

MEMORIAL DAY PRESENTATION WITH DON FULLER 5/29/23—NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY

Life in Illinois in 1800 very different (only 223 years ago):

- 1. In 1800, it is estimated that there were about 800 settlers in Illinois and 30-40,000 Native Americans;**
- 2. There were about 6,000 Potawatomi around the bottom of Lake Michigan from Milwaukee to St. Joseph, including in this area;**
- 3. The largest Potawatomi village in DuPage County was Sauganakka, largely along Salt Creek, which was called Wewanippissee, or “the pretty little river”;**
- 4. Features included signal station, chipping station, village, camps, burial mounds around current Graue Mill and Fullersburg Woods;**
- 5. Potawatomi life included migratory lifestyle, hunting, trading furs, canoes, summer farming—allied with Chippewa and Ottawa in 3 Fires Confederacy;**
- 6. Chief was Shabbona, located west of here, who knew the capabilities of US Army, as he had fought along side the British in War of 1812 and witnessed death of Tecumseh, the great Shawnee Chief who had united many Native Americans against the whites;**

There was a population explosion in Illinois that impacted Native American lifestyles:

- 7. By 1830, the Illinois population had grown to 157,000, and the growth occurred from the south and east into Illinois; Chicago had only 12 families and garrison; U.S. population was about 12 million, and many felt need to expand west;**
- 8. “Indian Removal Act” in 1830 meant that President Jackson could swap tribal Native American land east of Mississippi with land in territories west of the river; settlers could reserve up to 160 acres for \$1.25 per acre;**

- 9. This rapid growth led to Sauk Black Hawk's attempt to unite the Native Americans against the white settlers in 1832; he lived along the Mississippi River by present-day Rock Island, which put Shabbona in a difficult situation—many young Potawatomi braves identified with Black Hawk, and so they were confined in good conditions near Riverside; General Winfield Scott advised Lt. Sherman King to keep an eye on the Potawatomi at Fullersburg;**

- 10. In May of 1832, Black Hawk's war was imminent, and Shabbona and his closest allies warned all the settlers in this area to flee to fortified sites; led to panic in Naper Settlement who passed through this area on their way to Ft. Dearborn;**

- 11. Unfortunately, one settlement did not heed warnings of Shabbona, which resulted in what is called the "Indian Creek Massacre," in which 15 settlers at Davis Settlement were killed and two sisters kidnapped--but it was Potawatomi who led this war party and not Sauk, who were blamed; this event shows the precarious position of settlers in midst of unrest;**

- 12. Short-lived Black Hawk War ended badly for Black Hawk 3 months later, resulting in 1833 Treaty of Chicago, which forced relocation of all Native Americans in Illinois to territories west of Mississippi River; many local Potawatomi overlapped in this area when Ben Fuller first arrived in 1834; much more information and the entire text of the 1833 Treaty of Chicago on fullersburg.org. Don Fuller, great, great grandson of Benjamin Fuller, the founder of Fullersburg, will tell you what happened next.**

(Sue Devick, FHF Director)