

The Advocate Newsletter

Volume 42; Number 10; July 2018

Aurora Historical Society

Aurora, Colorado



Embrace your city, your past

July President's Letter

We kicked off summer this year with a very special event on June 16 at Centennial House. We brought back the Ice Cream Social fundraiser and were joined by the Capital City Band, an 1870s town band. Many towns and other groups in the 19th century had their own bands. These bands provided music for concerts, church services, parades, funerals, Victorian dances, and special occasions. The band members all played antique instruments, performed in period costume, and played music from the 1870's, talk about great listening! The weather held off until the end of the last piece the band played and everyone in attendance had a great time and loved all the nostalgia. Many have said they enjoyed the afternoon as much as anything they had done.

Thank you all who were able to come and to those that came in costume. A very special thank you to board members, Nadine Caldwell, Lynne Evans, Dolly Gray, Mike Lockwood and Carolyn Brassell for all their hard work in making it happen.

Stay tuned for future events and meetings, and as always, any suggestions for future special events appreciated. Have a great summer!

All the best,
The Aurora Historical Society

Sandy Sweeney, President

Historical Society Officers

President: Sandy Sweeney (303-854-4249)

Vice President: Nadine Caldwell

Secretary: Dolly Gray

Treasurer: Michael Lockwood

Directors: Dexter Harding, Carolyn Brassell

Membership: Larry Wilterdink

Hospitality: Caroline Brassell

Historian: Michael Lockwood

Newsletter, Website, & Publicity: Lynne Evans
303-671-0874

Program Committee: Dolly Gray, Lynne Evans,
Sandy Sweeney, Carolyn Brassell

Education- Vacant

If anyone is interested, please contact Sandy Sweeney @ 303-854-4249 or Livelyline@aol.com





IT'S TIME TO PAY YOUR 2018 MEMBERSHIP DUES

On January 1, 2018, it is time to send your dues payments for year 2017 to Michael Lockwood, 1629 Galena St., Aurora, CO 80010. Our membership dues come due in January each year now and with the New Year arriving please send your dues payment.

	Memberships
Family	\$15.00
Contributing	\$30.00
Business/Corporate	\$200.00
Life	\$200.00
Newsletter mailing	\$5.00

You can now pay your dues online at the AHS website on the join today page using PayPal if you would like or you can mail them in.

<http://auroracohistoricalsociety.org/join-today/>

Because of the increased costs of postage and printing, we are asking that you add \$5.00 to your membership cost if you wish to have the newsletter mailed to you.



Remembering Aurora

Michael Lockwood, Aurora Historical Society

An Aurora native, a graduate of the Aurora Public Schools (Vaughn Elementary, North Middle School & Aurora Central High School) and still living less than 2 miles from where I grew up, Aurora has been a big part of my life ever since I was born. Having grown up here, I have several memories that I'd love to provide for your reading pleasure via The Advocate newsletter. For those of you who have Aurora connections that go back as far as the 1950's the recollections presented may bring back waves of nostalgia. And while I have 60 years of memories to relate, if you have some stories you'd like to share, please feel free to contact us at the Aurora Historical web site: www.auroracohistoricalsociety.org

REMEMBERING: The 1972 Blizzard

In 1972, I was still a novice driver having only turned 16 a short time ago. Being young, I was absolutely fearless (translate that to not too bright) when it came to driving in the snow. Everybody else was cautious during a snowstorm, but I was certain I could handle anything that Mother Nature threw my way.



Jenn Webb's Facebook page reminded me of the snowstorm from 1972.

So, it was that one day in 1972 a blizzard hit Aurora. Probably not as bad as the one in 1982, but a blizzard nonetheless. And I had somewhere to be, although today I can't remember where I was off to that was so important (probably a girlfriend's house). Off I went, headed west on Colfax to Peoria, then south on Peoria to 11th Avenue. Not too many cars on the road although some of the ones out were stuck. But not me. Turning onto 11th, just outside the parking lot of Aurora Central was a snow drift. I figured hit it head on and fast and I'd bust through it, only to find that all I accomplished was high centering my 1956 Chevy. At 16, I didn't have any tools or shovels in the car, so I got to walk home about 10 blocks in the teeth of the blizzard. Lesson learned when the blizzard of 1982 came along.

