

# The Advocate Newsletter

Volume 43; Number 2; March 2019

## Aurora Historical Society

Aurora, Colorado



### Embrace your city, your past

#### Presidents Letter March 2019

Our Annual Pot Luck Supper (postponed due to snow storm) February 5 drew some terrific cooks, very much enjoyed by all in attendance. Thank you so very much to all who participated. And a special thanks to Drake Brownfield who did a terrific job explaining some of the programs that the Society funds at the museum.

Our wonderful Board is hard at work planning for future events and for a revised future of the Society as we change and grow. We will hopefully hold the board election at this meeting, postponed in Jan due to lack of candidates. Please let us know if any of you would be interested in serving. Believe me it is a wonderful experience!

Our next regular meeting will at the Aurora History Museum March 26 at 7pm. Our speaker Sandy Ronayne, Past President Colorado Genealogical Society will give an informative talk on Denver Cities role in World War I. A part of history of the area that I'm sure will be of great interest to all of us.

Do hope many of you have taken part in the Museums' latest exhibit. One of the events the AHS sponsors is the Brown Bag lunches at the Museum with wonderful programs, free to Historical Society members.

See you all in March if not before.

*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](mailto:Livelyline@aol.com)**

**UPCOMING  
events**

**Join us on March 26<sup>th</sup> at the 7pm at the Aurora History Museum for a presentation by Sandy Ronayne on WWI and Denver. Sandy is the past president of the Colorado Genealogical Society. Hope to see you all there!**



**IT'S TIME TO PAY YOUR 2019 MEMBERSHIP DUES**

On **January 1, 2019**, it is time to send your dues payments for year 2019 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.**

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**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](http://www.auroracohistoricalsociety.org)*

**REMEMBERING: Angel Flight suits**



There comes a time in a young man's life when he needs a suit, and in my case, it would have been in the 1970's working for Merrill Lynch. Now being in my early 20's there wasn't much money for suits and ties and dress shoes so I turned my attention to where I could buy something inexpensive and yet fashionable, the store of choice – Fashion Bar. Fashion Bar, where my wife worked carried Angel Flight suits. These suits were made of gabardine and for under \$70 you could get the pants, jacket and vest. It took me many years to realize what a quality suit really was, and these weren't them. 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.



**Spotlight on the Mayors of Aurora**

Did you know that the Town of Fletcher/City of Aurora have had 44 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 #14**

### Gershom Jones

- Served from 1911 – 1914
- Born 1850 in New York
- Came to Colorado after 1900
- Married Kate M. Pennoyer 25 December 1876 (on Christmas Day)
- Has two children, Edith and Orson (Orson was born in South Dakota)
- He owned and ran Aurora Hardware Co. at Colfax & Dallas (1515 Dallas)
- He would have been 61 years old when he became Mayor
- He died in 1920 and is buried at Fairmount Cemetery
- Colorado Governors at the time he was Mayor were John Shafroth and Elias M. Ammons
- While he was in office:
  - Novitiate House of the Sisters of Mercy is being built on 20 acres (Colfax to 13<sup>th</sup> & Clinton to Dayton)
  - Supreme Court ruled Aurora must pay off the water bonds
  - The first bank robbery in Aurora happened in 1912
  - I.D. Levinson became Aurora's new druggist

#### Trivia Question Answers:

1. b 2. a 3. a 4. c

### Remembering the Fox

By Carolyn Brassell

I grew up in Aurora in the 1950's and 60's. The Fox Theater was the movie theater in town and the only place to see a movie, unless you went to downtown Denver, or to the drive-in.

Several events in my life relate to the Fox. The first is a family story, my mom always said I won a baby picture contest there. I think it was the kind of contest where pictures were posted, and movie goers would vote on the pictures. I found an announcement in the newspaper about the contest, but never found out who won the prize. I am thinking my parents knew enough people to buy a ticket



and vote for my photo.

The second event was when my mom took me to see the Lucille Ball/Desi Arnez movie "The Long, Long

Trailer." I was about 5 and there is a scene in the movie where Lucy falls out the back door of the trailer face first into a huge mud puddle. The audience roared with laughter, not me. I burst into tears. Despite being reassured that she was an actress who got paid - I still protested that it wasn't nice of everyone to laugh at her.

Then there was the Elvis Presley movie that my mom took me and my little brother to see. I was maybe 11, my



brother about 4. Right before the movie started, she gave me some money for the snack bar, and I took my brother with me. While getting the snacks and change, I let go of his hand and he took off. I didn't know where he went so, I had

to go tell my mom and the search was on. He wasn't in the bathrooms, or the lobby. Or outside on the sidewalk. Panic was starting to set in when we checked inside the theater to find him sitting in the front row enjoying the movie!

Then there were the Saturday matinees. Movies for the kids and with a line a mile long around the side of the theater. In those days, parents could drop their kids off and pick them up later without worrying about them. I seem to remember it was a double feature with a cartoon in the middle. Anyway, once all the kids got

seated, they pretty much shut the doors and ignored us. What a zoo: kids running up and down the aisles, throwing food, screaming, siblings fighting with each other.

