

OLD FULLERSBURG AREA MAP



The center of Old Fullersburg is located at the crossroads of York and Spring Roads in Oak Brook with outlying attractions nearby. Five original structures of the early days of Fullersburg still exist in place today. These structures are: The Ben Fuller Farmhouse, Graue Mill and Museum, the Frederick Graue House, the York Tavern and the Faith Fellowship Church.

The Ben Fuller Farmhouse, Graue Mill and Museum, the Frederick Graue House, the Fullersburg Woods Forest Preserve and Fullersburg Woods Nature Education Center are owned by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. www.dupageforest.org

The Faith Fellowship Church and the York Tavern are privately owned.

Step back in time and visit one of the most historic settings in DuPage County. Enjoy acres of open space and miles of recreational trails in the scenic Salt Creek Greenway. Relive the days of years gone by.

Photo Credits: David Waycie, Mike Dutka, Eric Schwister, DuPage Graue Mill Corporation, Faith Fellowship Church, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, Elmhurst Park District (place in alphabetical order)
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The purpose of the Salt Creek Greenway Association is to identify, preserve and promote the natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Salt Creek Greenway and collaborate with partners to gather, distribute and share information as a community service.

SALT CREEK

The last Ice Age came to an end about 10,000 to 12,000 years ago, and the landscape features of northeastern Illinois and the Salt Creek Valley emerged from the meltwaters. Early Native American dwellers used the creek as a transportation route. The creek was later discovered by fur traders and voyageurs when the area was still a wilderness.

Originally known as The Little DesPlaines, the name change occurred in 1834 when John Reid was hauling supplies between Galena and Chicago. His wagon got stuck mid-way in the creek while crossing. As his barrels of salt capsized into the water, the salt dissolved into briny foam. Ever after, the stream became known as Salt Creek.



Today, the 30 mile length of Salt Creek is noted for its diverse recreational land and water trails, scenic beauty, historic sites, natural areas, wildlife and open space. The headwaters to Salt Creek originate at

the Busse Woods Forest Preserve in Schaumburg. Salt Creek reaches its confluence with the DesPlaines River in the Brookfield/ Riverside area. Salt Creek is a truly remarkable waterway connecting Cook and DuPage counties, municipalities, park districts, forest preserves, historical sites and tourism destinations along its watercourse and uplands.

Scenic views, flowing waters and lush greenery can be seen from bridges and roadways, revealing a more leisurely pace and time in the midst of suburb hustle and development.



For more information, go to:
www.saltcreekgreenwayassociation.org.

THE PAST

The first native peoples to inhabit Illinois – the hunters and gatherers –migrated into the area thousands of years ago, following the herds of deer, elk and buffalo as the climate warmed and woodlands and prairie replaced glacial ice. They left behind projectile points and cultural artifacts, some dating back to 8,000 BC. Archaeologists discovered them at ancient sites in the Fullersburg area.

From the 1600's to 1833, Potawatomi people lived in the Fullersburg area. Potawatomi dwellings stood on the uplands of Salt Creek north of today's Graue Mill parking lot. After the Potawatomi deeded land in northeastern Illinois to the United States Government in the 1833 Treaty of Chicago, they were relocated to land west of the Mississippi River. The Northeastern Illinois Territory was opened for European settlement.



Orente Grant, an Indian scout, is believed to have been the first white man in the Fullersburg area during the fur trader era when most of Illinois was still a wilderness.

In the spring of 1834, Benjamin Fuller arrived by horseback from Broome County, New York. He staked out a claim to land. His family and other settlers soon followed and the history of Fullersburg began.

The Walker and Frink stagecoach line added the Fullersburg area to their regular schedule in 1836. A toll house was built later. Barto Van Velzer was the keeper of the toll gate on the Old Plank Road (today's Ogden Avenue). The Fullersburg area was the only stop on the route between Chicago and Naperville in those days. By 1860, Fullersburg was a leading community in DuPage County with three hotels, three taverns, a post office, blacksmith shop, school, saw and grist mills, a wagon maker's shop, a church and cemetery.



Benjamin Fuller - 1810 - 1868

Fullersburg became a stop on the Underground Railroad in the 1860's. Men from the Fullersburg area fought in the Union Army during the Civil War.

With the arrival of the Burlington Railroad in 1865 a mile to the south, traffic through Fullersburg declined. The center of commerce shifted from Fullersburg to Hinsdale.

Today, five original structures and a rich architectural and historical legacy remain, reminding us of those bygone days.

Old Fullersburg



Centuries of History
and
Places to Visit
In the Salt Creek Greenway

PLACES TO VISIT

BEN FULLER FARMHOUSE

The c.1840 Ben Fuller Farmhouse is believed to be the oldest and best example of balloon frame construction remaining in northeastern Illinois. Balloon framing was made famous during Chicago's early history.



Ben Fuller built his white residence with green shutters in the Greek Revival style. During this period, Fuller's residence reflected his wealth and stature in the community. The farmhouse is located on a sloping hill adjacent to the Graue Mill parking lot east of York Road at the intersection of Spring Road. The farmhouse is owned by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

The exterior of the Farmhouse was restored in the 1980's. Now, the interior of the Farmhouse is being historically restored and the summer kitchen which was destroyed by fire on July 4th, 1980 is being added. The Farmhouse will open to the public as a historic center of the era.

