



Nordøst

Danish Archive North East
December 2017

Hello!

Julemarked is coming up on December 2 and Julefest is coming up on December 17. Mark your calendars! In addition to the President's letter, we have articles on Danish holidays, archive work at DANE, and the Harvest Festival. We are also again asking if you can identify some pictures in our collection. This has been very successful in the past!

It is the time for our annual request for donations. A form is included at the end of this newsletter. We hope that you will be able to help us this year.

If you are in the New Jersey area, please join us for one of the DANE programs (schedule at the end of this newsletter). Please visit our website (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njdane/index.html>) to see what we are up to.

Enjoy!

DANE President's Letter

Kære Alle,

ARE WE? DO WE?

What do the Holidays really mean to all of us? There are lots of adjectives to describe them: Joy, Happy, Merry, Giving, Fun, Memories, Treasures and more. When we decorate the Juletræ, are there reminders of the past? Are there loved ones missing from our lives? Are we making new memories for our family, children, and grandchildren? Are we celebrating the true meaning of the Holidays or just making a commercial thing?

Spending time with family and doing traditional things should be foremost in our thoughts and actions. Do we talk about the true meaning of Christmas? Do we read about the first Christmas? Do we still read such things as "The Night before Christmas" to the children? Do we know all the names of Santa's reindeer? Do we still leave cookies and milk for Santa? Do we sit around the table having special traditional foods and treats? And most serious, do we think and pray for all those in need and have suffered many hardships this past year? Floods, fires, shootings, hurricanes fill the news.

So with some somber thoughts, good memories and warm Holiday greetings, I wish all a Joyous Christmas and a New Year filled with much good health and peace in the world.

Agnes Hagmueller



Glædelig jul og et godt nytår

DANISH TRADITIONS & CUSTOMS

by Agnes Jespersen Hagmueller

Throughout the year Danes celebrate many holidays with traditional customs. DANE not only does Danish history and culture research but looks to customs as well. Here are just a few.

Fastelavn is usually celebrated the weekend before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of the Lenten season. It is practically a time for children's fun and family games including "Slå Katten af Tønden" - hit the cat out of the barrel. This is to chase away the evil spirits as the cat runs off. The favorite pastry is "Fastelavnsbolle". It is a sweet roll covered with icing and sometimes filled with whipped cream.

April 16th, **Queen Margrethe II's birthday**, is a day of celebration.

June 5th is **Grundlovsdag** – Danish Constitution Day. It recognizes the signing of the 1849 Constitution. Locally the Danish Home in Croton-on-Hudson, New York, holds an annual picnic and celebration with lots a good Danish food and Hygge.

Late June is "**Sankt Hans Aften**" - St John's Eve. It is a happy celebration with food and spirits. A large bonfire is lit and a witch made of old clothes is burned to keep all evils away. Legend has it, that the witch on top of the pile of wood sits on a broomstick and as the flames go up, she is flying off to a witch's convention on Blocksberg in the Harz Mountains in Germany, with all her evils. The day usually coincides with the June Solstice.

December 24 – **Juleaften** – Christmas Eve. The Danes celebrate Christmas on Christmas Eve. Many attend church in the afternoon. Immediate family members gather together for Christmas dinner after church at someone's home. The menu varies. The dinner could be andesteg or gåsesteg med æbler og svesker), (roast duck or roast goose, stuffed with apples and prunes) or flæsketeg med sprød svær (roast pork with crunchy skin (cracklings), all accompanied by sugar browned potatoes, white boiled potatoes, red cabbage and gravy. Dessert is Ris a l'Amande med kirsebærsauce (rice pudding with chopped almonds (mandler) and cherry sauce. A whole almond is included also, and whoever gets the almond (mandelen) gets a prize, traditionally a Marzipan Pig. After dinner, lighting of the tree (there are live candles on the tree), and if enough people are present, all take hands, form a circle and walk around the tree, singing Christmas hymns and carols. Finally, after the children have waited impatiently, the gift exchange takes place. (Old tradition, especially in the countryside on the farms: A bowl of Risengrød (rice porridge)

was left in the barn for the Nisser (Christmas elves) to appease them as they could often play nasty tricks).

December 25 - **Juledag** (Christmas Day). Traditions vary.... Many families get together for Julefrokost = koldt bord (Smörgåsbord) in early afternoon with beer and aquavit. Others are just taking a day of rest, relaxing, taking walks, assembling or enjoying their gifts, playing games, etc.

