

Dear Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society members and friends,

Next membership meeting is Thursday April 3 at 7 pm

Our next membership meeting will be on Thursday April 3 at 7 pm via Zoom. The Zoom meeting link is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89279944062?pwd=BdmZFoqr867DP0lj01Kuc7hV2I90ZA.1> The Zoom meeting ID is 89279944062 and Passcode is 908801.

Save the dates for these sesquicentennial celebration events



Please share this Village of Bourbonnais sesquicentennial inaugural event. This *Soirée de Bourbonnais* announcement can be found at the following sites:

1. Village Website Dedicated Event Page: <https://www.villageofbourbonnais.com/sesquicentennial-150th-celebration/soiree-de-bourbonnais-150th-gala/>
2. Village Website General Events Page- <https://www.villageofbourbonnais.com/soiree-de-bourbonnais-150th-gala>
3. Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/villagebourbonnais/posts/pfbid0jLaDyJiMTyW6jFrVXxyXuACcLtgB1KKA6UHDJqhsSzDmTmEC8FiueCubDcb14SK1>
4. Facebook Event - <https://www.facebook.com/share/1E615YdCRa/>
5. March e-News - <https://us13.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show-email?id=6745862>
6. Main St. LED Sign

A formal email invitation to the *Soirée de Bourbonnais* will be sent to you soon.

CALLING ALL RE-ENACTORS!

PLEASE JOIN OUR
FRENCH HERITAGE WEEKEND

SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2025
BOURBONNAIS, IL 60914

FOR THE VILLAGE OF BOURBONNAIS
SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

FEATURING:
DEMONSTRATIONS - ENCAMPMENTS -
VOYAGEUR CANOES
PRESENTATIONS BY MARQUETTE AND JOLIET

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
FRANK KOEHLER - FJKOEHLER1952@GMAIL.COM

  

SCAN HERE

Hooray Bourbonnais II/*Deux*: An Interactive Engagement with Bourbonnais History



Written and Narrated by James Paul,
President of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society
and

Dedicated to the Creators and Performers of the First
"Hooray Bourbonnais" Pageant at the
1975 Centennial Anniversary of
the Village of Bourbonnais

Please also save the weekend dates of Saturday-Sunday September 27-28, 2025. On that weekend, Frank Koehler, myself, and the Village of Bourbonnais Sesquicentennial Committee are planning a French Heritage Weekend, <https://bourbonnaishistory.org/french-heritage-weekend>. The reenactment encampment will be near The Grove, Bourbonnais. Also, on September 27 from 7-10 pm at The Grove's main stage, a multi-media history pageant "Hooray Bourbonnais II/*Deux*" <https://bourbonnaishistory.org/french-heritage-weekend> will be performed. The history pageant will include singing, dancing, historical portrayals, special appearance by George Godfrey (great grandson of Watcheke and Francis Xavier Bergeron), Q & A, slides, videos, and debates about the legacy of Noel LeVasseur, the excommunication of Fr. Charles Chiniquy, and the 1980s commercialization or parkland preservation of the Perry Farm.

Who am I?

On January 12, 1836, Will County was formed and Thomas Durham was elected Rock Village Precinct Commissioner as one of three commissioners in the newly formed county. One of his ambitions was to build a school in Bourbonnais Grove. After all, he and his wife, Margaret, had a vested interest: seven of their own children were of school age. At the commissioners' first meeting in Joliet, I (who was also a Methodist circuit rider minister) was appointed Will County clerk and school commissioner. Durham agreed with me that for any new settlement like Bourbonnais Grove to survive, it must have a school. Who am I?

Plans for log schoolhouse souvenirs progress



These are the two ideas for log schoolhouse souvenirs that the BGHS has decided on. At top left is a finished example of the sanded piece with wrapping--thank you Gary Seiner for creating this piece. It is 8 inches long by 3 inches wide by 1 inch deep. Gary has drawn an example of a sanded piece with a slit (at right above) for insertion of an information card (either 3 inch by 5 inch or 5 inch by 7 inch). A local wood worker will create this log piece (the BGHS will provide the information card) so that both pieces can be presented for orders at the 150th Village of Bourbonnais *Soirée de Bourbonnais* on May 17, and other functions we have throughout the year. This wood worker will then create the pieces.

Methodism retouches log schoolhouse after 177 years



On Sunday March 16 at 10 am, Rev. Valerie Metzker (upper left) led a Methodist historical reenactment at the log schoolhouse.

Not since 1848 when the Bourbonnais Grove first log schoolhouse closed, have Methodists used the building. The first Methodist quarterly meeting was held at the schoolhouse in January 1842 (Reverend John Sinclair presiding the next year). Bourbonnais Grove became part of the six-week Methodist circuit. Stephen R. Beggs, Levi Jenks, James Leckenby, [unknown first name] Chapin, David Lewis, and C. Lazenby were the circuit rider ministers. Thanks to Ken Ponton for inviting Rev. Metzker, the Methodist presence came back to the log schoolhouse on March 16. In the 1840s and 1850s, the Methodists--like the Durham family Quakers and the French-Canadian Roman Catholics in Bourbonnais Grove--were Bourbonnais Grove abolitionists.

