

The Little Mermaid



A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHWEST DANISH ASSOCIATION

Jan Feb Mar 2022 Issue #2021/2022 Volume 3

A Winter Walk in Copenhagen

By Line L Larsen

Raising the Christmas Spirit Apart, Together

By Gabrielle Clement and Emily Olsen



Image: Strøget in central Copenhagen during December 2021



Image: Danish woven hearts, a traditional craft and Christmas ornament

A trip to Copenhagen is hardly complete without a stroll down Strøget, the capital's main walking strip. And each December there is a particular magic in the frigid air. Strøget starts near Copenhagen's Rådhusplads (City Hall Square), where a giant, elegantly decorated Christmas tree tow-

ers over pedestrians. The steaming hot dog stands seem miniscule in comparison.

The City Hall Square feeds into Strøget, which is hard to miss in December. Hundreds of lights with

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With the ever-changing COVID situation, NWDA decided to hold virtual Christmas celebrations for another year. The holiday season started with a bang with our yearly Juleauktion. Thanks to our generous participants and donors, we raised over \$10,000! The online auction ran from November 14th to December 1st, 2021. This was the second time NWDA undertook creating a virtual auction. The auction ran smoothly and created a fun, competitive experience for participants! The \$10,000 fundraising goal for the Juleauktion will be used to support NWDA's community programs, including scholarships and eldercare.

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Northwest Danish Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing with others our Danish culture, traditions, and values.

President's Corner



Let's Create a Hundred Year Endowment

By Edith E. Christensen, EdD, NWDA President

With another year of COVID, I hope for a better year to come. Due to vaccines, better treatments, and a milder form of the virus, that is possible. At Northwest Danish Association (NWDA), we have stayed open, but we require masks in the building and have changed programs so people can still participate. Many have learned to use Zoom and other forms of communication. We also had another successful auction online that raised over \$10,000!

We are thankful for the many who have helped with donations this past year. Your donations help us continue our Danish Association programs, even if it is in a different way. The Danish American Retreat held online was again a success with many fantastic speakers. We have reserved Menucha for the last weekend in June 2022, and with improved health for all, we will be there to enjoy the camaraderie of people again and a week of Himmelbjerget.

I am looking at the future of NWDA, and legacy gifts are the best way to keep extending our reach and heritage for people to learn about the Danish contributions to the betterment of our world. So what is this? Legacy gifts are a way to provide financial support in our wills. No one will be here forever, so we want to help the future of our kids, our

grandkids, and others. Let's remember not only our families but organizations that have meant something to us.

The Danish Association was created nearly 100 years ago to take care of the later years of retirees. As people lived longer, the Danish Home became a nursing home and less of a home for aging Danes. So the NWDA decided to sell the old home in south Seattle and buy a gathering place instead. It would be for elders and others with a similar purpose of fellowship and programs for all ages to enjoy and learn about the Danish culture and the positive impact of Danes on the environment and other people. It would be a place for hygge.

Some years ago, a kind member left a legacy gift for an Endowment for Elders in the Seattle area. Because of this gift, we have programs like Torsdagsklubben, a once-a-month dinner at noon, and a program. We can also furnish wheelchairs, walkers, canes, and other help needs like a call button to wear, special hearing phones, personal contacts, etc. for our elders.

We also have another endowment in which the income helps people with scholarships for their education or retraining. This was created by



Image: The NWDA Building in Seattle

the donations in legacies by two other different members. They made a gift that helps many with their education and retraining for a better life.

These remarkable gifts have made it possible to help our elders and our young. When planning and deciding what you want to leave as a legacy, think of the NWDA and how you can help it for a long time into the future. It is so easy to do with a few words in your will. Just talk to your attorney as they are well versed in these types of legacy plans. Perhaps together we can create a Hundred Year Endowment for the future of NWDA to continue another hundred years. What a wonderful legacy to leave.

