

# NEWSLETTER

BELGIUM 2010



*Farewell Dinner*

*June 3, 2010*

*Photo by Andre Boucher -- center front.*

## BRUSSELS & WALLONIA: A Destination Full of Characters

While most people around the world associate comics and cartoons with Disney characters like Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, the Peanuts strip of Snoopy and Charlie Brown, the irrepressible Garfield, or Calvin and Hobbes, and super heroes like Batman, Superman and Spiderman, in Europe there is a whole different appreciation of La Bande Dessinée - "the comic strip".

The emergence of Brussels' comic culture coincided with World War II, when a suffering population turned towards the allure of escapism found in the fantasies of the comic strip. Following the war, comic's early readers began developing their own characters and, as they came of age in the 1960s, produced a plethora of talent in a market eager for more comics.

In the immediate post-war period, the rise of two children's magazines shook the publishing world in Belgium before sending shock waves through the rest of Europe. However, Tintin and Spirou were only the first in a line of heroes that were to appear on their pages.

The precision of the drawings, known as the clear line technique, and the richness of the colors prompted the publishers to bring out beautiful hardback editions of these wonderful stories. Moving away from the American influences, the Belgian cartoonists were the creators of a **'9th art'** that appealed to all readerships.

In addition to the most famous Belgian creations, you will also see many other wonderful characters in Brussels - cowboy Lucky Luke ; the Dalton brothers; a strange, bouncing imaginary animal, the Marsupilami; the cheerful Smurfs - known in Belgium as "Les Schtroumpfs" - and the "très British" detectives, Blake and Mortimer.

Belgium may be a small country but it has an unprecedented amount of comic creativity. From the originals of the 1940s to the classics of the golden age and on to modern times. Brussels is in a unique position and has designated itself to be "The Comic Book Capital of the World."

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The city of Wavre, Belgium, sponsored the Peninsula Belgian American Club for a day. This group photo was taken in front of a fresco mural painting painted by Roger LeLoup on the wall of Pont Neuf parking lot near the educational district in Wavre. From left are Ken Davis, Kim Potier Davis, Randy Bouche, Debbie Matsen, Leslie Utech, Nellie DeBaker, Fran Meyer and Lynne Jossart. (Photo by Kim Potier Davis)

**SOUTHERN DOOR: Belgian Americans visit the homeland - - Club returns from Belgium**

BY PAMELA PARKS • DOOR COUNTY  
ADVOCATE  
JUNE 9, 2010

A recent trip to Belgium was a homecoming trip in a sense for many of the members of the Peninsula Belgian American Club.

Members who traced back their Belgian heritage visited the towns where their ancestors once lived and forged friendships with Belgians, who likely will one day return the favor and visit the Belgian Settlement in Wisconsin, located in Southern Door and portions of Kewaunee and Brown counties.

The Peninsula Belgian American Club has been arranging trips to Belgium every other year since 1972. The most recent, a 19-day stay from May 17 to June 4 that included side trips to Denmark, Sweden and Germany, took 13 club members through the hamlets of the Belgian countryside, into historic sites, cathedrals and castles and to the big city of Brussels.

Connecting with family history is one of the purposes of the Peninsula Belgian Club, and the trip makes that final connection. "People want to go and visit and see where their ancestors came from," said Kim Potier Davis, Peninsula Belgian American Club treasurer and trip organizer since 2000. "They do the genealogy research and know where the town is their ancestors came from and want to visit those towns and visit the churches, cemeteries and places they lived."

"It gives you another incentive to want to go to Belgium and find cousins and relatives," said Sue Marchant. This was Marchant's fourth visit to Belgium. Her first trip was in 1992 with her husband, David. They spent a good amount of time on that trip tracking down her husband's relatives from both the Jeanquart and Marchant sides.

Now, visiting Belgium entails reconnecting with past friends and relatives as well as students who have spent time in Marchant's home over the years getting a taste of American life in the small, rural town of Brussels, which shares its name with the capital of Belgium.

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This mural, painted in 1991, was the first wall ever to be painted in Brussels with a comic book theme.

**BRUSSELS** from Page 2

Hergé - a pseudonym of Georges Remi's initials (G.R.) in reverse (R.G.), is a famous Belgian artist, often considered to be the most influential European comic artist ever. He is the father of the best known Belgian comic strip: TINTIN. Willy VANDERSTEEN is the most well known Flemish creator. His most important creation is SUSKE AND WISKE (in English known as Willy and Wanda).

