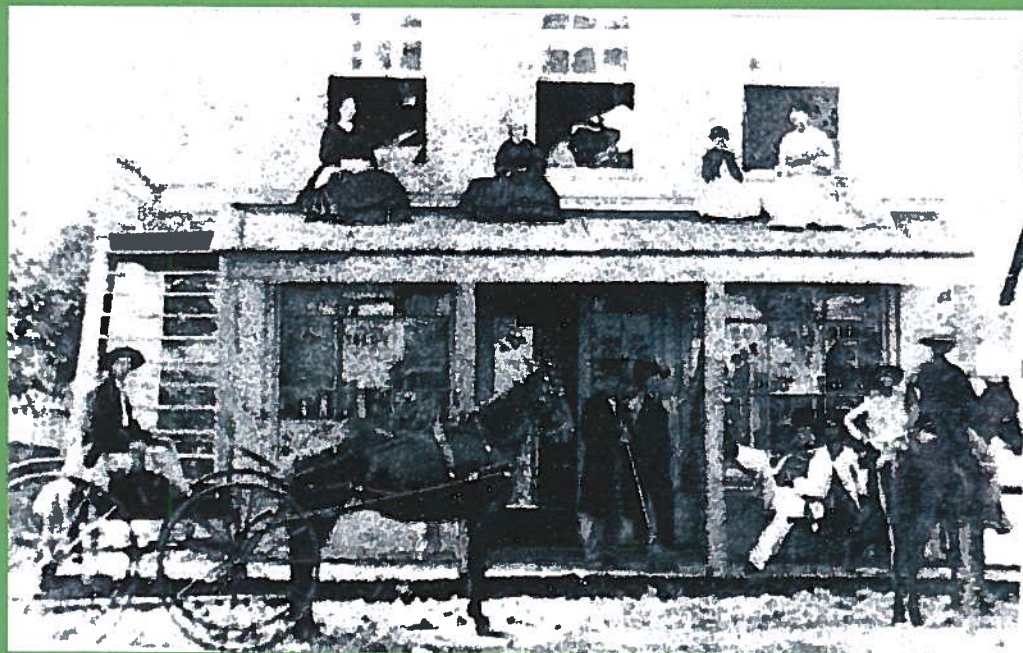


# FOUR WALKING TOURS OF HISTORIC BOURBONNAIS, ILLINOIS

By

The Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society and  
Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission



For website access, click "Four Walking Tours" on the <http://www.bourbonnaishistory.org/> home page.



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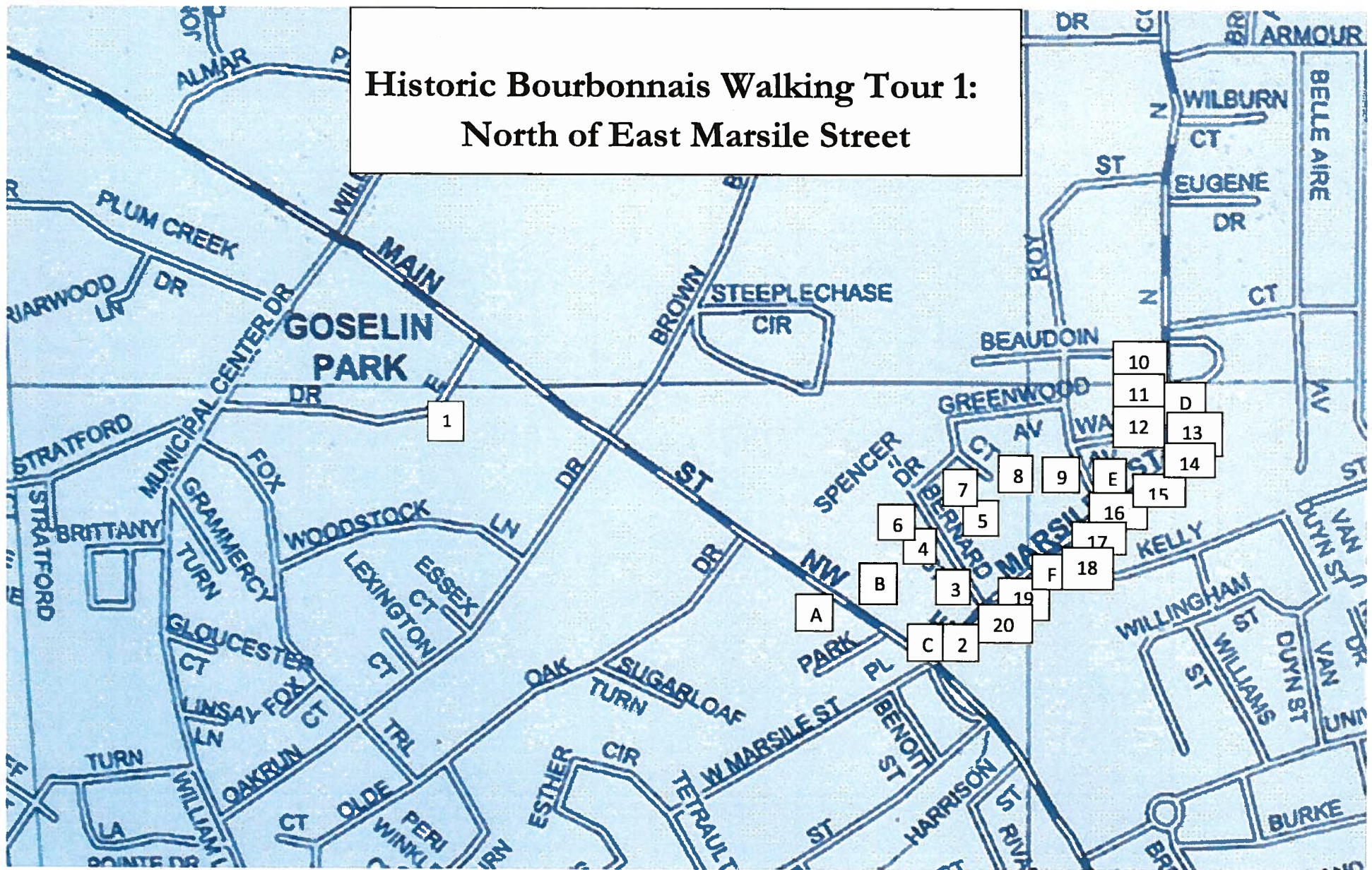
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## Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 1: North of East Marsile Street

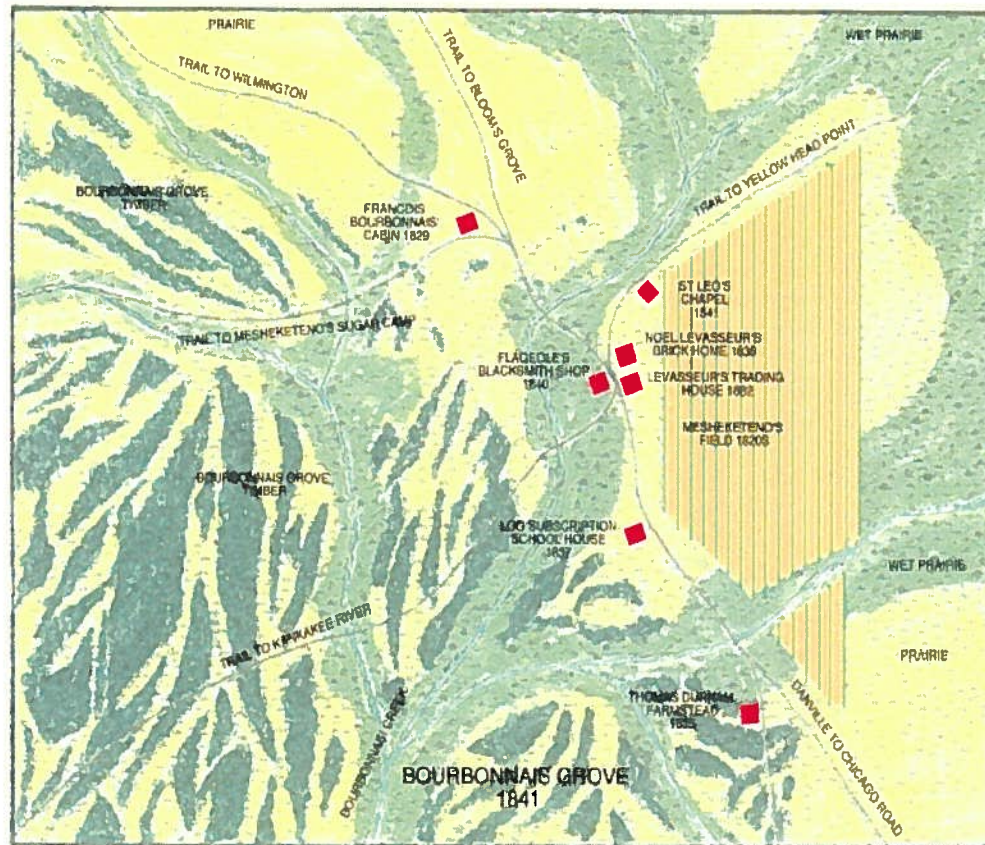


The numbers refer to existing historic buildings and the letters refer to historic buildings that no longer exist. The numbers and letters south of East Marsile Street denote structures on the north side of the street. *This page will be referred to throughout Walking Tour 1 so if you are using an electronic device, you may want to print this page before starting the tour.*



## **Introduction and Acknowledgments: Welcome to *Four Walking Tours of Historic Bourbonnais, Illinois***

Before the Village of Bourbonnais was incorporated in 1875, the settlement was known as Bourbonnais Grove. Local historian Vic Johnson drew the map below of the pioneer Bourbonnais Grove settlement in 1841. Bourbonnais, Illinois is situated 60 miles south of Chicago in the heart of the Illinois French-Canadian Heritage Corridor. In 2015, signs were installed on Interstate 57 marking the beginning and end of this corridor (see <http://www.russell-publications.com/articles/24895/cloonen-unveils-french-canadian-corridor-signs>). For a more comprehensive orientation to the Illinois French-Canadian Heritage Corridor, of which Bourbonnais is the focal point, go to <http://planning.k3county.net/pdf/FCHC.pdf>.



The following self-guided tours can then be used in walking, biking or driving to see these historic buildings and sites. The tours are arranged by historic neighborhoods so walkers can recognize where they are and what is around them. The numbers and

letters in the four walking tours correspond with the numbers and letters on the map for each walk. Indeed, virtual reality “walking” can be enjoyed by anyone from an easy chair at home while reading through these pages.

The Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society and the Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission have created these walking tours and would like to express gratitude to Adrien Richard, Mary Ann Kirsch, Vic Johnson, Bonnie Bergeron, Laurel Soper, Marsha Rabideau, Gary Seiner, Mardene Hinton, Patricia Paul, and Dr. James Paul for contributing to the narratives and images of the historic houses, buildings, and sites on these walking tours; and to Laurel Soper and Michelle Sadler for creating and maintaining the internet connections and updates. If the reader notices any errors in the following pages; has additional historical information on these or other current historic homes, buildings, sites, or exhibits related to Bourbonnais; and/or would like to add her/his house or site or other Bourbonnais-connected historic places to the walking tours, please contact the Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission (a committee within the Kankakee County Planning Commission) 189 E. Court Street, Kankakee, IL 60901 (815-937-2940) <http://planning.k3county.net/histpres.html>. These walking tours were introduced at the Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission’s “Bourbonnais Township Public Forum” at the Bourbonnais Public Library on April 19, 2016.

#### **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 1: North of East Marsile Street**

#### **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 1: East Marsile Street**

*Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 1* begins and ends at the Letourneau House/Museum, 698 Stratford Drive East in Bourbonnais. The round trip walk is just a little more than 2 miles. In order to shorten the walk, one could begin at the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church parking lot. After viewing the Letourneau Home/Museum and Adrien R. Richard Heritage Preserve—1 (see **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 1: North of East Marsile Street** map on page 1 for corresponding numbers and letters), one should walk east on Stratford Drive East and cross North Main Street (Illinois 102) at the light in order to walk south on the east side of route 102/North Main Street. The walk continues southeast along route 102/North Main Street about .4 mile to site **A**. The early pioneers who walked this dirt road would have seen hardwood timber forest on the southwest side of the road and open prairie on the northeast side. Just about .1 mile further along, on the northeast side of route 102/North Main Street, is site **B**. At the corner of route 102/North Main Street and East Marsile Street once stood the Tetrault Blacksmith Shop—**C**. Next, turn east and walk along East Marsile Street. This street was originally known as *Rue d’Eglise* (Church Street) and also known later as College Street after St. Viator College was built. Walk to the LaMarre Confectionary/The Library Bar—**2**—and then turn north to view the historic homes along both sides of North Bernard Street—**3-7**. Turn east on Spencer Drive to Spencer Court to view the Oliver Marcotte Home—**8**. Walk back to Greenwood Street and go east to Roy Street. Turn south to see the Norbert Landroche Home—**9**. At this point, one will have walked about 1 mile. Walk north on Roy Street and then east on Beaudoin Street to North Convent Street. View the historic homes on North Convent Street—**10-11**—and the site of the Notre Dame Academy from 1909-72—**C**. From this point, walk west along East Marsile Street for sites **13-20 and E-F** and then walk back to the Letourneau House/Museum.