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NWDA News



Saying Farewell

By Leah Koch-Michael



December was my last month working for the NWDA because I've gotten a job as an archaeologist at a firm here in the Pacific Northwest! This is something I've been working toward since 2019, so I am very happy to finally be working in the field that I trained for, but it means I don't have time to work at the Seattle Danish Center office anymore.

I've enjoyed working at the NWDA so much in the eight months I've been here, especially forming connections with the members I've met and the other people working to make our organization run and our events happen! It was difficult during this pandemic to organize as many events as I wanted to. I planned many more things than I got the opportunity to host, but the ones that went forward were a

blast! I know Gabrielle, Emily, and Line will be planning some fun things for 2022.

I'm also not *really* going anywhere, since I will certainly still be part of our NWDA community (as I was before I worked in the office) and will be volunteering and helping with events whenever I have time. So, I will see your faces in 2022 (with or without masks on!) and keep practicing my Danish. Thank you all for your friendliness and for making my time here so fun.

Membership

The NWDA membership year is from July 1st to June 30th each year. If you haven't gotten your membership renewed, you still can!

Benefits include:

- Discounts on all NWDA events and programs
- 15% OFF any order at Scandinavian Design Studio
- 5% OFF at Scan Design Furniture
- Free access to our Danish library in Seattle or Portland with over 2,000 books and films available
- Occasional discounts and/or free ticks from community partners (like Heritage Distilling)



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Visit our website for more information about events and programs!
Via our website you can also sign up for our e-bulletin to receive updates
on all these activities:

www.northwestdanish.org

Jul 2021

Northwest Danish
Association

Raising the Christmas Spirit Apart, Together

By Gabrielle Clement and Emily Olsen



Image: Kræmmerhuse (cone baskets)
made by the Jensen family.

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On the night of November 14th, spirits were high as over 100 people signed up to participate. Bidding wars ensued over the next two weeks. Through gritted teeth and email notifications, feuds were fought over beloved items. Most notably, a 16-ring Kransekage from Larsen's Bakery and homemade Leverpostej were at the center of an uphill battle for many. Juleauktion victors earned their hard-won items, and as disputes subsided, we all celebrated success for our common cause.

Thank you to all our donors; without your help, we would not have had

such a triumphant auction! We received item donations from many members, as well as local and national businesses. Hot items included a Danish Christmas Basket donated by the East Side Circle that included delicious Danish treats like akvavit, herring, and freshly baked cookies that exceeded its asking price by over 250%! Other popular items included over 15 Georg Jensen Christmas ornaments, handmade woven heart ornaments, and Danish landscape drawings by NWDA member Claus Windalev. Gift cards and museum tickets were sought-after as well. A gift certificate to Scandinavian Specialties and Ivar's Restaurants soared above their asking prices. Tusind tak to all who donated and participated!

NWDA is already accepting donations for our 2022 auction that will take place in early December! Items related to the holiday season, Jul, Denmark, and other Nordic countries are preferred. Please contact NWDA if you are interested.

Soon after, NWDA started mailing Julestue kits for at-home crafting with your friends and family. There were more than 60 participants this year who had the opportunity to have a hyggelig Jul. Julestue kits included stjerner (stars), julehjerter

(Christmas hearts), and kræmmerhuse (cone baskets) to hand on your tree. There were also festive coloring pages, Danish and English Christmas song sheets to sing at home.

If anyone has any Danish-inspired Christmas or New Year pictures you would like to share with NWDA, please send them to emily@nwdanish.org, so that we can share them with our members and friends. We hope everyone had a glædelig jul og god nytår! We can't wait to gather in person and, hopefully, celebrate together this year.

Write for The Little Mermaid!

Write about your experience at Danish events in the PNW or other topics related to Denmark or Danish culture.

Contact us at
seattle@nwdanish.org or
(206)523-3263 if you are
interested in our publication.

NORTHWEST DANISH NETWORK

The Northwest Danish Network is an online networking platform for the Danish community in the Pacific Northwest. Are you looking for a job, a new hire, housing, or some other connection? The Northwest Danish Networking Platform allows you to find the connections you need in our community.

