

The Advocate Newsletter

Volume 47; Number 2

March 2023

Aurora Historical Society

Aurora, Colorado



Embrace your city, your past

March President's Letter

Dear Aurora Historical Society Members,

I hope you are all surviving the erratic weather. The snow and cold are getting old, but we do need the moisture. Stay warm when it's cold and enjoy the sun when it warms up. My dogs don't quite know what to make of this weather.

The January Pot Luck was a success. Dr. Tucker got rave reviews from the members on his interesting talk and pictures. I have some pictures in the newsletter from the evening.

We are thinking about moving the pot luck to a warmer time of the year and maybe on a Saturday when more people might be able to attend.

Our next meeting will be on March 28th at 6:00 pm at the museum. Our speaker will be Stacey Stegman, who will talk about the History of DIA. This is the program that had to be rescheduled from November. It sounds very interesting.

Lynne Evans

Aurora Historical Society President

UPCOMING
EVENTS

March 28, 2023 AHS regular meeting 6:00 PM Aurora History Museum. Program-History of DIA

Join or Renew
Membership

IT'S TIME TO PAY YOUR 2023 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, Historian, Membership: Michael Lockwood
- Directors: Susan Hicks, Karen Schwieder
- Hospitality: Judy Keilman
- Program Committee: Susan Hicks
- Education: Vacant
- Publicity: Vacant

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

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



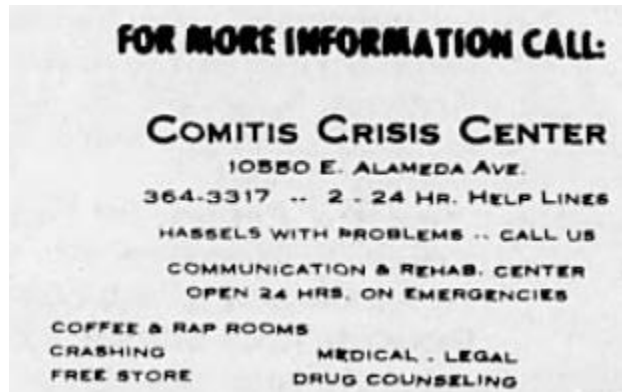
Remembering Aurora

Michael Lockwood, Aurora Historical Society

An Aurora native, a graduate of the Aurora Public Schools (Vaughn Elementary, North Middle School & Aurora Central High School), 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: Comitis Crisis Center
(Comitis means Friendship)**



An advertisement in the Aurora Star Sentinel, January 26, 1972, Vol. 63 No. 4, page 18

Shortly after I graduated from Aurora Central in 1973 a close friend of mine was volunteering at Comitis Crisis Center as a counselor. Comitis had started operation in 1969 and the individual running the organization was Richard "Barney" Barnhill and he had a strong urge to help young people who were struggling with life. Some of the kids were runaways. Some were kids that had been kicked out of their homes. Some were dealing with drug addiction. Most just needed someone to talk to and a safe place to be while they figured out their next step. I got involved by serving on their Board of Directors and while my time there was reasonably short, it implanted on my heart the need for compassion for those that didn't have life as easy as I did. Later in life, I served on the Board of Mile High Behavioral Healthcare, of which Comitis is now a program.

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.

City of Aurora Trivia Questions

1. When was the Community College of Aurora created?
 - a. 1972
 - b. 1983
 - c. 1978



2. Who opened The Aurora Technical Center?
 - a. Ellin Mrachek
 - b. The Aurora Junior College District
 - c. Aurora Public Schools



3. What trail system is pictured below?
 - a. Star K Ranch Wetland trail
 - b. High Line Canal trail
 - c. Aurora Reservoir trail



4. Why were trees planted in Apache Park by members of Girl Scout Troop 22?
 - a. For Community Service Day
 - b. For a Laredo School project
 - c. For Aurora's centennial celebration



5. Where was the Gully homestead originally located?
 - a. Near Colfax and Peoria
 - b. Near 6th Avenue and Chambers Road
 - c. Near Toll Gate Creek





