

Belgian Laces



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BELGIAN LACES

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THE BELGIAN RESEARCHERS
Belgian American Heritage Association
Founded in 1976

Our principal objective is:

Keep the Belgian Heritage alive in our hearts and in the hearts of our posterity

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Dear Members,

This is the last edition of the year. The Holidays will be on us very rapidly now Thanksgiving by next week, Saint Nicolas a few days later, the end of school for our children and grandchildren, followed rapidly with the family reunion and festivities of Christmas and finally New Year. We at The Belgian Researchers wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Peace and Joy to all of you, from all of us!

It is time also to renew your membership for 1992. A New Year with many new projects, a new presentation for our newsletter and increased contact with all of you.

Many of you have asked explanation and detail about the French Republican Calendar, we answered and mailed you a copy of the calendar, that was previously published in Belgian Laces. This month's contribution from Micheline Gaudette is a complete discussion and presentation of the thirteen years of the French Republican Calendar. It represents a true feat of academic research as well as an indispensable source of reference to anyone researching the years 1793 to 1806. However, due to lack of space in this publication and the high cost of printing and mailing, we only print the introductory pages of the calendar. We had the complete calendar (15 pages) printed as a separate publication and available to you upon request \$ 3,00 postpaid from this office) This is an exceptionally clear overview and concise, day by day, conversion of the Republican Calendar. Thank you Micheline for an exceptional contribution to the efforts of the organization.

We also have to thank, especially Mary Ann Defnet for her regular Wisconsin Corner. This time, very timely, she did something a little different and very suitable: "A Belgian Christmas in Wisconsin" including ideas for a Christmas menu. Thank you, Mary Ann! We welcome and encourage ALL our members to share their memories. We can learn so much from each other, and this way we can keep our Belgian Heritage alive. Where would we be, at The Belgian Researchers, if we didn't have the regular contributions from both of you. We are always hoping to get more members involved the same way. We wouldn't hesitate to raise the number of pages to accommodate everyone. Does anyone have some traditional "Easter Celebrations?" to share in the Spring edition of Belgian Laces?

An embarrassing spelling mistake crept into the last issue of Belgian Laces. We apologize for this (at least we were consistent, writing 8 times recipe for recipe, even our WP didn't detect it).

sincerely yours,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

BONNE ANNEE!

GELUKKIG NIEUW JAAR!

GUTES NEUES JAHR!

Radio Broadcasts for America. Did you know that the Belgian Radio and Television Station B.R.T., broadcasts daily in English, French, Dutch, German and Spanish: news and information, various word - and music programs, which can be listened to anywhere in the United States and Canada.

As the frequencies of these broadcasts have to be changed regularly, for technical reasons, we can not publish here the exact times.

The best thing to do in order to keep regularly informed on these various programs, the language in which they are broadcast, the wave-length or frequency, and the time on which they are beamed in the direction of the continent we are staying in, is to apply for a time and table schedule at the following address:

BRT-Worldbroadcast - P.O.Box 26, B-1000-BRUSSELS - BELGIUM

In Belgium and all Over Europe. Legal Age is 18.

Since the beginning of the year 1990, all young Belgians come to age on their 18th birthday. This decision was taken by the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, after 13 years of discussions. This decision brings Belgium in line with all other Western European Countries.

The Challenge of Europe.

In terms of its inhabitants, the EEC (European Economic Community) offers a market potential of 320 million consumers as against 250 million in the USA and 100 million in Japan. Another significant figure: the GNP of EEC states aggregated with the GNP of the EFTA states (European Free Trade Association) amounts to some \$us 4,300,000 million, by far exceeding the American score of \$US 100,000 million. (Wallonie/Ruxelles Magazine Aug,90)

A SPECTROMETER, one of a kind. The University of Mons, Hainaut in Belgium, has just inaugurated a new experimental mass-spectrometry laboratory. Thanks to the powerful computer system complementing it, this equipment is unique in the world; it is capable of both separating infinitely small quantities of a mixture into its components parts (something less than a thousandth of a thousandth of a millionth of a gram) and ascertaining its composition. Using this equipment, a study is underway on a large variety of molecules on which depend the start of life itself. (WBM June 91)

Starting June 1993, the Chunnel will be open for traffic.

The Tunnel-under the Channel, called affectionally THE CHUNNEL, will connect the European mainland with England. This means that next time we go to Europe, we will be able to take the train in France to go to England, or the opposite.

If we want to go by car we will have to wait a little longer, (sorry about that) the shuttle train for cars and trucks will only be in service starting September 1993. More than 100 Km in length, will take less than one hour, instead of more than 3 hours with the Ferry. I suppose that we will be patient enough to wait for the grand opening...

Confused by the French Republican Calendar? You are not alone. Hopefully, this article and the following pages listing the French Republican Calendar dates and corresponding Gregorian Calendar dates, will help those dealing with the 1793-1806 period when the French Republican Calendar was in full bloom, and in later years when it was referred to.

The French Republican Calendar

By Micheline Gaudette

The 1789 French Revolution brought many changes to France and later to Belgium and other European nations that were invaded and occupied by France.

Some of the changes were good, some were bad, and some were of questionable usefulness, the French Republican Calendar falls into the latter category.

