

Serving the
Danish Sisterhood of America Since 1947

Danish Sisterhood News

MAY 2026



In This Issue: Scholarships from the Danish Sisterhood Of America!

* Membership Corner. * News from Our President. * Midterm Proposals. *
* Great Events at Various Lodges! * Words of the Vikings! * Danish Sisterhood Butikken *



President's Corner



Greetings, Sisters:

I have just returned from the National Board meeting in Chicago. It was a wonderful, productive meeting. I am so grateful we get to meet in-person twice a year and also spend some time with the lodges where we are meeting. That time, as well as time on the phone with Sisters, truly is the highlight of the Presidency for me.

As I told you previously, the meeting was held at the Embassy Suites, Rosemont, IL, the site of the 2027 National Convention. The hotel is perfect for our convention! There is plenty of room in their atrium, located in the center of the hotel rooms for informal gatherings of Sisters during the day or evening; the convention center of the hotel has a great meeting room and workshop spaces; each room is a suite, so it is great for sharing with other Sisters; AND there is a fantastic breakfast and a happy hour with drinks and appetizers that is all part of your hotel registration. I'm also told there is great shopping nearby (we didn't have time to explore that!). What a great place for a convention! Make plans to attend from September 30—October 3, 2027.

A brief overview of other things we accomplished follows:

- At each in-person meeting, each officer presents a summary of what they have accomplished since the last board meeting. You can find information about this in the minutes of the board meeting.
- We surveyed and discussed the results of the midterm proposals. Find an article about this in this newsletter.
- We decided to fund raise to make the Mildred Sorensen Scholarship an Endowed Scholarship. More information about scholarships and this endeavor is in this newsletter.
- We installed Susan Hoppough as Vice President and Marilyn Dore as a Trustee.

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Danish Sisterhood News

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**Honorary Member Her Majesty
Queen Margrethe II of Denmark**

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Dear Sisters and Mister Sisters:

Velkommen

People reach out to me and wonder if they can submit stories about their family, or about their genealogy findings, or about crafts and art projects that their family has created recently or from the past. The answer is, "Yes!" Those wonderful stories will be valued by our readers! Sometimes people are afraid to submit an article because they think the storyline is too weak or brief. It's important to realize that even very brief articles are valuable. Submitting a photo of your great-grandfather and writing a short paragraph or two about him can be very entertaining to our readers. Discovering information about your family history and sharing it in an article can be very joyful to you, and it can also be entertaining to our readers. Never be concerned that your article/story submission is anticlimactic; you don't have to try too hard every time you attempt to submit a story to Danish Sisterhood News. Instead, allow yourself to bask in the joy of photos and history that you submit to share with our readers. I can't wait to read your family stories, or to see the photos of your heritage or Denmark travels, or to learn from your article how your mormor taught you to bake kringle, etc.

Have a great month, friends!

~~Charlene Jensen, Editor

Send articles/stories/photos to: editor@danishsisterhood.com



Charlene M. Jensen,
Editor

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CORRECTION: Please note the error listed in the March 2026 issue of *Danish Sisterhood News*, on page 9, in the "December" section of the article. In actuality, **Joan Swanson** from the Cleveland lodge was celebrating her **95th** birthday, not her 90th.—**Minna Mortensen of Danske Damer #185, Cleveland, OH.**

MEMBERSHIP CORNER, MAY 2026

Mother's Day (Mors dag) is celebrated in both Denmark and the United States on the second Sunday of May. A day dedicated to honor mothers in Denmark started in the 1920s having been inspired to do so by such a day noted in the United States of America. In both countries, moms (mors) are often celebrated with gifts of flowers, cards, and special treats. A day relaxing and spending time with family is the main goal for those special moms, grandmoms, mom figures.

Celebrating Mother's Day brings to mind the question, "How many past, present, and potential members of the Danish Sisterhood of America are so because of our mothers, grandmothers, other maternal figures?" My mother was extremely proud of her Danish heritage, and upbringing. She spread this pride wherever she could.

Another question, "How has becoming a member of the Danish Sisterhood of America evolved in its 140 old plus history?" In a 1964 copy of the Danish Sisterhood of America constitution, "Any woman of Danish birth, descent or heritage, as well as those married to a man of Danish descent, or any woman related to aforementioned..." can complete an application. The process for acceptance was complex, tedious, and sometimes selective. How times have changed!

Today's Danish Sisterhood of America welcomes all individuals, without any gender specification, without proof of Danish ancestry, to those interested in Danish history, culture, and traditions. An application for membership can be found and completed on the organization's web site: www.danishsisterhood.com.

