

BGHS News—April/May 2023

Dear Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society members and friends,

- **You are invited to our membership in-person and Zoom meeting this Thursday April 6 a 7 pm—zoom link**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81117895328?pwd=enVxV0xjTVZpdWZlMzJOaGxNdUISQT09>. If needed, the meeting Passcode is 623120 and ID 81117895328. The meeting agenda is below.
- **Chaperones needed for log schoolhouse and Letourneau Home/Museum open houses on April 16 and May 7--**Please consider volunteering to chaperon for the next two open houses of the Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse on Sundays April 16 and May 7 from 1-4 pm. The sign up is easy. For the Letourneau Home/Museum, just go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAE2BABFCC43-chaperoning> or for the log schoolhouse, go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAE2BABFCC43-chaperoning2>. Then go to April 16 or May 7 to type in your name in date(s) preferred.

Kudos to our volunteers



From left to right: A big BGHS thank you to log schoolhouse chaperon Cindy McBarnes (second from the left) who volunteered for the open house on Sunday March 19, and (right photograph left to right) Emory Ragan and his mother Jeni who chaperoned on Sunday April 2, and gave a tour to Joe Lanoue.



The BGHS also expresses deep appreciation to (left photograph) Mary Ann Lambert and Gary Seiner for chaperoning the Letourneau Home/Museum open house on Sunday March 19. Gary and Mary Ann, as curator and assistant curator respectively, are deciding how to best display the woven rug made by Eva Letourneau-Legriss (George and Elodie Letourneau's granddaughter). A big thank you also goes to Dave and Kelly Zinanni for chaperoning the Letourneau Home/Museum open house on Sunday April 2.

In addition to the above, the BGHS thanks our additional volunteers: Laurel Soper for her updating of the BGHS website and Facebook postings; Daron Kinzinger for picking up our mail; Christine Michels for her ongoing Corresponding Secretary work; Steve Monts for his ongoing treasurer work; Gary Seiner and Mary Ann Lambert for their work as curator and assistant curator respectively; and the Kankakee *Daily Journal* editors for publicizing “Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society seeks 2023 volunteers” on March 20, 2023. That article brought us two new volunteers: Jeni and Emory Ragan.

How to prepare to be a BGHS volunteer/chaperon for open houses

For preparation to volunteer as a chaperon for open houses, you may visit the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society website which is www.bourbonnaishistory.org and open the Museum Campus window. You can then open Letourneau Museum and/or Log Schoolhouse pages, and find a link on each of those pages for “A self-guided tour of the house and gardens” or “A self-guided tour of the schoolhouse”. Those links will open pages with "Letourneau House and Garden Self-guided Tour" (pdf) and "Log Schoolhouse Self-guided Tour" (pdf). You can then download/open the pdf's. There will be printed copies of these self-guided tours in the Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse for you and the visitors, but you might want to review the information beforehand so that you can be better informed and familiar with showing visitors how to access these pages on their mobile devices.

Mark your calendars for these BGHS 2023 events

- Friday April 7 at 9 am—hanging items in log schoolhouse;
- Sunday April 16 from 1-4 pm—open house at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- Thursday April 27 at 3:30 pm—Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee meeting;
- Sundays May 7 and 21 from 1-4 pm—open houses at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- Sundays June 4 and 18 from 1-4 pm—open houses at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- **Saturday June 17 at 1 pm—Melanie Holmes Book Signing *100 Things to do in Illinois Before You Die*, B.Harley Bradley House, Kankakee (see attached PDF);**
- Sundays July 2 and 16 from 1-4 pm—open houses at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- Tuesday July 4—*Les Artisans* Arts and Crafts Fair;
- Sundays August 6 and 20 from 1-4 pm—open houses at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- Sundays September 3 and 17 from 1-4 pm—open houses at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- **Friday September 15 at 5:30 pm—Log Schoolhouse fundraiser *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner, Kankakee Country Club;**
- Sundays October 1 and 15 from 1-4 pm—open houses at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- Sundays November 5 and 19 from 1-4 pm—open houses at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- Saturday December 2—*Les Artisans* Arts and Crafts Fair;
- Sunday December 3 from 1-4 pm—open house at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse;
- Sunday December 17—Christmas Open House at the Letourneau Home/Museum and Log Schoolhouse from 1-4 pm; and
- Click [French Heritage Corridor - French Heritage Society](#) to find many more events in the 7-state corridor.

