

The Advocate Newsletter

Volume 46; Number 5

September 2022

Aurora Historical Society

Aurora, Colorado



Embrace your city, your past

September President's Letter

It has been an interesting summer. I hope you are all managing to stay cool on the 100 degree days we have had. At least we have had rain to cool things off.

A few of you attended the joint field trip to Rambler Ranch. This was a hidden gem. Unless you were specifically looking for Rambler Ranch there is not much chance you would stumble on it. It consisted of 7 buildings full of old cars and memorabilia. I enjoyed it as did my husband. Lots of stuff to bring back your childhood. It was well worth the trip and the ice cream at the end was a bonus. Bill and I would both go back again.

The Ice Cream social was an enjoyable event though a bigger turn out would have been nice. We had about 35 people who came, sat in the shade, and enjoyed the time talking to friends, and listening to the great entertainment.

We are planning a field trip in September rather than our regular meeting. On September 24th, at 11:00am AHS will have a docent guided tour of Indigenous arts from North America Collection at the Denver Art Museum. Look for the rest of the information later in this newsletter. We will be participating in "Trunk or Treat" on Oct. 22 at Cherry Creek State Park and have our regular meeting at the museum in November.

I hope to see many of you at our next few events. More information to follow.

Lynne Evans

Aurora Historical Society President



Docent Tour of the Denver Art Museum's Indigenous Arts Collection. Sept. 24th at 11am.

Trunk or Treat Oct. 22nd Cherry Creek State Park from 2-4.

Regular AHS meeting November 29th at the Aurora History Museum 6:00 Stacey Stegman will talk about the history of DIA.

Coal Creek School re-dedication October 15th 11:00am



IT'S TIME TO PAY YOUR 2022 MEMBERSHIP DUES

It is time to send your dues payments for year 2022 to Michael Lockwood, 1100 Windflower Lane, Woodland Park, CO 80863. Our membership dues come due in January each year now and with the New Year arriving please send your dues payment. (*Note: The society changed its bylaws at the March 2022 meeting. The dues categories have changed.*)

Memberships:

Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$20.00

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/>

Historical Society Officers

President, Newsletter, & Website: Lynne Evans
 720-560-2490 lyevans@comcast.net
Vice President: Nadine Caldwell
Secretary: Gregg Chase
Treasurer: Michael Lockwood
Directors: Susan Hicks, Karen Schwieder
Membership: Michael Lockwood
Hospitality: Vacant
Historian: Michael Lockwood
Program Committee: Susan Hicks
Education: Vacant
Publicity: Vacant

If anyone is interested, please contact Lynne Evans 720-560-2490 lyevans@comcast.net

If anyone is interested in taking over the Newsletter or the website or both, please let me know.

Trivia Question Answers:

1. b
- 2) c
- 3) b
- 4) a
- 5) c



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: New Shoes

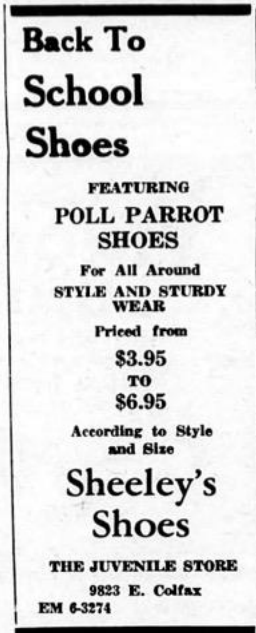


I remember, back in the 1960's, having to get new shoes for school. How I dreaded that trip to the shoe store. The old shoes were all broken in and I thought they were fine. Sure, there were a few scuff marks and there might have been a small hole in the sole and perhaps they were a bit tight at the toe and maybe the heels were a bit worn. But mother wanted us to look our best on that first day. The shoe department would measure our foot and that wasn't bad, but then they'd bring out those boxes and shoes that were SO stiff that it hurt your heel getting them on (even with a shoehorn) and then they'd lace them up what felt like way too tight. Stand up on them, they'd say and then they'd check to see where your toes ended ("looks like there's plenty of room to grow"). Then they'd ask you to walk in them, which didn't feel good at all. "How do they feel"? Mom would ask. Just wanting to get it over with I'd say fine. Who would want to go through that again with

another pair of shoes. As soon as we got home, I'd be bending the back of those shoes over and over and over trying to get them softened up.

