

Dear Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society members and friends,

The original logs from the year 1837 bring schoolhouse back to life



At left, the supplemental logs (40% of the logs needed) arrived on September 14. In the center photograph, the floor joists were built on September 22, and (at right) the log walls began to be reconstructed on September 27.



At left (also on September 27) after the supplemental new logs were positioned, the first log from 1837 was put in place. On September 28, more 1837 logs were added (center photograph), and on September 29, the walls were in place (at right), ready for the roof reconstruction to begin on September 30.

As Bourbonnais Grove’s first log schoolhouse reconstruction moves to completion, save the date—**Tuesday November 15, 2022**—to join the festivities of its inauguration and dedication. **Please print the attached “LSHinaugFdLCelDinAnnounce922” as your invitation and reminder.** The Tuesday November 15 activities, beginning at 2:00 pm at the schoolhouse (698 Stratford Drive East, Bourbonnais), include welcome, presentations, music, free cookies, cake, and beverage. The evening *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner at the Kankakee Country Club will be a fundraiser for the log schoolhouse preservation fund. To register for the celebration dinner, click [Fleur-de-Lis Celebration | Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society \(bourbonnaishistory.org\)](https://bourbonnaishistory.org).

Also, nominations for the 2022 BGHS *Fleur-de-Lis* Award of Excellence can be made by using the nomination form at the bottom of the above web page. This award will be presented to a local person who has contributed to the preservation of French, Belgian, or French-Canadian history. **The deadline for your nomination is October 5.**

Chaperone needed for Sunday October 2

A volunteer is needed to chaperone the Letourneau Home/Museum open house on Sunday October 2 from 1-4 pm. Self-guided tours are available for all individuals. Please contact me if you are able to assist.

MBVM 175th anniversary history tours were a highlight of Sunday August 21

Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary's 175th Anniversary celebration featured guided history tours of the church, Heritage Rooms, St. Viator Hall, the grotto, and four former St. Viator College buildings on Sunday August 21 afternoon. If you missed the tours, click here for the self-guided tour <https://www.mbvchurch.org/historical-self-guided-walking-tour>. To become immersed in the information and photographs of St. Viator College (prepared by Olivet Nazarene University History Professor Kyle Robinson and his students) click this new website (at <https://arcg.is/OLnHL0>).



At left, outside the MBVM rectory office, Jessica Graves (in center) explains that this site is where St. Leo's Chapel stood in 1841. At right, Claire McElroy (in center) relates the history of the Heritage Rooms. Charit Sams (holding the sign) led Tour 2 to each of the 8 stops.



Mary Beth Mathis (dressed in blue, left center) spoke about the artifacts in St. Viator Hall while Connie Lambert (with sign, front right) led the tour to each stop. At right, Joan Hermes (on right) gave the tour inside the church.



At left, ONU student Kaile Zito (wearing black in middle) explains the history of former St. Viator College’s Marsile Alumni Hall, now ONU’s Burke Administration Building. At right, ONU student Levi Berg awaits his tour groups in front of the building he will introduce: the former St. Viator College’s Roy Memorial Hall, now ONU’s Chapman Hall.



At left, ONU student Alex Wolfe (in middle with black shirt) offered insights about the former St. Viator College Dining Hall, now ONU’s Miller Business Center. At right, ONU student Courtney Hall gives a tour of the former St. Viator College Field House, now ONU’s Birchard Gymnasium.



The co-chairs of the MBVM 175th Anniversary Celebration are pictured above. At left Kim Bennett stands next to the sun dial in the church’s grotto. The sun dial was a gift from the St. Viator Class of 1917. The future Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen was treasurer of that class. At center right, Peggy Rogers stands between two members of the Congregation of Notre Dame who attended the event, Sister Darlene Mayo (on left) and Sister Elizabeth King.

Who am I?

