

## TIMELINE OF HISTORIC FULLERSBURG

At the end of the last glacial period around 8,000 BC, prehistoric people roamed the land which would become Fullersburg. More recently, the Potawatomi lived along Salt Creek in the vicinity of the present-day Graue Gill and dam. Following the 1833 treaty of Chicago, Native Americans were relocated from the area to lands west of the Mississippi river and the northern Illinois territory was opened to European settlement. Fullersburg became the only stop along the Indian trail (now Ogden Avenue) between Chicago and Naperville in those early days. In 1974, an archeological surface survey was conducted. It identified the Fullersburg area as an archeological site. Test excavations on the original site of the Ben Fuller farmhouse property in 1978 revealed ancient artifacts. These discoveries are included in the archeological surface survey.

### HISTORIC DATES AND PEOPLE

Early 1800's – Orente Grant, a fur trader and trapper, and Lt. King, an army scout, are believed to be the first white men in the Fullersburg area prior to European settlement.

1833 – Pottawatomi, along with other tribes, sign the Treaty of Chicago with the U.S. Government and cede five million acres of land along the western shore of Lake Michigan up to Lake Winnebago, Wisconsin. The Treaty is the last of 38 treaties ceding Indian lands from Cleveland, Ohio to the Mississippi River. Native peoples are re-located to lands west of the Mississippi River. The Illinois territory is opened to settlement.

1834 – Benjamin Fuller arrives in Fullersburg on horseback from Broome County, New York, through Chicago. He decides to settle here because of the fertile land, rich forests and nearby pristine creek and stakes a claim on a tract of land at present day Spring Road and 31st Street in Oak Brook. He returns to New York to make arrangements to move his family to Illinois.

1835 – Ben Fuller, his parents and 10 brothers and sisters make the journey to Illinois by covered wagon, on horseback and by canal boat to establish their new home on the frontier. The Fuller family constructs a house on land staked out by Ben Fuller in 1834.

1836 – The Walker and Frink Company establishes a stagecoach line serving travelers between Chicago and Naperville. Fullersburg is the only stop on the route and provides overnight accommodations and meals for weary passengers.

1837 – Nicholas Torode, one of the earliest settlers in the region, builds a saw mill on Salt Creek initiating a flurry of frame construction in the Fullersburg area. Up until then, structures were built mostly of large hand-cut logs or stone found locally.

1837 – The first dam, constructed of brush and mud, is built on Salt Creek to provide an energy source to run the Torode sawmill. It proves unstable and is soon replaced with a log dam.

1837 – The City of Chicago is incorporated. During this time, the Thursten family moves to Fullersburg, followed by the Foxes, Coes, Tallmadges, Graues, Browns, Wagners, Fords and Van Velzers. Ben Fuller's brothers and sisters marry into some of these families.

c.1840 – Fullersburg becomes a center of commerce. Benjamin Fuller designs and builds a frame farmhouse in the Greek Revival style as his new family residence. The Farmhouse is believed to be the oldest example of balloon frame construction remaining in northeastern Illinois. The house was originally located at 948 York Road south of the Graue House and Mill.

c.1840 – Benjamin Fuller begins construction of the Fullersburg Tavern, the first hotel in the area, later called the Grand Pacific Hotel. Shortly thereafter, Orente Grant and his brother build the Castle Inn down the road from the Grand Pacific.

1843 – Benjamin Fuller builds The York Tavern "Farmer's Home" using timber frame with brick fill construction known as "fackwerk". This construction style dates back to medieval times in Europe. The York Tavern still stands today at its original location west of York Road and north of Salt Creek.

1846 - DuPage County licenses The York Tavern "Farmer's Home" as a tavern and country store. It is believed to be the oldest privately owned and continuously operating eating and drinking establishment in the county.

1848 - Fire destroys the Torode Sawmill. The Torode family abandons the site and begins a stone quarry operation.

1850 - The Plank Road, later to be known as Ogden Avenue, is constructed using white oak timber from nearby forests and opens for traffic through Fullersburg between Chicago and Naperville.

1851 - Benjamin Fuller plats the town of Fullersburg, but it is never incorporated. The thriving community consists of three hotels, three taverns, a post office, blacksmith shops, school, saw and grist mills, wagon maker, church and a cemetery.

1851 - It is believed that Abraham Lincoln spoke from the Grand Pacific Hotel porch while riding the circuit through Fullersburg.

1852 - Frederick Graue and William Asche build a grist mill to replace the Torode Sawmill destroyed by fire in 1848. Three generations of the Graue family grind grain here for more than 60 years.

1858 - The Graue Mill becomes a stop on the Underground Railroad.

1859 - Frederick Graue builds his Italianate style mansion south of the Graue Mill. It still stands today at its original location.

1861 - The raging Civil War impacts Fullersburg. Ten men from the community join the Union Army, including Morrell Fuller, who participated in Sherman's march to the sea.