**1. George R. Letourneau House/Museum  
and Adrien M. Richard Heritage  
Preserve Arboretum,  
698 Stratford Drive East**



For more information,  
visit [www.bourbonnaishistory.org](http://www.bourbonnaishistory.org).

This is the oldest house in Kankakee County. It was built in 1837 and from 1854-83 was the home of French-Canadian nineteenth-century Bourbonnais and Kankakee political leader: George R. Letourneau (1831 – 1906). Letourneau was Bourbonnais Township Supervisor, Kankakee County Sheriff, County Treasurer, and two-time State Senator. He is distinguished by being the only person to serve as first mayor of Bourbonnais (1875-76) and later as mayor of Kankakee (1891-92). To accommodate their family of eleven children and one grandson, George and Elodie Letourneau remodeled the two story house in Greek Revival style in the 1860s. The home/museum is open for tours on the first and third Sundays of each month—excluding January-February—from 1-4 pm or by appointment (815-933-6452). The gardens and heritage preserve (west of the house) are open year round. The preserve will be the future site for the restored Bourbonnais Grove Log School House (1837-1848) which once stood at 493 S. Main Street in Bourbonnais. The house/museum is a Village of Bourbonnais and Kankakee County Historic Landmark and is the meeting place of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society.

**A. Original Site of George Letourneau  
House and Francois Bourbonnais Sr.'s  
Log Cabin,  
261 North Main Street**



This is where the Letourneau House and farmstead originally stood, just south of the pine tree still standing in the Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home parking lot. This is also the probable site of Francois Bourbonnais Sr.'s cabin indicated in Vic Johnson's 1841 map above. In the late 1820s or early 1830s, two French-Canadian brothers settled along the Kankakee River: Francois Bourbonnais, Sr. and Antoine Bourbonnais. "Bourbonnais Grove" was named after them. Letourneau referred to his new home as a "pioneer structure" when he purchased it in 1854. It may have been built on the stone foundation of Francois Bourbonnais Sr.'s cabin. The Letourneau House was moved to its current location on June 20, 1986. Before he moved into the city of Kankakee as Kankakee County Sheriff in 1883, George Letourneau owned 200 acres of land around his farm. The land here on both sides of route 102/North Main Street was part of his farm property, and his property may have extended to the site at 698 Stratford Drive East where his home is now located.



**B. Site of Beique House—Noel LeVasseur's Trading Post Inside, North of T.J. Donlan Bar on North Main Street**



For more information, visit

<http://www.bourbonnaishistory.org/le-journal.html>.

This 24 foot wide x 32 foot long one and one-half story house was built c. 1916 and demolished in 2008. Vic Johnson wrote in *Images of America: Bourbonnais* that Henry Roy moved this house from its original site to . . . North Main Street. Merrill Beique bought the house in 1916, and it was later owned by Prof. Dwight J. Strickler of Olivet Nazarene College” (122). Burt Burroughs, in *The Story of Kankakee's Earliest Pioneers* (1932), stated that after Noel LeVasseur's original log trading house was dismantled by being cut in two by Chicago's "sawdust king" M. DeRivieres (see location of LeVasseur's trading house on 1841 map—see page 2 above), the western half was sold to M.W. Beique who used the lumber to fashion his own new home (31). Before the house was demolished in March 2008, Vic Johnson and Charles Marquardt created a photographic documentation of the house. In the Summer 2008 issue of newsletter *Le Journal du Village*, Johnson stated that their examination of the Beique House led them to believe that house contained the complete intact trading post, not just one-half.

**C. Site of Tetrault Blacksmith Shop, later Tetrault Brothers' Garage, and then a Broom Factory, at Corner of Route 102/North Main Street and East Marsile Street**



French-Canadian Simon Tetrault opened his blacksmith shop about 1882. The photograph at left is dated 1915. A fire destroyed this shop in 1916, and it was replaced with the red brick Tetrault Brothers Garage (1916 to about 1942). Adrien Richard wrote in *The Village: A Story of Bourbonnais* (1975) “. . . in a short time the Tetrault Brothers' garage was in business, ready to meet the new horseless carriage challenge” (42). Before it was demolished about 1980, the building remained in the Tatrault family ownership, and it housed a broom factory. The cornerstone at left is located just south of T.J. Donlan Bar. Perhaps it was set as the blacksmith shop was rebuilt.

**2. LaMarre Confectionary/The Library Bar, 131 East Marsile Street**



This former candy and ice cream store was built in the 1890s. Camille LaMarre was the first proprietor, and then his son Amadee operated the business just across the street from St. Viator College. Amadee's daughter Cecile LaMarre Enright remarked, "They sold candy, tobacco, drinks, and ice cream. It was also a hangout for St. Viator College students. I was the envy of all my friends."

For Ms. LaMarre's complete interview, go to <http://frenchcanadians.kcc.edu/interviewees/c/enright/c/enright.html>.

**3. Antoine Lagesse House,  
143 North Bernard Street**



This one and one-half story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was built by contractor Napoleon Houde for Antoine Lagesse in the late 1800s. It was sold in 1927 to George Arseneau Sr. and later acquired by his son Willard whose family occupied the home until 1981. This Arseneau family (both generations) was well known for their nearby bakery at 261-269 East Marsile Street.

**4. Damase Benoit Jr. House,  
151 North Bernard Street**



This one and one-half story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was built by contractor Napoleon Houde for Damase Benoit Jr. in 1900. In 1926, his son Joseph sold the home to Leon Rivard. After 1966, the home was occupied by William and Margaret (Rivard) Hillebrand. The architecture is similar to the other vintage homes on North Bernard Street.

**5. Elie Dandurand House,  
156 North Bernard Street**



This two story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house is one of the oldest in Bourbonnais. It was built in 1875 by Elie Dandurand, father of Vitaline, Ezilda, Joseph, and Leida. The latter daughter was the last family member to occupy the home before she entered a nursing home in 1965. The three sisters spent their time as seamstresses making cassocks for the Viatorian priests and brothers. Their brother, Joseph, became a priest but died early in life. After Leida's death, the home was sold to Robert Prior.

**6. Wifred desLaurier House,  
187 North Bernard Street**



This one and one-half story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was built between 1895-1900 by contractor Napoleon Houde. After Mr. desLaurier's death, Mrs. desLauriers lived here for several years with her son Alfred. They were one of the few families in Bourbonnais who owned and operated an electric automobile. The home was later owned in sequence by Andrew Surprenant and Clara Boucher.



**7. Amadee and Bernadette LaMarre House,  
188 North Bernard Street**



This two story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was built about 1906 for the LaMarres who owned the nearby LaMarre Confectionery. Cecile LaMarre Enright—one of their daughters, said that “My father and my grandfather [Camille] owned it. I never asked them if they had built it, because there were not very many contractors then, but there were people who knew how to do these things. There are pictures of it that one can see. That was in 1906 or around that time. . . So that's where I was born [1925] and reared until 1943 at which time I went to Chicago.” See Ms. LaMarre Enright’s interview at <http://frenchcanadians.kcc.edu/>.

**8. Oliver Marcotte House,  
258 Spencer Court**



This spacious two story Queen Anne style frame house was built in 1903 after the Marcotte’s previous home was destroyed by fire. Typical of the better homes built at that time, the new home had a slate roof and a spire. Until the 1950s, the home sat on the corner of South Main Street and West Harrison Street (275 South Main Street).. After it was purchased in the 1950s by Olivet Nazarene College, it was moved to its present location.

**9. Norbert Landroche House,  
155 North Roy**



This two and one-half story Colonial Revival style frame house was built by Norbert Landroche in 1900. Norbert and his wife Bertha (Beique) resided in the upper story after World War I while his son Alfred’s family occupied the lower floor. The home was purchased in the early 1950s by Mose Raymond.

**10. Frederick Legris House,  
195 North Convent**



This one and one-half story mixed Queen Anne/Tudor style frame house was built in the 1890s by Eloi Bergeron. It was purchased in 1915 by Frederic Legris Sr. and occupied by Frederic Legris Jr. and his family until the early 1970s. The interior of the folk Victorian home is rich in early 1900 decor.



**11. John Roy House,  
185 North Convent**



This two story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was built about 1900 by John Roy. He was a handyman who worked at St. Viator College until his death. The home was then purchased by Felix Belisle. In 1965, the next owner was Armand L'Ecuyer who had recently sold his Royal Blue grocery store on South Main Street in Bourbonnais—see location of Royal Blue grocery store at C—*Walking Tour 3* (p. 29).

**C. Site of Notre Dame Academy from  
1909-72, across the street from John  
Roy Home in the undulating grassy area**



In 1909, contractor Philip Houde constructed the four story cream colored brick Notre Dame Academy north of the Maternity BVM Church and east of today's Convent Street. A full basement provided kitchen and full dining room for students, a separate dining area for the nuns, a multipurpose room for recreation and parties, storage space, a main floor with a beautiful chapel, parlors and living quarters for the nuns, a second floor of student dormitories, and third and fourth floors for classrooms, auditorium, and more dormitory space for younger boarders. Student boarders moved into the new building in September 1910. The elementary and secondary grades of the Academy accommodated 250 students at its peak. The Academy ended in 1949 and the building served as a convent. In 1956, Maternity BVM School occupied some classrooms in the rapidly aging building. With the completion of the new Maternity BVM School in 1961, Notre Dame Academy was vacated. The structure was declared uninhabitable in December 1971. It was demolished in 1972.

**12. Peter Balduc House,  
135 East Marsile Street**



This one and one-half story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was built in the 1890s by carpenter Peter Bolduc. He lived in the home until it was purchased by the Frederic Legris Sr. family. The home was then rented to Mrs. Marie Breault who lived here until her death in the 1920s. In 1940, David Rice, an instructor at the new Olivet Nazarene College, bought the home.



**13. Joseph Russell House,  
391 East Marsile Street**



This one and one-half story American Folk style with front gable and one-story side entry wing frame house was built in the 1890s. It was moved away from the road in 1926 (for \$623 plus \$150 paid to Mr. Russell for inconvenience and relocation time) when the new highway was constructed. Also, it was the “end of the line” for the street cars that served Bourbonnais to/from Kankakee until 1933.

**14. Granger/Picard/Mitten House,  
371 East Marsile Street**



This two and one-half story Queen Anne style frame house was built by David Granger in the 1890s. The house features a steeple—characteristic of Queen Anne style houses until about 1910. Arthur Picard purchased the home at the turn of the century. He was the owner of the Kankakee Book Store. Among his sons, one became a priest and one became a physician. Picard sold the home in 1918 to Mrs. David Bergeron who had just lost her husband and son to the flu epidemic. In about 1940, Lloyd Mitten, an instructor at the new Olivet Nazarene College, purchased the home.

**15. David Granger House,  
345 East Marsile Street**



This two and one-half story Queen Anne style frame house was built by David Granger about 1900 and occupied by Granger’s son Joseph and daughter-in-law Elizabeth, and family until the 1940s.

**D. Site of Girls’ School, later  
Boys’ School/St. Viator Academy,  
NE Corner of Roy and East Marsile St.**



On October 1, 1860, three Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame opened classes for 50 girl students in a small stone house on this site. The nuns moved into a new location in 1861—see *A Walking Tour 2*. Boys’ education remained in the hands of secular teachers in a Bourbonnais Grove public school until 1865—using the same two-story stone building that was vacated as a school by the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame in 1861. The Viatorian Order (who now served the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church) bought the building from the Bourbonnais Grove school board in 1868 and added a third story—soon to be called St. Viator Academy. Vic Johnson wrote in *Images of American: Bourbonnais*: “The building called St. Viator Academy, continued to be the district school for boys, taught by male clergy, until 1891 [when it was replaced by] a two-story frame building . . . constructed by the Bourbonnais school district . . . This school was staffed by Viatorian brothers who continued to teach the grade school boys of the village until 1918”. St. Viator Academy or the Boys School remained open until 1937. In later years, it was demolished (Johnson, *Bourbonnais*, 45-46; *MBVM Celebrating Education*, 12).



**16. Alfred Senesac House,  
299 East Marsile Street**



This one and one-half story Folk Victorian style with side-gabled roof and centered front gable frame house was built in 1900 by Alfred Senesac for \$1200.

**17. Dr. Charles Morel House,  
277 East Marsile Street**



This one and one-half story Queen Anne style with cross-gabled roof (a tower is embraced within the L-shaped plan) frame house was built about 1890 by Dr. Charles T. Morel, a practicing physician in the village. He was also an instructor at St. Viator College for many years, choir director at Maternity BVM Church (when the organist was Professor Caudiose Martineau, music instructor at the college), and member of the village board. He died on the way home from a board meeting in 1921. The home was later acquired by the Harvey Senesac family in 1939 and was occupied by a member of the family until about 1972. It was then purchased by Eldon White who occupied and remodeled the home.