Kudos to all our volunteers

In addition to Ken and Gary mentioned above for their volunteer work on the Methodist historical reenactment and log schoolhouse souvenirs respectively, more kudos go to: Daron Kinzinger for picking up our mail, chairing our Board of Directors, organizing publicity and upcoming Culver's fund raiser on May 6, drafting the bylaw restructuring of the BGHS, and creating the Landing Page for our website; Cindy McBarnes for chairing the log schoolhouse Education Committee and organizing future school visits; Steve Monts for his ongoing detailed treasurer's work; Gary Seiner for his expert and continuous detailed work as curator; Mary Ann Lambert for serving as assistant curator; Ken Ponton for setting up the March 16 event; 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, Tyler Goodrich, 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; and Doris O'Connor for chairing the Membership Committee and assuming the BGHS officer position of Corresponding Secretary.

Volunteering is as easy as clicking the links below

Volunteering for the open houses of the Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse is just a click away. These two historic landmarks will have open houses on the second Saturday of every month from 1-4 pm. 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.** The sign-up process is rather easy. **Just click one or more of the links below for an opportunity to chaperon at your preference site and 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.**

Craft Shows on July 4 and December 6, 2025 sign up link

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAE2BABFCC43-chaperoning1>

Letourneau Home/Museum open house, second Saturday of every month March-December from 1-4 pm (2 chaperones needed) sign up link

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C48ADAE2BABFCC43-chaperoning>

Log schoolhouse open house, second Saturday of every month March-December from 1-4 pm (2 chaperones needed) sign up link

Special BGHS 2025 activities, some with links—save the dates:

- Saturday April 19 from 9am-12pm--Daughters of the American Revolution meeting at the Letourneau Home/Museum;
- April 23-26--Fifth Annual French Heritage Corridor Conference at Washington University, St. Louis, MO https://us8.campaign-archive.com/?e=test_email&u=5d49c2a770212a80ceddc94d4&id=b6705d20dc
- Tuesday May 6 from 5-8 pm--BGHS fundraiser at Bourbonnais Culver's;
- Saturday May 17 from 6-10 pm--*Soirée de Bourbonnais* at The Grove--see page 1;
- Friday July 4 *Les Artisans* Arts and Craft Show from 9 am to 3 pm, <https://bourbonnaishistory.org/les-artisans-fair>
- August 1--nomination deadline for 2025 *Fleur-de-Lis* Award of Excellence, <https://bourbonnaishistory.org/fleur-de-lis-celebration>
- Saturday September 27 from 7-9 pm at the Grove--Bourbonnais sesquicentennial history pageant Hooray Bourbonnais II/*Deux*, <https://bourbonnaishistory.org/french-heritage-weekend>
- Saturday-Sunday September 27-28, 2025--Bourbonnais sesquicentennial French Heritage Weekend, <https://bourbonnaishistory.org/french-heritage-weekend>
- Thursday November 13, 2025--Eight Annual *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner, <https://bourbonnaishistory.org/fleur-de-lis-celebration>
- Saturday December 6 *Les Artisans* Arts and Craft Show from 9 am to 3 pm, <https://bourbonnaishistory.org/les-artisans-fair> and
- Saturday December 13--BGHS Christmas Open House from 1-4 pm.

Thursday April 3 at 7 pm Zoom meeting agenda

- 7pm—Pledge of allegiance;
- Presentation based on April/May 2025 news eletter item “Who am I?”
- Approval of March 13, 2025 membership minutes (*attached*);
- Treasurer's report;
- Corresponding Secretary report;
- Curator report
- Membership report
- Ways and Means:
 - Website update
 - Craft show update;
 - Remnant log pieces;
 - INaturalist app and purpose; and
 - Chaperones for open houses.
- Building and Grounds:
 - Current and future trees and shrubs work—Pete Gryzlak of B & S Yards Plus;
 - Florescent light replacement;
 - Electrician?
 - Pest control
 - HVAC
- Old Business

- Restructuring of BGHS update and process--see below; and
- Marker at Clancy Gernon Funeral Home parking lot
- New Business
 - **Next meeting May 1, 2025 at 7 pm**—Zoom only;
 - New possible slogan for BGHS: *Your History Starts Here*
 - Friday May 30 tour;
 - Assistance needed for Hooray Bourbonnais II *Deax*
 - Jim is working with volunteers to present an onstage pro and con debate with rebuttal during the September 27, 2025 production of “Hooray Bourbonnais II/*Deux*”:
 - “Was Noel LeVasseur’s legacy positive or negative?” Jim will portray LeVasseur and present the positive view. Rodney Miller is thinking about presenting the negative view. Jim will send Rod the primary arguments for that view;
 - “Was the Excommunication of Fr. Charles Chiniquy justified?” Ken L. has volunteered to present the pro “yes” view and Josué has volunteered to present the con “no” view. Jim sent each of them the primary arguments and resource book;
 - “In the 1980s, should Durham-Perry Farmstead/Perry Farm Park be commercially developed or left in its natural state?” Volunteers to debate each view are needed.

