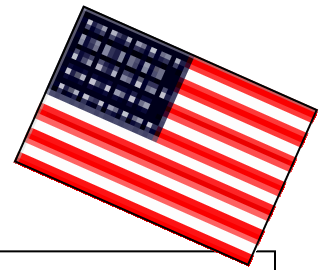


JOTTINGS



A publication of the Danish American Archive and Library

Sept.-Dec, 2016

AN IMMIGRATION STORY

A compelling story of courage, industry, a little WWII intrigue, and finally, love came to the Danish American Archive and Library recently. It is just one of hundreds contained in our collections, but the story of Jens and Martha Jensen is told in such wonderful detail that it stands out from others by bringing history into reality.

Jens and Martha's story was donated to the DAAL by their son, Jim, of Fairfield Glade, Tennessee, and is told in separate handwritten autobiographies in their own words.

In writing his story, Jens describes his desire to own his own farm, an opportunity not available to him in Denmark in 1928. With reluctant support from his parents, he was able to locate an address and possible employment in Albert Lea, Minnesota, which would allow him to emigrate to the United States. Having completed the necessary paperwork, he sailed to Hoboken, New Jersey, by way of London in January 1929. Jens describes in meticulous detail the sea voyage, the challenges of traveling to Minnesota in an English-speaking world, and finally, after working a few temporary jobs, finding his first permanent employment on a farm near Albert Lea. About that job Jens had this to say, "I had a wonderful surprise—here in America the hired people were taken in by the family they worked for and could sit with them in the front room in the evening. Also our clothes were washed with theirs and even were mended."

For the next several years Jens continued to work various jobs while learning English. He became an American citizen in 1937. In the spring of 1939, some friends told him about a Martha Hansen back in Denmark and suggested he write to her. After thinking it over, he took

their advice, and so began a long-distance romance that eventually blossomed into marriage.

Martha received that first letter in June 1939, and after some initial hesitation, she answered. "We continued to write and got to know each other better and better. Marriage was not mentioned as we agreed we should try to meet first," she said. Through their correspondence, Martha determined that Jens was a Christian man, which was very important to her. In April of 1940, the Germans invaded Denmark, so their future correspondence was heavily censored. In spite of that, they decided that Martha should emigrate to America. In May of 1941, after dealing with miles of red tape, this courageous woman traveled alone by air from Denmark with stops or overnight layovers in Berlin and Stuttgart, Germany, Marseilles, France, and Barcelona, Spain. When landing at a new and unpaved airstrip in Madrid, Martha's plane, "jumped a couple times...then skidded out in the grass where one wheel went down breaking the axel and tipping the plane to one side." Landing in Lisbon, Portugal, without further incident, Martha finally sailed for America, arriving in New York in mid-May. Of their first meeting Martha said, "I think Jens was just as emotional as I was. We walked to each other and embraced. It was so good to feel his arms around me. Now I just realized that



Jens and Martha shown in a church directory photo taken in the late 1970's.

my trip alone for 20 days had ended." Martha and Jens were married at Trinity Lutheran Church in Albert Lea on June 7, 1941, by Pastor Henry Bondo. They lived and farmed in the Albert Lea area from 1941 until they retired in 1965, and they raised two sons, James and Paul.

This overview is a very brief version of the rich, colorful detail and descriptions contained in the original documents. You can read the complete autobiographies at danishamericanarchive.com/Links and click on "Jens and Martha Jensen." Jens and Martha's story shows there is nothing new in the world. Match.com and online dating? Jens and Martha and many other immigrant couples were the pioneers of that, and most of the time it worked out very well. ■



The happy couple, Jens and Martha Jensen, on their wedding day, June 7, 1941.

FROM THE DANA ROOM

LAURITZ MELCHIOR AND DANA COLLEGE: The “warm and lasting friendship” continues By Ann Harms George

An article in the September 2016 “Jottings” (online in the digital archive at danishamericanarchive.net) described the developing friendship between Danish heroic tenor Lauritz Melchior and Dana College. That friendship started in 1950, when Melchior opened his concert season at Dana and performed as soloist with the Dana College Choir the much-loved Danish hymn, “Den Store Hvide Flok.” Then in 1965 he hosted the Choir at his Beverly Hills home and again joined the Choir in singing “Den Store Hvide Flok” at a concert in Inglewood, at Olivet Lutheran Church.