Brussels is home to the Comic Strip Museum, officially known as the "Belgian Centre for Comic Strip Art." The museum is located in the beautiful Art Nouveau setting of the Waucquez Warehouses in Brussels. The Waucquez Warehouses are considered to be one of the masterpieces of the most famous Belgian Art Nouveau architect, Victor HORTA. Horta built the house in 1906 for the Waucquez family who used it for a wholesale cloth business.

**The Hergé Museum in Louvain-la-Neuve**

The high point of the comic strip years in Wallonia took place in Louvain-la-Neuve where a brand new museum

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**SOUTHERN DOOR** from Page 3

Reconnecting with past exchange students was also a highlight for Sue Johnson. "I had exchange students from all three countries — Denmark, Sweden and Belgium — and I thought this trip would be a great opportunity to see where they had come from," Johnson said. This was Johnson's first trip to Belgium.

The travelers stay in the homes of their host families from the Wallonie Wisconsin Society, Peninsula Belgian American Club's sister organization. "That is what is so great," Marchant said. "We stayed with people. You get to live how they do and you get to see what they see."

"I had a wonderful host family and they took really good care of me," said Johnson, who was a bit apprehensive of the idea at first.

Host families took club members to see sites and several towns hosted the group as well, including Wavre, Walloon Brabant — the province where most of the Belgians in the Southern Door area are from — where club members met the mayor of Wavre, enjoyed a lunch at the town's culinary school, and visited notable historic structures.

A poignant moment for Potier Davis was a visit to Antwerp. "Antwerp is the port that the Belgians left from," Potier Davis said. "You stand there and everything is old, and you just imagine them waiting there with their big trunks holding everything they left with and waiting to get on this boat to get to a land that is unknown to them. It was incredible to see."

From Belgian chocolates and beer to waffles and Belgian Pie — which is only similar to the locally available version — the Peninsula Belgian American Club members were able to enjoy the taste of the county as well due to the generous hospitality of the Belgian hosts.

"The food and the drink was outstanding. I tried pretty much anything I could and tried to eat things that were very much Belgian in Belgium, Danish in Denmark, and such," Johnson said. "The Belgian beers were wonderful and the chocolates, too." Not only was the food similar to the local Belgian Settlement, the landform was as well.

"The layout of the land is very much like Wisconsin," Marchant said. "The difference is the buildings — they date back into the 12th and 13th century. But as far as the cropping and the land, cows were out in the fields and it is very much like Wisconsin."

"We saw yellow fields that looked like mustard to us," Johnson said. "It was rapeseed that they grow to produce cooking oils. It was a good time to go because everything was in bloom. It is a beautiful country."

Johnson said she also appreciated being able to travel by train, car, bus, train, ferry and cruise ship on the trip.

On the opposite years, members of the Wallonie Wisconsin Society will travel to the Belgian Settlement in Northeastern Wisconsin and stay with host families just as they have done for decades. The task of matching travelers with families had gotten a bit harder as Walloon speaking Americans are aging, according to Potier Davis.

Often Belgian visitors arrive in time for the Brussels Lions Club Belgian Days celebration. Last year, the Belgian visitors were the parade judges. A large party upon their arrival and prior to their departure is also tradition, as it was for the Peninsula Belgian American Club members in Belgium.

"The Belgian people are very gracious and proud people," Johnson said. "And I am proud to be of that heritage."

**HELP SOLVE A MYSTERY?**

Susan DeNamur Taylor would like to know what became of her 3rd great grandfather, **Louis DE NAMUR**, and his wife **Marie Francois VAES**. Louis was born in Brussels, Belgium in 1804 and Marie Francois was born in Grez-Doiceau in 1813. They came to Wisconsin in 1855 and bought land in the Lincoln/Kewaunee area. No death or cemetery records have been found for them and they do not appear in the 1880 Census. Did they maybe die in the Peshtigo fire? If not, they might be buried at St. Hubert's but the church's online records are incomplete. There is another Louis DeNamur buried there, but he was born much later and died around 1900. Does anybody have information on this family? If so, please contact Susan at [sdt2@cox.net](mailto:sdt2@cox.net) or 949-675-4032.

