

# Night Watchman's Round



## The Night Watchman's Round in the old neighbourhood of H. C. Andersen

Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there have been a night watchman in Odense. The earliest traces of the night watchman's song we recorded in our country dates from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and refers to the 127<sup>th</sup> David's psalm. "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain; unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen watch in vain".

From 1770 the guarding of the town became organized as follows: There were at night 1 watchman-guardmaster, 15 street watchmen, 2 tower watchmen; and there were 4 policemen for the dayshift. The watchman should take oath that he would carry out his watch faithfully, diligently and without deception - and take care of the following:

- \* To awaken and alert the citizens in case of a fire
- \* To lighten, control and maintenance the train-oil-streetlamps
- \* To control and maintenance of the city-wells
- \* To control the garbagemen
- \* To keep an eye on the "nightman", who empties the city cloos
- \* To control the traffic in the streets and allies
- \* To put bottling line on open beer-, winebarrels at 'closing-forserving- alcohol-time' at 10 pm in every guesthouse, Inn, Pub
- \* To guide people on the streets – after 10 pm - to their home or to set them in the dungeon at The Townhall
- \* To remove drunk people from streets and alleys
- \* To capture violent people, thieves, robbers and other criminals,
- \* To - each hour - shout the hour and sing the hour-vers from The Nightwatchman-Hymn

In day-time:

- \* To watch at the scaffold by executions and other punishments
- \* To walk through the town with criminals wearing the Spanish Mantel
- \* To wake sleeping people at the highmass in the churches on sondays

The Nightwatchmen were in 1866 replaced by a real police force. Since 1993 nightwatchmen have again been carrying out their rounds in Odense.





From **1. July – 31. August 2017**  
the watchman walks his round  
**every evening** (*except Sundays*) at **9 pm.** (21.00 hr.)  
starting from "**Den gamle Kro**" in **Overgade 23.**

The Night Watchman's Round have a duration  
of approx. 1 Hour and is *free of charge.*  
It is normally *in Danish*, but if you ask the Night-Watchman,  
he will make a brief translation of his stories.  
Every Wednesday the Night Watchman's Round ends  
with a small 15 min. Watchman's Service in Vor Frue Kirke..



**Odense City**  
and  
**Odense Historic Nightwatchmen**  
is member of  
**The European Guild of Night- and Towerwatchmen**



The Night Watchmans Round's are supported by "*The Nightwatchman's Friends*"  
and sponsored by:

Odense kommune: By- og kulturforvaltningen, Albani,  
Den gamle Kro, Grønttorvet, Odense City-forening  
og Lørups Vinstue.

**Odense Historiske Nattevægtere:**

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/Vægterne-i-Odense-328958553890794/>

**Website:** [nattevægtere-odense.dk](http://nattevægtere-odense.dk)



## Short review of the history of Odense

- \* Artefacts show signs of human activity in the bronze-age and the early iron-age
- \* 980 Viking-ring-fortres "Nonnebakken"
- \* 988 Odense is mentioned for the first time in a written source – in a letter to The German-Roman Emperor Carl the 3'th Court in Aachen
- \* 1086 The murder of King Canute the 4. (*King Canute the Sacred*) in The Sct. Alban Church
- \* 1231 Odense is mentioned in The Will (Testament) of King Valdemar the 2.
- \* 1247 The city was on fire because of war between two of the noble families.
- \* 1477 The Rights as a Merchant-Town confirmed by King Christian the 1.
- \* 1500th century (The first half) Queen Christine lived in Odense (Næsby-Hoved Castle)
- \* 1534-36 Civil-war between royal- and noble-families and the introduction of *The Lutheran Reformation*.
- \* 1549 The first pharmacist (Apothecary) in Odense
- \* 1580 The County leaders ceremonial acknowledgement of King Frederik the 2.
- \* **1639 King Christian the 4. established the regulations for The Nightwatchmen in Odense**
- \* 1677 The priest, author, hymn-writer and poet Thomas Kingo (1634 - 1703) becomes Bishop of Odense. (He wrote the nightwatchman-hymn)
- \* 1705 Author Ambrosius Stub is born (Odense 1741-47) – dies in Ribe 1758
- \* 1720 Sct. John Monastery is rebuilt and converted to The Odense Castle
- \* 1762 Train-Oil-streetlamps in Odense
- \* 1795 Odense Theatre (Komediehuset) on Sortebrødretorv
- \* 1805 H. C. Andersen is born (He leaves Odense in 1819)
- \* 1807 Rasmus Rask (linguist) finished his apprenticeship at the latin-school
- \* 1803 Opening of Odense Canal and Odense Harbour
- \* 1829 C. F. Tietgen is born – he leaves the city in 1849
- \* 1836 The first Iron-foundry in Odense
- \* 1846 The first bank in Odense
- \* 1853 Gas- and waterworks in Odense
- \* 1859 Albani Breweries
- \* 1860 The first provincial art-museum in Denmark in Jernbanegade
- \* 1865 Odense Railwaystation / Railway across Funen: Middelfart-Odense-Nyborg
- \* 1865 Carl Nielsen is born in Nr. Lyndelse south of Odense (He is in Odense 1879-1883)
- \* **1866 Nightwatchman-guild (Corps) decommissioned**
- \* 1867 H. C. Andersen becomes a "honorary citizen" and hailed by The cityzens torch-procession
- \* 1883 New Town-Hall (Oldest part of the present townhall)
- \* 1891 Public Electricity Supply
- \* 1894 Thomas B. Thrige is founder of the industrialism in Odense

