

Dear Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society members and friends,

Mayor Paul Schore will receive 2024 *Fleur-de-Lis* Award of Excellence



Standing inside Bourbonnais Grove's first log schoolhouse before the 2023 *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner, Mayor Paul Schore (on right) along with BGHS President Jim Paul, accepted a plaque inscribed "Bourbonnais Grove Log Schoolhouse 1837, Dedicated as a Historic Landmark, Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission". Commissioner Catherine Langlois (on far left) and Commission Chairperson Jane Johnson presented the Kankakee County historic landmark plaque. Earlier in 2023, the Village of Bourbonnais proclaimed the log schoolhouse as a village historic landmark.

At the upcoming September 24 7th Annual *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner, Village of Bourbonnais Mayor Paul Schore will receive the *Fleur-de-Lis* Award of Excellence. The annual awardee is chosen by the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society (BGHS) officers and board members. The award recognizes an individual's outstanding contribution in the preservation of French colonial, French-Canadian, and Belgian heritage in the Kankakee and Iroquois River Valleys Corridor. Mayor Paul Schore was selected because of his efforts, over the past thirteen years, in restoring the images and artifacts of the French-Canadian heritage for our community to appreciate.

In December 2011, Mayor Schore oversaw the dismantling of the Marcotte home at 493 S. Main Street in Bourbonnais. The home had been built around Bourbonnais Grove's first log schoolhouse (1837-48) and was lived in by French-Canadian families from 1848 to 2010. Mayor Schore was intent on preserving the schoolhouse logs, reconstructing the school, and providing the community (especially elementary school children) with another way to experience, respect, and honor the village's French-Canadian heritage. The reconstructed log schoolhouse's grand opening was on November 15, 2022. The mayor was a primary solicitor of funds to reconstruct the school, and is now intergally involved in fundraising to preserve the log schoolhouse. Since 2018, he has served on the BGHS Log Schoolhouse Restoration Steering Committee which is now the Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee.

Mayor Schore has also sponsored the movement to place *fleur-de-lis* on all Village of Bourbonnais street signs and markers (as in the photograph below) and create a new

Bourbonnais community center now named “The Grove”. The original pioneer name for the settlement before it incorporated as a village in 1875, was “Bourbonnais Grove”.



Just two weeks left to make your celebration dinner reservations



The reservation deadline for the 2024 Fleur-de-Lis Celebration Dinner on Tuesday September 24th is **September 14**. The annual celebration dinner fundraiser for the log schoolhouse kicks off at 4 pm with an open house at the schoolhouse (698 Stratford Drive East, Bourbonnais) followed by the 5:30 pm dinner event at the Kankakee Country Club. The *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner features welcome, appetizers, presentation of the award of excellence, French-Canadian dinner and dessert, entertainment of Midwest French music by Josué Savoie and Jon Middleton, and concluding remarks.

To make reservations for the celebration dinner online (**deadline is September 14**), click [Fleur-de-Lis Celebration \(bourbonnaishistory.org\)](http://bourbonnaishistory.org) and then scroll down the page and click “Make a Reservation”. After making your donation of per person celebration dinner price (see prices below) please email me at jpaul764@hotmail.com and—using the guidelines on the form below—inform me of the names of all in your dinner party guests (for name cards), who you would like to sit with at the dinner (tables of eight persons), and entrée choice: 1) “chicken” *La poule au blanc de Normandie*, or 2) “beef” *boeuf bourguignon*. The celebration dinner price (which includes appetizers, entrée, dessert, wine, coffee/tea, and gratuity) is: BGHS members--\$75 per person; non-members \$85 per person. **All proceeds go toward the preservation of Bourbonnais Grove’s first log schoolhouse (1837-48).** The BGHS is a 501c3 organization. If you cannot attend the celebration dinner, your donation to the log schoolhouse will be deeply appreciated. For your convenience, I have attached a copy of the celebration dinner invitation.

If making reservation by mail, please print, cut and return the information below:

Please send check (payable to “BGHS”) with information below to Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society, PO Box 311, Bourbonnais, IL, 60914 **by September 14, 2024.**

- Name:_____ Member: Yes No
- Postal address:_____
- Telephone number:_____
- Email:_____
- ___ I will attend with a party of ___ and would like to sit with _____
- Dinner choices—chicken or beef: name of each person and her/his dinner choice

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- Find enclosed my check of \$_____
 - ___ I am unable to attend but find enclosed my donation of \$_____ for preservation of the log schoolhouse.