In France, the need for a new calendar had already been expressed in 1785, when an almanach suggested the substitution of feast days named in honor of saints, by feast days named in honor of accomplishments of great men (e.g. Newton would have presided over the Univers feast day, Jean-Jacques Rousseau over Sensitivity feast day etc...). In 1788, another publication "Almanach des Honnêtes Gens" by Pierre-Sylvain Marechal, went one step further. It proposed a year of 12 renamed months divided by 3 weeks made of 10 days each, the year would have begun on March 1st, feast days would have been named in honor of great men, and each 31st day would have been a holiday dedicated to an ideal. The similarities between Almanach des Honnêtes Gens and the French Republican Calendar are quite obvious and point to the influence that the former had on the latter.

In an effort to break away from anything connected with the old pre-revolutionary regime, and to introduce decimal numeration to date recording, and to promote good feelings toward the new Republic, the French National Convention decreed on October 5, 1793, that a new calendar, a Republican Calendar, would replace the Gregorian Calendar used until that time by France and other European nations. The new calendar was the result of the work of distinguished scholars of that era, and had been submitted on September 20, 1793, to the French National Convention where it was adopted.

It was decided that the **French Republican Calendar** would be effective retroactively as of September 22, 1792, the date of the birth of the French Republic, the old regime (Ancien Régime) and royalty having ended on September 21st of that year. Since one year had already passed, the calendar started with Year II (An II).

The year of the French Republican Calendar started at midnight on the day of the true AUTUMN equinox as recorded by the Paris Observatory, it was divided into 12 months of 30 days each, with 5 holidays added at the end of the Republican year. These holidays were called Sans-Culottes (without breeches) so named in memory of the revolutionaries who adopted "pantalons" (trousers) instead of culottes (breeches), and were scornfully called "without breeches" by the aristocracy. Most often the Sans-Culottides days were referred to as Jours Complémentaires (complementary days).

The name Franciade was given to each four year period, and a day was added to the last year of the Franciade period, that year served the same purpose as the Gregorian leap year. But Gregorian leap years were 1796 and 1804 and Franciade "leap" years were III, VII and XI.

Originally the 12 months of the French Republican Calendar were designated as ‘First Month of Year II, Second Month of Year II, etc...,’ and divided into three decades (10 days), but it was quite confusing to have to say Second Day of Third Decade of First Month of Year II. This complicated system was soon modified, and a new decree dated 3rd Day of the 1st Decade of the 2nd Month (October 24, 1793) gave names to the months of the French Republican Calendar. The French poet Philippe Fabre d’Eglantine (1750-1794, composer of the song “Il pleut, Il pleut, Bergère”) played an important role in naming the months, disregarding completely the revolutionary themes very much in vogue, he selected nature as a base for the months’ names. The days were also given new names: Primedi (1), Duodi (2), Tridi (3), Quartidi (4), Quintidi (5), Sextidi (6), Septidi (7), Octidi (8), Nonidi (9). Decadi (10). Names of objects, plants or animals useful to man were associated to each day, e.g., each Decadi of the month of Vendemiaire was dedicated to objects: vat, wine-press, barrel, used in harvesting grapes and making wine.

MONTHS OF THE REPUBLICAN CALENDAR

Autumn months were:

VENDEMIARE (from Latin Vindemia: grape harvest).

BRUMAIRE (from French Brume: mist).

FRIMAIRE (from French Frimas: frost).

Winter months were:

NIVOSE (from Latin Nivosus: snowy).

PLUVIOSE (from Latin Pluvia: rain).

VENTOSE (from Latin Ventosus: windy).

Spring months were:

GERMINAL (from Latin Germinis/Germen: buds).

FLOREAL (from Latin Flora: flowers).

PRAIRIAL (from French Prairie: meadow).

Summer months were:

MESSIDOR (from Latin Messis: harvest, and Greek Doron: gift).

THERMIDOR (from Greek Thermos: heat, and Greek Doron: gift).

FRUCTIDOR (from Latin Fructus: fruit, and Greek Doron: gift).

On 15 Fructidor An XIII (September 2, 1805), a proposal to eliminate the French Republican Calendar was submitted to the French Senate. After reviews the proposal was accepted. The Republican Calendar was abolished and the Gregorian Calendar was restored on January 1, 1806.

Sources

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A Belgian Christmas in Wisconsin

Many times this writer is asked how the Belgians celebrated Christmas and how they decorated their trees. The time referred to is from their settlement here in northeastern Wisconsin (1853) to the early 1900's. Questions were asked of the oldest known descendants of the pioneers. Here is what we found out and what we pass along to those who question us:

During the first years in their new country, times were very difficult for the Belgian settlers. Their time was spent working to make a suitable home for their families. The nearest churches were miles away, so on special occasions the neighbors would get together for quiet celebrations.

Christmas trees were not common in the Belgian homes until around the turn of the century. The big holiday celebration for Belgians and their children was on St. Nicolas Day, December 6. On the eve before, children put out their shoe or a plate and St. Nicolas would bring them treats while they slept - if they had been good during the year. The treats were most often fruits and nuts; perhaps a piece or two of candy, or a small handmade toy. This followed the tradition of their homeland.

Christmas was a religious day with everyone attending Midnight Mass or one of the morning Masses. Families would gather, much as they did on Sundays, but there was no great celebration with much gift-giving. Children usually received a gift of clothing.