**18. Adrien M. Richard House,  
269 East Marsile Street**



This one story Colonial Revival style frame house was built in 1927 by Art Lambert out of wood from the former Arseneau Bakery located just west on East Marsile Street. Adrien and Anne Richard along with their two daughters lived in the house for many years until Anne moved in the early 2000s. Adrien was an accountant, local historian, author, and first president of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society in 1975. The Adrien M. Richard Heritage Preserve west of the Letouneau Home/Museum is named in his honor.

**E. Site of Perrault Store/Arseneau  
Bakery, East Marsile Street**



This is the photograph on the title page of these walking tours. According to Vic Johnson in *Images of America: Bourbonnais*, this is one “. . . of the earliest known photographs (around the 1860s or early 1870s) taken in the village of Bourbonnais Grove. The Perrault family owned the store . . . The proprietor’s name was Louis Perrault. His wife was Nathalie Lecuyer. Perrault died in February 1872. By the late 1890s, Harvey J. Legris owned the store building. It housed a bakery and candy store operated by Alfred H. Senesac. George Arseneau took over the bakery in 1905 [until the 1920s]. Senesac continued as proprietor of the candy store for awhile. He later became the village funeral director.” (41)

**19. Harvey J. Legris House, now the  
Harlow E. Hopkins Alumni Center,  
245 East Marsile**



This two and one-half story Prairie style with Tudor features masonry house was built in 1902. Local lore indicates that Frank Lloyd Wright was involved in the original design of the house. He apparently withdrew from the project and the home was completed by other architects and builders. It was first the home of the Harvey J. Legris family, and later used in the 1930s as a residence and school for students preparing for the Catholic priesthood in the Viatorian Order. After Olivet Nazarene College purchased the home in 1940, it was used as housing for male students. The building was named in 1950 in honor of Dr. J.W. Goodwin and renamed in 1994 to honor Dr. Harlow E. Hopkins, professor of music from 1954-96 and chair of the Division of Fine Arts from 1974-96. The home was remodeled in the 1990s when it was the residence of Dr. and Mrs. John Bowling, President of Olivet Nazarene University. Call for open hours (815-928-5534).

**20. Napoleon Senesac House,  
221 East Marsile Street**



Another typical turn-of-the-century house is this two and one-half story Queen Anne style frame house (with cross-gabled roof and a two story bay) which Napoleon Senesac built in 1900 for himself and his sisters Emma and Elmira. They all occupied the home until their deaths in the 1950s. The home was damaged by the 1963 tornado when it was occupied by Darlene Rogers and her family. It has previously been occupied by her father Eugene Benoit. Under new ownership in the 1970s, it was converted into apartments.



The Napoleon Senesac House completes *Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 1*. Before walking back to the Letourneau Home/Museum, enjoy this winter photograph (at left) of East Marsile Street taken in the 1920s—looking toward the northeast. Going from west to east one can see the Arseneau Bakery (site of future Adrien M. Richard House), Dr. Charles Morel House, unknown home, Alfred Senesac House, St. Viator Academy or Boys' School, and the barely visible David Granger House. The back of the Norbert Landroche House at 155 N. Roy Street can be seen left of center, above the Arseneau Bakery. Notice also the modes of transportation in the village in the 1920s: walking, automobile, streetcar, and horses pulling a wagon.

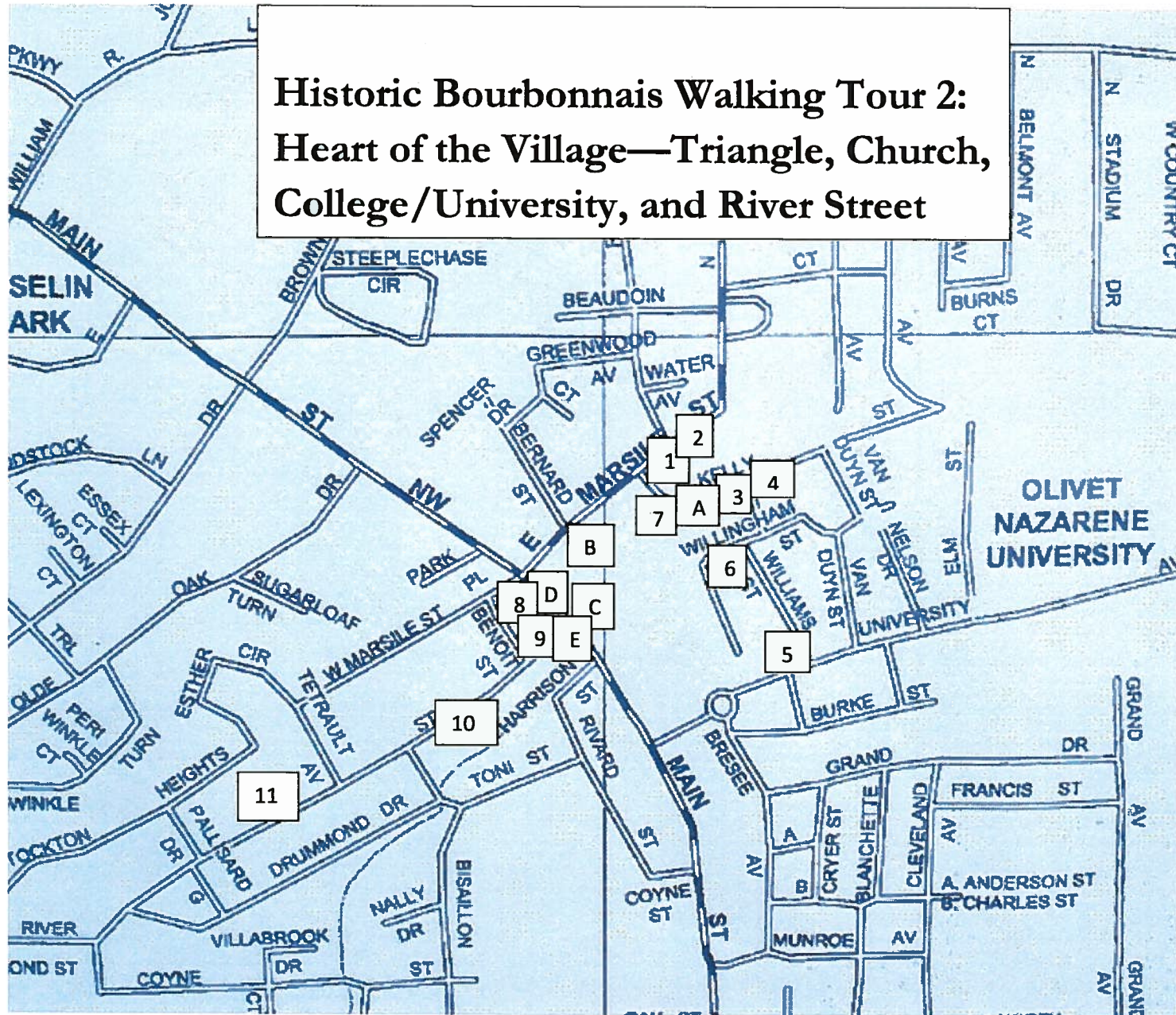


*Historic Bourbonnais Walking*  
*Tour 2: Heart of the Village-*  
*Triangle, Church,*  
*College/University, and River*  
*Street*

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## Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 2: Heart of the Village—Triangle, Church, College/University, and River Street

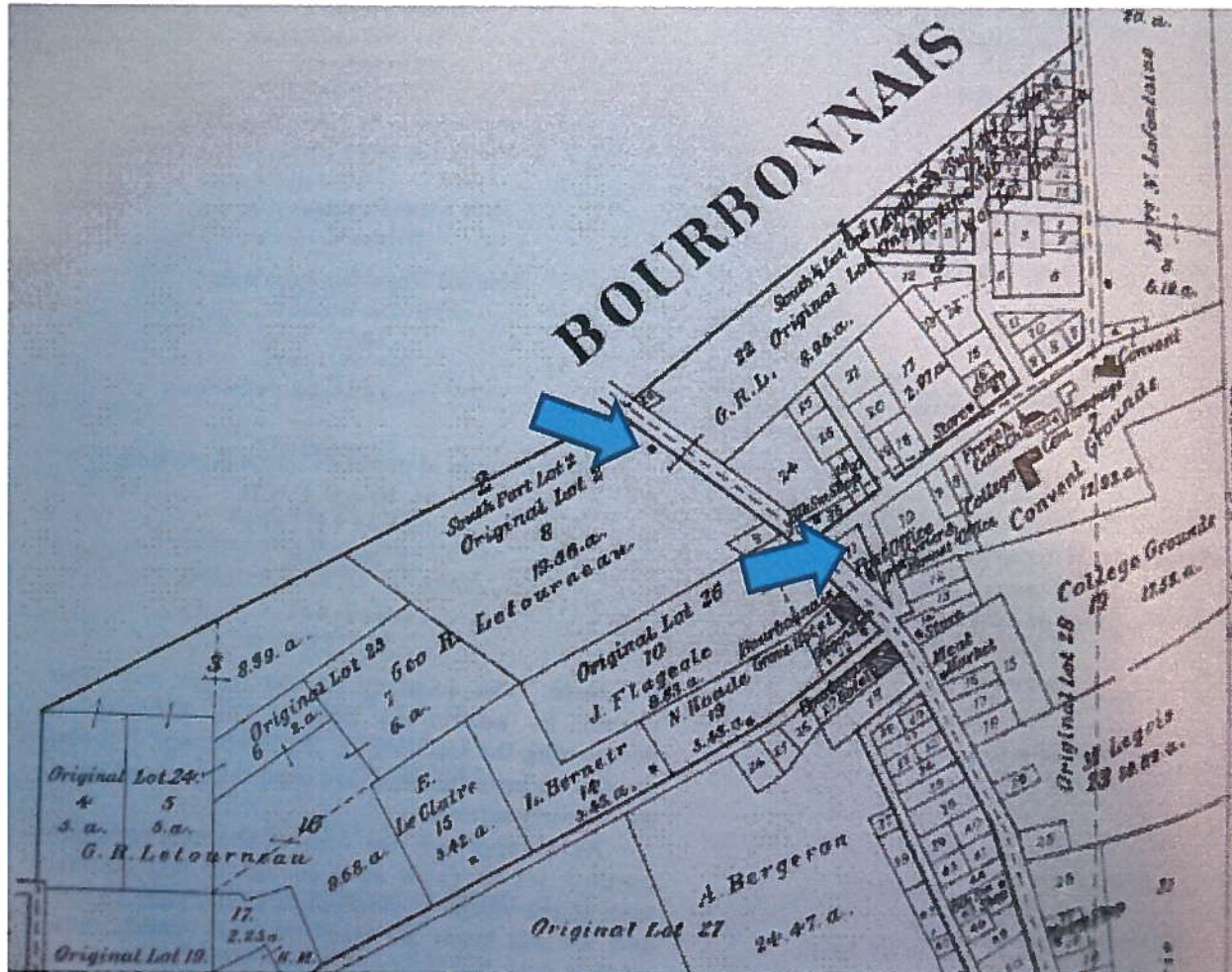
Historic  
Bourbonnais  
Walking Tour 2:  
Heart of the  
Village--Triangle,  
Church,  
College/University,  
and River Street



The numbers refer to existing historic buildings and the letters refer to historic buildings that no longer exist. *This page will be referred to throughout Walking Tour 2 so if you are using an electronic device, you may want to print this page before starting the tour.*



The map below of Bourbonnais in about 1880 will assist in your orientation for *Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 2*. The top blue arrow indicates the original site of the George R. Letourneau Home along North Main Street/Illinois Route 102 (A—*Walking Tour 1*). The bottom blue arrow points to the village “triangle”—the north side is East Marsile Street. The blacksmith shop indicated there is the Tetrault Blacksmith Shop (C—*Walking Tour 1*). In reference to the 1841 map above, St. Leo’s Chapel has changed to the “French Cath Ch” (Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church) on the map below.

