

# The Voice:



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

SPRING 2022

## President's Report

*Michael Hansen*

In this edition of **The Voice**, I will share comments I made at our recent annual membership meeting. Because we have such great members on the Board of Directors and a wonderful, supportive membership, our organization remains quite healthy. For the second year, we had to cancel our main fundraising event. We made a special appeal to members and sponsors to continue financial support, and the results were overwhelming -- our income exceeded our expenses. A BIG thank you to all who have been so generous during these very frustrating times. Please view the list of our sponsors on page 5.



It is good that our income exceeded expenses because we need some significant repairs to the Pioneer House. Wood is rotting, primarily on and around windows. Finding capable, available, and affordable craftspeople is challenging, especially when the work is on a house that is more than 120 years old. We also need to repair the sidewalk and steps leading up to the house. The Pioneer House is a wonderful asset and a favorite with our visitors, so it is worth our efforts to keep it presentable. We also have some much-needed maintenance in the main museum building.

We have increased the use of Facebook and Instagram to keep members and the community informed. Please follow us on these platforms.

We are very active in hosting tours these days. We were excited to have groups from the El Campo Memorial Hospital TREK club and First Baptist of El

Campo SAAC (senior adults activities committee). We were also glad to host a Wharton County Electric Coop board meeting since they are one of our faithful sponsors. I really enjoy hosting locals who may have driven by our museum but have never actually visited. We have also welcomed several groups from the greater Houston area and have several more scheduled. We love hosting our lunch tours and sharing the history of Danevang.

To prepare for additional tours, we recently had a Frikadeller (Danish meatballs) work day where we made about 1,600 meatballs. It was a lot of work, but it was also a great day of fellowship for the volunteers.

I am grateful for our very active Board that takes a hands-on approach to host tours, to create or rearrange museum displays -- and a special shout-out to those who labor in the heat and humidity to keep our buildings and grounds maintained. Each Board member uses unique strengths and skills to keep DHPS running effectively. **THANK YOU** – we couldn't do it without you!

I would like to note our appreciation of the Danevang Lutheran Church and the Danevang Cemetery Association. Working cooperatively with these organizations enhances our ability to promote Danevang and its rich history.

We do expect to host the inaugural **Danevang Harvest Festival** on October 22. Please plan to come for lunch, live music and other activities. We hope to see you again soon!

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### 2022 Lifetime Members of the DHPS

Dale Atchetee	Paul Jensen	Dennis Petersen
Harold Christensen	Peter Jensen	Gerald Richards
Jim Harton	Cheryl Lucas	David Rose
Kathi Jensen	Laurie Martin	



left to right: *Museum Director Suzan Berndt and Board Member Ronnie Wind* by the updated Christmas plate display. Ronnie cleaned the case while *Joy Wind and Suzan* cleaned the plates; select plates and other Danish porcelain items can be purchased in the Museum gift shop.

## Christmas Plates Provide Window Into Denmark's Culture and History

Christmas past and present in Denmark — horse-drawn sleighs carrying families to church, candles in frosty windows, skaters on an icy pond.

Very few have experienced those scenes firsthand, but one display in the Museum can transport you there.

The Museum's impressive and complete display of Danish Christmas plates began with a generous donation from **Jette Buhl Smith** and **Homer Smith** of their collection which included the first plate produced in 1895 through the year 2000. The Museum has continued to add to the collection and offers a number of the collectible plates for sale in the gift shop.

The first annual plate was produced by Bing & Grøndahl in 1895, followed by Royal Copenhagen in 1908. In 1987, Bing & Grøndahl merged with its primary competitor, the Royal Porcelain Factory, under the name Royal Copenhagen.

According to the book *Bing & Grøndahl Christmas Plates: The First 100 Years\**, the custom of making and collecting Christmas plates began long ago when wealthy Europeans gave their servants plates of fruit, cookies, and candies at Christmas time. Recipients saved the plates and began to display and even trade them.

Today's blue-and-white plates are produced using a special technique known as Danish underglaze.

An artist's drawing is meticulously copied to a plastic mold from which the plates are produced. Each plate is painted individually with a blue underglaze after which it is glazed and fired. The plates carry distinctive marks on the back: three blue waves, the royal crown, and a painter's mark. These are the company's symbols of authenticity, the royal connection and the mark of handcraftmanship. The mold for each year's plate is discontinued after Christmas Eve.

Here's how the Royal Copenhagen company describes the themes of the plates: "Throughout the years, Royal Copenhagen collectibles have told tales about war and peace, love and unforgettable moments. Like the little girl feeding swans by the lakes in Copenhagen. Or the kneeling angel from 1945, marking the end of World War II. Each plate ... tells a story..."

