown up right here around the højskole.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So then I was born, you know.

[SPEAKER\_00]: a few years later, they were married in 1939.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And her parents were Valborg Larsen and Christian Sandal.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Valborg had come from Tybjerg, south of Ringsted or whatever.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And Christian Sandal was from Mors, up on Mors.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Okay.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_00]: What was your schooling like?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well, I attended the elementary school in downtown.

[SPEAKER\_00]: The end of the street downtown, you see those schools?

[SPEAKER\_00]: They were not all there.

[SPEAKER\_00]: The newer one to the left was not there until I was 10, 12 in there.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I did go there two years, and then the middle school had been everything where also my father had attended that same building and that same building.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And there had been a high school built somewhere, and now there's another addition.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And so that was the first grade through 12th.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And then the church had summer school every year where we would read out Svanebogen, and sing and folk dance and do gymnastics kind of in that pattern.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I think they still have it now called Children's Camp or something like that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But we went for

[SPEAKER\_00]: two, three weeks in the summer.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Who organized that summer school?

[SPEAKER\_00]: The church.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I think the church did that, and the preacher that was there at the time.

[SPEAKER\_01]: So that was a Danish group?

[SPEAKER\_00]: That was a Danish group, and it was all in English except that Svanebog experience.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Did you get married?

[SPEAKER\_00]: I got married.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I went to Grandview College.

[SPEAKER\_00]: right after high school, and I met a guy from Solvang, California, another Danish community.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And we were married a couple years, two years after.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I had gone to the University of California with him, but I was way too lonesome.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I was a naive young thing, and he wasn't the most supportive at that point.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So I came back and finished at the University of Minnesota, and then he went back to Solvang for a year, and then we were married, and he finished here, and

[SPEAKER\_00]: So did I. So I was a teacher.

[SPEAKER\_00]: When and where did you get married?

[SPEAKER\_00]: We got married in Danebod Lutheran Church in 1964.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Here?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Here.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Okay.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Okay, then I was a teacher for, and I taught for half a year, but then we went to Askov Folk School in Denmark for a year, and that would have been 65 and 66.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Okay.

[SPEAKER\_00]: and then came back, and that's when he finished college, and I worked for the Minneapolis Public Schools for 36 years after that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: How come you went to Askov, a high school in Denmark?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well, I think we were both interested in our Danish roots.

[SPEAKER\_00]: He also had immigrant grandparents.

[SPEAKER\_00]: My brother had gone to Snoghøj,

[SPEAKER\_00]: So it was on our horizon.

[SPEAKER\_00]: My younger brother had gone right after Grandview.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So that sort of, oh, let's do that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And it was the grand adventure.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And sometimes it's wasted on the young, but at least it, you know, and it also helped my Danish.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I had learned Danish as a child.

[SPEAKER\_00]: That was my first language.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But, you know, I couldn't read those cute little things that I said very well.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So then I, at Berkeley, I had taken Danish classes.

[SPEAKER\_00]: for a year, and then, because we had planned to do this, and then, so that helped, and yet I still, you know, it took a while at Askov.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I can still remember the first complete sentence I heard in a foredrag.

[SPEAKER\_01]: So how was the experience at Askov?

[SPEAKER\_00]: It was wonderful.

[SPEAKER\_00]: There were other married couples that lived in one section of buildings,

[SPEAKER\_00]: so we had friends like our own age.

[SPEAKER\_00]: We were on the old side, I would say, so I was probably, I was 24 or 5, something like that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But then, and the other Americans there were older.

[SPEAKER\_00]: There was one fellow, you know, old, 65, back.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But at that time, it was kids that were

[SPEAKER\_00]: out of one of the schools of deciding if they should go to the university.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And it was also that 60s stuff, so it was Elskov på Askov, you know, the headlines were, and all kinds of junk like that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And then it was also a chance, we both had family to visit, that we did visit and connect with, and so that has, I think,

[SPEAKER\_00]: helped in the later years just to have a place in Denmark.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So my brother had been there, and then one of my sisters, my sister also, and she and her husband went seven years later to Askov also.