Eighteen years after his first visit to Dana College, Lauritz Melchior returned to the campus in May 1968 to receive, during Commencement ceremonies, an honorary degree as Doctor of Music. The degree was being given, the *Dana Review* (the alumni newsletter) reported in its announcement of the award, “in recognition of his outstanding accomplishments in music, for his encouragement to young and talented singers and in tribute to his dedicated efforts in promoting international goodwill and understanding.”

At the ceremony Melchior was the soloist for the third time when the Choir sang “Den Store Hvide Flok.”

Then on October 10-12, 1975, Dana's Homecoming weekend featured the dedication of the Lauritz Melchior Memorial Room.

After Melchior's death in March 1973, his son, Ib (a novelist and screenwriter), selected Dana as the most appropriate destination for a Melchior Memorial. He explained his decision in the October 23, 1975, *Bien* (the article was reprinted in the Winter 1976 *Dana Review*): “My father had many ties to Dana. . . . It seemed to me the perfect place for a permanent memorial . . . , which is why I selected it”

After learning of the gift, Dana asked Dr. Signe Betsinger of the University of Vermont to create the Memorial Room in Dana's C.A. Dana – LIFE Library.

The collection of memorabilia included all of Melchior's scrapbooks—more than 50 of them—his recordings, photographs, tapes, letters, papers, hunting trophies, an oil portrait of Melchior, mementoes, artifacts and costumes.

The dedication program featured Melchior's family and friends. One of the highlights was Ib's reminiscences of his father. He also brought with him from California three additional contributions to the Memorial Room, which he described in his *Bien* article as having “a special significance for the image of my father: [His] music case with a selected collection of signed sheet music and his personal, annotated score of 'Lohengrin'; a replica of the Holy Grail from the opera, 'Parsifal,' made for him in 1946 on



At the dedication of the Lauritz Melchior Memorial Room: Dana's President, Dr. Earl Mezoff, greets Ib Melchior; his wife, Cleo Baldon; and their niece, Helle Nielsen Hamilton, whose mother was Lauritz's daughter, Birte Melchior Nielsen. (Photo from the Dana Collection.)

(Cont. Page 3)

VOLUNTEERS: 2,278 hours by 49 volunteers from Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Texas.

VISITORS: 103 from Alaska, California, Colorado, Iowa, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Wisconsin and Denmark.

USERS: 30 from Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Oregon, Washington, Canada and email.

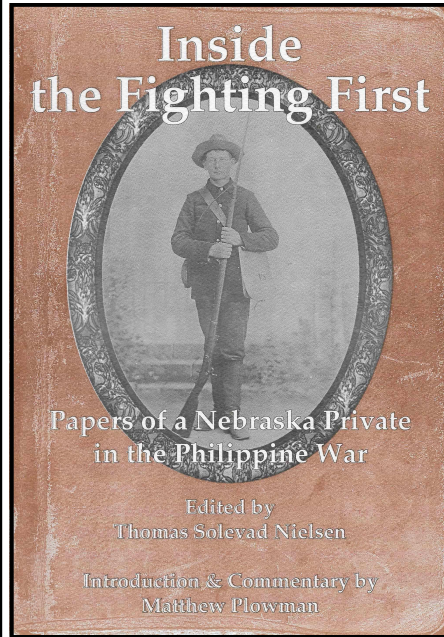
ACQUISITIONS

The following are the donations of materials we have received from September through December. 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

- Ruth Randall Benson (Apple Valley, MN)
- Ann Boos (Washington, DC)
- Rod Christensen (Omaha, NE)
- Myrv Christopherson (Decorah, IA)
- Lois Christiansen Eagleton (Eugene, OR)
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- John Mark Nielsen (Blair, NE)
- John W. & Elizabeth Nielsen (Blair, NE)
- Rev. Ronald A. Nielsen (White Bear Lake, MN)

SPECIAL PRICE
REDUCTION FOR
LUR BOOKS!



As a reader of this book you will be immersed in the little known Philippine War. The diary of Henry Thompson and the letters that he wrote provide a valuable human dimension to this conflict, and they offer a penetrating and sometimes disturbing insight into the psychological response of this young Nebraska soldier. The contrast between his response and that of his Danish immigrant parents is especially interesting.

The sale we ran in the last issue of *Jottings* was so successful that we've decided to make the price permanent when you order from this ad. You can purchase any Lur Publications book for just \$5.00 plus \$4.00 shipping when you call 402-426-7910 and mention the code LUR1738.

