

The Advocate Newsletter

Volume 44; Number 4

July 2020

Aurora Historical Society

Aurora, Colorado



Embrace your city, your past

July President's Letter

Dear Aurora Historical Society Members,

I do hope that you are all safe and well. This has certainly been an unprecedented time for us all. We are all having to take precautions because of Covid-19 and change how we are moving through daily activities.

We have not been able to meet or hold our normal activities, and who knows when or if we can resume our meetings. I for one miss seeing all of you.

As we get closer to September, we will be able to determine whether or not we can hold our meeting that month. The museum did hold a virtual lunchtime lecture on the Women's Suffrage in Colorado. We had a great speaker and it was fairly well attended. I believe the museum will continue using the virtual format until we can resume the actual event in person. The next Lunchtime Lecture is scheduled for July 15th from 12:30 to 1:30. Once again this will be a virtual online format, and the topic is a tour of the Black American West Museum.

The museum has also created virtual tours of several landmarks. Check them out on their website at https://www.auroragov.org/things_to_do/aurora_history_museum

It is with sadness that I report that we have lost another longtime member. Juanita Sparks passed on June 12. She had just passed her 100th birthday on May 30th. There is more information about Juanita and her mother later in the newsletter.

Remember to send me your observations, pictures, comments, etc. about dealing with Covid-19 so we can keep some kind of a record of this historic world-wide event. Years from now people will want to know what it was like and we are a historical society.

Lynne Evans, President

Hopefully

UPCOMING
events

September 22, AHS Meeting/ Dr. Gordon Tucker /archeology in Aurora 6:30 Aurora History Museum



IT'S TIME TO PAY YOUR 2020 MEMBERSHIP DUES

It is time to send your dues payments for year 2020 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://auroracohistoricalociety.org/join-today/>



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.auroracohistoricalociety.org

REMEMBERING: The 4th of July



Today is June 28, 2020 and the 4th of July is approaching, although based on the continual noise every evening you'd think that the 4th of July has been going on for over a month.

Since when did it become the thing to do to set off fireworks at the start of June? Growing up in the 60's Dad used to complain if he heard fireworks on July 3rd. Of course, back then we didn't buy the stuff they do today. We usually got one package of fireworks, which typically had (1) 2 or 3 cones, (2) a box of black snakes (3) maybe a pinwheel or two and, of course (4) sparklers. Some rebellious teens would get black cat firecrackers and pop bottle rockets. We could hardly wait until it got dark enough to set the fireworks off. Somehow the expectations and reality didn't quite line up. The cones emitted sparks for about 30 seconds and the rest of the stuff was quite tame. All-in-all it was over in



less than 45 minutes and that was spacing the lighting out. For many, the 4th meant going to Del Mar Park to see the city display bringing picnic supplies and a blanket. My Dad hated crowds so I can only recall a time or two of going there, however, now

that I'm all grown up, we almost always go see some elaborate display be it from a city or at the Rockies games.

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.

Trivia Question Answers:
 1. b 2) c 3) b 4) a 5) c



Spotlight on the Mayors of Aurora

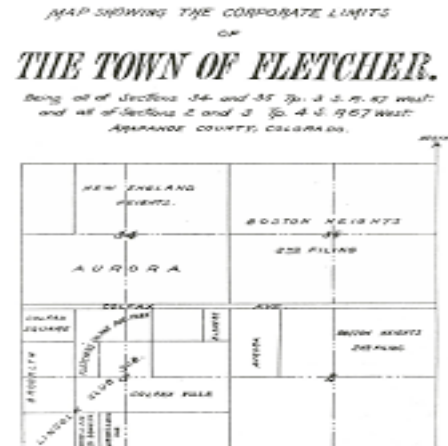
Did you know that the Town of Fletcher/City of Aurora have had 43 Mayors since its beginnings back in 1891? With each issue of the Advocate Newsletter we'll take a quick look at each of them. Special thanks to Carolyn Brassell for her research and assistance.

MAYOR #22 Fred Harrison

- Served from 1926 – 1927
- He was born 17 May 1881 in Kansas
- Married June Wilkerson on 11 May 1912 in Littleton, Colorado
- They had 2 daughters, Alice and Merle
- He was a lawyer in Aurora and in 1929 and later became an Assistant Attorney General
- He was a Captain in the Army and part of the Boxer relief expedition to Peking, China
- He retired from the Army in November 1922
- He had a house at 1624 Dallas Street in 1930
- He was active in the Order of Eastern Star and American Legion
- He formed a law partnership with his brother which was dissolved in 1936
- He would have been 45 years old when he became Mayor
- He left for California around 1941
- He died 24 July 1946 at the age of 73 in Los Angeles, California
- Colorado Governors at the time he was Mayor were Clarence Morley & Billy Adams
- While he was in office:
 - The original church of St. Therese parish was established at 14th & Dallas
 - Aurora's first park was dedicated at 16th and Dayton
 - The first sewage plant was built
 - Fitzsimons Army post has its own radio station - KEUP