[SPEAKER\_01]: So it got to be kind of a... How was the meeting with the Danish culture?

[SPEAKER\_01]: You grew up very much in the American culture, but that was different.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well, I don't know.

[SPEAKER\_00]: You were just open.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I don't know if I had expectations.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I'd lived in a dormitory situation.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It was hard to be illiterate, if you will, or you miss things, I guess.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But I just kind of rode with it, I guess.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I didn't feel like we were outcasts.

[SPEAKER\_00]: People were interested, and we were, and I think always welcoming that we were trying to learn Danish.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And we were interested, and I finally, you know, I remember the controversy in one class that it was trying to preserve all the small kommuneskoler.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But I spoke about, on the other side, about doing some, when you put schools together, melding of schools together, big enough at least to run a program.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I just remember, oh...

[SPEAKER\_00]: But always I felt the fringe because I couldn't understand everything.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I could read, and I tried to read, but no, if we had to read a book, I would get it in English.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Okay, I'll move on to something about family life.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Do you have children?

[SPEAKER\_00]: I have children.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I have three children.

[SPEAKER\_00]: My older daughter is quite bilingual in Danish.

[SPEAKER\_00]: She's got a good ear for language, and she has... My kids have all gone to Skovsøen, the Danish language village, and Britta has been... Is that in Tyler?

[SPEAKER\_00]: No, it's up in... The Concordia College in Moorhead runs Danish... Well, summer camps that are language-based.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And there's Danish and Swedish and Norwegian, and now they have Chinese and Arabic and Japanese.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Everything.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But my kids went there.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Britta has a good ear.

[SPEAKER\_00]: She went, after she had graduated from college, she went to Aarhus University for a half a year.

[SPEAKER\_00]: She also went to, after, before she went to college, she had gone as an exchange student and lived in Idom, outside of Holstebro.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So she has a Danish sister who now lives in Australia and family that have just taken us all in, you know, also.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So it's like another set of family friends in Denmark.

[SPEAKER\_00]: The other two, they're probably more like Tak for mad, you know, Velbekom.

[SPEAKER\_00]: That's the extent of their Danish.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And my two older girls, and they live in Minneapolis, very close to me.

[SPEAKER\_00]: My son is married to another woman from Minneapolis, and she's studying to be a doctor, and she's doing work at Yale University right now.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So they're out on the West Coast and have a little... So I have six grandchildren.

[SPEAKER\_00]: We were all here for family camp.

[SPEAKER\_00]: This summer?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yes, this summer.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Eric, Peter, and...

[SPEAKER\_00]: Laura came back from Connecticut, and we were here.

[SPEAKER\_00]: All those little children, but the family camp.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Eric Peter says, I come.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Because he was a baby the first year, and he's been here every year.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So he says, I can't quit now that you come.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Talking about your children, how do you think they will...

[SPEAKER\_01]: go on in this tradition?

[SPEAKER\_01]: Do you think they might sit here as old people?

[SPEAKER\_00]: I don't know about that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: They are not churchy.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So, you know, this kind of a meeting has a level of Christianity that they are not

[SPEAKER\_00]: as begeistered. (? I'm not sure about the word)

[SPEAKER\_00]: By coming, I'm happy Peter comes.

[SPEAKER\_00]: He makes the effort to come.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Britta has, I know, been involved.

[SPEAKER\_00]: The three of them, when my husband died, well, actually I was divorced, but then he died right after that, they were the executors of a big estate and they gave a lot of money.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So they...

[SPEAKER\_00]: away to Danish, the Danish museum, to the gym hall, to the other Danish, the grant.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So in that sense, that's one thing they've done.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I think you grow into taking part.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It was kind of at family camp.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I figured at some point I said, I can't teach a craft.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I can't teach folk dancing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I did to my children at school.

[SPEAKER\_00]: That was what I offered was folk dancing, sometimes when we had option programs.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But you find out that you can do behind-the-scenes work or something like that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But I had also grown up with that example here.

