



www.BelgianHeritageCenter.org

June 2023

BHC 2023 Event Calendar - Save the Dates!

3 JUN	Genealogy Resources - 10:30 am
22 JUN	History Days: Untold Story of the St Mary of the Snows Cemetery - 1:00 pm
25 JUN	Waffle Breakfast - 9:00 am
8 JUL	Narrated Bus Tour of Belgian Settlements - 9:00 am and 10:30am
20 AUG	BHC Kermis
16 SEPT	Belgian Harvest Festival at National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion
7 OCT	Great Fire Remembrance
OCT	Hunter's Raffle (Facebook Live Event)
24 NOV	Thanksgiving Sale and Mosaic Glass Ornament Workshop

More events are in the works - watch future newsletters, Facebook and BelgianHeritageCenter.org for details

DOOR COUNTY HISTORY DAYS Special BHC Event

The second annual History Days will take place in Door County on June 19 through June 25. Events are planned by many of the county's historical organizations to bring attention to the rich history of the Door Peninsula. The theme this year is "untold stories" which will give participating organizations a chance to highlight some less known history.



As our contribution, the Belgian Heritage Center will feature a talk on Thursday, June 22 at 1:00 pm, The Belgian Settlement and the True Story of the Historic St. Mary of the Snows Cemetery, presented by Barb (Englebert) Chisholm. The first Belgians came to Northeast Wisconsin 170 years ago. You will hear about their settlements as well as the story behind the unique St Mary of the Snows historic cemetery situated on the campus of the Belgian Heritage Center. There will also be plenty of time to check out our exhibits and visit the restored school/convent.

Consider the Heritage Center for your Next Event

The Belgian Heritage Center is a perfect church-like setting for weddings and wakes/funerals. The BHC is also available for rental for private events such as meetings, conferences and family reunions. Traditional Belgian food and a Belgian heritage presentation are available on request. For more information call Sue Havel at 920-493-2789 or email: events@belgianheritagecenter.org.

CELEBRATING 170 YEARS...

1853-2023



In the year 2023, the Belgian Heritage Center will be commemorating the 170th anniversary of the arrival of the first group of Belgian settlers to northeastern Wisconsin. On June 17, 1853, the Quinnebaug immigrant ship sailed from Antwerp, Belgium to New York City, NY arriving on July 6, 1853. A brave group of Belgians from Grez Doiceau and the surrounding areas made the difficult decision to leave their homeland and begin a new life in America. Upon landing in New York, the group made their way to the newly formed State of Wisconsin (1848). Promises of available land and a new beginning for those who wanted to be independent were a major factor in motivating the group to make the journey. Many of the group would settle in the area known today as Champion (Township of Green Bay) or as it was first known as Grez Daems and then Aux Premier Belges. Another small group would follow in late 1853, more in 1854 and then a great majority in 1855 and 1856. Throughout the 2023 season, the Belgian Heritage Center will be celebrating and honoring the first arrivals. In today's newsletter, we'll highlight a few of the families.

If you have information about this first group of settlers, please contact BHC. We would love to share the stories in future editions of our newsletter and online.

Who Were These Settlers?

BODART - Lambert Joseph Bodart (24), his wife Marie Celestine Wolput (22), their infant daughter, Marie Euphrasie Bodart (11 mo) and Lambert's mother, Jean Josephe Lambeau (62).

Lambert purchased government land in Sections 12 & 13 of the Town of Green Bay (southeast of Champion, near Walhain). He farmed the land the rest of his entire life until passing in 1902, even after losing much when his farm was in the path of the Great Fire in 1871. In total, eight children were born to the Bodarts. Lambert was instrumental in forming the French Presbyterian Church in 1861 (Robinsonville Presbyterian).

DETIENNE - Etienne Detienne (28), his wife Marie Therese Jossart (25) and their two children, Jean Philippe (3) and Josephine (1). Etienne first purchased government land in Section 4 of the Town of Scott, then in Section 31 of the Town of Red River in Kewaunee County. By 1880, the family had relocated to Jay Township in Martin County, Minnesota. (Marie Therese's sister, Barb Jossart, immigrated with her husband, John Baptiste Hannon, in the second 1853 group, arriving in December, 1853.)

DETIENNE - John Baptiste Detienne (25), younger brother of Etienne Detienne, also purchased government land in the Town of Scott. He married Josephine Vincent in 1855 who died the same year from typhus. Then he married Marie Barbe Debecker in 1857 (one daughter, Eva) and then Josephine's sister, Phillipine Hyacinthe Vincent in 1865 (two sons, two daughters) after serving in the Civil War in the 34th Wisconsin Infantry. He farmed in the Town of Scott until relocating to Green Bay where he had a contracting business.



Bodart

DETIENNE - Phillippe Joseph (31), older brother of Etienne and John Baptiste, emigrated in the second 1853 group, leaving Antwerp on the Stanislas in October, 1853 and arriving in New York in December, 1853. Phillippe bought government land in the Town of Green Bay in Section 3 and farmed there with his wife Mary and their seven children until relocating to the Town of Howard in 1880.

