

Dear Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society members and friends,

Schoolhouse log reassembly begins



The reassembly of the log schoolhouse is currently taking place at a Piggush-Simoneau Inc construction building. The above photographs are of the inside and outside of the building's northeast corner. Additional vintage logs have been found in Indiana to supplement the original logs which will comprise 60% of the structure. The reassembly is being done in a protected environment to figure out the best fit of the logs and calculate/measure the additional logs that are needed. Once the assembly plan is determined, a construction schedule will be provided. The onsite construction (next to the Letourneau Home/Museum) is estimated to be completed in May 2022.

As the reconstruction of the log schoolhouse moves forward, the BGHS is looking for:

- One-room schoolhouse heirlooms dated within the 1837-48 era.
- Artifacts related to the French-Canadian families that lived in the schoolhouse after it was transformed into a home from 1848-2011;
- Information and portraits of the Methodist circuit riders are needed; and
- Display cases.

If you missed the article “Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society looking for relics” in the *Daily Journal* on January 27, here is the link which provides a detailed list of items needed and the process for donation of such items https://www.daily-journal.com/life/bourbonnais-grove-historical-society-looking-for-relics/article_5946d2e2-7ed4-11ec-bfd4-63f6c16c1775.html.

May 2022 conference to extol benefits of French Heritage Corridor

I have attached the schedule, agenda, and hotel of the upcoming May 12-13 second annual French Heritage Corridor (FHC) conference in Lafayette, Indiana. The conference will be in-person and virtual. I will include a conference registration form in next month's news eletter. The May 12 lunch and reception will be compliments of the French Heritage Society. The hotel contact information is on page 3 of the conference attachment. I would recommend

that any in-person attendees plan on two night accommodation at the Holiday Inn (nights of Wednesday May 11 and Thursday May 12).

In addition to the French Heritage Corridor website launch with logo, interactive map, and calendar of events, the conference will feature the Ouatatonon Preserve-National Historic Landmark and the benefits of the FHC for the seven Midwestern states within the corridor.

On a personal note as Illinois ambassador to the FHC for the past year, I have witnessed our Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society's presence and reach expand from northeastern Illinois to statewide Illinois; then on to the seven state FHC; and then to a national and global networking. This has happened because the French Heritage Society has spearheaded the FHC initiative with its commitment to preserve and publicize the values that we all hold near and dear.

Next membership meeting on March 10 will be Zoom only

The next membership meeting will be on March 10 at 7:00 pm (CST) will be **Zoom only**. Please click this link to join the meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84054951834?pwd=YjJLOGdIOW1pMIQvT0JGSTlwd1NrZz09.>

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

- Pledge of allegiance;
- Presentation based on February/March 2022 news eletter item "Who am I?"
- Approval of February 3, 2022 membership minutes (*attached*);
- Treasurer's report;
- Corresponding Secretary report;
 - Log schoolhouse artifact donors
- Executive Vice-President Collection Committee report—Royal Blue door/window and log schoolhouse artifacts;
- Membership Report;
- Ways and Means:
 - Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley "pass through" fund investment option; and
 - July 4 *Les Artisans* Arts and Craft Show.
- Building and Grounds
- Old Business
 - Continued reopening of Letourneau Home/Museum—if so, chaperones are needed for April 3 and April 17 (Easter).
- New Business
 - Interview participation in MBVM 175th anniversary celebration in 2022—Ellen Stringer's planned interviews (any others?);
 - Bylaw, loan, and acquisition policy set for board approval;
 - Forming a Scholarship and a YouTube Committee; and
 - **Next meeting on April 7, 2022.**

Mark your calendars for these BGHS 2022 events

- Next BGHS membership Zoom meeting—7:00 pm March 10;
- Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee Zoom meeting—3:30 pm on March 10;
- Open house at Letourneau Home/Museum—Sunday March 6;

- March 25-26—Phi Alpha Theta Illinois Regional Conference, Kankakee County Museum and ONU—*see attachment*;
- April 29-30—MBVM 175th anniversary celebration;
- Tentative date, Saturday June 25, 2022—Inauguration of Bourbonnais Grove’s first log schoolhouse at the Bourbonnais Friendship Festival;
- July 4—*Les Artisans* Arts and Crafts Fair;
- August 20-21—MBVM 175th anniversary celebration with tours of church grounds and St. Viator/ONU campus;
- Friday September 16—Fifth Annual *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner; and
- Saturday December 3—*Les Artisans* Arts and Crafts Fair.

