

How did a 60 foot tall Danish windmill end up on the Iowa prairie?

It all started when Harvey Sornson, an area farmer of Danish descent, came back from a trip to Denmark in the spring of 1975. Harvey had an idea...an absolutely crazy idea.



Harvey was fascinated with mills since

And why?

childhood. Mills in Denmark were gradually disappearing from the rural scene. Harvey wanted to take one home. When he returned home to Elk Horn, he presented his “crazy idea”.

Within five months the people of Elk Horn raised the funds necessary to purchase and dismantle the windmill and transport it to Iowa.

This 60-foot windmill, built in Nørre Snede, Denmark in 1848, was dismantled, shipped to Elk Horn, Iowa and rebuilt in 1976 by community volunteers to honor the area's Danish heritage. The Danish Villages of Elk Horn and Kimballton make up the largest rural Danish settlement in the U.S.



Nørre Snede, Denmark

Elk Horn, Iowa USA



This project paid for in part by the Iowa Tourism Office.



A piece of Denmark close to home...

DANISH WINDMILL



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info@danishwindmill.com | www.danishwindmill.com
Weekdays & Saturdays 9-5, Sunday 12-5

Velkommen!

to the authentic 1848 **Danish Windmill**



Elk Horn, Iowa

Interstate 80, Exit 54—6 miles north
between Des Moines and Omaha
Electric Car Charging Station | Official Iowa Welcome Center

A Piece of Denmark Close to Home

Danish Cultural Heritage Museum Complex
and Import Shop featuring
Royal Copenhagen, Bing & Grøndahl and more!

Danish Windmill

danishwindmill.com

authentic 1848
Danish Windmill
Velkommen!



Elk Horn's Danish Windmill is America's only authentic working Danish Windmill. The Windmill has been restored to working condition and serves as a historical and educational museum for all people interested in Denmark, Danish customs, Scandinavian traditions, Iowa's cultural heritage and of course, windmills.

You can climb to the top of the mill, see the grinding stones and watch the sails go around on a windy day. And what a sight it is! A 15-minute video is included with the tour admission.

Farm-to-Mill and Mill-to-Table

The Danish Windmill is a working example of life in an earlier time when farmers brought their harvest to the mill and wind energy was used to grind grain into flour.

It provides a rare glimpse into the past when thousands of windmills were scattered about the Denmark countryside and stands as a valuable historical resource and a tribute to America's rural cultural ethnic heritage.



The official Møllebogen (Miller's record book) was given to the Danish Windmill by the great grandson of the last miller Kristen Vestergaard (1866-1950). You may want to take home a bag of our stone ground flour from the museum store and bake some Danish rye bread!



TAKE A VACATION WITH A DANISH ACCENT!



VikingHjem

The VikingHjem demonstrates a typical structure used throughout Scandinavia and Northern Europe during the latter Dark Ages to the early Middle Ages. From the blacksmith shop and woodworking area of the Hjem, to its attached living space, shows the interior as it would have appeared in the Viking Age around 900 AD.

Morning Star Chapel

The tiny Morning Star Chapel was built in 1951 by Charles Johann Walensky, a Danish immigrant. He was a skilled craftsman and helped construct churches in Waterloo. He built the 4-pew chapel in his back yard.



It was relocated to the Windmill complex in 2013 and is available to rent for weddings, renewing marriage vows, christenings and other ceremonies.

New in 2015! Ebeltoft Village

Richard Storkfelt was born in Denmark and immigrated to the US in 1925. In 1982, at the age of 82, he began building a scale model of the village of Ebeltoft, Denmark as a remembrance of childhood summers with his grandmother. The first piece was a 10-foot working windmill. The village includes five buildings (1:10 scale/6-10 feet tall) and about fifty people that are hand-carved from wood.

Growing Green and Wind Energy

The Danish Windmill has been "green" since 1848! It's interesting to note that once our mill was one of thousands scattered across the Danish countryside, and that today it stands amid fields of modern wind turbines on the Iowa prairie. The roof of the VikingHjem is green technology and there are two electric vehicle charging stations at the Mill.



Tivoli Fest and JuleFest

Elk Horn's Danish celebration, Tivoli Fest, is held each Memorial Day weekend. Enjoy Danish foods and specialties such as smørbrød, æbelskiver and medisterpølse. There is the Tour de Tivoli bike race and Mermaid to Mill 5K Run, a parade, Danish folk dancers, an entertainment stage, and fireworks.

Julefest is held annually over Thanksgiving weekend. This is a fun-filled Christmas festival with the Naughty or Nisse 5K Run, over 25 local businesses, organizations, historical sites and museums. Visit the unique gift shops, large Christmas Boutique and more!

Shop for Danish Gifts and Collectibles

The 1848 Danish Windmill Museum also includes an exquisite Danish import shop that features the old and new from Denmark. Featuring Royal Copenhagen, Bing & Grøndahl plates and dated collectibles, Viking and heritage gifts, food, books, and more. Proceeds from purchases support the Danish Windmill, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



We welcome large groups, school tours and international visitors.

We can help you plan your visit to the Danish Villages with one phone call! For more information on gas, food, lodging, shopping, historical interests, agriculture and eco-tours please visit www.danishwindmill.com or www.danishvillages.com for details.