



Fall, 2003
Newsletter
Danish Heritage Preservation Society
P.o. Box 386 Danevang, TX 77432-0386



photo by Irvin Wind

Laird Engle fills new post

Our New Era

Our museum is moving up to a new standard by extending museum hours and adding professional direction for our faithful volunteers. As of the later part of October, Laird Engle has been assisting at the museum.

Laird has already been working with Region 3 of the Texas Department of Education in Victoria, exploring ways in which the educational programs of the museum can interface with curriculum objectives of the various grade levels. He has further set in motion plans for an "in service" teacher-training day in May of 2004.

Laird came to the Danevang Community almost six years ago to pastor the Danevang Lutheran Church, where he continues to serve. Before coming to Danevang, the Rev. Engle served a congregation in Liberty, Texas. Prior to his seminary training, Laird was a high school science teacher. His interest in and training as an educator uniquely qualifies him for the educational outreach aspect of the museum's vision.

In addition to enhancing the educational facet of the museum, Laird will utilize the extensive training he has received to become a certified professional grant writer. The museum needs his expertise in this field to successfully fund its growing endeavors. With expanded operating hours, the museum now qualifies for many standards set by groups and foundations interested in funding enterprises such as the Danevang Museum. Areas of interest for which we are currently pursuing additional resources are:

- History of the community and of the Texas GulfCoast in general
- Current contributions and problems encountered in rurallife
- Environmental and wildlife issues of the area
- The specific contribution of the Danish Heritage to the rich cultural fabric of Texas

The expanded museum hours are:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday 1p.m. - 4 p.m.

Current members always receive free admission. Otherwise, we ask adults for a \$4 donation and seniors and students for a \$3 donation. Special rates are available for groups of students.

Newsletter

Published Four Times Annually By
Danish Heritage

Preservation Society, Inc. P.O.
Box 386
Danevang TX 77432-0386 (a
non-profit 501 (c)(3)entity)

And is available through Annual
Membership, June to June

Annual Meeting is held in conjunction
with GrundlovDag Celebration,
first Saturday in June

Board of Directors:

Terms Expiring June, 2006

Elvin Berndt Danevang TX 979-543-7997
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Terms Expiring June, 2005

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Carl Wind (Secretary) Alvin TX 281-331-0812

EX OFFICIO

Rev. Laird Engle EI Campo TX 979-578-0292

Committee Chairs:

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Bldg:Carl Larsen! Grnds:James Petersen

Events Leo Westerholm

Finance Kenneth Christensen

Funding Kermit Westerholm

Gift Shop Elaine Wind

Museum Lawrence Petersen

Newsletter Al Jensen

Publicity Elsie Christensen

Æbleskiver Fest

The third annual Danevang Æbleskiver
Fest will be held Saturday afternoon November
29th from 1-4 p.m. Heating up the large pan
donated to the Heritage Society by Leo
Westerholm will be cooks Irvin and Ellis Wind,
plus other skilled æbleskiver "turners" who
happen to show up.

Supplies will be on hand to make Danish
Christmas decorations such as the one displayed in
the photo below. Our able instructor Delores
Guiden will guide participants in weaving these
paper heart ornaments. In addition to making
ornaments, you will be able to buy them at the Gift
Shop, which will be well stocked with unique gift
items for the holiday season.



Photo by Irvin Wind

Lillian Hansen, named after her great grandmother
Lillian (Lily) Hansen, is the daughter of Dean and
Shanna Hansen and granddaughter of Myma
Thyssen and the late J. Bruce Hansen.

Writings From The Past

(Continued from previous issue)

This is the third and final part of the 3 part article by F. P. J. Lund, translated by the late Verner Petersen. It was first published in April of 1912 in the Times Weekly, published by J. C. Christensen.

The difficult and hard time from the economic standpoint is now over in Danevang and prosperity has made its entrance. This is observed whenever we look and see the large well-kept homes, large out buildings and improved farm equipment. Yes, even the automobile has arrived as two of the farmers have bought such a vehicle. In spite of the increased wealth, it is often with emotion that we are reminded of the many years of poverty when the togetherness, the readiness to help and friendliness were much more prevalent. I, however, have no doubt, if it were ever necessary, any of these characteristics would be there as strong as ever.

