

Danish Club of Houston News

www.dkhouston.org - hofer@mac.com

Volume 28 – May 2005



Enough of Andersen...

It is May in Houston – Andersen is finally through celebrating his 200 years! Birthday, the crown princess is expecting, and the Danes were voted among the three most happy populations in the world by some institute somewhere. If I remember correctly Denmark was beaten by Puerto Rico- another location with high alcohol consumption.

Also the Danes in Houston are doing fine and appear pretty happy. Our treasurer Hannes has relentlessly chased delinquent members until they finally came up with the 15 \$ for membership renewal. So the total membership is now close to 130 families, and we can again welcome a long list of new members to replace those who either left town or for other strange reasons did not renew membership.

I know I have said it a million times before, but it is really great to see the continuing influx of Danes and Danish-minded to Houston, especially because a club like ours does unfortunately have a lot of “goodbyes!” to good friends who return to Denmark or move on to new destinations.

Following our very successful Holiday party in December, and the “farewell” Church service with Torben Poulsen, we have been a little slow in the Spring Season. However, a couple of young families stepped up to plate and arranged a great fastelavns party in February in Hermann Park with good attendance and a lot of fun for the kids.

For the first time in recent history we were unable to muster a single team for the Five-a-side soccer tournament held in connection with the Scandinavian family day at the Norwegian Seamen's Church. It is disappointing and a little embarrassing, but e-mail reminders led to only one interested player, so we had to drop it. Too bad, because it is normally a lot of fun. Our apologies to the Norsemen.

Our friends in Danevang decided this year to celebrate Hans Christian Andersen instead of the Queen's Birthday, and they once again pulled off an amazing event. I would guess that some 300 people showed up, including a good crowd from our Club, as well as representatives from San Antonio and Austin.

The program included a parade, several musical and theater presentations, food concessions, folk dance by Scandinavian Folkdancers of Houston, and the museum had a special exhibit celebrating HCA, while animated fairytale movies were shown on big screen in the church.

Hats off to Bridget Jensen and the dedicated crew of hard working volunteers in the Heritage Society. Danevang does appear to be a small and rather isolated community not too far from Nowhere, but the Danish cultural heritage and the strong devotion makes it such a special place.

The Spring Family Camping took place the same weekend, only some 25 miles from Danevang, on the shores of Lake Texana. Six families with dogs and kids in all ages enjoyed the windy days with jogging, fishing and barbeque.

The season will be rounded off with our Mid-Summer Party and Annual Meeting on June 25, - only one day apart from “Sankt Hans”. We can not promise you bonfire, but instead we can offer free admission, food and beer to all those who coughed up the 15\$ to renew their membership for 2005. If you have visitors from the old country, then bring them along .

We hope to see you all at Nottingham Forest Club, so we can wish each other a nice long Summer in Houston, Denmark or wherever your vacation plans may take you.
Niels K.

New Members..

We are excited about all the new members joining the Danish Club. The following have joined the Club since Mid-November:

Anne & Tad Walsh
Kristian Toft Nielsen
Dorte & Per Myhre
Cynthia & Niels Lyngsoe
Christian Kvorning
Sabrina & Karsten Blok
Kasper Bihlet
Benedicte & Christopher Rowton
Henriette & Niels Jensen
Kristine Hart
Tina & Martin Kingshill
Tor Stavnes
Hanne Olson
April Gibson

As usual some of our newcomers are working in the energy sector and in shipping / shipbuilding, but the list also include people in marketing, airline business and the Houston ballet, just to mention some examples.

We look forward to meet you all at the Mid-Summer Party, and we welcome you to The Danish Club of Houston.



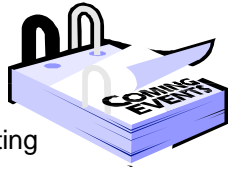
Season Calendar

June 4, 11 am.

Grundlovsfest in Danevang, TX

June 25, 5 pm.