Time waits for no man and our history eventually becomes shared memories of people and places. Preservation can help keep those memories a little more tangible so that we can share with future generations.

Aurora's Historic Newspaper Digitization Project

The Aurora Historic Newspaper Digitization Project is going strong. You can now browse old Aurora Newspapers online. There is now a Pay Pal button on the Aurora Historical Society Website where you can donate to the project online. There is also a link to the newspapers on the links page on the AHS website and on the Aurora History Museum's website. <http://auroracohistoricalsociety.org/donate-to-the-newspaper-digitization-project/>

The button is on the bottom of the page.

Here are some excerpts from some articles from *The Aurora Democrat*

Aurora Democrat, Vol 1, Numer 11, December 29, 1909

THE AURORA DEMOCRAT
An Independent Democratic Weekly
PUBLICATION OFFICE 9740 COLFAX.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION
Delivered by Carrier in Aurora
and Montclair.

ONE MONTH.....\$.10
SIX MONTHS..... .50
ONE YEAR..... 1.00

SAME BY MAIL

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Marshal Stitt arrested Myron Van Buren late Monday evening. The charge is that a water pipe belonging to Van Buren bursted and flooded the street, and it is alleged that he did not have it repaired. Mr. Van Buren claims the town should repair it. The case will be tried before Judge Klee, the time not as yet agreed upon.

As soon as the weather permits, there will be erected in Aurora a large Masonic Temple, costing upwards of \$4,500. The present plans are to utilize the top story of Shelburn and Ruggles and build out on the side. The old Babcock store will be moved and remodeled as a cottage.

As soon as the temple is completed a Masonic lodge will be organized in Aurora. Mr. Foley is building the temple.



Spotlight on the Mayors of Aurora

Did you know that the Town of Fletcher/City of Aurora have had 42 Mayors since its beginnings back in 1891? With each issue of the *Advocate Newsletter* we'll take a quick look at each of them. Special thanks to Carolyn Brassell for her research and assistance.

MAYOR #10 Andrew Thompson

- Served from 1906 – 1907
- Born 1866 in England
- Came to Colorado before 1900
- Widowed as of 1900
- Has two children in 1900, Margaret, age 15 and Robert, age 7
- Married his housekeeper, Jessie Reid, on February 2, 1904
- Resigned from being Mayor on January 7, 1907
- He would have been 40 years old when he became Mayor
- He was the fourth in succession of Mayors that only served 1 year
- Colorado Governor at the time he was Mayor was Jesse Fuller McDonald
- While he was in office:
 - It is unlawful to bury any human body within 300 feet south of Colfax
 - Fletcher struggles with repaying bonds sold in 1891 used to buy East Denver Water Co.
 - The Aurora News is the official town newspaper
 - Request was made to get a consensus of the residents to change the name of the town
 - David McKay wins bid to build a Town Hall for \$5,070
 - Site of Town Hall was to be on the corner of Elmira and 16th Avenue
 - Town agrees to sell 500 acres of land. Committee reported that about 200 acres was worth more than \$5 per acre but the rest “is not worth a penny”

Plains Conservation Tour

On Saturday, May 26th about 36 members of the Aurora Historical Society and the Cherry Creek Valley Historical Society meet at the Plains Conservation Center for a tour. Even though it was hot that day, everyone enjoyed the tour. Feeding the sheep and cows was a big hit. They also had chickens and turkeys. The buildings and the history of the Center was interesting as well. We got to see what life was like for early pioneers in this area.



Aurora's Librarians

by Pauline Lincoln
reprinted from July 1978 Advocate

Mrs. Sarah D. Woods was Aurora's first librarian. The library was located in Mrs. Wood's home which was a two-story brick house located on Dallas Street, behind what was Friend's Furniture Store. Mrs. Woods generously offered most of the house's ground floor for the use of the library which had been started by the Aurora Women's Club.