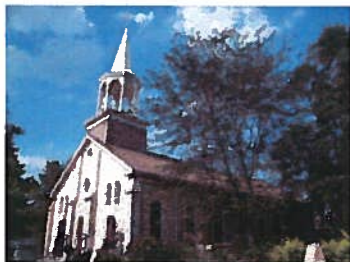


*Walking Tour 2* begins and ends at the parking lot of Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church at 308 East Marsile Street in Bourbonnais. The round trip walk is about 1 ½ miles. In order to shorten the walk, one could do just parts of the walk from the church parking lot. Before entering Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, walk to the southeast corner of the parking lot into the lawn to view the memorial to the Viatorians who established a school here in 1865 and the St. Viator College “home plate” memorial which marks the spot of the St. Viator College ball diamond until 1906 when Roy Hall (now Chapman Hall) was built on the ball field. After visiting Maternity of the Blessed Virgin March Church and Heritage Rooms—**1 and 2** (see **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 2** map on page 12 above for corresponding numbers and letters), one should walk east of the church past the old church cemetery (used from 1842-84) on the south toward the rectory garage. Cross the parking lot east of the garage, and go up the slight gravel incline into the parking lot connected to Kelly Street on the Olivet Nazarene University campus. At this point the Miller Business Center—**3**—is on your right and the Birchard Gymnasium—**4**—is on the left. Walk down Bradley Street (no street sign and not marked on map) between the two buildings to at T at Willingham Street (no street sign). Look back north to see both buildings (Miller Business Center and Birchard Gymnasium—**3 and 4**). Proceed west along Willingham and then turn south at Williams. Walk south and veer west at the large courtyard, walking toward Ludwig Center. At the rear entrance to Ludwig Center, the Viatorian Room—**5**—is just inside at the northwest corner of the building next to a coffee shop. At this point, one will have walked about ½ mile. Next, walk a short distance north toward Benner Library, then veer northwest toward Chapman Hall—**6**. By walking toward the clock tower, one will also be walking toward the front of Chapman Hall. From the clock tower, walk toward the Burke Administration Building—**7**. From the front (east side) of the Burke Administration Building, look east to the former site of the first Notre Dame Academy/Convent—**A**. Walk around the southwest corner of this building and view the sites where the LeVasseur brick house—**B**—once stood. Historic site **C** indicates where LeVasseur’s trading house was located, and later the Monast/Tetrault House, with its southern neighbor, the Antoine Bergeron House. This site is now open lawn, street, and Larson Fine Arts Building parking lot (see 1841 map of Bourbonnais Grove on page 2 above for locations of LeVasseur’s brick house and trading house).

Now, cross Illinois Route 102/US 45-52 to the “triangle” where the LeVasseur Memorial and Children’s Memorial are located. This is the former site of the Bourbonnais Town Hall—**D**. Just west are the Napoleon and Philip Houde Homes—**8 and 9**. Continue to walk south to Main Street Opticians to site **E** and then turn west. This is River Street although there is no street sign. In about .1 mile one will arrive at the Hubert Messier Home at 208 West River Street—**10**. Continue walking west to the Daniel Kirsch Home at 435 West River Street—**11**. At this point one will have walked about 1 mile. The return walk to the church parking lot will be about ½ mile. On the walk back at the intersection of River Street and South Main Street/US 45-52, one is at the exact spot once known as “La Pointe”. Vic Johnson noted in Burt Burrough’s *The Story of Kankakee’s Earliest Pioneers* that “When Daniel H. Beckwith surveyed Me-she-ke-ten-o’s reserve on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 1834, he noted that at 370 yards north of the reserve’s southeast corner (intersection of South Main and North Street) and about 33 west (in the vicinity of the Rivard Street and South Main) there stood a “point of timber” (24).



**1. Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church,  
308 East Marsile Street**



Front of 1870 Rectory

For more information, visit

<http://www.mbvmchurch.org/>

**2. Heritage Rooms at Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church**



This French-Canadian Romanesque style limestone church is on the site of a 20x30 foot log chapel dedicated to St. Leo which was built in 1841 on land obtained from Noel LeVasseur. The parish was officially chartered in 1847 as the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. After the frame church that replaced the log chapel burnt to the ground in 1853 (during the pastoral leadership of Fr. Charles Chiniquy), a new church of native limestone was designed by pastor Fr. Isadore Antioine Lebel. Parishioners completed the construction in 1858. The stone was hauled in horse-drawn wagons from quarries near the Kankakee River. This is the first church of the Clerics of St. Viator in the U.S., first mission of the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame, first establishment of the Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary, and the oldest church in Kankakee County (and one of the oldest in northeastern Illinois). A large bell was installed and dedicated in the belfry of the church in 1867—the same bell still today tolls at church service times. The 2 story Italianate style rectory (bottom left photograph and at left in bottom right sketch) was built in 1870 and dismembered in 1952. The century old stained glass windows on the south side of the church were blown out by the 1963 tornado. The church is open weekdays from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm, Sat. 8:30 am to 5:30 pm, and Sun. 6:30 am to 3 pm (815-933-8285).

These two rooms are located inside the north entrance of Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church. The rooms feature displays with artifacts from Notre Dame Convent/Academy, Maternity Blessed Virgin Mary Church, and St. Viator's College. The Heritage Rooms were created by the pastor of Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Fr. Richard Pighini, in 2010 during the parish's celebration of the 150th anniversary of educating the community: 1860—2010. Dr. Pighini was assisted by Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society members Laurel Soper, Charles Marquardt, Vic Johnson, and Dr. James Paul. Open times are the same as the church's above.

**3. Miller Business Center,  
Olivet Nazarene University**



This one story brick building is one of the four remaining St. Viator College buildings that are part of Olivet Nazarene University campus today. It was built in 1926 as the St. Viator College dining hall. It became Olivet Nazarene College's Birchard Field House, named after Clayton Birchard, a former student athlete and later professor at the college. Prior to the building of Ludwig Center, Birchard Field House was the college's dining hall and cafeteria. In 1968, the college remodeled the field house and it became the Miller Business Center. Dr. Howard V. Miller was an early Nazarene church leader. This building is located on the campus of Olivet Nazarene University on the southwest side of Kelly and Bradley Streets.

**4. Birchard Gymnasium,  
Olivet Nazarene University**



This two story brick building was built in 1926 as the St. Viator College gymnasium. It became Olivet Nazarene College's Birchard Gymnasium, named after Clayton Birchard, a former student athlete and later professor at the college. In 2006, Olivet Nazarene University renovated the gymnasium. This building is located on the campus of the university just east of the Miller Business Center.

**5. Viatorian Room, Ludwig Center,  
Olivet Nazarene University**



This room is located in Ludwig Center of Olivet Nazarene University. The room features photographs and displays of St. Viator College (1874 – 1939) which was the predecessor college of Olivet Nazarene University. Four buildings of the current university were originally constructed for St. Viator College's 39-acre campus. Call 815 928-5534 to arrange a tour of the Viatorian Room.



**6. Chapman Hall,  
Olivet Nazarene University**



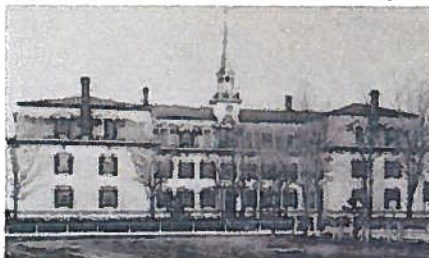
Chapman Hall is a four and one-half story limestone dormitory built in 1906, the same year that the Burke Administration Building was built. It is one of the four original St. Viator College campus buildings that still stand at Olivet Nazarene University's campus. During the St. Viator College tenure, it was named Roy Hall. It was later renamed Chapman Hall after Dr. James B. Chapman, an early leader of the Nazarene Church. Chapman Hall is located in the center of campus, and is home for approximately 200 freshman male students during the school year.

**7. Burke Administration Building,  
Olivet Nazarene University,  
240 E. Marsile Street**



The Burke Administration Building was formerly known as Marsile Alumni Hall at St. Viator College. After fire destroyed most of St. Viator College campus on Feb. 21, 1906, a new four story administrative building, constructed of limestone, was built in honor of the college president Rev. Moses J. Marsile and dedicated as Marsile Alumni Hall. Until 1938, the building housed administration offices and classrooms, including dormitory space on the second floor. The college was forced to close in 1938 due to financial difficulties. In 1940, the campus buildings were purchased by Olivet Nazarene College. The building was then renamed Burke Administrative Building for Edwin Burke, a longtime chairman of the Olivet Nazarene College board of trustees. The fourth floor was almost completely demolished by a tornado in 1963. The lighter colored brick on the renovated fourth floor testify to the tornado damage. Please call 815-928-5534 for open hours.

**A. Site of Notre Dame Academy**



In 1861, the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame moved their home and school for girls (see *E Walking Tour 1*) into a two story stone building just east of the Maternity BVM Church. The building had been constructed at the expense of Bourbonnais Grove in 1859 and became known as Notre Dame Academy. A larger three-story wood frame Academy (at left) was built in 1862, and expanded until 1910. The academy grew into a large educational institution and boarding school. In 1906, a decision was made to replace the old Academy with a modern building (*D on Walking Tour 1*). In October 1910, workers demolished the wings of the original building, and the center of the building became St. Viator College's infirmary (known as St. Joseph's Hall—later Olivet Nazarene College's Walker Hall). This building was destroyed by the tornado of 1963.

**B. Site of Noel LeVasseur's House,  
East of US 45-52/Illinois Route  
102 Intersection**



In 1837, Thomas Durham (original owner of the Durham-Perry Farmstead) built this two story Early Classical Revival with gable-front-and-wings style house for Noel LeVasseur (1799-1879). Durham used native red clay bricks—several of these original bricks are on display at the Letourneau Home/Museum. Vic Johnson wrote in *Images of America: Bourbonnais* “This sketch [at left] by Austin Conrad Shreffler, is based on a description by a close friend of LeVasseur’s, Alfred H. Senesac” (31). Before the brick house, LeVasseur’s first home was a crude log cabin located near this spot. After LeVasseur’s first marriage to the Potawatomie princess Watchekeee, he married Ruth (Russell) Bull in 1838. They lived in this home with their eight children. After Ruth died in 1860, LeVasseur married Eleanor “Fannie” Franchere. He died in 1879, and his widow sold off most of the estate to St. Viator College. Their house was demolished in 1885. On this site in 1889, the college built a large Byzantine style chapel as a memorial to the first college president Fr. Thomas Roy. The Roy Memorial Chapel was destroyed in the fire of February 21, 1906 (32, 98-99).

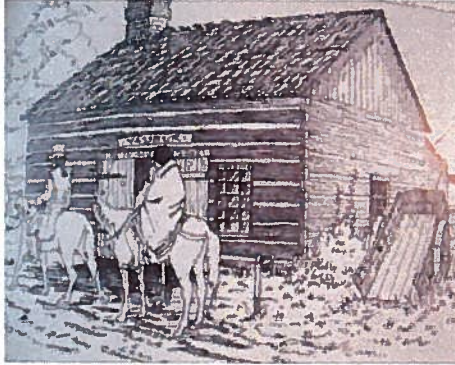
**C. Site of Monast/Tetrault House,  
156 South Main Street**



This two-story Folk structure is descended from the Greek Revival style due to its side-gabled wing, giving it a National gable-front-and-wing shape. It was purchased by Simon Tetrault from the daughter of Noel LeVasseur in about 1882. The basic structure of the house was of logs, and is thought to have been built in the 1860s by Doctor Louie Pierre Monast. The doctor had married LeVasseur’s daughter Carrie. The house was used as a medical office for Dr. Monast and Dr. Brousseau. Simon Tetrault raised eight boys and three daughters. The house was later owned by Omer Tetrault who resided here all his life. The house was located just southwest of LeVasseur’s brick home. Vic Johnson wrote in *Images of America: Bourbonnais*, “Villagers believed that part of LeVasseur’s original log cabin existed inside the walls of Tetrault’s house. No evidence of that was found at the time the house was demolished in 2001” (111).



**C. Site of Noel LeVasseur's Trading House, Southeast of US 45-52/ Illinois Route 102 Intersection**



Noel LeVasseur's trading house is aptly depicted in this 1992 sketch by Vic Johnson. It was a 24 foot wide by 32 foot long one and one-half story timber or post and girt frame with plank—split from logs—sheeting and chinking. LeVasseur purchased land from the Potawatomie chief Mesheketeno in 1834. While LeVasseur was working at his trading post on the Iroquois River, he probably instructed his American Fur Company associates, Henry Boucher and Dominick Bray, to build the Bourbonnais Grove trading house in 1834. In a *Daily Journal* April 2, 2008 article about the Beique House (and it's interior construction with LeVasseur trading house artifacts) demolition, Laurel Soper wrote: "Me-she-ke-te-no, the Potawatomie Indian chief whose village was located where Briarcliff now lies, held council in that long-ago trading post. It's not hard to imagine the cast of characters who spent time at this outpost of the Illinois fur trade—Gurdon Hubbard, John Kinzie, Francois Bourbonnais, Shaw-wa-na-see, and Wat-che-ke, LeVasseur's first wife. If you are of French-Canadian descent—an Arseneau, Benoit, Blanchette, Marcotte, Denault, Boudreau, Graveline, Roy, Tetrault, Bissaillon, Fortin, Rivard, Flageole—the list is long—your ancestors may have been some of the early settlers who were sheltered here as their new homes were built."

**C. Site Antoine Bergeron House, 180 South Main Street**



This two-story Italianate style house was built in the mid-1800s. In *Images of America: Bourbonnais*, Vic Johnson wrote "In this c. 1900 photograph are two of Bourbonnais Grove's oldest settlers, Antoine L. Bergeron and his wife Lucy Bergeron (nee Bosse). Lucy was born in Canada [in] 1834, and Antoine was born in 1831 at St. Leon, on the River Du Loup, in Canada. He arrived in Bourbonnais Grove in 1837. By 1912, Antoine and Lucy had been married 60 years" (53). The Bergeron house may have been located just south of LeVasseur's trading house.