There are Lodges located throughout the country, as well as a virtual, online lodge option. Applicants no longer go through the acceptance process of ages ago. Instead, they can expect open minds, warm smiles, and welcoming Danish "hygge." Our mothers would be/are proud.



By Marilyn Dore, National Trustee, Haabets Fremtid Lodge # 78, Troy, NY

NEWS FROM THE LODGES

IN MEMORIAM—May 2026

NAME	Cert #	Lodge #	Location	Birth Date	Birth Place	Initiated	Died	Benefit
Edith Corbett	24665	40	Seattle, WA	1.10.29	Slagelse, DK	9.5.90	1.6.26	250.
Elizabeth Christiansen	91063	15	Milwaukee, WI	3.9.67	La Crosse, WI	6.19.24	12.17.25	-0-
Jean Baxter	21654	36	Perth Amboy, NJ	10.14.31	Perth Amboy, NJ	11.19.59	12.26.25	250.
Sylvia Jensen	23542	20	Kenosha, WI	8.20.29	Ilford, Essex, Eng	6.15.77	3.26.26	500.

Youth Birthdays—May 2026

Name	Lodge	Age
Etilyn Rock	4	14
Addison Parise	36	14
Emery Teague	131	11



PRESIDENT'S CORNER (continued)

Continued from page - 2 -

- We met with Joy Dueling, the person who helps us with our website and looked at features we are not using as well as other features available.
- Check this all out in the minutes located in the "member login" on the Website.

Along with all of the above, we were able to attend Lodge #4's spring luncheon. We presented a very surprised Bente Rasmussen with the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award and enjoyed visiting with members and eating an awesome Danish lunch.

It was a great weekend. You, too, could be part of it, if you run for a National Board officer position. The Danish Sisterhood needs you!

As always, if you need something or have concerns, we are here for you.

Sisterly,

Nealna

Nealna Gylling, National President, president@danishsisterhood.com

TIVOLI LODGE #300: BUILDING DANISH COMMUNITY ACROSS THE MILES

Submitted by Karin Wasler and Laura Abbene

As a Danish Sisterhood virtual lodge, Tivoli Lodge #300 brings together members from across the country to explore Danish culture, history, and traditions in thoughtful and engaging ways. While we meet online, our programs are rooted in the same spirit of *fællesskab* (community) that has long shaped Danish cultural life and the traditions of the Danish Sisterhood.



This past year, Tivoli Lodge was fortunate to host programs that sparked both learning and lively conversation. Dr. Catharina Santasilia guided members through *The Joyful World* of Bjørn Wiinblad, inviting us into the color, imagination, and unmistakable style of one of Denmark's most beloved artists. Dr. Tim Tangherlini of UC Berkeley presented *The Scandinavian Origins of American Holiday Traditions*, helping us explore how Danish customs continue to shape celebrations here in the United States. We also traveled virtually to Copenhagen in our program *Tivoli Gardens: Denmark's Timeless Treasure*, reflecting on why this iconic place remains such an enduring symbol of Danish culture.

Our annual Julefest once again brought members together in song and shared participation. Even through a screen, the warmth of singing together and exchanging holiday traditions reminded us that Danish heritage is something we actively live—not simply something we remember.

This year's programming reflects the richness and breadth of Danish cultural life, with themes that include music, art, history, contemporary life in Denmark, food traditions, and seasonal celebrations. Our meetings blend thoughtful presentations with conversation and shared participation, creating a welcoming space for both men and women who wish to connect more deeply with their Danish heritage. No prior knowledge of Danish language or history is required—only curiosity and interest.

Tivoli Lodge meets virtually once a month (the second Thursday at 5 p.m. Pacific / 7 p.m. Central / 8 p.m. Eastern) and offers an additional way to stay engaged with Danish culture and the Sisterhood community. Members who may be considering dual membership are invited to join us for a program and experience the spirit of learning and connection that defines Tivoli Lodge. Those who would like more information or wish to attend an upcoming meeting may contact Tivoli Lodge member Anna Nielsen at annamnielsen88@gmail.com.

We hope you'll join us as we continue learning and celebrating our Danish heritage together.

MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION—May 2026

<u>LODGE</u>	<u>NEW MEMBER</u>	<u>SPONSOR</u>
181	Beree Chignoli	Janet Proper
81	Joyce Bradshaw	Inge Stupak
81	Rita Robinson	Inge Stupak
15	Judy Knudsen	Susan Jensen
102	Nancy Sand	Carol Rudisill
300	Karen Randolph	online
186	Theresa Blomer	Sheila Brogger
4	Brittany Pedersen	Hanne Michelsen
4	Sue Susman	Nora Bogehegn
4	Barbara Hergert	Anne Crandall
300	Jennifer Schwenker	online

LISA STEEN RIGGS VISITED WITH DANISH SISTERHOOD LODGE #102



Danish Sisterhood Lodge #102 was fortunate to have as a speaker a very busy Lisa Steen Riggs. She arrived on a snowy winter Saturday to give a presentation on the Rebild National Park Society.