When Christmas trees were used, they were either balsam, hemlock, or cedar, whatever could be found in nearby woods. They were decorated with simple things, such as:

Handmade paper chains

Popcorn strings (something unknown in Belgium)

Candied or wooden cherries, candy canes, or striped stick candy, or strings of rock candy

Small plain glass ornaments, or small red apples if
no glass ornaments were available

Tiny packages of hard candy (2 or 3 pieces tied in white paper, "hobo" style); children were allowed to take

one each day after Christmas until they were gone

Small white candles in metal holders which were lit only once on Christmas and watched very carefully.

An angel figurine or a star to top the tree

And always a creche (nativity set) beneath the tree

Decorations may have varied somewhat, depending on the affluence of the family. The above description pertains to farm families and homes where no electricity was available. It was not until after the Depression and World War II that decorations became more elaborate and the celebration became more materialistic. On our visits to Belgium, we have found that it is still pretty much the old-fashioned way, with stores only displaying Christmas goods from the 1st of December, in time for St. Nicolas Day. How nice!

Recollections

Two elderly ladies who were interviewed were asked what they remembered about Christmas when they were young. Both were around 90 years old. The first gave her recollections as a young child; the second, as a teenager or young married woman:

1) Father always went into the woods and cut a tree. We had trimmings, but not so fancy as today. In our family, small packages of candy and nuts were tied near the bottom of the tree. Each day we would open one package. It was like a game. There was no Santa Claus, but parents were secretive about the holidays. I always got dolls because I liked them so much. I don't remember much of the food, but I think we usually had a nice roast chicken.

2) Some years we had a tree, some not. The house was small, so there wasn't always room. I don't remember how it was decorated, but having a stable underneath the tree was very important. We had one when we didn't have a tree, too. Christmas was a big family day. The older ones worked in the city, but all came home for Midnight Mass and a big meal on Christmas Day. We usually had freshly butchered pork - a roast, and lots of tripe (a pork sausage made with ground cabbage and seasonings including nutmeg), jutt, and cheese pie. Mother would make cut-out cookies. They had no frosting, but she would sprinkle them with colored sugar before baking. On Christmas Eve, children would each put out a plate for Saint Nick to fill. In the morning, they'd have nuts and candy. Our little school had very nice programs for parents and family. A neighbor would act as Saint Nicolas. It was secretive; he was there, but we never really saw him.

Christmas Dinner

Every family had their own traditional meals, but a typical Christmas dinner would include some, or all, of these things:

Soup: Old-style bouillion, a broth containing diced celery and onion in which a chicken has been cooked. Originally, the chicken was used as the main dish of the meal. In later years, as at the present time, the chicken was chopped up and left in the pot and many other vegetables added. In Wisconsin this concoction is called "Belgian Booyah", but it is unknown in Belgium. (The word, booyah, came to be because of the inability to spell "Bouillion"!)

Main dish: Roast chicken, turkey, or pork. Sometimes a beef stew such as Carbonnades Flamandes or Ratatouille was served. Fork was the meat served most often in everyday meals, so it would be considered a treat to have beef on Christmas and Easter.

Vegetables: Mashed or boiled potatoes (plenty of them!); and jutt, a cooked cabbage flavored with bacon drippings, onion, salt, pepper, and a bit of nutmeg.

Additions Homemade bread and coffee.

Dessert Belgian cheese pie (tarte) , or a Buche de Noel (yule log). Galettes - a waffle-type cookie, were made at Christmas time, served then and especially on New Year's Day.

Joyeux Noel et Bonne Année de Wisconsin !

THE OREGON CORNER

by Leen Inghels

Yes, we will probably have a regular Oregon-Corner from now on.

On October 18th, 1991, a second meeting was organized in Baker-City at the home of Jeanette Delepierre-Beck, where eleven families of the former Belgian Town were represented. Baker-City is located in North-Eastern Oregon, on I84, the East-West freeway through the United States. It was a resting area on the Old Oregon Trail, and the hub of the Oregon-Gold mining area.

Jeanette had provided us earlier a list of 59 names of descendants of the Belgian immigrants, most of whom now live all across the United States. Nevertheless we sent an invitation to all, stating the aims of our efforts here at home” and the response was very rewarding. Letters came from other areas in Oregon and from as far as Montana, California and Ohio.

At the Baker-City reunion, it was a real thrill to witness the abundance of remembrances that each one present shared, and the abundance of new remembrances that the sharing solicited: “Remember, Simone, how we used to....”

- they talked about their parents or grand parents who had left their homeland around the turn of the century, to come to Baker-City with the promise of work at the local lumber mill.

- they talked about the poverty and hardship in Belgium (*), that made these people leave the security of home and family, to come to a strange country, with very little money (if any) but with the hope and the courage to build a new life for themselves. Some returned home after a few years, only to come back with that very special girl left behind but waiting faithfully for her turn to make the big trip. And so the families grew.

But as usual I am getting away from my purpose: a report on the meeting of October 18th ...

So, as mentioned before, we contacted everybody with the suggestion to write down and share their memories, in the hope that together we will be able to record the history of the Belgian settlement in this remote area of Eastern Oregon. How did they ever find out about Baker-City, all the way out here in the Par West? and that about 100 years ago? Who came first, and told others about this beautiful corner of the World? These are still some of the unanswered questions.

