



Fall, 2004 Newsletter

Danish Heritage Preservation Society

P.O. Box 386

Danevang, TX 77432-0386

Gift Shop News

The Museum Gift Shop is well stocked with many items in all price ranges from stocking stuffers to fine art and porcelain pieces. Suitable to be ordered for shipping to you are cookbooks, children's books, jewelry items, including Dagmar crosses. Other popular items with a Danish flair are the newly arrived Danish napkin holders and a variety of holiday napkins from Denmark, beautiful costumed dolls, a variety of Royal Copenhagen porcelain pieces, photo reproductions of scenes of Danevang and many more unique items. Come out and see or call Elaine Wind at 979-543-3332 for a verbal description. Also, you may call the Museum during operating hours, which are 1-4pm Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. The Museum is normally closed on Monday and Friday afternoons. The Museum phone number is 979-578-0808.

Christmas Mall at El Campo Civic Center

Saturday, December 4 from 10am-5pm and Sunday the 5th from 11am to 4pm, a communitywide Christmas Mall will be held in the El Campo Civic Center. Heading up the volunteers in charge of the Danevang Heritage booth are Marilyn Henderson, Ramona Lesak and Elaine Wind. Selected items from the gift shop plus bake sale items will be for sale. If you are able to donate bake sale items or homemade preserves or jellies, please call Elaine at 979-543-3332 or email irvwind@wcecn.net so she can arrange for delivery of your donation. Tak!

Æbleskiver Fest

After you have stretched your stomachs on Thanksgiving, your bellies will be ready to fill up again by Saturday, November 27 at the annual Æbleskiver Fest. These tasty treats will be sold at the Museum from 10 a.m. through normal Museum hours. Materials to make woven heart Christmas tree decorations will be available also.

Annual Christmas Program

The Annual Christmas Program and Community Christmas Tree will be held the Saturday night before Christmas, December 18th. The program in the church will begin at 6:30 p.m. followed by the traditional dancing around the tree in the Community Hall. If attendees are able to do so, a contribution of a plate of sandwiches or holiday "goodies" will be greatly appreciated. Then on Christmas Eve, the church service will be held at 4 p.m.

The version of the traditional song that the "Happy Danes" of Danevang sing while dancing around the tree is as follows:

Nu har vi Jul igen
og nu har vi Jul igen
og Julen varer ved til Paaske!
(repeat)

This translates loosely into English as:

Now we have Christmas again
O now we have Christmas again
O Christmas lasts until Easter!

In many other Danish communities, a second verse is added that says "No this is not so, No this is not so, for there must first come Lent (Fasten)."

Newsletter

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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 2007

Kenny Christensen (**Treasurer**) Danevang TX
979-543-2106
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Bridget Jensen -Houston TX 713-524-2328
Larry Jensen -Katy TX 281-391-7794
Helena Lauritsen (**Historian**)-Danevang TX
979-543-2052
Carl Wind (**Secretary**)-Alvin TX 281-331-0812

Terms Expiring June, 2006

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Marilyn Chappel- Danevang TX 979-543-4030
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James Petersen-El Campo TX 979-543-9403
Lawrence Petersen-Danevang TX 979-543-3005
Ellis Wind-Marble Falls TX 830-693-9353

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Ramona Lesak-El Campo TX 979-543-6703
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Leo Westerholm-Port Lavaca TX 361-552-4680
Irvin Wind (**Chairman /Pres.**)-Danevang TX
979-543-3332

EX OFFICIO

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

Committee Chairs:

Grounds/Maintenance	James Petersen
Building	Carl Larsen
Finance	Kenneth Christensen
Funding	Kermit Westerholm
Gift Shop	Elaine Wind
Museum	Lawrence Petersen
Publicity	Elsie Christensen

Newsletter Editors: Bridget Jensen
Bridget Jensen Howard

IN MEMORIUM

Faithful Board Member

Ellis Wind

Jan. 28, 1936 – Nov. 8, 2004

Memorial Service
2 p.m. November 20, 2004
Danevang Lutheran Church

Building Models Added To Museum

Leonard Lauritsen, native son of Danevang, has contributed to the museum exquisite models of both the original Lauritsen home and the original Danevang church, then named St. Ansgar's Lutheran Church. The detail of these models bear witness to the countless hours of meticulous work. So, from your fellow members and for all who will have a clearer vision of early Danevang because of these models, we send Leonard a hearty Thank You!



