

Aurora Historical Society

Aurora, Colorado



Embrace your city and its history

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

May/June 2026

Dear Aurora Historical Society Members,

Our last meeting of the season on May 26 will feature an enlightening program on “The Future of the High Line Canal.” This historic 71-mile-long man-made waterway started as a regional irrigation canal, serving farmers and ranchers in the Denver-Aurora metropolitan area, but it metamorphosed later in its life as an urban recreational trail for walkers, cyclists, joggers, and horseback riders, connecting communities in Douglas, Arapahoe, Denver, and Adams counties. The trail also offers opportunities for enjoying nature and viewing wildlife. It is a natural and historic resource that that is well worth preserving. Please join us at the end of May to learn more about plans for its ongoing maintenance, upkeep, and interpretation.

We have some exciting field trips planned for the summer. On Saturday, July 25, we will visit the Eisenhower Suite in the historic Building 500 at the former Fitzsimons Army Hospital, now part of the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. We will visit the room in which President Eisenhower stayed for seven weeks in 1955 after suffering a heart attack. We are joining members of the Highlands Ranch Historical Society on the tour of this historic Place.

On Sunday, August 23, we will take a walking tour of Mount Nebo Memorial Park and Cemetery. This Aurora cemetery, founded in 1898, tells an illuminating story about the city’s Jewish past and the contributions of the Jewish community. It was designated an Aurora Historic Landmark in 2025. Noted historian and author, Phil

Goodstein, will lead the tour. Additional details about these tours are described below.

The Aurora Historical Society exists to recognize and preserve our heritage, whether it is thousands of years or a few decades old. A Spanish-American philosopher George Santaya wrote in 1905, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” I urge all members of the AHS to advocate purposefully and actively for our heritage.

Sincerely,
Gordy Tucker
President

Historical Society Officers

President: **Dr. Gordon Tucker**
Vice President: **Keith Outcalt**
Secretary: **Lynne Evans**
Treasurer: **Gregg Chase**
Directors: **Nadine Caldwell**
Susan Hicks
Judy Keilman

Historical Society Committees

Education & Historian: **Keith Outcalt**
Hospitality: **Judy Keilman**
Membership: **Gregg Chase**
Newsletter: **Michael Lockwood**
Program: **Susan Hicks**
Publicity: Vacant
Website: **Lynne Evans**

meet your OFFICERS

THANK YOU NEW & RE-NEWING MEMBERS

March/April 2026



March – Richard & Lynne Jones, Anne Schuman, Gordon Davis, Nancy Brigham, Vivian Turner, Douglas Bowen, Keith Outcelt

April – None

From l to r:
Gregg Chase, Treasurer; Judy Keilman, Director; Dr. Gordon Tucker, President; Susan Hicks, Director; Lynne Evans, Secretary; Nadine Caldwell, Director; Keith Outcelt, Vice-President

Member Benefits

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, cabarets, or rentals).

Aurora History Museum

Entrance to the Museum for AHS members is paid for by the AHS. Mention you are a family member to the AHS family membership at the front desk.



Our membership dues come due in January each year now so you can send your payment for year 2026 to Gregg Chase, 25762 East Kettle Circle, Aurora, CO 80016.

From 1963

Memberships:

Individual	\$15	Contributing	\$30
Family	\$20	Life	\$200
Student	\$10	Business	\$200



If you wish to receive a hardcopy there is an additional \$5 charge

You can now pay your dues online at the AHS website on the join today page using PayPal.

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



Movie: Tom Jones

TV show: Petticoat Junction

Music Album: The Beach Boys – Surfin' USA

E-mail your question to koutcelt@gmail.com



Aurora, Colorado Historic Landmarks & Cultural Heritage Sites

There are 34 Historic Landmarks and 6 Cultural Heritage Sites in Aurora, Colorado. Each newsletter we'll show them to you one by one

Italian Villa Aurora Landmark #8 Article written by Keith Outcalt



The Italian Villa house today.