Danevang native **Irvin Wind** built the wooden display case for the Museum's collection. This year, it had reached capacity, so Museum Director **Suzan Berndt** and Board Member **Ronnie Wind** (with **Joy Wind**) "updated" it — they removed the plates and cleaned each of them. Then Ronnie moved the hangers a bit closer together, providing room for several decades or so of new plates.

\*Owen, Pat. *Bing & Grøndahl Christmas Plates: The First Hundred Years*. 1995: Landfall Press.

## Christmas with Danevang Lutheran Church



DHPS Board members helped the Danevang Lutheran Church decorate for Christmas -- and later joined in dancing around the tree festivities! (left) Jericho Narofsky had a special moment with Santa (who bears a striking resemblance to DHPS Board President Michael Hansen). Jericho's grandmother is Board member Laurie Petersen Martin. (right) Cason Hansen (Board member Natalie Hansen's grandson) helped decorate the tree.

## Preparing for lunch tours



The main course for Museum lunch tours is Danish meatballs. Volunteers recently made a huge batch -- (clockwise from left) (1) Carol and El Campo Mayor Chris Barbee at the deep fryer with Michael Hansen preparing a tray; (2) Natalie Hansen, Denise Flagg, Carol Barbee, Cynthia Priesmeyer and Jay Kristiansen rolling meatballs; (3) Cynthia Priesmeyer and Michael Hansen promoted tours to the Museum at a recent expo for tour guides.



## Annual meeting February 12, 2022



Treasurer Pam Pope had good news for the membership at this year's annual meeting.

# Early Farm Tools

by Paul A. Jensen



This hand-powered seed planter is on the equipment porch in the Museum. (the left handle is missing)



This one-row planter was yoked to a horse or mule.



The Museum's double-row cultivator (minus its seat).

Early Danevang farmers needed the whole family working long hours on a small (50 -100 acre) plot to survive. The Museum houses many examples of mechanical tools used to help with these tasks including plows, tractors, mechanical planting rigs pulled behind animals, water pumps and harvesting gear.

**Plowing Rows.** Turning the soil to make rows was a manual process using mules or horses. It required strength to control the path of a plow behind a tired animal who was probably complaining.

**Planting Seeds.** Seed planting initially involved poking a hole, dropping in a seed or two, and pushing the soil down. If a little rain arrived fairly soon, that was great. To speed things up, farmers started using planters that inject seeds from a can by gears driven by the wheel at the front. Two small blades at the rear covered the seed with dirt as it moved along.

The one-row planter was pulled by a horse or mule. (The seed hopper and the seat are missing in the example shown). The big blade in front removed some dirt from the top of the row to get down to the moist soil below. The seed hopper dropped seeds at predetermined intervals onto the soil. The small sweeps at the rear put some dirt back to cover the seeds. Often farmers pulled a weighted roller behind the planter to slightly pack the soil over the seeds.

**Weed Control.** Weeds compete with the crop for light, moisture, and nutrients, but chopping them with a hoe is slow labor. To automate the process, the cultivator was developed. It consists of a wheeled structure holding blades that cut through the soil and weeds at the edge of the row, leaving the desired crop at the top of the row, which requires careful driving and control. One developer of the cultivator was **Iver Wind**, grandfather of DHPS member **Irvin Wind**. He called his cultivator "The Weeder".

The Museum has several examples of cultivators. The single-row cultivator has a yoke for the pulling animal and spikes that go into the soil to cut weeds. The two-row cultivator, pulled by a team of horses or mules, had some minor steering capability so the operator could keep it centered on the rows in case the team strayed. (The seat is missing from this unit and many others because it became a fad to make them into chairs.) The farmer could adjust blades and then steer carefully to ensure that they did not cut into the crop.

*to be continued*



## New Donations — 10/21/22 - 02/22/22

People remembered or honored are in *italics* and donors in **bold**.

*Joyce & Tony Danna* by **Country Living**. *The Longwood Family* by **Paul & Mary Valigura**. *Hans & Emilie Nelsen* by **Karen & Nicolaas Nelsen**. *Christian Anderson Nygaard* by **Fred Nygard**. *Bill & Esther Harton* by **Alan & Karen Hall**. *Carl M. Anderson* by **Carl & Linda Andersen**. *Annette Waldman* by **Beverly Burmeier**. *Hans & Ann Andersen Family* by **Roger & Betty Andersen**. *Laurits & Abalone Wind Family* by **Jim & Jennifer Harton**. *Al Jensen* by **Bridget Jensen & Scott Howard**. *Lana Jo Jensen* by **Laurance Jensen**.