December 26 - **Anden Juledag** (Second Christmas Day) is also a holiday in Denmark. No known special traditions associated with that day. Will vary from family to family.

December 31 – **Nytårsaften** - New Year's Eve - The tradition is at 6 PM (local time) the Danes gather around their TV sets to watch and listen to the Queen's annual New Year's Speech and Greeting to the Danish People, near and far. The rest of the evening is devoted to companionship here and there with good friends, delicious food and spirits, games and merriment in anticipation of the arrival of the New Year to be celebrated with a champagne toast and followed by shooting off private small caliber fireworks by younger members of the gathering.

January 1 – **Nytårsdag** - New Year's Day – No general traditions... Catching up on lost sleep!!

Do you have any special memories or traditions that you would like to share? Please tell us about them.

DANE sender til alle de bedste ønsker for julen og det nye år



Working at the Archive...

There has been a lot of great work going on at DANE. This picture shows Vibeke Aagesen working on our book collection. We are trying to clean out books to make room for new exhibits. Thanks to Vibeke and all the others working on our collections!



Jacob A. Riis Museum in Ribe, Denmark

The museum of Southwest Jutland is developing a museum about Jacob A. Riis. He was born in Ribe, Denmark and was a photographer and social reformer who emigrated to New York and went from homeless to working his way up through the slums of the city during the late 1880's boom in. Through his expressive and impact-full photos he had a big impact in making the living conditions for immigrants and poor people better and he made very close friends with Theodore Roosevelt. He ended his days in the States continuously dedicating his life to social reformation in the US.

The group is looking for awareness and donations to support the museum development.

You can learn more about their work at the website:

<http://www.jacobariismuseum.dk/>

Harvest Festival

The annual Harvest Festival was Sunday, September 17 at the Danish Home in Edison. A great time was had by all! Enjoy the pictures!





Can you help identify any of these photos?

We have a number of wonderful photos in our collection where we do not know who is in the picture! Can you help identify anyone in these photos? (Many thanks to Janice Grace for managing our photo collection!) Please contact us at danenj@aol.com if you can help.



December 2017

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

Dear Friend of DANE,

DANE is dedicated to preserving the great history and culture of those Danes and their descendants.

Our recording and archiving information is done by volunteers who spend many hours gathering data. Our databases contain over 30,000 names. These come from inquiries, digitized church and cemetery records as well as many records of Danish organizations. DANE celebrates traditional Holidays and Customs. We have meetings dealing with Danish history and culture. We also help people with their Danish genealogical research both in the US and Denmark.

Money is needed to support our events and work. We are asking you to support DANE by making a donation so the Archive can continue our progress in adding to our collections and making the public know how much the Danes have done for this country.

Tours are available by appointment. If you are in the neighborhood give us a call at 732-287-6445. Need help with family research? E-mail us at danenj@aol.com

Tusind Tak for your generous past support. With that help, the Archive has grown and with your on-going support it will continue to grow.

We wish you all a wonderful Holiday Season and a great New Year!

*Glædelig Jul og Godt Nytår
DANE Board of Trustees*

**Donations can be done by PayPal by visiting our Donations page:
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njdane/Donations.html>**

Name: _____
Street Address: _____
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Phone: _____ **Email address:** _____
Amount enclosed: _____

**Please include this form with your donation and send to:
DANE—Nordøst
855 New Durham Road
Edison, New Jersey 08817**

DANE is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization

DANE meetings:

- December 2, 2017 – Julemarked/Holiday market – 10 AM – 3 PM
 - December 17, 2017 – Julefest/Christmas party – 2-5 PM
 - January 2018 – no meeting
 - February 18, 2018 – Fastelavn
 - March 2018 – no meeting
 - April 15, 2018 – Archive work day
 - May 20, 2018 – Archive work day
 - June, July 2018 – no meeting
 - August 21, 2018 – Harvest Festival planning meeting
 - September 9, 2018 – Harvest Festival
 - October 21, 2018 – Archive work day
 - November 18, 2018 – Archive work day
 - December 1, 2018 – Julemarked/Holiday market
 - December 16, 2018 – Julefest/Christmas party
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Web page: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njdane/index.html>

(31,146 visitors since 2002!)

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DANE has membership in:

- Museum of Danish America, Elk Horn Iowa
- Danish American Heritage Society
- New Jersey League of Historical Societies