A complete list of Lur books is found on our website at www.danishamericanarchive.com

From the Dana Room (Cont.)

the occasion of his 20th anniversary at the Metropolitan Opera in New York by the stage crew; and a set of his medals and decorations awarded him by the nations and governments of the world – medals we all have seen so often at our [Royal Danish] Guards' parties and other festive occasions.”

And there were more highlights: Music editor and critic Paul Hume of the *Washington Post*, in his “Melchior Remembered,” opened his remarks with, “Lauritz Melchior was not just the greatest Heldentenor in the world – he was the only one!” Hume also played and commented on recordings of Melchior's performances. Metropolitan Opera tenor Karl Laufkotter, Melchior's close friend, also shared reminiscences, and Scandinavian folk singer, guitarist and composer Birgitte Grimstad, the daughter of Aksel Schoitz, Danish opera and lieder singer, performed. Films in which Melchior appeared were shown throughout the weekend.

When Dana College closed in July 2010, Dr. John Mark Nielsen, executive director of the Museum of Danish America in Elk Horn, Iowa, moved the contents of the Melchior Memorial Room to the museum for safekeeping. He subsequently arrived at an agreement with Ib Melchior to assign the collection to the museum, with the exception of the music-related materials and other documents. Those materials are now in Blair, under the protection of the DAAL, because it has been designated by the other Danish American organizations as the repository for all Danish-related music materials.

(The next *Jottings* will describe programs at Dana that honored Melchior's legacy, visits by Lauritz Melchior biographer Shirley Emmons, author of *Tristanissimo*, and the music-related materials in the DAAL.) ■

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Dody Johnson's 90th Birthday
Fritz Hansen (Wichita, KS)
Phil & Florence Larsen's 65th Anniversary
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Marion Svendsen's 100th Birthday
Roger Hanson (Cedar Falls, IA)
John W. & Elizabeth Nielsen (Blair, NE)

**The Green Kitty Cat Fund of InFaith Community Foundation was established in memory of Rev. C. I. "Jerry" Lund by Maryann Lund & family.*

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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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 acknowledgement 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.
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 Donald & Audrey Pedersen (Pea Ridge, AR)
 Karl Petersen & Joan Pearson (Bainbridge
 Island, WA)
 Pete & Shirley Petersen (Canyon, TX)
 James Peterson (Richfield, MN)
 Palma & Larry Plume (Evergreen, CO)
 Bill & Margaret Rodenburg (Centerville, OH)
 Sandy Sonderup (Blair, NE)
 Joan Sorensen (Richardson, TX)

Doug & Jane Wilson (Farragut, IA)
 John & Deb Wood (Oklahoma City, OK)
 Sandra Wunder (Greeley, 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
 Myrv & Anne Christopherson
 Kathryn (Olsen) & Milbern Goetz
 Roger J. Hanson
 Michael and Jill Hennick
 Arnold & Marianne Jensen
 Russell P.* and Esther A. Jensen
 Tim & Sharon Jensen
 Julianne Johnson and Judy Pollock
 Oscar* & Dody Johnson
 Paul & Liz Johnson

Lorene Larsen
 Phil & Florence Larsen
 Gene & Nancy Lindblad
 Gary & Diane Madsen
 George Madsen
 Ronald D. Johnson* and Bodil Strom Muller
 John W. & Elizabeth Nielsen
 LeVern* & Marilyn* Nielsen
 W. Clayton Nielsen
 Larry & Palma Plume
 Joan Sorensen ■

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Total 2016 Net Worth: \$343,000, \$101,000 building equity; \$149,000 liquid assets (\$18,000 designated); and \$93,000 endowment.

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\$10,000 and over

Bruce & Gerry Lauritzen, Omaha, NE

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Roger Hanson, Cedar Falls, IA
 Dody Johnson, Blair, NE
 Philip & Florence Larsen, Blair, NE
 William Plume, Pine, CO
 Joan Sorensen, Richardson, TX

\$2,000 - \$4,999

Patricia Bentsen, Blair, NE
 Erna Berthelsen, Albert Lea, MN
 Fritz Hansen, Wichita, KS
 Tim & Sharon Jensen, Blair, NE
 Luther & Doris Kloth, Wauwatosa, WI
 Maryann Lund, Mulkiteo, WA
 Shirley Moore, Blair, NE
 John W. & Elizabeth Nielsen, Blair, NE
 Thrivent Choice Funds, Appleton WI