*Myrtle Waldman* by **Beverly Burmeier**. *Merle & Virginia Longwood* by **Patsy & Kirby Waldrop**, **Bob Mortensen**, **Stephen Schmelling**. *Ruth Nelsen Kelly* by **Rev. Stephen & Theresa Kelly**. *Gil & Suzy Nelsen* by **Karen & Nicolaas Nelsen**, **Ann Starup**, **Ellwood & Dot Hermansen**, **Kai & Elisabeth Nirell**, **Dorman Michaelsen**, **Paul & Bobbi Brodsgaard**, **Danna Insurance**.

*Ellen & Jacob Ravn* by **Kirsten Ravn Nelson**. *Ane Berndt Gardell* by **Gary & Kim Gardell**. *Alma Harton Haynes* by **Gaylon Haynes**. *Sam & Kristine Brodsgaard* by **Ric & Laura Mergenhagen**. *Arnold & Margaret Juhl* by **Darleen Miksik**.

*H.J. Berndt Descendants* by **Dale Atchetee**. *Mads Andersen Family* by **Kristine Lewis, Leroy & Billie Jean Bram**. *Alfred F. & Ruby Earle Jensen* by **Paul & Kathi Jensen**. *Al Jensen* by **Walta & Brent Ocker, Curtis & Frances Reece**. *Ejolf & Marjorie Wind* by **Dennis & Crystal Wind, Jeanne D. Nielsen**. *Laura Larsen Rose* by **David B. Rose, Linda & Dennis Harton**. *Ingaborg Berndt Atchetee* by **Valerie Leger**. *Carl & Marie Thaysen* by **Marilyn & Phil Richman, Norman Thaysen, Ole Galsgaard**. *Bill & Esther Harton & Virgil Harton* by **Alan Harton & Karen Hall**. *Eddie & Hilda Petersen* by **Dennis W. & Beverly Petersen**.

*Harold E. Wolf* by **Barbara Wolf Trotter, Patricia Bruecher, David Melanson**. *Marieane Berndt Christensen* by **Gerald & Myrna Christensen**. *James Hansen Sralla* by **James & Jeanne Sralla**. *Hans, Anna, Dores, Virginia Loraine, & Karyl Andersen, and Ed Gray* by **Kenneth Andersen**. *Dorothy & Albert Westergaard* by **Adele Westergaard**. *Jack & Lois Hansen* by **Chris & Carol Barbee, Lis & Ronald Grout**. *Adolph & Mary Andersen* by **Judy El Tines**.

*"Our Family"* by **Ann & Doyle Schaer**. *Rev. Ronald & Delores Jespersen* by **Deana Christiansen**. *Lyle L. Hansen* by **Pamela & Blayne Hansen-Henton, Dr. John & Cecelia Bell, Jay Kristiansen, J. Harry & Marcia Westerholm**. *Bill & Esther and Virgil Harton* by **Ramona & Robert Lesak, Dorothy Waldman**. *Myrtle Waldman* by **Beverly Brumeier**. *Harold & Eda (Nielsen) Hermansen* by **Mary Frances Gerberman**. *Mr. & Mrs. Leo Westerholm* by **Sheila Westerholm Smith, Poul & April Hornsleth, United Ag, Lisa McGaugh, Duby & Loran Baxter, Dean & Amy Hansen, Triska Funeral Home, Gary Petersen**. *Mr. & Mrs. Enor L. Hermansen (Ruth)* by **Julie & Jim Turner**. *Melvin & Majorie Hansen* by **Dennis Hansen, Cynthia Priesmeyer, Jack & Darleen Christiansen, Ronnie & Joy Wind**. *Al Jensen* by **Brendan & Martha Gau**. *Hans & Ann Andersen Family* by **Roger & Betty A. Andersen**. *Elwin Petersen* by **Sandra Petersen, Doyle & Ann Schaer, Carlene & Paul Jensen, Keith & Cherie Bram**.

*Magnus Frederik Hansen* by **Russell & Sarah Neisig, Bridget Jensen & Scott Howard**. *Harold Wind, Joan Karasek and Margaret Bastic* by **Mary Ann Wind**. *Harold Wind, Alfred Wind, Ellis Wind, Joyce & Tony Danna & J. Bruce Hansen* by **Irvin & Elaine Wind**. *Dagmar Thyssen Donnelly Ricketts* by **Linda Donnelly**. *Harold J. Wind* by **Claire Wind**.

**Weldon Charles Hickey** 01/29/1946 - 12/02/2021

Weldon Charles Hickey, 75, died December 2 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Weldon was born January 29, 1946, in Harlingen to Claud Hickey and Astrid Hansen Hickey.

