



Telling the story of the Belgian Settlement in Wisconsin and working to preserve unique elements of Belgian culture

www.BelgianHeritageCenter.org

April 2021

BHC Season Opening

Pre-Arranged Tours - Starting May 1
Friday, Saturday, Sunday 10-4 - Starting May 28

2021 Events

**16
MAY**

Booyah & Bread Drive-Thru

**4
JUL**

Booyah & Bread Drive-Thru

**15
AUG**

Belgian Heritage Center Kermis

Watch for more events, as they are scheduled. Remember to check out and "Like" our Facebook page to learn about events and other BHC info.

Volunteer Docents / Tour-Guides Needed

for Belgian Heritage Center and Schoolhouse

As we prepare for the 2021 season, the Belgian Heritage Center is seeking more volunteers to serve as docents. We are normally open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Even if you're not well-versed in your heritage or local history, there are many ways you can help.

This will be the first year we offer tours of the renovated schoolhouse building and need more helpers. Whether you're willing to work once in a while, or more regularly, we'd love to hear from you. This is also a great volunteer opportunity to do with a family member, friend, or even younger people. Other volunteers say meeting people interested in Belgian culture and area history is fun and rewarding.

We will be taking Covid precautions and following social distancing so we can safely open our building and share our wonderful Belgian heritage with visitors!

Email supportBHC@BelgianHeritageCenter.org for more information and to volunteer.

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



Grant Approved for Belgian Heritage Center

Money needed for Window Repairs

We are pleased to report that the BHC was approved for a grant by the Raibrook Foundation in February, 2021. The grant will partially fund the replacement of 13 windows in the schoolhouse and the production of new videos about Belgian Booyah.

Most of the windows in the schoolhouse are in very rough shape. Due to the historic nature of the building the Board of Directors decided that the new windows must match the design of the existing windows and the architectural character of the building. The Board had previously approved the replacement of 6 windows which were hand crafted by Kevin DeKeyser, installed by Buhr Construction, and interior trim work by volunteers Kevin Moore, Austin Moore and Kelly Chaudoir. This will finalize replacement of all first-floor windows.

The Board established a window replacement fund drive. This drive financed those six windows and will provide the financial match that the new grant requires. The drive also hopes to secure the money for future second floor window upgrades. All donors contributing at least \$600 toward the schoolhouse window project will be recognized on a permanent donor plaque in the school house. So far, we have collected \$20,000 from individual donors for this project. Additional donations are needed and welcomed to complete the window upgrade project.

Please contact Joe Alexander (920-343-6149) for further information or to make a pledge. Thank you to all who contribute to these needed repairs.

Our Fore Mothers

Our website currently features a gallery of pictures and stories that honor women in the Belgian community from the earliest days to more modern times. We have a sample of these stories on the following pages. To view the complete set, visit BelgianHeritageCenter.org, click on the Featured tab, and scroll down to the heading, Our Belgian Fore Mothers. This project was in recognition of Women's History Month in collaboration with the Women's Fund of Door County. We sincerely thank everyone who contributed to this feature. The gallery will be featured through Mother's Day so there is still time to add a story. Please contact contact@BelgianHeritageCenter.org if you are interested.

Volunteers needed for Booyah Video

Everybody loves Booyah, flocking to area church picnics, kermises, and events to devour the hardy Belgian soup, but few know the popular dish's history. We hope to translate the love and good feelings about Booyah into a new video.

BHC will engage Door County Digital Production Services to produce a video telling the interesting story of Booyah. The video will include interviews with local cooks, elders, local historians, and story tellers about the history of the dish and how it came to play such an important role in our homes and community. We'll produce two versions of the video, a five minute one for inclusion in our video kiosk at the center, as well as a longer 30+ minute version for special presentations to interested groups in and out of the center. We'll also provide complementary copies to local schools, libraries, and interested history groups. The longer version will also include the hands-on processes for making Booyah.