**2009**

**Donations.....\$783.00**

Anonymous	
Cappelle, Claire	
Charlier, Earl	
Chaudoir, Harry	
Christian Mothers & Rosary Society (B. Chisholm donation)	
Counard, Lee and Joliene	In Memory of our parents Ervin and Julia Counard; Elmer and Ann Vandertie
Dandois Wente, Peg	
DeBaker, Betty and Roy	In Memory of Harry, Grace and Tom Lampereur
DeBaker, Homer	
DeBaker, Len	
DeBaker, Mabel	In Memory of Alden DeBaker, John and Lillian Derenne
Delain, Ron	In Memory of Theophile and Mary Delain, and Family
Dewaelheyens, George	
Belgian Heritage Tour	
Ettien, Lawrence and Gladys	In Memory of William Ettien
Food Committee - Bertha Villers, Theresa Alexander	
Food Committee - Bernie Moore, Joyce Lampereur	
Food Committee - Barb Chisholm, Theresa Alexander	
Janquart, Paul and Donna	
Paque-Domach, Laverne	
Parcel, Sharon	
Reince Koller, Jeanne	In Memory of Fred and Mary (Looze) Reince
Reinemann, John	
Renard, Fr. Peter	
Schieber, Mikki	
Thenell, John and Donna	
Tlachac, Norb	In Memory of Math Tlachac
VandenHouten, Gary and Lori	
Vandeveld, Mildred	In Memory of Eben Vandeveld
Vandrisse, Sherman and Darlene	In Memory of Wm. and Louise Dequaine
Vlies, Marie	In Memory of Alex Parins Sr, Malvina "Chaudoir" Parins, Joe Vlies Sr., Jules "Cochart" Vlies
Weatherbee, Herbert and Gabrielle	

**New Members**

Bellin, Cletus	Forestville, WI
Binard, Marc	Sturgeon Bay, WI
Brown, Jason	Portland, OR
Charlier, Earl	Green Bay, WI
DeBaker, Robert	Green Bay, WI
Englebert, Danielle	Appleton, WI
Gray, Robert	New Franken, WI
Hinz, Karen	Green Bay, WI
Jadin, Shirley	New Franken, WI
Lampereur, Chris	Brussels, WI
Moran, Jim	Aplpleton, WI
Rowe, Arlyne	Green Bay, WI
Sheier, Dan & Jan	Green Bay, WI
Vandenhouten, Cathy	Green Bay, WI

**2010 (Year-to-Date)**

**Donations.....\$5,174.00**

Alexander, Sam	
Brat and Trippe Fry	
Debaker, Darvin	In Memory of Louise DeBaker
DeBaker, Roy and Betty	In Memory of Harry, Grace and Tom Lampereur
DeKaster, Myrtle	
Delain, Ron	In Memory of Patricia Delain
Jandrin, Janice	
Manduca, Joan	In Memory of Harold and Ellen Vandermause
Mulkin, Lisa	In Memory of Timmothy VanCaster
Pierre Family (Dale, Diane Rowader, Donald, Mary, Douglas, Patricia Tweedale, Deborah Thorsen, Denise Fitzgerald)	In Memory of our parents Joseph Julian Pierre and Odile LeGrave Pierre
Vandeveld, Mildred	In Memory of Eben Vandeveld
Weatherbee, Herbert & Gabrielle	

**New Members**

Carlsen, Judy	Norway, MI
DeNamur Taylor, Susan	Newport Bch, CA
Gerondale, Lyle	Green Bay, WI
Henrigillis, Joe	DePere, WI
Huhn, Marie	Appleton, WI
Janquart, Steve	Green Bay, WI
Jeanquart, Tim	Brussels, WI
Lumblo, Thomas	Lithia, FL
Mulkin, Lisa	Spokane, WA
O'Brien, Mary Kay	Mequon, WI
Parins, Tom	Green Bay, WI
Shaw, Dawn	Green Bay, WI
Tassoul, Giles	Green Bay, WI

**BRUSSELS** from Page 3

was dedicated to the life and work of none other than the great Hergé. Inaugurated in May 2009, **the Hergé Museum in Louvain-La-Neuve (Walloon Brabant)** is a modern museum that showcases those famous “Adventures of Tintin”, and the whole artistic output - paintings, sculpture, photography, film - of this prolific creator.