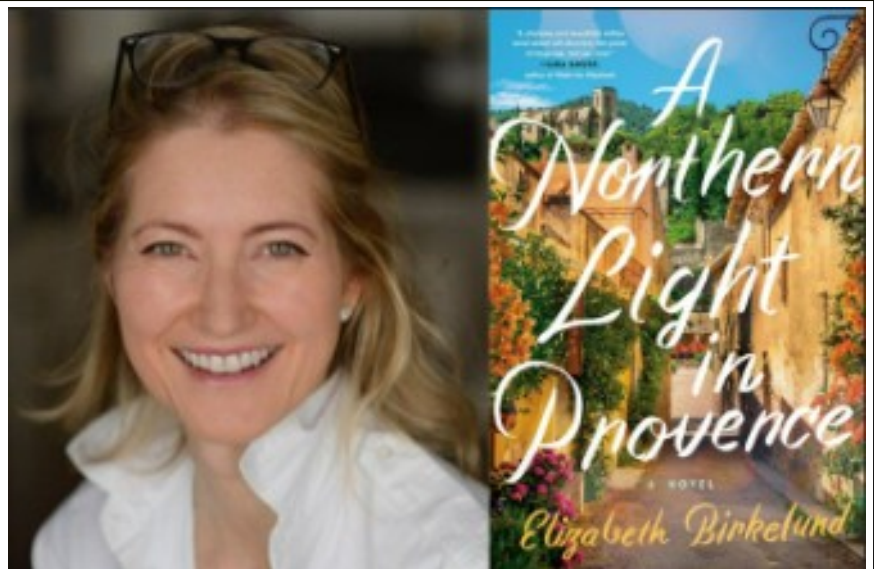
Born and raised in the Danish community of Elk Horn, Iowa the largest rural Danish settlement in the United States. Lisa was manager of Elk Horn's Danish Windmill for 44 years and has recently retired. But in retirement she was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Rebild National Park Society, a Danish-American Friendship Organization that has existed for over 110 years in Denmark.

Their mission is to work to strengthen and support the friendship and cultural ties between the people of Denmark and the USA. The Rebild Society sponsors the gathering of thousands for the fourth of July Festival in Rebild Hills of Denmark. This celebration of America's Independence Day in the Rebild Hills is the largest celebration outside the USA. It was started by Danish Immigrants in 1912 and the land was donated to the Danish nation with King Christian X as the receiver. It stands today as one of the first National Parks in Denmark with over 300,000 visitors hiking the Park every year.

More than 150 years ago, almost 336,000 Danes emigrated to the United States. Many were poor people who had difficulty making a living in Denmark. The dream of building a new life with a better life for themselves and their families enticed them across the Atlantic to the United States. These people wanted to preserve the relations with Denmark for themselves and their descendants. Therefore, they bought a piece of land, Rebild Bakker, and in 1912 founded the Rebild National Park Society. They took the initiative to make annually a celebration around the 4th of July in Rebild Bakker, all to maintain connections across the continents. And that's how it has been since the first celebration in 1912. Every single year, regardless of rain or sunshine, war or peace, economic crisis or boom, and regardless of who has been president or prime minister, the Rebild National Park Society has celebrated the 4th of July. The celebration is about relationships and friendships between people. Lisa and her husband, Mike, are looking forward to traveling to Denmark next summer to help with planning and organizing the next Rebild celebration. — **Submitted by Donna Archer, Danish Sisterhood Lodge #102**

PRINCESS MARIE LODGE #86 WELCOMES AUTHOR ELIZABETH BIRKELUND

On Saturday, March 21, 2026, at their monthly Sisterhood meeting, Lodge #86 members met virtually with author Elizabeth Birkelund for a discussion of her latest book, A Northern Light in Provence. Birkelund's publicist, had reached out to the EGC last year to gauge interest in meeting with the author who is herself half-Danish. Her father's side were Rasmussens and related to Knud Rasmussen, a Danish-Greenlandic Polar explorer who crossed the Northwest Passage via dog sled. The discussion focused on Elizabeth's choice of Greenland and France for her book setting and her travels to both Greenland and Denmark, as well as the writing process. It was very informative and the Sisters all enjoyed the activity as well as the book itself! Highly recommended reading! We even tried to recruit Elizabeth to come to a Sisterhood meeting should she ever be in Philadelphia concurrently! She promised to autograph our books! — **Submitted by Eve Kramp.**



HALF A MILLION DOLLARS IN SCHOLARSHIPS



By Nealna Gylling

Through the years the Danish Sisterhood of America has given over half a million dollars in scholarships! Following is a brief history of the scholarship program of the Sisterhood. In later issues of the Newsletter there will be other articles about Scholarship recipients, scholarship donors and where we go from here. I hope you enjoy this brief history. I apologize for any inaccuracies that may exist and please feel free to correct me.

