

The Voice:



Sharing the story of historic Danevang— past, present, and future.

SUMMER - FALL 2020

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ◆ **Museum is Open by Appointment Only**
- **Oct. 10 10 AM Meeting of the Board of Directors**

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Just Wait - All Will Be Well

Only three years ago we were agonizing over the disaster named Harvey. This was something you could actually see. Not a first for Danevang. As you may know, there was a terrible storm in 1945 that almost destroyed Danevang but it was not given a name. It is simply known as “the 1945 storm.” The storm hit in late August of that year and took a track across Danevang, destroying the church and many homes in the community. August 1945 recorded just over 25 inches of rain.

This August, we were struggling with an invisible disaster, CoVID—19. A

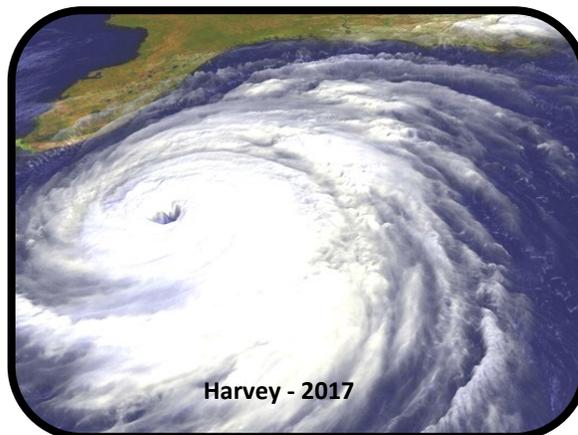
disease that caught our county and most of the world, totally unprepared. Not since the Influenza epidemic of 1918 has our country seen death and misery equal to this unknown virus. Fortunately, that virus (called the Spanish Flu) just disappeared never to return. Nevertheless, the family tragedies that resulted were much the same as we see today.

So the question is, Now What? For our organization these past six (6) months have been unparalleled in our short history. We shut the doors! Fortunately our director was able to continue working and has been carefully and

meticulously taking care of much needed cataloging and cleaning out the backlog. We were able to host one small tour group in August but are now open by appointment only. So, the question is, where do we go from here?

Ours is a resilient community and our organization reflects that passion for survival. The community continues to harvest and plant crops, attend church and take care of one another. Every effort is made to keep us all safe. The Board will set the tone for the coming months based on recommendations to the community from officials. With the help of a small grant we

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Harvey - 2017

This and That



The Danish Heritage Museum

New AC -

As we have been in our building for almost 20 years, it was expected that some of the equipment would need to be replaced. Well, recently the Board purchased a new mower and now a new AC. A sum of money was set aside for the purchase of necessary items and it was a good thing. It is anticipated another air conditioning unit will be needed in the not too distant future. We can only hope it is not soon.

Lunch and Coffee Tours – We are hoping that our tours for spring will be scheduled. When we are able to open

up please remember these special events. With seating limited, the number we can accommodate is diminished. If you have a group of 15-20 people who would enjoy a lunch and tour, please call. These tours are a major contributor to our bottom line so we intend to carry on as long as we can. Call Suzan to get an update and to schedule a group to visit.

Membership Dues – Soon You will receive a reminder of your annual membership dues which are due on January 1. As part

of the packet you are asked how you want to receive the newsletter. We encourage you to consider receiving the newsletter by email which means you see it in color. Dues are \$20 per person.

Danevang Lutheran Church Anniversary - We hope many of you were able to attend the festivities in June to celebrate the establishment of the Danevang Lutheran Church. We salute them for their many years of service to the community and for being one of our mainstays.

Stay Well - please take care of yourselves and stay well. If any of you need help that we can give, please call Suzan and she will pass on your needs. God bless all of you.

“We encourage you to consider receiving the newsletter by email...”

Interested in Sharing?

After the success of our 125th Anniversary Celebration in October of 2019, we had planned to host a new fundraising event called The Danevang Harvest Festival. Due to CoVID 19, we were forced to postpone this event until October of 2021.