**D. Site of Town Hall Building on the  
“Triangle”—bordered by US 45/52,  
Route 102, and South Main Street**



Regarding the Bourbonnais Town Hall, Vic Johnson wrote in *Images of America: Bourbonnais*, “From 1895 until it was severely damaged by a tornado in 1963, this town hall building located on the village “triangle” housed both civil and social functions of village life. . . The town hall, the ‘site of many gala bazaars, card parties, box socials, dances, basketball games, spirited elections,’ was torn down in 1964” (73). The photograph at left (looking to the southwest) was probably taken in the 1920s. Two persons—maybe St. Viator College students—have climbed the tree and another pedestal in front of the town hall. Today, the village “triangle” contains memorials to Noel LeVasseur (1799-1879); the March 15, 1999 *City of New Orleans* Amtrak train tragedy in which eleven persons died; the 2000 Mayor Humanitarian Award dedicated to all those who participated in the immediate response and follow up care after the March 15, 1999 *City of New Orleans* Amtrak train tragedy; and the Children of the Village of Bourbonnais (March 25, 2000). During holidays, decorations adorn the “triangle”.

**8. Napoleon Houde House,  
141 South Main Street**



This one and one-half story stucco (the innovative predecessor of Kelly Stone) French Colonial style house was built by Napoleon Houde and his son Philip in 1900. The rear building was Napoleon Houde’s earlier home which was moved from its original site next door to be a construction warehouse during the building boom of the early 1900s. The house (later owned by Paul Roy) may have been built on the site (just west of the village triangle) where the American House hotel once stood in the 1850s. It was in this hotel that the Illinois Central Railway surveyors and construction crews found local lodging as they built the rail line to what is now Kankakee. From the 1880 Bourbonnais map above, one can surmise that the American House hotel may have been replaced by the Bourbonnais Grove Hotel by 1880.

**9. Philip Houde House,  
147-155 South Main Street**



The two story (originally three stories) house was built by Philip Houde in 1914. Philip and his father, Napoleon Houde, were building contractors. Philip had seven sons and four daughters. His sons assisted him in building this house. Philip and his sons also participated in other building projects including Notre Dame Academy, Kankakee’s Knights of Columbus building, the Elks building, St. George School, and many homes in Bourbonnais. This large house originally had 16 rooms, oak trim and beams, and the entire second floor contained bedrooms as did the third floor which also had a billiard room. The house was remodeled in 1979 by Eugene Wilder and converted into apartments. Later, the building was expanded into a restaurant. The upper photograph was taken in 2014 and the lower photograph of the house was taken in 1979 or early 1980s. The tree is the same in both photographs. The Bourbonnais Hotel—on the 1880 map on page 13 above—was on or near this site.



**E. Site of Brouillette Saloon,  
197 South Main Street**



This is the site of the Flageole Blacksmith Shop indicated on the 1841 map—page 2 above. In *Images of America: Bourbonnais*, Vic Johnson wrote “John Flageole built this building in the 1890s . . . and opened a saloon. For several years, Alfred ‘Pete’ Brouillette owned the building and served up locally brewed Radeke beer. In the late 1920s, Albert Landroche used the old watering hole for a grocery store and meat market. Workers razed the venerable structure in 1968” (76). Today, Main Street Opticians occupies this site.

**10. Hubert Messier House,  
208 West River Street**



This one and one-half-story log/wood National style house was built by Hubert Messier sometime between 1870 and the 1880s. It was remodeled in the 1950s. Hubert and his son Henry raised potatoes on the farm adjacent to the house.

**11. Paradis/Goselin/Kirsch  
House,  
435 West River Street**



This two-story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was built in the early 1900s. The home figured prominently in nationwide news coverage of a kidnapping in September 1928. The village of Bourbonnais received national recognition after a ten-year-old Chicagoan named Billy Ranieri was abducted on September 10 as he was walking to school. This occurred shortly after the Charles A. Lindberg kidnapping case. After the boy’s release on September 19 (his father had paid the \$60,000 ransom), he claimed to have been held hostage at a farm with a large stone building bordered by a church steeple in the distance. On September 29, the *Kankakee Republican Journal* revealed that the farm was near Bourbonnais. The kidnapped boy had been held in this River Road (as River Street was called at that time) two-story farm home, part of a 17 acre truck farm owned by Andrew Capellano. Capellano had purchased the home and farm for \$12,875.00 from Adolf Goselin. At one time, a gardener named Herman Paradis had owned and operated the acreage, and had a reputation for growing prize strawberries and raspberries. Capellano and an accomplice were sentenced to a 25 year prison term. In *The Village: A Story of Bourbonnais*, Adrien Richard wrote: “The modest structure still stands in all its roaring 20’s grandeur at 435 West River Street and is owned and occupied by the Daniel Kirsch family at this 1974 date. The outward appearance of this historical structure is still very much the same as when it housed its nationally known guest during the fateful September in 1928. Billy Ranieri grew up, joined the army during World War II, and after his discharge from service, was never again heard of (66).” Daniel Kirsch, his wife Mary Ann, and their children lived in this house from 1959-77.

*Historic Bourbonnais Walking*

*Tour 3:*

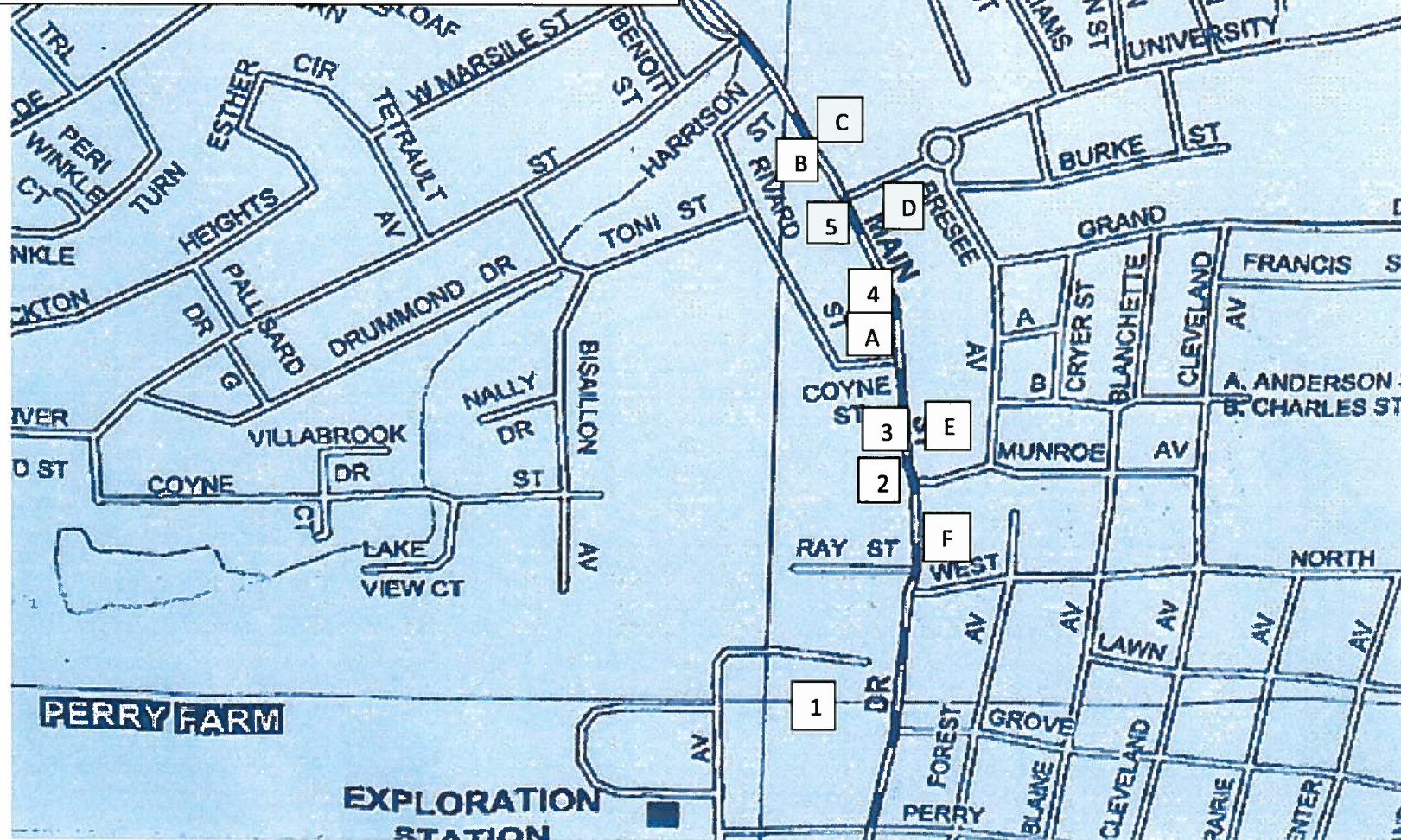
*Durham-Perry Farmstead and*

*South Main Street*

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## Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 3: Durham-Perry Farmstead and South Main Street



Historic  
Bourbonnais  
Walking  
Tour 3:  
Durham-  
Perry  
Farmstead  
and South  
Main Street

The numbers refer to existing historic buildings and the letters refer to historic buildings that no longer exist. *This page will be referred to during Walking Tour 2 so if you are using an electronic device, you may want to print this page before starting the tour.*

The majority of old houses and buildings are gone on *Walking Tour 3*. The expansion of Olivet Nazarene University and the development of the Village of Bourbonnais have left only four historic buildings on South Main Street—this number does not include the Durham-Perry Farmstead which is located southwest of South Main Street. Nonetheless, as one walks on South Main Street and sees the remaining historical sites as well as the location of former historical buildings, one can imagine (and “remember” if one is a native of the area) what the village was like years ago. What better way is there to identify with the past than to view the site of former historically significant buildings and read about their history?

This walking tour begins and ends at the parking lot of the Durham-Perry Farmstead at 459 North Kennedy Avenue in Bourbonnais. The round trip walk from the farmstead is about 1 mile. After visiting the Durham-Perry Farmstead--**1** (see **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 3** map on page 22 above for corresponding numbers and letters), one should walk out the east gate of the farmstead to US 45/52 N. Kennedy Avenue. Turn north and walk on the west side of the road past West North Street to the Albert Fortin Villa--**2**—and then the Noel Richard House--**3**. This is now South Main Street. Next, walk north across Coyne Street to the site of the first Log School House--**A**—and then to the Joseph Legris House--**4**. Continue walking north to the Brouillette Garage--**5**—and then to what was formerly the historic 200-300 blocks of South Main Street--**B**. Just to the north is where the Oliver Marcotte House was located at 275 South Mains Street before it was moved to 258 Spencer Court (see **8** in *Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 1*). Continue walking north to Harrison Street.

At this point, historic site **C** can be viewed on the east side of the street. Now part of the Olivet Nazarene University campus, this historic area included the Celestin Graveline House, the Graveline’s Sanitary Meat Market, and the Jerry Rivard Grocery Store which later became the Royal Blue Grocery Store. Just south of University Avenue is site **D** where the Frederick Richard Barn—the last surviving barn within the village limits—once stood. Just south of the barn site, several noteworthy houses once existed on the east side of South Main Street’s 400 block. Continuing south to just across the street from the Noel Richard House, is site **E**, the former site of Liberty Laundry. The last historic site **F** on this walking tour is where the home of David and Martha Perry was once located. They lived here from 1845 to c. 1866 before moving into the Durham farmhouse across the street.

Once back to the Durham-Perry Farmstead parking area, an optional 2 ½ mile round trip walk through the restored prairie to the Indian Caves is possible. Enter the Perry Trail just beyond the Centennial Orchard sign located west of the parking area of the farmstead. Walk west, and in .2 mile one will enter the prairie. In .3 mile one will come to the sign designating the Coyne Street or Kankakee River. Continue walking toward the river. In .17 mile, walk past the park trail that goes to the south and continue walking west. After .35 mile, walk to Kankakee River and Indian Caves at the fork in the trail where the sheltered rest area sign is located. At the river, turn north and walk another .2 mile to the Indian Caves at the Bourbonnais Creek. Return to the Durham-Perry Farmstead parking area along the same route.

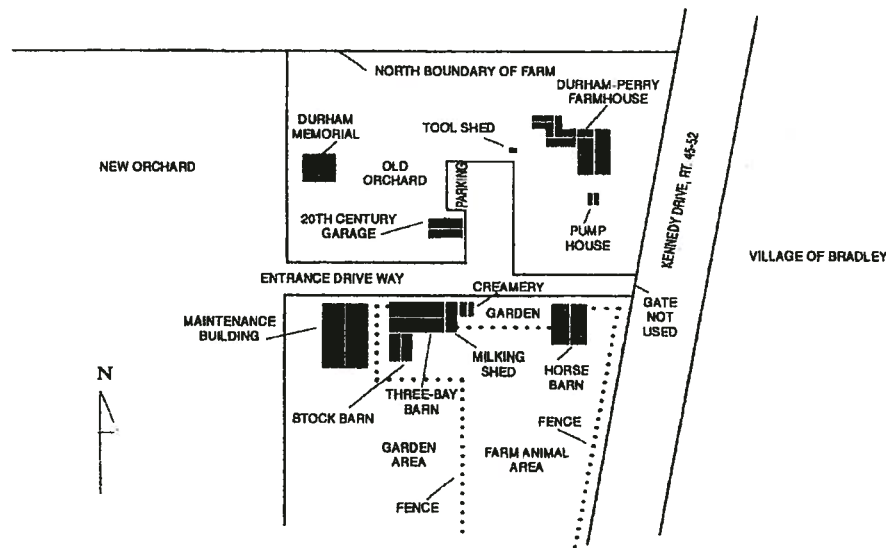


**1. Durham-Perry Farmstead,  
459 North Kennedy**



For more information, visit [http://www.btpd.org/park\\_history.php](http://www.btpd.org/park_history.php).