Leonard Lauritsen with his models in the display case.

Photo by Helena Lauritsen

Farm Equipment Exhibition Space Planned

Agriculture has been an important factor in the heritage of Danevang and the surrounding area. In the early years, the farmers worked the land with equipment pulled by draft animals. The years since then have produced a gradual modernization in the equipment up to the present time. The farmers now use very large implement systems pulled by tractors which produce several hundred horsepower.

Many people, especially the younger generations, have not had the opportunity to see the types of farm equipment that have been used in the past. Also, there is no single place in Wharton County and the surrounding counties where these types of equipments can be seen. The Board of Directors of the Danish Heritage Preservation Society feel that it would be beneficial to expand the scope of the current Danish Heritage Museum to include a collection of the earlier farm implements so that the younger people can understand more readily how the pioneers of Danevang and later generations of farmers had to work to produce their crops.

The Museum has been offered some items of earlier equipment and there are a few items on display at this time. However, we have been hesitant to accept more of this equipment at this time because there is no more space to display these large items in the building that we have. We also feel that it would not be proper to display this equipment on the outside because it would deteriorate rapidly in this Gulf Coast climate.

The Board of Directors has therefore elected to initiate a fund drive to enable the DHPS to build a building for housing and displaying a variety of items related to the

farming industry in the earlier days of the Danevang community and the surrounding area. A committee of three active farmers in the community has been studying the options for different types of buildings and has recommended a steel frame building with sheet-metal sides and roof. The recommended size of the building is 50 feet by 100 feet, or 5000 square feet, with a concrete floor. The anticipated cost for this type of building, including the site preparation and utilities is \$125,000.

We are currently in the process of preparing requests for grants from some charitable foundations and expect that we will be able to get some funds in this way based on the educational value of the displayed equipment to the school children in the area. However, we will also ask for contribution from the members of DHPS to cover a significant portion of the cost to show that there is a true commitment to the project.

The Board of Directors hopes that you will join us in our enthusiasm for this worthwhile endeavor. We feel that this will be a valuable asset to the community and will bring more visitors to the Museum.

Submitted by Irvin Wind, President DHPS



Grady Allen and Lawrence Petersen with 1930's era rice thresher used by Grady's father and uncle. This is the type of equipment to be housed in the planned farm equipment barn.

Writings from the Past - The Life of Hans and Sine Nygård in America

Edited from Gerda Stuart's direct translation of her grandmother Nygård writings in the Danish book – NYGÅRD SLÆGTEN – FRA ULBØLLE.

In the summer of 1885, after a month of helping at the Highschool Home in Svenborg, I went to Ulbølle to visit Marie who also worked at the Highschool Home. On this visit, (her brother?) Hans asked me to be his wife. By 1887, after two winters, we decided to be married May 22 and travel to the U.S.A. My sister Ida and her friend decided to be married the same day. It was a Sunday and there was an afternoon meeting at the church, so the congregation stayed for the wedding. When we entered the church, everyone rose and my father led the song "Alt Staar in Guds Faderhand." (All Stand in God the Father's Hand). Before we left to sail to the U.S. A., my father said, "He who began this good deed in you two, he will follow through, until our Lord Jesus Christ's Day."

After 14 days sailing, we arrived in New York, where we remained a couple of days before traveling on to San Francisco, CA. Hans had very little work and disliked town so he wrote to Pastor Madsen in Ferndale, CA and asked if there was any work there. He wrote back saying "Come on;" so on September 13, we moved to Ferndale where we received a hearty welcome. After an initial stay with the Madsens, we found a home with a Scotsman, but we soon said we could not work for him. By this time I was expecting a baby, so I went and stayed with the Madsens. Uffe was born April 15, 1888.

Hans worked several jobs until we rented a farm. Our second child, Anna, was born October 28, 1889 in our little farmhouse with the help of a neighbor while Hans had gone to have another neighbor go after the doctor. One day in the spring we had gone to visit the Madsens. The children and I stayed overnight while Hans went home to do the chores. When he came to get us, it had begun to rain. The trip home was very dangerous since the water had risen so high that rivers were overflowing. Even though we had made it home, our neighbor came over to us and we decided later in the night to drive over to another neighbor who lived on higher ground. The next morning they went to see how things were at home. The house was still there but the new shingles for the roof had sailed away and there was 2" of water inside. The hedge, which was 6-8' tall was under water. Everything was ruined. We had been so happy in our little home where everything was going good for us. Since there was hay for the cows, we continued living on the place, but we had to sell 6 calves and some hogs.

