



CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE of Western Illinois, Inc.

1608 Seventh Street, Moline, Illinois 61265

(309) 762-0167

www.belgianmuseumquadcities.org



August, 2020

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Center Closed for Safety

Again due to State rules, the Center will be closed during August and there will be NO waffle breakfast. We are hoping that logistics can be worked out so that the Center can be open and the breakfast can restart in September. In the meantime, please stay safe!

Welcome New Members



The Center welcomes new members Diane Wagner, Jeff Mahieu, Dirk De Smul, Stefaan De Groote, and John DeDoncker. Also, Maggie Sonnevile and Joe Galvin sponsored by Walt Sonnevile.

News of the Membership

Thank You to **Diana Wagner** and **Jeff Mahieu** for her donation to the Center along with their memberships, and to the **Richard DeGrauwe family** for their donation.

Sympathy is offered to **Margaret Wadsworth** and family on the death of her husband William, 93, who died July 8th at Heartland Health Center in Moline. Bill and Margaret were longtime members and volunteers at the Center.

Belgian Fest Cancelled

This year's edition of the Fall Belgian Fest has been cancelled. Like so many other activities planned for the area, Illinois' phased rules for dealing with Covid-19 safely made the logistics of the Fest activities nearly impossible to abide by. The Fest Committee thanks the Moline Parks Department for its help, but it too is hindered by the phase rules. We'll see you next year!

Rolle Bolle and a Bit of History

For years, Fred Klann wrote a column in the Moline *Dispatch* titled “Off the Beaten Path.” It covered a wide variety of subjects, but was mostly about Moline, its people, and its interesting subjects. In a column from May 1952, Klann introduced his readers to Edmond VanVooren and Edmond’s love for rolle bolle.

VanVooren was born in Adeghen, East Flanders in 1891. He learned to play rolle bolle as soon as he was able to hold a bolle and became a real fan of the game when he was ten years old. By the age of 15, he started playing in prize games.

At this point in the story, Klann noted that VanVooren referred to “hames.” It was then that Klann discovered that many who came from Belgium when they were adults were unable to pronounce the letter G – as we pronounce it. The name Gust was pronounced “Hoost,” a game was a “hame,” good was “hood,” and many enjoyed eating roast “hoose.”

Klann also learned that a bolle weighed from 7 to 9 pounds and when VanVooren first played the game, the bolle was made of wood. In the early days all bolles, made from African pouf wood (furniture wood), were imported from Belgium. Today, the bolles are made from rubber and exported to Belgium.

Most of you know how rolle bolle is played. Klann thought one of the amusing features of the game was to watch the bolders follow the bolle down the alley, running after it and talking to it. He was told by a non-playing spectator that the players cuss the bolle. VanVooren told Klann that was not so. He declared that tournament rules prohibited profane or dirty language. And most of the players who talk to their bolle do it in Flemish.

Klann learned a few more bits of local rolle bolle history. Van Vooren noted that in tournament games, prize money varied dependent on how many played; each player contributed one dollar. No side betting was allowed in tournament play. In non-tournament games, if played at an alley connected with a tavern, players boll for a beer. Prizes, whether for money or beer, were incidental – it was for the fun!

Edmond VanVooren died in 1979. He had been president of the Moline Bluff Bolders Club and the Western Illinois Rolle Bolle League. He had been on many championship rolle bolle teams over the years, and directed the annual Labor Day tournament sponsored by the *Dispatch*. Perhaps he summed it up best: “It’s fun, it’s a wonderful ‘hame’.”!



Jack and Blake Kelly were introduced to the “hame” at the Friends Circle by friends of their grandfather Jack Sevenandt in 2008.

The CBC will Tour Belgium

If you’ve never been to Belgium, or have been but would like to go again, here’s your chance. Blue Horizon Travel, in conjunction with the Center for Belgian Culture, has created a tour scheduled for Sept. 24th-Oct. 5th, 2021. The tour includes Brussels, Antwerp, the Bastogne area, Ypres, Bruges, Ghent, and the Tielt/Deinze/Nevele /Aalter area. There will be plenty to see and do, both scheduled and on your own.

We will soon be emailing a brochure to you with complete details and itinerary, as well as posting it on our web

and Facebook pages, and at www.bluehorizon.net. Bonnie Newman, who has planned many tours to Belgium, has put together an excellent visit and will be accompanying you on the tour. Patrick and Barb Van Nevel will be there, too.

A preview program will be held Thursday, August 6th, at 2040 N. 1100 Ave. in Lynn Center, IL at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Please join us that evening to get tour details. If you cannot attend, you may contact Bonnie at 309-737-0059 or bonnie@bluehorizon.net.

A Fishing Rarity

It seems that fishing in Belgium has always been male-dominated. But Katrien Terryn made headlines recently when she passed her final exam to become a horseback shrimp fisher.

This method of shrimp fishing has been around for 500 years, but the only place in the world where it is still done is at Oostduinkerke. Those certified for the job attach shrimping cages to big Brabant horses and ride them out into the sea. The cage drags along the sea bed, capturing the little grey shrimps.

There are only 17 certified shrimp fishers left, and only one is a woman. But now there are two. Terryn had to follow a two-year course to take the certification exam.

A long-time shrimp fisher noted that while technique is crucial, a love of horses and the sea cannot be underestimated. “You want to feel the sea on your feet and you carry the

horse in your heart – that’s why you become a horseback shrimp fisher.”

While the fishers to bring back shrimps, they don’t do it for a living. Rather, they are keeping up and old tradition – and entertaining onlookers.

(Thanks to *FlandersToday*)



Warming the House

Sint-Pieters Church in Maasmechelen was built in the 18th century in the neo-Roman style. It is a protected monument. Like any very old church, it is freezing cold in the winter. The church is known for its excellent acoustics and often hosts choirs and concerts. But it had become difficult to get an audience when there was a chill in the air. It was so cold in the church that instruments would fall out of tune. Something is now being done to warm the church.

As part of a thorough renovation, a heating system is being place beneath the tiled floor. So the floor must be removed. But because the church is a protected monument, it must be returned to its original state following any improvements.

How to do that? Number all 1,600 floor tiles with post-it notes. That will allow the tiles to be returned to the exact spot from whence they came. The contractor numbered all the tiles, left to right, front to back. Broken tiles were given the same number so they could be puzzled back together.

While a great idea, but let’s hope the post-it notes don’t fall off.

(Thanks to *FlandersToday*)



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1608 Seventh Street, Moline, IL 61265

CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE

August, 2020

Membership Renewal (Please detach and return)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: () _____ **Email:** _____

Recruiting Member's Name (if applicable): _____

Date: ____/____/2020

Would you like to volunteer? If yes, please let us know how below:

Annual Fees Enclosed (check appropriately):

Single/Family (one per household) \$25.00 _____

Senior (70+) Single/Family (one per household) \$15.00 _____

Please note that complimentary memberships are automatically renewed.

