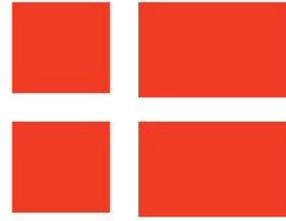


GRØN ØST

The E-letter of the Danish Archive North East/DANE



Winter 2012

Welcome to the Winter 2012 edition of Øst!

I apologize for the lateness of this newsletter. The target date for publishing was November 15, but that has long come and gone. Hurricane Sandy got in the way. A number of us lost power for an extended period of time and it has taken some time to get back in the groove.

A number of DANE members lost trees, but I have not heard of any house damage among our members. The same cannot be said for a number of people and businesses along the Jersey shore and in New York. A number of the businesses that I frequent along the Jersey shore are no longer there. It is all so sad and our best wishes go out to those who were victims of the storm.

Due to the lateness of this issue, we have only a few articles. I hope that you find them interesting.

Our annual Julefest is Sunday, December 16 (2-5PM) at the Danish Home in Edison. All are welcome! We will have live music, Danish sandwiches, and Santa. It is a great time to enjoy the Danish traditions. Please join us if you can.

A note – there is a new Danish restaurant in our area – the Danish café in Red Bank, New Jersey (<http://www.thedanishcafe.com/>). We tried it a few months ago and had a great meal. I highly recommend it!

We hope you enjoy this issue! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

by Wendy Hansen Hudson

Winter 2012 Øst:

- Danish Nisse
 - Christmas in Denmark
 - Simpson Methodist Church records
-



DANISH NISSE

During Christmas time in Denmark, the mischievous Danish elf "Nisse" plays pranks on people. Nisser often live in old farmhouses or barns. A Nisse was usually a small old man with a white beard, dressed in a grey sweater and trousers, a red pixie cap, red stockings and wooden shoes. You definitely want to stay best friends with this small Danish mythical creature, since it was said that he was able to control your fortune and play nasty tricks on you.

Danish children put rice porridge with cinnamon and butter (risengrød, med kanel og smør) out in the barn or in the attic for Nisserne. They also give the Nisserne a special beer called NISSE-ØL. It is a beer with very, very little alcohol in it, so that the children can also have it.

Glædelig Jul og Godt Nytår



Agnes Jespersen Hagmueller

Christmas in Denmark*

Christmas back in the time of Hans Christian Andersen was special and takes center stage in many of his fairy tales.

1808: The first Christmas tree was lit on the manor Holsteinborg by Næstved. The inspiration for the tree as well as the ornaments came from Germany.

In the beginning the Christmas tree was reserved for the bourgeoisie in the capital and larger cities.

Not until the 20th century did Christmas trees become common in Denmark. Typical ornaments: paper cones, baubles, Jacob's ladders, hearts, birds and flags.

1810-1880's: The goblin is slowly associated with Christmas and is no longer viewed as a pagan farmer.

1863: Johan Krohn pens "Peter's Christmas" and the popular poem is published in 1866.

1882: The first Danish Christmas card is published, illustrated by Carsten Ravn.

1880-90's: Industrially produced Christmas cards makes for wider use and lower prices.

After 1900: Santa Claus becomes popular due to American and British influences.

1904: The first Danish Christmas seal emerges, inspired by Einar Holbøll.

App. 1915: The first advent wreath appears with a star and candles as per German example.

1930's: The first Christmas calendar turned up. Christmas decoration of city streets and shop windows in the capital became the norm.

1942: The candle factory ASP Holmblad produced the first advent candle. The Christmas decoration is a Danish tradition and emerged as a substitution

for Christmas trees in poor families.

1940's: The custom with Lucia processions was begun in Denmark during the World War II. The custom was started in North Germany, spread to Sweden and from there to Denmark.

1960-70's: Advent calendars (with gifts).

1962: Danish State Radio broadcast the first Christmas calendar on radio and TV: "Stories from all over the world".

2001: The Danish Christmas seal goes electronic.

* From Visit Odense the Hans Christian Andersen Christmas Market 2010-Christmas like in the day of Hans Christian Andersen

Joan Seguine-LeVine

Simpson Methodist Church records – Perth Amboy, New Jersey

The primary Danish churches in Perth Amboy were St. Stephens, Our Saviours, and the Danish Methodist Episcopal church. Some of the Danish families left these churches and some started attending Simpson Methodist church. Janice Grace from DANE contacted Pastor Fernandez at Simpson and started the discussion about DANE photographing the Simpson records. Pastor Fernandez was very gracious and got permission for us from the church council.



On August 22, Janice Grace, myself, and my husband Bill spent the day at Simpson photographing the records. We had a camera and two scanners along with the camera setup and three laptop computers. The equipment filled the back of the car! The picture at left

is of me at my station using the camera. It was a long hot day, but we got through all the church records from 1852 until the 1960s. We have thousands of pages now on the computer.

We then wrote a letter to Pastor Fernandez thanking him for his graciousness and support. We included a DVD with all the pages. This will be a good archive for the church.

Janice and I started work on indexing the records. It will probably take about a year before we have this done. Our early work has shown that there were far more Danish families that went to Simpson than we thought. The records will be a great resource for our Danish research! Thanks to Janice for getting this going!

Wendy Hansen Hudson

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