\$1,000 - \$1,999

Ruth Benson, Apple Valley, MN
 Karen & Mike Brody, Richardson, TX
 Phil & Becky Bryant, West Des Moines, IA
 Borge M. Christensen, Rochester, WI
 Ingrid Christiansen, Brookline, MA
 Myrv & Anne Christopherson, Decorah, IA
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #1, Omaha, NE
 Chris & Frank Gehringer, Omaha, NE
 Joyce Johnsen, Huntington Beach, CA
 Chuck & Joyce Jorgensen, Blair, NE
 Don & Joyce Jorgensen, Ripon, WI
 Richard & Delores Jorgensen, Poy Sippi, WI
 Charles & Janet Kahn, Gulf Breeze, FL
 Gene & Nancy Lindblad, Blair, NE
 William C. & Margaret R. Nelsen, St. Peter, MN
 Lisa Nielsen, Fairfield, PA
 Clayton & Lila Nietfeld, Greeley, CO
 Larry & Palma Plume, Evergreen, CO
 LeRoy & Sandra Wigdahl, Blair, NE

\$500 - \$999

Thomas Bengtson, Rock Island, IL
 Mark & Erika Bondo, Freehold, NJ
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #206, Blair, NE
 Michael & Jill Hennick, Blair, NE
 Elaine Hoyer, Blair, NE
 Ada Jeppesen, Blair, NE
 David & Michele Johnson, Council Bluffs, IA
 Judy Pollock & Julie Johnson, Columbus, OH
 Paul & Liz Johnson, Fremont, NE
 Marty & Linda Koefoed, Missouri Valley, IA
 Andrea Neve, Minneapolis, MN
 David Nielsen, Winfield, KS
 John Mark & Dawn Nielsen, Blair, NE
 Folmer & Vera Nyby, Michigan City, MI
 Ruth & Allan Nyegaard, Eugene, OR
 Roger & Dorothy Olson, Blair, NE
 Don & Audrey Pedersen, Pea Ridge, AR
 Joan Pearson & Karl Petersen, Bainbridge Island, WA
 Pete & Shirley Petersen, Canyon, TX
 James Peterson, Richfield, MN
 Joanne Peterson, Oshkosh, WI
 Bill & Margaret Rodenburg, Centerville, OH
 Sandy Sonderup, Blair, NE
 Agnete Temali, Shoreview, MN
 John & Deb Wood, Oklahoma City, OK
 Sandra Wunder, Greeley, CO

\$250 - \$499

Keith & Paula Anderson, Gaylord, MN
 Dennis Barten, Kirkwood, MO
 David & Lois Carlsen, Blair, NE
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #35, Homewood, IL
 Eugene Gnuse, Arlington, NE
 Arvin Hernes, Blair, NE
 Herb Jorgensen, Green Lake, WI
 Jim & Linda Jorgensen, Blair, NE
 Jean Clark Kaldahl, Port Townsend, WA
 Tim & Jamie Kuiken, Fairfield, IA
 Roger & Marilyn Nichols, Tucson, AZ
 Jim & Sue Olsen, Blair, NE
 Matthew Petersen, Johnston, IA
 Carl Rasmussen & Cindi Rasmussen, Nevada, IA

Starla Sweda, Selma, TX
 Doug & Jane Wilson, Farragut, IA

\$100 - \$249

Stephanie Adams, Blair, NE
 Greek & Marilyn Abariotes, Blair, NE
 Anonymous
 Lloyd & Ann Bansen, Yamhill, OR
 Jack & Lois Beal, Bothell, WA
 Grace Beck, Omaha, NE
 Aase Besson, Laake Oswego, OR
 Egon & Diana Bodtker, Salem, OR
 Carol Bogacz, LaVista, NE
 Milt & Elaine Brostrom, St Peter, MN
 James & Annette Brown, Mishicot, WI
 Niels Carlsen, Summerfield, FL
 John & Myra Christensen, Fortuna, CA
 Joyce Christensen, Omaha, NE
 Phil & Marilyn Christensen, Sparks, NV
 Robert & Martha Christiansen, Scottsdale, AZ
 Vaughn Christensen, Blair, NE
 Robert & Joan Coffey, Menomonee Falls, WI
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #16, Minden, NE
 Danish Brotherhood Lodge #84, Lincoln, NE
 Danish Sisterhood Lodge #185, Shaker Heights, OH
 Danish Sisterhood NE/CO District, Lincoln, NE
 Darrell Dibben, Blair, NE
 Anne Eppley, Omaha, NE
 Charles & Sherry Forrest, Omaha, NE
 Agneta Gaines, Omaha, NE
 Dennis & Barbara Garrett, Blair, NE
 Esther Grindberg, Blaine, MN
 Neil & Arlene Grover, Staples, MN
 Charles Hansen, Mt. Prospect, IL
 James Hansen, Charleston, WV
 Michael D. Hansen, McCook, NE
 Verlan & Helga Hanson, Blair, NE
 Marilyn Hawes, Fort Calhoun, NE
 James Heiser, McMinnville, OR
 Robert Hemmingson, Fergus Falls, MN
 Ralf & Inga Hoifeldt, Urbandale, IA
 Lynette Hunt, Blair, NE
 Richard Hunt, Blair, NE

