

The Voice:



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

WINTER 2021

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ◆ January 23- Meeting of the Board of Director
- February 13 - Annual Membership Meeting 11 AM

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Living in Danevang - Joyce Petersen's Perspective

The following unedited vignettes were found in an Arnold Petersen file while "cleaning out" these past few weeks. Interesting thoughts. Joyce was married to Earl Petersen and a long time employee of the COOP. These were just thoughts she shared.

Danish Cooking - A common saying in Danevang was "every good Danish recipe begins with 'take a pound of butter'."

Grow Cotton?? - The first settlers to come to Danevang were farmers. When they prepared to plant their crops, their American neighbors tried to tell them how to grow cotton. The Danes told them they did not plan to grow cotton. They were going to farm like they did in Denmark. They didn't grow any cotton there. It didn't take long for them (farmers) to see that

cotton was where the money was, so they went begging to their American neighbors to show them how to grow cotton.

Red Barns - In the early 1940s every farmstead had a red barn trimmed in white. After a time my curiosity got the better of me and I asked someone why they are all alike. This is what they told me.

Germany over ran the southern part of Denmark. After it came under German control the Danes were not allowed to display their national colors which were red and white. Many of the Danes who came to Danevang were from that section of Denmark. They didn't like liv-



ing under German rule so they came to America. One of the men who had lived in that section of Denmark had served in the Kaiser's personal guard. All the men the Kaiser chose for that duty had to be at least six feet tall. Like this man, others came to America to avoid serving in the German army.

Tagged "To Danevang" - A young couple in Denmark was planning to be married and wanted to come to America but they didn't have enough money to pay passage for both. They decided to be married in Denmark and the man would come to America and when he had saved enough money he would send for his bride. When the money arrived, another problem arose. The bride could speak no English. She was "tagged" to come to Danevang, Texas.

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This and That



No News—As we move into 2021 we find ourselves with no specific plans for the coming months. The Board will meet on January 23 so you can expect activities to ramp up. If you are interested and willing

The Danish Heritage to serve on our Board, please contact Ronnie Wind, rkclwind@yahoo.com. We may need one or two but not sure at this time.

We look forward to the pandemic slowing down which will allow us to get back to regular business—lunch tours, open for visitors and more. Our General Membership meeting is scheduled for February 13 at 11 a.m, Lunch and Coffee Tours – We

are hoping that our tours for summer and fall soon will be scheduled. We do have a lunch tour scheduled for January 27 but no more at this time. If you can help, please let Suzan know.

Stay Well - please take care of yourselves and your family. 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.

Stay Well - please take care of yourselves and your family.

Interested in Sharing? Asking again

Sharing Information—With the publication of this edition of *The Voice*, my tenure as writer will come to an end. It has been a true learning experience and as a social science major, I loved it. History is my favorite. Now we will have a new primary writer/editor, Kathi Jensen. She is ready to jump in to this world of Danevang and Danes here and across the country. Since 2011 the articles were based on documents in the museum's archives, personal research and interviews, occasional guest writers, information from our friends at various Danish groups throughout Texas and the U.S. to list a few.

Now, Kathi will be seeking not only historical articles but new sources to share with you. If you have interest in writing or in sharing written material with her, I am sure she will be grateful. If you are willing to be interviewed about some aspect of the organizations' heritage, it would be well received. With our technology perhaps a Zoom interview could be arranged.

Sharing Financial Resources—While the organization has been blessed with donations through this dark period, without the income from lunch tours, gift shop sales and special events, DHPS still runs close to a deficit. Remember

DHPS on special occasions and possibly as a recommendation for memorials when a loved one passes away. Your money always is used for the benefit of the organization and its goals.

Sharing Family History—We always need more history of your families and the community. As you continue to “clean out” while staying at home, you may find historical items that will be useful for the museum. If you have a question, call Suzan. In some cases the item may be a duplicate of something already in the archive, but often it is a true historical gem.

Items donated become the property of the museum.

Farming Changes in Danevang

1900 to the Present by Ralph E. Petersen

Second of a 4 Part Series

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.

Early tractors did not have much horsepower. For example, by 1940, 15 HP was typical. By 1960, 80 HP was normal. But today, tractors of up to 500 HP could raise a disc or shredder on wheels. Most of the 12-row equipment was mounted on a folding bar. These bars were 6 rows in the center and had vertically folding wings on each side that were 3 rows each. About 1950 tractors were able to work 4 rows at a time. By 1960 capacity had grown to 6 rows, and by 1970, 8 rows, and by 1990 they could work 12 rows.