Two of the people present complied to our suggestion and read a written narration and anecdotes about life in Belgian Town. Florine De Groote-Tiedemann’s lecture was very informative and quite emotional. She went into a lot of details about the daily routines, the school, the grocery store, and the church.

The other contributor to the memories, Simone De Bel-Moore was very surprised to learn from Florine and others present that her mother gave piano lessons to the other Belgian youngsters, something Simone didn’t remember, because” she said, “I always thought I had to take up the violin, because there was no room for a piano in our house”. (By the way, Simone has been an active member of the viola section of the La Grande loud. Sywhony Orchestra for 45 years. – La Grande Ronde is the name of the river flowing through La Grande, as well as the name of our beautiful valley.)

Discussions went on between all the participants, many additions to the two reports resulted. As usual when a group of people start talking about the past, everyone remembers other details about this or that event, or about this one or that one. So both ladies are reworking their narrations now.

We want to thank Jeanette again for her hospitality to host this meeting at her home.

Not only those still living in Baker-City showed interest in their “Belgian American Heritage. We received letters from several Belgian-Bakerites living elsewhere in the US, especially from those living in other parts of Oregon. Two weeks after the Baker-City meeting, we received another report in the mail, from Ivona Vandewiele-Chaves. One of the more anecdotal parts of her essay was the story about an interesting move. The land on which their home was built, was bought up by the Oregon Lumber Company for lumber storage. The elder Vandewiele decided to save the house and move it farther down the long Street. The house was lifted up on wheels and a team of horses pulled the whole property slowly down the ,street, a few yards a day. During this period, mother Vandewiele continued cooking the meals on her woodstove and the large family bedded down at night in their “loose-footed” family home in the middle of the street!!.

Thanks to all three of you ladies for an encouraging start of your Baker-City/Belgian-Town anthology.

We became aware that there is a number of Belgian families in the greater Portland OR. area. Our next step will be a meeting for those people in the Western corner of our State. The interest is there, proven by the new members who signed up for The Belgian Resarchers.

Last weekend, Pierre and I had the pleasure of meeting and visiting in Portland with the Belgian Consul General from Los Angeles. Mister Marc OrrE was quite interested in our efforts to rekindle and encourage interest in the Belgian Heritage of a group of Oregonians.

He also proposed to come to our State and participate in a future meeting, either in Baker, La Crande, and/or Portland. We will certainly take advantage of this generous offer and plan to organize such a meeting in Spring. hoping the weather will cooperate by then.

We are off to a good start here in the Far—West. We hope that more contributions will join us soon.

To end this report, we give here a first listing of the family names of the immigrants to Baker-City:

BRECKFELT	DE ROO	SCHEERENS
COGGHE	DE VOS	SPIELBROECK
DE BAETS	DE WITTE	SPRIET
DE BEL	GRACE	VAN BEVEREN
DE GROOTE	HUYS	VAN BROCKER
DE HART	KNOCKAERT	VANDEWIELE
DELAMATER	LANKRIET	VAN DRIESCHE
DELEPIERRE	MORTIER	VAN LEUVEN
DE ROEST	PATTEEUW	VERHAEGHE
DE ROMMELAERE	PIL	WALLAERT

undoubtedly, more names will be added to this list as our contacts progress.

(*) For more on the situation in Belgium at the time of the great emigration, read in this issue The Melting Pot Did Not Melt, the excellent article written by our member Henry A. Verslype. This article is the final Chapter of his very well documented and well written book The Belgians in Indiana.

THE MELTING POT DID NOT MELT.

by Henry A. Verslype

For the Belgian immigrants to the United States, life in the Old Country had been hard, often cruel, and rarely tewarding, but they had learned to cope with it and to accept what they could not change. They were trapped in their status, largely tenant farmers. Only the oldest son was able to look forward to even tNhat much when he took over after his father could no longer do the work. Many of the younger ones left home and worked as laborers in contract migrant groups or went to the larger cities where there was sometimes a job to be found in the factories. Some worked as gardeners or as colfon labor in the building industry when such work could be found. Many became career soldiers in the Belgian or other armies. Life at home was primarily a matter of survival. They learned to make do with minimal comforts. little choice in diet, and an occasional glass of beer. They were poorly educated, called upon to work and earn money as soon as physically able. The potential earnings from children's labor was in part the reason that little concern was given to control of the birth rate. Scant knowledge of how this could be done existed among poor.

The Church with her promise of a hereafter, held up a bright light at the end of a life of hard work. The hope of a better life after death was a prime factor in their child-like devotion to their religion and helped make life bearable. The pastor was held in high esteem. He was, as a general rule, one of the few, if not the only, educated person in the village. He was asked for guidance in many mundane matters and was generally ready for advice. If he proved to be wrong, it was excused on the basis that he was a human being after all.

Religion was also a factor in politics. There was a Catholic Party on the ballot, well-organized and guided by the Princes of the Church. Even the postman was respected as a representative of the national government. As a rule, he was

the only national office-holder in the village. The Belgian who came to the United States between 1890 and 1910 (the peak migration years) was generally a poor, minimally-educated laborer or farmer, with a few craftsmen making up the total. The better-educated Belgian had no incentive to emigrate except for a few who were in trouble politically and came here to avoid prosecution. Well educated persons came only when they could not advance in their field due to limited opportunities to get one of the rare openings that ocured. Later innigrants could be counted on to be somewhat better educated, perhaps to the sixth grade level, but also still included many virtual illiterates. The rule of literacy as a requirement to get into the United States did not go into effect until after World War I.