Dr. Jim Healy's premier performance as Louis Jolliet was a big hit



On Saturday March 11, Dr. Jim Healy portrayed Louis Jolliet in a one act play “A Solid Path through Water” at the Kankakee Public Library. Jim’s ongoing performances commemorate the 350th anniversary of Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette exploring and mapping the waterways in New France (which is now where we live). New France covered an area east of the Mississippi to the Allegheny Mountains from Quebec to New Orleans. In the photograph at right, Jim poses with Vicki Forquer (Assistant Director of the Kankakee Public Library) and me. Both the library and the BGHS sponsored Jim’s premier performance.

Log schoolhouse joins registry of Country School Association of America (CSAA)



On Wednesday March 22, while on a family visit to Texas, my brother Chris and I traveled to the League City (a suburb of Houston, Texas) Historic District. There, in the West Bay Common School (1898), Richard Lewis—board member of the Country School Association of America—presented me the landmark schoolhouse marker seen above. Earlier on March 6, Richard wrote to me in an email “Our committee met and you will be pleased to know that we approved your application for entry into the National Schoolhouse Register”. In the photograph at left, Richard, his wife Catharin (also a board member of the CSAA), and my brother Chris, stand in front of the West Bay Common School.

BGHS team testifies in public hearing for log schoolhouse



On Monday April 3, BGHS members testified under oath in support of the log schoolhouse becoming a Kankakee County historic landmark. The hearing was conducted by the Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission. Seen above from left to right are: me, Frank Koehler, Gary Seiner, Mary Ann Lambert, Steve Monts, Cindy McBarnes, Daron Kinzinger, and Ken Ponton. The next steps in approval of the log schoolhouse's county historic landmark designation are: Village of Bourbonnais re-approval, Kankakee County Zoning and Planning Approval, and finally Kankakee County Board approval.

Who am I?

I once owned a National style frame house at 331 South Main Street in Bourbonnais and I became the second mayor of Bourbonnais. I was born near Lake Champlain in New York. I arrived in Bourbonnais Grove at a very early age when I was sent here by my physician who recommended this climate for relief of inflammatory rheumatism. I was a carpenter, inventor, and building contractor. I married Adeline Therien in 1858 and we had five children. After Adeline died, I married Caroline Lambert in 1881. Three more children were born to the family. I purchased my home and the one next door for \$300. You may know me by my special wood work craftsmanship art *Four Drawer Chiffonier*. Who am I?

Information and agenda for April 6, 2023 Membership Meeting

The next BGHS's membership meeting (in-person and Zoom) is this Thursday April 6 at 7 pm. The minutes of the March 9, 2023 are attached. The agenda for the meeting is below.

- Pledge of allegiance;
- Presentation based on April/May 2023 news eletter item "Who am I?"
- Approval of March 9, 2023 membership minutes (*attached*);
- Treasurer's report;
- Corresponding Secretary report;
- Executive Vice-President report;
- Curator report;
- Membership report;
- Ways and Means:
 - Remnant log pieces;

- Sign up for volunteering—open houses etc;
- Craft show report;
- *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner on September 15; and
- Preparation for celebration of log schoolhouse's village and county historic landmark designation.
- **Building and Grounds:**
 - Log schoolhouse landscaping;
 - Cedar fencing along NW corner of museum campus;
 - Small repairs—Angi?
 - Alarm system; and
 - Bisailon Rid All pest/termite estimate for log schoolhouse.
- **Old Business**
 - Restructuring of BGHS update; and
 - New IT Director.
- **New Business**
 - Next meeting on May 11, 2023;
 - Special BGHS 2023 dates: 6/17, and 9/15; and
 - Chaperons needed for Sundays April 16 and May 7 open houses of the Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse.

Have a Happy Easter! Best wishes,

Jim Paul, President of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society