I was fifty years old when I arrived as a pioneer settler in Bourbonnais Grove with my family. When I ran for the elected office of the new Will County's Rock Village Precinct Commissioner in 1836, I promised to build a school. Who am I?

Kudos to our volunteers and donors

The BGHS thanks all our volunteers: Mary Ann Lambert and Ken Ponton for assisting in the identification of artifacts for the Municipal Building Community Room; Laurel Soper for her updating of the BGHS website and Face Book postings; Daron Kinzinger for picking up our mail and overseeing the property; Steve Monts for his ongoing treasurer work; Gary Seiner for chaperoning the open houses at the Letourneau Home/Museum in September and landscape pruning; Laurie Cyr for initiating the BGHS artifact display in the Municipal Building's Community Room; and all the members of the BGHS Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee members for attending the monthly meetings and planning the November 15 festivities: Charles Balesi, Laurie Cyr, Steve Depasquale, Frank Koehler, Cindy McBarnes, Steve Monts, Ken Ponton, Mayor Paul Schore, Gary Seiner, and Norm Strasma.

French Heritage Corridor website [French Heritage Corridor - French Heritage Society](#) includes new sites on the interactive map plus exciting events

- **October 1:** [Visiting Our Ancestors, Prairie du Chien, WI](#)
- **October 1-2:** [55th Feast of the Hunters Moon, Lafayette, IN](#)
- **October 1:** [Fête de Automne, Old Mines, MO](#)
- **October 15:** [Nuit de Loup Garou \(Night of the Werewolf\), Ste. Genevieve, MO](#)
- **October 16:** ["French Genealogy", St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Dayton, MN](#)
- **October 22:** [French Colonial Studies Conference](#)
- **October 22:** [Déjà vu Reunion \(Foundation for the Restoration of Ste. Genevieve\), Ste. Genevieve, MO](#)
- **November 5-6:** [Fort de Chartres Winter Rendezvous & Woodswalk, Prairie Du Rocher, IL](#)
- **November 5:** [Pecanapalooza, Ste. Genevieve, MO](#)
- **November 15:** [Inauguration of Bourbonnais Grove's first log schoolhouse followed by an evening Fleur-de-Lis Celebration Dinner at the Kankakee Country Club, Kankakee, IL](#)
- **November 25:** [Allée Allumée; Ste. Genevieve, MO](#)
- **December 2:** [Allée Allumée; Ste. Genevieve, MO](#)
- **December 9:** [Allée Allumée; Ste. Genevieve, MO](#)
- **December 10:** [Christmas at Fort Crawford, Prairie du Chien, WI](#)
- **December 16:** [Allée Allumée; Ste. Genevieve, MO](#)
- **December 31:** [Guignolée Watch Party, Ste. Genevieve, MO](#)
- **December 31:** [La Guiannee at Fort de Chartres, Prairie du Rocher, IL](#)

Mark your calendars for these BGHS 2022 events

- Tuesday November 15—Log Schoolhouse Inauguration and *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner—please click [Fleur-de-Lis Celebration \(bourbonnaishistory.org\)](#); and
- Saturday December 3—*Les Artisans* Arts and Crafts Fair.

Letourneau-Legris-Lesage family heirlooms—with log schoolhouse connection—will be featured in Municipal Building’s Community Room display cases



Four of George and Elodie Letourneau's great great grandchildren and their spouses came to visit the Letourneau Home/Museum in October 2015. From left to right above are BGHS members Claudia Legris-Isenhour, Paul Isenhour, Michele Legris, Joel Legris, Jean Legris-Pekoc, and Roy Pekoc. Heirlooms from this family will be on display in the Village of Bourbonnais Municipal Building’s Community Center.

