

## Celebrating DANE

Ten years of documenting a significant community

Some said our effort should have been made 75 years ago. Some said our effort shouldn't be made at all. But there were important others such as Einer Sorensen and Carl B.S. Pedersen who said, "By King Christian, yes."

Well maybe, they didn't say, 'By King Christian,' but they did say, 'yes' to Joan Seguine-LeVine and Agnes Jespersen-Hagmueller and Jack Kjersgaard who approached them with many cardboard boxes of files and the possibility of using a room in the Danish Home for a work space.

Agnes and Joan had been meeting in various spots, the Barnes & Noble bookstore, Agnes' home; Friendly Ice Cream Store, Carl and Norma's porch and our boxes were growing in number.

After getting permission to use one room of the Home, Agnes and Joan shopped for three new oak desks, three



bookcases and set up the offices of what would become the Danish Archive North East, known as DANE. The funds came from our own pockets. We hired ourselves a lawyer, completed federal and state forms, applications for 501 (C) (3) status, wrote by-laws and asked interested people to serve as board members. We were in business.

Carl B.S. Pedersen was our first president. Joan, secretary, Agnes treasurer, Jack, Einer, Joseph Jeantet, Axel Munck completed the Board.

**Continued page 2**

## Calendar

**Sunday May 16th 2-5PM**  
HONORING OUR VETERANS  
Danish Home, Edison NJ

**Sunday June 6th**  
DANE exhibits at  
GRUNDLOVSDAG

Danish Home, Croton, NY  
**Sunday June 27th 2-5PM**  
CELEBRATING DANE's 10TH  
ANNIVERSARY  
Danish Home, Edison, NJ

**No meetings for July & August**  
**Sunday Sept 5th**  
DANE exhibits at SCANFEST  
Vasa Park, Budd Lake, NJ

**Continued page 5**

## A TASTY SUCCESS

There were hot dishes — pork tenderloin cut in delectable pieces, hammered flat, fried in butter, topped with fried onions from Vibeke Aagesen and roast pork with caramelized potatoes from Agnes Jespersen-Hagmueller and red cabbage with bacon and apples from Bernice Yates. There were cold dishes — pickled beets and cucumber salad. **Continued page 4**

## Happy Anniversary Continued

At that time the Home still had residents, Violet, Fred, Leroy, a live-in couple as caretakers. We were extremely lucky to have the support of the Home's board members.

### Our accomplishments

Genealogy Seminars conducted by Agnes, DANE's vice-president and treasurer, also a professional genealogist evolved into a Genealogy Club started in October 2002 which met on the third Sunday of each month and continues to meet.

In October 2002

due to the efforts of Wendy Hansen-

Hudson DANE established an Internet presence. The genealogy website [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njdane](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njdane) now has more than 16,000 names and is a valuable resource. It is used by many US citizens from all parts of the country as well as Danish citizens who request help in searching for their families in the US.

DANE initiated microfilming of church records by the Church of the Latter Day Saints (at no cost). Records were filmed in Brooklyn by the Lutheran Church Archive New York and in Perth Amboy's Grace Lutheran Church.

The discarded Danish books from the Perth Amboy Public Library

grøn Øst

saved by Jack Kjersgaard many years ago became the cornerstone of DANE's library in the West Wing. Jack devised a numbering system and a shelf catalog necessary for a growing collection. Jack has since integrated hundreds of donated books from the Danish Home in Croton-on-Hudson and many other donors.

By the end of five years, DANE had amassed an amazing collection of information, books, pictures,

documents and artifacts. Some of these began the reference library and the genealogy library in the East Wing. Others were used for exhibits. A top-of-the line microfilm reader/printer donated to us, was recently repaired. Through generous donations we have purchased microfilm of New Jersey newspapers and census records. This helps us in our research and enables us to assist others as well.

The Home now is a museum and resource and cultural center. If you visit — and you can visit with an appointment by calling 732-287-6445 — you will be impressed by the

depth of the Danish story. There are ongoing and changing displays of Danish Sisterhood and Brotherhood histories. An exhibit showcases Danish artists. The Home records are on display. Photographic exhibits, costumes, examples of Danish handiwork, a sausage-making machine from Smith's Market are on display. Bob Thomsen donated the accordion that belonged to his father-in-law, Ernie Christophersen.

More than 70 people visited "Before Interstate 287 — 87 Years of Care, the history of the Danish Home from its beginning to the 2001 departure of the last resident." This was our first exhibit.

"Storefronts and Smokestacks," an exhibit of Perth Amboy's Danish industrial and business history based on Sanborn maps was funded in part by Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission. It remains as a permanent exhibit at the Home and is available in mini-form to travel for display in libraries and organizations. Representatives of DANE traveled also to Omaha, Nebraska and participated in "Danish and North American Relations Since WW II", an international conference.

## grøn Øst



DANE regularly attends and exhibits at SCANFEST in VASA Park, at Croton-on-Hudson at the Danish Home there.

Øst, meaning 'east' not to be confused with ost, meaning 'cheese' began publishing quarterly in Fall of 2001 and continues to publish an electronic edition, grøn Øst.

DANE received a matching grant from Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission to produce an award-winning DVD, "Perth Amboy Neighborhoods: The Danish Cycle. 1860-1935" showing how the Danish population influenced the architectural, geographical, political, educational, civic, industrial development of that city.

Educational and cultural programming included Hans Christian Andersen's 200th birthday party, Victor Borge's 100th and Danish traditional celebrations that have become annual events such as Fastelavn and Julefest.