[SPEAKER\_00]: We lived across the street from the parsonage, and Enok Mortensen, the pastor here, who had this vision for this

[SPEAKER\_00]: decrepit building during World War II it was not good to be ethnic but he had the vision and he started those family camps but at that point they were not even as Danish as they are now they were recreation institutes to train recreational leaders that was his vision but then he had all these young people who wanted to be recreational leaders but they had all these kids what do you do with them

[SPEAKER\_00]: So then it had to program for families, I think.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So it's sort of a familiehøjskole that is what it is, because it's very much this same pattern of singing and discussion, and then in the afternoon, which I learned at Askov, frit arbejde, you have, so then that would be craft time, and of course then there's free time, so you can go swimming, and

[SPEAKER\_00]: more singing and folk dancing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So it's the same pattern.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So I saw that, and my folks were good friends of Enok and Nan.

[SPEAKER\_00]: That parsonage, we could go in without knocking.

[SPEAKER\_00]: We walked in as kids.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And you heard all that, and my folks were very supportive and worked hard also to support it, so that they were always involved.

[SPEAKER\_00]: My mother had

[SPEAKER\_00]: been the registrar a lot for this meeting and the family camps after probably after Enok and Nan left but, um but that you know they intellectually they were on the same page that this was a good vision. As a child

[SPEAKER\_00]: I remember when they fixed up the building because they had painted some of the little chairs and things pink and blue and yellow and I was small enough.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So it's in the 40s.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_01]: You have been telling about why you have relations with the Tyler, of course, and Danebod.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_01]: But anyway, I'll ask, how come you are here at Danebod?

[SPEAKER\_01]: Now, today?

[SPEAKER\_01]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_01]: How come you came here?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Sometimes I... No, I know.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It is sort of the birthplace of my spiritual identity, I suppose.

[SPEAKER\_00]: You know, we grew up with axioms that were said to be Grundtvigian, that you had to go to school and keep learning

[SPEAKER\_00]: To live, not to make a living.

[SPEAKER\_00]: That's why you learn things.

[SPEAKER\_00]: The spoken word and the spirit of the community is so vital.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Let's see, I can't even think of... They'll come to me.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But, you know, the English versions of human first.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It's about... And it is about the people we know

[SPEAKER\_00]: And then I think I had grown up.

[SPEAKER\_00]: When I was a kid, half of this was in Danish, and there were all these old people speaking Danish, and they would kind of look around.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But in my 40s, I thought, you know, and my mother was doing it then, I thought, if I wanted to be here when I'm old, maybe I have to do a little work now.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I think in my 50s, I woke up and thought,

[SPEAKER\_00]: this thing is happening because of about six old women, most of them over 90.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Oh my word.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So it, and I just like what happens.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And my favorite part is singing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I hear over and over what the things in life that I think are important, that we are, we do have common humanity and we,

[SPEAKER\_00]: That is our heaven, kind of, I think.

[SPEAKER\_00]: That's my take on it.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I told you the story about under the tree.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I'll tell you under the tree again.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I drove up the other day and I said, yes, here it is, because we parked and then under the big chestnut tree and that big oak tree out there, there sat all these people in the shade on this beautiful summer day,

[SPEAKER\_00]: talking and greeting and meeting, and I just said that is heaven on earth, where you see people you know and are going to meet if you don't.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And they're also interested in being here, I guess.

[SPEAKER\_01]: The singing.

[SPEAKER\_01]: You said you're very fond of the singing.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Do you have the chance to sing where you live?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Not so often.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But we do have at Christmas time there's always a Danish song afternoon that we sing both languages and we have a song sheet that has that on it.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It's sponsored by the Danish American Center.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I have with one other Danish immigrant friend and a very good song leader that lives in Minneapolis, we

[SPEAKER\_00]: try to have three others a year.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So we tried to have four sangaftener a year in Minneapolis, where we would sing out of both The World of Song and song sheets, kind of like that blue book.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Let's put it together.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But in the last years, I have, since 2000, I've gone to Denmark a couple of times.

