

## Hudson's Travel Journal – Gallery Visit – December 2020

One of my many jobs is to keep a daily journal of my travels during December. It is a lot of fun and I think I may just do this all year! I am sharing it with you for a few days, but then like me, it will then magically disappear. I will be back next year. Until then, my best to you. I already cannot wait to return!

Love,  
Hudson, the Official Little White School Museum Elf



**December 23** - Many of the area's images of yesteryear were captured by local Oswego carpenter and avid photography hobbyist Irvin Haines. This camera from the 1800's was used by Haines to take many of the images now part of the museum's collection and on exhibit in the museum's gallery.



**December 22** - Native People who hunted Ice Age mammals were the area's first residents. They settled in villages along the Fox River where they hunted, fished, and planted crops.



**December 21**- The first map of Oswego dates to 1838. Even amidst growth and change, some things remain. Can you see the Fox River running through the community? At that time, the river froze solid during the winter, but today, you will find the water too warm to fully freeze even in the most frigid of temps.



**December 20** - The need for a "shave and a haircut" has been met in downtown Oswego for many years. This chair provided decades of barber services throughout the years. A film in the gallery about Oswego's Downtown Business District includes an interview with one of Oswego's barbers and can be viewed by [clicking here](#).



**December 19** - This is a block of natural chert, also known as flint, from an ancient flint mine that was once located along the Waubonsie Creek - right behind the Oswego Public Library building in downtown Oswego!



**December 18** - Trunks have not only served families well in their journeys to new places, but also provided a secure location for belongings for military personnel through their travels. This military trunk or footlocker stored the belongings of Oswegoan Lt. Max Cutter who served in the U.S. Army Air Corps. during World War II. The special decorations on the footlocker were created by Max himself!



**December 17** - A handmade wooden trunk like this one often carried all the belongings a family was able to bring on their journey to America. Hudson is sitting alongside the newest addition to the museum gallery, a family trunk that traveled along with the Schoger family on their unique journey.



**December 16** - A fire in 1918 destroyed the home of Oswegoan Alice Gray, a working, single woman of little means. With no ability to rebuild, the remains from the fire were buried underground as was the story of Alice Gray. An excavation nearly a century later revealed remnants of her life and unearthed the story of a single, working woman in the Oswego area.



**December 15** - Hiding amongst shiny steppers and a handsome blue and gold uniform, Hudson has discovered a bit about the Oswego School District's band program. Early uniforms were hand sewn by parents; however, 1943 welcomed new professionally made uniforms which served students through the 1963-64 school year when they were retired.



**December 14**- The legendary environmental crusader, Jim Phillips a.k.a "The Fox", hailed from the Oswego area and his efforts in addressing pollution in the area is credited for helping to create the U.S. and state environmental protection agencies.



**December 13** - Butter was primarily made by hand through the 19th century using hand cranked butter churns. Hudson is visiting one today that used a handle and wheel attached to paddles which turned the cream in a circular motion. Eventually all the "churning" caused the fat in the cream to form clumps of butter. The clumps were removed, rinsed, and kneaded with salt to form a smooth consistency.



**December 12**- Grocers in downtown Oswego used wooden collapsible crates to pack groceries for home delivery and a cash register - not an automated scanner or computer - to total purchases! Two important grocers in the area included Charles Schultz and Carl Bohn. The last grocery store, located at 60 Main Street in downtown Oswego, was closed in 1981 by Carl Bohn's son Ken.



**December 11** - With men and women returning home after WWII, the Caterpillar and Western Electric corporations establishing operations in Oswego Township, and new business ventures in the area, the need for housing and development boomed. Response to the large influx of residents resulted in many changes to the community including the creation, by referendum, of the Oswegoland Park District in 1950.



**December 10** - High school education was introduced to the community in 1886 as a two-year course of study. The Class of 1887, comprised of five students, successfully completed this new expanded educational opportunity as the first graduating class. A full four-year high school education was introduced by Oswego High School in 1928. Competitive sports, which had been available to male students, were not offered for female students until 1978.



**December 9** - The Oswego Township Library dates to 1964 and was funded using public donations. It has continued to grow and expand with the growth of Oswegoland's community.



**December 8** - The trolley line that once ran through Oswego brought bread boxes from Aurora filled with fresh bakery bread for Oswego grocers and restaurateurs. Long after the bread delivery ceased, the sturdy box was repurposed as a ballot box for Oswego voters.



**December 7** - The Fox River provided many things to those who have settled near it. Ice harvesting was one such successful business that can be attributed to the Fox River. Ice was cut by hand using a large saw, insulated with thick layers of sawdust, and stored in ice houses along the river for sale during the summer months.



**December 6** - Sunday! Sunday! Sunday! From 1955 through the early 1970's, Sunday was a day to rev up engines at the Oswego Drag Raceway! There is even a film about this exciting place in Oswegoland's history. [Click here for the film.](#)



**December 5** - The start of the school day is usually recognized by a sound and in the days of one-room schools, that sound was often a school bell rung by hand. Sometimes, lucky students earned the privilege to ring the bell!



**December 4** - Some of Oswegoland's early settlers traveled long distances from Germany, Wales, England, France, Scotland, and Canada to make a new home in America.



**December 3** - The Parker Furniture Factory was attached to the Parker Sawmill in the area where Troy Park exists today. An interpretive sign at the park allows visitors to learn more about the hidden history nestled along the banks of the Fox River.



**December 2** - *Tentaculites oswegoensis*, a worm like marine animal was discovered in 1852 by an Oswego doctor. After review by several educational institutions, the fossil made its way to the Philadelphia Museum. There it was classified and named after the place where it was found. Can you find the word "oswego" in "oswegoensis"? These fossils can still be found today along the banks of the Waubonsie Creek.



**December 1** - Oswego was originally known as Hudson when settlers first arrived in 1835. When a post office was established in 1837, the town became known as Lodi. A permanent name was voted upon later that year - Oswego - and remains today.



See You Next Year!!