

**Maps and plats:** Some of the earliest maps of the Oswego area, starting in the late 1830s.

**Photographs:** Thousands of photographs and postcards depicting the Oswego area during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Letters and papers:** Original letters mailed to and from Oswego starting in 1843; papers and records belonging to pioneer families, civic and fraternal organizations, local government, and the Oswego School District.

**Textbook collection:** Textbooks from the 1800s to the mid 1900s.

**Research collection:** Local, regional, and state histories; family genealogies; and census and cemetery indexes.

**Vertical files:** Materials on a wide variety of subjects dealing with local history and heritage, including a surname file containing historical and genealogical information on hundreds of area families.

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The Little White School Museum's hours are  
Thursday through Monday from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

Have an Oswego history question? Call us at 630-554-2999 or  
email [info@littlewhiteschoolmuseum.org](mailto:info@littlewhiteschoolmuseum.org), and we'll be happy to help.

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Let us help you teach your students about the rich history of the Oswegoland area. Contact  
Museum Manager Tina Heidrich at [cheidrich@littlewhiteschoolmuseum.org](mailto:cheidrich@littlewhiteschoolmuseum.org); or call her  
during regular weekday museum hours at 630-554-2999.

*Want to help preserve and protect local history?  
Join the Oswegoland Heritage Association today!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Address 2: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Friend: \$20 Sponsor: \$75 Business/Institution: \$150  
Lifetime Gold: \$1,000**

Make checks payable to the Oswegoland Heritage Association  
and mail to Box 23, Oswego, IL 60543.

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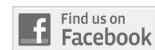
# A Teacher's Guide



to the  
*Little White School Museum*

*Jackson at Polk Street  
Oswego, Ill. 60543  
630-554-2999*

[www.littlewhiteschoolmuseum.org](http://www.littlewhiteschoolmuseum.org)  
[info@littlewhiteschoolmuseum.org](mailto:info@littlewhiteschoolmuseum.org)



*Let us help you teach your students about the rich  
history of the Oswegoland area.*

## *The Little White School Museum: The Oswego School District's Community History Resource*

The Little White School Museum specializes in community history. You will find no information here about the Gobi Desert or Inuit culture. The museum's collections and exhibits are all aimed at telling the story of the 68 square miles comprising the Oswego School District's boundaries.

From the prehistoric era when a warm shallow sea covered the Oswego area to the time the earliest Stone Age hunters arrived following Ice Age mammoths and other game, through the thousands of years of occupation by American Indians and the arrival of the first pioneer settlers, the Little White School Museum tells a rich and interesting historical tale.

### *Little White School Museum history...*

The Little White School Museum is a restored 1850 Greek Revival building first used as a Methodist-Episcopal Church and then as an elementary school.

The building was constructed on a triangular parcel at Jackson and Polk streets in 1850. Methodist services were held in the building until 1913, when the congregation dissolved. Two years later, the Oswego School District bought the building and turned it into a one-room school. In 1930, the room was divided into two classrooms for students in grades 1-3, first and half of second grade in one and half of second and all of third in the other room. A third classroom was added to the back of the building in 1936. Following the completion of East View School in 1957 just a few blocks away, primary classes were moved a block away to the Red Brick School on property where the Byline Bank and Oswego Post Office are now located. From 1957 to 1960 the building was used as storage space. Afterwards, it was reopened to create junior high classroom space. In 1964, when Oswego High School opened on Ill. Route 71, the building was again used as storage space. By the mid-1970s, it had badly deteriorated and the district contemplated demolishing the building and selling the land.

In 1976, the Oswegoland Heritage Association was established to preserve the building, restore it, and establish a community museum. In 1983, the building's third classroom was renovated and opened as a community museum. In 1991, the heritage association began work towards opening a community research and archives area in the building's basement. In 2002, nearly a quarter century after it began, restoration was substantially completed.

Today, not only has the building become a community landmark, but it also

houses the Oswego area's community archives and collection of historical artifacts.

### *Educational opportunities...*

Museum staff and volunteers welcome hundreds of Oswego School District third grade students to museum tours and hands-on activities each year. For junior high and high school students, opportunities for research abound using primary sources such as original letters and other documents. In addition, the museum annually hosts hundreds of Boy, Girl, Cub, and Brownie scout visits, as well as visits by 4-H and other youth groups.

The museum's staff is ready to work with educators to develop customized programs that take advantage of the museum's rich range of historical resources.

### *Museum exhibits...*

The museum's exhibit gallery was completely remodeled in early 2019 officially opening to the public on March 24. The newly revamped gallery's exhibits are divided into four major groups: The Fox River, Oswego's schools, farming, and the community good. Exhibits are arranged in roughly chronological order, starting with the area's prehistory and the Native People who lived in the Oswego area before white settlers began arriving in 1833. The period of settlement is covered as is the Civil War. During the war 15 year-old Robinson Barr Murphy won the Medal of Honor for bravery during the Battle of Ezra Church near Atlanta, the only Kendall County resident to have won the nation's highest award for valor. After the war, Oswego resumed its role as a commercial center for the large farming region that surrounded it. When World War II broke out, the community contributed in many ways, including sending off five men who were killed in action. After the war, Oswego entered several eras of fast growth that changed the community's character from a small farm town to a bustling suburb. Museum exhibits tell these and many more stories that illustrate how Oswego has grown throughout the years to become the community it is today.

### *Museum collections & resources...*

Since the Little White School Museum specializes in community history, its archival and research area features a rich variety of materials that can be used for historical research and to enrich social studies and history curricula. Collections of special interest to educators include:

**Microfilm:** Kendall County census records from 1850 to 1920; issues of newspapers that include Oswego historical facts from the 1830s and 1840s; Kendall County property records; marriage records; Sanborn fire insurance maps of Oswego for 1884, 1892, 1898, 1907, 1930; and original survey notes of the Oswego area, 1837.

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