



## KANKAKEE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

# *The Preservationist*

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### Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commissioners

Mardene Hinton, chair

John Adams, vice chair

Dr. James Paul, secretary

Jane Johnson

Terry Johnston

Daron Kinzinger

Neeley Provost-Regas

Ron Shank

Pat Wagner

Staff:  
Michelle Sadler

## Kankakee County Preservation Commission Receives Grant from IHPA

The Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission (KCHPC), as a Certified Local Government, applied for and received a \$19,950 Certified Local Government (CLG) 2015 Matching Grant from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA). The federally funded grant will be used to finance a Comprehensive Kankakee County Historic Preservation Plan developed to encourage the preservation of the county's historic resources and character.

A preservation plan will supply the Commission

with a roadmap for the county's future preservation activity. An effective action plan will establish goals set forth by our community and will organize preservation activities in a logical sequence that can be achieved in a reasonable time period. The plan will be a public outreach tool for the Commission, involving the public in the planning process. Public meetings will be held in communities throughout Kankakee County, in an attempt to learn what local resources from the community's history is important to the

residents and also to bring public awareness of the importance of protecting and maintaining those resources. We seek to encourage enthusiasm and support for preservation to grow in a positive way.

A preservation plan is also an economic development tool. Businesses and individual property owners are attracted to communities when they value the characteristics found in communities with strong preservation programs.

## Community Foundation Grant

The KCHPC was awarded a \$2,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley at their Annual Awards Luncheon held May 21, 2015, at the Kankakee Country Club. The Communityworks grant program awards grants for projects that address issues in the areas

of Early Childhood Education, Land Use & Protection, and Workforce Development. The grant received will help the KCHPC meet the local share of a 70/30 matching grant from IHPA and will allow the Commission to achieve a Preservation Plan for Kankakee County.



L-R: Hollace Clark, Chairman of the Foundation's Grants Committee; Michelle Sadler, KCHPC staff; & Mardene Hinton, KCHPC, chair.

## French-Canadian Heritage Corridor



***Unveiling of the sign by Representative Kate Cloonen and Quebec Delegate to the Midwest Eric Marquis.***

On Wednesday, July 29, Dr. Jim Paul, Secretary for the KCHPC, was the emcee at the Letourneau Home & Museum for the official unveiling of the French-Canadian Heritage Corridor Signs. The signs have been installed on Interstate 57 to identify the historic Illinois corridor. One sign is located just north of Manteno at exit 322 for southbound

traffic and the other just south of Ashkum at exit 293 for the northbound traffic.

The two signs encompass an area where the majority of French-Canadian pioneers immigrated to what is now Kankakee and Iroquois Counties from the late 1820s to 1850s. The settlements included Bourbonnais Grove (now part of Bourbonnais, Bradley & Kankakee along the Kankakee River), Le Petite Canada (the site of which is located in the Davis Creek area of Kankakee River State Park), Rockville (the site of which is located in the northwest section of the Kankakee

River State Park), and St. George,

Among those speaking at the event were: Representative Kate Cloonen; Monsieur Eric Marquis, Quebec Delegate to the Midwest; Manteno Mayor Tim Nugent; Dr. John Avendano, president of KCC; local historian and co-curator of the French Heritage Museum, Vic Johnson; officer in both the Kankakee County and Bourbonnais Grove Historical Societies, Ken Ponton; City Administrator of Wilmington, Mr. Tony Graf; and local author and co-curator of the French Heritage Museum, Dr. Charles Balesi.

## FRENCH-CANADIANS of Kankakee County

Exhibits and projects on the area's French-Canadian heritage can be seen at the following:

- **Letourneau Home/ Museum**, open from 1:00-4:00 p.m. the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month from March thru December.  
[www.bourbonnaihistory.org](http://www.bourbonnaihistory.org)
- **French Heritage Museum**, in the Stone Barn at 165 N. Indiana Ave., Kankakee.  
[www.kankakeecountymuseum.com](http://www.kankakeecountymuseum.com)
- **French-Canadian Heritage Wall** and

the French-Canadian Interview Project, third floor east end of Kankakee Community College, 100 College Drive, Kankakee. (815-802-8100)  
[www.frenchcanadians.kcc.edu/](http://www.frenchcanadians.kcc.edu/)

- **Heritage Room**, Maternity BVM Church, 308 E. Marsile St., Weekdays: 8:30 a.m.—3 p.m.; Sat. 8:30 a.m.—5:30 p.m.; Sun. 6:30 a.m.—3 p.m. (815-933-8285)
- **Viatorian Room** in Ludwig Hall, Olivet

Nazarene University, Bourbonnais, IL., One University Ave. Bourbonnais, IL. (815-928-5534).

Experience the contributions that the French-Canadians made in Kankakee County.

For your convenience call or visit the websites of the above institutions to plan your visit.

