



Peninsula Belgian-American Club

www.rootsweb.com/~wipbac

January 2007

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next Meeting - -

Thursday,
April 19, 2007
7:30 pm
Namur, Wisconsin



The Roadside Chapel

The Roadside Chapel, formerly known as The Chapel of Our Lady, was originally located on a farm in Dyckesville (corner of County "S" and Bader Road) that was established in 1856 when Josie Wautlet's great grandfather, Jean Alexis LeGrave, a widower, came to this country. The chapel was built in 1871.

In 2003 the chapel was restored and relocated to Robinsonville, behind "The Chapel of Our Lady of Good Help," in the far back corner of the beautiful chapel grounds.

The Roadside Chapel - - "These small chapels were once common among the devout Roman Catholic Walloon speaking Belgian communities in Northeastern Wisconsin. Formerly located east of Dyckesville, this chapel was moved to its present location in Sept. of 2003. It was restored and donated by Troy Thiry and his children Dylan, Allison, and Amber."
Photo by Kim Potier Davis

Located on 6 acres of peaceful farmland just 17 miles Northeast of Green Bay, Wisconsin; 6 miles East of the intersection of Hwy. 57 and Hwy. K; and 1 mile east of the town of Champion on the North side of the highway.

The Chapel - Our Lady of Good Help

Surrounded by dairy farms and fields of corn, oats and soybeans, The Chapel of Our Lady of Good Help stands humbly, yet majestically, in a quiet and beautiful spot of rural Northeast Wisconsin.

The Chapel was the first house of worship in the Belgian settlement. It all began when Adele Brise's father erected a 10-foot-by-12-foot oratory near the spot of Adele's vision of Our Blessed Mother.



When the news spread about Adele Brise's vision of the Blessed Virgin, most people believed the account and were astonished. Some considered the event a demented delusion. Adele Brise, however, considered it a commission to catechize the children and admonish the sinners of the Bay Settlement. To honor the alleged apparition, Adele's father erected a makeshift chapel near the spot of Adele's vision. A small picture of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, given to Adele by Father William Verhoef, was the only adornment of this makeshift chapel. As news of the apparitions spread, pilgrims arrived almost daily to the oratory, making it apparent that the structure was too small to accommodate the faithful. In 1861, the settlers—with the help of Adele's father, Lambert Brise, and a donation from Mrs. Isabella Doyen of five acres of land around the holy knoll—built a 24-foot-by-40-foot Chapel. According to a description of the Chapel reported in the Kewaskum Enterprise, the building was capable of seating about 100 people, and the inscription over the entrance of the Chapel read "Notre Dame de bon Secours, priez pour nous." The description continues.....

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- Letters by Lambert Brise
- Dion-le-Val, Belgium
- Robinsonville, Wisconsin
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- Trip to Washington D.C.

.....“In the auditorium, low, unpainted benches without backs answered the purpose of pews, but the chancel and the altar were richly and expensively decorated with paintings, images and silver plate. On one of the walls of the chancel were hung eight crutches, said to have been left by cripples who had been cured of their lameness through the instrumentality of Our Lady, and which are regarded as ever present witnesses of her power.”

Miracle cures began to occur in the chapel. Tales of blind visitors regaining sight, of the desperately sick being cured, and of cripples restored to health began to spread. Behind the altar, a collection of discarded crutches and canes gradually built up.

Another supposed sign of divine intervention occurred during the famous Peshtigo Fire. On October 9-10, 1871, (the anniversary of Adele's third vision), this massive fire spread through 400 square miles of northeastern Wisconsin, killing about 1,500 people. On the east side of Green Bay, it rapidly spread through the Belgian region. While others fled toward the lake for refuge, Adele and her community called on divine power for protection. They lifted the statue of the Blessed Virgin from the chapel and, carrying it above their heads, circled the buildings while praying for deliverance. The forest fire devastated the land all around them and spread right up to the fence surrounding their enclave -- but did not leap over it. Their wooden school and church stood out like an island in the charred landscape.

Festival of The Assumption

For many years after the original Chapel was first built in 1861, and especially after its spectacular survival of the great Peshtigo Fire of 1871, worshippers from around the peninsula, the state, and even the nation and world have made pilgrimages to the Chapel of Our Lady of Good Help.

