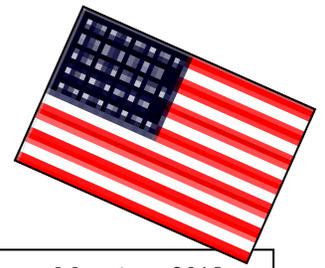


JOTTINGS



A publication of the Danish American Archive and Library

May-Aug. 2018

KRINGLE & MINGLE AND PHOTO EXHIBITS HIGHLIGHT OCTOBER AT THE DAAL

Staff and volunteers at the DAAL have been busy with two projects in conjunction with the 2018 Dana College homecoming event:

- ◆ Planning the Kringle & Mingle scheduled for Saturday, October 6 from 9 to 11 a.m.
- ◆ Assembling two different photo exhibits centering on Dana College history

Each year since Dana College closed its doors in June of 2010, the tenacious Dana College Alumni & Friends Association has organized and staged homecoming festivities the first weekend in October.

In the beginning, most of the festivities were held at the Blair YMCA, but recently the owners of the Dana College campus have allowed most of the events to take place at Dana. However, one event has been consistent since 2011—the **Kringle & Mingle at the Danish American Archive and Library.**

“Kringle & Mingle is just one of many ways we collaborate,” says Sandra Jensen, Chairperson of the Dana College Alumni & Friends Association. “We are partnering with DAAL for the production of our “Dana College Alumni Today” newsletter and frequently enjoy the use of the DAAL conference room for our Alumni Council meetings. We especially appreciate the valuable service that DAAL is providing to the Dana College alumni in preserving a large treasure trove of Dana College artifacts and historical information. The Dana College Room at DAAL is a wonderful place for alumni to gather to review Dana yearbooks and historical information which rekindle their memories of that special place called “Dana”. The Dana College Alumni and Friends sincerely value these joint activities with DAAL and plan to continue cooperation that benefits both organizations.”

The DAAL and the Alumni Association have always worked to keep the memory of Dana College alive in spite of the fact that we are two separately funded and distinct organizations. The Alumni Association keeps the traditions such as Homecoming going, and the DAAL preserves the documents, and therefore the history, of Dana College. Our Dana College collection is by far our largest and takes up an entire room at the DAAL as well as additional library shelves.

That first Kringle & Mingle succeeded beyond all expectations. Originally scheduled for 8 to 10 a.m., it was almost noon before a power failure caused the last of the 150 attendees to exit the building. Since then, Kringle & Mingle has continued to be the place where Dana alumni can meet and visit. This year we are expecting legendary track and cross-country coach Jay Birmingham and members of the nationally ranked 1996 cross-country team.

Two different photo exhibits will be on display during Homecoming weekend—one at the Blair Public Library and Technology Center and the other at the DAAL. The majority of the photos came from the DAAL’s Dana College collection, with additional photos on loan from the Washington County Museum.



From left: Marilyn Abariotes, Barb Sandvold and Karen Hansen prepare to transport the Dana buildings display to the Blair Public Library and Technology Center.



Now on display at the DAAL are exhibits focusing on Dana choir tours and sports as a preview for next year’s exhibits at the Blair library. Caps like this were worn by 1929 choir members.

The exhibit on display at the Blair library includes compelling historical photos of the buildings of Dana College, past and present. Visitors will be able to virtually walk through the campus from its beginnings to the present. We decided to focus on the buildings, since the married student housing and two dormitories are being demolished this year. Once again we collaborated with Dana alumni. Dawn Nielsen helped with the initial selection, and Barb Sandvold, Marilyn Abariotes and Karen Hansen finished selecting and arranging the photos into attractive framed displays.

The exhibit on display at the DAAL focuses on sports and choir tours. This exhibit is a preview of the expanded exhibit at the Blair library next year. Also on display at both venues will be artifacts from sports teams, campus activities, and business and faculty offices among others. Most of these have been donated to the DAAL, but some are treasured keepsakes on loan from Dana College alumni. ■

FROM THE DANA ROOM

REMEMBERING ARGO HALL

by Ann (Harms) George

This fall Argo and Elk Horn Halls – women's and men's dormitories built in the 1920s – were slated for demolition. Even before Dana closed in the summer of 2010, both had been unoccupied for a number of years because of heating and maintenance problems. Before the buildings were razed, a group of area alumni spent a day in both, but mostly in Argo, reminiscing while salvaging items, ranging from doors to Sights and Sounds of Christmas memorabilia, that were later auctioned. "Remembering Argo" is adapted from an article (by the same writer) that appeared in the spring 2006 issue of the Dana Review, the alumni quarterly.