The earliest history of scholarships given by the Danish Sisterhood of America indicate that in 1968-1971, scholarship money, totaling \$2,150.00, was given directly to Dana College and they selected the recipient. Then at the 16th National Convention in 1970, the delegates allocated a portion of the fraternal benefits fund to be used for scholarships. These "National" scholarships were for members and their children to the college of their choice. Thus began the scholarship program as we know it today. The first National scholarships from this fund were given in either 1972 or 1973 (there is some discrepancy in the history that I have read as to the first one). In January 1974, Supreme President Mildred Sorensen (Lodge #84) passed away while in office and the Mildred Sorensen Scholarship for use at Career Colleges was established with donations made in her memory. This scholarship was to be strictly from donations and memorials. The first scholarship (\$250.00) from this fund was given in 1977. In 1981, past National Trustee, Olga Christensen (Lodge#20), donated \$1,000.00 to be used for a scholarship. The first scholarship (\$150.00) from this fund was given in 1983. Like the Mildred Sorensen Scholarship, this scholarship was to be strictly from donations and memorials and interest on such monies. At the 19th Convention in 1987, the Past National Officers scholarship fund was established with donations in memory of Past National President, Edna Petersen (Lodge #65). The first Past National Officers Scholarship was awarded in 1991.

In July, 1989, National Vice President Elizabeth Garde (Lodge #16) passed. Her family asked that the many memorials be used to start an Elizabeth Garde Nursing Endowment Fund. This was to be used for scholarships for persons pursuing studies in the medical field. The stipulation was made that the scholarship could not be given until the endowment fund had reached \$15,000.00. The first Elizabeth Garde Scholarship was offered in 1998, however, there were no applicants. Thus the first one given was in 2001 in the amount of \$850.00.

Then in 1997 Betty Hansen (Lodge #40) passed away. The Danish Sisterhood of America was named as a beneficiary of her trust. According to the trust, the bequest was to be used for scholarships for the education of Sisterhood members and their families. The bequest was \$247,000.00. And thus began the Betty Hansen National Scholarship program which replaced the National scholarship program. The scholarships from this program use only the interest that is generated from the original bequest. This scholarship includes 4-year college scholarships as well as the Continuing Education Grant for part-time students and for workshops. What an amazing gift!

Along with the above scholarships, there was a short time during the 1980's that \$2,000.00 scholarships were given for study in Denmark. This ended after 5 years of no applicants. In 1984, there were 2 scholarships given to honor the centennial of the Danish Sisterhood. Along the way, there have also been a few individual scholarships given for a year or two. The number of scholarships per year, and the amount of each scholarship, has varied through the years, but the scholarship program has remained strong and an important part of our organization.

Today, each year the Danish Sisterhood offers six Betty Hansen National Scholarships (\$2,500.00 each), one Mildred Sorensen Scholarship (\$1,000.00), one Olga Christensen Scholarship (\$1,000.00), one Elizabeth Garde Scholarship (\$850.00) and one Past National Officers Scholarship (\$500.00) as well as ten Betty Hansen Continuing Education Grants (up to \$500.00). This is an amazing program of the Danish Sisterhood of America. Congratulations to all of you!



MIDTERM PROPOSALS



We on the National Board would like to thank you all for your time and effort for submitting, and ultimately voting on, the midterm proposals. We appreciate your input. Following is a synopsis of the voting results.

1. "Initiation" Procedure. Proposal was meant to present a more welcoming and condensed ceremony. One with a concentration on a more positive tone. Voted to accept.
2. "Initiation and Installation". Proposal recommended a change to eliminate the awkwardness of left hand over your heart and right hand raised, and flip to place your right hand over your heart and raise your left hand. Voted to accept.
3. Article IV Sec 2D – Proposal to change wording from 'knowledge of'...to 'proficient in' computers... Voted to Leave as is.
4. Article IV Sec 4 – Proposal to add bullet point to the officer positions, to set 'out of office' email messages. Although a good reminder, this was felt to be procedural and did not constitute a Constitution change. Voted to leave as is.

5. Article XI Sec 1B – Proposal to add: A letter from National will accompany the 25 and 50-year anniversary pins. Voted to accept.