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.

From the Aurora Democrat Sept. 1, 1955



City of Aurora Trivia Questions

1. When did Aurora achieve City status (moving from a town to a city)?
 - a. 1920
 - b. 1930
 - c. 1925



2. Who was the first Aurora Public Librarian in 1929 at 1516 Dallas ?
 - a. Sarah Tobias
 - b. Sarah Fletcher
 - c. Sarah Wood



3. What was the original name of Fitzsimons Army General Hospital?
 - a. Fitzsimons Army Tuberculosis Hospital
 - b. Temporary Army General Hospital #21
 - c. Woodrow Wilson Army Hospital



4. Why did Children's Hospital relocate from Denver to Aurora?
 - a. Closure of Fitzsimons provided land to expand and modernize
 - b. Denver "evicted" them because of unpaid taxes
 - c. Children's Hospital was purchased by an Aurora individual



5. Where did the original Colorado Avenue Electric Railway Trolley line end in Aurora?
 - a. At Colfax and Yosemite Street
 - b. At Colfax and Boston Street
 - c. At Colfax and Dallas Street



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.

MAYOR #34 Robert W. Fennig

- Served from 1963 – 1965
- He was born on October 2, 1916, in Celina, Ohio
- He attended Ohio State University and Yale University
- Married to Nance Bell on September 5, 1945
- They had a daughter, Mellisa, and a son, Robert Jr.
- Came to Aurora in 1953 from Denver
- Owned his own business, North American Leasing
- He lived at 479 Oswego
- He died on July 7, 1985
- Colorado Governor at the time he was Mayor was John Love
- While he was in office:
 - Annexed 5.7 sq miles of Buckley Field
 - Approved traffic light at 13th and Dayton
 - The new library at 13th and Peoria was dedicated
 - Denied the building of a skating rink in either Hoffman Heights or Del Mar Park
 - Purchase of 115.8 of Tailgate Creek
 - Homestake Reservoir construction started (\$38 million in bonds)
 - Metropolitan State University in Denver was established

Some pictures from Rambler Ranch



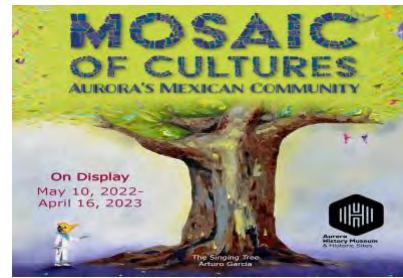
The Ice Cream Social

The Ice Cream Social was held on July 30th in the garden of Centennial House. The weather was hot, but there were 3 tents set up for guests and our entertainer. Special thanks for all those who helped with set up, serving ice cream, and putting everything away.

The company was great, and Elsa Wolff entertained us with great music her animated songs. I think everyone thoroughly enjoyed her performance. The ice cream and cookies went well with the heat.



Aurora History Museum Exhibits



The Aurora History Museum and the city of Aurora Office of International and Immigrant Affairs celebrate Aurora's Mexican population with a new exhibition, "Mosaic of Cultures: Aurora's Mexican Community," set to run through April 16, 2023.

The people of Mexican descent who call Aurora home come from all walks of life and have their own individual stories of immigration or a long family history that predates Colorado statehood." Today, Aurora is a true mosaic of cultures. One in five Aurorans are foreign-born. According to the 2020 census, 20.24% of the city of Aurora's population has family origins in Mexico.

"Mosaic of Cultures" is a series of exhibitions that promote understanding of the increasing cultural diversity in the city and incorporate the voices of local communities into Aurora's History Museum. The new exhibit aims to increase awareness of the Mexican community's contributions to the overall history of the city, including highlighting individuals, business owners, cultural traditions and history.

Admission to the Aurora History Museum is always free. The museum is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information and to stay up to date on related programming, visit AuroraMuseum.org.