For its first 40 years, Argo Hall wasn't "Argo Hall." The November 1923 *Hermes*, the campus newspaper, reported that the dedication of "the new Girls Dormitory" had been the first event of the school year.

And it's "Girls Dormitory" that was engraved on the lintel above Argo's north door. In contrast, the lintel over the front entrance of Elk Horn Hall, Argo's companion building to the north, completed in 1927, identified it as "The Men's Dormitory."

"Girls Dormitory" recalls a time when many colleges, including Dana, acted "in loco parentis" (in place of parents), especially for their women students. Women had curfews, and they had to "sign out" in the evening when they left their dorm and whenever they left the campus, indicating the time, where they were going and with whom. When they returned they signed in. At Dana the dean of women, who lived in the dorm, checked this register before she locked the doors for the night. And for many years, "lights out" followed within an hour or two. Students needing to study retreated to the second floor lounge.

Over time these rules changed and eventually disappeared, but they certainly made life in Argo in about its first four decades different from the decades that followed. Alumnae from those earlier years remember leaning out of open windows after hours to lower pillowcases tied to ropes for obliging male friends to fill with canteen food; the annual open house for male students, with a competition for the best room (there was also an annual men's open house); and the panty raids of the mid-to-late '50s, one of them foiled by a dean of women who invited the raiders and dorm residents into the dining hall for ice cream.

By 1963 several new buildings, including additional residence halls for men and women, had names. In "A Place Called Dana: The Centennial History of Trinity Seminary and Dana College," Peter L. Petersen writes, "Clearly the two dorms built during . . . the 1920s needed more exact designations. . . . In late 1963, therefore, the regents approved renaming the two structures. The south building was christened Argo Hall in honor of the now-vanished community [about 15 miles northwest of Blair] where the Blair Church [predecessor of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (UELC)] was officially formed in 1884 and the first steps taken toward the creation of Trinity Seminary [college classes soon followed]. The north building became Elk Horn Hall, commemorating the Iowa community of Elk Horn, birthplace of Elk Horn College, which moved to Blair in 1899 [when college classes became coeducational]."

A photograph in the March 1923 *Hermes* of Argo under construction reveals that it was to be more than a women's dormitory: The inscription on the lintel above the main entrance reads "19 Dining Hall 22" -- the year construction started. It would be the dining hall for 43 years.

Meals were served family style, with six students at a table. Because students had weekly table assignments for lunch and dinner Mondays through Fridays, eventually everyone knew one another. Each table had an assigned host and hostess, and students dressed up for dinner on Wednesday evening and Sunday noon.

By 1959 serving family style was no longer practical because of the growing number of students, and the September 7 *Hermes* reports that "The installation of the new cafeteria line and all new kitchen equipment will make food preparation easier and more efficient." Students continued to eat in Argo until 1966, when the E.C. Hunt Campus Center, with a cafeteria on the second floor, opened.

Argo even housed male students for several years in the early '60s. Otherwise, it was always a women's residence hall. This is only a capsule history of a building that was 95 years old; its real history is in the memories of the hundreds of women -- and some men -- who lived there. ■



DIGITIZING THE DAAL

One of the main goals of the Danish American Archive and Library is to make as much material as possible available to as many people as possible as easily as possible. How can we accomplish this? The answer is digitizing.

What is digitization? Many of us now routinely scan photographs or documents to email to someone else. Through the process of scanning, an image of the material is captured in the form of a computer file, which can be easily stored and sent from computer to computer. Users can access these files and view the image on their computers or print a copy. And with printed or typewritten documents, part of the digitizing process even includes Optical Character Recognition (OCR) which allows users to do a search for specific words or phrases.

Why digitize? There are several reasons to digitize archived materials:

- The materials can be made readily available to many users
- Materials are protected from wear and damage during use
- It is easier to retrieve related materials that are scattered across multiple collections
- Volunteers can work on digitized materials from remote locations
- Digitized materials can be used for publications and exhibits
- The originals of digitized materials can be stored more compactly

What do we digitize? In recent years we have digitized a wide variety of materials, including among others:

- Newspaper collections (in conjunction with the Museum of Danish America)
- Dana College yearbooks, and other Dana College publications
- Audio recordings including oral history tapes
- Movies and videos saved in obsolete formats
- Dana College files
- Historic documents and photos
- Obituaries

Interested users can access much of the digitized material online in our “Digital Archive” at www.danishamericanarchive.net. For some types of material, such as copyrighted documents and very large files or collections not of general interest, users must come in person to the DAAL.