[SPEAKER\_00]: First just to visit, but then one year I went to Helnes Højskole for

[SPEAKER\_00]: two weeks to just do art and see how Højskole went.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well, it went fine, but it was very, very hard work.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It was hard physical labor to do Danish.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But my relatives said I was a lot better at it when I came home.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And then just two years ago, I went with a friend to Diget Højsko.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And that was, I just said, I can't go a month without support, sort of.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So she...

[SPEAKER\_00]: um, is that Danish immigrant.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And she's, her husband had said to me, well, I hope you're planning to go because she is.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I had just said, well, look at this website I found.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But anyway, but we went and that was great.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But we, and she also works on sangaftener.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So that it was really fun to learn new Danish songs, if you will.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And, um,

[SPEAKER\_00]: And yeah, that was real exciting.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I liked a lot of the new songs and I thought the melodies were great and I just, I like that we're singing about our life rather than just intellectual talk.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Are there other sides of this cultural event, these things that go on here, this tradition, that you have a chance to live in in your daily life?

[SPEAKER\_01]: You mentioned singing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah, well, a little.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I have a little singing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I guess, you know, when we have festivities and stuff, my niece just got married and there were songs written for that occasion, that sort of thing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So we've done that piece that I know is Danish.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well, I think dinner parties once in a while.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I do that, but that's sort of, I did not grow up with that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But I've learned that, that you could sing at a... Okay.

[SPEAKER\_01]: In a home, at a dinner party.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah, you know, here, let's have a song or two.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_00]: What kind of songs do you sing?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well, it might be that, or some about food, or, you know, that kind of, sort of lighthearted.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Not, not the ones that,

[SPEAKER\_00]: touch my heart, but it's still a way to share.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I personally, I mean, I don't say that very often, but I kind of think you want to talk about praying.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I think when we sing together, that's prayer enough.

[SPEAKER\_01]: So you carry it with you, the tradition and what's in it.

[SPEAKER\_01]: In your daily life, in many respects.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah, I think it comes up a lot.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Some conscious, some hardly conscious, perhaps.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Some hardly conscious and some that, you know, that any time I'm doing a job, you know, at the Danish Center or something, why would I do that?

[SPEAKER\_00]: It's to keep that going or perpetuate it in maybe a very practical way that's... So you help with the various things?

[SPEAKER\_01]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Could you just tell me, what is the Danish Center?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Okay, the Danish Center.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It used to be the Danish American Fellowship, and it probably was something in Danish before that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But when I was very young in Minneapolis, they had a folk dance group that I danced in, because we had certainly grown up doing those old, you saw those old,

[SPEAKER\_00]: You know, Skomagerdreng kind of thing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And then we danced at Grandview College.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And then so when we were married and there was this group in Minneapolis, we danced with that.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well then, you know, you get busy and we didn't do that so much anymore.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I haven't gone back to it.

[SPEAKER\_00]: The dancing part, but they were pieces of this Danish...

[SPEAKER\_00]: community that comes together and has this sort of organization of that sort of is a nucleus I think for other little like the dancers aren't really part and there were book clubs and all kinds of things going on they they also owned a Danish American what did they call it the Danish young people's home. In Minneapolis? In Minneapolis and I actually lived there

[SPEAKER\_00]: for a year and a half when I came back from California.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And it was a boarding house that you got a meal at night.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I think you took your own breakfast and had a meal at night.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And so they were all these kind of little affiliations of, and that's kind of what it still is.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well, the Danes also had had an old people's home.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And then I was on that board when we decided we had to close it.

[SPEAKER\_00]: because we were losing a lot of money every month.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I think people live longer and frailer.

[SPEAKER\_00]: They stay in their own homes more.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I mean, I got a big education about living for elderly people, because we looked at things we could do, but it was basically, you had a room with your own toilet and sink, but no bath.