Without an annual fundraiser and the cancellation of many of our luncheon tours due to the corona virus, our donations are at a considera-

bly lower level than in past years.

We are fortunate to have several anonymous donors who have offered to match any donation dollar for dollar through the end of 2020 until we reach the goal of \$5,000. We are thankful for this offer and thankful to you in advance for supporting our Museum and its programs.

So, for every \$1 you donate, we will get \$2.

Membership applications will be mailed soon and you will be able to donate when you join or renew your membership. Of course, donations from non-members are also welcome. As a nonprofit organization, we rely on donations and our few events to continue serving our heritage. Please give what you can and all will be greatly appreciated.

Thanks to Pam Pope for arranging this for us.

WANTED

New writer and editor for **THE VOICE**. All applicants should contact Michael Hansen or Suzan Berndt. A terrific opportunity to share the history of our community.

Just Wait - Continued

Will remain open and move forward. Plans for the October festival, of course, have been put on hold but there is always the possibility that when we can open up and get out with a crowd, we will celebrate together. We have weathered many storms throughout our history. Just wait - we will go on and do well.

And now a request for the future.

For almost ten (10) years, I have been privileged to write the articles and gather information for *The Voice*. It is time for someone else to take on the mantle of scribe for our organization. I will continue until January and then, it will be all yours. I thank Lydia Petersen for editing for me and being

gracious enough to make minor and major suggestions and corrections. She too will be leaving the publication. Thank you for your support for the newsletter and the organization. If you are interested in taking on the challenge, please contact Michael Hansen.

Sandra Petersen

Farming Changes in Danevang

1900 to the Present by Ralph E. Petersen

First of a Four Part Series

Farming, like much of society, has changed a great deal in the last century. Most of these occurred throughout the United States, but I am more familiar with farming around Danevang.

My grandparents moved from Denmark to Danevang in 1894. They tried to farm like they did in Denmark, but conditions were different and they had to adapt. Cotton became the cash crop instead of wheat, but

They still had to grow corn, oats and other crops for the draft animals and milk cows. Some animals like milk cows were pastured on open land around Danevang since there were no fences except on the individual farmsteads. The surrounding lands were owned by huge landowners such as Shanghi Pierce, Kountze Brothers or KO Ranch. Children from Danevang farms would drive cattle from the homestead to the open pasture

In the morning and drive them back home after school. Each farm had milk cows, hogs, chickens and perhaps a beef cow or two.

When my grandparents first settled, all farming was done by hand or draft animals like horses, mules or oxen. Many operations were done with one-row equipment because the horses could only pull so much. Some operations

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Early tractor

Farming Changes Continued- Ralph E. Petersen



Cotton Field

were done with two-row equipment, but there was always the consideration of where the horses would walk versus the crop and row pattern. The only fertilizer was loading manure from the barn and spreading it on the cropland. Hay was cut with a sickle mower and collected with a bull rake. The Museum collection includes a bull rake and a sickle mower.

The collected hay was loaded by hand on a wagon and taken to the barn, which in our case had a hay fork (like the one located over the front door of the museum) dropped to the wagon, picked up load of hay and carried it to the top of the barn which had a beam along the top. The hay was then released wherever desired.

In the 1920s and 30s, cars and tractors became available, and the need for draft animals was reduced. A trip to El Campo, 11 miles, with a horse and wagon may have tak-

en half a day. When Highway 71 was completed, the trip by car may have only been half an hour. As supplies and food were easier to acquire, the need for a farmstead with garden, fruit orchard, chicken yard, pasture for livestock and woodlot was reduced. Each farm had woodlot by the farmstead or a rented area along a creek.

In 1939, when the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) and the Wharton County Electric Cooperative first brought electricity to Danevang, much of the drudgery of living in the country was eliminated. With electricity you could have lights, heat, fans, and eventually air conditioning, pressurized water systems, and power for a farm shop or business. The Danevang Coop is the oldest in Texas and supplied every need

for the farm: seed, fuel, fertilizer, welding shop, cotton gin, grain storage and marketing. Residents of Danevang created their own telephone service, mutual insurance company and fire department.