Visit www.northwestdanish.org/network/

Learn Danish in the Pacific Northwest



Virtual Danish Language Classes: Winter Term 2022



Donate Your Time & Volunteer!

Building Maintenance—Help us with repairs and other building maintenance at our once-a-month Work Party

Writing/Editing—Assist with The Little Mermaid, including writing articles of interest to the Danish community

Event Planning—Help us plan our returning events in 2022 like Himmelbjerget and DACR

Thank you to all our volunteers for your deep commitment to NWDA throughout 2021!



Image: Peder Jensen cleaning up leaves outside the NWDA building

NWDA's Danish language program began during Summer 2019 and has had great success since. When in-person gatherings went virtual due to COVID-19, the language classes shifted to an online format. Now taught through Zoom, anyone from near and far can join and learn Danish!

Registration for the Winter term is now open. Our instructors this term are Melissa Lucas and Adrian Tan.

Beginner Danish 1

Teacher Melissa Lucas
Jan. 15th—Mar. 19th
11:30 am to 1:00 pm (PT)

Danish 2

Teacher Melissa Lucas
Jan. 22nd—Mar. 19th
9:30 am to 11:00 am (PT)

Intermediate: Culture and Conversation

Teacher Adrian Tan
Jan. 22nd—Mar. 19th
9:00 am to 10:30 am (PT)

Danish Book Club (Danish III)

Teacher Melissa Lucas
Jan. 20th—Mar. 17th
7:15 pm to 8:15 pm (PT)

For course details and cost, please check online at :
www.northwestdanish.org/learndanish

From Denmark



The Stone Ships of Hjarnø

By Jan Bruun-Petersen

It was a perfect summer day, the kind you only get in Denmark in August. The sun was out, but there were a few clouds, and it was warm enough to wear shorts, but not *too* warm. Best of all was the smell of saltwater ocean that swept over and made the air feel clean—I was surrounded by it on the Danish Island of Hjarnø. I was there to help with an archaeological excavation, but I still had time to walk around the tiny island with a friend one brilliant afternoon. We walked through a churchyard and down small lanes, always within view of the sea. We passed mailboxes that had shelves next to them with jams and chicken eggs for sale, and a little box to keep kroner. We circled around farmers' fields with a few cows and horses in the distance, framed by gold light and water. The path was marked, but not much else had been done to maintain it—this was not a tourist path, but an adventurous route, and we had been warned to watch the tide.

We saw no one else on our trip, which removed it from time. There were no big cities on the horizon or power-lines—not even the infamous windmills! It was easy to imagine Viking ships coming to the shore, being pulled out of the water by the crew.

The stone ships (skibssætninger) could barely be seen from a distance, but once we were upon them, it was easy to walk between the stones and see the ship-shape of them, even where stones were missing or worn down. These stones, sometimes called Kalvestene (the Calf Stones) dated to the Viking Age have an unclear history, though legend surrounds them. As archaeologists, my friend and I were more interested in what we could see in their physical shape and context, but that doesn't mean we don't find the legends interesting and useful as well!

The [Gesta Danorum](#), written by Saxo Grammaticus in the



Image: The stone ships (skibssætninger) of Hjarnø. Photo taken by Jan Bruun-Petersen.

12th century, is the first to mention the stones in text. He tells the legend of a man named Hiarn (or Hiarni) who was a poet. Upon the death of King Frode, he composed a poem which Saxo includes:

"Frode, whom the Danes would have wished to live long, they bore long through their lands when he was dead. The great chief's body, with this turf heaped above it, bare earth covers under the lucid sky" (Grammaticus circa 1204).

