



THE DANISH SOCIETY (INC.) AUCKLAND

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1966 FEBRUARY, 1966

THE  
OFFICIAL OPENING  
OF  
DANISH HOUSE  
19th FEBRUARY, 1966



**SPEAKERS**

The President, Borge Kirk.

His Worship, the Mayor of Auckland, Dr Roy G. McElroy.

The Hon. Minister of Internal Affairs, David C. Seath.

His Excellency The Danish Ambassador, Dr Axel Serup.



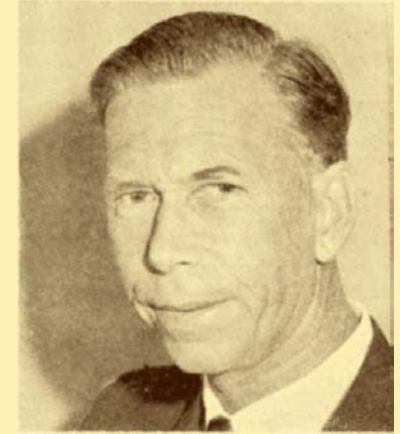
### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to say that over the last ten years the Danish Society in Auckland has expanded rapidly, the membership having increased from 80 to more than 350 this year. Over this period the following outstanding events have taken place. Firstly a building fund was established. Secondly a newspaper, with a circulation of 450 copies in the capable hands of its editor Mr Aage Larsen, was founded. And thirdly the Liberty Theatre in Parnell was purchased as a home for the Society. In my opinion this was the most significant event in the history of the Society. During the last eighteen months this building has been renovated mostly by voluntary labour.

I feel that I must pay tribute to previous past presidents and the committee members because they were the ones who did the spade work in forming the Society and who worked assiduously to keep it going.

During the past four years of my chairmanship I can only say that my wife and I have enjoyed our association with you all. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee members and their wives for their very loyal, active and happy support during the busy time just passed. Special thanks also must go to the Danish Embassy in Wellington and the Consulate in Auckland for their interest and backing in our effort to make this Danish House possible.

It is my fervent wish that this House will develop into a centre for the fostering of Danish culture, that it will become a home away from home where old and new settlers in this country can congregate, and that it will remain a meeting place where both Kiwis and Danes can gather together in good fellowship. In this way goodwill, friendship and understanding will be engendered between our Danish folk and the people of the country which has adopted us.



BORGE KIRK  
President

### FROM OUR AMBASSADOR

It is with great pleasure that I accept the suggestion by the Danish Society in this way to offer my congratulations to the Society on the occasion of the opening of The Danish House in Auckland.

New Zealand may well appear remote to many people in Denmark. Yet any Danish visitor to New Zealand will, I believe, be struck by the similarity between the two countries in social values, in the way of life and in the attitude towards the vital problems of the world of today. He will also be impressed by the bonds of friendship and mutual respect which have always existed between the two countries.

Just a hundred years ago the illustrious Bishop Monrad, his family and a few friends decided to leave Denmark and make New Zealand their new home. After arriving in Lyttelton they went to the North Island and settled at Karere near Palmerston North. Their homestead was soon to become the cultural and spiritual centre of all Scandinavians in New Zealand. The pioneer work of Monrad and his descendants gained historical importance not only because of its significance to the Scandinavians, but also because it resulted in important contributions to the later cultural and economic development of New Zealand.

In the past century a number of Danes followed Monrad's example and settled in various parts of New Zealand. They must have liked the new country because today one finds many Danes and Danish names in Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Manawatu, Wellington and Taranaki.

The completion of The Danish House in Auckland was made possible through the initiative and guidance of a few and the sacrifices and efforts of a great number of people. As a result, the Danish Society has not only acquired a permanent and attractive home, but also will be able to open its doors to all Danes in New Zealand. Thus a new chapter will begin in the history of the Danes in this country, and a further step will have been taken to strengthen the already strong bonds of friendship between New Zealand and Denmark.



DR. AXEL SERUP  
Danish Ambassador to New  
Zealand

### THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

I am very pleased to be able to send this message on the occasion of the opening of the Danish Society's Assembly House.

The Danes have always taken a lively interest in the world outside their homeland and this has brought many of them to this country. We have had good reason to value their contribution to our national life whether it is through the work of distinguished individuals such as the jurist O. T. J. Alpers and that student of Maori folklore, Johannes Anderson or through the humbler efforts of farmers struggling to make a living in our pioneering past.

Today we continue to benefit by the contribution of those whose memories are of Denmark and who continue to take pride in Denmark's achievements today. The opening of the Assembly House as a home for the Danish Society and a centre for Danish cultural activities in New Zealand is an achievement to be proud of and I congratulate all who have worked to make it possible. I also wish the Society every success for the future in its work.