Midsummer Party & Annual Meeting
Nottingham Forest Club



Young Danes Network

The Young Danes Network (YDN) usually meet on the third Friday of each month for Happy Hour(s) at a centrally located water hole. You do not have to be young to show up, just don't try to keep up with the young crowd.

If you are not on the mailing list, contact ring leader Sten Svendsen. YDN operates as a separate group under the Danish Club with own mailing list and own activities.

New Danish Club in Austin..

The Danish lecturer Kristian Himmelstrup who was teaching Scandinavian Literature at UT has unfortunately returned to Denmark, and the "Danish Events" at UT are therefore pending his replacement.

Meanwhile our new members Sabrina and Karsten Blok are living in Austin, and Karsten is currently working on establishing a club for the Danes in the area. You will be able to find the link to Karsten's web-site on our web site as soon as our friends in Austin are "up running"

Scandinavian Folkdancers..

The Scandinavian Folkdancers of Houston are busy with their 2005 performance season, Following the exhibition at the HCA Festival in Danevang , they also performed at the Houston International Festival in April with a good crowd in attendance.

The group is preparing for a trip to Norway this summer, where they will be performing for other folkdancing groups and exchanging dances - this trip is funded in large part by the group's annual glogg sales at Dickens on the Strand.

Frances and Carl Steffensen have assumed the challenge of co-dance directors and are now instructors. They invite any interested parties to join the weekly practices held Mondays at Christ the King Lutheran Church, beginning at 7:15 p.m. Contact them at 281-493-4801/
steff@houston.rr.com for more information.

Fastelavns Party in Hermann Park

The weather was nice for a February Sunday when more than 40 adults and kids showed up in Hermann park for Fastelavns Party. All the kids were wearing costumes, and a clown was taking care of face painting and balloon animals for everybody.

Carl had secured a fresh supply of wooden barrels so the traditional "beating the cat out of the barrel" survived another year without anybody being accused of animal cruelty.

For those not familiar with Danish traditions, we can assure you that the barrels are filled with fruit and candy, although according to history, in the good ole days a living cat would be hidden in the barrel, and the poor animal would be scared to death and run for it's life, when somebody finally broke the barrel.



One of the young Danes enjoys the fun and good company at the Fastelavns Party in Hermann park.

The Annual Fastelavns Party is run by volunteer families with young kids. Those who volunteer get to decide the location of the party, which is certainly an advantage in a big metropolitan area like Houston. The Danish Club sponsors the event, so let us know if you would like to head next year's party in February 2006.



Call for Annual Meeting

The 8th Regular Annual Meeting will be held

Saturday, June 25, 2005 at 5.30 pm at Nottingham Forest Club, 325 Kickerillo Drive.

In accordance with the By-Laws, the Agenda will include the following items:

1. Election of Chair of Meeting
2. President's Report for the Year
3. Treasurer's Financial Report for the Year
4. Approvals, and Decharge of Board of Directors.
5. Elections:
 - a) President
 - b) Vice-President
 - c) Treasurer
 - d) Secretary
 - e) Committee Coordinators
 - f) Two Substitutes
 - g) Two Auditors
6. New Activities
7. Sundry

The Board has no suggestions for change of by-laws this year. The By-Laws are available on our web site.

Board Roster:

The Board is nominating the following slate of Board Members for election:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| President: | Lillian Jensen |
| Vice President: | Carl Steffensen |
| Treasurer: | Hannes Hofer |
| Secretary: | Mette Miller |
| Activity Coord.: | Sten Svendsen |
| Activity Coord.: | Christina Clark |

Nominations for Substitutes and Auditors will be made at the meeting. Please inform Niels Kastrup by e-mail in case of other nominations to the Board or in case of suggestions for modifications to the By-Laws.