- Built in 1925
- 1785 N. Hanover Street
- Designated: 1988

The Italian Villa House

Designated as Aurora Landmark No. 8 in 1988, the Italian Villa is located at 1785 N. Hanover St. The building was constructed as an Italian restaurant in 1925 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. This architectural style gained prominence after the California Exposition of 1915 and found prominence in states with pre-existing Spanish influence. Distinguishing architectural features include: a low-pitched tile roof with no eave overhang, stucco exterior, prominent arches, and an asymmetrical façade.

The Italian Villa Restaurant opened in 1925. Prohibition in Colorado took effect in January 1916, four years



before the passage of the 18th Amendment. The restaurant, found acclaim when Alex Maranzino took over in 1929, establishing the Villa as a quiet getaway for Denverites, advertising it as "Denver's Smartest Night Club," with quality food, live music, and an extensive garden patio. The outdoor space, known as the "summer garden," sat 150 patrons and featured a trout pond, dance floor, and a decorative awning that covered the entire patio. The restaurant was rumored to have been a speakeasy and gambling club during Prohibition, but the only written account of the restaurant violating the law came in early 1933, after the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt amended the Volstead Act to make 3.2% beer legal. Following local ordinance, Maranzino applied and paid for a license to sell the now legal beer.

Despite his compliance with local ordinance, Maranzino was arrested in August for breaking the 3.2% beer law. A crowd of Aurorans filled the courtroom in Brighton to hear the injunction brought on by Harry Behm, District Attorney. Behm immediately dropped the charge that Maranzino violated the 3.2% beer law and asked the court to close the Villa because it was a public nuisance. Several Aurorans testified to the character of Maranzino and the Villa, and by the days end the court dismissed the suit, stating, "The overwhelming predominance of evidence is in favor of the defendant; it is plainly apparent that the people and officials of Aurora are in favor of the establishment and that Aurora has enough law to take care of any such place."

Unfortunately the victory was short lived for Maranzino. The cost of the court proceedings, coupled with the Great Depression's financial devastation, might have proven too much. In January of 1934, Maranzino and his family closed the restaurant and moved to nearby Denver.

The Italian Villa was sold as a residential property and purchased by Henry Blank as a home to share with his new wife. Henry, a Spanish American War veteran had studied medicine at the University of Maryland, graduating in 1906. He moved to Denver seven years later, where he practiced medicine for the next twenty-

two years, retiring in 1936. He married Lena La Bruzza in 1934, purchased the closed restaurant at 1785 N. Hanover St and moved in. Henry passed away at the age of 70 in 1954. Lena continued to reside in the home, becoming a fixture of the community, until her death in 1982.

Sources:

- “Abatement Sought Against Night Club,” *The Denver Post*, August 21, 1933.
- “Case Dismissed: Jude Johnson Re-Fuses to Issue Injection,” *Aurora Democrat*, September 1, 1933.
- “Grand Opening,” *Aurora Democrat*, June 23, 1933.
- “Local News,” *Aurora Democrat*, January 5, 1934.
- “New Council Takes Office,” *Aurora Democrat*, April 14, 1933.
- “New Music at the Villa,” *Aurora Democrat*, July 7, 1933.
- “Strolling Through Aurora,” *Aurora Democrat*, June 16, 1933.i



**Aurora Historical Society May 26 meeting
The Future of the Highline Canal
6:00pm at the Aurora History Museum**

Our speaker for the evening is



Josh Phillips

Senior Director of Planning & Implementation

Josh is an urban planner with a passion for conservation, equity and improving the quality of life in the Denver Metro Area. He brings a diverse background in planning,