Mrs. Woods served as librarian from 1928-1947. She received \$25.00 per month for her services, the use of part of her home and the heat and lights used on a farm east of Aurora.

Our second librarian was Mrs. Lydia Cleaves who served from 1947-1954. The last few years of her tenure were served in the new library building at 1616 Elmira Street. By this time the library had been given to the city of Aurora by the Woman's

Club. Mrs. Cleaves was active for many years in Aurora's public life, serving as Postmistress during World War I and acting as president of the first PTA in Aurora.



main library in 1978 1298 Peoria/picture by Davidson G. Hicks

Miss Ruth Dunbar was the third librarian to serve Aurora. At the time she was appointed she was a student at Denver University and after serving a short period of time (September 1954-January 1955), she resigned to devote full time to her studies.

Mrs. Mary Brown, who had served as an assistant under Mrs. Cleaves, was chosen to be the city's fourth librarian. She held the position from January 1955 to April 1977. As befitted an able and dedicated librarian, she was active in many library and community affairs, including Gold Star Wives and Central Colorado Library Systems.

Mr. David Price assumed office as Aurora's city librarian in June 1977, having come to Aurora from Austin, Texas where he had been assistant to the supervisor there.

Aurora now has 6 full service library locations which offer a multitude of services.

Aurora Historical Society's Ice Cream

Social was held at Centennial House on June 16th from 1-4. Capitol City Brass Band an 1870's town band performed for the social. The band members dressed in period costumes and played vintage instruments.

During one of their sessions they also talked about the history of town bands, the instruments, and the music. Attendees fully enjoyed their performance.

Everyone had a good time despite a few rain showers. A few members even came in costumes appropriate



for the time period. The gardens looked lovely with lots of flowers in bloom for all to enjoy. Many attendees toured Centennial House as well as enjoying ice cream and music. All told, the day was a success despite the rain.

Thanks to all the members who pitched in and helped. To Dolly Gray and Nadine Caldwell for



servicing everyone ice cream. For Mike Lockwood for manning the ticket table. A special thanks to Drake Brownfield for the great assist getting Centennial House ready and for conducting tours, and to Jessica Lira and Scott Williams.





July 14 & 28, Aug. 11 & 25
9:30 – 10 a.m.

Watch a live performance of a classic radio broadcast, featuring news from those early days of our fair city in the 1930s. These stories have been borrowed from the *Aurora Democrat* newspaper which reported the happenings in Aurora, and around the nation, from 1909 to 1955. See a different performance on each date.

History Highlights Day Camp days

Kids 8-11. Campers will stretch their critical thinking skills while engaging with history. Register for one, two, or all topics. July 24th: The Eastern Plains: Highlight life on the Eastern Plains in Colorado during the 1920's and 30's. July 25th: The Finest Suburb: Celebrate "The Finest Suburb" with a look at life in mid-century Aurora. July 26: The Roaring Twenties: Highlight the roaring twenties with a look at streetcars, strikes, and entertainment in Aurora Post-WWI. Visit AuroraGov.org/MuseumPrograms or call 303-739-6660 to register.

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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

Current Museum Exhibits

Artworks by DAVA Youth May 8-July 29th

Exhibition showcasing artwork created students who attend the Downtown Aurora Visual Arts located in Original Aurora. The exhibit explores ideas about health, peace, innovation and imagination through 2-D art, sculptures and short films produced by children and teens in DAVA's award-winning afterschool and summer art programs. The exhibit also highlights DAVA's history in original Aurora over the last 25 years.

Mosaic of Cultures: Aurora's Salvadoran Community June 19-Nov. 4th

As the third-largest national group in Aurora, the Salvadoran Community impacts our city every day. The exhibit gives voice to the contributions of Salvadoran residents as they live, work and own businesses in Aurora.

DeLaney Farm Open Days July 14 & 28 August 11 & 25 9a.m. -1 p.m. 170S. Chambers Road

Explore Aurora's agricultural roots with a summer full of performances and programs.

JULY 14: Life on the Homestead. See inside the historic buildings and try your hand at the rolling pin toss.

Radio Days

Aurora History Museum