The oldest buildings on this farmstead—farmhouse, three-bay English barn, and horse barn—date back to 1840. The farmstead was built by Thomas Durham, who is buried on the farmstead, and purchased by his son-in-law David Perry in 1866. Over time, the farmhouse was remodeled into a two-story Greek Revival style frame house. This 25 acre farmstead is located on the 169 acre Perry Farm Park. The farmstead is a Kankakee County Historic Landmark and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Thomas Durham's grave and memorial are on the site. The farmstead is open during Perry Farm Park hours and the farm house is open during Bourbonnais Township Park District business hours (815-933-9905).



**DURHAM-PERRY FARMSTEAD**

This plan drawing shows the farmstead as it appears today. Drawing is not to scale. The farmstead occupies only the Kennedy Drive frontage of the 169 acre farm now called the "Perry Farm Park." It is administered by the Bourbonnais Township Park District.

**Looking North on South Main Street (this 1922 photograph is from St. Viator College's *Viatome*)**



As you begin your walk north on South Main Street, you will be on the west side of this street—South Main Street/US 45-52. Notice the house partially hidden by the wagon. The Victorian spire indicates that it is the Noel Richard House. On pages 23-25 and 56-60 in *The Village: A Story of Bourbonnais*, Adrien Richard provides a fascinating walk up South Main Street in the years 1890 and 1920 respectively. The rest of *Walking Tour 3* begins here.

**2. Albert Fortin Villa,  
615 South Main Street**



This three-story brick building was built in 1952 and is now home of the Olivet Nazarene University ROTC Roaring Tigers Battalion. In 1932, Albert Fortin's will included the bequest of his estate for the establishment of a home for orphaned children. After 20 years of litigation and challenges to the will, construction was completed in June 1952. The children's home was supervised by the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois. Food and lodging were available for children of any race or religion who had become a burden on a surviving parent or a victim of a broken marriage. In 1964, 34 children were being cared for by the sisters at the villa. In 1974, the facility became a day care center known as the Provena Fortin Villa Learning Center. The building was purchased by Olivet Nazarene University in 2003 to house the ROTC program (815 939-5011).

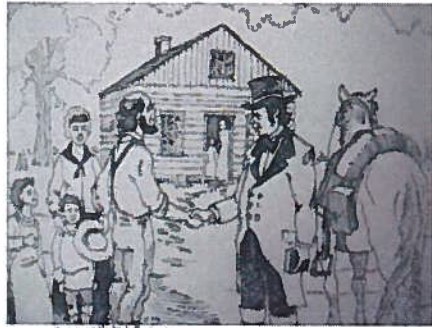
**3. Noel Richard House,  
577 South Main Street**



This two-story Queen Anne style house with its traditional Victorian Age spire, slate roof, and spacious rooms, was built about 1890. It was occupied for many years by Hypolite Gousset and sold to Noel Richard in 1902. It was later occupied by Richard's widow and the Fred Brault family in the early 1930s. The home was sold in 1940 to Edyth Curl. Until July 2011, Olivet Nazarene University students and the general public enjoyed the home as the *Higher Grounds Coffee & Café* restaurant. It is now an ONU art gallery known as the *Victorian House Gallery*.



**A. Site of Bourbonnais Grove's First  
Log School House,  
493 South Main Street**



The sketch at top left by Vic Johnson depicts Thomas Durham welcoming parents of students to the first subscription log school house in Bourbonnais Grove. The one and one-half story Pre-Railroad style school was built in 1837 and served Bourbonnais Grove students for a ten year period from 1838 to 1848. In December 2011, the unstable house that surrounded the log school house structure was razed and the log timbers of the 20' x 20' original structure were surgically dismantled, tagged, labeled, and stored. The log school will be rebuilt on the Adrien M. Richard Preserve next to the Letourneau Home/Museum. The log building served not only as a school house, but also a meeting place for Methodist six-week circuit riders. In *Images of America: Bourbonnais*, Vic Johnson stated that in 1848, the French-Canadian Joseph Lesage bought the log school and made it his home after the school's classes were moved to a new location. Additions were made to the structure over the years, and the logs were covered with clapboards. The home also served as a gas station during the mid-twentieth-century. The house has been owned most recently by Ralph and Mary Marcotte (*Bourbonnais*, pages 34 and 74). The lower left photograph was taken in December 2011. It shows the exposed logs before they were dismantled and stored in a Bourbonnais Public Works building.

**4. Joseph Legris House,  
465 South Main Street**



This two story Colonial Revival house dates back to 1857. After amassing a small fortune in the gold mines of California, Joseph Legris returned to Bourbonnais Grove, married Cleophil Sylvester, and built a small cabin in 1857. The home's present kitchen is the original log constructed dwelling. Legris added rooms to the house as his family grew. Legris and his sons opened two banks in Kankakee, IL. He was a member of the village board, and spent his declining years in this house. Legris was the father of a very well-known family consisting of Monsignor Gerasime Legris—a life time professor of theology at St. Viator College, poet, musician, author, and devout priest; Frederic Legris—president of the village board for 26 years and banker; Harvey Legris—banker; Thomas Legris—banker. The elder Legris was one of the members of the first village board.

**4. Brouillette and Brosseau Garage,  
417 South Main Street**



This building was the village's first automobile dealership and garage. A two-story frame structure was built first, and later moved to the back of the lot when this two-story brick garage was constructed prior to 1920. The building housed the agency for new cars, Patterson's equipment, and Twin City farm tractors. Frank Ullom joined Ed Brosseau when Pete Brouillette withdrew from the partnership to go into the saloon business with his brother three blocks north. The building was later occupied in succession as a bakery loading station, Schneider Addressing Agency, and clothing store.

**B. Site of Edward Lagesse House,  
355 South Main Street**



This two-story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was built by Joseph Marcotte between 1895 and 1900. The house was sold to Edward Lagesse and occupied by the Lagesse family until 1980. Sometime in the 1940s, the house was converted into two apartments. The house was later occupied by Beatrice, one of the Lagesse daughters, before she moved to Manteno.

**B. Site of Alexander LaMontagne House,  
343 South Main Street**



This one and one-half-story National style frame house was purchased by Alexander LaMontagne along with his larger house next door, both for \$300 in 1860. For a long time, this house was occupied by Edward Brosseau, a long time garage owner. Brosseau is one of the first in the village to operate a threshing ring. He was also one of the first to switch from a steam engine threshing machine to a gasoline driven Twin City tractor. Brosseau was a village maintenance engineer who directed the drilling of a village water well in the early 1900s. He located the site for the well with a divining rod and cherry branch.



**B. Site of Alexander LaMontagne House,  
331 South Main Street**



This two-story National style frame house belonged to the second mayor of Bourbonnais, Alexander LaMontagne. He was born near Lake Champlain in New York. He arrived in Bourbonnais Grove at a very early age, having been sent here by his physician who recommended this climate for relief of inflammatory rheumatism. LaMontagne was a carpenter, inventor, and building contractor. He married Adeline Therien in 1858. When she died, the couple had five children. In 1881, LaMontagne married Caroline Lambert. Three more children were born to the family. As mentioned above, LaMontagne purchased this house and the one next door, he paid \$300 for both.

**B. Site of Dominique Bray House,  
319 South Main Street**



This two-story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house was owned by one of the very early settlers of Bourbonnais Grove, Dominique Bray. The left portion of the house was the original structure built in about 1860. The remainder of the house was added by grandson Raymond Roy in 1935. The house was later occupied by Barbara Roy, the widow of Raymond Roy.

**B. Original Site of Oliver Marcotte House,  
275 South Main Street (before it was moved  
to 258 Spencer Court—see 8, *Walking Tour 1*)**

**C. Site of Celestin Graveline House,  
288 South Main Street**



This two story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house with slate roof was built by Celestin Gravelin in 1893. The building that had previously occupied this site was moved to West Broadway Street in North Kankakee (today Bradley, IL). Gravelin was a pioneer butcher in the village, and he built the Graveline Sanitary Meat Market next door south. The house was later occupied by the Joseph Boisvert family until the 1920s, and then by the Feeney family. In the 1930s, Ernest (son of Celestin) Gravelin and his family moved in from their previous home across the street on the corner of South Main and Harrison Streets. The house was occupied by Ernest until his death in the 1950s. His son, Daniel, next occupied the house until it was sold to Olivet Nazarene University in the 1960s. The house then served as a Home Economics Center for the college.

**C. Site of Graveline Sanitary Meat Market,  
300 South Main Street**



The original Gravelin Sanitary Meat Market frame structure was destroyed by fire in 1916. Celestin Gravelin then built his pride and joy: the most modern brick structure (not using common brick) in all of Kankakee County. It was equipped with modern refrigeration where ice blocks had been formerly used for cooling the meat. The market was later owned by Daniel Graveline who sold the building to Olivet Nazarene College in the 1950s. The college used it as a storage building.

**C. Site of Jerry Rivard Grocery Store, later  
known as the Royal Blue Grocery Store,  
310 South Main Street**



In 1911, Jerry Rivard bought this grocery store from his brother-in-law Edward Lagesse. The two-story frame store was built c. 1900. In the store, Rivard sold groceries and staple goods along with conducting a farm implement business on an adjoining lot. The Rivard family lived upstairs before moving to a house next door in 1921. Adrien Richard in *The Village: A Story of Bourbonnais* noted that about 1921 "... the opportunity to go into a coal business with his [Jerry's] brother-in-law Alphonse Benoit, saw the termination of his grocery career. . . Some 16 years later . . . Jerry returned to the scene of his earlier accomplishments . . . and operated a tavern along with a weekend restaurant business. . . until 1943. In the meantime, Armand L'Ecuyer, son-in-law of the Rivards opened a Royal Blue grocery store in a smaller building adjoining the tavern, and when the larger area became available, by the termination of the tavern enterprise, the L'Ecuyers moved in and continued in this effort until 1965. The vacated smaller building was later occupied for some time by the United States Post Office" (59). The upper left photograph depicts the grocery store in around 1911. The upper right c. 1920 photograph shows the east side of South Main Street as viewed from the south. The scene includes the grocery store, Graveline Sanitary Meat Market, and Celestin Graveline House. The lower photograph of a political parade on South Main Street was taken in 1930. In the background (looking to the southeast) are the meat market, grocery store, and the house that the Rivards moved into in the 1921.





**D. Site of Frederick Richard House,  
406 South Main Street**



**D. Site of Frederick Richard Barn,  
rear of 406 South Main Street**



**D. Site of William LaMarre House,  
424 South Main Street**



**D. Site of Armand Houde House,  
438 South Main Street**



This two-story Craftsman style frame house was built in 1909 by Philip Houde. It was occupied for nine years by the Frederick C. Rivard family. It was then sold to the Prairie family who occupied the house until the 1960s. At that time Len Delonas purchased the house and converted it into the Wedding Center after making several additions to the building. The interior light oak open stairway and trim were preserved. The house was demolished in the late 1980s to accommodate Olivet Nazarene University campus

On the east side of the Frederick Richard House stood this frame barn built in 1909. Vic Johnson wrote in *Images of America: Bourbonnais*, "This was the only surviving horse barn in Bourbonnais. At the time Olivet Nazarene College bought the property, the barn was razed. Originally built by Philip Houde in 1909, the barn had one horse stall, a hayloft, and room for two buggies. The Richard family used one buggy for everyday chores and another fancier model on Sundays. With the advent of the automobile, Richard kept two cows in the barn. The Prairie family, later owners, kept their automobiles in the barn until they sold the property to Leonard Delonais" (112).

This two-story Gothic Revival style frame home was built in 1885 for Frederick Legris Jr. In the early 1900s, it was occupied by David Besse for several years before he departed to make his home in Texas. Merrill Beique was the next occupant of this house for a few years before it was purchased by William LaMarre. The LaMarre lived here for many years. After the deaths of Mr. and Mrs. William LaMarre, their son Joseph lived here until he sold it in the early 1970s. This site is now part of Olivet Nazarene University campus.

This two-story French Colonial style house was built about 1920 by Armand Houde, the son of Philip Houde. It was occupied by the Houde family until Mr. Houde's death. Mrs. Houde then moved to Kankakee. The house was rented for some time by Armand L'Ecuyer and his family until they moved into the new living quarters in their Royal Blue grocery store. The house was then purchased by Gabriel Legris for his family. He sold the house to Olivet Nazarene University in 1979. The structure was demolished in 1980.