As the need for farm animals diminished, more land could be devoted to farming, and pasture around the house could be plowed up. Most of Danevang is laid out in square miles. Improved drainage was necessary and still is. Cleaning of creeks, road ditches and field ditches is most important in flat areas, which is most of Danevang.

The first tractors were very large and heavy. They had steel wheels were hard to move because they tore up the roads and bridges and would sink in any wet spot. An excellent example is found in the museum.

Part 2 is coming in Winter Edition 2020

Obituaries

Larry Edward Wind - was born on May 20, 1956 in Wharton, Texas to Floyd Charles and Muriel Glass Wind. He was a lifelong resident of Wharton where he graduated from Wharton High School. He attended the Oklahoma Farrier School but spent the majority of his working life with Sweeney Refinery of Phillips 66. He enjoyed working with Little League, playing golf and traveling.

Larry married Sara Cochran on December 31, 1978. Their lives together began in the 1st grade. They lived their entire lives in Wharton where they raised their children and enjoyed their grandchildren.

Larry was preceded in death by his parents, and two sisters, Elizabeth Ann Wind and infant sister, Laura Wind. He is survived by his wife of 42 years, Sara Wind, daughter, Laura Starks (Stormy), son John (Sara Beth), 2 grandchildren. He is also survived by his mother-in-law, Evelyn Cochran; step-mother, Billie Winterrowd, numerous nieces and nephews.

The family asks that Memorial donations be made to The First Presbyterian Church of Wharton or the Fairmont Hospice, Richmond, TX.

Shelly Priesmeyer Nielsen - born on July 30, 1962 in El Campo. She was a dedicated wife, mother, Meme and educator. She loved taking care of her five children and was also happy to be a grandmother. She finished her bachelor's degree at the age of 42 so that she could become a classroom teacher.

She is survived by her father, Alfred Priesmeyer (Maxine); husband, Michael Nielsen; daughter, Cayla Johnson (Montray); sons, Cliff Nielsen (Kenna), Chris Nielsen, and Tyann Rheinschmidt; brother, Russell Priesmeyer (Sandy); sister, Audrey Nielsen (Mark); six grandchildren and nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her mother, Rebecca Priesmeyer Hermansen.

Funeral services were held at First Baptist Church of El Campo. Memorial donations may be made to First Baptist Church of El Campo or the Ricebird Booster Club.

Alfred Wind - was born on September 18, 1928 in Danevang to Lars and Dora (Harton) Wind. He was a farmer, a Korean War veteran (Air Force), a member of the Danevang Co-op Board and a member of the American Legion. His favorite pastime was playing dominoes.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Joyce, and brother, Ellis Wind. He is survived by his daughter, Debbie Cooper (Mike); son, Ronnie (Joy); brothers, Irvin (Elaine), Carl Lester (Jassy), Harold (Claire); sister-in-law, Mary Ann Wind; and five grandchildren.

A private graveside service will be held at a later day. Burial will be at the Danevang Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Danish Heritage Preservation Society (Danish Heritage Museum) in Danevang.



Obituaries

Virginia (Ginny) Andersen Hall— was born to Hans T. and Anna Andersen in Danevang on November 25, 1926, She passed away on June 23, 2020 surrounded by her loving family. Ginny loved sewing, traveling, gardening, baking and decorating for all holidays. She was especially proud of the Danish heritage and passed the tradition to the younger generations. She was a member of the Masonic Eastern Star and Mother Advisor for the masonic Rainbow Girls. She was retired from Texas International Airlines' marketing department.

She is survived by her husband of 71 years, Harry; daughters Debra Michalcik and Terry Jackson (Craig). She had five grandchildren and six greatgrandchildren. She is also survived by her brothers, Kenneth Andersen and Roger Andersen (Betty), her in-laws and numerous nieces and nephews.