Still, unlike the Shrine at Lourdes, the Chapel of Our Lady of Good Help remains relatively unknown to the world outside of Northeast Wisconsin. The Catholic Church has not yet officially recognized the Apparitions of Our Lady to Adele Brise, nor has it made any pronouncements on cures that may have taken place.

For years, the most famous and most attended annual gathering has been the August 15th festival of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated with ceremonies filled with fervent devotion and great reverence. The high point of the Assumption celebration is when a statue of Our Lady is taken from the Chapel and carried in triumphant procession around the Chapel grounds, recalling the procession of the statue of the Blessed Virgin around the sanctuary of the Chapel on the evening the Peshtigo Fire was raging around the Chapel grounds, as well as remembering the day when the original statue of Our Lady, arriving on a steamship from Belgium, was carried from Dyckesville, WI to the Chapel with hymns and prayers.

New Chapel

By the end of the 1930's, it had become clear that, again, the Chapel was too old and small to handle the increasing numbers of pilgrims making their way to the Shrine. Father Smits appealed to Bishop Rhode that if people saw some evidence of the initiation of a building program, Our Lady would see to it that the funds would come. So the Bishop started plans for the building of an updated Chapel, bountiful contributions came in, and Father Smits' assurance of help from Our Lady was confirmed! A new, larger red brick Tudor Gothic chapel seating 300, with its 47 foot by 118 foot main section and a 47-foot wing flanking one side of the sanctuary, was completed in May and dedicated in July of 1942. Today, the Chapel is under the guardianship of the Diocese of Green Bay.



Chapel of Our Lady of Good Help - Robinsonville, WI

Adele Brise and The Apparition

Adele Brise was born in Dion-le-Val, in the Belgian province of Brabant on January 30, 1831. As a child, Adele was involved in an accident with lye that resulted in the loss of an eye. Despite this handicap and a meager education, Adele was known for her charming and inviting personality, fervent piety, simple religious ways.

On October 9, 1859, it is reported that Mary manifested herself to Adele Brise in Robinsonville, Wisconsin, USA. According to Sister Pauline LaPlant, to whom Adele often told her story:

“Adele was going to the grist mill about four miles from (Robinsonville) with a sack of wheat on her head [...]. As Adele came near the place, she saw a lady all in white standing between two trees, one a maple, the other a hemlock. Adele was frightened and stood still. The vision slowly disappeared, leaving a white cloud after it. Adele continued on her errand and returned home without seeing anything more. She told her parents what had happened, and they wondered what it could be — maybe a poor soul who needed prayers?”

The following Sunday on her way to church in Bay Settlement she passed the same spot and told her companions, “there is that lady again.” On her way home from church she again saw the beautiful lady clothed in dazzling white with a yellow sash around her waist. “Who are you and what do you want of me?” Adele asked. “I am the Queen of Heaven who prays for the conversion of sinners and I wish you to do the same. Gather the children in this wilderness and teach them what they should know about salvation.” Then she slowly vanished, leaving Adele overwhelmed and prostrate on the ground in the dense forest. Convinced of the reality of the vision, Sister Adele devoted her entire life to the work she believed she had been commissioned to do.

Source: <http://www.shrineofourladyofgoodhelp.com/index.html>

Photos by Kim Potier Davis

*Thank you for Helping
to Preserve
Our Belgian Heritage*

Donations Made by...

**Joyce Lampereur - - in memory of her parents
Austin & Ceil Allard**

Claire Cappelle

TOTAL: \$ 150.00

THE MISSING BLACK COAT?

Lynda Baudhuin wore her favorite black coat to the Christmas party but returned home with one belonging to someone else.

If you attended the Christmas party wearing a black coat, and left with one that didn't seem to fit quite right - - please contact Lynda at (920) 336-7557 or waynelynb@msn.com



Wallonie Wisconsin Club



**Visitors will arrive from Belgium on
July 2006**

Members of the Wallonie Wisconsin Club will be arriving in Green Bay on July 26th. They'll be staying with host families for a few days before departing on a side trip to Washington DC. Anyone is welcome to join them for the American Heritage tour from July 30-August 9 - - complete itinerary can be viewed online at www.carefree-tours.com , or contact Care Free Travel at address below.