A block of rooms have been reserved at the Hilton Garden Inn (455 Riverstone Parkway, Kankakee, IL 60901, 815 932-4444) under the name “Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society” or “BGHS” for overnight guests on September 24th. Please make your own independent reservations by September 17.

Membership Zoom meeting on Thursday September 19 at 7 pm

Our next membership meeting will be a Zoom meeting on Thursday July September 19 at 7 pm (meeting agenda is below). The Zoom meeting connections are: Passcode 391621, meeting ID 89450395755, and Zoom link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89450395755?pwd=ZY4MEZDQaf8yuKc3NNwgAJurrMPzaq.1>.

Boucherville-Bourbonnais sister city progresses

At the July 11 BGHS membership meeting, Frank Koehler explained that five years ago, the Village of Bourbonnais asked the Bradley-Bourbonnais Rotary Club for its help in initiating a Sister City outreach. Recognizing the importance of French-Canadians in the history of Bourbonnais, two communities were identified: Boucherville, Quebec Province, Canada—from which many Bourbonnais families can trace their lineage—and Mortagne au Perche, France—the birthplace of Pierre Boucher, after whom Boucherville is named. In 2023, Bradley-Bourbonnais Rotarians, Frank stated that he and his wife, Jean, traveled and met with Rotarians in Mortagne au Perche and helped bring about a Sister Club relationship between the two Rotary Clubs. In September, Frank and Jean will lead a delegation to Boucherville to meet with representatives from the Boucherville Heritage Society, City of Boucherville, and Holy Family Parish. It is said that Holy Family Church served as the inspiration and model for Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Bourbonnais. Joining Frank and Jean, who will represent the BGHS, will be Mike Van Mill from the Village of Bourbonnais, Fr. Jason Nesbit, CSV, Pastor of MBVM Parish, and Veronica Featherston and Samanta Rocknowski from the Kankakee County History Museum.

Kudos to all our volunteers



Pam and Russ Perkins have expanded the Native Garden behind the Letourneau Home/Museum. The garden is in memory of Joanne Schnell. A new marker will indicate the native plant names and the garden's dedication to the memory of beloved neighbor and Master Gardener Joanne Schnell.



On Saturday August 24, Master Gardeners Dale Bowman and Pam Adams groomed the *Le Jardin aux Potage* (herb garden) in the left photograph while Judy Smead cared for her adopted garden: the Two Maple Tree Garden.

In addition to Pam Adams, Dale Bowman, and Judy Smead—in photographs above—a big BGHS “thank you” goes to Pam and Russ Perkins for expanding the Native Garden, and Tyler Goodrich for printing copies of the *A Pictorial History of Bourbonnais Grove’s First Log Schoolhouse (1837-48)* and *Home for French-Canadian Families from 1848-2010*. She printed 30—8 ½ x 11 copies for \$5 donation each at the July 4th *Les Artisans* Arts and Craft Fair and 50 booklets for \$5 donation each at the *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner and later. More kudos go to: Josué Savoie for updating the BGHS website postings; Daron Kinzinger for picking up our mail and chairing our Board of Directors; Cindy McBarnes for chairing the log schoolhouse Education Committee; Christine Michels for her ongoing Corresponding Secretary work; Steve Monts for his ongoing detailed treasurer’s work; Gary Seiner and Mary Ann Lambert for their

expert and detailed work as curator and assistant curator respectively; Ken Ponton for his oversight as executive vice-president; Ellen Stringer for organizing the craft show fundraisers; Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee members Mayor Paul Schore, Laurie Cyr, Ken Ponton, Gary Seiner, Charles Balesi, Frank Koehler, Cindy McBarnes, Norm Strasma, Daron Kinzinger, and myself; Perry Farm Living History Advisory Committee members: Mack Brza, Daron Kinzinger, Ken Lewellen, Max Michels, Rodney Miller, Doris O'Connor, Gary Seiner, Jorie Walters, and myself; Charles Bales for arranging the program for the September 24 *Fleurs-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner; Doris O'Connor for chairing the Membership Committee and chaperoning the open houses at the museum campuses on August 18 and September 1; Judy Smead and Ken Lewellen for chaperoning the museum campus open house on August 4; and Ralph Lambert for sending orange butterfly weed seeds from Missouri for the Native Garden.