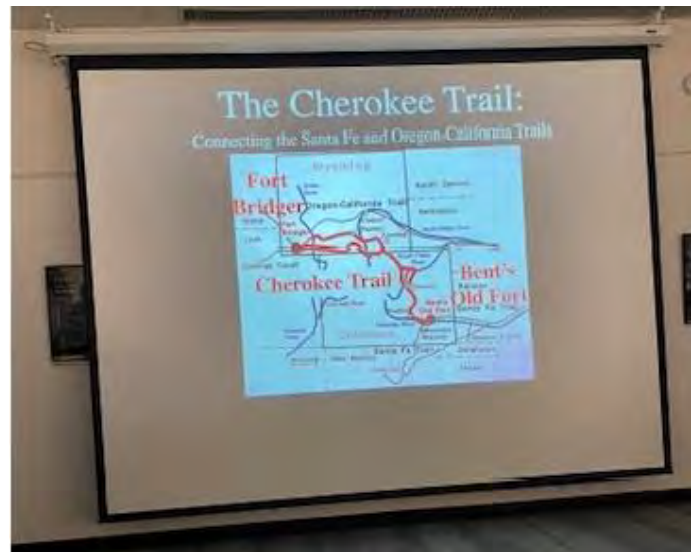
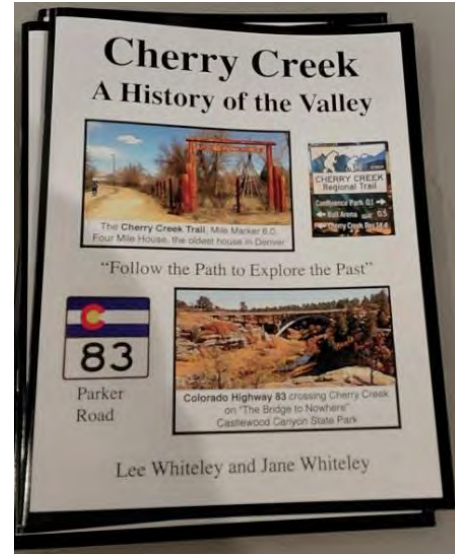
community organizing and nonprofit management to the Conservancy. Josh started with the Conservancy working part-time on public engagement and program development and he has spent hundreds of hours on the Canal engaging community members and partner organizations. Born in Boston, MA and raised outside of Burlington, VT, Josh received a dual undergraduate degree in Political Science and Political Communication from The George Washington University and a Masters of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Colorado Denver. As Director of Planning and Implementation, Josh uses his boundless energy to collaborate with our jurisdictional partners along the Canal and ensure The Plan for the High Line Canal becomes a reality.



At Our March Meeting

On March 31, 2026, Lee Whitley spoke to the 30 members present about a Journey Through the Cherry Creek Valley. We were given the history of the town of Melvin and Clark County. How the area was affected by the Santa Fe Trail and the Smoky Hill Trail, and what the Cherry Creek Reservoir covered. It was a very interesting presentation for all. Signed copies of Mr. Whiteley's books were available for purchase after the presentation.

We also got to admire the new bench dedicated to Ruth Schmunk with Ruth actually seated on her bench. After the Presentation was over, President Gordy Tucker talked about the annual Potluck Dinner meeting in May, the upcoming sale of Native American Native American Basketry and Pottery at the May Potluck Annual Meeting. Plans for summer Field Trips, and the Treasurer's Report. Dr. Tucker then invited the group to attend his upcoming program at the 17-Mile House on April 25th.





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.aurorahistoricalociety.org

REMEMBERING: Trips to Grandparents (from Kathryn Lockwood)



When we was young, every almost every year the Harding family would pack up the car and head to South Dakota (Colton and Sioux City) to visit my grandparents. My grandmother Harding was born of the 4th of July so she'd tell everyone that all the fireworks and parades were in honor of her birthday.

Dad would usually drive at night so us kids would be asleep during the trip and make the driving much quieter. Mom would pack things to keep us busy when we were awake like a brand new box of crayons and coloring books (it was the late '60's after all).

One stop was Uncle Bruce's farm. This was a pretty rustic farmhouse and yes, we used an outhouse when we were there. If we arrived at night it would be pitch black until we would spot a lone light in the distant. That was a light on a pole between the farmhouse and the barn. A beacon showing the way.



Of course, Grandmother Thill was constantly cooking for all the guests. Breakfast looked like everything on the menu. Eggs, bacon, rolls, pancakes, sausage, ham (no one went hungry). No sooner was breakfast cleared than lunch was ready and right after that there was dinner. We were a well fed group.



Grandmother Harding was a Scrabble player and if she played a word that didn't look like a real word she'd dare you to get a dictionary and prove her wrong. She never lost that challenge as far as I knew.

Time waits for no man and our history will eventually become shared memories of people and places. Preservation can help keep those memories a little more tangible so that it, too, can be shared with future generations.