Even though he was not royalty or related to the dead king, the Danes liked his poem so much that they crowned him king, since King Frode's heir was believed to be dead. Fridleif, the heir, was however not dead, but in Russia. When the Swedish king went to ask for Fridleif's help in

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From Denmark



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battling the Norwegians, Fridleif learned his father had died. After a brief side trip to slay some bandits, Fridleif returned to Denmark. The Danes split into two camps: Team Hiarn or Team Fridleif. Team Fridleif defeated Hiarn's forces, and Hiarn fled to the island that is now Hjarnø (i.e. Hiarn's island). He died there and was buried under the largest of the ship graves.

People have been living on this island since at least 5400 BC (Astrup et al. 2021), but it's unclear what that occupation looked like through the ages. The Island currently has a small town, a church, and thirteen farms. It is accessible only by a small ferry, but that is all that is needed, given the tiny population, which numbers 100-150 people.

Recently a team of archaeologists (Sebo et al. 2021) set out to answer the question of why these particular stone ships were so well-known, since other stone ship settings around Scandinavia are often larger and perhaps more impressive. It is known that some stone ship settings were a show of power, some were memorials, and some were graves. The Kalvestene are cremation graves. However, it's unlikely that they're the grave of a king named Hiarn, since language experts say the island's etymology indicates it was not named after a person. Instead, the name of the island likely

inspired the legend of Hiarn. No other early texts mention Hiarn among the Danish kings. Sebo et al. conclude that given the uniqueness of this site compared to other stone ship sites, and the relative uniformity of size of the stone settings, this probably reflects the small and non-hierarchical community on the island. The thirteen farms were present at least back to the Middle Ages, and very possibly before that. Sebo et al. suggest that the twelve visible ship settings correspond to the farms (and perhaps one ship setting was lost, or one farm was added after the stones were placed) and were used as family grave plots. They further hypothesize that the reason the site is so well-known is because the Island was regularly visited by traders on their way to Horsens, which would have made the tiny island unexpectedly cosmopolitan!

I will remember Hjarnø as a little oasis of summer, a calm and pastoral landscape. It seems fitting for these long-enduring Viking-age graves.

(Note: thanks to Jon Christensen of Salem, Oregon, for bringing this story to NWDA's attention!)

Further reading:

Astrup et al. "A drowned Mesolithic shell midden complex at Hjarnø Vesterhoved, Denmark and its wider significance"

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277379121000615> .

Sebo et al. "The Kalvestene: A reevaluation of the ship settings on the Danish island of Hjarnø." *The Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology*, 2021.



NWDA IS LOOKING FOR A PART-TIME ACCOUNTANT

Do you have bookkeeping or Quick-books experience? Interested in working for a nonprofit?

Contact us:

206-523-3263

seattle@nwdanish.org



From Denmark



A Winter Walk in Copenhagen

By Line L Larsen

Continued from page 1

bright, glowing hearts are suspended from the buildings on each side. It creates an inviting path for pedestrians to follow into the long strip. Kebab restaurants, Chinese restaurants, a 711, a Burger King as well as a few souvenir shops line the first part of the strip, all testaments to a globalized world. Further down the strip these are replaced by Danish brand stores, clothing stores, jewelry stores, and toy stores, with cafes scattered throughout. But the stores aren't where the magic lies.

that are cooked over open fires are mixed with the sound of soft music from entertainers who stand bundled in layers with their instruments. There is a cozy feeling on the strip as you pass all the friendly faces with blushed cold cheeks. And with a stroke of luck, a light snowfall adds to the ambiance.



Image: Nyhavn, Copenhagen

Strøget opens to several plazas along the way that have small coffee shops and bars scattered on them like islands. As you walk deeper into the strip, you may stumble across other performers—dancers shooting a music video or a large polar bear entertaining giddy children.

Once you have passed Magasin, the big shopping mall, and other small cafés, and reached the end of Strøget on the other side, you reach yet another enchanting destination, Nyhavn. Nyhavn is split by a small, narrow canal lined with old fishing boats that are bedecked in Christmas lights in honor of the season. The small cafés spill onto the sidewalk with people sitting outside gently wrapped in blankets. They lean into the orange glow

of the outdoor heaters and sip on their warm beverages. There are small wooden huts set up along the canal, selling Christmas décor, food, and other holiday treasures.