The Belgians will return to Wisconsin to spend a few days with their host families and then depart for Belgium on August 13.

Host families needed

Please contact Kim Potier Davis (920) 743-4973 or kmpd@charter.net if you would like to be a host family. We have a current need for (2-3) Walloon speaking families. Eight Belgians have already signed up for the trip; complete list of names will be provided in the next Newsletter.

Care Free Travel

**5163 Algoma Road
New Franken, WI 54229
920-866-9733, 1-800-844-9733**

American Heritage Adventure

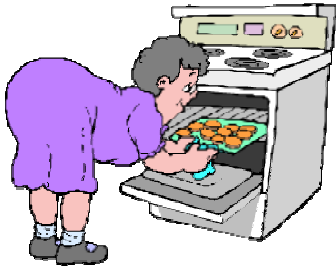
Come and join the Wallonie Wisconsin Club members on a tour of Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Colonial Williamsburg, Gettysburg, and more. This 11-day historic tour is filled with excitement and adventure as we retrace the early history of America and enjoy the present beauty of the nation's capital and other prominent cities in the surrounding area.



American Heritage Adventure

\$1,649 Double Includes:

- Transportation
- Coffee, rolls, juice first morning
- Accommodations
- (11) Breakfasts; (10) Dinners
- Philadelphia Historical Tour
- Annapolis tour
- Jamestown Tour
- Yorktown Tour
- Colonial Williamsburg Tour
- Colonial Plantation dinner with Entertainment
- Mount Vernon
- Washington D.C. City Tour
- Arlington National Cemetery
- Smithsonian Institute
- Washington DC Illumination Tour
- Gettysburg Tour
- Lancaster Countryside Tour
- Hershey Chocolate Tour
- Services of Tour Director



BRAISED BRUSSEL SPROUTS

(Gazette van Detroit)

1 lb. Brussels sprouts, fresh or frozen
 2 T. chopped onion
 a pinch of thyme (or ½ t. Italian seasoning)

1 t. Olive Oil
 1 small bay leaf
 ½ c. stock (or water and ½ stock cube)

Trim the tough part at the base of fresh sprouts and discard any loose or yellowing leaves. Rinse quickly in a sieve under running water and drain.

For best results, select a saucepan that is wide enough to hold the sprouts in a single layer, with a tight-fitting lid.

Heat oil and lightly sauté onion. Add sprouts and stir until they are coated with oil and beginning to brown just a little. Add herbs and liquid and bring to a boil. Cover tightly, reduce heat to slow and cook about 8 minutes. Add pepper and salt to taste.

Belgian Community in The News

■ Door County Advocate – November 18, 2006

Town asks for Namur triangle land

The town of Union wants to preserve a pocket of Belgian history using a parcel of Door County owned land.

Union Town Board supervisors Cletus Fontaine and John Bur appeared before the Door County Property Committee on Nov. 15, to ask the county to give Union a triangular, almost 5-acre parcel of land in Namur at County N and State 57.

The triangle of land at the Namur curve will become county property when the diverted, four-lane State 57 is completed in 2008. The town of Union has asked Door County for the land as part of a plan to preserve the area's Belgian heritage.

The property falls within a Belgian historical site and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Some of the buildings that surround the land include an old Belgian home, the former Fontaine General Store, a tavern, a former school and St. Mary's Church. "They're trying to preserve the Belgian architecture and community," Fontaine said. The town has no current plan for the land, except to use it in the future to preserve the Belgian enclave. This could mean, for example, relocating a Belgian structure to the property.

Dyckesvillians a bit lonely

Road construction began on the southbound lane of State Hwy 57 in Dyckesville last September, with all traffic shifted to the northbound lane. The traffic is now routed around Dyckesville and will no longer run through the main business area. Access from the state highway to Dyckesville was limited and some businesses reported an immediate 40% drop in sales.

Note: Door County Advocate, Dec. 2, 2006, the Dyckesville bypass project on State Hwy. 57 in Brown and Kewaunee counties is complete, according to the state Department of Transportation. A new intersection at Kewaunee Cty "P" has opened, and all lane restrictions on the new northbound State 57 bypass have ended.



