



# CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

712 - 18th Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265  
(309) 762-0167  
www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



September, 2013

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

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**Newsletter Editor**  
Dave Coopman  
d.coopman@mchsi.com

**Chaplain**  
Rev. Jim DeBisschop

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

September 7th	Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
September 7th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
September 9th	Board Meeting	4:00 to 5:30 p.m.
September 15th	Flemish Fest	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
October 5th	Waffle Breakfast	7:30 to 11:00 a.m.
October 5th	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
October 14th	Board Meeting	4:00 to 5:30 p.m.
October 26th	50th Anniversary Dinner	6:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Visit the Center for more information and to stay updated on current events.

## Schedule for Volunteers

The September schedule is as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Gift Counter</b>	<b>Host/Hostess</b>
Wed., Sept. 4th	Jan Irwin	Jan Irwin
Sat., Sept. 7th	Celie Donohue (a.m.) Barb Michalek (p.m.)	Kevin DeRoo (a.m.) Barb Michalek (p.m.)
Wed., Sept. 11th	Mary Lou Andrae	Bonnie Newman
Sat., Sept. 14th	Celie Donohue	Gene Donohue
Wed., Sept. 18th	Celie Donohue	Gene Donohue
Sat., Sept. 21st	Jan Irwin	Jan Irwin
Wed., Sept. 25th	Margaret Wadsworth	Bill Wadsworth
Sat., Sept. 28th	Millie Kale	Millie Kale

Contact Mary Gardner-Karcher at (563) 508-0886 or  
mcgkarcher@mchsi.com as soon as possible  
if there is a conflict with your scheduled time.

## Center for Belgian Culture's 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Saturday, October 26, 2013 • More details on page 2.

**Center OPEN Wednesday & Saturday 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.**  
**Waffle Breakfast 1st Sat. of each month**

*News of the Membership*

Thank You to **Joe DeMeyer** and **Delores Bultinck** for distributing CBC brochures to area visitors sites; to Ralph Dufour for a 1914 book on homing pigeons, and to Robert Thompson for donating pictures from Belgium.

Get Well wishes are extended to **Lou Rae Colman Hoogerwerf** and to **Al DePorter**.

**September  
Waffle Volunteers**



Volunteer cooks and servers for the September waffle breakfast will be Millie Kale, Pat Lievens, Beverly Fullmer, Georgia Slininger, Paul and Art Holevoet, and Gene Donohue. Mike Kerckhove will mix the batter and start the coffee, and Joan DeCap will cashier. Catherine VanHecke will help insure everyone has a good time.

**Hero Passes**

Lt-Gen Michel Donnet, one of Belgium's foremost heroes of World War II, has died at the age of 96. Donnet escaped to England in 1941 from under the noses of the Germans. He joined the RAF and flew fighter missions with a squadron of Belgian expat pilots, later winning the Distinguished Flying Cross.

*50th Anniversary Celebration and Dinner*

In October 1963, Wilbur Lievens and Arthur VanLancker, with the help of Honorary Consul Ralph DePorter, had an organizational meeting that gave birth to the Center for Belgian Culture.

The CBC is celebrating its 50th Anniversary at Oakwood Country Club in Coal Valley, Illinois, on Saturday, October 26th, with a dinner and program to pay tribute to founding members, past presidents, and the six Medal of Merit recipients: Alan Hoyt, Kathy Knobloch Bustos, Mary Lorensen, and Larry Lorensen. Posthumous honors will be given to Lucy DeWaelche and Beverly Francque.

A cocktail hour starts at 6:00 p.m. with hors d'oeuvres and entertainment by the Happy Belgians Band. Dinner

**Sunday,  
September 15, 2013**

**Stephens' Park  
Moline, IL**

Celebrate the history of the Olde Towne neighborhood with an afternoon of Belgian tradition, culture, food, and sport!

1:00 - 4:00 pm • FREE ADMISSION

begins at 7:00 p.m. with food prepared from the recipes of Mrs. Maurice Bultinck, Catherine Coryn, Mrs. Ralph DePorter, Mrs. George Holevoet, Mrs. Gus VandeVoorde, and others found in the Center's original Belgian cookbook. You have your choice of Flemish-style chicken breast, Belgian roast, or filet of sole. The program will follow dinner.

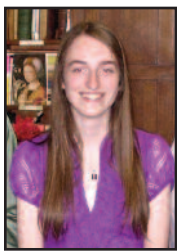
Cost is \$30.00/person all-inclusive (cash bar). Reservations, choice of entrée, and payment should be made by October 16th and sent to:

Anniversary  
Center for Belgian Culture  
712 - 18th Avenue  
Moline, IL 61265

## Scholarship Essay

This month's essay was written by Tiffany Fields. She attended Moline High School and graduated with a grade point average of 4.0 out of 4.0. Tiffany was a member of the National Honor Society, a Junior Rotarian, an Illinois State Scholar, news editor for the Line O'Type, and a Prairie State Achievement Award winner. She will attend St. Mary's University and major in astrophysics.

### My Belgian Heritage by Tiffany Fields



My heritage, like many others, makes me who I am today. My great-grandparents traveled here from Belgium for the sake of a better life and a brighter future for their children to come. They settled around this area and made their livelihood here. My great-grandparents owned a farm and raised their children to be proper, to learn their manners, to be responsible on the farm, and to carry some traditional Belgian traits with them.