TRIVIA

City of Aurora Trivia Questions From Aurora Advocate

1. May 1951 – Aurora Jewelry and Appliance offered a prize for the largest what in Colorado? [Vol 4 No 24]
- Watermelon
 - Trout
 - Set of antlers



2. Jun 1956 – The City Council approved the installation of what? [Vol 9 No 30]
- Sculptures in City parks
 - Sidewalks in Mission Viejo
 - Center island street lights



3. May 1961 – Kay Carter Dress Shop was robbed of \$66 cash and what else? [Vol 14 No 29]
- \$58 of jewelry
 - \$172 of dresses
 - \$46 of hats



4. Jun 1966 – What new section of I225 opened? [Vol 18 No 30]
- Colfax to 6th Avenue
 - 6th Avenue to Mississippi
 - Mississippi to Parker Road



5. May 1971 – What newly approved restaurant was causing citizen concerns for their children? [Vol 24 No 25]
- Round The Corner
 - Taco John's
 - 94th Aero Squadron



Changes at Aurora History Museum in 2026

by: T. Scott Williams, Director, Aurora History Museum & Historic Sites



This past year, the AHMHS Team has served and engaged the entire community to interpret and foster pride in Aurora's story every day through providing exhibits, events and educational programming for all ages. We have strived to find new ways for museum and historic site supporters like you to participate in our programs and increase your knowledge about Aurora's people, places and things!

The main purpose of this message is to provide you with news of changes to the AHMHS operations beginning next year. The Museum is introducing modest admission fees (\$5 for adults and \$1 for children) and adjusting public hours (Open Days: Tuesday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.) in 2026, in response to the city of Aurora's budget shortfall.

The updates will allow the museum to continue delivering the exceptional experiences, community events and innovative storytelling that have made it a cultural cornerstone in Aurora, while maintaining accessibility through affordable pricing, annual memberships and multiple free community days each year.

The AHMHS will offer three tiers of Annual Museum Memberships including: Individual - \$25, Family - \$50 and Organizational Membership - \$100. For more specific information about admissions and annual

membership benefits please visit our website at AuroraMuseum.org. The new admissions, hours and annual memberships will begin on Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2026.

On behalf of the entire Museum & Historic Sites team, I thank you for your past support and I humbly ask for your continued support as we change our business model in 2026. I hope to see you at the museum and please join us in preserving Aurora's history!

Upcoming Events at Aurora History Museum



for tickets, registration and more information visit AuroraMuseum.org.

Morning at the Museum

Every Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.

Spend the morning with your preschooler at the Aurora History Museum for stories, crafts and hands-on activities. A new program is offered every week. Please note, children must be supervised by an adult. Cost: Adult admission is free with \$1 children's admission for this program.

Homeschool Day: Archaeology

Tuesday, May 5, 9:30 a.m.

Learn about the science, techniques and ethics used by professional archaeologists with this fun, hands-on lesson! Students will partake in a mock dig with professional archaeologists. Aurora History Museum's two-hour Homeschool program is aimed at elementary students and their parents. Each month will have a new theme with several educational opportunities for students. Work with museum professionals and educators to expand on your homeschool curriculum. [\\$8 per participating student](#)

History Hikes: Fitzsimons Army Hospital to CU

Saturday, May 16, 10:00 a.m.

Join us for our first History Hike of the year! Whether you call it Gutheil Gardens, Army Hospital #21, Fitzsimons or Anschutz, that piece of land has gone through a lot of changes in the past century. Explore the history of the base, its buildings and its people while strolling around the campus. Meet at General's Park, 1561 Quentin St.

This event is free thanks to a generous donation from the City of Aurora Historic Preservation Commission. [Registration Required](#)

“Behind The Scenes” Artifacts Presentation

Thursday, May 21, 6 p.m.

Did you know that most of the museum’s collection isn’t on exhibit? We have thousands of items in our collections’ storage. Explore selected military artifacts with AHM curators, Kerrie Iyob and Keith Outcalt as you prepare for Memorial Day. This special, free event is only for AHM members.

[Email museum@auroragov.org](mailto:museum@auroragov.org) us for free tickets to this members-only event.

