



Nord Øst

Danish Archive North East
May 2015

Hello!

In this issue is the DANE's president's message talking about our current plans. The articles are one on the famous Danish New Jersey Governor – Morgan Foster Larson and one on the history of the Danish Home. We are starting a series on the museum rooms at the Danish Home. Many people have not had the chance to visit our museum rooms, so we wanted to let everyone see what we are up to. The first article in this series is on the Smith's Market display. Also, we need your help! We included two pictures of unknown Danish people associated with the Danish Home. If you can help with the identification, then that will be wonderful!

Enjoy!

DANE's President Message

Kære Alle,

Foråret er endelig her !!!

It is finally Spring! There are robins hopping on the lawns and all the tulips and Spring flowers are in bloom. What a great awakening after such a miserable Winter season.

Of course we all think of Spring cleaning at this time of year. Well, we could use some help of that at the Archive. Despite the mountains of work that has already been accomplished, there is a lot more to do. So we are asking you help to get things organized and archived. Our June 28th Sunday meeting will be devoted to archival work. There will be no formal meetings in July & August but we might take some time for archival work.

Due to date conflicts, we need to reschedule our Danish Pastry session.

But! don't be sad 😞 Wendy will do her magic at our November 15th Meeting. It may be a long time to wait but your taste buds are in for a treat.

Please join us at our meetings. Our topics are always Danish inspired and we have good times.

Med Venlig Hilsen

Agnes M Hagmueller
President

MORGAN FOSTER LARSEN 1882 - 1961

(Source material gathered from "History of Middlesex County NJ Vol III 1921, NJ State Library files and DANE Biographical files.)

By Agnes Jespersen Hagmueller

Morgan Foster Larson, a well known civil engineer of Perth Amboy, New Jersey, in spite of his years, has already earned a distinction in his particular line of work which might be the envy of a much older man. His efforts have been so discerningly directed along well defined lines that his may already be called a successful life in the true sense of the word.



Peter Larsen, father of Morgan F Larson, was born in Denmark July 4, 1849 and came to this country at the age of twenty-two years, settling in Perth Amboy NJ, where he has ever since resided and where he is the owner of a blacksmith shop and wagon factory located on Prospect St. He married Regina Knudsen, a native of Denmark, on October 31, 1848.

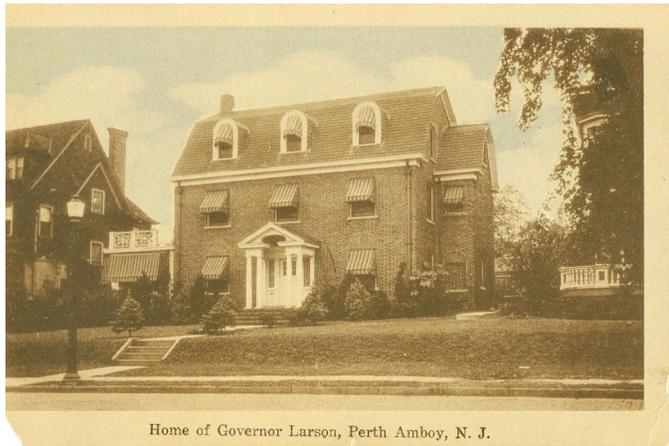
Mr. & Mrs. Larsen are the parents of five children, George T. born 1878, who is now a member of the of the city of Perth Amboy fire Department. Louisa, a daughter, born 1880, is married to Thomas Jensen. Morgan F. Larson was born 1882. Peter Larsen, born 1884, is a blacksmith by trade. Another brother Edward died in infancy.

Morgan Foster Larson was born in Perth Amboy NJ on June 15, 1882. He received his preliminary education in the local public schools, later **matriculating** in Cooper Union University, from which he was graduated B.C. in 1907, and immediately established himself as an engineer in his native city, receiving that

same year the appointment of County Engineer, which position he held for three years. In 1911 he received his degree of Civil Engineer and the year previous he formed a partnership with Alvin H. Fox and this (1921) still exists under the name of Larson & Fox. In 1917 Larson was appointed city engineer of Perth Amboy and township engineer of Woodbridge. He held both these positions in 1921. By 1921 Larson entered the world of politics when he was voted and elected State Senator. He again was voted in to that office in 1924 and 1927. In 1925 he became the New Jersey Senate's Majority Leader. During these terms he was instrumental in such transportation projects which included the George Washington Bridge, the Outerbridge Crossing and Goethals Bridges.