HISTORIC FULLERSBURG CEMETERY

The private Fullersburg Cemetery is one of the oldest cemeteries in DuPage County. Jacob and Candace Fuller, the parents of Benjamin Fuller, and Fuller family descendants, are buried here.



The monuments and gravestones tell the story of the births and deaths of Fullersburg pioneers. Some families lost infants and children during these hard times who are buried here. The cemetery is also the final resting place for men who served in the Union Army during the Civil War and lived to return home. Morell Fuller, a drummer with General Sherman on his infamous march to the sea through Georgia, lies here.

The cemetery is open to the public on Memorial Day for the changing of the flag ceremony.

The Fullersburg Cemetery is located west of York Road between Fuller Road and Maumell St. at the intersection of Garfield St.

GRAUE MILL AND MUSEUM

The four story red brick Graue Mill was built by Frederick Graue in 1852. Three generations of the Graue family ground grain here for local farmers for more than 60 years. But this was not the first mill built on the site. In 1837, Nicholas Torode constructed a saw mill here supplying lumber to nearby residents until 1849.

For a short period before the Civil War, the Mill was used as a station on the Underground Railroad. Runaway slaves were given shelter until they could be transported safely to Chicago and freedom in Canada.

In the 1930's, the Mill was acquired by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. It is operated today by the DuPage Graue Mill Corporation. The Mill is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as an Illinois Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark. It became a museum in 1951. Visitors can watch the milling process using the original 150 year old grindstones, enjoy spinning and weaving demonstrations and view artifacts of the Civil War.



The Graue Mill and Museum is located at 3800 York Road, Oak Brook. www.grauemill.org.

GRAUE MILL DAM

Several dams were built at this Salt Creek location from 1837 to 1889. They became unstable and washed out.



Today's historic limestone Graue Mill Dam was built in 1935 during the Great Depression by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). As Salt Creek meanders through the Fullersburg area, its waters cascade over the dam and enter the sluice gates of the Mill much as they did decades ago.

The Graue Mill Dam on Salt Creek and the Fullersburg area are two of the most visited places in DuPage County and attract more than 250,000 locals and tourists each year. Nature artists and photographers are drawn to capture the picturesque Graue Mill Dam waterfall and scenic beauty of the site on canvas and through the lens.

School groups on educational field trips, nature lovers, birders and land and water trail users pause from the hectic pace of daily life at the dam's edge to enjoy the view and listen to the tranquil sound of falling water.

FREDERICK GRAUE HOUSE

The red brick Graue House was built by Frederick Graue in 1859 in the Italianate architectural style and predated the Civil War. The Graue family resided there while they operated the Graue Mill.



In 1989, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County acquired the house and land for preservation and restoration at the urgings of preservationists and historians.

Today, the Graue House can be rented for meetings, receptions and special events. Art shows and special exhibits are held here now. Archival collections of Old Fullersburg are stored on the second floor. The DuPage Graue Mill Corporation operates and maintains the property. The Graue House is located at 3800 York Road, Oak Brook. www.grauemill.org.

THE YORK TAVERN

The York Tavern was built by Benjamin Fuller in 1843 as one of his many business enterprises in Old Fullersburg and was known as "The Farmer's Home." Locals gathered here for news, to purchase merchandise and to socialize. Fuller used heavy timbers to frame The Farmer's Home in the medieval building style popular in Europe known as "fackwerk" or half timbered construction. The open spaces between the hand hewn logs were filled with unfired bricks and served to strengthen and fireproof the structure.

Examples of this construction can be viewed at The York Tavern today behind framed glass panels, recalling the days when Fuller set up shop here.

The Farmer's Home was first licensed by DuPage County in 1846 and is believed to be the oldest continuously operating privately owned eating and drinking establishment in DuPage County to this day. It was closed only during the Prohibition Era. The York Tavern is located at 3702 York Road, Oak Brook



FAITH FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

The Faith Fellowship Church was built in 1881 by local farmers who arrived in Fullersburg from Hanover, Germany. It was originally a Low German (Platdeutsch) speaking Free Church with services conducted in German until 1920. Today, the church is occupied by the congregation of the Faith Fellowship Church which conducts services as non-denominational Protestants.



Recalling old country churches of yesteryear, the welcoming steeple and arched stained glass windows invite visitors to experience the natural beauty and charm of this quaint rural church and grounds.

A cemetery is located on a scenic wooded hill behind the church where citizens of Fullersburg are buried, including some members of the Graue family.

The Church is located at 3724 N. Washington Street a short distance south of Salt Creek where a plaque commemorates the historic location of the Mammoth Spring Company Ice House.

FULLERSBURG WOODS NATURE EDUCATION CENTER

The Fullersburg Woods Nature Center was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) from local timbers and stone in 1934 on the western banks of Salt Creek within the 222 acre Fullersburg Woods Forest Preserve.

The Center was a canoe rental facility for paddlers in its early days and a popular destination for nature appreciation. Salt Creek was a pure and pristine waterway then. Later, when the creek became polluted, water related recreation activities were discouraged.

Today, the condition of the creek is much improved. Visitors can paddle up and down the creek again and enjoy hiking the forest trails beneath the oaks.

Waterfowl and wildlife can be observed in all seasons. The Center is located at 3609 Spring Road, Oak Brook.