What happens next? Once the material has been captured, there is still a significant amount of work to be done:

- Label and catalog the digital material to make it easy to use
- List the collection where the original material resides
- Identify individuals in photos if possible
- List the date, topics and names of people participating in oral histories
- Keep the digital archive and relevant software maintained, updated and backed up

Volunteers and staff have been working on this effort for years, because we believe it is the way to the future. An extreme example is volunteer Helga Hanson, who spent nearly 20 years gleaning information from our enormous Danish Brotherhood collection and entering it into Excel spreadsheets.

We have now taken those spreadsheets and turned them into a searchable database where anyone descended from a Danish immigrant who belonged to the Danish Brotherhood can easily find their ancestor’s birth place, beneficiary names, which are often spouses or parents, occupation, how much insurance coverage they carried, as well as other information depending on the listing.

We are constantly deciding which materials to digitize. Large collections with hundreds or thousands of photographs take a significant amount of time, of course, but we also like to accommodate interested users by digitizing select portions of larger collections for specific purposes. For example, if someone is preparing an exhibit or presentation, we can readily digitize several dozen photographs or documents for them.

Do you have basic computer skills? We are always looking for people who can help us with this effort, and have ways for volunteers to work from a remote location. If it sounds like something you would like to try, please contact us at 402-426-7910 or by email at info@danishamericanarchive.com. ■



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2019 PREVIEW EXHIBIT
NOW ON DISPLAY
AT THE DAAL

In preparation for our Dana College exhibit in the Blair Public Library and Technology Center, we have gone through hundreds of photographs like this one. While it is interesting to know that there was a Women's Open House during the 1954-55 school year, the photo livens up when we



Standing from left: Jon Nuland, Herb Jorgensen.
Seated from left: Carol Nielsen, Shirley Andersen

know more about the relationships involved.

Carol Nielsen was the daughter of Danish immigrants. She married Herb Jorgensen (even though he seems to be giving more attention to Shirley Andersen in the photo). Herb Jorgensen is part of our "JOP-998 Jorgensens of Poy Sippi" collection. His uncle, brother, at least seven cousins, at

least nine second-cousins, a daughter and a nephew also went to Dana. Many of those also found a spouse at Dana.

The Jorgensens are not the only family from Poy Sippi for which we have a collection. The "AAO-2006 Alfred and Anna Olsen" collection has materials from other members of that community. One of their daughters married Reverend N.P. Nielsen (the NPN-2003 collection) whose daughter Lela married Paul Neve (the PLN-2000 collection). Interconnections between relatives and in-laws abound.

Both the Jorgensens and the Olsens attended First Lutheran Church (CHU-995 Wisconsin, Poy Sippi First/Lazarus). Some of the pastors who served this congregation include R.E. Morton, J.H. Thomsen, Raymond Paulsen, Niels B. Hansen and Norman Freund (all of which are found in the "JEN-997 PC" and Jensen PAS-2001). Norman and Esther Freund's collection (FRE-999) includes sermons he preached while at that church.

It is the interrelationships that hold the seemingly disparate collections together. We hope you will tell us more about your family and their lives, including relatives, friends, towns, schools and churches. Our challenge will then be how to create *finding aids* that will enable future generations to find the connections that we are lucky enough to know. ■

DAAL

Danish American
Archive and Library

Dedication to our Ancestors,
Appreciation of their Labors



Executive Director
Jill Hennick



VOLUNTEERS: 1,868 hours by 53 volunteers from Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska and Ohio.

VISITORS: 89 visitors from Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington, Denmark and Norway.

USERS: 69 users from Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, Washington DC, Denmark, France and email.

ACQUISITIONS

Materials:

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

Allan & Fran Anderson (Omaha, NE)
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FINANCIAL REPORT

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 In Gratitude for John W. Nielsen
 Myrv & Anne Christopherson (Decorah, IA)
 John W. & Elizabeth Nielsen for Fathers Day & Mothers Day
 David Nielsen (Winfield, KS)
 John W. & Elizabeth Nielsen for Birthdays
 David Nielsen (Winfield, KS)

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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 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.

50/100 FOUNDER LEVEL

- Luther & Doris Kloth (Wauwatosa, WI)
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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
- Judy Brehm
- Myrv & Anne Christopherson
- Bernhard* & Marilyn* Erling
- Kathryn (Olsen) & Milbern Goetz
- Roger J. Hanson
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- Paul & Liz Johnson
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Thank you for your ongoing support of the Danish American Archive and Library