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Joann Jamison, San Rafael, CA
 Jean Jaspersen-Naegle, Columbus, NE
 Arnold & Marianne Jensen, Charlottesville, VA
 Lorraine Jensen, Blair, NE
 Paul & Jayne Jensen, Cresco, IA
 Lynda Jeppesen, Oak Park, IL
 Alice M. Jorgensen, Ferndale, MI
 Lis Jorgensen, Burnsville, MN
 Rodney & Nancy Kastrup, Gainesville, VA
 Deb & Arnold Katt, Herman, NE
 Vivian I. Kelley, Blair, NE
 John & Ramona Klaasmeyer, Omaha, NE
 Larry Knudsen, Northfield, MN
 Lowell & Chana Kubie, Blair, NE
 Eugene & Lee Anne Lack, Montrose, MN
 Elizabeth Larsen, Cupertino, CA
 Robert & Linda Larsen, Georgetown, TX
 Harold & Barbara Laursen, Kearney, NE
 Carole Liljedahl, Missouri Valley, IA
 Edgar Madsen, Princeton, NJ
 Duncan & Kathryn Meldrum, Mertztown, PA
 Laura Meldrum, Musella, GA
 Sarah Meldrum, Lowell, MA
 Marilyn Meyer, Everly, IA
 Linda Knudsen Moore, Eagan, MN
 K. Joyce Mynster, Council Bluffs, IA
 Norma Nabity, Omaha, NE
 Vordyn Nelson, Luther, MI
 Leon & Alice Neve, St. Paul, MN
 Loyd & Marie Neve, Omaha, NE
 Carolyn Nielsen, St Clair Shores, MI
 North Logan Cemetery Assn., Firth, NE
 Gunnar Nyholm, Valley, NE
 Myrna Olsen, Racine, WI
 A. Richard & Beverly Petersen, Sioux Falls, SD
 Duane & Dixie Petersen, Wichita, KS
 Jon & Dorothy Petersen, Puyallup, WA
 John E. Peterson, Plymouth Meeting, PA
 Arvin Quist, Oak Ridge, TN
 Carl L.M. Rasmussen, Kirkland, IL
 Restoration Exchange, Omaha, NE
 D'Arlene Rosenau, Lodi, CA
 Leroy & Norma Schafersman, Arlington, NE
 Greg Schou, Albert Lea, MN
 Milo & Phyllis Shavik, North Platte, NE
 Jens & Eileen Simonsen, Oakdale, NE
 Donald & Elvera Skokan, Bel Aire, KS
 Arliss Stockdale, Ames, IA
 Mark & Dian Svendsen, Philomath, OR
 Paul Thisted, Evergreen, CO
 Steffen Waendelin, Homewood, AL
 Lauretta Walker, Swea City, IA
 Sonja Walker, Minneapolis, MN
 Barbara Ward, San Diego, CA
 Paula Jean Wolf, Elmhurst, IL

\$50 - \$99

Cindy Adams, Littleton, CO
 Marcia Bergmeyer, DeWitt, NE
 Molly Bogh, Highland, CA
 Judy Brehm, Blair, NE
 Frida Brewer, Lubbock, TX
 Ronald & Mary Bro, Cedar Falls, IA
 Henry & Patricia Brock, Selma, CA
 Pat Brown, Burlington, WI
 Tim & Lu Brown, Blair, NE
 Betty Bryan, Cary, NC
 Paul Christoffersen, Underwood, IA