The World in a City: Food Tour by Bus

Friday, May 22, 9 a.m.

In partnership with History Colorado’s Tours and Treks program, we are leading a bus tour of Aurora’s historic sites and stopping at three local restaurants to enjoy food that highlights Aurora’s incredible cultural diversity. Food is included with registration.

Registration ends May 7. [Tickets](#)

Cost: \$145 per person (\$135 for AHM or HC members).

Email rebecca.chickadel@state.co.us for member discount.

“Mosaic of Cultures: Aurora’s Filipino Community” Opening Celebration

Saturday, April 21, 2026 to April 17, 2027

Help us welcome a new Mosaic of Cultures exhibit with Aurora’s Filipino community and join us to thank our community partners. Check out the exhibit, hear about how it came together and stay for fun crafts, music and games.

Free event.

The Local Cost of Freedom

March 10 to July 11, 2026.

Aurora’s fallen in the Sesquicentennial story

What is Worth Remembering

Collector’s Corner

Coming soon to our Collector’s Corner:

Hand-painted teacups and saucers made in Occupied Japan. Sharon Wilson’s collection

Do you have a great collection you want everyone to see? Tell us about it!

Coming Soon

Museum Free Day

Saturday, June 13, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Events in June:

Coal Creek School Days

Fridays in June, 10:30 a.m.

Starting on June 5

Local LGBTQ+ History Talk at Hoffman Heights Library

Thursday, June 4, 5:30 p.m.

Aurora Prehistory Talk at Mission Viejo Library

Saturday, June 6, 10:30 a.m.

Aurora Fest

June 13, 3 to 10 p.m.

June History Hike: Birding and Jewell Wetlands

Sunday, June 15, 8:30 a.m.

Civic Season Events:

Centennial House Open Day

Saturday, June 20, 3 to 6 p.m.

The Colorado Freedom Memorial with Rick Crandall

Saturday, June 20, 11 a.m.

Jewell Wetlands: A Local Activism Success Story

Wednesday, June 24, 6:30 p.m.

Legendary Ladies Performance

Friday, June 25, 5:30 p.m.

Aurora Museum Exhibits

Exploring Prehistoric Worlds: The Art of Andrey Atuchin

Illustrator, biologist and noted paleo-artist Andrey Atuchin has worked with paleontologists around the world to illustrate papers, press releases and museum exhibits. His art is featured prominently of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, and in our prehistoric Aurora Exhibit. The East Hallway exhibit features profiles of various prehistoric species.

Unsung Heroes of WWII Through October

This exhibition highlights individuals and groups whose vital contributions to World War II were recognized years after the conflict. Explore the histories of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs), the Navajo Code Talkers, the Tuskegee Airmen and other local heroes.

On Display in the East Hallway

Aurora's Historic Photos

Photos have a way of connecting the current generation with their past. This exhibit showcases a small sample of the over 30,000 images archived at the Aurora History Museum.

On Display in the Theater Room Trolley Trailer #610

This exhibit takes a deep dive into the history of electric streetcars in the Denver metro area and explores the story of Aurora's Landmark, Trolley Trailer #610 before it was an exhibit at the Aurora History Museum.

This exhibit was chosen to return to our museum by visitors in June and July 2023.

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.



Admission: \$5 Children (2-17): \$1

Hours:

Tuesday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

15051 E Alameda Pkwy, Aurora, CO 80012

303.739.6660

Join the Aurora History Museum

Be a history hero and help us champion Aurora's history by becoming a member of the Aurora History Museum. Three levels of membership are available. **Individual - \$25, Family - \$50 and Organizational - \$100.** Each tier includes free admission, invitations to members-only events, 10% off purchases and event fees. [Become an AHM member today!](#) For more specific information about admissions and annual membership benefits [please visit our website.](#)



The Aurora Museum Foundation is a non-profit dedicated to the historical and cultural enrichment of the community by advocating and fundraising to ensure the continued viability of the Aurora History Museum & Historic Sites. Each year AMF takes part in a variety of community projects to raise funds for the museum and to preserve the history of Aurora.

[Visit the AMF webpage](#) or [email the AMF](#) for more information.