6. Standing Rules, 5. Editor – Proposal to increase the Editor's salary to \$2100.00. Voted to accept.

These changes will be noted in the Constitution following the 2027 National Convention. In the interim, we will send the lodge secretaries (and presidents) a copy of the new Initiation and Installation options to use, if they wish, prior to the coming convention.

COVER PHOTO—BREGENTVED MANOR ESTATE

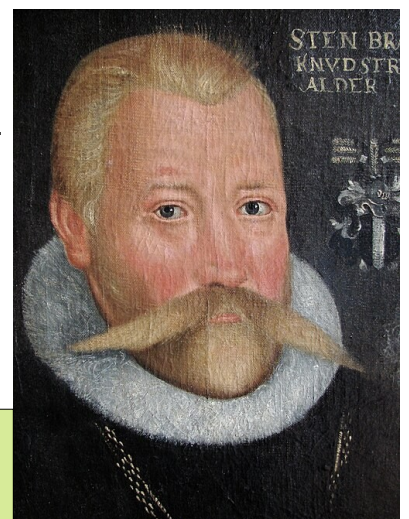
WHERE DID THE COVER PHOTO COME FROM? This photo was submitted by Sisterhood member **Lizette Burtis** from Tivoli Lodge #300. Thank you, Lizette Burtis, for sharing this photo with us!

HOW DID THIS COVER PHOTO COME TO BE? "While I was house hunting in Haslev almost two years ago, I drove by Bregentved Manor/Estate. It immediately caught my eye, so I turned around, parked and took a picture. I thought it was such a stunning property," Lizette Burtis explained. "I loved how the picture turned out and I wanted to share it with you." The photo that Lizette took is quite beautiful: The eastern main wing is to the left of the photo and the older north wing is to the right.

Bregentved is a manor house located 3 km east of Haslev on the Danish island of Zealand. It has been owned by the Moltke family since the middle of the 18th century. The first known reference to Bregentved is from 1319 when King Erik VI of Denmark passed the estate to Roskilde Abbey. From the end of the 14th century the property was owned by a succession of aristocratic families, including that of Krognos in the 16th century, until 1718 when it was acquired by King Frederick IV.

The north wing still extant in the early 21st century was built in 1731—1736 by architect Lauritz de Thurah and has a black-tiled, hipped roof. It contains a chapel on the first floor.

PHOTO RIGHT: Steen Brahe was a Danish Privy Counsellor and landowner who owed Bregentved from 1581 to 1630. See last page for reference.



DAGMAR LODGE 4 WINTER LUNCHEON AND CONVENTION UPDATE

Respectfully submitted by TLC Nielsen

The Danish Sisterhood National Board held their spring meeting in Chicago, Illinois, so the Dagmar Lodge 4 sisters invited those in attendance to come to the annual Winter Luncheon fundraiser held on March 7, 2026 in Mount Prospect. It turns out the D.S. National Board members surprised Bente Rasmussen with the Sisterhood's 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award at the lodge's frikadeller (free-kah-DEL-er) lunch. Nealna Gylling (MN Lodge 186), Susan Hoppough (MI Lodge 65), Glenda Madrid (CA Lodge 177), Linda Brooks (CO Lodge 21), Carol Rudisill (IA Lodge 102), Marilyn Dore (NY Lodge 78), and Karen Vig-Keathley (IL Lodge 4) were the National Board members we enjoyed meeting at the luncheon.



Bente responded in surprise to the Lifetime Achievement Award, mentioning that she works as just one of such a great team and so the award belongs to the whole lodge. The National Board reminded Bente that it was because of her work with the Sisterhood and so many other Danish organizations to host, volunteer, organize, and give so much of her time, talents, and friendship to her fellow Sisters that made her the recipient of the award.

Anne Crandall and Lea Olesen received their Sisterhood pins from the National Board as well. The raffle ended the lunch festivities with 42 raffle gifts for the adults as well as 18 kid baskets. A few of the National Board members and Danish Home residents won some of the very many raffle prizes.

Tusind tak (TUH-sin tahg) to the Winter Luncheon kitchen crew led by Caroline Christensen and all the volunteers that made this a successful community meal. The numbers were 75+ meals, 30 volunteers, and a wonderful time together!

The 2026 slate of officers remains the same for Chicago's Dagmar Lodge:

President Lea Olesen, VP Kimberly Hansen, Treasurer Hanne Rex Michelsen, Secretary Karen Vig-Keathley, Past President Jean Jackson, Event Coordinator Bente Rasmussen, Historian Linda Steffensen, Social Secretary Robin Decker, Marshall Jill Crooker, and our three Trustees—Lillian Sorensen, Jan Glinthorg, and Charlotte Mogensen.