1862 - Loie Fuller, niece of Ben Fuller, is born at the Castle Inn on a cold January night. She is to become Fullersburg's most famous person, world renowned for her creative dance performances, innovative stage lighting and flowing costumes.

1865 - Fullersburg declines as a commerce center when the railroad is constructed to the south through Hinsdale.

1877 - The Fox Brothers sell five (5) acres of land for \$400 to the St. John's Evangelical Church congregation for use as a cemetery.

1881 - St. John's Evangelical Church is built on Washington Street just south of Salt Creek. A cemetery is located on a wooded hill behind the church and contains the graves of early Fullersburg settlers. The church is now known as Faith Fellowship Church.

1885 - John Ruchty builds The Mammoth Spring Ice House at Spring Road and Washington Street on Salt Creek. Ice is harvested here each winter for 30 years. A historic marker commemorates the location.

1889 - Frederick Graue replaces the post c. 1837 log dam with a crib and plank constructed dam.

1894 - An iron truss bridge is built across Salt Creek on York Road.

1914 - The crib and plank dam washes away. It is replaced with the first stone and concrete Salt Creek Dam.

1916 - The stone and concrete dam is breached by flooding.

1916 - The Graue Mill ceases operation.

1916 - The Mammoth Spring Ice Company ceases operation following the invention of refrigeration and factory manufactured ice.

1924 - A new bridge is constructed on York Road across Salt Creek.

c.1930 - The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County purchases the Graue Mill and surrounding property.

c.1935 – The CCC (Civilian Conservation Corp) restores the Mill, waterwheel, millrace and dam.

c.1935 – The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County purchases Fullersburg Woods and the CCC constructs a boat house on Salt Creek a short distance west of the Graue Mill and Dam.

1950 - The DuPage Graue Mill Corp. is incorporated to restore and operate the Graue Mill.

1951 – The Graue Mill becomes a museum and opens to the public.

1958 – The Village of Oak Brook is incorporated.

1962 – The Fullersburg Woods area is annexed to the Village of Oak Brook.

1974 – An Archeological Surface Survey of the Village of Oak Brook determines that prehistoric man was present in the area from 8,000 B.C. The entire Fullersburg area is considered an archeological site.

1975 – The Graue Mill is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

1978 – Archeological test excavations at the original Benjamin Fuller Farmhouse site show a record of prehistoric human occupation in the area from about 2000 B.C. through the historic period.

1980 – The Historic Graue Mill Gateway Area Ordinance is established by the Villages of Hinsdale and Oak Brook and creates the Historic District.

1981 – The Ben Fuller Farmhouse is moved from its original location at 948 York Road to its present location on a hill next to the Graue Mill parking lot.

1981 – The Ben Fuller Museum Association is incorporated and exterior restoration of the Ben Fuller Farmhouse begins.

1981 – The Graue Mill is listed as an Illinois Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark.

1986 – The Fullersburg Historic Foundation is formed at the request of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

1988 – The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County purchases twelve acres of land threatened with development with support from the villages of Oak Brook and Hinsdale to protect the open space and historic character of old Fullersburg.

1989 – The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County purchases the Frederick Graue House and 1.4 acres of land as part of the Historic District.

1991 – The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County purchases 1.76 acres of land east of York Road in partnership with the State of Illinois to preserve open space in the Historic District.

1990-1 – Gates to control the rate of floodwater runoff are built on Salt Creek at Graue Mill Dam as part of the Deep Tunnel project.

1996 – The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County purchases 1.07 acres of land east of York Road to preserve open space in the Historic District.

1996 – The York Road Bridge is re-built and enlarged over Salt Creek. Historic lights are installed.

1998-2002 – The Frederick Graue home undergoes extensive historic restoration funded by two state grants.

2001 – The Ben Fuller Museum Association is dissolved.

2002 – The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County purchases 3.65 acres of land on Spring Road west of the Graue Mill to expand open space in the Fullersburg Historic District.

2002 – The restored Frederick Graue home opens to the public for events and exhibits.

2004 - The Fullersburg Historic Foundation assumes responsibility to work with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County toward the preservation and historic restoration of the Ben Fuller farmhouse.

2006 – The York Tavern is restored historically while undergoing enlargement to provide space and accommodate adequate food preparation requirements.

2009 – The Ben Fuller Farmhouse Structure Report and Feasibility Use Study is completed by Terence Russell of STV, Inc. funded by the Fullersburg Historic Foundation.

2009 – Petitions are circulated and citizens rally to protect the scenic and historic Graue Mill Dam threatened with modification or removal.

2010 – A documentary featuring the life and career of Loie Fuller and the history of Fullersburg is produced by The Momenta Dance Company.

2010 – A historic marker is installed commemorating the site of the Mammoth Spring Ice Company. The marker is donated by the Fullersburg Historic Foundation in partnership with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

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