

Aurora Historical Society

2026 Heritage Sale



Thank you to our generous donor-

Ms. Marcia Tate



All proceeds benefit our mission to

preserve Aurora's story.



Your donations support:

Senac Site at Aurora Reservoir

Centennial House

Gully House

DeLaney Farm

Other sites of historic importance

Welcome!

Members of the Aurora Historical Society are presented with an opportunity to purchase objects of beautiful craftsmanship that reflect the customs and worldview of Indigenous people who have inhabited North America for tens of thousands of years. These are not ancient relics (it would be disrespectful and in many cases illegal to sell such artifacts); rather, they are marvelous reproductions of traditional styles of basketry and pottery, made by skilled artisans in the modern period (20th and 21st centuries). Each of these objects tells a story (or possibly stories) about ancient people in western North America, including Aurora, whose descendants still live here. When you hold one of these objects in your hands you can admire both the beauty and the story that the artist wanted to convey.

The Aurora Historical Society is offering these items for sale to our members to keep our history alive and to offer a narrow window into Aurora's ancient past. We hope that one or several of these items will find a respected place in your home.

Gordon C. Tucker Jr., PhD

President, Aurora Historical Society



Senac Site – Aurora Reservoir



Table of Contents

Fiber Collection	5
Basket 001 - Coiled Basket with Geometric Motifs	6
Basket 002 – Miniature Coiled Pine Needle Basket	7
Basket 003 – Miniature lidded basket	8
Basket 004 – Miniature round basket	9
Ornament 005 – Horse Ornament	10
Mug Collection	11
Mug 001 – Black and White Geometric	12
Mug 002 – Tan and Black with Curious Animal	13
Centennial House	14
Pottery Collection	15
Pottery 001 – Acoma Pueblo Pottery Vase	16
Pottery 002 – Southwestern Geometric Clay Bowl	17
Pottery 003 – Hand-Formed Rustic Clay Vessel	18
Pottery 004 – Miniature Jemez style vessels - pair	19
Pottery 005 – Miniature Pueblo-Style Geometric Bowl	20
Pottery 006 – Miniature Southwestern Geometric Pot	21
Gully House	22
Cover Page Art: The DeLaney Round Barn	24
Welcome Page (page 2) – The Senac Site	24



Fiber Collection

Basket 001 - Coiled Basket with Geometric Motifs



Estimated Date: Mid–20th Century

Attributed Style: Tohono O’odham or Apache

Dimensions: Approx. 6 1/2" diameter

Materials: Natural plant fibers, possibly yucca and devil’s claw

Condition: Excellent; no visible fraying or fading.

Estimated Value: \$65–\$85

This small basket carries a weaving tradition that stretches back generations. Made one careful wrap at a time from the natural fibers that Tohono O’odham and Apache weavers have worked with for centuries, it brings that living tradition right into your home. The stepped black motifs climbing the interior represent rain, mountains, and spiritual journeys — a worldview compressed into a 6½-inch circle. No two baskets like this were ever identical. The artisan’s hands determined every tension, every turn. Excellent condition. Ready to display and guaranteed to spark a conversation.



Basket 002 – Miniature Coiled Pine Needle Basket



Estimated Date: Mid-20th century to late 20th century

Attributed Style: Southeastern/Gulf Coast traditions —

Dimensions: Approx. 4” wide and 3” high

Materials: Longleaf pine needles, coiled with thread or raffia

Condition: Excellent; no visible fraying or fading.

Estimated Value: \$25–\$60

Tightly wound and quietly beautiful, this miniature pine needle basket is the work of hands that knew exactly what they were doing. Coiled from longleaf pine needles and bound with raffia or thread, it follows a tradition practiced for generations by Coushatta, Seminole, and Cherokee artisans along the Southeastern Gulf Coast. Its braided rim and natural tonal variation are not manufactured — they emerged from the maker’s touch. At just 4 inches wide, it was clearly made to be cherished, not used. A perfect keepsake, or a gift that will not be forgotten.



Basket 003 – Miniature Lidded Basket



Estimated Date: Mid–20th Century

Attributed Style: Coushatta Tribe (Louisiana or East Texas)

Dimensions: 2” diameter and 1 ½” tall

Materials: Longleaf pine needles

Condition: Excellent; no visible fraying or fading.

Estimated Value: \$45–\$65

This is the kind of object that stops people mid-sentence. A miniature lidded basket, barely 2 inches across, coiled with remarkable precision from longleaf pine needles — lid and base fitting together as if born that way. The warm reddish-brown tones are characteristic of Coushatta artisans from Louisiana and East Texas, who produced baskets like this for the thriving mid-century tourist trade. Skillfully made, unsigned, and in excellent condition. Rare at this size.



Basket 004 – Miniature Round Basket



Estimated Date: Mid–Late 20th Century

Attributed Style: Southeastern traditions — especially Coushatta, Seminole, or Cherokee

Dimensions: Approximately 1 3/4 inch in diameter

Materials: Pine needles (likely longleaf or ponderosa).

Condition: Excellent; no visible fraying or fading.

Estimated Value: \$15–\$50

Hold it in your palm and you'll understand immediately. This pine needle basket — barely 1¾ inches across — is coiled with a precision that takes years to develop. Stitched from longleaf or ponderosa pine needles with waxed thread, it reflects the Southeastern Native American tradition of the Coushatta, Seminole, and Cherokee, where miniature work like this required extraordinary patience and skill. Its braided rim and natural tonal variation are entirely the maker's doing. No two alike. In excellent condition.