2027 Convention update: Please reserve September 30–October 3, 2027 for the next Danish Sisterhood Convention in Chicago, held at the Embassy Suites in Rosemont (near O'Hare Airport). The convention theme is Weaving Our Danish-American Story: Past, Present, and Future with three sub-themes of: 1) Heritage and Hygge (HYOO-guh), 2) Heart of Denmark: Stories that Unite, and 3) Strength in Sisterhood.

Dagmar Lodge would like to encourage all Sisterhood lodges to consider hosting a workshop or presentation at the 2027 convention. Email your ideas to: 2027DSSconvention@gmail.com.

PHOTO RIGHT: Dagmar Lodge 4 Lifetime Achievement Award 2025. Danish Sisterhood National Board members surprised **Bente Rasmussen** of Chicago's Dagmar Lodge with the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award at the annual Winter Luncheon. *Photography by TLC Nielsen.*



Continued on the next page.

DAGMAR LODGE 4 WINTER LUNCHEON AND CONVENTION UPDATE (continued)



PHOTO LEFT: The bartenders at Dagmar Lodge 4's Winter Luncheon kept busy serving Aquavit and other drinks. *Photography by TLC Nielsen.*



PHOTO RIGHT: Dagmar Lodge 4 Winter Luncheon 2026. The Danish Home of Chicago residents enjoyed a table of their own at the Winter Luncheon.

PHOTO BELOW LEFT: Dagmar Lodge 4 Winter Luncheon 2026. The Danish Sisterhood National Board members are introduced along with Dagmar President Lea Olesen.

PHOTO BELOW RIGHT: Dagmar Lodge 4 Winter Luncheon 2026 Kids Raffle Table. A small number of children at the Winter Luncheon won a surprising number of raffle prizes.

Photography by TLC Nielsen.



8 VIKING SAYINGS THAT TURNED HARDSHIP INTO STRENGTH

Published: Nov 14, 2025 written by **Matt Whittaker**, BA History & Asian Studies

Viking culture arose in a brutal environment, producing warriors and explorers. Eventually, survival strategy sayings emerged, akin to instructions to staunchly face adversity.

The Vikings lived in harsh, unforgiving northern Scandinavian lands. The Viking cultures of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway developed a strong but unforgiving culture. Common aspects to all three included rugged terrain, extended winters, and volatile seas.

To survive, raiding became a primary source of survival along with trading or emigration. The Vikings soon developed a warrior ethos, brutality and endurance. Hardships were commonplace. Loyalty and fearlessness were prized, with death in combat seen as a worthy path to Valhalla. In the face of all this, the Vikings created these sayings to teach and educate. Hardship shouldn't be feared but prevailed over.

**WAKE
EARLY**
if you want
**ANOTHER
MAN'S
LIFE OR LAND...**



Sayings Embracing Action Over Evasion

1. *"Wake early if you want another man's life or land. No lamb for the lazy wolf. No battle's won in bed."*

The Vikings could never be described as passive; a warrior ethos shaped their society. Raiding was a rite of passage. Given that, the saying's meaning tells the listener to rise with purpose. The early riser gets out raiding or defends territory before others are up. One must act before others do.



Viking runic stone.

2. *"Fight your foes in the field, nor be burnt in your house":* A saying from the Icelandic tale *The Volsunga Saga*, this motto tells the warrior to fight. Not to stand but to confront the enemy head-on. Hiding is cowardice and dishonorable. And to a Viking, dying without fighting is the ultimate disgrace.

8 VIKING SAYINGS THAT TURNED HARDSHIP INTO STRENGTH (continued)

Sayings that Challenge Fear and Fate



The Norns, from *Asgard Stories: Tales from Norse Mythology*, by Mary Foster and Mabel Cummings, 1901, Source: My Norse Digital Image Repository.

5. *"The brave man well shall fight and win, though dull his blade may be."*

6. *"When men meet foes in fight, better is stout heart than sharp sword."*

Quoted from the Viking poem *Fafnismal*, this saying suggests that sharp swords are crucial in a conflict. Yet the warrior's blade must be matched by their resolve. A fine wielded by a coward is just that—a nice weapon. Even Odin prized wisdom and valor over sheer force to earn their reward.

7. *"Bravery is Half the Victory."*

This saying, sourced from the *Havamal*, a collection of traditional poems attributed to Odin, means that bravery is more than a virtue. Before any fight, a Norse warrior's bravery should be without question. Conquering fear killed the warrior's worst enemy.