DAVID C. SEATH  
Minister of Internal Affairs

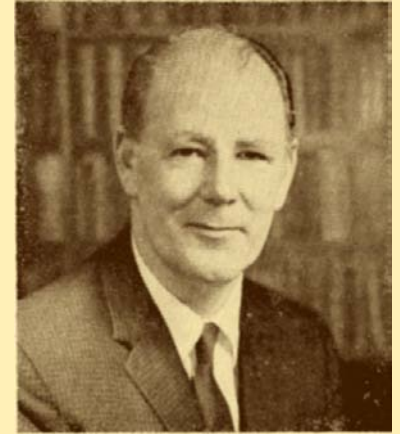
### MAYOR'S MESSAGE

May I, on behalf of the City of Auckland congratulate the Danish community on the opening of the Auckland Danish Society's headquarters in Parnell.

Among peoples from overseas who have adopted New Zealand as their homeland, none are regarded more highly than those from Denmark. Their integration has been so easy and so successful that native-born New Zealanders tend sometimes to forget that they still form a not inconsiderable national group in our population. One hundred years ago, in 1866, there were few of Danish extraction in New Zealand. By 1874, however, war in Europe had driven 2,000 to seek refuge in this country. Their fortitude and diligence is remembered in the settlement they won from the bush at Dannevirke. Today, the New Zealand-born descendants of the original fourteen Danish families are to be found throughout the length and breadth of the Dominion in all walks of community and national life.

In Auckland, "Danish House" will be an ever-present reminder of a people whom we hold in such esteem and with whom we share so much culturally.

Long may it stand as a headquarters for those from Denmark new to this country, and as a meeting place for people of all nationalities who together make up the citizens of Auckland.



Dr. ROY G. McELROY  
Mayor of Auckland

## AN HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Consular representation of Countries in territories of friendly Countries overseas is standard practice and follows trade and commerce, particularly maritime operations. Thus we find the Kingdom of Denmark as a predominantly Maritime Nation is widely represented. It maintains Embassies and Legations staffed by Career Diplomats in Capital Cities in many of the principal Countries. In New Zealand it maintains an Embassy in Wellington.

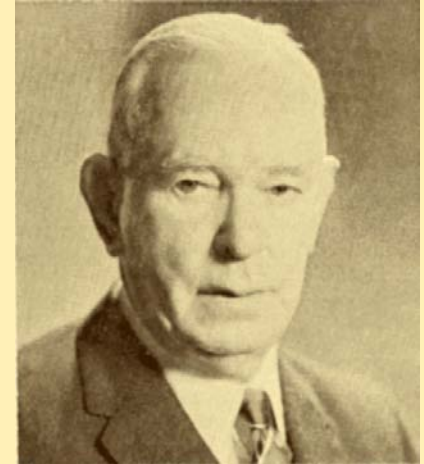
In addition, and more widely and in keeping with recognised procedures, it maintains representation in the main Cities of the World through Consulates staffed by honorary Officers. The Auckland office is staffed by Honorary Officers, as are the Consulates at Palmerston North, Christchurch and Dunedin.

Denmark first established representation in Auckland a matter of eighty years ago. In the year 1886 Edvard Valdemar Johansen was appointed Vice-Consul. He was succeeded in 1910 as Vice Consul by Paul Maximilian Hansen and later appointees were Robert Millar, S. P. Anderson and C. G. MacIndoe. They were prominent citizens and colourful personalities. On Mr MacIndoe's death the position remained vacant for a period until my appointment as Vice Consul in 1950.

Danish migration in the post war years and the growth of trade particularly shipping has made the Consulate in Auckland an important one. It led to the elevation in 1955 of the Vice Consulate to the status of Consulate. Its importance was further recognised in February 1962 by the addition to the honorary staff of a Vice Consul in the person of Erik Kjaer himself a Danish National. In importance and the scope of its activities the Danish Consulate in Auckland is the most active of all diplomatic posts other than the Netherlands Consulate and those such as the United States Consulate the United Kingdom Trade Commissioner and the Australian Trade Commissioner staffed by Career Officers.

The Consulate has catered for the needs and welfare of Danish Nationals and for the trade and commerce of Denmark. It will be the object of the Consulate to continue to service Denmark and its citizens.

Its Officers offer their congratulations to the Danish Society in its achievement of a Danish Centre. They are confident that the amenities of the Danish House will assist materially in the maintenance of Danish Culture and the welfare of all Danes in the Country of their adoption.



L. J. STEVENS  
Danish Consul in Auckland

The links between New Zealand and Denmark provide a long and colourful story, going back to the first discovery of this country by Abel Tasman in 1642. Peter Petersen of Copenhagen was first mate of Tasman's ship Heemskerck, and there were other Danish sailors aboard the Dutch ships.