There is a Letourneau-Legris-Lesage family log schoolhouse connection. Pictured above, Claudia, Michele, and the twins Joel and Jean are four of Harvey and Anna (Rose) Legris's six children. Harvey was the son of Alphonse Sylvester Legris and Eva (Letourneau) Legris. Eva was one of three children of Phillip and Mary (Lesage) Letourneau. Phillip was the fifth born of George and Elodie Letourneau's eleven children. Therefore, Harvey and Eva (Letourneau) Legris are the Letourneau-Legris-Lesage family's grandparents and George and Elodie Letourneau are their great great grandparents.

Earlier in 1848, the Letourneau-Legris-Lesage family's other great great grandfather, Bourbonnais Grove village blacksmith Joseph Lesage (1828-1920), purchased Bourbonnais Grove’s first log schoolhouse when it closed. Joseph was born in 1828 in St-Leon-le-Grand, Quebec Province. He married Domitilde Boucher in St-Leon-le-Grand in 1848 right before moving to Bourbonnais Grove. Joseph converted the log schoolhouse into a home with his blacksmith shop next door. Two weeks after giving birth to daughter named Domitilde in 1850, mother Domitilde mother died. In 1853, Joseph married Julie Fortier (1831-97) who is the Letourneau-Legris-Lesage family's great great grandmother. They had ten (10) children in the former schoolhouse. One of their children was Marie/Mary Lesage (1859-1934) who later married Phillip Letourneau--these are the Letourneau-Legris-Lesage family's great grandparents.

Jean-Legris Pekoc and her husband Roy have joined several of the BGHS Zoom membership meetings. Earlier this year, Jean donated to the BGHS several family heirlooms. On Tuesday September 27, I delivered several of these items to Village of Bourbonnais Administrator Mike Van Mill and Assistant Administrator Laurie Cyr. They will soon be in the display cases of the Community Room in the Municipal Building—at the same time that the log schoolhouse reconstruction is nearing completion. The BGHS has been looking for venues outside the Letourneau Home/Museum to display our artifacts for many years. We were so thankful for the opportunity when Laurie Cyr invited the society to display items in the Community Room. Mr. Van Mill suggested that the BGHS switch out artifacts in the display every 6-12 months.

Among the Letourneau-Legris-Lesage items to be displayed are:

- Coffee and tea pots handed down by Jean’s grandmother Eva (Letourneau). Eva and Alphonse Legris were married in 1914, and the pots were gifts to the couple by Alphonse’s uncle Monsignor Gerasim Legris (see below);



- Needlepoint and wood doorstop from home of Mary (Lesage) Letourneau;
- Embossed leather case tin type of Mary (Lesage) Letourneau, age 10, and her sister Julie Lesage, age 8;
- Durogatype (by “photographer artist” Charles Knowlton of 56 E. Court Street in Kankakee) of Joseph Legris at age 29 in 1856 after his return from California—he was born September 7, 1827, to Moses and Sylvia (Flagole) Legris; and
- Small French prayer book printed in 1897.

Next membership meeting will be in-person and Zoom on October 6

The next membership meeting will be on October 6 at 7:00 pm (CST) will be in persona and Zoom. Please click this link to if you wish to join the meeting via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88438729921?pwd=eVBScklrRmdFSmJER3B3TTZHWfKzd09>

If you need the Meeting ID, it is 884 3872 9921 and the Passcode is 24110.

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

- Pledge of allegiance;
- Presentation based on September/October 2022 news eletter item “Who am I?”
- Approval of September 22, 2022 membership minutes (*attached*);
- Treasurer’s report;
- Corresponding Secretary report;
- Executive Vice-President report;
- Collection Committee report
- Membership Report;
- Ways and Means:
 - Log Schoolhouse report;
 - *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner report; and
 - Craft show report.
- Building and Grounds
- Old Business
 - Restructuring of BGHS update.
- New Business
 - Next meeting on October 6, 2022—after meeting, officers choice *Fleur-de-Lis* Award of Excellence winner for 2022;
 - Chaperon needed for November 6 and 20 open houses of the Letourneau Home/Museum.

Enjoy the beautiful fall season. Best wishes,

Jim Paul, President of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society