We made a hard trip to where Hans had been told he would manage one of a man's places, but there was already a manager and enough people on the place when we got there. Though Hans worked for the man, he didn't make enough for us to live on so we sold our horses and wagon. Hans went to find work in Fresno and the children and I stayed near the Madsen's who helped us all they could. Finally, Hans had earned enough money and we were able to go down there. That was a happy day when we again we able to meet. We stayed with friends in Fresno in their extra large living room. After a time, we moved out to live with an old man and here our next little girl, Margrethe, was born October 16, 1891.

We had letters from Texas that a Danish colony was in the making and we wanted to go, but didn't have the money. We had written home telling about it and they took up a collection so we could travel to Texas. Before we were to leave, we had another little boy, Hans, born Oct. 29, 1894 in Fresno, CA. We sold everything we had. Hans went first and bought 40 acres. A month later, the children and I packed and traveled by train from San Francisco to Boston, where we changed trains to head for a small town in Texas. It was such a dark night when we arrived, I could not see the hotel across the tracks where we were to spend the night before going on the next morning to El Campo where Hans was to meet us. We were in the last wagon so were far from the station and there I stood with 4 small children and all our baggage. I will always be thankful for the man who came and helped us to the hotel and went back to get our luggage. Until Hans finished building us a small house, we lived for a short time with a family who had a larger house.

The farmers had arrived early in the fall of 1894 to get their land plowed, which was impossible since the winter had been too dry. The first rain came after we arrived. A young man who had land south of Mads Andersen's was out looking for the dividing line and since he couldn't find it, decided to burn the grass. The whole prairie burned – leaving everything black and a few days later it snowed. Many cattle on the prairie died because of a lack of grass to feed on. There was a little creek running through the colony and when they went down to drink, there were too weak to get up again. What a shame.

Before we left Fresno, all but Uffe had typhoid fever. Luckily Hans got well before I got it. But while we were all sick, Hans could not work and earn any money. Doctor bills and medicine took a great deal of the money we had received from home and the trip to Danevang was expensive. So after building our little house and buying beds and stove, etc., there was nothing left to live on and there was not much work to be had. I guess we were the poorest in Danevang, but everyone was so nice to us and helped us. They first took up a collection and bought us a cow. The next day, it had a calf and 2 years later, they each had another calf. Since we didn't have a horse, the neighbors plowed 2 acres for us. Everyone helped each other and we were like one big family.

In May, we were all glad to have Pastor Frederick Grundtvig come to visit the colony. A couple of days before his arrival, the children and I were home alone as Hans was helping Chris Madsen and stayed there nights. The children and I were all in bed asleep when a terrible storm blew the house off the blocks. The blocks had come up through the floor and soon the house was full of field mice and there was glass on the floor from the broken lamp. I managed to gather the children together and covered them with a down comforter. There was only the one strong blast and soon a beautiful moonlit night. When Grundtvig arrived, he dedicated the church grounds, preached, had communion, and baptized the first little girl born there, Ingeborg Olsen. Later that year, we formed a community and meeting house and L. Henningsen came to be our preacher.

The first summer, the farmers bought a trainload of wheat. One night, Uffe was sent to the post office after our mail. The postmaster told him he'd pay him 10 cents if he would go down to 2 brothers Hansen to see if the wheat could be delivered the next day. When he came home telling me, Hans was not home, and I was not happy about him going since he was only 7 and had already walked 5 miles to and from the post office and this other trek would be just as far. I finally agreed to let him go even though it was a dark night. He came home safely, but only after he died when his wife Helga and I were talking did I find out that a snake had crawled up and wrapped around one of his legs.

Hans got work measuring land. During the summer, he worked in the hay fields so was away during the week, coming home Saturday nights. He had to walk 3 Danish miles. The man he worked for didn't have money to pay him, so he gave him a slip of paper so he could go to the store to buy us some food, which he had to carry home. Then he had to leave again on Sunday night. When there was no more work to be had, he decided to go to Galveston to look for work. He left the day before his birthday, August 25th. He stayed until Christmas. Ida was born Nov. 18, 1895.