In the mean time, when the economic side is discounted, it is not so favorable for Danevang. Here I am thinking of the lonesome area. The other Danish Colonies almost all lie in the middle states, which means that Danevang has about 800 American miles to the nearest Danish colony (in Kansas). This distance is felt as a cultural loss, in that none of the lecturers that come from Denmark, visiting the Danish Colonies in America, will ever go so far south, with the exception of Pastor F. R. Brunn and his wife from Levring, who visited us last November.

We must not think that the Danevang Danes don't have the opportunity to hear a lecturer every now and then. It has incidentally become a custom that at least once a year a lecturer is invited from one of the middle states to be our guest as a speaker for several days. When such a person arrives, all work is put to rest and the people gather at the church or meeting house to listen to a lecture, or if it is Sunday, to a sermon. At noon, we gather for a pot luck dinner that each family has brought from home. After the meal, we gather again for

another lecture. This gives us an opportunity to take stock of the spiritual and intellectual thoughts. It is customary that we in the colony pay \$100.00 to the lecturer for such a trip. The travel expenses back and forth will cost at least \$60.00. The long distance is especially felt when the colony is without a pastor. Old Pastor S. H. Madsen, who had been the Colony's minister for many years, died last summer after several years of sickness. There was a shortage of pastors in the Danish Church in America. At this time the colony is still without a pastor and the distance is too great to be able to receive church services from one of the other Danish congregations.

In such a remote outlying new colony, great requests are demanded of a minister. He lives almost completely in his own circle, with very little opportunity to meet with other ministers. Therefore, he must keep himself capable by reading, self studies or other methods so that his preaching in the church and lecture hall does not stagnate. Unfortunately, it is still common and necessary that the minister also must be the children's teacher in the months that the American public school has a vacation, teaching the Danish school every day and the remaining part of the year giving religious training on Saturday (The public school does not have school Saturday).

The Danes have been used to the church and school being provided by the State in Denmark. Over here, the public school is free but if we wish to have Church and Congregational school, we must provide the necessary funds. The Danes have not yet learned nor seen the importance of the Danish children's school, and therefore have not the willingness to contribute. They are far from having reached the goal, nor has the Danish Church shown its support and is far behind what other Church Synods are showing.

In Danevang, the congregation pays the pastor a fixed yearly salary of \$600.00, free parsonage and the use of enough land for gardening, cotton, pasture for two horses and two or three milk cows. If the pastor prefers not to cultivate himself, he can lease the land to someone else and receive the customary rent.

In additions, the pastor receives festival offerings and other amenities and his household expenses are often lessened by other means.

In the groups that belong to the Danish Church, singing is enjoyed very much, more so than in Denmark, and Danevang is no exception. It is customary for people who visit friends and neighbors on Sunday afternoon to bring their songbooks. One song after the other is sung for several hours. This is done with delight and pleasure and obviously all who participate appear to be uplifted in spirit.

Here in Danevang a songbook is used that was written for the Danish people in America and published by the Danish Folk Society. Pastor F. L. Grundtvig has compiled the book, and in a mild manner changed several songs a little here and there so that it is meaningful to immigrants and the grown population's feelings. The present songbook (3rd edition) has been arranged by L. Henningsen and contains 781 pages.

In its content, there are songs that will appeal to many individuals. There are songs of deep religious feelings, songs that describe the pioneer life and longing for Denmark, patriotic songs, etc. I have compiled a manuscript of melodies for the earlier 2nd edition of the songbook, which contained 596 songs. For the present 3rd edition of the songbook, organist Dripont Hansen in Chicago has expanded on the above mentioned collection of melodies so that there is a melody for every song. This collection is published by the Danish Folk Society and is, without a doubt, the largest collection of melodies that has ever been published for any songbook. In this collection, there are 132 melodies that are composed by Danish Americans.