By the time I was a teenager it wasn't cool to go to the movies at the Fox. Your date took you to one of the theaters downtown: The Paramount, the Aladdin, or the East drive-in.



Times change,

and while I wish the Fox could have been preserved as it was, at least the building is still there, unlike so many of our historic places. At least we have the Centennial House, which is frozen in time, for us to enjoy.

### Annual Meeting & Potluck

The Annual AHS meeting and potluck was a great success. Drake Brownfield, Aurora's Historic

Preservation Specialist, gave the group a presentation about Aurora's Historic Sites which everyone enjoyed.

The food was great, our AHS President, Sandy Sweeney remarked that Aurora has the best cooks. A check for \$2,500 was presented by Sandy to Drake Brownfield to help with the cost of the new signage for Centennial House. Be on the lookout for the new sign which will hopefully be installed in March. She also presented a check for \$160 to pay for the Brown Bag lunches at the museum. Just a reminder, AHS members get into the Brown Bag lunches for free.

# TRIVIA

## CHALLENGE

### City of Aurora Trivia Questions

1. The Aurora Municipal Building was completed in?
  - a. 2004
  - b. 2003
  - c. 2005



2. The Mission Viejo subdivision borders are:
  - a. Buckley, Hampden, Chambers and Quincy
  - b. Buckley, Hampden, Chambers and Yale
  - c. Hampden, Chambers, Quincy and Parker Road



3. This gentleman has a school named after him.
  - a. Fred Hood
  - b. William Hinkley

c. Samuel Hoffman



4. The building pictured below is the
- Creel Automotive
  - White Way Grill
  - Strait Lumber



*Reprinted from the March 1976 Advocate  
"A Lovely Lady -----Nell Kennedy"*

John G. Kennedy moved to the ranch three-quarters of a mile down the road from the Gully Ranch in 1884. The ranch had earlier been homesteaded by John's brother Michael, who was drowned in a flash flood in 1878 on Cottonwood Creek.

John and Sarah Curtin Kennedy had two sons and four daughters, with Nell Kennedy now being their only surviving child. In an interview March 5, 1859, Miss Kennedy recalled those early years.

John Kennedy came in 1859 from Tipperary, Ireland to Silver Plume, Colorado to work as a hard-rock miner. Her was later to die at age 52 from a lung disease, silicosis. Sarah Curtin left Limerick, Ireland with her family in 1850 and first lived at Chateau Gay on the Canadian border. She and John Kennedy were married

in Silver Plume by Father Matz, who later became the second Catholic bishop of Colorado. Sarah had come to Colorado in 1876, the Centennial Year.

John and Sarah moved to the ranch east of Aurora in 1884 when Michael's widow and eight children decided to give up ranching and move into Denver. John and Sarah's family now included John W., Mary (born 1884), Patrick (1887), Catherine (1891), Helen (Nell-1893), and Ruth (1897).

Nell was born two years after Donald Fletcher founded the little community of homes along Colfax. Nell remembers Colfax as a "cowpath with barbed wire fences on both sides." Nell attended Tollgate School (later Comitis Crisis Center) and remembers it as two or three different frame structures. The school usually had around 12 students, give or take a few. Classmates included Kennedys, Gully children and the DeLaney Family.

Nell graduated from the eighth grade and got credit for four years there of high school. She then took courses at Denver University and came home to teach one year at Tollgate School.

She then taught sixteen years at Mountain View School (six miles southeast of Tollgate School, but no longer there). Nell then came back to the ranch and milked cows, something she always liked to go.

In 1953, Nell moved into Aurora with her sister, Mary. The Kennedy ranch home is no longer there.

Nell remembers attending Catholic services at the Sisters of Merch Convent, then located at 14<sup>th</sup> and Dayton. She remembers that the convent had a steeple. She supposes that the convent was later not needed and that the sisters moved back to Mercy Hospital.

The Kennedys also attended services occasionally at a mission church established in east Aurora by St. James Parish of Montclair. Father Wa was the priest and dances were held in the building during the week. St. Therese was the first Catholic church built in Aurora.

Nell recalled that at one time Tollgate School was called the Duff School but said she had never known how it got that name. She does remember her sister meeting the teacher of the Tollgate School at the end of the street car line and taking her out to the school.

Times change so quickly, and Nell Kennedy saw many changes, but to her that isn't at all unusual. She keeps up with what is going on, and with a twinkle in her eye, suggested that Aurora might lobby to have the new mint built on the Aurora Concourse!

Aurora does most definitely have a history... and a fascinating one if it can be told.

*Excerpt from the Aurora Democrat, February 2, 1910*

*Continued on next page*

## TOLL GATE.

(By THOMAS SAWYER.)

The big windstorm that struck Toll Gate Tuesday did great damage in tearing down the fences and blowing down the smokestacks.