Tour of the Denver Art Museum's Indigenous Arts Collection

"The Denver Art Museum was one of the first art museums in the nation to collect Indigenous arts from North America. As early as 1925, the DAM recognized and valued the fine aesthetic qualities of Native arts, when many other institutions primarily valued them as anthropological material. While the DAM collected the early artwork of Indigenous people, it also focused on the work of contemporary Native artists at every moment in time. Today, the DAM has over 18,000 objects by artists from over 250 Indigenous nations." Our tour of this collection will be led by a docent familiar with the stories behind the artwork. Join us for a fascinating look into the art and culture represented by one of the finest Indigenous art collections in the world. Our tour will start at 11:00am and the cost is \$15 a person and after our docent led tour your ticket will allow you to wander through the other exhibits at the Art Museum.

Growing Home & Trolley Trailer No. 610

Growing Home is a permanent exhibit about Aurora's history featuring Trolley Trailer No. 610, a fully-restored 1913 historic trolley trailer. The exhibit highlights people, places, and events from Aurora's history. It features over 100 historic photographs and objects, and the fully restored 1913 historic Trolley Trailer No. 610 in the new Ruth Fountain gallery. Go inside the trolley and experience 100 years of history

first-hand. The exhibit was designed by Dennis Meyer of Filament Design/Build with support from museum staff.

In October 2012, the Aurora City Council approved funding for the construction of a new gallery and addition at the Aurora History Museum. Council resolved to name it in honor of Ruth Fountain, a former city councilwoman, community activist and museum supporter.

The Aurora Museum Foundation was instrumental in raising funds and in-kind donations through grants and support from local businesses, organizations and individuals. The 1,630 square foot gallery was completed in November 2014. The addition was designed by Humphries Poli Architects and built by Palace Construction.

Aurora's Historic Growth Exhibit

Published on Mar 19, 2020

Aurora has grown by leaps and bounds over the decades. Once a small suburb of Denver, Aurora has boomed into the third-largest city in the state of Colorado. The city sits in three different counties: Adams County, Arapahoe County and Douglas County and lies just east of the city and county of Denver. The number of Aurorans just keeps on growing. As of July 1, 2019, the population was estimated at 381,000. The citizens of Aurora are diverse and come from many different backgrounds. The people of Aurora represent about 140 different countries. In fact, around 1 in 5 Aurorans are foreign born. As the city expands geographically and demographically, it is hard not to recognize the historic growth underway. This exhibition will explore how the city has changed from its foundation up to the present day, dig deeper into the booms and busts that have defined Aurora's past and discover how growth is redefining the once small town. Online exhibit

https://issuu.com/aurorahistoricsites/docs/aurora_s_historic_growth_exhibit_panels

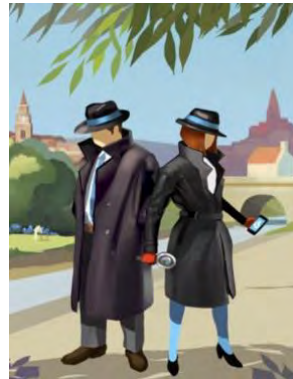
https://www.auroragov.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_1881137/Image/Things%20to%20Do/Aurora%20History%20Museum/Exhibits/Aurora's%20Historic%20Growth/Timeline_Small.pdf

Murder at the Museum Interactive Performance

September 11, 2022, from 4:00pm-5:30PM at the Aurora History Museum. Repeats every week on Monday and Sunday ending on September 20, 2022.

A high tea is being hosted at the Museum to unveil the next mascot for the city. Hosted by Edna Mosely, the first African American Councilwoman, some important

historical figures have also gathered namely Donald Fletcher, Billie Preston, and Bill Nakaoka, the first Japanese pharmacist in Aurora. AS all eagerly await the entrance of the mysterious mascot, a murder is committed, that of the mascot itself.



Through comedic and interactive discourse, in smaller groups, the guests must help Schnerbock Moans, a dancing detective, to find out who the killer is and win the coveted prize of being the "Detective" of the year.