## Kankakee County Preservation Plan

With CLG status, the KCHPC was able to secure a \$19,950 grant from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency to develop a “preservation plan” for the county. The Community Foundation awarded the KCHPC with a \$2,000 grant to help with the 70/30 CLG grant requirement.

A comprehensive preservation plan includes identification of historic resources, evaluation of resources, and identification of strategies and short and long term goals for preservation efforts. The plan will identify community goals and provide a framework for future preservation activities.

Key components of the

plan include:

- History of the county and identification of historic periods and themes,
- Review of the current landmark ordinance and coordination with municipal governments,
- Review of previous research, studies, surveys, nominations, education materials, and public events.
- Identification of significant properties or areas with a high concentration of historic properties where future survey work should be performed
- Background information that can be used to develop adaptive reuse standards or design guidelines appropriate to local commu-

nities.

- Information that can be used for public education about historic preservation and local history, and to promote economic development or tourism that enhances the appreciation of historic resources,
- Identification of future needs and goals for the next ten years.

The plan will be developed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning. The plan will also provide background information and a context for the future stewardship of historic resources; therefore, it will not include extensive field survey work, historical research

**“Historic District designation has a stabilizing effect on neighborhoods”**

on a particular site or individual person, or preparation of local landmark or National Register nominations. However, the plan will identify, as future goals, the areas where future survey work is desirable, particular sites or persons to be researched in more detail, and/or properties or types of properties that should be considered for nomination as landmarks.

## KCHPC seeks to form a STEERING COMMITTEE

The Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission is looking for community members with a significant interest or experience in historic preservation. The Commission would like to partner with historical societies, historians, local preservation groups and local educators, as we work to prepare a Preservation Plan that will encourage preservation of rural landscapes and the historic character of the

County. We will be forming a Steering Committee that will help the Commission address the following issues:

1. Develop an historic context of the county, identifying historic periods and themes.
2. Review past preservation efforts.
3. Hold meetings within County villages and/or municipalities to:
  - Investigate their concerns and values.
  - Define properties that

are historically and architecturally significant.

- Explain tax incentives that encourage preservation and maintenance.
- 4. Develop a base of well-informed owners of landmarked properties and/or properties that may potentially be landmarked.
- 5. Develop an ongoing coordination and information exchange between local government & county government.
- 6. Identify educational opportunities that expand

the knowledge and understanding of the community's heritage.

7. Identify ways of improving Tourism & Economic Development.

If you have an interest in this exciting project, please contact us at 815-937-2940. The project is due to be completed in September 2016.



## KANKAKEE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

189 E. Court Street  
Room 201  
Kankakee, IL 60901

Phone: 815.937.2940  
Ext. 5555

E-mail: [msadler@k3county.net](mailto:msadler@k3county.net)  
[www.k3countyhistoricpreservation.com](http://www.k3countyhistoricpreservation.com)  
Mapping: [http://webfiles.k3gis.com/historic\\_sites/index.html](http://webfiles.k3gis.com/historic_sites/index.html)

[www.k3countyhistoricpreservation.com](http://www.k3countyhistoricpreservation.com)

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## The Preservationist

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### What Does a Historic Preservation Commission do?

The establishment of a countywide historic preservation commission in 2007 was the first step taken to protect Kankakee County's historic heritage. With the creation of a Historic Preservation Commission by the Kankakee County Board of Supervisors, the commission was authorized to:

- Conduct surveys to identify historic resources.
- Designate landmarks,
- Establish local districts with a majority of property owner consent.
- Use guidelines to review building permits of designated properties, and
- Issue Certificates of appropriateness.

Development of a historic preservation commission is also a necessary first step in receiving local government certification by the National Park Service. It was one of the first steps taken by the newly formed KCHPC and CLG (Certified Local Government) status was achieved on May 3, 2009. Benefits of certification include: technical assistance and grant money for education, staff support, surveys, preservation plans and a variety of other projects.

### Working together: CITY of KANKAKEE and KANKAKEE COUNTY

The KCHPC is pleased to announce that an Intergovernmental Agreement drafted between the City of Kankakee and the County of Kankakee has been approved by both governments.

The agreement states that the Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission can serve to advise the City in implementing and enforcing a Historic Preservation Program to serve the city and its residents.

1. The KCHPC shall have jurisdiction within the corporate boundaries of the City of Kankakee to advise and recommend to the City relating to the preservation of the City's historically significant buildings, structures, landmarks and sites.



sites.

2. The City of Kankakee shall cooperate with the KCHPC in preparing a general plan of action for the preservation of historically significant buildings, structures, landmarks and sites within the corporate boundaries of the City of Kankakee.

One of the goals of the Kankakee County Preservation Plan is to establish Intergovernmental Agreements with all county villages and/or municipalities. In the very near future we will be reaching out to the individual historical societies and mayors in the hope of completing Intergovernmental Agreements with each municipality. The agreements can be made either on a case by case basis or as a blanket agreement.