75 Years Ago – May 8, 1931

Andrew **VAN DREESE**, 21, of Sturgeon Bay, was killed Tuesday at the Leathem D. Smith shipyard while working on the steel freighter Sinaloa. Dean **HOSLETT**, a Sturgeon Bay seventh grader, won the Chamber of Commerce first-place award of \$2 for his essay "Why Should We Keep Sturgeon Bay Clean?"

Virgil **ALBERT** of Sturgeon Bay High School won first place in the extemporaneous speaking contest in the district forensic meet held in Oshkosh.

100 Years Ago – Nov. 15, 1906

Licensed to Wed: Jules **MALLIEN** and Louise **MASSART**, Brussels; Leon **MACCOUX**, Gardner and Eugenie **LARDINOIS**, Brussels.

100 Years Ago – Nov. 22, 1906

Chicken thieves are raiding some coops in western Nasewaupée area. Among the worst hit was Philip **DEBROS**, who Thursday lost a number of his prize chickens. Licensed to Wed: John **WAUTLET** and Mary **DELFORGE**, both of Brussels; John B. **EVERARD** and Josie **DELVEAUX**, both of Union; John **BIRDSALL**, Forestville, and Ruth Matsick, Clay Banks, no dates given.

TRAVELING BACK.....

Door County Advocate

IN MEMORIUM

With Deepest Sympathy
to the family of

Norman Wautier
March 26, 1916 – Oct. 24, 2006

Elmer J. DeDecker
August 5, 1925 – October 27, 2006

Long time club member and past officer, Elmer DeDecker, passed away Friday, Oct. 27, 2006. He was born in Misere, to Elmond and Annias (Neuville) DeDecker. Elmer was a member of the club since it began in 1960 and he served as Secretary-Treasurer for 23 years. Elmer's efforts resulted in his being knighted by King Baudoin of Belgium in 1986.

Elsie (Van Pee) DeBaker
July 3, 1918 - December 10, 2006

Robert J. LaLuzerne
Dec. 29, 1932 – January 1, 2007

*"May the memories held deep within your heart,
help to soothe your spirits."*



OFFICERS

President - James Lampereur
5405 Oak Leaf Dr
Luxemburg, WI 54217
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Vice President - Allen Alexander
1262 Bayshore Rd
Brussels, WI 54204
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E-mail: atalexander@hotmail.com

Secretary-Treasurer – Kim Potier Davis
1255 N 12th Pl
Sturgeon Bay WI 54235-1159
Tel: 920-743-4973
E-mail: kmpd@charter.net

Trustees - Mary Ann Defnet, Bertha Villers, Randy Bouche

Chaplain – Fr. Sam Jadin
Newsletter Editor – Kim Potier Davis

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Claire Cappelle.....Kalaupapa, Hawaii

THANK YOU!

Thank you to Rep. John Gard of Peshtigo for donating flags to our club. The flags will be used at the monument in Namur.



Book Donation

LÎVE DI MOTS «d'après Nameur èt avar-là»
2e modéye – 2002; Lucien Somme; Rèlis namurwès

SPOKEN WORDS: around Namur and surrounding area
2nd Edition – 2002; 361 pp.; Wallon to French dictionary

From the Forward: "Wallon is a language whose spelling is guided by three principles, 1) phonetics, 2) the analogy to French, and 3) etymology. These principles are difficult to apply simultaneously. This is the reason that priority is given to the phonetic (the local variations are indicated following the pronunciation ..."

This volume is the bridge between our elders' Wallon and our French. Skipping English in the process saves a step and speeds our understanding.

*Donated to Algoma Public Library
by Michael Dearing*

Wisconsin library joins Google book project

<http://www.library.wisc.edu/news/releases/2006/20061012-GoogleBook.html>

**\$12 per Person
Due by May 31st**

2007-08 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Have you paid your dues ?

Name(s) _____
Address _____
_____ Do you speak Walloon? _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$12 - PER PERSON

Make checks payable to "PBAC" and mail to Kim Potier Davis, 1255 N 12th Pl, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for membership card

DONATION

Amount Enclosed for Donation \$ _____ (Used for maintenance on schoolhouse in Namur)
(In Memory of...) _____ (if applicable)

How would you like to receive your "Newsletter?"