Proposed new bylaws Articles I, II, and III below will provide BGHS restructuring

The last time that the bylaws of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society were approved was: by membership at the March 4 and May 6, 2021 BGHS meetings, and by the Board of Directors and BGHS officers on June 2, 2021. Over the past four years, Daron and I have been working on new bylaw language that would restructure the BGHS. In the restructuring all current officers will join the current board members on the Board of Directors. The monthly meetings would combine board and membership issues. As many as 15 persons may be on the board. All BGHS members would be invited to the monthly board meetings and could participate in a “straw vote” on issues that would then be voted on by the board--at the same meeting. A more defined committee structure will developed. Here are the first three Articles of the bylaws, drafted by Daron and me, for you to review and possibly vote on at the May 1, 2025 membership meeting. More bylaw Article new language proposals will be forthcoming in future issue of the news eletters.

BOURBONNAIS GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CORPORATE BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - NAME AND OFFICES

The name of the organization shall be the BOURBONNAIS GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY. The official address of the organization shall be P.O. Box 311, Bourbonnais, Illinois, 60914. The organization shall maintain a registered office in the State of Illinois and a registered agent at such office. The organization may have other offices within or without the state.

ARTICLE II - MISSION STATEMENT

A. To perpetuate the history and heritage of the Village of Bourbonnais, Illinois.

- B. To educate the public about the history of the Village of Bourbonnais, Illinois
- C. To cultivate social discourse and friendship among the members of the Society.
- D. To receive, purchase, sell, hold and maintain items and artifacts that meet the criteria listed in the Mission Statement and the Acquisition Policy
- E. To receive, purchase, sell, hold, convey, encumber, lease, rent, and maintain all kinds of property, both real and personal, in furtherance of the aforementioned purposes.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERS

Section 1. Classes of Members. The term “member” will henceforth be used to describe a person or entity that is current with annual membership dues and separate from the Board of Directors. The organization shall have four classes of members whose membership status is based on annual dues being current. Membership in the Society is open to all individuals, businesses, and organizations that have an interest in the purposes of the Society and the community. Members do not need to be residents of Bourbonnais, Illinois. The four classes and their subclasses shall be:

ANNUAL:

Senior (over 60)

Individual

Family

BUSINESS:

Business (Annual)

LIFETIME:

Individual Lifetime

Business Lifetime

NON-VOTING

Complimentary - Free (One time for a period of two years, for promotional purposes)

Full-time students under 21 years old - Free

Section 2. Voting Rights. Each member in good membership standing shall be entitled to one (1) vote in the election of the Board of Directors. Each current member shall also be entitled to one (1) non-binding vote on each matter presented to them by the Board of Directors President at any Board of Directors Meeting. This non-binding vote shall be called a Straw Vote.

A member shall not have more than one vote if they are a part of two different classes of members.

Section 3. Transfer of Membership. Membership is not transferable or assignable.

Section 4. Membership Notice. The Membership Committee chairperson of the Society and/or their designee(s) shall issue membership cards upon the full payment of dues. The card shall state the name of the member, term of the membership, and year range for which dues have been paid unless the membership is a Lifetime membership.

ARTICLE III - MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

Section 1. Annual Meeting. An annual meeting of the members shall be held during the month of December at such time and place as may be fixed by the board of directors.

Section 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the members may be called by the president, the majority of the Board of Directors present at a Board of Directors meeting, or not less than one-third of the members.

Section 3. Notice of Meetings. Written notice stating the place, date, and hour of any meeting of members shall be delivered to each member entitled to vote at such meeting not less than two (2) nor more than sixty (60) days before the date of such meeting, or in the case of a removal of one or more directors, a merger, consolidation, dissolution or sale, lease, or exchange of assets, not less than twenty (20) nor more than sixty (60) days before the date of such meeting. In case of a special meeting or when required by statute or by these bylaws, the purpose for which the meeting is called shall be stated in the notice. If mailed, the notice of a meeting shall be deemed delivered when deposited in the United States mail addressed to the member at his or her address as it appears in the records of the organization, with postage thereon prepaid.

Section 4. Record Date. The record date for any meeting of the members shall be the date on which notice is delivered.

Section 5. Quorum. The presence of six members shall constitute a quorum at any annual meeting. If a quorum is not present at any annual meeting, a majority of the members present may adjourn the meeting at any time without further notice. At any adjourned meeting at which a quorum shall be present, any business may be transacted which might have been transacted at the original meeting; withdrawal of the members from any meeting shall not cause

failure of a duly constituted quorum at that meeting. One more than half of the members present must be in agreement within a quorum to affirm a matter.

Section 6. Proxies. Members shall be entitled to vote by proxy.

Have a great spring! Best wishes,

Jim Paul, President of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society