**D. Site of Alexis Caron House,  
462 South Main Street**



This two-story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style house was built by a Native American carpenter about 1860. It was occupied by Alexis Caron until his death in 1901. It was next occupied by Mrs. Caron and the Henry Granger family until 1911. In later years, the house was occupied by the William Betourne, Louis Tourangeau, and William Latham families. Mr. Latham sold the house to Hardee's Restaurant in the 1980s. The house was demolished for the restaurant's expansion. The Olivet Nazarene University purchased the site and remodeled the restaurant into a radio station.

**E. Site of Liberty Laundry,  
500 Block of South Main Street**



This is the site of Eugene Benoit's Liberty Laundry. He was the son of Joseph and Celina Benoit, and a descendant of Damas Benoit.

**F. Site of David and Martha Perry House,  
600 Block of South Main Street**



This is the site of the house that David and Martha Perry lived in from 1845 to 1866 when they moved into the Durham farmhouse across the street. David and Martha (daughter of Thomas and Margaret Durham) were married on January 1, 1845. David Perry purchased the Durham farmstead from his brothers-in-law in 1866.

Now walk back west across US 45/52 South Main Street to the Durham-Perry Farmstead parking lot. As mentioned above on page 23, an optional 2 ½ mile round trip walk through the restored prairie to the Indian Caves is possible.

**Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 3:**  
**Durham-Perry Farmstead and South Main Street**

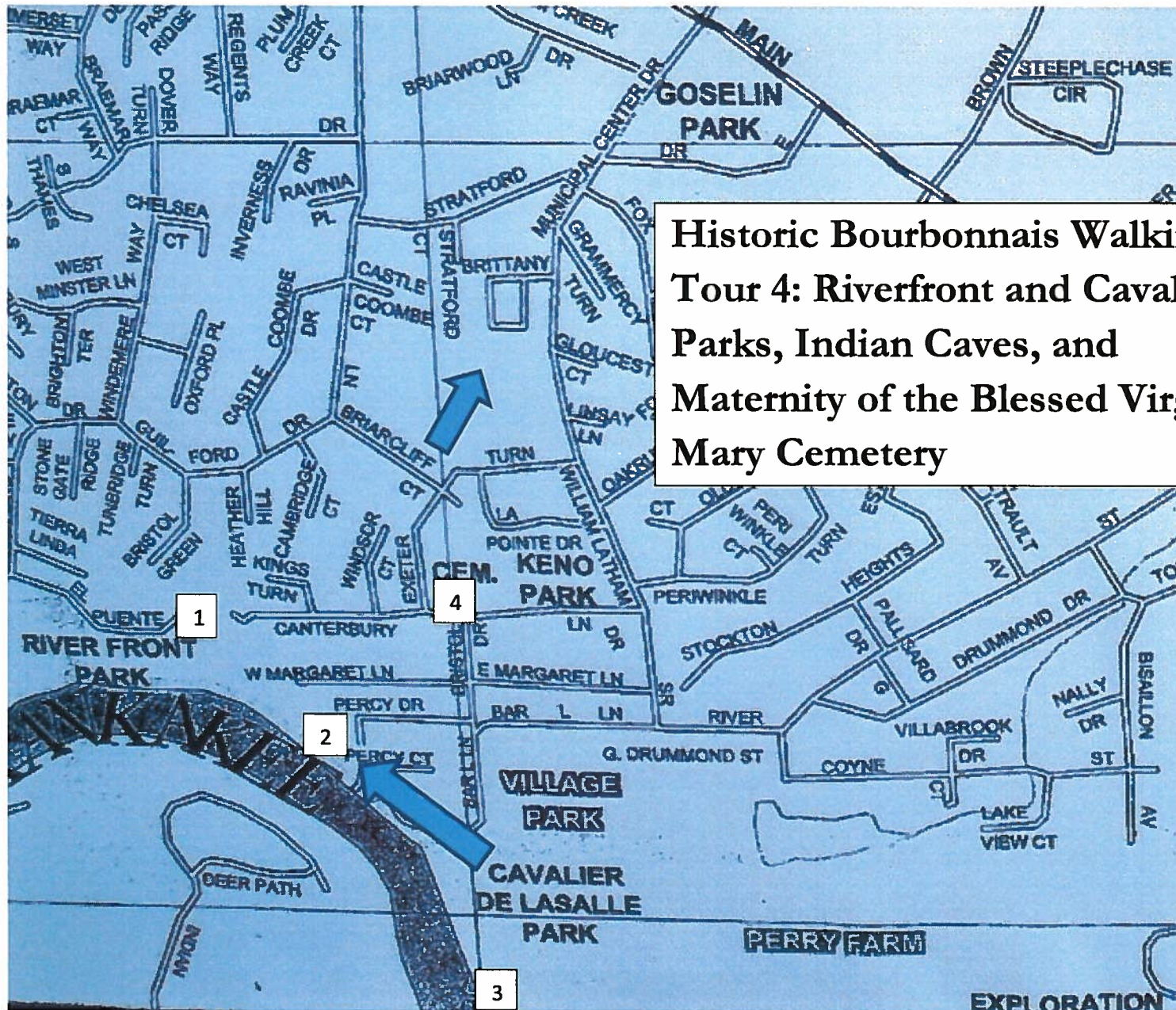


*Historic Bourbonnais Walking*

*Tour 4:*

*Riverfront and Cavalier Park,*  
*Indian Caves, and Maternity of*  
*the Blessed Virgin Mary*  
*Cemetery*

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## Historic Bourbonsais Walking Tour 4: Riverfront and Cavalier Parks, Indian Caves, and Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cemetery

Historic Bourbonsais Walking Tour 4: Riverfront and Cavalier Park, Indian Caves, and Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cemetery

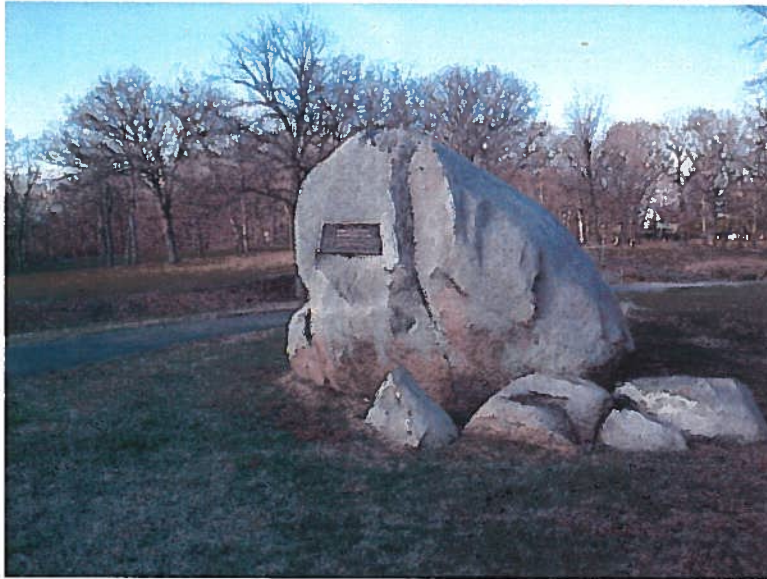
*This page will be referred to during Walking Tour 4 so if you are using an electronic device, you may want to print this page before starting the tour.*



*Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 4* begins and ends at the parking lot of Riverfront Park at the west end of Canterbury Lane (1071-81 Canterbury Lane) in Bourbonnais. This round trip walk from the park is about 1.75 miles. This walking tour takes the visitor back to the year 1679 in historic Bourbonnais. As one walks the pathways of Riverfront Park, one can imagine the aesthetic enjoyment the Native Americans felt who lived in this part of Potawatomi Chief Mesheketeno's village in the 1830s. The main lodges of the village were located just to the northeast, near today's Lake Brittany (which was created by Briarcliff Subdivision developers when a creek was dammed—see location of Lake Brittany indicated by left-of-center blue arrow on map—page 32 above).

After exploring Riverfront Park--1 (see **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 4** map on page 32 above for corresponding numbers), one should walk east on Canterbury Lane. Turn right at 1065 Canterbury Lane onto the paved asphalt walkway and proceed to Cavalier de LaSalle Park--2 (see **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 4** map on page 32 above for corresponding numbers). The walk to this point will have been about 1.25 miles. Now walk down the hillside's asphalt pathway to the river. This may be the spot where in December 1679, Rene-Robert Cavelier Sieur de LaSalle's group of explorers landed their birch bark canoes for a rest on the river which LaSalle named the Seignelay, in honor of colonial minister of France. Now, proceed southeast along the river. One will soon enter the Bourbonnais Township Park District's Perry Farm Park. Just a little over .10 mile, one will arrive at the mouth of Bourbonnais Creek and its limestone bedrock canyon commonly referred to as the Indian Caves--3 (see **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 4** map on page 32 above for corresponding numbers). This unique bedrock formation has been an attraction since the early pioneer days. After finishing the visit to this area, one may retrace the walk back along the beautiful Kankakee River. From Cavalier de LaSalle Park walk onto Percy Drive and follow the curve to the east to the Bristol Lane intersection. Do not turn onto Percy Court, but continue around the curve to the east. Now, turn left onto Bristol Lane and walk to the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cemetery at the intersection of Bristol Lane and Canterbury Lane--4 (see **Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 4** map on page 32 above for corresponding numbers). This portion of the walk from the Indian Caves to the cemetery will be about .35 miles. The cemetery dates back to 1884 when the parish outgrew its churchyard cemetery. After visiting the cemetery, one may return to the parking lot at Riverfront Park.

**1. Riverfront Park,  
1071-81 Canterbury Lane**



The granite boulder (depicted at left) sits atop Riverfront Park. The inscription reads, “Village of Bourbonnais, Riverfront Park, with grateful thanks to Jim and Barbara Hunt, whose donation of this land and other resources will forever benefit current and future residents of Bourbonnais.” The Hunts donated this land to the Village of Bourbonnais in the early 2000s. Two centuries ago, one can imagine a Potawatomi tribe member walking up to the site of this boulder and enjoying the view over the Kankakee River. This was the western part of Mesheketeno’s village. This is where the Potawatomi stayed, especially during the maple sugar season. This site was also the midway point in the twelve-mile long by one mile wide “Bourbonnais Grove”. This grove of trees stretched from today’s Kankakee River State Park in the north to Cobb Park in Kankakee in the south.



**2. Cavalier Park,  
Southwest End of Percy Drive**



This may be the December 1679 landing site where Rene Robert Cavalier de LaSalle (1643-87) and his band of thirty *voyageurs* rested from their birch bark canoe paddling from the Lake Michigan to the Illinois River. At that time, LaSalle named the river Seignelay in honor of colonial minister of France. The name was later changed to the Theakiki. The Potawatomi called the land adjacent to the river "Te-yar-ac-ke" ("wonderful land"). The word "Ky-an-ke-ke" evolved. Some Indian tribes called the land "Te-ok-e-kee" ("wolf") while some *coureurs de bois* used the name "Quin-que-que". The gazebo at Cavalier Park was dedicated to Robert Bryan LeBeau by the Village of Bourbonais on May 1, 1999. The sketch at left is by Vic Johnson.



**3. Limestone Bedrock Ravine “Indian Caves”,  
Perry Farm Park, at mouth of Bourbonnais Creek**



**Indian Caves**



**Mouth of Bourbonnais Creek as it enters the Kankakee River**

The Indian Caves have attracted curious visitors from the day the first settlers came to Bourbonnais Grove. The beauty and mystery of the limestone ravine and caves enchanted generations of people young and old. In the spring of 1984 Fred Tetreault, a staff writer for *Outdoor Highlights*, wrote:

*“Deep and narrow, Bourbonnais Creek ravine in the Bradley-Bourbonnais area of Kankakee County is carved through layer after layer of limestone believed to have been part of a prehistoric reef. . . . About a quarter mile long, it conducts its shallow, nondescript little water way down to an appointment with the [Kankakee] river via a series of scenic, stair step waterfalls, [and] picturesque pools between sheer rock walls that rear as much as five or six stories above the creek bed. Nowhere are they less than 20 to 30 feet high. The chasm’s width ranges from eight or 10 feet at its narrowest to about 25 or 30 feet in the broader portion. . . . Of particular interest to the U. S. Department of the Interior,” said Tetreault, “[is] the gorge’s geological features, primarily—the bedrock, sedimentary rocks, fossil-bearing limestone, the numerous fossils and prehistoric stone implements found in the area, invertebrate fossils and, of course, the rock exposures.”*

A different account of the Indian Caves relates to the spring of 1844. According to Judson Nichols and as reported by Burt Burroughs, “a meeting was held at the home of ‘Uncle Tommy Durham’ [later called the Durham-Perry Farmhouse] which was attended by nearly all settlers on the river.” The subject was horse thieves. The thieves were using the limestone canyon on Bourbonnais Creek to hide their stolen horses. The canyon was often referred to as Horse Creek Hallow. Some Prairie Banditti who lived on an Indiana island in the Kankakee Marsh often crossed the border to harass local population into the 1850s. A newly formed Vigilance Committee promptly captured a suspect with two horses. Before the vigilantes could hang the culprit, he was turned over to the Iroquois County sheriff. However, the alleged horse thief escaped and was not caught.