The sealers and whalers who began to frequent New Zealand waters soon after Captain James Cook's first visit in 1769 comprised many sailors of Danish blood. The notorious Jorgen Jorgensen, who later proclaimed himself "Protector of Iceland." was in 1804 the skipper of a whaler off the New Zealand coast, while in 1830 Hans Homman Falk (Hans Tapsell), a Danish whaling captain, built his fort at Maketu and carried on this hazardous occupation of a coast trader. Many of his descendents are to be found in the Rotorua district today.

When the ship Tory with the first shipload of emigrants for the foundation of Wellington entered Cook Strait she encountered a Danish whatler, the Concordia of Copenhagen, off Kapiti Island.

However these were only slight or transitory contacts and it was not until the gold discoveries in the South Island that many Danish settlers came to New Zealand. Some came from the Australian diggings, others deserted from their ships and a few came from Denmark. It is thought there were about 500 Danes in New Zealand in 1867.

The arrival of Bishop D. G. Monrad in 1866 was the commencement of a new era of Danish settlement in New Zealand. He and his family arrived after the disastrous 1864 war with Germany and took up bush land at Karere, near the site of the present city of Palmerston North. Monrad was the first white settler in the Upper Manawatu bush country. With tremendous energy he cleaned the heavy forest and established a farm. His success attracted the attention of the Government and when, after the Bishop's return to Denmark, it was decided to open up the forest country of the interior of the Wellington province, efforts were made to seek immigrants from Scandinavia for the task. Several thousands of Danes arrived and they and their descendants played a prominent part in forest clearance, the establishment of road and rail communications, and in laying the foundations of the dairy industry. Under conditions of hardship and privation they created settlements at Palmerston North, Dannevirke, Eketahuna and Mauriceville.

When the Government's Public Works and Immigration scheme terminated in 1876 the stream of immigrants ceased and it was not until after the close of the Second World War that there was any appreciable influx of new immigrants from Denmark. The post-war settlers have mostly been engaged in trade and industry and have concentrated in the city of Auckland.

Danes can regard their contribution to the founding of this new nation in the Pacific with some pride, and may truly be said to have "honoured their native land by willingly giving their best to the country of their adoption."



GEORGE PETERSEN  
Danish Vice-Consul, Palmerston  
North



It has been no easy task for the present Committee to establish the early history of The Danish Society. Although no doubt a strict record was kept during this period, unfortunately most of this was lost during the numerous changes of committee in the years after the war.

However it is evident that the Society was founded as The Danish Association in New Zealand (Inc.) by the late Mr E. A. Dahl as an off-shoot of the Free Danes Movement in London about a year after the German occupation of Denmark on the 9th April 1940, its main activities being dedicated to the liberation of Denmark.

During its first four years of patriotic endeavour the association presented a fully equipped ambulance to the Royal New Zealand Air Force, besides making generous donations to New Zealand's war effort. Several tons of clothing reached Denmark as a gift from Danes and friends of Denmark in New Zealand and a large fund was collected to help dependents of Danish patriots.

At the Danish Association's annual meeting in March 1946, the association's objective having been achieved, it was decided to wind up its affairs and to form a new organisation, the activities of which would be principally of a social nature. Mr K. C. Jorgensen was elected the first president of the new Danish Society, a position he held till 1949. For the following years the society saw a number of presidents and changing committees, and a varying degree of interest was shown by the rather small number of members. Since 1957 when the Society's Building Fund was started, a revival has taken place and the number of members which has steadily increased year by year now exceeds 350.

Although The Danish Society's main activities since the end of the war have been its socials where members are able to meet under friendly surroundings to enjoy the company of their fellow countrymen, Danish foods, and Danish style entertainment it has always been the society's aim to assist wherever possible new Danish settlers and visitors to New Zealand. Where it has come to the knowledge of the Committee that a member is ill in hospital or in his home, visits have been paid and in all cases of bereavement, wreaths or messages of condolence have been sent. An always popular occasion is the annual children's Christmas party with its traditional Danish Christmas celebrations. During the winter months members have participated in evenings with folk dancing and gymnastics and in summer, picnics have been arranged. Whenever new films from Denmark have been available, mainly thanks to the Danish Embassy in Wellington, they have been shown at a social.

It is the Committee's hope that the opening of the Danish House in Auckland will further strengthen the society and help members keep their Danish spirit, feelings and sentiment fully alive, and, without losing loyalty to their beautiful new country, always remember the country every true Dane will ever cherish as Home.

## **THE DANISH SOCIETY 1941-1966**

by  
BENT BRYDER

When the Danish Society in Auckland in 1959 was finally past its teething troubles and could look toward the future with an open mind, one of the committee members, Mr Chr. Nissen, had the idea for the Danish Club to send out a Newsletter every month to all members of the Society and also to all Danish people known to the D.D.F.