Early tractors did not have hydraulic pumps, so the implements had to be raised by hand with a set of

levers. As equipment got wider and heavier, a hydraulic hitch on the tractor could lift it or a hydraulic cylinder could raise a disc or shredder on wheels. Most of the 12-row equipment was mounted on a folding bar.

Farm equipment today is more capable and efficient, but it is also more expensive. For example, a new 400 HP tractor is over \$350,000, a new combine costs over \$350,000, a corn header \$50,000, a 6-row cotton picker over \$250,000, a self-propelled sprayer over \$350,000 and a 6-row cotton picker that makes round bales over \$750,000. While costly, a 300 HP tractor can pull a 40-foot disc or a 60-foot planter and has a GPS system which lets it steer itself along programmable lines within 1 inch tolerance. The tractor also has many sensors to alert the operator of a problem and can self-diagnose most of them. With the GPS, new rows can be made at any time, even at

at night. Some farmers are trying limited tillage or no-till, but they don't make a crop every years. This may be the future since costs are reduced and we now have crop insurance for those years when you don't make a crop.

Some farmers have farmed for 60 years and made a crop every year. Organic crops are now being tried (corn, cotton, soybeans and rice) but most of these crops yield so little they are not harvested or the quality is so bad, it is not sellable.

Insect control started with the farmer walking or riding a horse through the field shaking a sack of insecticide on the crop. Application methods went from a 4-row duster to a 12-row sprayer to a 30-row self-propelled sprayer. Over the years, some insects became so hard to control that certain crops were abandoned in that area. For example, boll weevils prevented cotton from being grown

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Early tractor

Farming Changes Continued- Ralph E. Petersen



Cotton Field

in Tennessee. To control boll weevils, very harsh poisons (Guthion or Methyl parathion) were applied every 3 days. These required 3 automatic applications in the spring to break up the breeding cycle. Hopefully, you could then wait a few weeks before you started spraying for bollworm or tobacco budworms, because once you started again, you sprayed until harvest.

Boll weevil eradication areas were established, and after much expense and frustration, the Danevang area is now weevil free. We are still paying for the program but are seeing benefits of less spraying and the possibility of a top crop, perhaps as much a ½ bale per acre. Bollworms and budworms became increasingly hard to control due to resistance to insecticides. Even the most toxic poisons would not give satisfactory control. A whiff of the spray mix might make you dizzy. Aerial applicators had to

be tested periodically for non-reversible toxic buildup. Some parts of Mexico quit cotton farming due to worm resistance. Pest management became the new procedure. You tried to not use any insecticide that would kill beneficial insects and let the beneficials keep the bollworm in check. This was partially effective but very complex and hard to do. Spraying for boll weevils had to be incorporated into the program. In the mid 1960's entomologists noticed a fungus (virus) that killed some of the bollworms. Some of the affected worms were gathered, mixed up in solution and sprayed with some results. After some years of development, a larvicide was made with the bacteria (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) or BT. This larvicide was effective on young worms at low populations. Later with genetic modification (GMO) the BT was incorporated into the cottonseed and a resistant cotton was developed. These changes

(weevil eradication and GMO insect control) reduced the use of toxic poisons and reduced the exposure to these chemicals to farmers, farm workers and the general public.

Weed control was another big problem. Hand weeding with a hoe was the method early settlers used. Soon this was complemented by a cultivator. Weeds continued to be a problem as hand labor became hard to get. Many things were tried such as spraying oil (varsol) under the cotton. This could only be done when the cotton stems were waxy and not cracked. Pre-emerge chemicals could be sprayed behind the planter but normally needed a rain to be effective. Post-emerge chemicals had to be sprayed under the cotton since they would burn any leaves they touched. Other post-emerge chemicals could be sprayed over the crop but were not effective on both weeds and grass.

Part 3 in the Spring edition

Living in Danevang - Continued - Joyce Petersen



The Immigrations Officers didn't know where Danevang was and they could not communicate with the woman, so they sent her to California. The railroad company had to bring her back to El Campo, Texas. When she was put off the train in El Campo, the station agent had to find someone who could talk to her to find out where she belonged. She was eventually reunited with her husband in Danevang. What faith and courage!

Petersen—a Common Danish Name - In the 1940s if you were at the Coop, the first house to the west was occupied by the Peter C. Petersen family, the first house to the north was the Jens Peter Petersen home. The first house to the east was the Peter J. Petersen home. South, but farther away was the home of the Petersen Brothers, Peter and John. None of these were related except the two brothers, who lived together.

Citizenship— There was a couple in Danevang who

thought they were citizens until they applied for social security and were told they were not citizens. The man had come to American with his parents as a child and he thought his father had naturalized the family. His wife thought she became a citizen when she married a citizen which was the law at that time. They learned the father had applied for citizenship but had not followed through and completed the process of himself and it would be easier for the woman as a wife of a citizen. They asked the man what he had done while thinking he was a citizen that would have otherwise been denied him as an alien. He had voted and had been elected and served as a school trustee. They both became citizens.