Daniel Kennedy and Mr. Emery Lyon left their bachelor haunts last Sunday and visited with friends here.

Mr. Gully and Miss Mayme visited Mr. Kennedy Sunday.

Mr. P. E. Kennedy attended several dances the past week and looks a little the worse for wear.

Mrs. Jane Slattery and Joe Kelly of Aurora, visited Mr. Gully and family Sunday.

Mr. Thomas De Laney returned to Watkins the last of the week.

Mrs. Kennedy, who has been sick the last two weeks, is improving.

Miss Mayme Gully is the proud possessor of a new piano, and we can see the notes flying in every direction.

Miss Nell Kennedy is taking lessons in domestic science. She spent Wednesday evening here, and the lesson of which you could see over the fence.

Mrs. Wm. B. Hair has returned to the city.

Thomas Ahern is busy building a new line of fence.

Thomas Flynn paid Mr. Gully a short call Wednesday.

Mr. J. W. Kennedy has been hauling coal the last week.

### *Aurora History Museum Exhibits and Events Winter 2019*

#### **Drink Local Passport**

Nov. 20, 2018 – April 7, 2019

Visit participating breweries and purchase a drink brewed by the location, then ask for a stamp in your passport. 6 stamps earn a pint glass you can pick up at the Aurora History Museum. While supplies last. See passport book or website for further details.

#### **VOLUNTEER**

Volunteer for National History Day in Aurora on March 16. Support local middle and high school students by judging projects or helping with the event. Contact us for details [jlira@auroragov.org](mailto:jlira@auroragov.org) or 303.739.6663.

## HISTORIC SITES

Story Line is now available online!

Visit [AuroraGov.org/HistoricSites](http://AuroraGov.org/HistoricSites) to see which historic landmarks have a recorded story line.

### **BROWN BAG LECTURE SERIES**

Wed., noon-12:45 p.m.

\$4 (\$3 Resident)

Aurora Historical Society members: Free

Bring your lunch

#### **Landscape Photography**

**March 20 Noon-12:45 p.m.**

Local Photographer, Joseph Roybal, create fine art photographs of nature and wildlife. A staunch conservationist, Roybal uses photography to encourage others to step into diverse landscapes.

### **EXHIBITS**

#### **Drink Local: Aurora's Craft Beer Scene**

Nov. 20, 2018 – April 7, 2019

This exhibition showcases the history of craft beer in Aurora and the passion Coloradans hold for the brewing industry. Learn about the people, companies and beverages that makeup Aurora's dynamic craft beer scene.

#### **Cultivating Community: Hoery Family Photos**

Dec. 11, 2018-Mar. 10, 2019

Experience Aurora through 100-year-old photographs of the Hoery family. Whether by farming, education, business ownership, land stewardship or leisure – the Hoery family helped shape early Aurora's community and created an enduring legacy.

#### **Last Call: Drink Local at the Aurora History Museum**

Sat. Apr. 6

1 – 5 p.m.

Celebrate Aurora's impressive craft beverage community at this one-time-only event. Ticket includes unlimited beverage tastings, exclusive drink releases and a commemorative tasting glass. Tickets on sale March 1.

#### **Upcoming Exhibits**

March 12 – July 21

#### **One Small Step: Fifty Years later:**

In July 1969, for the first time in human history, a man walked on the moon. To commemorate this pivotal achievement and to educate a new generation about such a momentous time in history, the museum presents an exhibit chronicling the moon landing. This exhibit recounts the history of space travel, highlights

humanity's reaction, and details Apollo 11's mission from launch to reentry.

### Hometown Pride: Student Athletic and Extracurricular History in Aurora

April 23 – Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>

Whether an athlete or a mathlete, many students grow up involved in some sort of extracurricular activity. This exhibit explores the sports & activities that shaped Aurora's youth throughout the years. Relive your glory days & learn about Aurora's new generation of students as the museum celebrates Aurora's hometown pride.

### Our Corporate Sponsors



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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](mailto:lyevans@comcast.net)

Please visit the Aurora Historical Society Website <http://auroracohistoricalsociety.org/>

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:**  
Aurora Regional Contest  
for National History Day  
March 16, 2019



**What is National History Day?**  
National History Day is a literacy and social studies program for middle and high school students. Students research topics and produce projects in one of five categories: website, paper, documentary, exhibit or performance.

Volunteers serve as judges to rank student projects. More volunteers means more students can compete at the contest.

- Must be 18 or older.
- No experience or history background necessary.
- Online training available.
- Breakfast and lunch provided.
- Time commitment: from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and/or from noon to 3:30 p.m.
- Location: Anschutz Medical Campus, Education II South • 13121 East 17th Ave.

For more information and to sign up:  
[auroranhdc.weebly.com](http://auroranhdc.weebly.com)  
Contact Jessica Lira • [jlira@auroragov.org](mailto:jlira@auroragov.org)  
303.739.6663