This event is a partnership between the Aurora History Museum & Historic Sites and Roshni-an Aurora based non-

profit using art to uplift, heal, inspire, and create inclusion and empathy.

\$10 with discounted rates for Seniors, Students, and Veterans. Tickets go on sale soon! Check back regularly. You must visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/murder-at-the-museum-tickets-389583714377> to purchase tickets.



Got Questions?

Ask a Historian

Aurora Historical Society
mdlkel@aol.com

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 events, cabaret's, or rentals).

Remember AHS members also get in free to the "Lunchtime Lectures" at the Aurora History Museum.

One-Room Schools Move to the City

Aurora residents who wonder what the typical one-room schools that were so popular in the first half of the 20th century looked like do not have far to go to find out. Three of the rural schools that once dotted Arapahoe county have been moved into or near Aurora and are being preserved as museums.

The **Coal Creek School** (top photo) was located 2 ½ miles east of Gun Club Road and one quarter of a mile south of Jewell avenue on the Edward Smith farm, close by Coal creek. It operated as a school until 1960 and rested from some years in a farm yard near the intersection of Colfax avenue and I-70 before it was moved to its present site on the property of Beck Recreation Center/Springhill Park. The original Coal Creek school burned in 1927 or 1928 and the present building was constructed on the old foundation. Group tours of the museum school can be arranged by calling (303) 361-2997.

The oldest of the three schoolhouse museums is the **Cherry Creek School** (middle photo) located on the campus of Cherry Creek high school in Greenwood Village—just across the dam road from Aurora. It was built at a cost of \$800 in 1875 and was located on Parker road just north of Arapahoe. Sold at public auction for \$185 in 1953 the schoolhouse became a farm storage building for a number of years. In 1969, largely through the efforts of the Cherry Creek high school Key Club, it was moved to the campus and restored.

The two-room **Melvin School** was located in what is now Cherry Creek state park and it was closed in 1950 when construction got underway at the Cherry Creek dam. The Melvin school had been built in 1922 at a cost of \$4,450. Moved to the corner of Parker road and Quincy avenue in Aurora it served as a restaurant and tavern for 17 years. In 1976 it was moved to its present site on the Smoky Hill high school campus and restored by members of the Cherry Creek Valley Historical Society. The society has a small museum in the building.

Both the Cherry Creek and Melvin schools are maintained by the Cherry Creek School District. The Coal Creek school is managed by the Aurora Historic Preservation office.

A few other former rural schoolhouses remain in the Aurora area including the brick First Creek schoolhouse at the intersection of 26th Avenue and Picadilly road in unincorporated Adams county.



Denver Art Museum Indigenous Art Docent led Tour

“The Denver Art Museum was one of the first art museums in the nation to collect Indigenous arts from North America. As early as 1925, the DAM recognized and valued the fine aesthetic qualities of Native arts, when many other institutions primarily valued them as anthropological material. While the DAM collected the early artwork of Indigenous people, it also focused on the work of contemporary Native artists at every moment in time. Today, the DAM has over 18,000 objects by artists from over 250 Indigenous nations.” Our tour of this collection will be led by a docent familiar with the stories behind the artwork. Join us for a fascinating look into the art and culture represented by one of the finest Indigenous art collections in the world.



When: September 24, 2022, at 11:00am

Cost: Colorado Residents: \$15 a person \$12 for Seniors

Ticket: Your ticket allows you to view the rest of the regular exhibits at the DAM after the docent tour is over.

Parking: Cultural Center Complex Garage. Garage entrance is located on 12th Avenue between Broadway and Acoma Street.

Garage address: Address is 65 West 12th Avenue, Denver, CO 80204.

Rates: Morning/Daytime Hourly rates* (non-event times) – *Pay upon exiting*

- 1 to 2 hours \$3
- 2 to 5 hours \$6
- 5 to 12 hours \$10
- Lost Ticket \$10

Cash and major credit cards (Visa and MasterCard) are accepted. **Please RSVP to Lynne Evans 720-560-2490 or lyevans@comcast.net so we have a number to give the DAM.**

Bring your friends and family!