Several volunteer slots remain open vacant for upcoming museum campus open houses and craft show

The open houses of the Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse continue on the first and third Sundays of every month from 1-4 pm, **but the BGHS needs volunteers for both sites--especially Sunday September 15.** Chaperons greet visitors, hand out self-guided tour information at the door, and oversee artifacts. **If you have not volunteered before as an open house chaperon, no worries, a mentor will be present to train you—as well as open and close the sites—on the date you sign up for. By clicking on one or more of the links below, you may then click “Sign Up” for the date(s) you prefer. If both slots are filled for your site and date choice, just send me an email, and you can still come on your preferred date.**

Log schoolhouse open house volunteer chaperon link:

Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society: Chaperoning Log Schoolhouse Open House--Meet and Greet, Hand Out Self-Guided Tours, Oversee Artifacts ([signupgenius.com](https://www.signupgenius.com)).

Letourneau Home/Museum open house volunteer chaperon link:

Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society: Chaperoning Letourneau Home/Museum Open House--Meet and Greet, Hand Out Self-Guided Tours, Oversee Artifacts ([signupgenius.com](https://www.signupgenius.com)).

Also, if you would like to volunteer as a BGHS table greeter at one of our *Les Artisans* Arts and Craft Fairs on December 7, please open this link for dates and times: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAE2BABFCC43-chaperoning1>.

Who are we?

When we arrived in Bourbonnais Grove in 1835, we were neither French-Canadian Roman Catholic, nor Methodists like our soon-to-be friend and Will County School Commissioner Levi Jenks. We became very active in the pioneer settlement and sponsored the construction of its first school. Who are we and what was our religion?

Thursday September 19 Zoom meeting agenda

- 7pm—Pledge of allegiance;
- Presentation based on September/October 2024 newsletter item “Who are we?”

- Approval of August 8, 2024 membership minutes (*attached*);
- Treasurer's report;
- Corresponding Secretary report;
- Executive Vice-President report;
- Curator report;
- Membership report;
- Ways and Means:
 - Website update;
 - Remnant log pieces; and
 - Chaperons and “openers/closers” needed for open houses of the Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse. At the Letourneau Home/Museum, Doris O'Connor has volunteered for September 1, and Judy Smead has volunteered for the log schoolhouse on Tuesday September 24 from 4-5:15 pm.
 - **Chaperon(s) are needed for September 15 and 24—please see page three above for sign up links.**
- Building and Grounds:
 - Southeast trees and shrubs need to be trimmed—Pete Gryzlak of B & S Yards Plus .
- Old Business
 - Restructuring of BGHS update, and
 - Chaperones for open houses.
- New Business
 - **Next meeting September 19 at 7 pm**—Zoom only;
 - Organize celebration dinner silent auction items and promote booklet for donation;
 - Quebec basket of products--Jeanne Lamy-Belzil,
 - Bottle of wine--Jim,
 - Other items?
 - Special BGHS 2024 dates with links—**save the dates:**
 - September 14—reservation deadline for annual *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner [Fleur-de-Lis Celebration \(bourbonnaishistory.org\)](https://bourbonnaishistory.org)
 - **September 17**—BGHS Board of Trustee meeting at 7 pm
 - **September 19**—[BGHS membership meeting at 7 pm](#)
 - **Tuesday September 24**, beginning at 5:30pm—*Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner [Fleur-de-Lis Celebration \(bourbonnaishistory.org\)](https://bourbonnaishistory.org)
 - **October 17**—Perry Farm Living History Advisory Committee meeting at 7 pm
 - **October 22**—Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee meeting at 3:30 pm
 - Saturday December 7 from 9am – 3 pm—*Les Artisans* Arts and Craft Fair [Les Artisans Fair \(bourbonnaishistory.org\)](https://bourbonnaishistory.org)

Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee next meeting is Tuesday October 22

The next meeting of the BGHS Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee will be on Tuesday October 22 at 3:30 pm.

Have a great end of summer! Best wishes,

Jim Paul, President of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society