We have several local organizations in Danevang; one of course, Ansgar congregation, takes first place. There is a women's organization that works in connection with the congregation. The Young People's organization holds its meeting the second Sunday in each month with entertainment of different kinds. The reading club has a very good selection of Danish books. The public school has a library of English books that can

be loaned to the students. A fairly large group of gymnasts practices twice weekly under the leadership of one of the young men in the community. There is also a Mutual Fire Insurance Association and a Farmer's Union organization, baseball club, etc.

There is a large group of young people in the community. Many of them have attended one or more of the Danish Folk schools in the Northern States and a few have been on a trip to Denmark and attended a Folk High School there. Some of the young people went to the Northern states and worked for a while. Happily, after earning enough dollars, most of them returned to Danevang or the near locality to establish their homes. They were convinced that the economic condition here offers a better opportunity and a much more comfortable climate. This proves that the careful selection of the location for the Danevang Colony by the Committee was well planned and that there is good hope for the future of the colony.

Let me say in closing that, even when we live far from Denmark, our mother tongue will always be heard among us and both the adults and our youth who were born here consider ourselves both Danes and Americans. We know that if the small group of Danish people here in America can give a valuable contribution to the formation of the great American Folk Society, then it only happens by us continuing to uphold the connection with the mother country, which certainly has many excellent things to give that the American people are badly in need of.

Then once more, we are sitting over here following your actions at home. When you quarrel and struggle, we worry that you can set your opinion aside for the sake of the native country. When there is agreement for the work of Denmark's future and when new National undertaking is accomplished, glory is cast on Denmark's name and we and our children rejoice. With us who went forth from our Fatherland, there is deep within us a neverending longing for that land where our childhood is relived, as we sing with the poet O. C. Molbeck.

Danevang Christmas

The traditional Christmas program in the church will take place Saturday, December 20 beginning at 6 p.m. Following the presentation in the church, the celebration in the meeting hall will begin.

The dancing around the tree and singing of Christmas songs is a festive event dear to the hearts of all. As usual, the inner circle around the tree is made up of the youngest children and parents; the next circle is of older children and young people and the next two other circles are for any able to join in. So practice up on the words of Christmas carols, songs such as "Up on the Housetop," "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," etc. and, of course, we must be sure we teach to all the words of "Nu har vi Jul igen." (The folk in Danevang sing a "Happy Dane" version of this song from the 1890's. Today's Danes sing "Nu ' det Jul igen") Then the jolly St. Nick comes with his sacks of treats and a photo op for proud parents and grandparents.

Those able to bring a plate of sandwiches, a dip and chips, or baked cookies or coffee cake are asked to do so. The coffee hour is a special time to renew friendships with out-of-town visitors.

El Campo Christmas Mall

Volunteers from the Museum's Gift Shop will be participating in the El Campo Christmas Mall, which will be held Saturday, December 6th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, December 7th from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the El Campo Civic Center.

Our booth will feature an assortment of items, including merchandise from the museum gift shop and homemade jellies and delicacies

Recent Tours

During the month of October, the museum hosted several special groups. On September 3rd, the Gulf Coast Ministerium of the E.L.C.A. held its monthly meeting at the museum. On October 14th, a group of over 40 persons from Life Enrichment of Houston were our guests. Even after their two hour tour, the group was still busy exploring their favorite exhibits, asking questions, and browsing the gift shop. They needed to be

urged onto the bus for a short stop at the meeting house and church.

Recently, the Extension Education Club of Duetschburg held their monthly meeting at the museum. The arrangements for this group were made by Martha Kubecka. After the meeting, the group was given a museum tour by Elsie Christensen.



PHOTO by Al Jensen

Elsie Christensen welcomes the Extension Education Club of Duetschburg

It is not unusual for our faithful Elsie to get calls from San Antonio, Houston, or Austin that visitors from Denmark or elsewhere in the U.S. want to make a special trip to Danevang. The service Elsie has given in this regard has been so selfless and dependable. A BIG THANKS to her!