In 1928 Morgan F Larson threw his hat in the ring for the position Governor of New Jersey.

He was elected the 40th Governor of the State of New Jersey, under the Republican banner. His term of office was 1929-1932.



While serving as Governor his major commitments were conservation of potable water, development of transportation and control of water pollution. However his intense concerns were given little interest in the New Jersey Legislation. He failed to be nominated for a second term. He then returned to Middlesex County and served in many civil and county projects.



Gov Morgan Larson, front row. 3rd left

As for family life, he married Jennie Brogger (1887-1927), daughter of the prominent Danish Entrepreneur & Commissioner N C N Brogger. Morgan and Jennie had 2 children, a son Brogger (1890-1890) and daughter Anna (1892-1927). After being widowed 3 years Larson married his secretary Adda Schmidt in 1930 while he was in the office of Governor. They had 2 children, a daughter Joan Isele and M. F. Larson Jr.

Following his term of governor, Larson continued his career in both civil engineering and political involvement in Middlesex County NJ. He died 21 March 1961. He is buried with family members in Alpine Cemetery, Perth Amboy New Jersey.

(Go to DANE's website: www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njdane/index. Click on ("Useful Links") and go to "Find a Grave" and you will be able to see a photo of the Larsen plot in Alpine.)

Can anyone ID these men?

The picture was from the 50th Anniversary of the Danish Home in 1964. If you have any information, then please contact us at danenj@aol.com



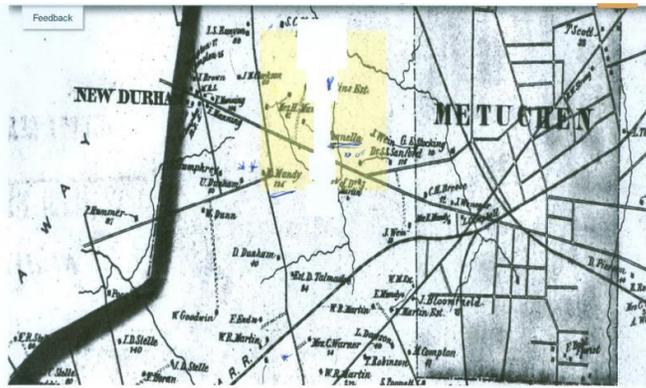
Do you know any of these people?

The picture was taken on the front porch of the old Danish Home, probably in the 1930s. If you have any information, then please contact us at danenj@aol.com



THE BEGINNING

"How it Became the Danish Home"
By Agnes Jespersen Hagmueller



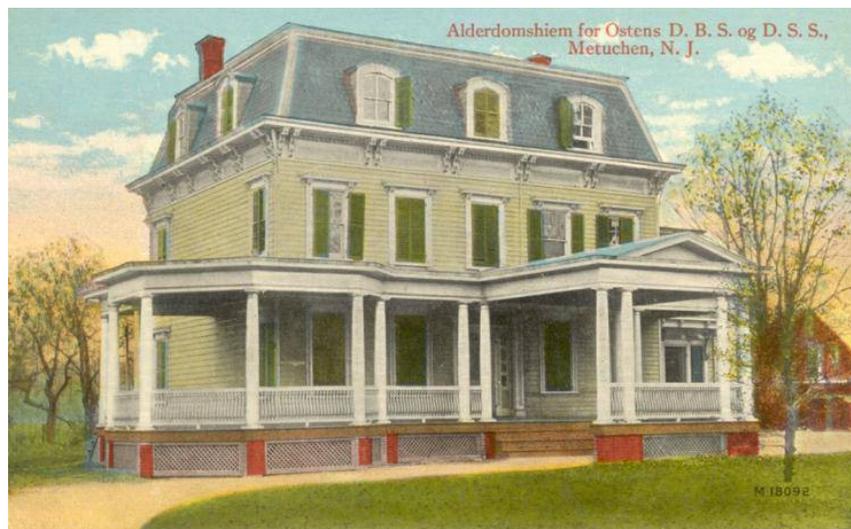
On March 29, 1887, Henry Cook Mundy and his wife Lydia sold a parcel of land in what was then known as Raritan Township to Cecile Salles Tonnele (1815-1868). The farm consisted of 72 acres. According records there was a Victorian Style House on the property, reportedly built in 1865.