French Heritage Corridor upcoming events

- February 4-June 5—“People of the Prairie: 12,000 years in DuPage County, Elmhurst History Museum;
- February 19—*Fete de Voyageur*, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin (www.prarieduchien.org);
- March 5—The Travels and Adventures of Charles Napoleon Morin, Little Canada, Minnesota (*see attached for more information*);
- February 26-27—Old Mines, Missouri; Winter Camp Meat Shoot and Rendezvous https://www.mineaubreton.com/uploads/1/2/2/4/122436774/flyer-feb_2022_rendezvous.pdf;
- April 22—25th Canal Boat Captain’s Luncheon, 11:30 am (iandmcanal.org);
- May 12-13—2nd Annual FHC Conference, Tippecanoe County Historical Society, Lafayette, Indiana (*see attached for conference program and hotel accommodation*);
- Tentative date, Saturday June 25, 2022—Inauguration of Bourbonnais Grove’s first log schoolhouse at the Bourbonnais Friendship Festival; and
- July 16, Bastille Day Festival at French Heritage Museum (Kankakee).

Letourneau family heirlooms come to the BGHS



BGHS member Jean Legris-Pekoc joined our February 3 Zoom membership meeting and showed photographs and other items belonging to her family that she wishes to donate to the BGHS. The above coffee and tea pots were handed down by Jean’s grandmother Eva (Letourneau), the daughter of Mary (Lesage) and Philippe Letourneau. Eva and Alphonse Legris were married in 1914, and the pots were gifts to the couple by Alphonse’s uncle Monsignor Gerasim Legris. The membership was impressed by the treasure trove of artifacts that Jean

wishes to donate. What is so special about these items is that they relate to both the Letourneau Home/Museum and the log schoolhouse—because Eva’s mother, Mary (Lesage) Letourneau, was born in the log schoolhouse when it was a home to Joseph and Julie Lesage.

O’Hare Airport Terminal 5 art project to include French-Canadians

I recently communicated with Jeremy Sublewski, studio assistant for Associate Professor Jina Valentine at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Jeremy stated that Professor Valentine’s team is currently working on a public art work called *Irenwa Wa* (She Speaks the Regular Way). The art work will be installed next summer at O’Hare Airport as part of the Terminal 5 expansion project. This art will illustrate the changing demographics of Illinois over the past 200 years by representing the growth of immigrant communities. Quotes from these communities will be etched onto wall-mounted convex aluminum discs of varying sizes. Jeremy stated that “We plan to represent the French and Canadian communities.” He sought input on how to best frame the French-Canadian communities. Jeremy has also contacted Jorie Walters, Research Coordinator of the Kankakee County Museum.

I have referred Jeremy and his art team to the BGHS website, specifically the French-Canadian Heritage Corridor information, the French-Canadian Heritage Wall at KCC, the French-Canadian Interview Project website, *Le Journal du Village*, *The Herald* articles, and BGHS News Eletters. All of these sources will prove beneficial as primary and secondary resources for the quotations of our French-Canadian immigrant community.

Who are we?

In 1838, we lived in Bourbonnais Grove and were the parents of 7 children of school age (their ages ranging from 6-17). Thank goodness we initiated the log schoolhouse to be built in order to accommodate these children. Who are we?

Kudos to our volunteers

The BGHS expresses special gratitude to our volunteers: Laurel Soper for her updating of the BGHS website and Face Book postings; Ken Ponton for corresponding with potential BGHS artifact donors; Gary Seiner and Daron Kinzinger for shoveling the boardwalk at the Letourneau Home/Museum and picking up our mail; Christine Michels and Steve Monts for their ongoing corresponding secretary and treasurer work respectively; Marcia Rabideau for retyping the BGHS bylaws, loan and acquisition policies; and Christine Michels for chaperoning the Letourneau Home/Museum open house on March 6.

I wish you all a good end of winter and beginning of spring.
Jim Paul, President of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society