Photo by Debbie Scholz

Visitors from Denmark, Jorgen and Karin Holst

Memorials

We remind you that we have a program of receiving contributions in honor of, or in memory of someone. Unless the donor has a specific purpose or project, the funds will go into our Endowment Fund and the interest earned by those funds will pay for operational needs. In this way, Honorary and Memorial contributions "live on".

We offer our thanks for the following remembrances:

In Memory of:	By:
Harvey Westerholm	M/M Joe Byrd
Carl M. Lund, Sr.	Mary C. Lund
Veri Westergard	M/M Carl Westergard
Andy Thyssen	Gerda C. Stuart Ineborg A. Williams
Marius Thyssen	Bertha Brock
Alfred Jensen	M/M Al Jensen

In Honor of:	By:
Bridget and Al Jensen (on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary)	M/M Scott Howard

Volunteers

As we all know, the success of the Heritage Society has been and is based on our dedicated volunteers. In past newsletters, members of the building and grounds committee have been featured, as have museum volunteers who deal with museum record keeping, library work, care of our artifacts and other jobs too numerous to mention.

This season, we are seeking to recognize some of our faithful docents. Of course, we have a local Danevang-EI Campo cadre of folks who many times drop everything to guide a tour or a drop in visitor. Without these faithful folk, happenings at the museum just wouldn't happen!

However, in this space we want to point out the members who drive sometimes hundreds of miles to take their turn at keeping the museum

open on the regular Sunday hours. The danger in listing is that your editor runs the great risk of leaving someone out. If that happens, speak up and correct the omission. All docents are scheduled through the tireless efforts of Elsie Christensen. It is not unusual that Elsie is called upon at the last minute to find a replacement and often it is Elsie and Mickey themselves who do the job.

From Marble Falls

Ellis and Mary Ann Wind

From Austin- Sherry Green

From Alvin- Carl Wind

From Port Lavaca - Leo Westerholm

From Houston- Al and Bridget Jensen

From Seguin

Kermit and Carolyn Westerholm

From Corpus Christi- Delores Guiden

It is a bit on purpose that Delores was listed last since she is our featured volunteer this month. There are some Sundays when the museum has few, if any visitors and yet, to keep our commitment to the public to honor our schedule during these years, we must have docents on hand. Delores has committed to the last Sundays of the month this year. In addition, Delores has volunteered to be our craft instructor for the æbleskiver fest on November 29th. Delores has made dozens of the woven paper hearts, which have become a favorite item in the gift shop. With the holiday season coming, these hearts are sure to be in demand to add a Danish touch to many trees!

Here is Delores' Danevang heritage: Her grandparents were Peter and Stephanie Harton. (In Denmark, the Hartons' surname was Rasmussen; however, upon arriving in the U.S., they changed the name to Harton, a variation of a grandparent's name, Hartung.) Delores' mother, Mona, was the second born to the couple. Mona married Rudolf Bendixen in 1929. Delores was born in San Benito, but calls Corpus Christi home. Delores has used her many talents serving her church, the Cub Scouts and the Girls Scouts in some very demanding leadership roles. She has used her musical abilities, craft talents, and teaching skills to contribute to her community. Now, we too are the fortunate recipients of the time and energy of this special lady.

Great Food

The name of Susie Ibsen's new delicatening service, Great Food, says it all. Some of you may remember the lovely buffet Susie served in Danevang at the opening of the "Scandinavian Roots" exhibit. Well, now you can get such a spread catered or just get some of your favorite Danish treats for yourself.

Phone (281) 470-0867

Fax (281)470-1788

Cell (281)300-2147

E-mail: greatfood@earthlink.net

Editor Update

This quarter's newsletter is a bit more brief and a little later than expected because of the sudden and unforeseen hospitalization of editor, Al Jensen. Despite not feeling well and being in isolation due to chemotherapy for acute leukemia, Al has continued to give direction for the newsletter to family members who have stepped in to produce this edition. This issue comes to you thanks to the internet, son-in-law Doug Sheetz, daughter Bridget Jensen Howard and wife Bridget.