City of Aurora Trivia Questions

1. Donald Fletcher developed the north side of Colfax, who developed the south side?
 - a. Judge A.H. Gutheil
 - b. Samuel & Frank Perry
 - c. Gresham Jones



2. Which club was formed in Aurora in January 1925?
 - a. Aurora Republican Women's Club
 - b. Aurora Civitan Club
 - c. Aurora Women's Club



3. What building is pictured below?
 - a. Aurora's first mayor's home
 - b. Aurora's first public library
 - c. Aurora's first boarding house



4. Where was the first post office for Aurora located?

- a. Inside Gersham Jones General Store
- b. Inside the Aurora Drug Store
- c. Inside the Bus Cafe



5. When did Adams County split from Arapahoe County?
 - a. March 1903
 - b. November 1859
 - c. November 1902



Juanita Preston Sparks was a long-time member of the Aurora Historical Society. She was born May 30, 1920 and died June 12, 2020. She had just celebrated her 100th birthday.



Juanita served as the treasurer of the Aurora Historical Society from 1981-1983, and as a director on the board in 1998. She also served as the newsletter editor for many years. She was a retired

Aurora Public School teacher. Mother of David P. Sparks and grandmother of Luayne & Kendra; great grandmother of 6, great-great grandmother of 3.

Reprinted from the July 25, 1995 Advocate- originally printed in the Aurora Sentinel
Juanita's family has been active in Aurora for much of its history. This appeared in the Advocate in memory of Juanita's mother Helen S. Preston

In Memory

Services were conducted on May 27, 1995 for Helen S. Preston, 96, an Aurora resident for 70 years and leader of the community as it grew from a small suburban town toward its ranking of the state's third largest city.

Preston devoted much of her life to volunteer work. She was one of the founding members of the Tri-County Health Department and served on its board of directors for 25 years.

During the Depression she and others started a hot-lunch program in Aurora schools. The food was cooked in her kitchen and transported by wagon to the students.

She worked to establish well-baby clinics in Aurora and was a prime mover in getting tuberculosis screening established in elementary schools.

She was the historical consultant for the 1978 book *Early Aurora* by C. Vincent and Leona McFadden and was one of the first members of the Aurora Historical Commission, which established the Aurora History Museum. She was accorded the honor of cutting the ribbon in 1991 when the museum opened in a new site adjoining the Municipal Justice Center, at 15001 E. Alameda Dr.

She also had leadership roles in the Rebekah Lodge, the VFW Post 3631, Ladies Auxiliary, the Women's Club of Aurora, and other civic and service organizations. She was the first elected president of the Aurora Parent Teacher Association.

Her husband, Homer Preston, who died in 1959, was elected an Adams County Court Judge in 1932 and served as the county's juvenile court judge. He had served overseas in World War I and was assigned to Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in its early years.

She was born March 12, 1899, in Gibson City, Ill., and was a rural schoolteacher before she married. She and her husband lived in a home on Fulton Street for 35 years.

Survivors include her children, Juanita Sparks, Hertel "Pete" Preston and Horatio Preston, seven grandchildren, and nine great-great grandchildren.

THE AURORA DEMOCRAT

Founded 1909 by R. N. Gwynn

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

Published by Aurora Publishing Company



Publication Office 9736 East Colfax Telephone EM 6-1600
ARAPAHOE COUNTY, COLORADO

Entered as Second Class Matter at Denver, Colorado, Under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Subscription Price \$3.00 a Year. Single Copies 5 cents

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100 Years Ago - Volume 11 Number 39
July 2, 1920

The meeting of the fire department, Monday evening, was a most interesting one, as Fire Chief Healey, of Denver, gave us a splendid and a most instructive talk on fire fighting.

It was to be regretted that so few turned out to hear it. At least every man in this town should take an active interest in the fire department if it is to be worthy of being called one. We have all been taught or should have been taught, the crying need of a properly trained and equipped one. However willing you may be to help on the day that an actual fire occurs, unless you are trained, you would be more in the way than anything else. We are not begging you for anything—it is your own interests and your own homes that you are protecting. Your money will help some, but your presence and active interest will help a great deal more.

Fire Chief Healey explained the methods of fighting various kinds of fires and the inestimable value of a trained and properly equipped department. He strongly advised us to consult with the board of fire underwriters before investing a cent and to be guided entirely by their wishes, as, of course, it rests entirely with them what our fire rate shall be. He promised us assistance at any time; that he would be glad at any time to help us anyway he could, and he invited the men of the department to be present at drills of the Denver fire department. In fact the Chief, considered one of the best fire fighters in the country, proved to be a regular guy, and Aurora thanks him.