When they arrived here, they found work easy to get but also learned that good times alternated with bad times just as in the Old Country. Their virtue of getting by on very little made them survivors here as it had in Belgium.

Some of the points of view brought here by the ininigrants were slow to change. The reliance on the pastor of the church generally remained with the first generation. In the early 1920's the author remembers hearing the pastor of the Belgian church make the following announcement. He stood just in front of the altar rail, so as to be technically out of the sanctuary, Tuesday is Election Day. Don't forget to vote for the straight Democratic ticket". This anouncement was not resented nor was it rejected by the congregation. It was taken as a matter of course to be normal advice from the pastor and accepted as such by the vast majority of the people. The early ininigrants were never found reading the Bible. This was discouraged by the Belgian clergy of that time on the theory that poorlyeducated persons reading the Bible might try to interpret the writings and come up with ideas that

were contrary to the teachings of the Church. It was believed by many that this was what had caused the many divisions of religions and the innumerable sects and branches of the Protestant churches and that the same thing could happen to the Catholic Church if everyone read the Bible. This attitude still prevailed in the 1930's when the author went to the parish priest after getting married and asked the pastor what edition of the Bible to get for a family Bible. The reply was, "What do you want with a Bible? You don't need one. If you live by your catechism, that's all you need." After some discussion of the use of the Bible as a family record-keeping, he reluctantly gave a recommendation of the Douay version. The second generation did many things differently from their immigrant parents. Child labor laws kept them in school longer, and large numbers of them began to complete high school and enter the business world as well as middle management in industry. Wider fields of experience came to mean wider acquaintance with non-Belgians and non-Catholics. These contacts led to mixed marriages and international marriages. The lines between the immigrants and the early Anglo-Saxon colonists of the 1600's and 1700's were beginning to blur.

By the time the third generation came to adulthood, large families had become rare. A much lower percentage of the Belgians was in the labor force. Executive positions were being filled by the sons and the grandsons of the immigrants and businesses were founded by them to a greater degree than at any time in the past. The original immigrants, arriving in the United States, experienced cultural shock. This drove them toward each other as like seeks like. They had little in common with the third and fourth generation Anglo-Americans and not much more rapport with other nationalities first-and-second-generation immigrants, except for the Holland Dutch and some Germans who spoke a dialect similar to the Flemish dialect of Belgium. The immigrants' children went to school with, in many cases, a multinational group of children in public

schools and a less widely divergent group in the parochial schools. They all learned the American version of the English language. This generation mixed to a greater degree than their parents to the non-Belgian population and prided themselves on their ability to compete with these other groups on an equal footing in work, school, or business with equal success. They made an effort to fit in and belong. Some went as far as to change the way they spelled their names, both given name and surname. Prefixes such as "De", "Van", "Van Der", and "Van" were dropped. In some cases the Belgian name was translated into English words so as to avoid calling attention to the foreign background of the individual. The third generation, the grandchildren of the immigrants, was marrying in a larger percentage with non-Belgians. The language was no longer being spoken, except for a few bits of profanity that Grandpa used when upset and the grandson remembered hearing.

Very little communication was carried on by this generation with the Old Country. Some contacts were made when academic work or business took some of this generation to the land of their grandparents, but this was relatively rare. Some contact was also made by members of the armed forces serving abroad who visited and made contact with family members there.

In general, interest in the land from which they came was minimal until the late 1970's and early 1980's. Then, as was said 50 years ago in an address to the Augustan Historical Society by Marcus Lee Hanson, "What the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember." We all became aware that there was a country-wide reawakening to the value and importance of the contribution made by the various ethnic groups to the culture and progress of this nation.

We did not succumb to the "melting pot" and lose our identity. We have formed a 'mosaic', with the component parts of the whole, still retaining their individuality, yet contributing to the meaning and success of the broader picture.

The Carillon and the Royal Carillon School “Jef Denyn” Mechelen Belgium

International Higher Institute for the Carillon Arts

Under the Gracious Protection of

Her Majesty Queen Fabiola

From “Flanders” Magazine 8/90

Check also:

<http://www.beiaardschool.be/engels.htm>

http://www.carillon.org/eng/dynamic_frame_eng.htm?http://www.carillon.org/eng/actueel/mechelen_1.htm

<http://www.beiaardschool.be/>



The carillon¹ is a typical instrument of the Low Countries, just as original as the balalaika in Russia or the koto in Japan. This sort of bell-ringing, played by using the fists and feet on wooden bar keys as pedals originated in the Flemish and Brabant regions during the late Middle Ages. Many towns and municipalities therefore possess a carillon which is not only used for festivities and all kinds of ceremonies, but also as a concert instrument. Through the centuries this art form spread mainly across the countries of the northern hemisphere which have western influences. Now one can listen to carillon concerts in Japan, the United States and Canada, as well as in England, Denmark, the Soviet Union, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands and as far as Australia, New Zealand, Mexico and Suriname.