The idea was very well received by everyone concerned and after a lot of work by Mr Nissen in conjunction with Mr Larsen a couple of issues were published. Although it was only a typewritten and duplicated paper, it was still a link between the Danes, and a link between the committee and the members of the D.D.F., where one could make certain observations where necessary and for the good of the Society.

In November 1959 Mr Larsen became the first editor of our monthly newsletter and as a result the first printed issue was published, and it was even in the Danish language. Naturally it was very difficult to obtain the specific Danish letters “å æ ø” and the magazine had to do without until such time as these letters were imported from overseas.

The D.D.F., which is the Danish abbreviation for “The Danish Society” has been trying to hold on to the Danish language where ever possible, but since the General Meeting in February 1963 when it was decided to admit non-Danish people as members of the Society, it was felt that news about socials and meetings should be printed in English.

Over the past six years the D.D.F. has been covering small news items from Denmark, news about family functions, address changes, whatever was happening in the Society and last but not least family increases. To cover the cost of printing the magazine, small advertisements were accepted and because of this it has been also possible to print photographs of events of interest to the Society.

Gazing back over the last six years that the magazine has been in publication one cannot help but feel proud for a job well done. The D.D.F. in co-operation with its readers and contributors takes very great pleasure in congratulating the Society on the opening of Danish House and in wishing everyone the very best for the future.

**THE  
NEWS  
MAGAZINE  
D.D.F.**

by  
A. LARSEN

It all started with an idea. An idea so enormous that it seemed hardly possible ever to become a reality.

The idea was for the Danish Society to have a place of their own, a place where parties and meetings could be held, and as the English so well say, a place “in a little street where old friends meet.”

It was also thought that once the Society had a place of its own and it had become a paying proposition something could be done for those who were getting a few years older and who were joining the ranks of pensioners. In particular it was felt that this could be a place where old Danish pensioners could meet and talk.

Once the idea was conceived and talked about it was decided to start a Building Fund for the raising of money for these very worthwhile causes. Going back through the books we found that the Building Fund was started on the 13th April 1957 and at the first General Meeting George Madsen was elected President, Niels Kyed cashier and Christian Nissen secretary. At the first Building Fund Meeting rules were drawn up as the committee would be working separately from the the Danish Society Committee, but still alongside it. To make things easier it was decided by the Society to give the committee of the Fund a free hand for the raising of money and that it would be responsible only to the General Meeting.

After a few ideas had come up regarding the raising of funds it was decided to start off with “donation books”. Booklets were printed and stamps could be bought in different colours according to their values which at that stage were from 1/- to 10/-.

In those days all out of pocket expenses were met by the committee members themselves since no money could be taken from the Fund until such time that it was decided to buy sections or a building. It was really one way traffic; money could go in, but could not be taken out.

Fishing trips, raffles, picnics, etc. were organised to raise funds and we very well remember the Tivoli style fair we had in Orewa, with tombolas, luckwheels, darts and the sport so popular to carpenters, the hammering of large nails into a piece of timber, plays for children, the folk dances, the sausages and all the other foods and fun that were there to be had.

The first year the Building Fund closed its books with a profit of £216, small in comparison with the huge amount of work that was done. However, by

## **THE BUILDING FUND**

by  
CHR. NISSEN

the same token, membership increased from 54 to 130. Naturally in these first few hard years there were some pessimists who felt that it was all a waste of time, but we are glad that there were enough optimists to out-shout them.

When in 1959 George Madsen withdrew as president, Bob Kirk was elected to the Building Fund in his place. It is often said that a new broom sweeps clean and the coming in of the new president was like a breath of fresh air and brought new enthusiasm. Everyone felt something was going to happen. And it did . . . the so popular mystery envelopes, the debenture notes and then . . . all of a sudden there was £1100 in the bank. This money was used for the buying of the two sections in Dundonald Street, Auckland, which were sold later on because the money was needed for other purposes.

At the General Meeting of 1961 it was decided to absorb the Building Fund Committee into the committee of the Danish Society.

Now after nearly nine years the original small idea has snowballed and has become reality. Reality to such an extent that we now have our own building, our own Danish House. Approximately 18 months ago it was decided to sell the sections in Dundonald Street and put the money towards the buying of the Parnell Movie Theatre.

Naturally a lot of work had to be done before it could be used for social functions and we are very glad indeed to be able to thank all those people who have given so much of their time to convert this building into what it is today.

We, of the Building Fund Committee, are certain that you will all share our happiness on this occasion and that the Danish House which we are passing on to the members today will be taken good care of by all.



B. KIRK  
President

# THE COMMITTEE OF THE DANISH SOCIETY 1966



B. BRYDER  
Secretary



K. KRISTENSEN  
Treasurer



CHR. NISSEN  
Vice-President



N. KYED



P. JORGENSEN



B. STANIUS



L. BECK



T. SORENSEN



A. LARSEN  
Editor of D.D.F.