

The Advocate

Newsletter for the Aurora Historical Society

Volume 39 Number 1 January 1, 2015



Aurora Historical Pres. Letter newsletter January 2015

2015 already... Time sure fly's when you're having fun!

Wish you all a very Happy New Year, and hope one of your resolutions will be to attend more of our meetings and events in 2015. We are putting together a committee to come up with some exciting ideas to increase interest in what we do and at the same time preserve the history of the area for future generations. If you would like to serve on this committee please let me know. Also we still have a vacancy for a Program Director on our board, so if you are interested or know someone who might like to serve, please let us know. I can be reached at 303-854-4249 or livelyline@aol.com, please put your interest in the subject line.

Our annual meeting and Pot Luck will be held on January 27, in the fellowship hall of the Parkview Congregational Church of Aurora, 12444 E. Parkview Drive, starting at 7pm. Bring your favorite dish to share.

Remember when? Just a little under 100 years ago when the population of Aurora was around 1000, things began to change. With the onset of WWI there was increased interest in the high altitude climate around here. A Colonel who was interested in the treatment of tuberculosis was well aware of the climate for those with pulmonary-respiratory ailments. Army Hospital No. 21 was built, and the history of what is now know as Fitzsimons began.

See you all on the 27th.

Sandy Sweeney, President Aurora Historical Society

Aurora Historical Society Officers

President: Sandy Sweeney (303-854-4249)
Vice President: Nadine Caldwell
Secretary: Carolyn Brassell
Treasurer: Michael Lockwood
Directors: Dexter Harding, Dolly Gray
Program:
Membership: Larry Wilterdink
Hospitality: Nadine Caldwell
Historian: Lyn Eckhard
Education:
Newsletter, Website, & Publicity: Lynne Evans
303-671-0874

We still need a program director for our board. If anyone is interested, please contact Sandy Sweeney @ 303-854-4249 or Livelyline@aol.com

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Our Corporate Sponsors

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Hopefully, many of you made it to the Grand Opening of the Ruth Fountian Gallery and the new “Growing Home” exhibit at the Aurora History Museum. A lot of thought and work went into the new exhibit, plus all the hours of restoration work on the 610 Trolley Trailer. If you haven’t seen it yet make a trip to the museum. It is worth the time.



“Image courtesy of Debra Parcheta”



“Image courtesy of Debra Parcheta”





The Story of Early Aurora in 24 True-False Statements (reprinted from May 31, 1981 *Advocate*)

1. Seven Indian tribes lived in Colorado: they included the Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Ute, Kiowa, Pawnee, Comanche, and Apache.
2. The Arapahoe were most in evidence in the local plains area, which included the Aurora Area.
3. The oldest known dwelling in the Aurora area is the Gully Homestead, the original, one-story part of which was build long before the Civil War.
4. The Aurora area was on the south branch of the smoky Hill Trail, which met the Ft. Morgan Cut-Off Trail at the bridge over Kiowa Creek.
5. Coming into the Aurora area, a traveler on the stage line would stop at two stations, Coal Creek and Tollgate or Eight-Mile.
6. Most travelers were on their way to search for gold and silver in the mountains to the west.
7. The Union Pacific Railroad had been given every square mile on either side of its tracks as an incentive to build it line, the Kansas-Pacific to Denver.
8. The Early Aurora area made up of mostly homesteads was a farming community in which wheat, corn, alfalfa, sugar beets and soybeans were raised.
9. Early settlers east of Yosemite Street and near Colfax Avenue called their area, the Aurora Subdivision.
10. County Road 45 became Colfax Avenue (named for Schyler Colfax, vice=President of the U.S.) and later, U. S. Highway 40.
11. Donald Fletcher, who is considered to be the founder of our city, sold his water works for the Town for \$150,000 in bonds.
12. Boundaries of the new town, incorporated April 30th 1881, encompassed four square miles: Yosemite to Potomac streets and 6th to 26th Avenues.
13. The first mayor was H. M. Miliken, the governing body was called the Board of Trustees.
14. The land south of Colfax Avenue was used for grazing cattle; when animals strayed (a real problem in the early days), a Pound was built to hold them.
15. In 1891, a resolution was passed to require property owners on the west side of Hathaway (Galena) Street to lay sidewalks in front of their properties.
16. In the late 1890's, a bicycle path was constructed on Colfax Avenue due to the immense popularity of bicycles.
17. The Denver Tramway began to build a trolley line to the Town in the 1890's; workers lived at Munn's Hotel, which was erected to house them.
18. Samuel Perry was president of the trolley line as well as the Colfax Trust Company, which developed the Aurora Subdivision in 1800.
19. Fletcher's first school was a tiny, one-room frame building that burned in 1892 and was replaced with a larger one-room brick building.
20. In 1905, Colfax Avenue became the dividing line between Adams and Arapahoe Counties.
21. The town's name of Fletcher was changed to Aurora on February 25, 1907.
22. In the early days of the town the biggest problem was the water bonds problem, which was finally settled for nearly \$431,000 after going to the Supreme Court in 1917.
23. Fitzsimmons General Hospital, now Fitzsimmons Medical Center, built in 1918, kept Aurora from going bankrupt in the 1920's.