Baker, Susan
 Barnes, Mildred
 Bartholomew, Randy & Barbara
 Beach, Mr. & Mrs. Robert L.
 Beach, Robert
 Benedict, Sally & Van I.
 Bennett, Mr. & Mrs. Don
 Bottoms, Jack & Ruth
 Brown, Dick & Kay
 Caldwell, Nadine
 Caron, Dean & Theresa
 Chase, Gregg & Mary
 Crawford, Judi & Jessica
 Daniels, Kimberly & William
 Drollinger, Don & Carol
 Elwell, Tom & Dottie
 Essex, Joyce Brown
 Evans, Lynne
 Fanning, James
 Fletcher, Robert & Cindy
 Fugler, Carl & Gloria
 Gehler, Robert & Terri
 Gigikos, John & Lila
 Heckman, Dorothy
 Heflin, David & Mary
 Hensler, Bill & Sue
 Hicks, Susan
 Hogan, Becky
 LeGare, Bob
 Jordan, Ralph & Sharon
 Keller, Chris & John

Letofsky, Jane Anne
 Lindemann, Ingrid
 Lockwood, Michael & Kathryn
 Lord, Pat
 Lusche, Jim & Pat
 McClure, Kirby & Roberta
 McFadden, Joyce
 McGrath, Jane & Isaacson, Thomas
 Metcalf Jr., Traver
 Monroe, Vernon & Helen
 Morey, Bill & Teresa
 Murray, June
 Nicholls, Edwin
 O'Brien, Joe & Betsy
 Perkins, Steve & Jan
 Peters, Charlie
 Pierce, Brad
 Reynolds, Mr. & Mrs. Walter
 Sala, John & Elizabeth
 Sanders, Dr. & Mrs. Randall
 Scherling, Richard & Beverly
 Schmunk, Ruth
 Severson, Carl
 Sherfick, Donald & Charline
 Spencer, Vernon
 Steele, Laurence & Virginia
 Tedrick, Katherine & John
 Ulmer, Keith & Mary
 Vickers, Mary
 Wiggins, William & Lori
 Wilterdink, Larry & Carol

In Memoriam

In remembrance of Society members who are no longer with us.

Armstrong, William
 Beach Sr., Robert
 Creager, Jo (past president)
 Dunning, Annabelle (past president)
 Fountain, Ruth (past president)
 Haag, Col. (Ret) George
 Harding, Dexter
 Harding, Julie
 Hogan, Stephen
 Hood, Shirley (past president)
 Kerns, Peggy
 Lincoln, Joseph & Jeannine
 Lindemann, Donald
 McClure, Janice
 Moore, David
 Murray, Bev
 Murray, William Jr
 O'Brien, Mr. & Mrs. John
 Penn, Ruth
 Preston, Mary
 Scherling, Beverly
 Sparks, Juanita
 Staadt, Florence (past president)
 Travis, E.A.
 Tupps, Edythe
 Watson, Elizabeth
 Weddig, Frank & Pat
 Whitmore, Ruth
 Wiley, Robert
 Woodbury, Ruth



Dunning, Anabelle (1976-1979)
 Metcalf, Gladys (1980-1981)
 Staadt, Florence (1982)
 Elwell, Dottie (1983-1984)
 Johnson, Elizabeth (1985-1986)
 Pierce, Mary (1987-1988)

Creager, Jo (1989-1990)
 Sanders, Kathy (1991-1992)
 Creager, Jo (1993)
 Hood, Shirley (1994-1995)
 Brown, Connie (1996-1998)
 Betka, Charyn (1999-2000)

Fountain, Ruth (2001-2009)
 Sweeney, Sandy (2010-2018)
 Evans, Lynne (2019-2025)
 Tucker, Dr. Gordon (2025-present)

Don't forget the Aurora Historical Society's May 26th meeting & Potluck. We will be voting on the Bylaws and having a Pottery Sale. The Speaker is Josh Phillips, who will discuss the Future of the Highline Canal. Bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to share. Arrive by 5:30, Dinner at 5:45 at the Aurora History Museum.

The Aurora Historical Society will supply paper products, drinks, ham, and fried chicken.