By E-mail (color) -- address: _____
(Don't forget to notify us if your address changes)

I'm unable to receive E-mail -- send a B/W copy by regular mail.

 Peninsula Belgian American Club 
1255 N 12th Place
Sturgeon Bay WI 54235-1159 USA

2006} Year in Review

Thank you for your Donations..... \$1,474.00

Baenen, Merlin		Howard, Robert	
Baudhuin, Wayne and Lynda		Jadin, Marilyn	
Baylake Bank		Jadin, Rev. Sam	
Binard, Joe		Jandrin, Janice	
Burns, Joanne		Koller, Jeanne	
Chaudoir - Food Committee		Lavine, Tom and Judy	
Clabots, Gerald and Della		Manduca, Joan	
DeBaker, Betty and Roy	In Memory of Harry, Grace and Tom Lampereur	Palzer, Bob	
DeBaker, Darwin and Louise		Pierre, Douglas	
DeBaker, Homer		Reinemann, John	
DeBaker, Mabel	In Memory of Alden DeBaker	Renard, Howard and Angela	
DeBaker, Nellie		Renard, Fr Pete	
DeJardin, Mary Ann	In Memory of Louis DeJardin	Thenell, John and Donna	Mary Herlache Memorial
Dekaster, Myrtle		Thenell, John and Donna	
Delforge, Clyde and Joanne		Thiry, James and Carol	
Delvaux, Russell and Joyce		Thome, Ron	
Delveaux, Cletus		Tlachac, Norb	In Memory of Math Tlachac In memory of Tony and Mae Mallien
Delwiche, Reg		Uhyrek, Joan	
Domach, Laverne		Vandenhouten, Gary	
Fontaine, Cletus and Shirley		Vandrisse, Darlene and Sherman	
Food Committee – Theresa Alexander		Zingler, William	
Havel, Sue			

New Members

Theresa Annoye	Sturgeon Bay, WI	Nancy Goman Haley	Woodbury, MN
Barbara Barrett	Galt, CA	Ron Thome	Green Bay, WI
Bernard & Priscilla Baudhuin	Brussels, WI	Robert Howard	Ames, IA
Neal & Mary (Renard) Bessett	Green Bay, WI	Reg Delwiche	Mountain Home, AR
Gary DeBauche	Green Bay, WI	Frank Mead	Sun City, AZ
Bob DeGrave	Green Bay, WI	Arky Englebert	Two Rivers, WI
Donat VandenHouten	Sheboygan, WI	Randi Tassoul	Brussels, WI
Lory VandenHouten	Beaver Dam, WI	Dave Neuville	Sturgeon Bay, WI
Mark VandenHouten	Green Bay, WI		

Financial Summary

Income		Expense	
Books & Postage	289.10	Books	325.00
Christmas Party	1272.00	Christmas Party	1391.91
Flags	110.00	Equipment	250.00
Shirts/Hats	228.50	Insurance	458.00
Pins/CDs/Misc	90.80	Newsletter	763.49
Dues	3110.00	School Maintenance	8581.74
Donations	1465.50	Shirts/CD	570.70
Belgian Days (Books/Shirts/Hats)	761.00	Supplies/Misc	148.21
		Utilities	513.60
	\$7326.90		\$13,002.65
Checking/Savings	\$6897.90		

2006} Year in Review

Peninsula Belgian American Club

The Peninsula Belgian American Club, located in Namur, Wisconsin, is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1964 for the purpose of keeping our Belgian heritage alive.

To recreate and hold dear that era in history, when good fellowship was prime, when our most effectual tool was prayer and a "good neighbor", when our forefathers well knew that a combined effort was the number one necessity for life.

To promote cultural, social and charitable functions around the counties, for the betterment of our immediate surroundings and for our "neighbors."

To communicate with, assist, and accept assistance from all other Belgian American Clubs, wherever they may be located.