**The Comic Strip Trail**

Throughout Brussels you can see over thirty murals located on buildings or walls, and the interiors of some Metro stations. Each mural acts as a single frame depicting a Belgian comic character within a unique scene. From Captain Haddock, Snowy and Tintin running down a fire escape near the Grand Place to Cubitis taking over the iconic Manneken Pis' position.

It's a matter of national pride that such a tiny country as Belgium has had such a profound impact and influence on the international comic scene.

**Officers**

President - -James Lampereur  
Tel. (920) 866-2189  
Email [Joyce.Lampereur@centurytel.net](mailto:Joyce.Lampereur@centurytel.net)

Vice President - -Al Alexander  
Tel. (920) 825-1328  
Email [atalexander1@hotmail.com](mailto:atalexander1@hotmail.com)

Secretary - - Barb Chisholm  
Tel. (920) 743-5969  
Email [barbmike71269@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barbmike71269@sbcglobal.net)

Treasurer / Newsletter Editor - - Kim Potier Davis  
Mob/Home: (920) 559-1117 Email [kmpd@charter.net](mailto:kmpd@charter.net)

Trustees - - Bertha Villers, Randy Bouche, Barb Goral Lardinois; Chaplain - - Fr. Sam Jadin

## Special Program

*On The Namur National Landmark District  
At the Old Schoolhouse in Namur*

On Thursday, July 15, the Peninsula Belgian American Club will host a presentation on Southern Door County's Belgian Historic District and National Historic Landmark designation. Daina Penkiunas, National Register Coordinator for the Wisconsin Historical Society's historic preservation office, will lead an illustrated discussion on the myths and facts of the National Register. Using examples from around the state, Dr. Penkiunas will discuss common misconceptions, rehabilitation tax credit benefits, evaluation criteria and the process of National Register and National

Historic Landmark designation. The presentation will take place during the Peninsula Belgian American Club regular meeting on July 15 at 7pm in the old schoolhouse in Namur (adjacent to St. Mary of the Snows Catholic Church). The presentation is open to the public. Owners of property located in the Historic District are especially encouraged to attend to learn about tax incentives to improve their property.

For more information, please contact Kim Potier Davis at 920-743-4973 or [kmpd@charter.net](mailto:kmpd@charter.net)

## Calendar

### July 10-11, 2010

Belgian Days

### July 15, 2010 (7pm)

PBAC Meeting - - Speaker

"National Register & National Historic Landmark Designation"

### August 19, 2010 (7pm)

PBAC Meeting - - Speaker

"Civil War"

### September 12, 2010

Kermis (Brussels)

### September 16, 2010 (7pm)

PBAC Meeting - - Speaker

"Antwerp Emigration - Red Star Line"

### October 21, 2010 (7pm)

Last Meeting of the Year

## 49th ANNUAL BELGIAN DAYS

### Saturday, July 10

- 10 am Baseball Tournament
- Noon Food Stands Open
- Volleyball Tournament
- 12:30 Garden Tractor Pull
- 8-12 pm Country Music (John Welch)

### Sunday, July 11

- 8 am Baseball Tournament
- 10 am Parade
- Food Stands Open
- 10-4 Arts & Crafts
- 11-4:30 Kids Play Park
- Noon Country Music (Center Line)
- 5:00pm Raffle Drawing



**Visit Us at The PBAC Booth!**

**MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE PAYABLE BY MAY 31, 2010**

PENINSULA BELGIAN AMERICAN CLUB

1255 N 12TH PL  
STURGEON BAY, WI 54235

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

The PBAC is a non-profit organization that depends upon  
your support to help keep our Belgian Heritage Alive - - THANK YOU!

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE:            NEW MEMBER            RENEWAL

MS/MRS/MR/DR \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (HOME) \_\_\_\_\_ (MOBILE) \_\_\_\_\_

DONATION \$ \_\_\_\_\_ IN MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP RATE:    \$15 PER PERSON - - DUE MAY 31ST EACH YEAR**

PAYABLE TO: PBAC

MAIL TO:    PENINSULA BELGIAN AMERICAN CLUB, 1255 N 12TH PL, STURGEON BAY, WI 54235  
(INCLUDE SELF ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE FOR MEMBERSHIP CARD)

I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE CLUB UPDATES AND QUARTERLY NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL.

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Kim Potier Davis  
Peninsula Belgian American Club  
1255 N 12th Pl  
Sturgeon Bay WI 54235