

On display at the next Luxembourg Heritage Society's meeting this Saturday, November 13, will be examples of trauliicht sculpted by a member of the Society. While most trauliicht are carved from root vegetables, these will be made of varieties of squash.

In addition, photos of traditional statues of Our Lady of Luxembourg from churches throughout Luxembourg will be exhibited. The Luxembourg Heritage Society of Northwest Iowa will meet at 9:30 a.m. in the Remsen Public Library meeting room.

Jack-o-lanterns may be disintegrating on front steps in the United States, but in Luxembourg, trauliicht, or carved vegetables, continue to appear through mid-November. Large beets and turnips are hollowed out, carved, and illuminated with candles. The tradition began in the Ardennes forest, in the northern part of Luxembourg.

Traditionally, young men would carve the grotesque faces as a way to frighten girls. The same carvings were also placed outside of barns to frighten away evil spirits who supposedly drew disease to the farm animals. The lamps not only kept ghosts and spirits away, but also provided illumination as the days became shorter and darker toward the end of the year. Today, the sculptures can be seen decorating outside walls and the windows of homes.

The tradition of constructing trauliicht was widespread in the Ardennes until the 1970s, when the practice began to die out. In the 1990s, the Robbesscheier Tourist Center in Munshausen, Luxembourg, revived the tradition. Today, families can visit the Center to participate in activities including carving the spooky vegetable faces.

A topic of discussion during the Society's Saturday meeting will be the Plymouth County Historical Museum's Ethnic Food Fair on November 14 from 3:00-5:00. The Luxembourg Society will provide free samples of Luxembourg cuisine including treipen, head cheese, bouneschlopp (green bean soup), and other traditional Luxembourg foods at the Food Fair.

Prior to the Ethnic Fair, Judy Stokesberry, president of the Luxembourg Heritage Society, will present a powerpoint program on her recent trip to Luxembourg. The show will take place at 2:00 in the Plymouth County Museum's music room.

Everyone is welcome at the Luxembourg Heritage Society's meeting. The Remsen Public Library is located at 211 Fulton Street in Remsen.