Cookbook

The "Danevang Community Cookbook: Recipes and Stories Compiled by Members of the Danevang Community" has been a hot selling item from the Museum Gift Shop as Elaine Wind has filled requests to send copies all over the country. The book, first published in 1985 in celebration of the community's 90th anniversary, was reprinted last year, exactly as the first edition. Some of the recipes were given in memory of the loved ones from whom they were handed down. Many of these older recipes include personal remembrances of these foods being prepared in Danevang households. Some of the recipes are newer ones that may become cherished by generations to come. Gathering around the table is how families come together, but since families tend to get spread around the country as younger ones grow into adults, there are fewer opportunities to gather together. We can still come together around food, sharing recipes across the miles. Each cookbook (including fee for mailing) is \$20. Send checks, payable to DHPS, to Elaine Wind, P.O. Box 401, Danevang, TX 77432.

Gifts and Memberships

Though our Membership Year is from June to June, people can join at anytime. Perhaps you'd like to give someone a membership into the Danish Heritage Preservation Society as a Christmas gift along with the cookbook mentioned above. It might be a great way to inform extended family about the efforts here to preserve the Danish Heritage. Dues received before February 20 will cover the current membership year: June 2003 to June 2004. Hopefully, after getting a gift membership, these folk will want to join themselves next year to become part of the growing network of support. Or, if you want to make it easier, it is possible to join for more than one year at a time. Include the names and addresses of new members and how many membership years are being paid for. Membership dues are \$10 per person per year (\$20 per family per year). Another Christmas gift you might want to consider for the family member(s) for whom the Danish Heritage Preservation Society means a lot is an extra gift to the Society in honor of that person. Send checks payable to DHPS to:

Kenny Christensen

P.O. Box 386

Danevang TX 77432

THANK YOU!

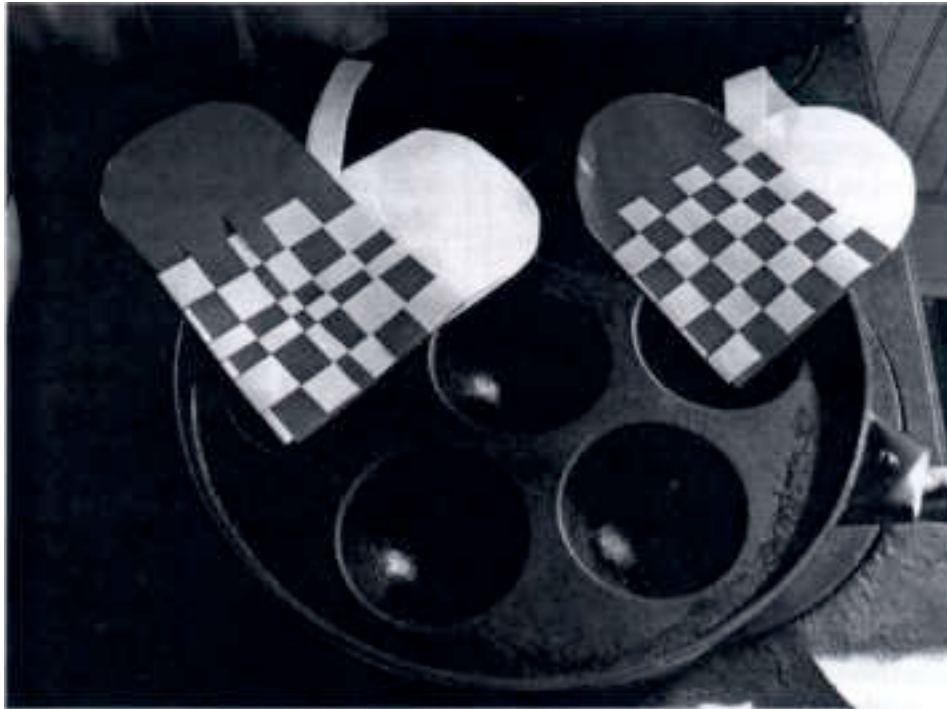


Photo by Al Jensen

**Make plans to come to the Æbleskiver Fest and Craft Workshop,
November 29, 1-4 p.m.**

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