Our March Speaker

Did you know that the Town of Fletcher/City of Aurora have had 45 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 #37 William Rene Dominquez

- Served from 1974- 1975
- He was born in September 1922 in San Francisco, California
- He served in the Air Force training pilots
- Married to June Percy on April 17, 1948 in San Francisco, California
- He was a Lt. Col.
- He came to Colorado in 1958
- He was elected to Aurora City Council in 1972
- They had 4 children, Michelle, Steven, Adrienne and Gregory
- He died on January 17, 1995
- He is buried at Black Hills National Cemetery
- Colorado Governor at the time he was Mayor was John Vanderhoof and Dick Lamm
- While he was in office:
 - The Aurora Mall was opened
 - Aurora Presbyterian Hospital opened
 - City demographic survey completed
 - Colorado constitution amended to create the Regional Transportation Dist.
 - RTD extended routes, acquires taxing powers, absorbs private companies
 - City building boom continues
 - Three women apply to the police academy, fail the physical and file a lawsuit
 - Study conducted to see the impact of Fitzsimons closure. Fitz has a \$35 million payroll



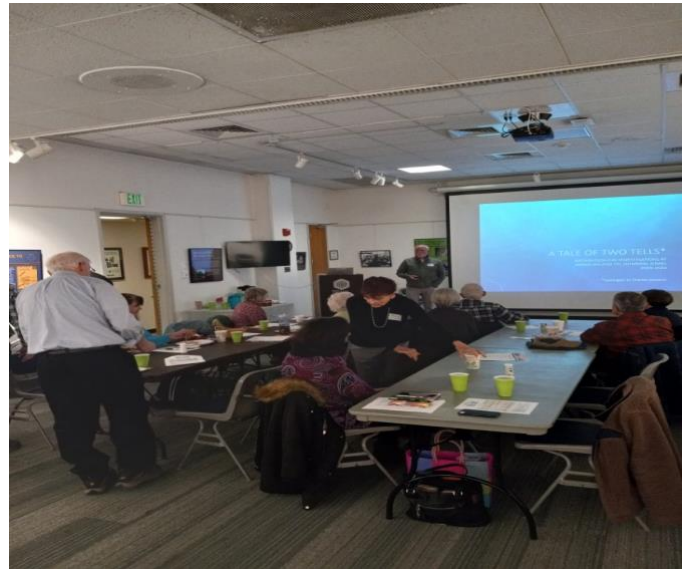
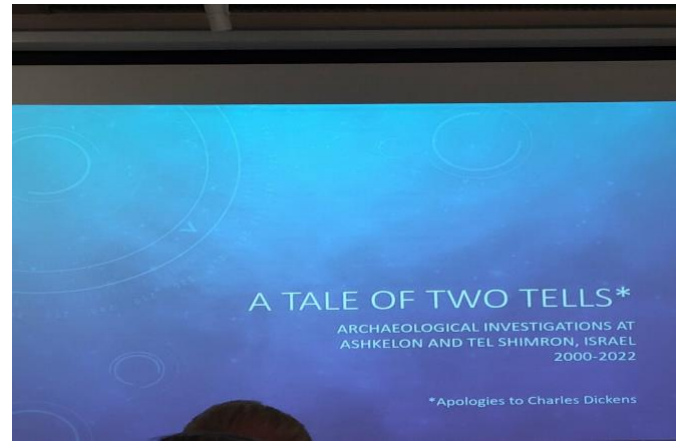
Senior Vice
President, Communications, Marketing and
Customer Service.

Stacey Stegman is the senior vice president of communications, marketing, and customer experience for the world's 3rd busiest airport – Denver International Airport (DEN). Stegman guides the airport's customer experience efforts as well as media relations, marketing, brand, social media, website, communications, public art and events on a local, national and international level.

Stegman joined DEN in December 2012 after serving nearly 17 years with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), where she became the agency's public relations director in late 2001. Prior to her career at CDOT, Stegman worked in radio promotions and as an on-air talent.