Concerts showcasing Danish music were major programs with Chris Petersen, Jr. conducting an orchestra playing music especially arranged for this performance. DANE matched funds with Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission to provide this landmark program. DANE sponsored a number of Danish dance events with live music provided by Chris Petersen, Jr.

DANE opened a gift shop, Nissestrom, a name combining nisse, the Danish elves that appear before Christmas and the very big, very successful department store, Nordstrom. Now we call Nissestrom also "The Gift Shop" and stock it with Danish items and open it for holiday shopping at the Jule Marked.

Reaching out and establishing connections, we established contacts with the Danish community in the New York metropolitan area. The DK Moms now meet at the Home. DANE would not be able to cite all these accomplishments

if it had not been for the contributions and generosity of many of you. We are funded by donations and our campaigns have demonstrated the generosity of many individuals and organizations. In each issue of Øst we have included their names. At the end of our first ten years, we can say if it were not for you we would have not been able to list these accomplishments. We look forward to the next ten with you at our side.

Tusink Tak.



## A Taste of Denmark Continued from page 1

The desserts, oh, the desserts. Joe Billich observed "Doesn't your stomach think it's died and gone to Heaven?" as he sampled buttery Danish pastry rings decorated with slivered almonds known as "Grandmother's Cakes" baked by Wendy Hansen-Hudson.

Danish æblekage (apple cake) one with jelly on top, sugar, macaroons, whipped cream from Fred Anderson decorated with miniature Danish and American flags; another deliciously rich version from Marian Meyers delighted our palates.

Of course, we had to have Danish Dessert made by Julia Kelly. First, we have a tie to because Niels Malmquist who spent the summer of 1944 working in the Chr. Hansen laboratory testing and tasting the Junket products. Secondly, boxes of this well-loved, familiar product incidentally are sold in DANE's gift shop. Danish Dessert is reminiscent of a fruit pudding with cherries, strawberries and cream made by Bernice Yates' grandmother. Introducing Danish cuisine, Vibeke explained the importance of fish in the Danish diet. Cod, salmon, plaice, a type of fish similar to flounder but not available in this country figure in Danish cooking. Herring, of course and fried eels, hornfisk

## grøn Øst

(garfish), whose bones are green, are on the menu. Danes enjoy shellfish, such as langoustines, shrimps, clams, mussels, virgin lobsters and crabs.

Joy Billich remembered her father dipping his black bread in buttermilk and coffee brewed by pouring it through a sock. Carl B.S. Pedersen, of course mentioned different kinds of cheese.

Frikadeller, yes and open-face sandwiches such as cold sliced potatoes on rye bread spread with sweet butter and sprinkled with salt and pepper and cold potato sandwiches with mayonnaise were added to the list. Once our memories were primed, recollections of goose and duck for the holidays with apples and prunes or parsley, liver and stuffed calf hearts were revisited. The soups, yellow pea soup, kale soup, cauliflower soup, a creamed soup, clear broths with vegetables, dumplings and a small meatballs and a bread soup made with non-alcoholic beer sim-

mered in our reminiscences. We knew we were right back in the Danish kitchens of our mothers and grandmothers as we washed, dried and put away the dishes. No one remembered dishwashing machines.

## A note from our president

*Hello!*

We have had a busy winter and we are looking forward to spring! It's the green growing season. We are growing too. Our May and June programs highlight emerging shoots of information about Danish contributions in the military and detail the seedlings of a new organization — DANE. We are looking forward to our 10-year anniversary in June. And as gardeners have to water and tend to their crops, so do we depend on you, our readers to help us grow financially and by giving of your time as a volunteer. We have projects aplenty. We made an excellent start at organizing our collections in March, but there is still a lot more to do!

*Wendy*





**Calendar Continued from pg1**  
**Sunday Sep 19th 2-5PM**  
 "WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?"  
 Exploring ways to find your Ancestral 'Roots'  
 Danish Home, Edison NJ

**Early October**  
 DANE exhibits  
 CELEBRATING THE COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD  
 Metuchen Country Fair  
 Metuchen NJ

**Sunday Oct 21st 2-5PM**  
 The Danish Monarchy - Part 2  
 Danish Home, Edison, NJ

**Sunday Nov 21st 2-5PM**  
 Program to be announced  
 Danish Home, Edison, NJ

**Saturday Dec 4th 10-4PM**  
 DANE's ANNUAL JULE MARKED  
 Danish Home, Edison, NJ

**Sunday Dec 5th**  
**FESTIVAL OF TREES**  
 American Hungarian Foundation, New Brunswick NJ

**Sunday Dec 19th 2-5PM**  
**DANE's ANNUAL JULEFEST**  
 Danish Home, Edison, NJ

**Recipes**  
 are  
 available  
 for foods  
 served at  
 Taste of  
 Denmark

**grøn Øst**

grøn Øst is the official publication of DANE – Danish Archive North East. It is published quarterly – Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.

DANE is a 501(c)(3) licensed non-profit organization with offices at 855 New Durham Road, Edison, NJ 08817. It is licensed under the New Jersey Charities Registration Act.

No warranty, either expressed or implied is offered for any losses due to the use of any material published in Øst. The material is offered for informational purposes only.

©Copyright 2010 DANE

**Board of Directors**

- Wendy Hansen-Hudson, President
- John Kjersgaard, Vice-President
- Agnes Jespersen-Hagmueller, Treasurer
- Joan Seguine-LeVine, Secretary
- Vibeke Aagesen
- Greg Hispanski
- Captain Axel Munck
- Carl B.S. Pedersen
- Chris Pedersen, Jr.
- Alex Rabel
- Bob Thomsen
- Editor
- Joan Seguine-LeVine