[SPEAKER\_00]: You would have to go down the bath, and it was just a room.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And you'd have to go down to meet other people.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And then if you aren't very agile, it wasn't happening.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: We were not set up to be assisted living.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And that's the kind of patients I think we had.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: But anyway, so then there was a lot of legal work.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: We had to prove that it was indeed Danish.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: We had to prove to the state of Minnesota that we were indeed Danish.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: It was indeed a Danish home.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: Because now there weren't Danes living in it anymore.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: I think it had been built for Danish immigrants and older.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: I know they had a dormitory for older men upstairs that they just slept, you know, and I don't even know, they may have gone to work.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: I don't know.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: So it had started that way as Danish immigrants.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And then they had, I guess we heard all that, some of it was written, all the beginnings were written in Danish.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: Then they had a big deal,  
[SPEAKER\_00]: Could you come there if your spouse was not Danish.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: I mean, that was a controversy.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: It's very interesting to hear all that.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: But the people just a little older than I am, they had great memories of it because they would come there as kids and they would have Danish meetings on the site.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And it's now... So we had to go and prove that it was Danish and then the Danish American Center could buy it for a dollar or something.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: It's...  
[SPEAKER\_00]: you know, that financial stuff.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And then still have it be non-profit.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: All of that kind of thing.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: But anyway, so we have this wonderful site.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: It's right on the Mississippi River, on that road.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: I think you maybe heard me say it's ... (? the word is hard to hear) the river.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: It's a wonderful site.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And it has, you know, it's possibilities for a lot more.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: We're not wealthy.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: and we had to do a new elevator and a new entrance, and we really wanted to do a whole new hall so you could have a wedding, but no, we are not going into debt.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: But the best thing we did also was save one of those floors, and so we have a floor of about 13, 14 bedrooms that we can rent out.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And so in the summer, we rent them, and then it pays our... But it is a Danish-American... It is very much, and that...  
[SPEAKER\_00]: is the place where I know a lot of what I call New Danes.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: Not those from the turn of the century, but those that have come in the last 40 years.  
[SPEAKER\_00]: And that's a meeting place for them as well.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And it's real interesting because they're different than the old, too, in some ways.

[SPEAKER\_00]: They have a different tradition.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And some of them now have heard and start coming to family camp.

[SPEAKER\_00]: August family camp has a lot of, quote, the newer Danes that come.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But you end up going to the same one because your kids go and then you go with their friends.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I want to go to camp with them.

[SPEAKER\_01]: You feel very related to these new Danes.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yes, and I'm sure it is because I work with, you know, if I only came and I didn't know them as well, but we've worked on committees and

[SPEAKER\_01]: So that piece of your background, that part of your background, that you're Danish in some, that makes you create this group.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Or value, you know, that, yeah, well, that's... And then I'm interested in what is happening in Denmark.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Sure.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Yeah?

[SPEAKER\_01]: Fine.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Okay.

[SPEAKER\_01]: I have, I think, a last question.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Okay.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Are you a Grundtvigian?

[SPEAKER\_00]: I don't know if I am.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I say I am.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I was raised in sort of those.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But who knows?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Sometimes I read the stuff he writes and I think, that's not my kind of language.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But I do believe in that sort of existential piece.

[SPEAKER\_00]: You are... It's the here and now.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Sorry?

[SPEAKER\_00]: It's the here...

[SPEAKER\_00]: It's happening here and now.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It's in the here and now that it happens.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I don't worry about going to heaven.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It'll be okay.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It's a living thing.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Absolutely.

[SPEAKER\_00]: But it's important for you.

[SPEAKER\_00]: It's very important.

[SPEAKER\_00]: And I think we find it in community and the community that

[SPEAKER\_00]: Goes around in circles and eats (? the word is hard to hear) and eats together and so on.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So, yeah.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Very good.

Interview of Sonja Walker by H.B. Simonsen  
Transcript reviewed and corrected by H.B. Simonsen  
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[SPEAKER\_01]: I think I'll stop now.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Yeah, that's fine.

[SPEAKER\_01]: Interesting.

[SPEAKER\_00]: Are you a Danish-American?

[SPEAKER\_00]: Well, I don't know.

[SPEAKER\_00]: I would say I am, and my kids say, no, you're not.

[SPEAKER\_00]: What are you thinking about?

[SPEAKER\_00]: You're not Danish at all.

[SPEAKER\_00]: You're not a Dane.

[SPEAKER\_00]: So, there's the dilemma.