**4. Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cemetery,  
Canterbury Lane and Bristol Lane**



In 1884, the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church (number 1 in *Walking Tour 2* above) outgrew its churchyard cemetery and purchased land just west of the village. Today, the cemetery lies within the village limits surrounded by Keno Park, and Briarcliff and Bristol Woods subdivisions. Within the large white mausoleum are buried Peter (1844-1926) and Olive (1848-1932) Granger. Both were French-Canadian immigrants to Bourbonnais Grove. They were married on September 17, 1867 at Maternity BVM Church. They had no natural children, but adopted one daughter, Emma Trudell. By the 1890s, the Grangers owned 400 acres of farmland and lived 387 S. Rosewood in Kankakee. Emma married George Graveline on January 12, 1898 in St. Rose of Lima Church in Kankakee. They were married for 57 years and raised several children. The Gravelines are buried in the Graveline family plot marked by a large white granite monument, not far from the Granger mausoleum. In the article “Digging up history in Maternity cemetery” of *The Herald’s* September 1, 2015 edition, Laurel Soper wrote “So if you have an interest in local history, a walk through Maternity cemetery may very well be the best way to connect with the village’s past. Historic figures such as Noel LeVasseur and George Letourneau, as well as people like Peter and Olive Granger, lie there waiting to tell you their stories.”

**Historic Bourbonnais Walking Tour 4:**  
**Riverfront and Cavalier Park, Indian Caves, and Maternity**  
**of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cemetery**

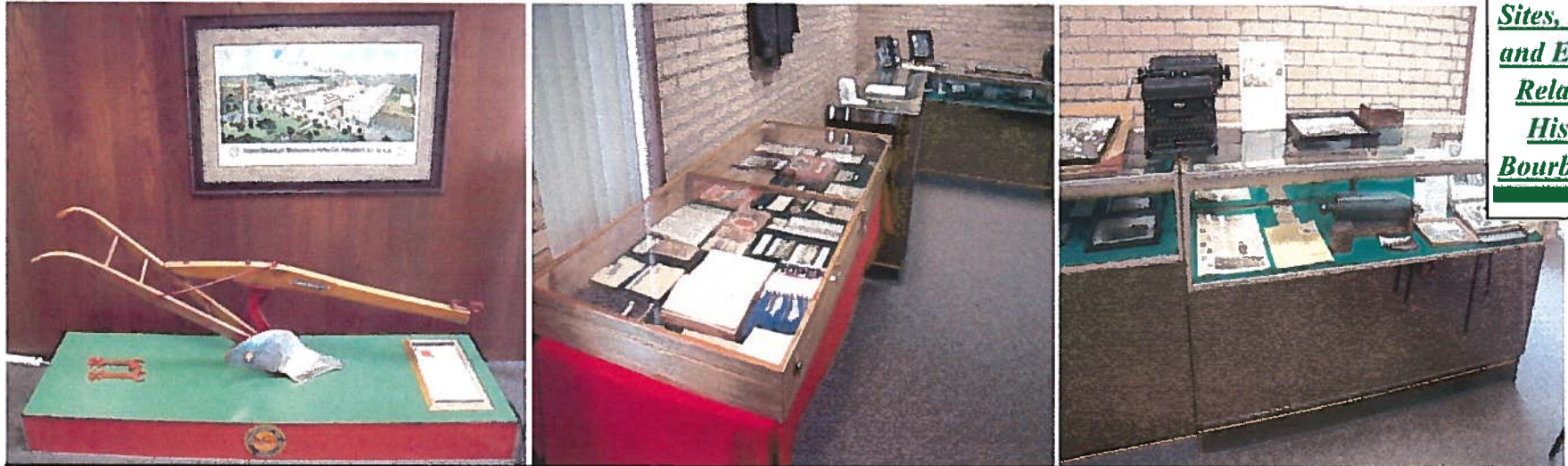
*Other Historic Sites, Places, and*  
*Exhibits Related to Historic*  
*Bourbonnais*

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## Other Historic Sites, Places, and Exhibits Related to Historic Bourbonnais

**Bradley Manufacturing Company Exhibit, located at the Bradley Village Hall, 147 South Michigan Avenue, Bradley, IL**



*Other  
Historic  
Sites, Places,  
and Exhibits  
Related to  
Historic  
Bourbonnais*

This collection of David Bradley's (1811-1899) Bradley Manufacturing Company memorabilia and artifacts is displayed in the Bradley Village Hall main meeting room. This exhibit was created by Robert Simpson of the Bradley Historical Society. The Bradley Manufacturing Company made farm implements and other products during the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries. The display includes letters, account ledgers, product advertisements, personal artifacts, and some examples of the farm implements. Many residents of Bourbonnais worked in the Bradley factory in Bradley. The Bradley Historical Society has summarized the development of the Bradley Manufacturing Company:

J. Herman Hardebeck succeeded in bringing the David Bradley (1811-99) Manufacturing Co. to North Kankakee in April of 1895. On July 13, 1895, the village name was changed to Bradley City, and then in March of 1896 to just Bradley. In 1958 the name was changed to the George D. Roper Corporation. In 1962 Sears merged the David Bradley Mfg. Co. and the Newark, Ohio, Company into a single unit. The Bradley plant became known as the Newark, Ohio, Co., Bradley Division. In 1964 the Newark, Ohio, Company is merged with the George D. Roper Corporation. In 1982 the Bradley Roper plant is given to the village of Bradley. In 1986 fire destroyed 6 buildings of the Bradley plant. After his death in 1899 the family sold the company to Sears, Roebuck & Co. and it was renamed David Bradley Manufacturing Works. Sears operated the factory until they sold it in 1962. Between 1910 and 1962 many of the farm and garden related items sold by Sears carried the trade name David Bradley (<http://www.asecc.com/data/engines/david-bradley.html>).

Visitors should contact the Bradley Village Hall in order to make arrangements to view the exhibit (815 936-5100).

For more information, visit <http://www.asecc.com/data/engines/david-bradley.html>.

**French-Canadian Heritage Wall,  
at Kankakee Community College,  
100 College Drive, Kankakee, IL**



For more information, visit <http://frenchcanadians.kcc.edu/>.

On August 30, 2012, this French-Canadian Heritage Wall was put on permanent display on a wall at Kankakee Community College. It is a tribute to the Kankakee River Valley's French-Canadian heritage and *The French-Canadian Interview Project*. From 2000-06, Kankakee Community College students interviewed 12 women and 6 men of French-Canadian descent, preserving their life stories and relating to their family histories to local and world history. The French-Canadian Heritage Wall is an extension of this project. The heritage wall is located on the third floor east end—near room L308—of Kankakee Community College. The 15' x 4' exhibit contains historical narratives, photographs, time line, and interaction by using electronic devices (815 802-8100). *The French-Canadian Interview Project* website is located at <http://frenchcanadians.kcc.edu/>.

**Alexis Bergeron Sr. Farmstead,  
1827 E 5000 Rd N, Bourbonnais, IL**



Photo courtesy of Mimi Raiche  
(This view is from the south)



Photo by Bonnie Bergeron  
(This view is from the east)

For more information, visit  
<http://www.bourbonnaishistory.org/le-journal.html>.

The two-story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame house of this farmstead was built in the 1870s. An addition was attached to the original home around 1890. This was the farmstead of Alexis Bergeron, Sr. and his wife Elizabeth (Granger) Bergeron. The farmstead was known as Maple View Stock Farm. Percheron horses were bred and raised on the farmstead. The grove of trees to the west of the farmstead was known as Bergeron Grove and church picnics and dances were held there. Some of the trees still remain from the grove. To learn more about this historic site, go to the website at left to request a copy of the Summer 2008 issue of *Le Journal du Village* which includes Bonnie Bergeron's article entitled "Maple View Stock Farm and Bergeron Grove".



**Xavier Raymond Sr. House,  
3577 E 5000 RD N, Bourbonnais, IL**



This view is from the south)



(This view is from the southeast)

This two-story National Gable-Front-and-Wing style frame home was built by Alexander Lord around 1850 and sold, along with 80 acres of land, to Xavier Raymond Sr. in 1894. The home was occupied by the Raymond family until 1966, and owned by Anne Richard, the youngest of the Raymond children, until 1984. The photograph of the family at left was taken in 1912. Anne Raymond/Richard (toddler in middle center) was two years old at the time. Anne married Adrien Richard and lived at 269 East Marsile Street—see number **18** in *Walking Tour 1*.

**Willowhaven Nature Center,  
Bourbonnais Township Park District's Whispering Willows Park,  
1451 N. 4000 E. Road (Skyline Road), Kankakee, IL**



This nature center is in the eastern part of Bourbonnais Township. The building was formerly a cattle barn located 250 miles away in Jones County, Iowa. The barn, built in the early 1900s, was scheduled to be demolished but the Folkers family donated it to the Bourbonnais Township Park District. In the late 1990s, the barn was dismantled timber by timber, transported across the state, and re-assembled at Whispering Willows Park. The Folkers Barn has been rebuilt and remodeled with state of the art environmentally friendly technology. Please call 815 933-9905 for open hours.

**Site Commemorating Chief Shaw-waw-nas-see's  
Final Resting Place, Kankakee River State Park**



Historical records indicate that on or near this site in 1834 (although boulder is inscribed as 1838), the Potawatomi Chief Shaw-waw-nas-see was placed in a sitting position facing west after his death. Many of his personal belongings surrounded him. George Letouneau wrote in the *History of Kankakee County* that in the spring of 1836, 500 from Shaw-waw-nas-see's tribe left for Iowa . . . and in 1838 nearly the last of those remaining behind, two hundred in number, undertook the same mournful journey (633). This historic site is in the Kankakee River State Park and can be accessed by walking ½ mile along a forest trail northwest of 5000W Rd parking lot near Rock Creek.

**Little Rock Village,  
Kankakee River State Park**



This is the site of the Potawatomi Chief Shaw-waw-nas-see's Little Rock Village in the early 1800s. The Little Rock marker is located .6 mile northwest of the Island View parking lot (parking lot is west of the Potawatomi Camp Ground) on the southwest side of the Kankakee River State Park access road. Little Rock Village was the southern part of Shaw-waw-nas-see's tribal boundary. The larger section of the Potawatomi village was Rock Village, located due north on the north side of today's Illinois Route 102.

**The Altorf Mill Site,  
Kankakee River State Park,**



This flour mill was built, along with a dam across the Kankakee River, by Hiram Goodwin in 1852. The mill was in operation for ten years. Ice buildup on the river apparently caused irreversible damage to the dam in 1862. Wilmington, Illinois's *The Independent* edition of July 23, 1862 stated that the ten feet high dam was "now broken and out of repair." This site is located just northwest of Potawatomi Camp Ground on the park access road.

**Site of Rockville,  
Kankakee River State Park**



As the Potawatomi under Chief Shaw-waw-nas-see left their lands in 1835, a small village named Rockville was established by the pioneer settlers. The monument at left commemorates this long-gone village. The village stretched from this spot to the Kankakee River. The monument is located west of Rock Creek. It may be reached by first parking at the Kankakee River State Park concession parking lot, then walking across the Rock Creek suspension bridge and proceeding 14 yards on the asphalt path, and then turning right onto the grass access road and walking 112 yards uphill toward Route 102. The monument is on the right.



**French Heritage Museum at the Stone Barn,  
165 North Indiana Street, Kankakee, IL**



This stone carriage house was built in 1860 by Lemuel Milk (1820-82), a prominent Kankakee business man and farmer. The stone carriage house is now known as the French Heritage Museum at the Stone Barn. Milk's large mansion once stood just to the east of the stone carriage house. Over its many years of history, the stone carriage house contained a livery stable for Percheron horses, carriages, a milking stall for dairy cattle, ice for the Waldron Ice Company, horses for the Kankakee Fire Department, bakery/restaurant, and headquarters for the Junior League. It is now the home of the French Heritage Museum. The museum was dedicated on July 28, 2012. The museum allows one to explore and celebrate the French involvement in the history of the Kankakee River Valley—the first explorers and missionaries; the *coureurs de bois* and fur traders; and the pioneer settlers from France, French Canada, and Belgium. The museum is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 pm (closed in January-March). It is operated by the Kankakee County Museum. For more information, call 815 932-5279.

<http://www.kankakeecountymuseum.com/french-heritage-museum-.html>.

**Kankakee County Museum,  
801 South 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Kankakee, IL**



For more information, visit  
[www.kankakeecountymuseum.com](http://www.kankakeecountymuseum.com)

As one of the oldest historical societies in the State of Illinois, the Kankakee County Historical Society was founded in 1906. The historical society began exhibiting artifacts at the Kankakee High School in 1912. The collection grew so large that a new facility was needed. In 1936, exhibit space was donated to the historical society at the Kankakee County Court House. In 1944, the collection was moved back to the high school. In the mid-1940s, the Small family donated 25 acres of land and the Dr. A.L. Small Memorial Home to the society. The historical society's new museum was dedicated and opened to the public on October 17, 1948. The one-room Taylor School House (built in 1904) was moved to the "Governor Small Memorial Park" in 1976. Since then, a Column Garden and Let Freedom Ring Garden have been added to the memorial park.

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