PAQUES - Martin Paques (39), his wife Marie Therese Ralet (47) and their four children, Antoine (17), Anna Josephe (13), Alphone Jean (11) and Xavier (8).

The Paques family acquired government land in Section 1 of the Town of Green Bay (just south of County K, east of County P), where they too would suffer losses in the Great Fire of 1871. Antoine, the eldest son, married Marie Antoinette Heraly and they would have nine children (5 boys, 4 girls). Their son, Michael, took over the homestead and is pictured here with a threshing crew on the Champion farm.



Paques Farm

Why Did the Settlers Leave Belgium?

Crossing the Atlantic in 1853 was no pleasure cruise - the ships were small, the ocean was rough and passengers had no privacy and limited food and water. After 50 days at sea they travelled from New York to Wisconsin and finally made a long walk to the land they would settle. According to Yves Destree with the Grez-Doiceau Office of Tourism, life in Belgium in 1853 was hard. There was famine - potatoes and wheat were rotting because of three years of rain. There was overpopulation with too many people on farms too small to feed them all. It was so bad that a pastor in Grez-Doiceau, Pastor Vleugels, advised the first 10 families to leave. They left for the US knowing it would be impossible for them to return to Belgium. Said Yves, the crossing was "a nightmare because there were 187 migrants on this ship and the terrific tempests they had to suffer." But the US was a land of promise, so they sold what they had to pay for the travel and set out for the US.

Why Wisconsin and Champion (Aux Premiers Belges)?

Many Belgian immigrants came to Wisconsin because they had dreams of owning larger farms. That wasn't possible for them in Belgium. It was crowded in their homeland. Farms were small, land ownership was limited and there was little economic opportunity. In Wisconsin, which had only recently become a state, they could buy land in large parcels for \$1.25 an acre and sometimes, even less. When they arrived in Wisconsin, a chance meeting of Fr. Eduard Daems, a Belgian priest serving at Holy Cross Parish in Bay Settlement, caused the settlers to give up land claims in Kaukauna and settle near Champion instead. They followed Fr. Daems and settled near Champion, naming their settlement "Aux Premiers Belges" - the first Belgians.

More on YouTube

To learn more about the experiences of the early Belgian Settlers, check out these videos at BHC's YouTube channel:

- *The Belgian Immigration to NE Wisconsin - John Mertens*
- *They Came With Little - Arlene Jadin/Clifford Abts*
- *A Tragedy Overboard - Emily Dhuey*
- *Immigration Beginnings - Door County Historical Museum*

Monthly Photo Contest

Thanks to enthusiastic participation in our monthly photo contest, BHC added many new photos to our archive documenting the daily lives in the Belgian Settlement. All contest entries and winners are posted in the Happenings section at belgianheritagecenter.org. Here are a few examples of the wonderful photos submitted.

Emma Wouters Saelens with children Minnie, Julia, Joseph and dog Prince taken at a logging camp in Northland, Michigan. Submitted by Karen Wuyts Diedrick who also submitted the February contest winning photo.

Originally the *Victor Bader Tavern & Hotel* in Champion, later became *Dekaster Tavern*, *Mohimont's* and *DePeau Tavern* and is now a private residence. Submitted by Della (DeKaster) Clabots. Dekaster Tavern was the March photo contest winner.



Minnie (on lap) Julia (seated) Joseph standing Emma Saelens (seated) & Prince sitting



Please join the fun and help BHC at the same time.
Monthly Contest Themes:

- June: Men at Work and Play
- July: Historic Street and Town views
- August: Harvest and Farming
- September: Celebrations / Dancing / Drinking
- October: Outdoors (Hunting/Fishing/Trapping/Boating)
- November: Logging, Making Wood, Firemaking, Log Camps
- December: Winter Photos (Children sledding, ice cutting, winter sleighs, etc.)

Stereoscope Photo Viewer

Stereoscopes like the one pictured were popular by the late 1800's. The viewer consists of two prismatic lenses on a wooden stand with a slide holder. The slides contain two images of the same scene, each with a slightly different angle to produce an image with depth when viewed through the lenses.



Slide showing train and passengers in De Pere circa 1900

Jack Alexander recently brought in a stereoscope and several slides belonging to his grandmother, Ida (Jadin) Martin. The photos look great in the viewer but they also produced excellent quality scans. Here are two examples:



*Boys playing at St Mary of the Snows School – Namur 1901
(April photo contest winner)*



*Inside home, possibly rectory at St. Hubert Catholic Church –
Rosiere 1901*

BHC Featured in Upcoming Movie

BHC had the great honor on April 15 to host esteemed film director Freddy Moyano for the filming of his upcoming movie, **Room 108: The Clearing**.

We're thankful to our volunteers, Julie Rheingans, Sandy Orsted, and Carol Price who were onsite to help with logistics. Several other BHC folks played small roles in the film as costumed 1899 characters: Barb Chisholm, Kristin Alberts and Rebecca Derenne. Other dedicated volunteers prepared the historic schoolhouse and grounds for filming. Rebecca Derenne provided cultural direction for the scenes and coordinated site details.