24. Aurora's population increased to 2,174, so that the town could become a Second Class City on February 21, 1928.

Answers on page 6.

Aurora History Museum Exhibits & Events

Through May 2014

EXHIBITS

Growing Home

Now Open

The Aurora History Museum officially opened their new permanent Aurora history exhibit, *Growing Home*, on Saturday, November 22. The new exhibit is housed in two galleries, the older and recently remodeled Ferguson Gallery, named in honor of Doris Ferguson, a longtime supporter of the Museum, and the newly constructed Ruth Fountain Gallery. *Growing Home* highlights the 123 year history of Aurora through stories, objects, and more than 100 historic photographs. Thematic areas of the exhibit cover Aurora stories of Community Life, Neighborhoods, the Military, Public Safety, Education, Businesses, Water, and Transportation. Personal, business, and organizational profiles offer a way to connect to Aurora's one-of-a-kind past. One interactive element invites visitors to build their own city choosing the pieces and parts important to them. The dramatic finale of the exhibit is the fully restored 1913 historic Trolley Trailer No. 610. This brightly painted yellow and red trolley trailer sits in the center of the Ruth Fountain Gallery and invites visitors to enter and experience a virtual historic ride down Colfax. A large wall mural looking east down Colfax Avenue at twilight helps to set the scene. *Growing Home* offers a glimpse at Aurora's unique, exciting, and often untold past with color, texture, creativity, and thoughtful moments of great storytelling.

Turkey Tracks, Penny Squares, & Crazy Quilts

Through Mar 29

Quilts are often made for a person or event & the

story lives on with the quilt. The story behind quilt patterns is often just as interesting. Dozens & dozens of quilt patterns are passed down through the generations & many describe family origins, good omens or religious stories.

The Way We Worked

Apr 3- May 10

What would life be like without teachers, doctors, or firefighters? Every day Americans are hard at work on farms, factories, in homes, or at desks keeping our communities thriving. Explore the professions and the people that sustain American society in this Smithsonian Institution exhibit, in cooperation with the Colorado Humanities Council.

Community Gallery

Early Japanese Woodblock Prints

Through Apr 12

In 17th century Japan, woodblock printing evolved from plain text in books to elaborate drawings using many layers of different color paint. These prints of Japanese daily life pre-1915, women, landscapes & even Western visitors are from the Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Collection.

The Art of Tea

Apr 14 - Jul 19

Celestial Seasonings tea company commissions new artwork for each flavor of tea. Come view a selection of the original art and see how the style has changed over the years.

FAMILY DAYS

Sat., Feb. 21

2-4 p.m.

Chinese New Year Celebration

All Ages. The Denver Chinese Cultural Center presents traditional folk dances, storytelling,

crafts & customs in celebration of Chinese New Year. Stay as long as you'd like & enjoy an afternoon of fun with your family!