Mid-Summer Party on June 25

Last years Mid-Summer Party got rave reviews from all the member families, enjoying the pool-side party at the nice facilities at Nottingham. So why not repeat the success? We therefore invite all our member families to a Mid-Summer Party at the Nottingham Forest Club,

Saturday, June 25, at 5 pm.

| | |
|----------|----------------|
| Program: | |
| 5 pm. | Pool is open |
| 5.45 pm. | Annual Meeting |
| 7.00 pm | Barbeque |
| 10.00 pm | End of Party |

The party is held at the pool area, and the pool will be open all night with lifeguard on duty. Admission is free for all members in good standing, in other words: It's free of charge provided that you paid your 15\$ membership fee for 2005.

Carl Steffensen and Mike Miller should be ready to flip the burgers and hot dogs, and we hope our expert Jan Mogensen can track down some of his Danish style wieners.

We are looking for a keg sponsor – and we ask you to please bring your own wine and sodas. Please also throw a couple of lawn chairs in the trunk.

Please RSVP with number of participants by e-mail to Hannes Hofer (hofer@mac.com), so we have an idea of how much food to buy.

Mark your calendar, keep an eye on your e-mail and look forward to a fun night with good food and good company.

Candidate for Presidency..

The Board is pleased to suggest Lillian Jensen as new President for the Club. Lillian has for four years been a very active member of the Holiday committee, and been an active supporter of the club for many years.

Lillian has called Houston home for 15 years, and she will split her working day between the Danish Club and the small company Resource Studios, specializing in Computer Aided Facility Management.

Niels Kastrup will be stepping down, having been on the Board since co-founding the club in 1997. He has taken up a new job assignment in North Africa, and is therefore not available on a daily basis anymore.



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Bits & Pieces..

Smoerrebroed in Houston Chronicle

The Steffensen family, - Frances, Carl and daughters had visitors for "smorrebrod" in March. The Houston Chronicle brought a nice article about the Danish food traditions, focusing on herring and "beuf-tartar". Some might whisper that the tartar dish could actually be of French origin, but Danes have certainly enjoyed the delicacy for generations, although Salmonella and other bacteria have more or less outlawed raw egg in Denmark.

The journalist seemed to have a touch time eating her way through all the raw stuff. Great job by the Steffensens.

Danish runner celebrates HCA

A Danish jogger in Texas celebrated HCA's 200 years birthday by announcing a 200 km run on April 1 & 2., according to the official HCA web site. Strangely enough we never heard any details here in Houston, but the initiator Thorbjorn Pedersen was supposed to host the run at Sam Houston State Park in Huntsville, and revenues would be supporting cancer research. We wonder if the run ever took place?

Danevang in shining colors..

One of the most impressing vehicles in the HCA Grand Parade in Danevang was the top-polished and chrome shining fire truck in red and white colors. The Parade also showcased old tractors, veteran automobiles and HCA tableaux with adults and kids dressed in historical outfits. See all the pictures on our web site.



Facts About The Danish Club.

Board of Directors:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Niels H. Kastrup, President | 281-855-9299 |
| Carl Steffensen Vice President | 281-493-4801 |
| Hannes Hofer, Treasurer | 713-664-7784 |
| Mette Miller, Secretary | 281-859-3140 |
| Christina B. Clark, Activ. Coord. | 713-862-0739 |
| Sten Svendsen, Activ. Coord. | 713-862-9871 |

www.dkhouston.org

Have you read our web site lately? We have plenty of interesting links, and you can view the Club's impressive Photo Archive. Updated member address list is also available for members private use. The address list may not be used as commercial mailing list. E-mail Hannes or ask a friend if you do not know the pass word.

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Hannes is always thankful for ideas or suggestions for further improvements of the site.

Address & E-mail Changes:

Hannes Hofer
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Newsletter:

This volume is edited by Niels H. Kastrup, and mailed to members in good standing and selected friends of the Danish-American community in Houston.

Next issue: Sept / October 2005

Mailing courtesy of



Our thanks to Ebbe H. Christensen for the help.