Many amazing and talented local folks were involved in the filming: Davister's Carriage Rides (and Bar and Restaurant), Jose Calvillo and his horse Palomino, and Pat Wiley Music featuring Pat Wiley, John Wilson and Mike McConnell, along with many talented actors, actresses and a wonderful team of extras.

Room 108: The Clearing is a feature length fiction thriller based on an urban legend and homicide. For more information, check out www.room108themovie.com. The movie premiere will be at The Tarlton Theatre in Green Bay on Sunday, August 27, at 1:30 pm; tickets are available starting in June. Follow BHC on Facebook for updates.

At the Kermis on August 20, a small exhibit is planned to show some props and items used in the movie.



L-R: Rebecca Derenne, Barb Chisholm, Kristen Alberts

Volunteers Needed

As BHC finds more ways to share the story of the Belgian Settlements, we need more volunteers. There are many more ways to get involved. Docents, greeters, event workers, writers, video editors, graphic artists and more! Maybe you can even star in the next movie at BHC!

Email contact@belgianheritagecenter.org or call 920-825-7319 if you are interested.

THE BOOYAH SHED

1800 S Ashland, Green Bay

920-371-6249

Dine-in or Carry-Out

Homemade Booyah, Chili, Burgers, Brats, Pulled Pork, Chicken. Pork Tacos, Tots, Deep-Fried Cheese Curds, Desserts, Beer, Cocktails, and much more.

Featuring our Friday Fish Fry

Visit our Facebook page for Full Menu

Hours:

Monday 11-5

Tues, Weds, Thu 11-7

Friday 11-8

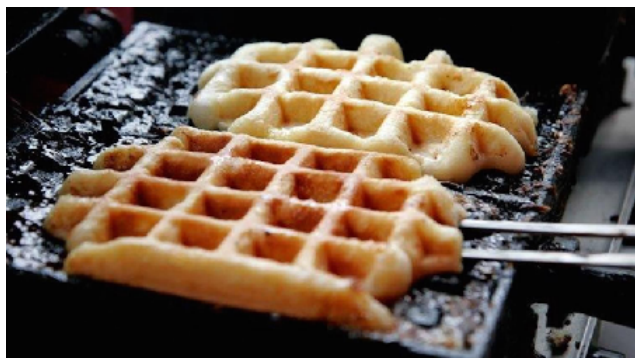
Saturday 11-7

Sunday CLOSED



Waffle Breakfast June 25

BHC will host a Belgian Waffle Breakfast on Sunday, June 25 from 9:00 until noon. Breakfast includes waffles, trippe, eggs and a beverage. Proceeds help support the Belgian Heritage Center's mission to preserve and promote Belgian heritage. Price is \$12 for adults, \$7 for children 4-12, free for children 3 and under.



Narrated Bus Tour of Belgian Settlements July 8

Join BHC's Historian Barb (Englebert) Chisholm for a one hour narrated bus tour in the largest Belgian settlement in the US. See roadside chapels, traditional Belgian houses, summer kitchens, cemeteries and where the first Kermis was held. Hear stories about the lives and challenges faced by the early settlers. Tour participants will also receive a guided tour of the Belgian Heritage Center campus including exhibits, the votive chapel of St Roch and the restored Schoolhouse/Convent.

Tours are \$20 per person and leave from the Belgian Heritage Center at 9:00am and 10:30am on Saturday, July 8. Reservations are strongly encouraged as seating is limited. To reserve your seat call Julie at 920-619-6363, email contact@belgianheritagecenter.org or stop in at BHC during our weekend hours. Payment by cash, check and credit card is accepted. The tour is offered in cooperation with the Brussels Lions Club as part of their annual Belgian Days celebration on July 8 and 9. Tour proceeds benefit the Brussels Lions Club and BHC.

Cyber Security for Online Donations

BHC takes online donations only at our website, BelgianHeritageCenter.org. For security reasons, we do not take donations on social media sites or ask for donations via email. We only send a payment link if you ask us to do so. If you ever have concerns about online communication from BHC, please contact us at supportBHC@belgianheritagecenter.org or 920-825-7319.

BELGIAN HERITAGE CENTER DONATION FORM

Name: _____ Donation: \$ _____

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Please make checks payable to Belgian Heritage Center, P.O. Box 173, Brussels, WI 54204. Donations may be made at www.belgianheritagecenter.org (Paypal and major credit cards accepted).

Namur Belgian Heritage Foundation, owner of the Belgian Heritage Center, is a 501(c)(3) organization

Delarwelle Children on Duvall Farm

This circa 1917 photo is one of many shared with BHC by Lisa (Delarwelle) Colombo.

Pictured are the first six children of Eli and Mary (Corroy) Delarwelle: Erwin, Signa, Eli, Ann, Elmer, Lillian (three more children not in picture were Hazel, Victoria and Melvin).

The kids are adorable and we love the old farm in the background.

Thank you, Lisa!