For the Vikings, fate became fixed and unescapable. As with other cultures, their mythology and literature reflected this. For the warrior, he must accept his *wyrd* (fate).

3. *"Fear not death, for the hour of your doom is set and none may escape it."*

This saying shows that one's fate is predetermined. The Norns, three Norse deities who determined a person's fate, spun a Viking's fate. What mattered in this life is how the warrior met that end. The warrior must choose to meet it with honor.

4. *"None but a coward dares to boast that he has never known fear."*

In a culture that values courage, boasting about being fearless is bravado. Even Odin feared Ragnarok, but prepared for this final battle.

Those of Forging Resilience and Resolve

While swords are critical in any fight, courage and resolve matter more. It's just not the hand wielding the weapon.



Norse hero Sigurd killing Fafnir from the door panels of the Hylestad stave church, now at the Historisk Museum, Oslo, Norway. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

8 VIKING SAYINGS THAT TURNED HARDSHIP INTO STRENGTH (continued)



Odin fighting the Fenris Wolf. Source: World History Encyclopedia

The Value of Legacy and Reputation

The Vikings prized reputation highly. Victorious warriors in heroic tales echoed through time like Sigurd defeating a dragon. Scandinavian society equally prized legacy and honor. Their reputation and actions affected their kin (family), too. Personal and family legacy mattered, and deviations could mean exile or worse. Many of their sayings took on these issues, teaching their ethics.

8. *“Cattle die, kinsmen die, all men are mortal. Words of praise will never perish, nor a noble name.”*

The quote’s definition is layered. Found in the *Havamal* (quotes attributed to Odin), the first comments on cattle dying. Cattle to Vikings symbolized wealth. Yet all possessions are temporary. The rest states that death is unavoidable, even for the Norse gods. For all, the final battle of Ragnarok looms.

Finally, the last line displays the rich Viking oral tradition: great deeds and noble names will live on through praise. The Viking sayings quoted here show that hardship is unavoidable. What mattered was how the person responded by using bold actions, a sharp sword, and resilience.

A Visual Representation

The Vikings reflected these in their runes, typically inscribed on materials such as stone or metal. The eiwaz rune, or yew tree, represented resilience and endurance in the face of adversity. Eiwaz represents the ability to be stronger after strife.

The Vikings shared these sayings through an oral tradition. These vehicles include tales, proverbs, and poetry (sagas). Much later, these sayings would be written down.



Please see back page for reference.

THE DANISH LANGUAGE IS REMARKABLE

Linguists argue that Danish is one of the hardest languages to learn. Due to an overabundance of vowel sounds, it is proven that Danish children learn to speak later than most other European countries. With a reversed word order and 3 unique letters (æ, ø, and å) that non-native Danish speakers find hard to pronounce, it is no surprise that when translated into English, the Danish have some of the funniest expressions out there.

In the heart of Denmark's rich cultural heritage lies a mosaic of phrases and sayings, each a thread weaving together the tapestry of Danish life and its unique worldview. These sayings, more than mere words strung together, encapsulate the essence of Danish culture, offering an intimate glimpse into the collective psyche of its people. Through their simplicity and wit, they reflect a nation's history, values, and even its humor, becoming an integral part of everyday communication.

Here are 15 of these funny expressions in Danish and how to use them in cultural context.

1. When Danes are surprised they don't say "holy cow!"... rather, they say "take a whole vacation!" (*hold da helt ferie*)
2. You won't hear some loud exclamations in Denmark... instead they use "gentle Moses." (*milde Moses*)
3. When a Dane wants to know the agenda, they will ask, "what's on the wallpaper today?" (*hvad er på tapetet i dag?*)
4. If someone wakes up early in Denmark, they "woke up before the devil puts his shoes on." (*før fanden får sko på*)
5. A Dane doesn't "kill two birds with one stone"... instead he "hits two flies with one swat." (*slå to fluer med et smæk*)
6. If a Dane is very drunk, they are "chicken drunk" (*hønefuld*) and "fairly withered." (*rimelig vissen*)
7. And after having too many, a Dane won't be "under the table"... they'll be "in the fence." (*i hegnet*)
8. A Dane is also never "wrong", they have just "gone wrong in the town." (*gået galt i byen*)
9. In Denmark you don't "feel stressed"... instead you've "gone down with the flag." (*gået ned med flaget*)
10. If a Dane likes to read a lot, they may be referred to as a "reading horse." (*læsehest*)
11. When someone in Denmark is very slim, they will be described as "eel slim." (*Åleslank*)
12. When it's really windy, the weather will be described as "half a pelican." (*det blæser en halv pelikan*)
13. In Denmark you don't get lucky... instead you'll "shoot the parrot." (*skyder papegøjen*)
14. When a Dane expresses disbelief in something you've done, they might say "you must have eaten nails!" (*du må have spist søm*)
15. In Denmark you're never on "on good terms"... instead you are "on a good foot." (*på god fod*).

