



CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

1608 Seventh Street, Moline, Illinois 61265

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www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



February, 2018

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

February 3rd	Waffle Breakfast	8:00 to 11:00 a.m.
February 3rd	Belgian Lacemakers	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
February 12th	Board Meeting	5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

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

Schedule for Volunteers

The February schedule is as follows:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Gift Counter</i>	<i>Host/Hostess</i>
Sat., February 3rd	Barb Michalek (am)	Diana Slininger (pm)
Wed., February 7th	Alan Hoyt	Alan Hoyt
Sat., February 10th	Mary Gardner-Karcher	Mary Gardner-Karcher
Wed., February 14th	Bonnie Newman	Mary Lou Andrae
Sat., February 17th	Millie Kale	Millie Kale
Wed., February 21st	Linda Polich	Barb Coppens
Sat., February 24th	Diana Slininger	Diana Slininger
Wed., February 28th	Bob Francione	Bob Francione

*Contact Diana Slininger at (309) 792-2790
as soon as possible if there is a schedule conflict.*

Belgian Olympians

This year, Belgium will have its largest delegation at any Winter Olympics since World War II. And for the first time ever, three Belgian snowboarders will compete. Stef Vandeweyer, Seppe Smits, and Sebbe De Buck will compete in both the slope style and the big air events. Smits is slope style world champion and is sure to win a medal. The Olympics start February 8th.

Belgium Was Dull

December 2017 will go down in Belgian records as the dullest month since December 1934. With short days and the transition to winter, December usually has the least sunshine; 1.5 hours a day. This past December was even more overcast, with just 10 hours of sun recorded for the entire month. Although temperatures were quite normal, the lack of sun made for an exceptionally somber month.

OPEN Wednesday & Saturday 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Waffle Breakfast 1st Sat. of each month

New at the Kleine Winkel

Thanks to Catherine VanHecke, the Kleine Winkel now has some Belgian garden flags. Designed by Catherine's nephew, they're double-sided and will make a very nice addition to any garden or yard shrubbery. The cost is \$20.00. Get yours soon!



Finding Your Roots

On Saturday, February 10th, Mary Gardner-Karcher will be teaching another class on how to research your Belgian ancestry. The class will be held from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Family History Center, 4929 N. Wisconsin in Davenport, Iowa. And it's FREE!! Why not join Mary and learn some helpful information on how to find your roots.

FEBRUARY
WAFFLE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers for February's waffle breakfast will be Bill and Sandy Coopman, Jan Irwin, Pam Black, Debbie Schwiebert, and Angie Jennes. Mike Kerckhove will mix the mix and start the coffee, Joan DeCap will cashier, and Catherine VanHecke will help everyone enjoy the morning.



Continued Special Thanks

We continue to salute members who have stepped up to sponsor a breakfast or the newsletter. Previous contributors have been: **Mary Joy Allaert Feeney** (3 waffle breakfasts); **Chris Van Lancker** (donates her time in the layout of the monthly newsletter); **Dr. Volkan and Merry Sumer** of Tremont, Illinois (1 breakfast); **Rafferty Funeral Home** (1 breakfast); **Kevin and Colleen Rafferty** (1 breakfast); **Patrick and Barb Van Nevel** (1 breakfast and 1 newsletter); **Debbie and Mark Schwiebert** (1 breakfast), **Kevin DeRoo** (1 breakfast), **Lizette L. Dessey** (2 newsletters) and **Shawn Van Driessche** (1 breakfast).

We have also received from **Pat Blondell**, the **Kevin DeRoo Family**, **Mary Joy Allaert Feeney**, **Phyllis Maxfield**, **Walter and Linda VanDamme**, **Lavone Slead**, **Donna Cavins**, **Barbara Michalek**, and **Alice Van Quekelberghe** additional donations.

Speaking of . . .

In Belgium, people can speak any language they want. And like any other country, it also has official languages: Dutch, French, and German. The use of one (or several) of these official languages is compulsory in a limited number of situations, especially in contacts with the authorities. Sometimes this obligation only applies to an official body, other times to the citizens as well.

Belgium counts over 11 million inhabitants: over 6.25 million in Flanders speak Dutch, 3.5 million in Wallonia speak French (and German in the German area), and around one million are bi-lingual in the Brussels-Capital area. The prevailing language spoken in a specific area is also the language of administration for that area.