AROUND THE ARCHIVE

- ◆ **Fall Volunteer Week** kicks off with a meeting of the DAAL Board of Directors on Sunday, October 7. Then on Monday, approximately 24 long-time volunteers come to the DAAL at their own expense to work on translating, sorting, coding and cataloging the extraordinary materials that we gratefully receive from people across this and other countries. On the Wednesday of that week we will hold the annual members meeting. Anyone who has donated time, money or materials during the past two years is a voting member.
- ◆ **We continue to attract** international visitors. During the past couple of months we've had visitors from Denmark, Norway and France—some just to visit and some to do research. The visitor from France came to read the letters of Jacob Riis and Jorgine Enghoff. In a good example of how digitization works, he found us through a Google search that led him to our digitized *Jottings* newsletters.
- ◆ **We were honored to receive** a bequest from the Bernard and Marilyn Erling estate. Marilyn was the daughter of Dana College president Lawrence Siersbeck, who served from 1938 to 1944.
- ◆ **Former Dana College history professor, Iain Anderson**, visited on June 1. Iain designed his history course to tap into the rare primary immigrant history materials housed at the DAAL when we were all still at Dana, and he brought several classes to the archive to do their research. On this visit, Iain was doing research of his own in the massive Danish Brotherhood collection.
- ◆ **The Danish Children Growing Up American photo exhibit** is still traveling. In June it began a month-long stay at the Washington County Museum in Ft. Calhoun, Nebraska. This appearance was accompanied by a reception with Danish style food, Scandinavian dancers and Danish music. Currently the exhibit is on display at the library at Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln. We hurried it down there to have it set up in time for a class on immigration that was visiting the library.
- ◆ **Two great-granddaughters of N.C. Carlsen**, Barbara Carlsen and Janet Campbell, both from Omaha visited the DAAL in June. N.C. Carlsen was a Lutheran minister and a prominent figure in the Danish Lutheran Church who served as its president from 1925 to 1950. During their visit they met Dody Johnson who boarded with Reverend and Mrs. Carlsen when she worked at Blair's Lutheran Publishing House.
- ◆ **On November 27** from midnight to midnight you can make a contribution to the DAAL online at **WCNE gives.org**. For this 24-hour period, you can choose the DAAL for your tax-deductible donation. Hosted by the Blair Area Chamber of Commerce and the Blair Area Community Foundation we will be joining other local nonprofits to raise money together and compete for bonus prize money.
- ◆ **Would you prefer** to receive your *Jottings* by e-mail? Many people already do. Nothing is easier. Just send us a message at info@danishamericanarchive.com and we'll add you to our list for e-mail. Of course we will always continue to send *Jottings* by U.S. Mail to those who prefer it that way. Please update us whenever you have a change of address.
- ◆ **A group of Dana College alumni** have started up a book club with their reading list taken from the LARP (Liberal Arts Reading Program) course that was required at Dana. The club members plan to meet at the DAAL at 1 p.m. every other Wednesday of beginning each month.
- ◆ **Three DAAL pioneers** recently celebrated birthdays. John W. Nielsen, Elizabeth Solevad Nielsen and Dody Johnson, all of whom are in their 90s, celebrated birthdays in June and July, and we threw a party for them at the DAAL. We will be forever grateful to these three individuals and for their extraordinary contributions to the DAAL. ■

1738 Washington Street
Blair, Nebraska 68008

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

IN THE STACKS

A Day in the Database: Searching for Hans Hansen

By Michael Hennick, Library Assistant

We often have only a name— not a long name, not a rare name, not even a middle name, but only the most common of Danish names. “Do you have anything on Hans Hansen?” Well, undoubtedly the DAAL has a lot of material on Hans Hansen, but which one?

The DAAL’s reference database, which dedicated volunteers have continued to improve and expand over the years and is available to on-site visitors, is where we begin our search for names. We first learn that the Danish Brotherhood in America had at one time or another over eight hundred Hans Hansens! We also have physical obituaries for sixteen men by that name, our family file folders contain fifteen such men, and ten students at Dana College were Hans Hansens. A further look at the DAAL Digital Library, which is accessible on-line, shows us three pastors in the old United Evangelical Lutheran Church named Hans Hansen, and over forty records of men associated with Washington County Nebraska by that name.

We have our beginning—there are Hans Hansens out there. Now the narrowing down process commences. Do we know the names of parents, wives, children or siblings? Do we know where he lived all or most of his life? Was he born in America or was he an immigrant? Did he reside in Washington County Nebraska for any length of time? Is he really Danish or is he possibly Norwegian? Was he in the Danish Brotherhood? Did he go to Dana College? What was his occupation? Was he a church-going man, and if so was it an ethnic Danish church like the old UELC? Did he go so far as to become a pastor? Family researchers usually have enough of this information to allow us to zero in on the right Hans Hansen or to learn with some certainty that we do not have anything on the man they are after.

We always strive diligently to find something of value to our users and visitors. The task of organizing and cataloging the collection is ongoing, and the continued growth of our database and digital library is making research faster and easier. ■



One of many Mr. and Mrs. Hans Hansens—in this case Hans and Kathrine (Dahl) Hansen of Audubon, Iowa.