The origin and the evolution of the carillon is a fascinating story.

Initially, only a few bells were played using loose hammers. But, in time, their numbers grew so much that it was necessary to search for a way of making the playing of the music easier. And so, the first simple keyboard appeared at the beginning of the 16th century with which all sorts of melodies could be played, sometimes even with a simple accompaniment. It is not known exactly what these keyboards looked like. Yet, some old chronicles from Saint Michael's Monastery in Antwerp

mention 'bells, cord and bars' (clocken, seel ende stocken), so we may assume that these were quite primitive mechanisms. These mechanisms, mostly fitted out by local mechanics, differed greatly from each other so it was quite impossible for the carillonneur to go and play in another town. For this reason a great variety of keyboards came into existence which obstructed a uniform development of the instrument. Only in the 17th century, the golden age of the carillon, did this problem receive special attention. It looks as if the old keyboards made by Frans Hemony – now in the Vleeshuis museum in Antwerp - were widely studied and indeed manufactured, which is hardly surprising considering the earnest attempts of this renowned bell-founder, aided by his brother Pieter, to make his instruments as perfect as possible in every respect.

With a few exceptions during the 18th and 19th centuries bell-ringing declined, for reasons including the general economic decline and the high maintenance costs. Yet, notable events still sometimes took place, mostly concerning public competitions for the appointment of local carillonneur. Two examples are Leuven in 1745 and Mechelen in 1772 for which Mathias Van den Gheyn, wrote his famous series of carillon preludes. Yet it was only at the end of the 19th century when a real revival was discernable, on one hand under the influence (if Flemish romanticism and on the other because of the enthusiastic carillonneur from Mechelen Jef Denyn who founded his celebrated carillon school. In 1922 and right from the outset worked effectively for the improvement and spreading of the carillon arts across the whole world.

The reason for the foundation of the Carillon School was to preserve carillon arts for the future and to promote its further development.

¹ Bronze voices waiting to be brought to life by ingenious mechanisms – Jo Haazen is Director of the Royal Carillon School and City Carillonneur of Mechelen

Although carillon playing became neglected in most countries and towns and fell more and more into the background, the school fulfilled a real demand.

Up to now, some 400 students have received their carillonners training and around 130 have gained their diplomas. These are now carillonners spread throughout the whole world; Belgium, the Netherlands, France, England, Ireland, Denmark, U.S.A., Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa etc.

The study program at the Royal Carillon School includes the technique of carillon playing and discourse, mainly on specific carillon compositions; arrangements of music from the 16th, 17th and later centuries; songs and traditional music from different countries; knowledge and operation of the automatic player; history of the carillon arts and carillon construction; harmony and composition for carillons, singing together and kinetics.

To be accepted as a student the candidate must be able to produce a certificate of competence with regard to music theory, music reading and instrument playing (preferably piano, organ or harpsichord) or the candidate must sit an entry examination on the afore-mentioned subjects.

The duration of the studies is six to nine years.

The Royal Carillon School 'Jef Denyn' has an exceptionally rich library containing more than 2,000 works relating to the carillon arts, carillon music, carillon construction and everything to do with bell-ringing.

The school's repertoire of carillon music disposes of a large number of unpublished manuscripts and studies. The school has so far produced more than 80 prize-winning carillon compositions. The repertoire is annually supplemented.

The Royal Carillon School, established at the house 'Het Schipke', Fred de

Merodestraat 63, 2800 Mechelen, is adjacent to the Carillon Museum and the Town Museum 'Hof van Busleyden'. The school has six sound exercise keyboards available for student use as well as a complete light carillon, with 49 bells (tower of the Hof van Busleyden' weight 2,500 kg), founded and exemplarily furnished by the bell-founder Marcel Michiels. The most advanced students also play the two renowned large carillons in the St. Rombouts tower.

The laureate diploma is awarded to those who pass a theory exam, a written treatise and a practical test in the arts of playing and harmony using the carillon in the St. Rombouts towers. Subsequently, the studies can be continued for the virtuosity diploma.

In recent years there has been renewed interest in the carillon arts, at home as well as abroad. This is mainly due to the great influence and the intense work of the Royal Carillon School which continues to work to enhance the aesthetic ideal in our society and for the future of her students.



Jef Denyn



'Het Schipke', the historical building which houses the Carillon School.

In the background, the tower of 'Hof van Busleyden' with the School carillon (49 bells)

FROM AND TO --- FROM AND TO ---

From Mary Ann DEFNET: In 1989, Andre Gyre submitted query 89/61, asking for help in finding the whereabouts of the GYRE family that emigrated to America around 1857. Up to now, very little was found about them. But, writes Mary Ann in her last letter dated 3rd October 1991, "almost by accident, while looking for something else, I ran across a family with the same first names, but a surname spelled GILLE. It was so coincidental, I checked into it further; collected a lot of data; and sent it to Andre. Yes, it is the family he has been looking for for so long!! And this week, I found a descendant who is very interested in corresponding with Andre... (This is again proof that the queries pay off, even if it takes a long time!)

Louis VAN DEN BRANDEN in Belgium has helped many of our members in their research, answering many of the queries and doing research for them. We have to thank him very specially for his precious help. We can only recommend his services to our members. His address is Louis Van Den Branden, Rue Fleurbeek 13, B- 1620 - DROGENBOS - Belgium
Thank you, Louis.