Again we received money from Denmark to buy 2 horses and build a little barn. We had a good neighbor, Iver Wind. We helped one another many times. Mrs. Wind grew up in Uubberup and we had many of the same interests. They received "Hojksilebladet" from Denmark, which we also enjoyed reading, and we got "Fyns Tidende" from brother-in-law Peter. After Pastor Henningson left, we got a young preacher from Denmark, Rasmus Kristensen. He had visited mother before leaving and brought us many good things. Now we had another little girl, Ingeborg, born January 6, 1898. (to be continued...)

Pictorial Reflections from the 110th Anniversary Celebration



As anticipated in our last newsletter, the wonderful Matagorda Beach Seashell exhibit case is now installed in the museum. Henrietta Krumholz, who presented her lively program on Saturday October 23rd for the 110th anniversary celebration of the Danevang community, was the donor of the shells appearing in the exhibit. With the artistic abilities of Marilyn Henderson, assisted by Elaine Wind, Elsie Christensen, and Laird Engle, a most pleasing presentation has been created. The handsome case holding the work is the handiwork of Board President, Irvin Wind. Irvin also created the identification tags for the various shells.



In addition to the exhibit on the wall, Henrietta has donated beautiful shell creations, displayed in the case below the wall hanging. These items, which include candle holders and wreaths, are for sale benefiting the museum.



Patty Jensen, coordinator of the opening ceremony, together with costumed hostesses from Danevang Girl Scout Troop 765.



Veterans raising the flag.



Laird Engle as Hans Christian Andersen telling stories.

Hans Christian Andersen Birthday Bicentennial

Danes together with all lovers of classic literature around the world are participating in a year long celebration of the 200th anniversary of Hans Christian Andersen's birth. This favorite son of Denmark is being honored in symphony halls, theaters, art museums and outdoor celebrations in many lands. The website www.hca2005.com offers information about all these festivities, the work for which he is known, and the man himself.



Cover of the official brochure for the bicentenary celebration of Hans Christian Andersen.

As the Danish Capital of Texas, Danevang will also be observing Andersen's birthday bicentennial. A special exhibit honoring Hans Christian Andersen will be on display in the Museum in March and April of 2005 with a full day of activities on April 9, 2005.

A parade of depictions of some of his stories plus local groups of antique autos and tractors and much more will begin at 11 a.m. Local and visiting musicians will perform under the hospitality tent. As Andersen is best known for his fairy tales, storytellers will be telling these tales and there will also be films based on the tales shown as well. The food for sale will be the traditional all meat Danish hotdogs and Danish dessert treats. Since the Queen's birthday is on April 16th, an early toast to the queen will occur. Singing and folk dancers will add to the festivities of the day. **So be sure to mark your calendar for April 9, 2005.**



Papercut design by Hans Christian Andersen

Recent Tour Group

An especially unique group among the tours coming to the museum were the "Red Hat Ladies" from Palacios.



"Red Hat Ladies" with tour guides Elsie Christensen and Laird Engle (not in red hats).

Photo by Helena Lauritsen

FUTURE EVENTS OF INTEREST

November 27 th (10-4 p.m.)	Annual Æbleskiver Fest & Ornament Workshop
December 4 th (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.) December 5 th (11 a.m. – 4 p.m.)	El Campo Christmas Mall at the El Campo Civic Center
December 18 th 6:30 p.m.	Danevang Christmas Program & Community Christmas Tree
December 26 th 5 p.m.	Granly, MS Christmas Tree (For information: Ray Nygaard 228-588-2279)
April 9 th	Celebration of the 200 th Anniversary of Hans Christian Andersen's Birth
June 4 th	Grundlovdag (Constitution Day) Celebration
October 13 th -16 th	A major international conference entitled “Danish Culture, Past and Present: The Last Two Hundred Years,” is to be held at the Embassy Suites in Des Moines, Iowa. The theme of the conference - culture and the arts among Danish-Americans and those of Danish descent- provides an opportunity for an interesting and exciting series of events for those who will attend. Let's start making plans for a Danevang group to attend.

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