OFFICERS

James Lampereur; President; Allen Alexander, Vice President; Kim Potier Davis, Secretary-Treasurer
Trustees - Mary Ann Defnet, Bertha Villers, Randy Bouche; Chaplain – Fr. Sam Jadin

MEMBERSHIP

The Peninsula Belgian American Club currently has a membership of 283 with 19 new members joining in 2006. Membership dues increased from \$10 to \$12 per person after June 1st.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance on the schoolhouse continues. New roof and gutters were installed on the school, a new gas furnace was put in before the Fall meeting; painting was completed on the front steps, middle room and main room; outside chapel was cleaned and painted. Volunteers help with the indoor maintenance and cleaning on a monthly basis. Many hours of scraping have been completed on the stairway but many more are required to complete the job. Volunteers also made new curtains for the windows, washed floors and windows, refinished furniture, etc. Work was also completed outdoors to keep the yard and building maintained, and special attention is always provided for the flags on the monument. Some people have asked when the school's upstairs living quarters will be maintained. At this time, there are no immediate plans to do anything upstairs. That area has never been touched and would require a huge amount of time and money. Thank you to everyone who donated time, money, equipment or provided support in any other way - - we could not continue without your generosity.

EVENTS AND PROJECTS

Information and equipment in the genealogy room is expanding due to member donations which includes bookcases, and a copy machine. All members are invited to fill out a Family Genealogy form for inclusion in our binder that is kept for reference. We've also started a photo album that will include a name and picture of all members. If you would like to be included, please send us your photo. Our participation at Belgian Days continues - - 2006 was a success with regards to the amount of items sold, but the number of people who stopped by our booth to talk about their Belgian Heritage was priceless. Thank you to everyone that helped at the booth, and represented our club in the parade. Our Annual Christmas Party was held at the Eagle's Nest in Green Bay. All reports indicate that it was a "Merry" event, attended by 106 of our members who enjoyed the food, great company, and entertainment provided by "The Odd Couple." This was the year for our trip to Belgium - - (19) of our club members joined us for the trip... (18) PBAC members and (18) Belgians from the Wallonie Wisconsin Club also enjoyed a side trip to Ireland. Thank you to the Wallonie Wisconsin Club and all of the wonderful host families, and their assistants, who welcomed us into their home or provided transportation.

BEHIND THE SCENES ACTIVITIES

There is a lot of activity performed by our members behind the scenes to promote our Belgian Heritage such as a radio talk segment on WDOR (*scheduled again for July 2007*); visits to local schools; representation at International Bay Fest in Green Bay; presentations on the Peshtigo Fire and how it affected the Belgian community; research required to obtain a historical plaque that is now on the outside of the schoolhouse; maintaining a website presence that has reached people around the world; discussions with the Norbertines regarding the church in Namur; discussions with the Department of Transportation regarding signage for the historical sites in Namur; assistance provided to the Door County Chamber of Commerce for new projects; representation at local historical society meetings; members who grant interviews for new videos and documentaries. The list is endless!

MEETINGS

New and visiting members are always welcome at club meetings. Several came to visit from Belgium, Florida, etc. We had guest speakers that talked about the Peshtigo Fire, and the Oneida Tribe of Indians. Past documentaries of our Belgian community have been shown; and photos of a recent club trip were shared. Members have been taking advantage of the books and documents in the genealogy room prior to our meetings, and sharing information with each other on their family history.

VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORT

It's impossible to list all of our volunteers because it's a very long list. It would include the person who brings the water so we can have coffee at our meetings; members who volunteer for the food committee each month; those that come on Cleanup Day or provide maintenance inside the school and around the yard. The ones that are always there to help with special events and activities. The person who maintains and displays our flags at the monument; another that installed wheels on the giants; host families who open their homes to visiting Belgians; those that volunteer to be on a committee; and our club Officers who contribute countless hours for a variety of reasons. Members that provide monetary donations, or equipment. Support can be provided in many ways and we have a tremendous group of members, and non-members, that volunteer their time to help preserve our Belgian Heritage. Many go unnoticed and do not require gratitude but we know who you are and every bit of it is appreciated.

Walloon Brabant



DION-LE-VAL

The village of **Dion-le-Val**, where Sister Adele Brise was born, is located in the municipality of **Chaumont-Gistoux** in the province of Walloon Brabant. Dion-le-Val merged into Dion-Valmont on July 17, 1970. The villages of Bonlez, Chaumont, Corroy-le-Grand, and Gistoux et Longueville were also part of the merger.