Weldon grew up in Bay City and graduated from Bay City High School in 1964. He held undergraduate degrees from Sharon County Jr. College and Southwest Texas State University. He held a master's in business education from the University of North Texas. He was a faculty member of College of the Mainland in Alvin, and one of the founding faculty members of Austin Community College, where he served as coordinator for adult vocational education.

He was an avid square dancer for more than 40 years. After moving to Houston in 1991, he devoted many hours to raising money for various LGBT charities. In 2005, he was elected by the Harris County LGBT community as male grand marshal for the Houston gay pride parade. He was an early member of the Classic Chassis Car Club, a longtime member of the Miss Camp America foundation, and was chosen Queen Olympus 29 of the Krewe of Olympus Texas Inc. and Royalty II of the Mystic Society of Isis & Osiris, Inc. Collectively, these organizations raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for HIV-related causes during the years he was a member. He was happiest when he was doing work that benefited and brought joy to other people, working for Legacy Community Health centers, Maranatha Fellowship, and Bering United Church of Christ. Along the way, he made many friends of all colors, shapes, and sizes that remember his humor, kindness, thoughtfulness, and sage advice. Once his husband Sands retired, they enjoyed traveling the U.S. in their RV with their best women Annie Couch and Marianne Huerter. He loved being Uncle Weldon to Marianne's nieces and nephews. Three years ago, they bought Weldon's forever home on Lake Livingston, and just a year ago, they were joined by a new love, an orphan German Shepherd named Gilley.

Weldon was preceded in death by his parents and sister, Gevonna Hickey Frnka. He is survived by his husband of 44 years, Sands Littlefield Stiefer; his former wife, Ruth Ann Petroskey Wilson; nephews, Chaim Elijah, Ricky Frnka, Randy Frnka; niece, Vicki Frnka Hensley, and many friends and family who love him.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the "There's No Place Like Home" senior living campaign of the Montrose Center, or to the Alzheimer's Association, are requested.

**Dennis Drew Harton** 12/17/1941 - 12/04/2021

Dennis Drew Harton, Spartansburg, SC, passed away at age 79 from complications of Parkinson's disease. He was a much loved husband, father, grandfather, friend, and longtime member of St. John's Lutheran Church.

Dennis was born in El Campo on December 17, 1941, to the late Heinede Thyssen and Einer Christian Harton, both of whom were Danish immigrants. He grew up in Danevang. In 1966, he moved to Spartanburg while working for cotton broker and merchandiser Goedecke. He met his future wife, Linda, on a blind date in 1967.

Dennis was a successful small business owner who took great pride in his work and in providing for his family. He formerly owned and operated Sunshield Awning and Wrought Iron and Asheville Ironworks. Dennis was a life-long outdoorsman and enjoyed hunting and fishing. He was known to all as good-natured, generous, and laconic, which he punctuated with dry wit and astute observations.

Dennis is survived by his wife of 53 years, Linda Bonner Harton; daughter, Hollie and partner, Andrew Simpkins of Warwick, England; son, Dennis Drew Harton, Jr. (Drew), wife, Sonata and grandchildren, Adelaide and Evers Harton of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The family expresses heartfelt gratitude to the staffs of Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System Hospice and Agape Upstate Community Hospice House for their kindness, care, and attention.

Contributions can be made to either the Danish Heritage Preservation Society Museum (PO Box 368, Danevang TX 77432) or St. John's Lutheran Church (415 S. Pine St., Spartanburg SC 29302).

"As once I loved you in my mortal flesh, without it now I love you still." Dante's *Purgatorio*.

**Harold Johannes Wind** 05/01/1927 - 12/13/2021

Harold Johannes Wind was born May 1, 1927 to Lars Wind and Dora Harton Wind in Danevang. He grew up the oldest of the five Wind boys on a farm outside of Danevang, where his grandfather, Iver Wind, was one of the original founders. As a 2nd generation Danish American, he was very proud of his heritage and proudly flew the Danish flag! Along with several of his brothers, he was able to visit his grandparents' homeland and meet several relatives, and he happily shared the stories of this trip with family and friends.

Harold attended Markham High School where he excelled in sports and especially enjoyed playing 6-man football. In 1944 after graduating from high school, he joined the Army and was sent to Louisiana State University where he attended classes until he was called to active service after he turned 18 in 1945. While attending LSU, he met Julia Claire Hebert; they married on June 2, 1949.