We are excited to get started on the Booyah video project but to do a good job we need help from the community. We are looking for Booyah lovers and experts to serve on a steering committee to help guide the video project. We are also hoping to hear from folks who have early knowledge or interesting stories about Booyah making over the years in the Belgian community.

Please contact Bill Chaudoir (920-559-3113) if you have information to share or would like to get involved with this project. Thank you for your help.

Help for Preserving Your Old Buildings

The Belgian Heritage Center would like to encourage area residents to preserve those things that make our area unique, including historic buildings. One of the perks of being named a state historic site is that you could possibly qualify for a tax credit for preserving your historic building. Your project must have a cost of at least \$10,000 over a two-year period and must receive pre-approval from the State Historical Society. There are several forms along with photos and estimates which must be submitted, but this is a credit off your income tax owed, not just a deduction from your income. The credit will equal 25% of the project costs. As such it can be well worth the effort. The Belgian Heritage Center has volunteers that will help you fill out the paperwork. We will also help if you would like to submit your property for historic status. Of course, we are always looking for additional volunteers to help in this area. We encourage you to obtain estimates and submit your project well in advance of your intended start date. There is no cost to submit your project.

Our Belgian Fore Mothers



Palmy Chaudoir Jeanquart

Our Grandma Palmy was born on April 5, 1905 to Eli and Emma Chaudoir. Her entire faithful, Christian life was lived in the town of Union; first at Chaudoir's Dock, then on highway 57 next to St. Mary of the Snow Church where she married Harvey Jeanquart in February 1927 and sang in the choir for many years.

Married and with 4 children, they lived on a farm on Pit Road where she used the summer kitchen to bake Belgian Pies and homemade breads. Palmy's favorite things were visits to The Chapel in Robinsonville with family, ice cream at the Frosty Tip in Dykesville, gardening, watching the Packers and her favorite show, The Golden Girls. We all remember her specialty pancakes with the toasty, browned edges and the comforting, squishy feather pillows on many sleepovers. Grandma loved her Belgian heritage and spoke the language often. She passed on her excellent culinary skills to her grandchildren who try to incorporate them in our own cooking and baking. My grandma was a very special person, role model and spiritual guide who will forever be in our hearts ❤️❤️

photo courtesy of Kewaunee Record Herald; information courtesy of Mary (Moore) Wulf, Palmy's granddaughter



Palmy (Chaudoir) Jeanquart baking bread, 1963

Jean Lardinois Guth

Jean Guth was born on March 30, 1919 in Brussels Wisconsin to John B. Lardinois the II and Ida Rouer Lardinois. She was baptized Mary Josephine Lardinois. Many in the community knew her as Evangeline (Angeline) and in later years as Jean. This posed a great problem when, as a founding member of the Peninsula Belgian American Club, she struggled to verify her identity when her passport application was submitted. She persevered and was able to travel to Belgium with the group and her husband Ray in the 1970's.



Young Jean learned to make Belgian Pies from her mother Ida who learned from her mother Adele Deviller Vandertie Rouer and mother-in-law, Mary LuMaye Lardinois. Mary and Adele were born in Belgium and immigrated to the U.S. as adults, married and both had large families.

In 1970, Jean was featured in the Door County Advocate and the Milwaukee Journal. The article, "Learn Belgian Pie Making From One Who Knows How" by Dorothy Fleming was one of the first featured articles of that era and Jean was the first to have the recipe for 12 pies published.

Having married a German man while staying fluent in Walloon proved her pride in the Belgian Heritage. Fifty years later, Jean's daughter, Gina Guth continues to carry on the pie making tradition by teaching others how to make Belgian Pies in small batches of 2 with both in-person and online classes.

photo and information courtesy of Gina Guth, Jean's daughter

Our Belgian Fore Mothers



Amelie Delforge Thiry

Amelie was born on August 26, 1827 in Monseau-sur-Sombre in Hainaut, Belgium. She married Constant Thiry on August 25, 1852. They immigrated to the US in 1856 with their children Alice, Jule and Ernest L. They later had five more children – Emma, Edmond, Augustine, Juliette and Constant II.