A great Belgian tradition that is still carried in my family is the love of rolle bolle, the famous Belgian game. Whenever my family would have a reunion at a local park, the men would compete in games of rolle bolle. It was so much fun to watch them passionately compete to call themselves champion until the next reunion. Now, it is even more rewarding to remember those times, because I know the heritage behind the game, not just that it's another game.

One of the things that I most recognize from my great-grandparents, beyond the rolle bolle competition at family reunions, is a simple and maybe even common thing – the Belgian Lukken cookies. Whenever my great-grandmother would attend a family event, while she was still able, she would bring a box of her homemade, buttery cookies. The treats were unlike anything that the stores would sell – homemade with an iron to get the round, slim shape. My cousins always thought they tasted a little out of the ordinary, which left more for my mother and I to enjoy.

With those cookies, I was able to learn stories about who my family was and who I am now, listening to the conversation at the “adults” table while my cousins and the other children played tag or football outside. Heritage is important because it reminds us, through stories told, of the hardships faced by those who came before us to give us the life we now have.

My great-grandmother made a picture book for my cousins and me from cutout newspaper and magazine pictures, with labels and written paragraphs about her life in Belgium. And recently, my grandmother found an old diary of a great-grandmother of mine. This diary gave an insight to the humble person she was and simple life she led, often writing about canning

vegetables or crafting quilts for her small children, and always proud of where she came from and proud of where she was now – here, in America.

It's incredible to think, but without the stories one's kin were able to live through, without an individual's heritage, those individuals would literally not be where they are now. It's likely for someone's great-great-grandparents to have missed their boat to take them across the Atlantic, or could never have afforded the luxury of beginning a new life here. Without the voyages made, the lives of those around us could have been drastically altered – they never may have lived here, they may never have been born. It's thrilling to think that because of all of the minute details of our heritage, because of all the specific plans to put into place at just the right time, that we are all where we are today.

Family from both sides of my mother's family descended from Belgium, with the majority having the last name of Boelens, – and much of the family in my dad's outreach circle – with the last name of DeWilde – descended from Belgium as well. It is astonishing to think of the coincidences of marrying an individual with a similar heritage as the other, since the world is so vast and people come from all different walks of life.

It is important that everyone recognize and remember their heritage, because it not only gives us an insight as to how life was for a citizen of either America or a foreign country years ago, but it often teaches us to be humble, grateful, and respectful of those that lived before we did. In this way, I am proud to remember my heritage through my great-grandmother's written words and delicious cookies.

## Moline Pigeon Club

The Moline Pigeon Club was organized in 1896 at Charles Leenknechts' tavern, on 4th Street and 3rd Avenue, with six members. For many years, this was the only one in the area. In the late 1920s, the club's headquarters moved to Peter Coppens' Tavern at 1712 - 7th Street. In 1930, the club had 90 members who regularly raised and flew pigeons. The club moved to VanHooreweghe's Tavern at 1702 - 7th Street that year.

In 1928, the Belgian-American Pigeon Societies was organized for the protection of the pigeon sport. The members would return lost birds to their owners or assist in any other way needed. Membership was made up of the Moline Pigeon Club, East Moline Pigeon Club, Moline West End Pigeon Club, Rock Island Pigeon Club, East Moline Pigeon Bond, and two pigeon clubs in Kewanee.

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*September, 2013*

## **We Will Remember Them**

Preparations have been under way in Flanders for years for the four-year commemoration of the First World War, including the rush to restore the headstones of those who fell in Belgium. The war's "killing fields" are these days such serene and timeless places, that it seems strange to speak of speed in the same breath.

But for those involved in the painstaking restoration, the clock is truly ticking to get the work complete in time to mark the start of the "war to end all wars." The anniversary comes as living memory fades of what was then called the Great War – this will be the first major anniversary for which no known soldiers survive.

Tyne Cot cemetery in Passchendaele held a strategic position in the war, standing in the way of Germany's planned sweep into France from the north. Ten million people are estimated to have died in the war, at least 600,000 in Belgium, of whom at least 550,000 fell in West Flanders. More than 300,000 of these victims are buried in military cemeteries dotted around the Flemish countryside, but at least 200,000 are still missing. Tyne Cot is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world, but is just one of innumerable Commonwealth cemeteries in 153 countries.

Peter Francis of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (GWGC) stated: "We have teams traveling around our cemeteries engraving thousands of headstones and replacing them when they reached the end of their useful life – about 15,000 per year at present." Gravestones generally last about 90 years before the names are erased by wind, rain, and time.

Some headstones bear names and dates, while other countless bodies were never identified and the inscriptions their stones bear simply read "Known unto God."

The CWGC staff also replaces plaques on the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres. Each plaque bears the names of some of those who fell in the area known as the Ypres Salient and have no known grave.

"This is all part of our ongoing commitment to the fallen and perpetual remembrance of their sacrifice," explains Francis. "For the Commission, an illegible headstone is a brave man or woman forgotten, and that is unacceptable to us. We are doing everything we can to ensure our cemeteries and memorials remain fitting tributes to the sacrifices made by those who died in the two world wars."

(By Martin Banks from *Flanders Today*)