Land Ownership Map 1876
Raritan Township, Middlesex County

Cecile made a Codicil to her will on May 25, 1867, filed in Hudson County NJ leaving the bulk of her estate to her son, Laurent John Tonnele (1827-1901). Laurent John received much of his wealth from his father John Tonnele, who was a wool merchant in New York City. The father owned properties both in New York and New Jersey (mostly Hudson County). At one point John Tonnele was a State Senator from Hudson County.

During his lifetime, Laurent John was considered a gentleman and realtor. At the outbreak of the United States Civil War, he organized and equipped the Second Regimental Militia from Jersey City. He served as Captain of the unit for only three months. In records after this 3 month period, he went back to his real estate business.

Laurent John Tonnele's Last Will and Testament (dated 1897) left the Raritan, now known as Metuchen, to his wife Mary B. In 1907, Mary B. Tonnele deeded the 72 acre farm to her son Laurent John Tonnele Jr. and his wife Lillian. Laurent Jr. married Lillian Mary Metzner on November 5, 1905 at St Francis Church, Metuchen NJ. City Directories listed them as living in Metuchen. Did they reside in the Victorian Farm House?



***The Old Danish Home
Metuchen, Middlesex, NJ***

In 1912 Laurent John Tonnele, Jr. and wife Lillian sold the property to a Henry Kuntz. Kuntz held the land until 1914. He sold the property to Anders R. A. Overgaard on February 9, 1914. In turn, Overgaard turned the property over to "The Home for the Aged of the Danish Brotherhood and the Danish Sisterhood of the Eastern United States". Deeds show that there were three mortgages on the land. Kuntz sold the farm to Overgaard for \$16,000.00.

A. R. A. Overgaard was elected the first president of the Danish Home Board and managed the property for the first two years.



A.R.A. Overgaard

Thus the beginnings of the now Danish Home of Edison (formally Metuchen) NJ. It was a retirement home for Danes of the various Lodges.

In 1949 it was deemed that the old Victorian Farm was no longer suitable as a residence, a new and updated Home was built across the road.

Today the Danish Home of Edison no longer houses residents. It is a Cultural and Heritage Center. A Museum and Archive is maintained by DANE. The Home is also a meeting and activity place for the Eastern Lodges. Most of the original 72 acres have been sold off, but the Home lives on.

Smith's Market exhibit at the Danish Home (Thanks to Janice Grace for the pictures!)

In one room at the Danish Home is an exhibit about Smith's Market. The room is part of the "Storefronts & Smokestacks", an exhibit showing the Danish businesses, merchants and industries of Perth Amboy New Jersey in the late 1890s and early 1900s. The market served the Danish community for many years in Perth Amboy.



The exhibit includes an old sausage making machine and a pickle barrel that has been used during some of our special events.



DANE had a successful fund raising campaign this past December, but we are always in need of donations of any amount to help with supplies, utilities, and postage. Any donation will be greatly appreciated and can be sent to:

DANE
855 New Durham Road
Edison, NJ 08817

DANE meetings:

- Jun 28 - Genealogy workshop
 - Jul - no meeting
 - Aug - no meeting
 - Sep 20 - Harvest Fest
 - Oct 18 - Danish movie about the Danish Home for the Aged
in Croton, New York
 - Nov 15 - Danish pastry making
 - Dec 5 - Jul Marked (Holiday sale)
 - Dec 20 - Julefest (Christmas party)
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