Image: Boats covered in Christmas lights floating in the canal by Nyhavn

On a winter day in Copenhagen, it can be a cold walk down Strøget, but the charming gløgg huts at Nyhavn serve an effective remedy. Denmark may be cold in the winter, but it exudes a certain warmth in December. Most Danes have several days off during the month and many traditions to tend to. There is hygge (coziness) year-round in Denmark, but there is nothing quite as special as julehygge (Christmas coziness).

Image: A small hut serving gløgg by Nyhavn



Image: Magasin, a famous shopping hall in Copenhagen, decked in lights for Christmas

There is a certain warm feeling in the soft glow of the lights reflecting off the wet cobblestones in Central Copenhagen, despite the cold. Whiffs of brændte mandler (candied almonds)

The *Other* Christiansborg and the Danish Transatlantic Slave Trade

By Leah Koch-Michael



Image: Christianborg Castle in Accra, Ghana (Photo by Joli Gbebleou-Sleem)

(This is a short summary of an article in [Archaeology.org](https://www.archaeology.org) by Marley Brown, which you can read [here](#). Thanks to NWDA member Jon Christenson for alerting us to this story.)

Though the Danes have a lot of history to be proud of, some is not so benign. It is still interesting and worthwhile to know the history of Danish involvement in the European slave trade. Many of us have heard of, and even may have visited Christiansborg Palace in Copenhagen, but there is also a Christiansborg Castle, located in Accra, Ghana.

Beginning in 2014, as part of the Christiansborg Archaeological Heritage Project, archaeologists have

been delving into the history and cultural heritage of this castle. It was built in 1661 and was used mainly in the Danish transatlantic slave trade until 1803 when Denmark started to enforce abolition. (The timeline of true abolition is a lengthier subject, but you can read more about it at [The Danish National Museum](#).) The Danes purchased the land to build Christiansborg Castle from the local Ga Chief Okaikoi for 3200 Florins (around \$60,000 in USD today).

Thousands of enslaved people were kept in Christiansborg Castle until they were sent to the Danish West Indies. Thousands of people also worked at the castle and facilitated European trade with Africa and vice

versa—of both slaves and material goods. Archaeologists are working to learn about the community that lived in the castle which was made up of Danish men, West African women whom the Danes married, and their children. When we imagine a slave trading outpost, we don't think of a diverse community, or complex ethnicities and identities. This project is challenging that idea. The team of archaeologists working to uncover the history of the castle are descendants of the people who used to live and work there—Danish-Ga people who now have a chance to delve into their own history and reframe the stories usually told from a European point of view.

The material findings reflect a cosmopolitan society: Chinese porcelain, European wardrobes, Danish ceramics and pipes used with Brazilian tobacco. Until the British took the area that is now Ghana as a British colony, it was governed by several groups, and the political landscape was complex. West African groups like the Ga and the Akwamu were rivals to each other, and sometimes leveraged European groups against each other for political gain. Likewise, European traders formed relationships with the West African groups to force other European groups out. The European traders had to maintain good relationships with the local groups to keep the flow of trade goods (and captive people) flowing.

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NWDA Events



Filmaften

By Leah Koch-Michael and Gabrielle Clement



Thanks to all who attended our Filmaften events in 2021! We watched *Journey to Utopia* in October, and *Gooseboy* in December. *Journey to Utopia* was a documentary made by Norwegian filmmaker Erlend E. Mo, about he and his family's move from Norway to Denmark to live in a community designed to reduce its residents' impact on climate. It was certainly a journey—Mo's Danish wife deeply wants to leave a better world for their children, but it's unclear if the utopic community is the way to do it. The movie ended on a high note, though I think all of us who watched it together agreed that we would probably have stayed in the idyllic Norwegian farm where the family started!