Diving into Danish sayings is not just about learning a language; it's about immersing oneself in a new way of thinking. These sayings serve as a bridge, connecting non-native speakers to the heart of Danish culture. They offer a lens through which one can view and better understand the subtleties and nuances of Danish society.

Key Takeaways

- Danish sayings offer deep insights into the nation's culture, history, and values.
- Sayings reflect the core values and societal norms of Denmark.
- Common sayings reveal the Danish approach to life, humor, and wisdom.
- Danish humor is reflected in its unique and witty sayings.
- Sayings are integral to daily communication, enriching social interactions.
- Sayings evolve with time, reflecting changes in society and culture.
- Sayings are a valuable tool for understanding the nuances of Danish language and culture.

REFERENCES:

Danish Sayings: Popular and Funny Sayings & Their Meaning, By Kristian Updated: February 13, 2025
The 15 Funniest Expressions in Danish (and How to Use Them), by Annika Morck March 30, 2018

This is a great video to watch in order to learn more about the Danish language:
<https://youtu.be/dWLw3EZR7Co?si=fYundJtJROlab-Oh>

DANISH SISTERHOOD BUTIKKEN

Visit the DSS Website Marketplace-Butikken to see all items available for purchase.

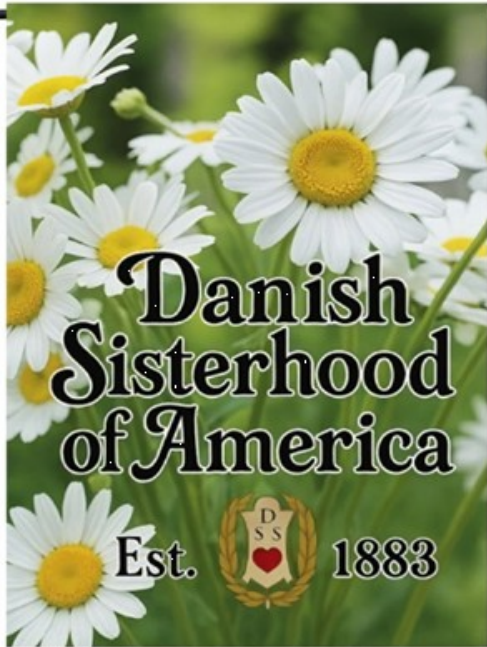


PHOTO LEFT: Garden flag, regular price is \$20.00, but convention price is \$16.00!

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PHOTO BELOW: Evelyn Mathies 5 blank note-card set, regular price is \$12.00 but convention price \$9.60!

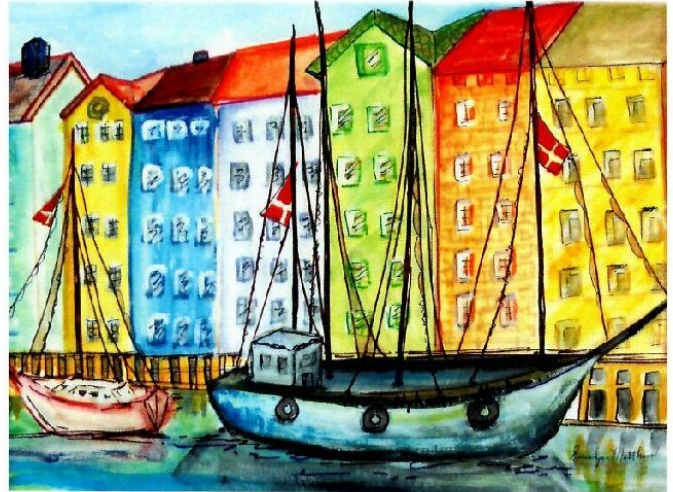


PHOTO LEFT: Caroline Christensen from Lodge #4 in Chicago is wearing a red scarf with silver heart; regular price is \$10.00, but convention price is \$8.00!



PHOTO ABOVE: Hygge onesie 6/12/18 months; regular price is \$15.00, convention price is \$12.00.



PHOTO LEFT: DSS 14kt gold plated necklace regular price is \$45.00, but convention price is \$36.00!

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Whittaker, Matt. "8 Viking Sayings that Turned Hardship into Strength" TheCollector.com, November 14, 2025, <https://www.thecollector.com/viking-sayings-that-turned-hardship-into-strength/>

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Greetings from Linda, Elsa & Elizabeth Steffensen
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Dagmar Lodge #4, Chicago, IL

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