After boot camp, his unit was being shipped to Okinawa, but after Japan surrendered, he was diverted to mainland Japan to join the occupation forces as a paratrooper in the 11th Airborne. After discharging from the Army in 1946, he tried his hand at farming for a year. He then attended Texas A&I in Kingsville and graduated with a degree in petroleum and natural gas engineering in 1952.

Harold joined Marathon Oil Co. (known then as Ohio Oil Co.), where he worked until retiring in 1986. He was superintendent at gas plants in Bay City/Markham and Iraan, Texas, and also spent time in the Houston and Findlay main offices. His last and most challenging assignment was as senior engineer in London, England, heading teams designing gas plants to be put in the North Sea. He thoroughly enjoyed his time in England and spent weekends exploring the countryside and meeting English and American friends to have a pint at the pub. He also enjoyed hosting his many relatives and friends who made to trip over to England.

Upon retirement, Harold and Claire came back to Houston and, in 1990 at Rockport, he fulfilled his dream of building a bay house where he could indulge his love of saltwater fishing and deer hunting. He also enjoyed being close enough to visit often with his daughter and three grandchildren who lived in Corpus Christi. He especially enjoyed being able to watch his granddaughter Brittany Arneson marry Jake Keim in Baltimore, and made several trips to visit his granddaughter Jessica Boyce and his great granddaughter Ali, who also lived in Baltimore.

He suffered a heart attack and after a brief hospital stay, he passed away peacefully surrounded by his family. He is survived by his wife Claire Wind, five children (Bruce Wind, John Wind, Leslie Wind, Martha Arneson, Jeanne Wind) and four grandchildren (Ashley Arneson, Brittany Arneson (Jake Keim), Matthew Arneson, Jessica Boyce) and one great grandchild Ali Boyce. He is also survived by two brothers Irvin Wind and Carl Lester Wind; his brothers Alfred Wind and Ellis Wind preceded him in death.

**Bruce Ray Lauritsen** 05/21/1950 - 02/10/2022

Bruce Ray Lauritsen, was born May 21, 1950, in El Campo to the late Albert and Gertrude Peters Lauritsen. He started farming at the age of 16 and continued for 46 years. Bruce was a devoted father and a loving husband. In his spare time, he loved being with his grandchildren and enjoyed taking them tubing at the lake.

He is survived by his wife, Debbie Matak Lauritsen; sons, Bradley Lauritsen and wife Kathryn and Blake Lauritsen and wife Jessica; grandchildren, Erin Lauritsen, Ella Lauritsen, Braxton Lauritsen, Zeke Doshier, Caroline Doshier, Brinley Lauritsen, Camille Lauritsen and Bryce Lauritsen; and sister, Estelle Smith and husband Erling. Bruce was preceded in death by his parents and brothers, Donald and Larry Lauritsen.

Pallbearers were Glenn Smith, Gary Smith, Lane Lauritsen, Dale Tally, Paul Bruton, Brad Crist, Wayne Holub and Keith Bodungen. Honorary pallbearers were his grandchildren, Melvin Matak, Dennis Matak and Tom Bodungen.

Memorial donations in memory of Bruce may be made to the American Heart Association.

The Danish Heritage Preservation Society  
P.O. Box 368  
Danevang, Texas 77432

979-578-0808

### ***Danebod Folk School in Tyler, Minnesota***

The 7th annual fall Danebod Folk Meeting is set for August 7-20, 2022, in Tyler, Minnesota. Modelled after the Danish-American Folk School, the Danebod Folk Meeting provides life-long learning through lectures, learning from each other, singing, eating together, visiting old friends and making new ones.

Topics include: •What the Heck is Feminism, Anyway? •Grundtvig's Influence on 19th Century Christianity •Dakota War and Its Aftermath •Architecture: Reinventions of Airport Amenities •Unions and Labor •Cyberology and Podcasts •Improving Healthcare via Lessons Learned •What Makes Music Great? •What's Up in Denmark.

Registration forms and information will be available in May at <https://sites.google.com/view/danebodfolkmeeting>.

### **The Danish Heritage Preservation Society 153 County Road 426, Danevang TX 77432**

Museum Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 1- 4 p.m.  
*call 979-578-0808 for appointment*  
Closed Sundays, Mondays, and holidays

E-mail: [danishmuseum4@gmail.com](mailto:danishmuseum4@gmail.com)

Michael Hansen.....	<b>President</b>
Ronnie Wind.....	<b>Vice-President</b>
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Jim Harton.....	<b>Member</b>
Bridget Jensen Howard.....	<b>Member</b>
Natalie Hansen.....	<b>Member</b>
Paul Jensen.....	<b>Member</b>
Jay Kristiansen.....	<b>Member</b>
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