Clem DE ROO received from us and from different sources documents about people with the same name as his. Last year, we even found a Father De ROO who was the priest of St Francis De Sales Church in Baker City, Oregon.

Many other De Roo came to the States with the S.S. Rhyndland in 1880, but no luck there either, they were not related to him. Clem has a large documentation about this name, and will help whoever needs help. He even found a Jean-Baptiste DE ROO who was listed as Josephine De Roo in the 1880 census? Clem is now working with the computer trying to put his genealogy in book form, but he writes that it is a much more painful process than searching and hopes to complete the project next year... Good luck Clem, I know it takes a lot of patience and redoings, but as my father always said: You can do it!.

Jeff LUCIA writes I would like to thank Mary Ann DEFNET for her reply to my query 90/88 regarding my BODART, DEPAS, SWILLENS line and for her untiring work for the Belgian Researchers and genealogy in general. (One more for you, Mary Ann, congratulations and thank you from us also).

Ludo VAN DEN BOGAERT writes: I wrote to the four addresses of namesakes in Belgium, that you communicated me a while ago. Here are the copies of the four answers I received. To date we have not found a common ancestor, but we are working further on it. Ludo also mailed us his complete pedigree chart in 31 pages, plus 4 paged index of names, established on the computer. Thank you for this fantastic work. (Read also his queries).

Richard DE LOMBARD writes I have been trying to assemble a “book” about the DELOMBAERDE name in America. Since I had lost three of my grandparents by the time I was eleven, the burden of family history rested with my paternal grandmother, Lelia Irene HINKLEY-DELOMBARDE. Lelia began to collect and record her childrens’ families structure which served as a starting point for my present work. The ancestor of my grandfather, Andre Joseph DE LOMBARDE, aside his parents, were unknown to those family members living nearby. Since I was not actively pursuing genealogy, I rarely visited with other relatives who resided farther away. In addition, I was unsure whether De Lombard was a French name or that it came from de Lombardy region of Italy. All Lelia could remember was that he had referred to a town near the French-Belgiann border. Later I found a document of the death of Andre’s father in Menen, Belgium. The city of Kortryk, Belgium provided a wealth of information during two trips there in 1983 and 1989. As a result I have researched ancestors back in the 1600’s, met a Ce Lombaerde in Kortryk, and some of my distant relatives in France. Victor De Lombaerde, a 17th cousin of mine, his wife and his nephew were gracious hosts in their home near Le Mans, France. I found the people of Kortryk and the surrounding areas to be very friendly and hospitable (See also DeLombarde in the Query section)

From Paul HEERBRANT in Brussels, Belgium, my wife Leen received a complete genealogical record of her mother Gabriella VERRIJDEN. Included was an enormous 3 by 4 feet family tree and a set of 30 pedigree charts, complete families with all the brothers and sisters and all the children. Everything going back to 1690. Paul writes . . . “because I knew that you were researching this, and as my wife also has the same name, I thought you would enjoy to have this all made up for you. I did it before finishing my wife’s genealogy, somewhere the two genealogies must be joining each other, but where?”

The name was changed at different periods from VERHEYEN / VERHYEN/VERHEYDEN/ VERRIJDEN. A family legend, that can not be proven, is that my wife’s ancestor changed his name from Verheyden into Verrijden, to escape the conscription in Napoleon’s army, while his brothers and sisters kept the original name. This is one of the nicest gifts my wife ever received from a “stranger”.

(I am jealous!) Thank you Paul, we wish you great success in the continuation of your wife’s genealogy, and Leen hopes she found a new cousin.

QUERIES - - - QUERIES - - -

Here at the Office, we open a file for each query. When you send an answer to a member, may we ask you to send us also a copy of your answer, so that we keep informed about the status of the research: update or close the file. If someone answers your query, be sure to acknowledge receipt by a card or note as a matter of courtesy. With the deteriorating mail situation, members need to know that their response got through to you.

91 / 135 . FRERE , My Grandmother was Lucie Hortense FRERE from Charleroi, Belgium. I would like to correspond with members having the same name in their genealogy, not necessarily from the same area. Please write to Patricia N. DONAHO, c/o Belgian Laces.

91 / 136 . JASOGNE - RIQUET - BERTAINCHAMP - MARTIN - PROGNEAU - FOULON - MORTELETTE - GEORGE - ROBERT - CORDIER - BRUIR - GERARD - LAMBILLOTTE - LEGUAIN This is maybe a long list, but I am a beginner, and would like to correspond with anyone having one or more of these names in his or her genealogy. I have some documents that we could exchange. Leslie MAHLER, 2251 Shamrock Drive # 3. CAMPBELL CA 95008.

91 / 137 . I would like to ask whether there are any researchers looking for the following names **BEIRLING/ BEERLINGS/ BEIRLINKX** (or variations) from Aartselaar or Hemiksen or around Antwerp, Belgium. write to Ludo Van Den Bogaert. 6502 Stafford Terrace PLANT CITY, FL 33565.

91 / 138 . I would like to ask whether there are any researchers looking for the following names **VERRELST / VERELST** from the Hoboken or Hemiksem area in Belgium. Write to Ludo Van Den Bogaert.