Gooseboy was a light-hearted movie, that surprised us viewers by being a musical! Viggo is a little boy

who spends too much time playing a video game about a goose flying north. Then, a *real* goose crash lands on his balcony with a broken wing and after hitting his head, the goose can only speak Human instead of Goose. Viggo reluctantly helps the Goose on his journey northward. There were lots of laughs as we watched the antics of Viggo, his mother, his friend Vigga, and the other colorful characters

On January 28th, NWDA will be screening *The Good Traitor*. The film follows the story of Denmark's ambassador to the United States, Henrik Kauffmann, during World War II. His refusal to follow Germany's demands leads to Denmark's spectacular resistance against Nazi Rule in order to save the Danish people... Thank you to the Danish Embassy for the films!

The Other Christiansborg

By Leah Koch-Michael

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However, the slave trade, and the new products that were brought to West Africa as a result, encouraged power struggles—as did the weaponry the Europeans provided to local peoples. This in turn led to more prisoners taken in armed conflict, which helped fuel the slave trade even further—European demand for slaves fed instability in the area. West Africans sometimes even pawned themselves or family members as collateral for trade, another way that the slave trade was fueled. The Danes did not accept collateral—not because they were morally opposed, but because they needed the good will of the Ga to maintain their trade post at Christiansborg Castle.

Christiansborg Archaeological Heritage Project and its director, Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann, hope to one day turn Christiansborg Castle into a museum. It will be another place where Danish history is preserved, but perhaps more importantly, where we can learn about a neglected piece of the past.

 **Save the Date!** 

Danish American Cultural Retreat

June 24th – 26th

NW Danish Calendar



Northwest Danish
Association

We are working on restarting in-person events! Sign up for our e-bulletin to receive the most recent updates: www.northwestdanish.org/e-bulletin/

January 2022

Søndag	Mandag	Tirsdag	Onsdag	Torsdag	Fredag	Lørdag
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7 Fredagscafe (S) Heritage Distilling	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15 Danish Class (Danish I Only)
16	17	18	19	20 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	21	22 Danish Classes (Online)
23	24	25	26	27 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	28 Filmaften (S) The Good Traitor 6pm	29 Danish Classes (Online)
30	31					

February 2022

Søndag	Mandag	Tirsdag	Onsdag	Torsdag	Fredag	Lørdag
		1 Work Party (S)	2	3 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	4 Fredagscafe (S) Heritage Distilling	5 Danish Classes (Online)
6	7	8	9	10 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	11	12 Danish Classes (Online)
13	14	15	16	17 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	18	19 Danish Classes (Online)
20	21	22	23	24 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	25	26 Danish Classes (Online)
27	28					

March 2022

Søndag	Mandag	Tirsdag	Onsdag	Torsdag	Fredag	Lørdag
		1 Work Party (S)	2	3 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	4 Fredagscafe (S) Heritage Distilling	5 Danish Classes (Online)
6	7	8	9	10 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	11	12 Danish Classes (Online)
13	14	15	16	17 Danish III Bookclub (Online)	18	19 Danish Classes (Online)
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

(P)= Portland (S) = Seattle (E) = Eugene

For more information on these events, programs, and activities, please visit our website:

www.northwestdanish.org



Donations: July to December 2021—Thank you!



Donations and gifts are cumulative from July 2021 to December 2021.



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Visit our website: www.northwestdanish.org

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SAVE THE DATE:

FILMAFTEN—January 28th
FREDAGSCAFE—February 4th
FREDAGSCAFE—March 4th

Monthly Events (subject to change)

- Work Party — First Tuesday, Seattle (except July & August)
- DBIA & DSS — First Wednesday, Seattle (except July & August)
- Fredagscafe — First Friday, Seattle
- Torsdagsklubben — Third Thursday, Seattle (except July & August)

Watch our e-bulletins each week for specific times and dates of programs. Note: Monthly events are subject to change.

The Little Mermaid

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Jan Feb Mar 2022 #2021/2022 Volume 3

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