

Dear Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society members and friends,

Laurel Soper passes the corresponding secretary torch to Christine Michels



On January 13, outgoing BGHS officer/corresponding secretary, Laurel Soper (at left), taught Christine Michels (newly elected to that officer position) how to check and respond to the emails that come to the BGHS via website or elsewhere. Christine will reply to the emails and/or if she cannot answer the email, forward it to the appropriate person in the society. Welcome aboard, Christine, and thank you, Laurel, for your continuing service as BGHS website/Face Book coordinator and member of the Collections Committee.

Next membership meeting on February 3 and will be Zoom only

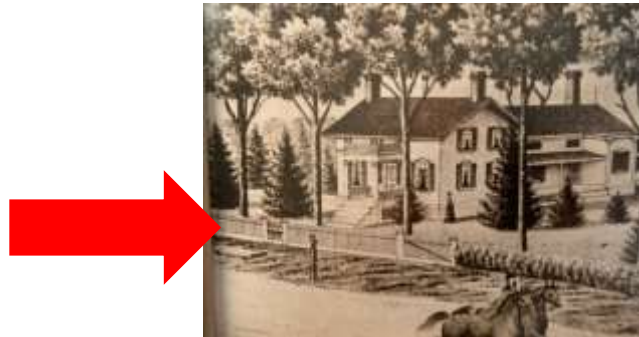
The Thursday February 3 membership meeting at 7:00 pm will be **Zoom only**. Please click this link to join the meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85258902304?pwd=YmJ1dDJjOFRqbE42eUhpNFJLT0R6UT09>

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

- Pledge of allegiance;
- Presentation based on January/February 2022 news eletter item “Who am I?”
- Approval of December 2, 2021 membership minutes (*attached*);
- Treasurer’s report;
- Corresponding Secretary report;
 - Log schoolhouse artifact donors
 - O’Hare Airport art project on Illinois French-Canadian immigration
- 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; and
 - July 4 *Les Artisans* Arts and Craft Show.
- Building and Grounds
 - White vinyl fence—on southwest corner of Adrien M. Richard Heritage Preserve; 32 feet of fence along the west sidewalk and another 72 feet extending south (near the apartments) would form a nice visual boundary for our museum and log schoolhouse campus. **An anonymous donor has given \$1000 to the BGHS for garden projects in 2021. There is still \$730 left in that 2021 donation that can be used for the fencing. This donor will contribute another \$1000 for the fence in 2022.** The Lowe’s vinyl fencing seems most desirable: Lowe’s [Freedom Pre-Assembled Newport 3-ft H x 8-ft W White Vinyl Gothic Fence Panel in the Vinyl Fence Panels department at Lowes.com](#)



The fence will look similar to the fence (as indicated by arrow) in this 1883 drawing of the Letourneau Home.

- Old Business
 - Continued reopening of Letourneau Home/Museum—if so, chaperones are needed for March 6 and March 20.
- New Business
 - Interview participation in MBVM 175th anniversary celebration in 2022—Ellen Stringer’s planned interviews (any others?); and
 - **Next meeting on March 10, 2022.**

Mark your calendars for these BGHS 2022 events

- Next BGHS membership Zoom meeting—7:00 pm February 3 (see December 2 membership meeting minutes attached);
- Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee Zoom meeting—3:30 pm on March 10;
- Tentative first open house at Letourneau Home/Museum—Sunday March 6;
- 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 19—*Fete de Voyageur*, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin (www.prairieduchien.org);
- 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;
- 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).

BGHS Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee meets for first time

The BGHS Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee met on January 20. This committee has transitioned from the Log Schoolhouse Restoration Steering Committee which met monthly during 2018-19. All former members plus three new members serve on the advisory committee. BGHS member and Village of Bourbonnais Assistant Administrator Laurie Cyr provided a construction update. She stated that the log schoolhouse foundation is in. A sump pump has been installed to drain the foundation so that freezing temperatures do not crack the foundation. The sump pump has a long blue extension cord which is plugged into an outlet at the back of the Letourneau Home/Museum. The additional logs needed have been located in Indiana. All logs have been moved from the Public Works water tower to the construction office at PSI. The logs are being assembled there. This is being done to figure out the best assembly of the logs and calculate/measure the additional logs that are needed. Mayor Paul Schore pointed out that the logs are square, not round. Once the assembly plan is determined, a construction schedule will be provided. The onsite (next to the Letourneau Home/Museum) construction is estimated to be completed in May 2022. There will be three windows and one door. The roof will be shake shingles.



Pictured: foundation sump pump hose and blue extension cord for pump plug-in at back of Letourneau Home/Museum.

BGHS is seeking artifacts for log schoolhouse



Pictured: 1807 *General View of the World* book and early 1800s slate tablet used by students to practice writing letters and numbers.

Do you have items that date back to the 1800s that you want to be showcased in Bourbonnais Grove's soon-to-be-rebuilt log schoolhouse? 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.

There is no better way to get involved with the living history of Bourbonnais than to donate and display the local items you have saved. All items will be categorized and put on display within the historical rebuilt log schoolhouse. If you missed the article "Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society looking for relics" in the *Daily Journal* on January 27, here is the link https://www.daily-journal.com/life/bourbonnais-grove-historical-society-looking-for-relics/article_5946d2e2-7ed4-11ec-bfd4-63f6c16c1775.html. Please read the article, review the list of items needed therein, and spread the word on the process of how to donate relics for the log schoolhouse.

Ken Ponton, BGHS executive vice-president and chair of the BGHS Collections Committee, has collected several artifacts so far: 26 star flag, teacher's bell, quill pen, ink well, kerosene lamp, bars of lye soap, and seven wood pegs for hanging coats or clothes. He is in the process of making a small table (out of barnwood) with bowl or bucket and ladle. Ken has also built student tables and benches and a teacher's desk from barn wood. As I wrote in earlier newsletters, Ken has already made a teacher's desk, student table-desks, and student benches. Thank you, Ken, for all this wonderful work!

Who am I?

I was born in the former Bourbonnais Grove log schoolhouse and later married a person who became a prisoner of war during the Civil War.

Kudos to our volunteers

The BGHS expresses special gratitude to our January volunteers: Laurel Soper and Ken Ponton for their work mentioned above; Gary Seiner for removing the Letourneau Home/Museum *Joyeux Noel* decorations; Christine Michels and Steve Monts for their ongoing corresponding secretary and treasurer work respectively; and Daron Kinzinger for collecting the mail and monitoring the messages on the phone answer machine.

I send you all warm wishes during the remaining winter months.
Jim Paul, President of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society