At the next meeting of the department let every man in Aurora answer present.

75 Years Ago

Volume 36 Number 27 July 13, 1945

CAUGHT 7-POUND TROUT

Clinton Strait caught a 7-pound Mackinaw trout 29 inches long July 3.

Mr. and Mrs. Strait and daughter, Gail, accompanied by a neighbor, Mrs. Weisenberger, were enjoying a vacation in the mountains, and after riding 12 miles on horseback arrived at beautiful Crescent Lake, where snow still abounds. It was here that Mr. Strait landed the 7-pound trout, on a fly rod. He says that after 15 years fishing he really landed a BIG fish—29 inches long! and it was quite a thrill. He had previously caught fish weighing 4 or 4 1-2 pounds, but that landing this whopper came as a complete surprise.

On July 4th the party attended the rodeo at Steamboat Springs.

They report a grand trip, and lots of beautiful scenery.

Thank you
FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Thanks to former Mayor Bob LeGare, Gordon Davis & Julianne McCarthy for their donations to the Aurora Historic Newspaper Digitization project! !
AHS appreciates your support!

More donations are needed, to finish this project so please consider donating.

Aurora's Historic Newspaper Digitization Project

The *Aurora Advocate* is currently being digitized. The cost to finish the project is almost \$10,000. The Aurora Historical Society paid \$403.00 to digitize the *Aurora Advocate* from October 2, 1968 through December 25,

1968. AHS members had previously donated \$609.80 to digitizing the *Aurora Advocate*. Issues from July 21, 1949 through December 25, 1952 (116 issues) are already digitized and available online.

Visit the Colorado Historic Newspaper website and check out Aurora's history
<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org/>

The cost is a \$1.00 a page to digitize these papers. Please consider donating to this project. You can mail a check to the AHS treasurer, Mike Lockwood at 1629 Galena St., Aurora, CO 80010-220 or you can go to the Aurora Historical Society website and donate there.
<http://auroracohistoricalsociety.org/>

Please see the attached flyer and donate to this project. What a great legacy to leave to our city!

Member Discounts

FOX discount
We have a discount for 20% off of tickets for just this sort of thing. The discount code is CULTURAL. Anyone can use that for our Season shows online or over the phone (not valid for special event, cabaret's or rentals).
Remember AHS members also get in free to the "Lunchtime Lectures" at the Aurora History Museum.

Historical Society Officers

President, Newsletter, & Website: Lynne Evans
303-671-0874 lyevans@comcast.net
Vice President: Nadine Caldwell
Secretary: Gregg Chase
Treasurer: Michael Lockwood
Directors: Carolyn Brassell, Susan Hicks, Sandy Sweeney, & Karen Schweider
Membership: Larry Wilterdink
Hospitality: Carolyn Brassell
Historian: Michael Lockwood
Program Committee: Susan Hicks
Education- Vacant

If anyone is interested, please contact Lynne Evans
303-671-0874 lyevans@comcast.net

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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

Please visit the Aurora Historical Society Website

<http://auroracohistoricalsociety.org/>

and our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/1975colorado.aurora/>



Got Questions?

Ask a
Historian

Aurora Historical Society
mdlkel@aol.com

**Aurora, Colorado Women's Hall of Fame
Nominations Due November 16, 2020 – 12
Midnight**

I know that many of you know the women that have been inducted into the Aurora, Colorado Women's Hall of Fame in 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019.

Our next Induction Ceremony will be in March 2021 during Women's History Month.

There are a number of Aurora Historical Society founders and members that have already been inducted so please go to the Website and look at the caliber of women already inducted.

The Nomination Form is on the Website now under Nominations. Please read it and print it out to start working on it NOW. You might need to do some research about the woman you wish to nominate, and you will also need to provide 3 references from other people. They will need to write a support letter and mention a different reason why your nominee should be inducted or provide additional information about the woman.

Website – www.aucowhof.org

NOTE – If you don't have the ability to print out the Nomination Form please call me at 303-601-3710 and I will print it out and mail it to you by regular mail.

Questions? Call me.

Alice Lee Main – Aurora, Colorado Women's Hall of Fame – Board President

We need your help!

For just \$1/page you can help digitize Aurora's historic newspapers!

Newspapers like the *Aurora Democrat* and *Aurora Advocate* are saved on microfilm reels which deteriorate over time and are cumbersome to use.

Digitizing this film creates an online and searchable database to find photos and articles from Aurora's past. Through Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection's website, you can already access hundreds of editions of historic Aurora newspapers from the early to mid-20th century. Learn more by visiting ColoradoHistoricNewspapers.org

Historic Aurora Newspapers - Digitization Project

Yes! I want to give my support with my tax-deductible gift.
 \$25 \$50 \$100 other

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 Aurora, Colorado

AURORA HISTORY MUSEUM

AURORA