Dion-le-Val was also the home of the famous DION family who lived in the village until 1627. Josine de Dion married Jean de Henin-Liétard, baron de Fosseux, the property remained in the hands of Henin-Liétard until the French revolution. The famous Lorraine glassmakers in the village manufactured special goblets, bottles and glasses. Some beautiful specimens were found at the time of the excavations of the castle of the Mound with Archennes.

There is very little population information for the village; old registers and files were transported to Brussels in 1695. They were later destroyed at the time of the bombing and fire by the Marshal of Villeroy to the service of Louis XIV. The parochial registers start in 1695. In 1666, one counted 70 inhabitants and 54 in 1709; in 1784, 182; in 1856, 361. The church is dedicated to Saint Martin. The primitive temple is very old (1211) and was on the site opposite the current church that was built in 1838.

Dion might have been named after the Celtic word *devonos*, divine, holy. in Latin, the toponyms Devona and Divona refer to holy rivers, and Dion might have been named after a holy fountain or source. Dion, made of the two villages of Dion-le-Mont and Dion-le-Val, is located on a large limestone strip stretching from Givet to Beauraing; limestone is there rich in iron lodes, which have been exploited since the Roman times.



Saint Martin de Dion-le-Val, Belgium

Letters from Lambert Brice in America to J.J. Delmez in Belgium, 1855

ANNEXE27 Green Bay on November 20, 1855. "My very dear cousin, it is on this day that I hasten to write to you to announce that I am in perfect health and I hope that you are the same there. My dear cousin, our voyage here was 42 days on water and then by road we had a famous embarrassment which caused us much sorrow, we had all our lost trunks; this is the reason I did not write to you more quickly, but now thanks to God, they returned. My dear cousin, if you want to come to find us, always provide you with food, you know what we had, and we still had little. My dear cousin what I have to say to you if you get under way, take attention with your trunks well. My very dear cousin, we are very content in America, we bless the hour and the moment that God transported us to America. My dear cousin, here the manner of cultivating the ground, one cuts the trees to 2 feet off the ground, then they are cut out, they together are rolled and one puts fire at it, and soon all is tiny room in ashes and then one plants there potatoes which produce in great abundance, one sows all kinds of grains like on our premises and it produces very well. Finally! my dear cousin, for a man who wants to work it makes much easier food in America than in Belgium: for me my dear cousin I would not like in Belgium because I to be blessed any more the hour and the moment that I arrived to America. In America all the food products sell well, and the same with cattle. Finally my dear cousin

may I dare to tell you my side that which has to come to America and which does not come there is foolish because in Belgium you will always be unhappy where in America your happiness and your fortune are in your hands. Finally dear cousin I hope if you have happiness to come to find me, that you will be content and merry and that you will be blessed by the Lord to have transported you in a rich and pleasant country for the farmer, where rests the happiness and the fortune of your family. My dear cousin, for hunting that we spoke so much together you will have much pleasure, hunting is free with everyone. You can even pass the enclosures and drive out everywhere. We bought 108 hectares of ground, our grounds are quite as flat as the large meadow of Gastuche, and we have done everything very excellent, and now we have cattle.

27 Appendix - *On the testimony of Marcel COPAY, author of the article "A Marvelous History" published November 1960 in the parochial sheet of Dion-le-Val "Our Bell-Tower", we present a letter intended by L. BRICE for his cousin Jean DELMEZ. The author affirms to have received "several other letters". It is in vain that we sought them.*

First quality whole wheat flour is sold for 4 dollars the hundred books, which makes 21 frank and 20 centimes, the potatoes are sold 2 dollars the hundred kilo. A cow with its calf is sold from

Like Lambert Brice, and so many others, letters were exchanged with relatives and friends left behind in Belgium. These early settlers described the new country in glowing terms and optimism. Their glowing letters to relatives and friends in Belgium were perhaps due to a desire to justify their judgment amongst the home people, for many shook their heads disapprovingly when the first emigrants had left their old neighborhood to seek a new life in an unknown land.