91/ 139 . I would like to ask whether there are any researchers looking for the following name: **BRION** from Hoboken, Berlaere or Wolverthem in Belgium. Write to Ludo VanDen Bogaert.

91 / 140 . I am researching and would be interested to get in contact with anyone researching these names **DE LOMBAERDE / DE LOMBARDE / DE LOMBARD / LOMBAERDE** (or variations). Please write to Richard DE LOMBARD, 5850 Beach Rd #BL, WADSWORTH, OH 44281.

91 / 141 . I am researching and would be interested to get in contact with anyone researching the following names **DE WILD/ VAN POUCK/ WOOLECAMP/ VOLLECAMP ; GHEYSSENS and LAMBRECHT**. Please write to Richard DE LOMBARD.

91 / 142 . SCLIFFET . My great grand parents were George Enmanuel **SCLIFFET** born 1885 in Brussels, and Flora **DUBOIS** born 1886. They moved to Point Marion, PA. and had 3 children: George, Adhemar and Lillian. I have never been able to find the name **SCLIFFET / SQUIFFLET** (or variations) anywhere. Could anyone help me? Patti CAMPBELL, 3201 Churchview Ave. PITTSBURGH, PA 15227

91 . 143 . TILLMAN My husbands gparents were Louis Joseph **TILLMAN** and Julia **COLLETTE** from Charleroi, Belgium. They came to Charleroi, PA. They had 2 sons: John and Joseph. Louis Joseph was a roofer , and was working on St Jerome Church in ChArleroi, PA, when he tragically fell to his death about 1908. The name **TILLMAN** could have been spelled **TILLEMENT** or **TILLEMONT** or other variation. Any information would be appreciated. Patti CAMPBELL.

RECIPES RECIPES

With the holidays right before us, I would like to share two festive and delicious meat dishes, which have been a favorite with our family for a long long time. These offer also a variation from the traditional turkey, when company stays more than just Christmas dinner and/or New Year The Stuffed Pork roast is well known all 'across the European Low Lands, including the northern part of Belgium. the Netherlands, northern Germany and Denmark, all the way east to Danzig (Poland). The Gigot is a European classic for Sunday dinners or special occasions.

GEVULDE VARKENSROTI (Pork loin stuffed with apples and prunes) serves 8 to 10

4 to 5 pound boned pork loin, trimmed of its fat

12 medium sized pitted prunes

1 large tart apple peeled and cubed

1 tsp lemon juice

1 cup dry white wine

1 cup cream

Bring prunes to a boil in water, remove from heat source and let them soak for 30 mm. Drain, pat dry and set aside. Sprinkle the cubed apple with the lemon juice. Make a pocket in the middle of the roast with a sharp knife or with the handle of a wooden spoon. Season the pocket with pepper and a little salt and stuff it alternatively with the apples and the prunes (use your fingers, or a long round object like the wooden spoon handle or a metal knife sharpener to help insert the fruit). Tie the loin at 1 inch intervals to keep its shape while roasting. Melt 3 Tbps of butter and 3 Tbps of oil in a casserole dish until nicely hot. Add the loin and brown it evenly on all sides. This takes about 20 mm. Pour in half of the wine and simmer on top of the stove for a few min. Cover the dish and continue roasting in a 350 preheated oven 1 ½ hrs.

Optional: surround the roast with small onions when ready to put in the oven.

To finish the sauce remove the loin from the casserole onto a heated platter and let it rest. Skim the fat from the liquid gathered in the dish, add the other half of the wine and bring to a boil, whisking constantly to get all solidified meat juices.

Add the cream and stirring constantly simmer until the sauce is smooth. Taste for seasoning. Serve with boiled potatoes and a tossed green salad.

GICOT (Roasted Leg of Lamb)

Shop for Spring Leg of Lamb and have the butcher cut off the shank for a nicer looking piece of meat. You can also ask to have the leg boned for easier carving, but keep the bone to roast along with the meat. Remove the skin and excess fat. Make slits with a sharp knife and insert small slivers of garlic, using 4 to 8 cloves for the average size leg. (If the leg is boned, you can also season and stuff the cavity with crushed garlic, fresh rosemary, oregano or parsley). Rub the meat well with a little olive oil and rosemary, oregano or parsley leaves (dried herbs do fine here!) and roast on a rack in a shallow pan in a 325 oven. Allow approx. 11 minutes/ pound or until interior temp. reaches 140 degrees (for medium rare, longer if you want the meat "done, but PLEASE, not over 160 deg.

internal temp.). Use a meat thermometer. Add salt and freshly ground pepper about midway in the roasting process. When the roast has reached the desired internal temperature, remove from oven, let it rest 5 to 8 mm. before carving.

To finish the sauce: remove the gigot from the rack. Pour 1 cup of red wine in the roasting pan, and stirring constantly to loosen the solidified meat juices, put the pan on a burner until boiling. (For those of you concerned about the alcohol in the sauce, the boiling will take out all traces of alcohol, and leave only the delightfully Belgian touch to your sauce). Add cream if you like it rich. Serve with white beans flavored with a touch of garlic, chopped parsley and some butter.

An assortment of cheeses and some nice crisp french bread make an excellent final contribution to your holiday meal.

BON APPETIT - SMAKELIJK - AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL !!