

BOURBONNAIS GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING—September 7, 2023 (action items are in red)

CALL TO ORDER: President Jim Paul called the Zoom and in-person meeting to order at 7:00 pm. He hosted, presided over the meeting, and took minutes. The pledge of allegiance was recited. Jim then asked for a moment of silence to remember Carl Moran who died on August 30, 2023.

ATTENDANCE: In addition to Jim Paul who attended in person (as well as Levi Lawson and his mother), Charles Balesi, Daron Kinzinger, Betty Leininger, Steve Monts, Doris O'Connor, Wal Schuller, Penelope Stickney, and Gary Seiner attended via Zoom.

PRESENTATION: The membership then discussed “What am I?”—from the September/October 2023 issue of BGHS News eletter). “I am the oldest house in the Kankakee River Valley. In 1837, I was likely built on the foundation of Francois Bourbonnais, Sr., Catish, and family’s log cabin. My construction was unusual at that time as Jack Klasey wrote in an August 19 *Daily Journal* article about me: instead of logs , , , [I] was built of lumber sawn from trees in the surrounding grove.” In 1854, my new owner referred to me as a “pioneer structure”. Who am I? The members correctly answered: the Letourneau Home.

MINUTES: The August 3, 2023, meeting minutes were approved. The motion was made by Penny and seconded by Charles. Motion carried.

TREASURERS REPORT: Steve provided the bank balances as of the end of July: general account which now includes the windows account (to save a \$15 monthly fee for a separate account if below \$2500) \$22,234.16 plus Windows subaccount \$576.37; log schoolhouse account \$4820.55; and CFKRV pass through investment \$6,534.23 (Steve is still awaiting an update for this account). A motion was made by Gary to accept the treasurer’s report and pay the bills. Motion was seconded by Penny and carried.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY REPORT: None

EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT COLLECTION COMMITTEE REPORT: None.

CURATOR’S REPORT: Gary stated that he:

- Continues to catalogue artifacts and is almost done in Letourneau Home—log schoolhouse is next;
- Placed new items on display;
- Painted the coal bucket black and has put more log pieces in the bucket;
- Thanked Mary Ann for purchasing more acid free boxes for storing artifacts;
- Needs more artificial vegetables for kitchen and dining room bowls;
- Needs a cover for the scrap book in the log schoolhouse;
- Asked open house chaperones to turn on lights upstairs, especially in the “military room”;
- Is looking for a bench and French lantern—Penny volunteered to help;
- Will bring paper yard waste bags, one bundle at a time for the back porch;
- Gary will research blinds for the north lower floor windows in the Letourneau Home/Museum.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Bonnie's email to Jim: current 50 lifetime members, 55 paid members and 6 new members for total of 111 members.

#### WAYS AND MEANS:

- Gary, Daron, and Ken are working on designs for the remnant log schoolhouse pieces to be used in fund raising. Daron is checking with Benoit Wood Services to see how they might accommodate Gary or Ken's design ideas.
- Jim emphasized the ease of volunteering for open houses by using the Sign Up Genius. Gary and Betty will chaperone for open house on Sunday September 17, Doris on October 1, and Gary on October 16.
- Jim encouraged members to make reservations for the October 17 *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner.
- **Daron will determine possible dates for holding a fundraiser at Culvers from 4-8 pm.**
- Jim advertised his new Facebook public group page [Bourbonnais History Dossier | Facebook](#); and
- Jim stated that the Log Schoolhouse's nomination as a Kankakee County historic landmark was approved by the county board on August 8. The Village of Bourbonnais has already approved the log schoolhouse as a village historic landmark on June 17. He has ordered the historic landmark plaque to be presented to the BGHS for display in the log schoolhouse. The date for the presentation is TBA.

#### BUILDING AND GROUNDS:

- Levi Lawson stated that he likes Gary's design for his Eagle Scout project. Levi plans to do the work after he conducts a fund raiser for his project. **The BGHS will need to supervise his project.**
- Steve gave a report on the new landscape plants at the log schoolhouse.
- Jim mentioned again that Angi be used as a resource to find someone to complete repairs as needed for the home/museum upstairs east side wall plaster, back porch repainting, and future roof repairs/replacement for the Letourneau Home/Museum. Daron said that the upstairs northeast window in the Letourneau Home/Museum needs attention.
- **The village and BGHS are pursuing the idea of planting shrubs along the west boundary to hide the trash bins and driveway.**

#### OLD BUSINESS:

- **Daron stated that he is still in the process of editing of the bylaws (drafted by Jim and emailed to Daron on 3/2/22). The draft provides language for restructuring of the BGHS. Daron and Jim will meet on September 21 to move this draft forward so that it can be presented to the membership in 2024.**
- Jim confirmed that Doris will assume Bonnie's position as Membership Committee chair.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- Due to Jim's travel schedule, the Fleur-de-Lis Celebration Dinner on October 17, and family commitments, the next BGHS membership meeting will be via Zoom at 8:00 pm—one hour later than usual—on Thursday November 9.
- Jim announced special BGHS dates for 2023.

- Jim re-emphasized the need for volunteers on the Perry Farm Living History Advisory Committee. Daron has asked if there would be a BTPD issue with the open meetings act. **Dave Zinanni said that he would check it out. Daron will follow up with David.**
- Volunteers are needed for the log schoolhouse education committee to serve as docents or interpreters for visiting schools and other guests. Several individuals have already expressed interest: Doris, Betty, Wayne Rybak, Jeanne Benson, Maureen Antignoli, Karen Duchene-Korup, Kristen Singer, and Joyce Harris.
- We now have a new BGHS logo thanks to Laurie Cyr. Everyone likes it. **Betty will check to see how we can trade mark this logo.**



- Laurel has put the tour document *Let's Spend the Weekend in Illinois's French-Canadian Heritage Corridor* (by Jim) on the BGHS website. He has also sent it to the KCCVB. **Jim said that the French Heritage Corridor Leadership Team will set up an Illinois Module on the FHC website. He will then put the tour document *Let's Spend the Weekend in Illinois's French-Canadian Heritage Corridor* on the FHC website. He will send a press release to the *Daily Journal*.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm. Motion was made by Charles and seconded by Gary. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Jim Paul