\$5 (\$4 Aurora Residents)

Sun., Mar. 8

2:30 p.m.

World War II – From Biplanes to Atomic Bombs

Sponsored by the Aurora Museum Foundation

Join us as we mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II with Chuck Stout of the Wings Over the Rockies Museum. Learn about the astonishing changes in aviation technology during the six years of World War II. Museum Foundation Members are free.

\$8 (\$6 Resident)

Sat., Mar. 21

2-4 p.m.

Tea with Unconventional Women of the West

Enjoy afternoon tea and meet courageous and fascinating women whose lives became a part of the lore of the West portrayed by the Legendary Ladies.

\$26 (\$20 Aurora Residents), Advanced reservations required.

Sat., Apr. 25

9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Antique Appraisal Fair

Sponsored by the Aurora Museum Foundation

Have your antiques & collectibles evaluated by local appraisers! Museum Foundation members receive one free appraisal. No Walk-ins Accepted. **\$5/per item; 5 item limit**

Call 303-739-6705 for event entrance time.

Sun., Apr. 26

1-4 p.m.

Aurora's 124th Birthday Party

Sponsored by the Aurora Museum Foundation

Celebrate Aurora's 124th birthday with your family & friends. Enjoy entertainment, games, face painting, scavenger hunts, cake, and much more.

Free Admission

**BROWN BAG & WHITE LINEN
LECTURE SERIES**

Jan. 21

Jewish Colony of Cotopaxi

In 1882, a group of Russian Jews moves to land north of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to live together & farm. Was the settlement a success? Come find out with author Nancy Oswald as she describes their hard work & struggle.

Feb. 11

Creating Global Citizens In A Global World

As citizens of a Global World, students need to have skills that include speaking a second or third language and understanding cultures around the world. Join Courtney Black, Principal at Global Village Academy to discuss how they are teaching students the skills to be the leaders of our global world.

Mar. 18

The Art of Ikebana

Join Akiko Buckmaster and Lois Krause from Ikebana International, Denver Chapter, for a demonstration of the Japanese art of flower arranging known as Ikebana.

Apr. 15

Holocaust Survivor

The Holocaust impacted people worldwide and continues to be an important chapter in history. Come and hear a firsthand account from a Holocaust survivor from The University of Denver's Holocaust Awareness Institute.

May 20

Mid-Century Polynesian Culture in Aurora

Take a look back at the heyday of Mid-Century Polynesian Pop culture and how exotic fantasies of the South Seas influenced it with local expert Mike Skinner.

DELANEY FARM

170 S. Chambers, Aurora

Second Sat. May-Sept.

Sat., May 9

1-4 p.m.

Delaney Farm Open Days

Tour the historic buildings & learn about the people who lived there 100 years ago.

Free

CENTENNIAL HOUSE

1671 Galena St., Aurora

Sat., Feb. 14

Session 1: 10:30 a.m.–12 Noon

Session 2: 1-2:30 p.m.

Victorian Valentines

Ages 6 & older. Families can discover the history & creativity of old-fashioned, handmade, elaborately decorated Victorian Valentine cards & create cards for loved ones.

\$5 (\$4 Aurora Residents), Advanced reservations required.

First Sat. May-Sept.

Sat., May 2

1-4 p.m.

Centennial House Open Days

Tour Centennial House, one of Aurora's original homes, built in 1890, during this special open house.

Free

If anyone would like to receive the newsletter by email and let the Aurora Historical Society save the postage, Please contact Lynne Evans at 303-671-0874 or lyevans@comcast.net Also-If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about the newsletter you can contact me as well.

Please check out the AHS Website:
<http://auroracohistoricalsociety.org>

Answers: All statements are true except #3 should be **during** the Civil War. #4 should be **north** branch. #7 should be every **other** square mile. #8 leave out **soybeans**. #10 should be **54**. #12 should be **Peoria**

Decorating Centennial House for Christmas