Nancy Davis, Carroll, IA
 Carol Donelan, Northfield, MN
 Anne-Marie Douglas, Chicago, IL
 Lois Eagleton, Umpqua, OR
 Lyle & Dorothy Feisel, Chestertown, MD
 Ken & Mary Ann Fehl, Racine, WI
 Norman Freund, Fremont, NE
 Janice Hansen, Minnetonka, MN
 Larry & Sandra Hansen, Fremont, NE
 Kristie Hansen-Mendez, Chicago, IL
 Mary Henriksen, Omaha, NE
 Herman Community Church ABCs, Herman, NE
 Teresa Houser, Omaha, NE
 Ron & Rikki Hulsebus, Omaha, NE
 Kathy Gerking & Andy Johnson, Iowa City, IA
 Dorothy Jorgensen, Bemidji, MN
 Richard & JoAnn Klebez, Northfield, MN
 Martin Kuhr, Blair, NE
 Charles Lang, Orlando, FL
 Keith & Lori Larsen, Omaha, NE
 Lorene Larsen, Omaha, NE
 Roger Hans Larsen, Fremont, NE
 Susan Marsh, Blair, NE
 Claudia Martin, Omaha, NE
 Peter & Barbara Mathiasen, Aldergrove, BC
 Ruth McMaster, Nebraska City, NE
 Dan & Alice Mikel, West St Paul, MN
 Patricia Miller, Crawfordsville, IA
 Muriel Neve, Blair, NE
 Mark & Archana Nath Olsen, Redondo Beach, CA
 Agnes Paulsen, Tucson, AZ
 Mimi Payne, New London, MN
 Duane & Anna Pedersen, Ames, NE
 Hans & Jeanette Pedersen, Haines City, FL
 Robert C. Rasmussen, Laguna Niguel, CA
 George & Susan Rozanski, Omaha, NE
 Bill & Carole Schetter, Highlands Ranch, CO
 Irene Schmidt, Audubon, IA
 Larrie Stone, Ames, IA
 Martha Stone, Boston, MA
 Marilyn Svendgard, Blair, NE
 Dick & Sonja Switzer, Omaha, NE
 Mary Teten, Talmadge, NE
 Wayne & Naomi Theye, Winona, MN
 John Thomsen, Brooklyn, NY
 Larry & Charlotte Travis, San Antonio, TX
 Washington County Genealogy Society, Blair, NE
 Nicholas Wilson, Shenandoah, IA

\$49 and under

Ingvert & Sharon Appel, Eldora, IA
 Hal Berry, San Diego, CA
 Larry & Lois Bornemeier, Danbury, CT
 John & Linda Braunhold, Chicago, IL
 Fenton & Carol Broadhead, Rexburg, ID
 Dale & Arlene Christensen, Ames, IA
 Dale & Laurel Christiansen, Dannebrog, NE
 Jim Eastwood, Fridley, MN
 Dorothy Farthing, Colorado Springs, CO
 Jon & Elizabeth Fredlund, Anoka, IA
 Albert Girtz, Mankato, MN
 Cynthia Gunderson, Elgin, IL
 JD & Heather Hall, Blair, NE
 Franklin G. Hansen, Washington Island, WI
 Gerry Hansen, Fremont, NE
 Alice Hanson, Oregon, WI
 Alvina Hjortsvang, Council Bluffs, IA
 Kristen Jacobsen, Skokie, IL

Jill Jensen, Minneapolis, MN
 Jane Jensen, Plainview, NE
 Dorothy Jepson, Onawa, IA
 Michael & Jeannette Jurkovich, Fresno, CA
 Lois Kemble, Lincoln, NE
 Gladys Kempe, Tustin, CA
 Solveig Sperati Korte, Vermillion, SD
 Bob & Joan Krogh, Blair, NE
 Robert Laursen, San Francisco, CA
 Larry & Susan Legore, Algona, IA
 Elberta LeVine, Germantown, WI
 Gary Lund, Norfolk, NE
 Clarabelle Mares, Fremont, NE
 Gene & Susie Meyer, Blair, NE
 Maxine Mitchell, Fremont, NE
 Elsie Moreau, North Yarmouth, ME
 Joy Linnea Morgan, Austin, TX
 Howard Nicholson, Marquette, MI
 W. Clayton Nielsen, Solvang, CA
 Elmer Petersen, Galesville, WI
 Ruth Rasmussen, Omaha, NE
 James & Sidney Rames, Omaha, NE
 Donna Rector, Norfolk, NE
 Charlie & Julie Rohlfing, Blair, NE
 Alice Schattauer, Blair, NE
 Jean Sneen, Sioux Falls, SD
 Jerry & Diane Stockdale, Cedar Falls, IA
 Arlene Stork, Arlington, NE
 Robert Storms, Omaha, NE
 Karen Taylor, Springfield, IA
 Gene & Nancy TeSelle, Tekamah, NE
 Marion & William Vierow, Saco, NE
 Marian Ward, Blair, NE ■



The display case at the front of the DAAL now features album covers and other materials from the Melchior collection. Be sure to stop in to see it whenever you are in Blair.