Pictures from the Pot Luck

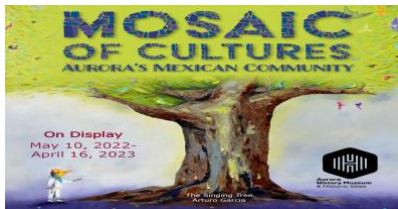


Aurora Museum Exhibits

A HISTORY OF LOWRY

Community Gallery: March 14 to July 9, 2023

Lowry opened in 1938 along the far western border of Aurora. The base focused on technical training, including aerial photography in its early days, and for a time, was home to the United States Air Force Academy. The exhibit will chronicle the story of Lowry and the people who served there.



The History

Aurora

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.

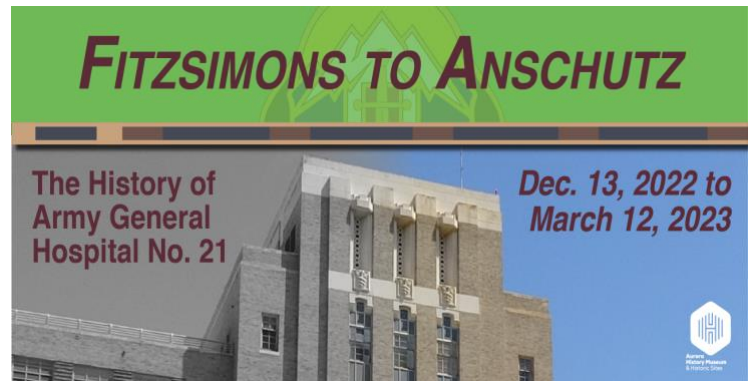
Admission to the Aurora History Museum is always free. The museum is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information and to stay up to date on related programming, visit AuroraMuseum.org.

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.



Fitzsimons to Anschutz

A new exhibit at the Aurora History Museum explores the development of the Fitzsimons medical complex and its impact on our community over the last 104 years. From its early days during World War I to the more recent developments as a state-of-the-art medical campus. Visitors will learn the history of the world-renowned respiratory treatment facilities, as well as discover the story of its most famous patient - President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Army General Hospital No. 21 opened near the small

town of Aurora in 1918. Two years later it was renamed Fitzsimons General Hospital in honor of Lt. William T. Fitzsimons, the first U.S. medical officer killed in World War I. After numerous closure attempts in the 1930s, the government classified Fitzsimons as a permanent installation and appropriated funds for expansion. This included constructing a new main building to centralize patients and provide staff with up-to-date facilities. Building 500 was dedicated December 3, 1941, just days before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Although it treated patients throughout both World Wars, Korea and Vietnam, Fitzsimons may be best known for the seven-week treatment of President Dwight Eisenhower after a heart attack in 1955. The Army deactivated Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in 1999. Today, the Anschutz Medical Campus is on the former Fitzsimons site and maintains a world-wide reputation for cutting-edge medical technology and research.

Many Aurorans have fond memories of Fitzsimons. Several were born at the hospital, even more served on the base. Large neighborhoods sprung up all around the Army base. Fitzsimons shaped modern Aurora. Today, the Anschutz Medical Campus employs over 15,000 people from the surrounding areas and is a major economic asset in Aurora's economy. The new exhibition chronicles the people, places, and structures of the historic Fitzsimons medical complex.

[Want to tell us your Fitzsimons Story?](#)

We're asking Aurorans, former Fitzsimons employees, or anyone else with a connection to Fitzsimons to tell us about their connections to the base and their stories about it. We're also collecting oral and written histories and looking for knowledgeable locals to guide Fitzsimons tours. Help us by filling out our survey [here](#).

Fitzsimons Walking Tours March 4 & 11

Tours at 9:00 A.M., 10:30 A.M. and Noon - Please ensure you register for the tour you want to attend.

Have you ever wondered why Building 500 is that shape, or just how long General's Park has been around? And why did the Army choose Aurora for a hospital anyway? Meet up at General's Park and learn more about an important piece of Aurora history in this one-hour tour.

\$2 per person. [Register](#) Repeats every week, on Saturday, ending on 12 March 2023 For more information contact: koutcelt@auroragov.org



Member Discounts

FOX discount

We have a discount for 20% off 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.