A very special thank you to Juana Rodriguez and Maritza Catarino and the others who served as caregivers for both Ginny and Harry.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her honor to Cure Alzheimer's Fund.

Linda Laura Brodsgaard Shelton - passed away on July 4, 2020 in Victoria, TX. Linda was born in El Campo, TX on December 11, 1941 to Johnny and Helena Berndt Brodsgaard. She was raised in Danevang by Helena and her second husband, Leonard Lauritsen.

Linda graduated from El Campo High School and then attended the Massey Business School and the University of Texas in Austin. She was successful in business and retired from the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston as the Development Director of the Medical Center. She loved gardening and her pets, especially her cats.

She was preceded in

death by her parents and husband, Clough Shelton III.

Linda is survived by her sons, Eli Ofenstein (Jennifer) and Archie Ofenstein (Caroline) and three grandchildren. She is also survived by her sister, Carolyn Lauritsen Mitchell, brothers, Paul Brodsgaard (Bobbie) and Mark Lauritsen (Janet) and several nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service will be held at a later date with interment at the Danevang Lutheran Cemetery.

Memorials can be made to the Danish Heritage Preservation Society; the Danevang Lutheran Church; the Danevang Lutheran Cemetery; PBS, or a charity of your choice.



Donations July 15 - October 1

Donations to the General Fund

Maty Ann Wind Charles & Marie C. Poage Carol Christensen Patricia Bruecher

Donations to the General Fund in Honor of

Jay Kristiansen In Honor of Molly Ramirez, Mary Ramirez
Sandra Petersen

Kerry & Mary Koehler In Honor of Carolyn Westerholm

Memorial Donations to the Endowment Fund

Jay Kristensen In memory of Al Wind

Jay Kristensen In memory of Marilyn Chappell

Mary Ann Wind In memory of Alfred Wind

Mary Ann Wind In memory of Larry Wind

Glenn &

Susan Nohavitza In memory of Alfred Wind

Carolyn Westerholm In memory of Helena Lauritsen

Ray & Gay Clark In memory of Alfred Wind

Judy Tines In memory of Virginia A. Hall

Myrna Hansen In memory of Linda Shelton

LaVerne Harton In memory of Alfred Wind

Paul &

Mary Valigura In memory of the Longwood
Family

Jim & Jennifer Harton In memory of Alfred Wind

Jim & Jennifer Harton In memory of Larry Wind

Country Living Rentals In memory of Olaf & Lilly
Hansen

William & Jane Hanna In memory of Linda Shelton

Memorial Donations to the General Fund

Michael Barosh In memory of Alfred Wind

Paul & Tim Cerny In memory of Alfred Wind

Kevin & Dunae Stehling In memory of Alfred Wind

Ronnie & Joy Wind In memory of Alfred Wind

Natalie Hansen In memory of Marilyn Chappell

Sara Wind In memory of Alfred Wind

Michael R. Hansen In memory of Alfred Wind

Country Living Rentals In memory of Joyce &
Tony Danna

Michael R. Hansen In memory of Raymond
Mauch

Mike & Suzanne Stanfield In memory of Olaf & Lilly
Hansen

Corinna Harton In memory of Ernest Harton

DANES AROUND the USA

As we think of our Danish heritage, please remember our fellow Danes in Wisconsin who have lost so much to riots and looters.

The Danish Brotherhood Lodge in Kenosha, Wisconsin, was torched on August 24, 2020.

The organization was established in 1892 and has served as a gathering place for events such as weddings.

Please pray for everyone effected by these lawless acts and that all will return to normal or even better. Our hearts go out to all who are suffering.

The Danish Heritage Preservation Society
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**The Danish Heritage Preservation Society
Board of Directors**

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Bridget Jensen Howard..... Member
Harold Christensen.....Member
Keith Bram.....Member

Museum Hours: Tuesday-Sunday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Closed Mondays and Holidays

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Published by The Danish Heritage Preservation Society

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