Constant claimed 200 acres in the south east portion of the town of Red River where Constant and Amelie built a log home in 1857 out of logs cleared from their land using hand tools. The building survived the Great Fire in 1871 and stood until 2005. For forty years, Constant and Amelie ran a tavern in Thiry Daems, with residence, dance hall and boarding house. It was built in the late 1860's and destroyed by fire in the 1970's.



So that Fr. Daems could share mass with area settlers, Constant and Amelie donated five acres of land for St. Odile's Church and Cemetery. The first of two log churches was built in 1858. A brick church was constructed in 1914. Constant and Amelie are both buried there. Amelie died on September 13, 1898 at age 71.

photo and information courtesy of Monica Thiry, Amelie's great-great-great granddaughter



Margaret Draize, directing the Christmas Pageant at Rocky Glen School

Margaret Lampereur Draize

Margaret was born on February 4, 1927. On December 26, 1946 she married Ivan Draize at St. Mary of the Snows in Namur. Margaret was an elementary school teacher for 44 years.

Margaret is the author of *Belgian American Customs and Cookbook*. First published in 1996 and reprinted in 2019, the book remains popular today for its lively stories, old-fashioned recipes, home remedies, and nostalgia from Wisconsin and Belgium.

Margaret and Ivan spent much of their lives dedicated to sharing the customs, language, foods, and dance of our Walloon Belgian ancestors. Together, the Draize's spent years calling local square dances in the Walloon language, holding impromptu Walloon language lessons in their rural Brussels home, hosting many visitors from Belgium, and sharing countless traditional Belgian meals with friends and neighbors. Their lives were a lesson in preserving the culture that defines us and honoring the sacrifices made by our ancestors.

Our Belgian Fore Mothers



Sarah Gaspard Renier

Sarah (Pulcherie/"Cherie") Gaspard Renier was born March 15, 1890 in Misere, Brussels Township, Wisconsin to Belgian immigrant parents Francois Joseph Gaspard and Antoinette Josephe Guilette. She married Frank Renier on 29 October 1907 at St. Michael Catholic Church in Misere, where they lived their entire lives. Together, they bore two beloved children, Ed and Laura.

Like many farm women, Sarah worked very hard in the fields, plowing barefoot, clearing the land, and milking cows by hand. She lost five children to miscarriage because of working so hard during pregnancy. She was a kind and gentle mother, raising her children with love and the strong Belgian work ethic. She often told the story of how she would walk a half-mile to pasture to bring the cows to the barn each morning while holding a lantern atop her head to light her path. That old, rusted lantern is treasured today.

Like most all Belgian women, Sarah was an excellent cook. Fondly remembered are her canned stew meat, cream chicken, and both molasses and sugar cookies. She always ensured her family was well-fed, even when provisions were in short supply.

Sarah was incredibly talented with all types of handiwork, as is evidenced by the many handcrafted things she left for her family, including intricate beadwork. Though a hard-working woman, she also had an eye and hand for delicate crafts.

Memories of her wearing a house-dress with a gingham apron come to mind. A well-worn rosary was always kept in the pocket, one she had made years before from dried white beans, polished smooth by her own hands. I use that very rosary still today and remember Great-Grandma Sarah always.

By Pamela (Renier) Alberts, Sarah's granddaughter



Sarah and Frank



Sarah with granddaughter, Pam





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Checks may be made payable to the Namur Belgian Heritage Foundation, P.O. Box 173, Brussels, WI 54204. Donations can be made at www.belgianheritagecenter.org (major credit cards accepted).

- Please check if you **DO NOT** wish to be recognized in publications under the names provided above.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

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