IN THE STACKS

THE LAURITZ MELCHIOR COLLECTION

By Michael L. Hennick, Library Assistant

The Lauritz Melchior collection at the DAAL was once part of the materials housed and displayed at the Dana College library. When Dana closed in the summer of 2010, the contents of what was called the Melchior Room were taken to the Museum of Danish America (MoDA) in Elk Horn, Iowa. After sorting through these materials, the MoDA kept the artifacts and turned over numerous boxes of scrapbooks, documents, files, memorabilia and phonograph records to the DAAL. Our Melchior holdings suddenly went from six feet of shelf space to more than sixty!

Before acquiring the new holdings, the DAAL had several biographies, two boxes of miscellaneous items relating to Melchior, a shelf of reel-to-reel recordings of numerous radio and TV programs that Melchior hosted or was a guest on, and approximately 50 records. The reel-to-reels had been converted to CDs just before the DAAL left Dana College. These recordings also include live, full-length opera performances. The fifty-five 7 ½-inch reels were a gift to Dana from Danmarks Radio, Denmark's national broadcasting corporation, in 1990. Although Melchior was first and foremost an opera singer, these old recordings showcase his ability in all types of vocal music.

The new materials that came to us include Melchior's private record collection. This includes both his own recordings as well as music he enjoyed. Of the nearly 600 records in the collection, roughly three quarters are 78 rpms and the rest are 33 rpms. All of these records must be cleaned and catalogued one at a time.

Another significant part of the collection is Melchior's extensive scrapbook collection. He seems to have saved every clipping from numerous sources that dealt with his life and career, and would be an invaluable resource for anyone doing research on this legendary performer. The scrapbooks have been digitized and can be viewed by going to the DAAL digital archive at www.danishamericanarchive.net. They present a detailed portrait of a man, his work and the times he lived in. We can further enhance that portrait with several boxes of files, letters, documents and other papers that have yet to be examined and organized at the DAAL.

We are fortunate to be able to preserve these materials from one of the greatest singers that Denmark ever produced. Lauritz Melchior spent much of his life in the United States and became an American citizen in 1947. ■



Books, photographs, recordings, scrapbooks and a wide variety of documents make up more than 60 feet of shelf space at the DAAL and provide a fascinating picture of Lauritz Melchior, whom some have called the world's greatest Heldenenor.

OMAHA'S DANISH BROTHERHOOD BUILDING LISTED AS HISTORIC PLACE

The building that originally housed the National Headquarters of the Danish Brotherhood in America (DBA) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 22, 2016. The DAAL is the official repository of the Danish Brotherhood records and provided material for the nomination.

The following information was provided by Restoration Exchange Omaha (REO):

The building at 3717 Harney Street in Omaha was nominated and approved based on its architectural significance. Stylistically eclectic, the building is an intact example of an early Postmodern/Late National Romantic office building with one-of-a-kind Danish architectural details. Those details—including a copper spiral cupola, integral stepped dormers, and terra cotta tile roof—were requested by the client, the Danish Brotherhood in America.

REO's staff architectural historian Patrick Thompson, noted that, in many ways, the architect designed a typical small office building for the DBA headquarters: its horizontal orientation was similar to many of the ranch homes that were then being constructed in suburban Omaha. In other ways, he said, it is unique both to Omaha and to its time. Thompson notes that The Børsen, the 17th century stock exchange building in Copenhagen, Denmark, was the inspiration for at least some of the details of the DBA building.

The building served as law offices from 1994 until 2015, when it was purchased by Security State Bank as future administrative space for Dundee Bank. AO, an Omaha architectural firm, is doing the architectural work on the property and hired Restoration Exchange to write the nomination. You can see the entire nomination document at: landmark.cityofomaha.org/images, then click on National Register. ■



The former headquarters building of the Danish Brotherhood in America.



