

BOURBONNAIS GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING—February 3, 2022

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Jim Paul called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:00 pm. He hosted and presided over the meeting. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

**ATTENDANCE:** In addition to Jim Paul, Daron Kinzinger, Christine and Max Michels, Steve Monts, Jean (Legris) and Roy Pekoc, Marcia Rabideau, Ken Ponton, Gary Seiner, and Ellen Stringer attended.

**PRESENTATION:** Jean Legris-Pekoc showed photographs and other items belonging to her family that she wishes to donate to the BGHS for display or sale. She illustrated the coffee and tea pots that were given to the family by her grandmother Eva (Letourneau)—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. She will mail them to Daron, and the Collections Committee will then complete the acquisition forms. 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 was born in the log schoolhouse when it was home to Joseph and Julie Lesage.

The membership then discussed “Can you identify this local historical person?”—from the January/February 2022 issue of BGHS News eletter). After several minutes of discussion among the members, Marsha correctly identified the person as Domiltilde (Lesage) Byron/Biron.

**MINUTES:** The minutes of the December 2, 2021 minutes were corrected and approved. The motion was made by Ken and seconded by Marcia. The correction was made by Daron since it relates to his recommendation regarding the Pass Through Fund of the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley. The corrected minutes are on the website, and his corrected comments are also below under Ways and Means.

**TREASURERS REPORT:** Steve provided the bank balances as of January 31, 2022: general account \$20,892.42; log schoolhouse account \$64,035.99; and windows account \$451.00. The former CD (\$6,534.23) is now part of the general account. Several bills were paid including the \$1,600 for tree trimming to Four Seasons. Members asked for more expenditure details. Steve mentioned that Jim donated \$149.90 for another one-year Zoom subscription. Marsha made a motion to accept the treasurer’s report and pay the bills. Gary seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**CORRESPONDING SECRETARY REPORT:**

- O’Hare Airport art project on Illinois French-Canadian immigration—Christine explained the email invitation from Jeremy Sublewski to participate in the expansion project for Terminal 5 at O’Hare Airport. The project initiative is to etch quotes from Illinois immigrant communities (over the past 200 years) onto convex aluminum discs of varying sizes. Christine stated that Jim has referred the project hosts 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.
- Log schoolhouse artifact donors—Christine has forwarded several emails (to Ken and Jim) from the website “Drop Us a Line” regarding log schoolhouse artifacts.

**EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT COLLECTION COMMITTEE REPORT:** Ken stated that he has been addressing several artifact donations regarding the log schoolhouse. He asked Jim to send him a list of the French-Canadian families who lived in the former log schoolhouse from

1848-2011. Two members asked if the log schoolhouse acquisition criteria included the French-Canadian families. Jim insisted that the criteria that the membership approved last year did just that.

[Post meeting research of the September 2, 2021 minutes: Marcia also asked for membership approval of the following addition to the BGHS Acquisition Policy:

CRITERIA FOR ACCESSIONING FOR THE LOG SCHOOLHOUSE

- School furnishings from the period 1837-48;
- Books printed up to 1848; and
- Artifacts and information pertaining to residents of the home from 1848-2011 in the form of signage and photographs.

Charles made a motion to that affect and it was seconded by Steve. Motion carried.]

- Royal Blue door/window and log schoolhouse artifacts—this item was not discussed.

MEMBERSHIP: No report.

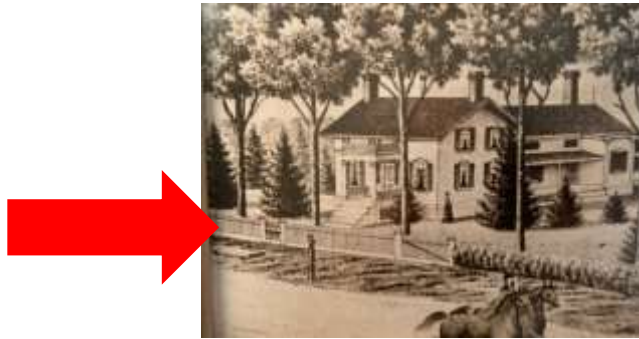
WAYS AND MEANS:

- Daron made the following correction to the December 2, 2021 minutes regarding his meeting with the CFKRV.
  - Daron reported on his meeting with Nicole Smolkovich of the Community Foundation of the Kankakee River Valley. As a result of that meeting, Daron recommends the CFKRV Pass Through Fund investment option. The Community Foundation manages approximately \$40 million. He was told that the fee would be 2.5% of any generated revenue from our deposits and our organization could withdraw our total balance if we deem necessary. At this time, Daron is not recommending the Endowment option which would only charge a 1.5% fee but would lock-in our primary funds with interest-only withdrawals. The Endowment option has a long term focus and we must be cognizant of short-term needs given our current financial status. If excess funds become available in the future, the Endowment option might be a viable option. The board would need to vote to approve such an investment if it is desired. After membership approval, Daron will solicit a decision from our board of directors for BGHS investment in the Pass Through Fund.
- Ellen reported on the past December craft show and the upcoming shows. She said that the shows have been largely successful, but she recommended that we establish a “suggested donation” door fee of \$1. Jim made this into a motion and Ken seconded it. Motion carried.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS:

- Jim recommended that the following business about the fence be tabled until the log schoolhouse reconstruction is completed, and that—if there is no village ordinance barring the fence—the installment of the fence be considered as part of the log schoolhouse landscaping.

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 Pane [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.

- Daron thanked Gary for decorating the Letourneau Home/Museum for Christmas and the low key Christmas open house.

**OLD BUSINESS:** The membership agreed that the Letourneau Home/Museum should remain open during March. Christine volunteered to chaperon the open houses on March 6 and Gary volunteered for March 20. Daron and Gary will open/close the Letourneau home for Christine on March 6, and disarm/reset the alarm.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- The members decided that the next BGHS membership meeting will be Zoom only at 7:00 pm on March 10, 2022.
- Ellen reported that she is going to interview her father, mother, aunt, and possibly other family members for the MBVM 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration this year. Jim requested other members to consider doing similar interviews.
- Jim asked the membership to consider reviving the BGHS annual scholarship for a Kankakee County high school junior or senior. He suggested that the scholarship be based on a student's test score regarding the BGHS YouTube Channel's Local History 101 series. He will bring the issue up again next month so that a committee may be formed to: 1) determine the amount of the scholarship, 2) how it should be awarded, and 3) when shall it be awarded.
- Jim also raised the issue of enhancing our website with more videos—connected to our YouTube Channel. As Gretchen Small (of Moline's Butterworth Center & Deere-Wiman House) wrote in the January-February 2022 issue of *Illinois Heritage Association* newsletter insert, "Is our channel a perfect example of a high-quality YouTube channel? Definitely not, but we are thrilled that we are trying something new that we can improve and build upon. . .realize that to keep moving into the future, we need to learn the latest methods for reaching new audiences." Daron wholeheartedly endorsed this initiative. Jim stated that he would bring this issue up again next month, and would like to form a YouTube committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm. Respectfully submitted by Jim Paul