An increasing number of Belgians speak at least a second and even a third language, including English. In Dutch-language education, the French lessons start at the age of 10. At the age of 14, pupils are also taught English.



Sabena Belgian World Airways

During the World War I, aircraft had proven their value, and following the war, thoughts turned to using this technology to transform civilian life. The Belgian Armed Forces began investigating ways that aviation might benefit Belgium and was encouraged by King Albert I. During March of 1919, a survey flight took two passengers from Brussels to London, then Paris and back. From that simple beginning would grow SABENA, Belgium's national airline, which would serve nobly in Africa during World War II and in cities throughout the world for almost 80 years.

One early imperative to the development of aviation in Belgium was the commitment of service to the Belgian Congo. The government created CENAC for the study of aviation in the Congo, and survey flights between Leopoldville and N'gombe began in June 1919. In July 1920, regular service began between those two cities, and flights to Lisala and Stanleyville were added a year later under a new name LARA.

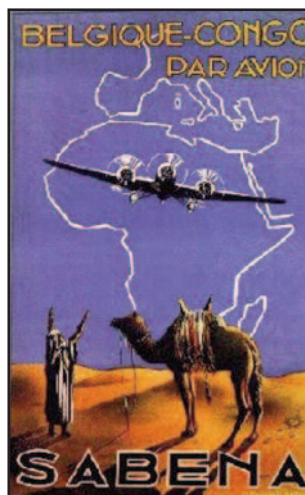
Back in Europe, flights began between Brussels and London in May 1920. Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Paris were added a year later in association with KLM and CMA (of France).

May 23, 1923, was an important date as SABENA came into being with the termination of its forerunner airlines. In June of 1925, flights within the Congo were re-established and by 1930, SABENA's European network covered ten cities.

The airline's route network continued to grow, both in Europe and Africa, until Belgium was invaded by Germany in May 1940. All SABENA operations in Europe were halted. While some of its planes were destroyed, captured, or taken over by the British military, surviving aircraft that had been moved to the Congo enabled SABENA to continue operations within Africa. There, the airline would play an important role throughout the war.

With its already transferred planes and several new ones, SABENA participated in a vital 3,125-mile Trans-Africa Route that linked Cairo with Africa's west coast, where it connected with wartime supply lines flown from the United Kingdom. Throughout the war, SABENA maintained this lifeline network, covering some 20,000 miles, mainly across all of Africa.

When the war in Europe ended, SABENA reopened routes linking Brussels with London and Paris. War surplus airplanes allowed the airline to reopen and expand its Brussels-Congo line. In February 1946,



SABENA received its first four-engine Douglas DC-4 aircraft and placed it in service on the Europe-Congo route, reducing the number of enroute fuel stops from six to three. With delivery of more DC-4s, SABENA began scheduled service to New York via Gander and Shannon in mid-1947.

By the mid-50s, SABENA was flying an average of 370,000 passengers, but was not profitable. Yet the airline still added newer planes and routes to remain competitive. Now serving most significant cities in Europe, it opened new routes to the Mid-East, added Montreal to its North American service, and increased service to Chicago. Additional aircraft were leased to handle traffic to the Brussels World Fair during the spring and summer of 1958.

SABENA's network extended throughout Europe, to the Middle East, across the Atlantic to North America, and to Africa's main cities. It was now time to join the jet age.

(Edited and condensed from Maurice Wickstead's history of SABENA. The conclusion of the history will appear next month.)



This group of Quad City area Belgians is shown departing Moline for Chicago to join their SABENA flight to Brussels in 1954.

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Emissions Free

Antwerp is preparing to welcome the world's first fully electric and emission-free barges. Five small and six large vessels are being developed in the Netherlands, following the Port of Antwerp's call for projects to reduce freight traffic on the roads.

The first of the boats, called Port-Liners, is expected to arrive this coming August. The boats are 170' long and 22' wide, and can carry 24 20-foot cargo containers. The larger models are 360' long and can carry 270 containers.

The boats are driven by batteries that power electric motors. Because there is no need for a traditional engine room, the boats also save space. The electric motors and their batteries can be retrofitted into older boats, as well. In theory, the boats could travel autonomously, without a crew, but this is not an option on most waterways.

With over 7,000 barges in Europe, these electric boats represent only a tiny fraction of shipping traffic to begin with. But it's a start. And the six large boats scheduled for use

are expected to lead to a reduction in CO2 of 18,000 tons per year compared to diesel ships.

(Thanks to Flanders Today)