In Belgium such letters were passed from one to another and read by hundreds, for emigration to America was still such a new idea that it seemed a wonderful thing to hear. Many of those able to, departed at once for the new country full of pleasant anticipation.

45 to 55 parts. A pair of oxen is sold from 80 to hundred dollars and the horses are sold hundred dollars the part: here one does not plow with the cows like on our premises, it is with oxen and the horses but one always chooses the lightest work for the horses, the grounds are sold 20 dollars the 40 arpents which makes approximately 18 hectares. My dear cousin when you arrive and your friends come by us your housing awaits you, but what I recommend to you when you get under way is to keep all the Belgians together as long as you can because on all transport there are many Germans and when they have the top they cause much suffering. Everyone said that the Belgian workmen were apprentices, it is false because a good Belgian workman is worth a good American workman and if you come, take all the tools you can because they are expensive in America. My dear cousin if I were to still make the passage I would prefer to come by Canada, to pass by Quebec, that will cost you much less because in New York are many robbers and also on the road. When you come have kindness to send 2 spades to me, because on our premises we have a marshal who makes some and he asks 2 dollars the part and very badly made, also have kindness to bring tools to me to Guiaumes to strips and of all kinds of iron because in America that is very expensive, bring 2 ells of packed slipper, 4 pairs of bottom for the women, 1 pair for me and a pair for the small little one, and each pair of shoes at Philippe close to..., a book of blue for the linens, a scythe. We all are in perfect health and I hope that your family is the same there, dear cousin give my regards to all the family – regards to my brother Jean François PIÉRARD and his family and François (DAISE) and his family. Best regards to Jean P

EAU and all his family that it goes very well. My dear Frère J.F. PIERARD, you spoke to us as if your children would separate from you, come close to me and you will be very well, you will eat white bread there all your life. Your dear sister kisses you with all her heart and we all are in better health than in Belgium. Best regards to François PIERARD and his family. Best regards to Marie-Catherine VASE my cousin and all the family. Our best regards to all our friends of Dion-the-Val. Best regards on behalf of Adèle to Marie-Thérèse DEVROIE. Best regards on behalf of Pérance to Marie-Catherine LOICQ, Marie-Isabelle OTTAT. Dear cousin give best regards to the LAMBERMONT family, and the Priest. Dear cousin I finish my letter by kissing you all of all my heart, have the kindness to return news as soon as possible. Dear cousin, approve my agricultural greetings. Make the compliments with J. Joseph VASE and all his family and the small Vital one made many compliments with his/her Benoît brother. Have kindness to say a mass which I had promised at a rate of my effects, have kindness to say and one will return the money to you or to those which would come there. Here is our address: Mr. Brise, in Green Bay United States of America. Have kindness to make our compliments with J. Joseph DEQUEL and his wife Françoise EVRAERTS in Dion-le-Val. Have kindness to make the compliments of Jean-Baptiste EVRAETS and all family; we are all close to each other and we are all well. Hoping that you are the same there and hoping to see you arriving one day by us. You will give this letter to Victoire THEYS".

Source: Andre & Xavier Theys, Belgium; and Paul Theys Translated from French

Robinsonville

Robinsonville, Wisconsin - - located in Kewaunee County, 4 miles south of Dyckesville, and 3 miles from New Franken off Hwy. 54 - - is the location for "The Chapel of Our Lady of Good Help."

The Belgians called Robinsonville "Aux Premiers Belges."

This was home to some of the first Belgian settlers in Northeast Wisconsin. In 1853, ten families, most from Grez Doiceau, county of Wavre, Province of Brabant, Belgium departed for the United States, eventually settling in Robinsonville. The names of the heads of these ten families who formed the first Belgian settlement, are as follows: François Petinot, Etienne Detienne, Martin Paque, Philip Hannon, Adrian Masy, Joseph Moreau, Jean Baptiste Detienne, Joseph Jossart, Lambert Bodart, and Jean Martin; with them, were their wives and children.

"The passage from Antwerp to New York was long, tedious, and rough, attended with several terrific hurricanes, one of which carried off the mainmast of the ship. There were many hardships, such as hunger, thirst, sickness, and one death; but finally we arrived in New York harbor July 5, having been tossed on the troublous sea for forty-eight days."