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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Name _____ Spouse _____

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In thinking about what characterizes the Danish Americans I have known—family, friends, coworkers, schoolmates—I feel the main thing they have in common is a love of learning. I see evidence of that every day at the DAAL.

The library portion of the DAAL contains more than 12,000 books, all of which were donated from the collections of Danes or Danish Americans. Every section of the Dewey Decimal System is represented on our shelves, from encyclopedias in the 000s to history and geography in the 900s. Our periodical section includes issues of more than 150 different newspapers and magazines. The stories behind these collections are great, such as the 15-volume set of the complete works of Søren Kierkegaard that belonged to Captain Rognald L. Gøtsche, as is mentioned in “Around the Archive.”

Learning doesn't come just from reading, though. The DAAL's record collection occupies 50 feet of shelf space and spans genres from classical to opera to folk to rock. All of this music was donated, either by individuals or by other Danish American organizations. The DAAL is the designated conservator of all music materials by its sister Danish American organizations.

A love of learning also is evident in our family collections. These include obvious items such as diplomas, scholastic awards, master's theses, doctoral dissertations and in some cases, more books. We also have a wealth of materials connected to educational institutions, such as folk high schools and the colleges and seminaries established by Danish Americans. Our materials aren't just Danish or just American. We see the connections to other cultures through the numerous letters that kept the immigrants connected to their families in Denmark. These connections often continue through many generations with letters, documents of missionary assignments, and pamphlets, photos and narratives of international travel.

Before the age of computers and the internet, how did people compile their information? One answer is through clipping collections and scrapbooks. At least five of our largest collections are full of newspaper articles chronicling a wide variety of Danish or Danish American subjects that were of interest to the collector. And the Lauritz Melchior scrapbook collection is a prime example of how people assembled scrapbooks of memories.

I love the fact that almost the entire contents of the DAAL was collected, saved and then donated to us. It is a definite testament to the love of learning of Danish Americans. ■



*Executive Director
Jill Hennick*



1738 Washington Street
Blair, Nebraska 68008

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

AROUND THE ARCHIVE

- ◆ Two different families are including volunteer work at the DAAL in their family reunions this spring and summer. The family of long-time volunteer Jody Sorensen of Richardson, Texas, plans to join us April 3-7, 2017, for Spring Volunteer Week. And the family of another long-time volunteer, Roger Hanson of Ceder Falls, Iowa, will be gathering at the DAAL in June. We will happily accommodate any family that includes the DAAL in their reunion plans.
- ◆ Kristin Jacobsen, a graduate student at Loyola University in Chicago, visited the DAAL in June and October 2016 in order to do research for a paper titled, "*Write soon!*": *Danish Immigrant Letters and their Role in Marketing Relationships*. Kristin was able to find several original letters and documents among the materials at the DAAL that contained the information she needed. The immediacy of the primary sources found at the DAAL are what scholars and researchers like the most about coming here.
- ◆ Earlier this month a filmmaker from Denmark, Peder Krøyer, visited the DAAL to gather preliminary information for a documentary on Danish immigration. He was accompanied by outgoing Museum of Danish America Executive Director John Mark Nielsen, incoming Executive Director Rasmus Thørgersen, and David Hendee, a reporter with the Omaha World-Herald.
- ◆ In response to our appeal letter that went out in November, several donations have come in that were designated for computer hardware and software. So far we have purchased one new desktop computer, and would like to order two more. We are also in the process of registering for a web site called Tech Soup through which we can order the software at a discount. This represents a good start on one of our goals to update and upgrade our internet technology.
- ◆ The DAAL has been the recipient of three substantial donations of materials during the last several months.
 - *Lee Anne Lack, Pastor Ed and Shirley Hansen's daughter, made a special trip to the DAAL from Minnesota to bring us eight boxes of documents and other materials to add to Ed and Shirley's already extensive collection. Ed Hansen was a pastor and served as bishop of the southwest ALC synod.
 - *Fifteen boxes of books belonging to John M. Jensen, who wrote a definitive history of the UELC, and his son, Frederik V. Jensen came to us through their son and grandson, Frederik R. Jensen. Among the books are the memoirs of John M. Jensen. When we were still located at Dana College, the DAAL received a 15-volume collection of books from this same Jensen family called *Søren Kierkegaard Samlede Værker*. This beautiful set of books, written in Danish, had belonged to John M. Jensen's father-in-law, Captain Rognald L. Gøtsche 1854-1933 who sailed for the United Danish Steamship Company for 47 years. ■