The Vanishing Bridegroom - In the early days of the community a young man wandered into the community, got a job and stayed. He

courted one of the young ladies and they were married in a home wedding. After refreshments were served, the men all went outside, the ladies stayed inside the house. After some time someone asked where the bridegroom was? They looked everywhere and he was not to be found. He was never seen or heard of since.

Stowaway - A family in the northern part of the U.S decided to move to Danevang. They planned to ship everything— household goods and animals - by rail freight. A friend of the family asked if he could stowaway in the freight car. They came to an agreement that the friend could stowaway if he would help build a house for the family when they reached Danevang.

After the house was built, the stowaway wanted to find a piece of land for himself. As he walked over the land, he carried a spade so that he could dig down to examine the soil. *There are a few more tales I will share with Kathi.*

Donations Continued

In Remembrance (continued)

Brett Comer	In memory of Harold Osterlund
Carl L. Wind	In memory of Ellis Wind & Al Wind
Jeanne D. Nielsen	In memory of Julius & Stephanie Swendsen
Jeanne & James Sralla	In memory of Jamie Sralla
Jim L. & Carole Harton	In memory of Otto & Opal Harton
Marilyn & Phil Richman	In memory of The Berndt & Thaysen Families
Ralph Petersen	In memory of Lawrence Petersen, Louise & Verner Petersen

Donations to the Endowment Fund

Country Living Rentals	In memory of J. Bruce Hansen
Country Living Rentals	In memory of Joyce & Tony Danna
Gary Petersen	General Endowment
William B. Hansen	General Endowment
Mary & Kerry Koehler	In memory of Kermit Westerholm
Denise Flagg	General Endowment
Carol & Linda Andersen	In memory of Carl M. Andersen
B. David Rose	In memory of Laura Larsen Rose

In Honor of

Mary & Kerry Koehler	In honor of Carolyn Westerholm
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Sponsorship Donations

Cerny Brothers Farm	Wenglar Construction
South Texas Land & Cattle Company	Ekstrom Farms
Gloria Petersen	Rice Farmers Coop
United Ag. Coop	First Financial Band
J 4 Fencing & Services	Ralph Petersen
Michael Hansen	

Donations - November 1 - December 31

Donations to the General Fund

Kim & Gary Gardell Kai G. & Elisabeth Nirell Harold & Rhonda Atchetee Bridget Jensen
Kenneth & Anita Christensen Cynthia Priesmeyer Gary Petersen Kenneth Nygard

In Remembrance

Beverly Burmeier	In memory of Myrtle Hansen Waldman
Corinna Harton	In memory of Abelone Harton Family
4 Cedars Farm (Sandra Petersen & Donald Petersen)	In memory of Al Wind
Jimmi & Virginia Barosh	In memory of Al Wind
Mary Frances Gerberman	In memory of Harold & Eda Hermansen
Laurance Jensen	In memory of Lana Clark Jensen
Rev. Stephen & Theresa Kelly	In memory of Ole Nielsen, Nels H. Nelsen, David H Nelsen & Ruth Nielsen Kelly
Rev. Stephen & Theresa Kelly	In memory of Buster & Kathryn Schaer
Bent & Walta Ocker	In memory of Al Jensen
Sarah & Mark Hajovsky	In memory of Verner Harton
Laura Mergenhagen	In memory of Soren (Sam) and Kristine Brodsgaard
Sonya & Patrick Stephens	In memory of Clara Juhl Stephens
Carolyn Alford	In memory of Lawrence E. Harton
Norman Thaysen	In memory of Carl & Marie Thaysen
Corinna Harton	In memory of Lawrence Harton
J. Harry & Marcia Westerholm	In memory of Jenna Westerholm
Carol & Gerald Richards	In memory of Ethel Jensen Richards, Bessie Lauritsen Jensen & Helena Lauritsen
Myrna Hansen	In memory of Michael Brodsgaard
Robert Martin Christensen	In memory of Martin J. Christiansen
Donna Simmer	In memory of Rev. & Mrs. Ronald Jespersen
Corie Pope	In memory of Lawrence Petersen
Paul & Kathi Jensen	In memory of Alfred F. & Ruby E. Jensen
Kristine Lewis	In memory of Doris Andersen Gray
Sandra Petersen	In memory of Elwin Petersen
Jay Kristiansen	In memory of Michael Brodsgaard & Helena Lauritsen

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

Closed Mondays and Holidays

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