

Dear Fellow Members,

The first year of our activities has come to an end, and, although we have had difficulties to overcome, events have fully justified our decision to continue the work so ably carried out by the Danish Association.

Building on the foundation laid by the Danish Association, the N.Z. Danish Society is now a united body, with Centres established in Auckland, Dannevirke, Palmerston North, and Wellington, and our Constitution will be placed before you tonight for your adoption. The success of our efforts in this respect has been largely due to the help and assistance rendered by our Patron, Mr. K. I. Eskelund, and also by Mr. G. E. Petersen of Palmerston North.

It is due to the generosity of our Vice President, Mr. W. Madsen, that we now have our own home. He has provided us with these rooms at a rent that has enabled us to sublet at a profit which will pay off our overdraft to the Bank in about two years. In addition, Mr. Madsen also provided the security at the Bank, and thus enabled us to furnish and alter the rooms to meet our requirements.

We are also indebted to a few of our members who have ~~lent~~ lent us their own money so as to reduce the amount of our overdraft. If other members are able and willing to help in a similar manner, the Committee will be very grateful.

King Christian's birthday was a most memorable occasion, as it was on this 26th September that we received the first visit from Mr. and Mrs. Eskelund, who greatly endeared themselves to us all. A luncheon was held, at which were present members of the Scandinavian Club and prominent citizens. Mr. F. Andersen proposed the King's health, and Mr. Eskelund declared the Clubrooms opened. In the evening a most enjoyable social was held.

At the King's birthday celebrations in Palmerston North, our Vice President, Mr. W. Madsen, Mr. K. Graae, and I represented Auckland. Dannevirke and Wellington were also represented, and a most excellent dinner and social were provided, with opportunity for meeting members from the various Centres.

An occurrence which proved the value of having our own rooms was when the first Danish ship to leave Denmark since the war arrived in Auckland on the 24th of January. Mr. and Mrs. Eskelund motored from Wellington for the occasion, and took a small party out to the Stream to greet the "Selandia". Mrs. Eskelund handed Captain P. Sorensen a spray of roses, and the gallant Captain asked our party to join him at breakfast. His Worship the Mayor, Mr. J. A. C. Allum, C.B.E., tendered a civic reception to Captain Sorensen in the Mayor's Room at the Town Hall. His Worship the Mayor, Mr. and Mrs. Eskelund, and a number of our members afterwards joined Captain Sorensen for lunch on board the "Selandia".

In the evening, we had with us about forty members of the ship's company at a most enjoyable social in our rooms, which were filled to capacity.

On Sunday, January 26th, we joined with the Scandinavian Club in arranging an outing to Blockhouse Bay, and the Scenic Drive, for about fifty members of the ship's company. After a swim, Danish picnic hampers provided by the ship were much appreciated.

To indicate the interest taken in the "Selandia's" visit, I need only point out that some of our members, from as far away as Palmerston North and Hawera, came up especially for the occasion.

Your Committee has worked very hard during the past year - they have been few in numbers, and deserve some relief, which can be achieved by electing a larger Committee. Their wonderful enthusiasm has been a great inspiration and encouragement to me. I do ask of you that you appoint additional members to the Committee to share in the work. The Committee would like to see folk dancing and choir singing added to our activities.

Some of you will have received an appeal from Denmark for support of "Frihedsfondens Kollegier", the object of which is similar to the Heritage Movement in New Zealand. This matter I have referred to our Danish Council, and I have no doubt the Council will formulate a scheme for adoption by all Centres.

Many of you will know that His Majesty, King Christian, has been graciously pleased to award the Danish Freedom Medal to the Founder of the Freedom movement in New Zealand - Mr. E. Dehl - and also to Mrs. Ingeborg Langkilde, who so ably acted as convenor of the Danish Sewing Circle. The two worthy Presidents of the Danish Association, Messrs C. Langkilde and O.N. Hadrup, were also similarly honoured for their conscientious work. I am sure we all feel very gratified by His Majesty's action.

We have been advised by our Consul General, Mr. Karl I. Eskelund, that Denmark has recently appointed a Minister to Australia and New Zealand, in the person of Mr. C. M. Rottbøll. We look forward to an early opportunity to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Rottbøll to our midst.

By the appointment first of a Consul General, and secondly of a Minister to New Zealand, and by the establishing of direct regular sailings from Denmark to New Zealand, we have clear indications of the importance our Mother Country attaches to the objects for which our Society stands. Let us, therefore, go forward to the end that firm, friendly, cultural and economic relations may ever endure between our adopted country and that dear little land in which our birth and love are rooted.

Sincerest greetings.


K.C. JØRGENSEN.

PRESIDENT.

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K.C. JORGENSEN.

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This is the original record of the "First Annual Report" of the New Zealand Danish Society.

It was presented at the Annual General Meeting held in Auckland on 22nd April, 1947