Ornament 005 – Horse Ornament



Estimated Date: Mid–Late 20th Century

Attributed Style: Folk-toy using natural materials

Dimensions: 3 inches long (tail to nose) and 3” tall

Materials: Raffia or straw fibers; wooden stick legs; natural dye

Condition: Fair – one leg shows wear.

Estimated Value: \$10–\$30

There’s something irresistible about a handmade animal figure – especially one this carefully constructed. Wrapped from reddish-brown raffia or straw over a wooden stick armature, this small horse has a looped tail, four legs, and the unmistakable character that only comes from being made by hand. Its folk-art lineage connects to raffia traditions in Madagascar and artisan markets in Asia. One leg shows some wear – which only adds to its story. A charming, one-of-a-kind piece at a very approachable price.





Mug Collection

Mug 001 – Black and White Geometric



Estimated Date: Mid–20th Century

Attributed Style: Acoma Pueblo

Dimensions: 2 ½” diameter, 4 ¼” including handle, 3” tall– *decorative only*

Materials: Ceramic, studio pottery

Condition: Small cracks on the interior

Estimated value: \$20–\$35

Hand-signed “JW” and numbered “A-2,” this studio pottery mug was made with genuine intention — two encircling bands of stepped and zigzag motifs in bold black and white, drawing on Acoma Pueblo lightning and rain symbolism. The ruler-marked handle adds a wry, modern touch. Wheel-thrown or molded, glazed, and built to be looked at rather than used. Display it where people will notice it — and they will.

Maker Mark: The base is signed “JW” and marked “A-2,” consistent with studio pottery numbering systems.

**⚠ Do not use with food or beverages.
Not microwave safe.**



Mug 002 – Tan and Black with Curious Animal



Estimated Date: Likely late 20th to early 21st century

Attributed Style: Small-batch studio pottery; Mexico (Chiapas), and parts of Asia

Dimensions: 3 1/2" diameter, 5" including handle, 3" tall
– *decorative only*

Materials: Hand-formed ceramic with glossy black glaze

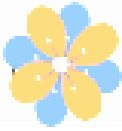
Condition: Good handmade condition with expected irregularities.

Estimated value: \$20–\$45

The little animal perched on the rim will make you smile every time. This hand-formed ceramic mug — with its bold black geometric motifs and glossy glaze — has the confident irregularity of genuine studio work. No signature, no mass production, no two exactly alike. Whether it comes from a small workshop in Mexico, Asia, or somewhere in between, it arrived here as a singular object with real personality. Decorative only, and proud of it.



**⚠ Do not use with food or beverages.
Not microwave safe.**



Centennial House



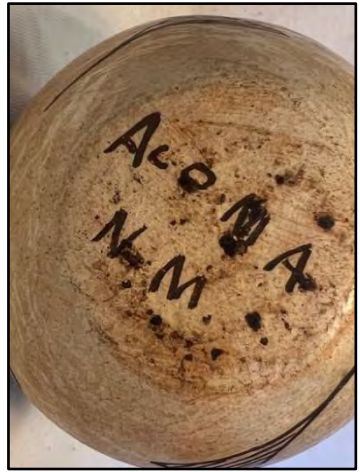
Built in 1890, Centennial House is the first home constructed by Donald Fletcher for his ambitious development east of Denver — the community that would eventually become Aurora. A two-story Queen Anne Victorian in brick, it reflects both Fletcher's optimism and his eye for convenience: every home he built included indoor plumbing and an upstairs bathroom, a genuine luxury for the time.

Fletcher himself was prominent in the region's early growth, with investments in local water companies and streetcar lines and a role in founding Fairmount Cemetery.

Centennial House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996. The City of Aurora purchased it in 1990, and community members restored it in honor of the City's Centennial year — bringing one of Aurora's founding structures back to life for the next generation of residents.



Pottery 001 – Acoma Pueblo Pottery Vase



Estimated Date: Mid–20th Century

Attributed Style: Acoma Pueblo

Dimensions: Approx. 5” tall and about 4” at widest part

Materials: Hand-painted earthenware

Condition: Excellent

Estimated value: \$60–\$100

Marked “Acoma N.M.” on the underside, this hand-painted earthenware jug is a fine example of mid-century Pueblo craft — made by an artist who knew the tradition and made it their own. Abstract birds and angular geometric motifs wrap a bulbous body in warm reddish-brown and black on beige, bold and expressive rather than rigidly formal. Not a reproduction of a style — this is the style itself, painted by hand, one careful brushstroke at a time.



Pottery 002 – Southwestern Geometric Clay Bowl



Estimated Date: Mid–20th Century

Attributed Style: Pueblo-inspired (Acoma / Hopi Influence)

Dimensions: Approx. 4 ½” long, 3 ½” wide, and 2” tall

Materials: Natural red clay, mineral-based paint

Condition: Excellent

Estimated value: \$45–\$85

Run your finger along the rim and you’ll feel where the clay was shaped by hand. This warm reddish-brown bowl carries a bold band of dark triangles outlined in white — a motif drawn from Acoma and Hopi tradition, where such patterns have long represented mountains, feathers, and rain. Unglazed and matte-finished, it has the honest, earthy presence of something made to last. No cracks, no chips — in excellent condition, and exactly the kind of piece that looks like it belongs somewhere it will be noticed and appreciated for years.



Pottery 003 – Hand-Formed Rustic Clay Vessel



Estimated Date: Mid–20th Century

Attributed Style: Southwestern or Mexican rustic folk pottery

Dimensions: Approx. 3" wide & 3" tall

Materials: Unglazed earthenware clay

Condition: Good – some chips on rim

Estimated value: \$40–\$90

This is what pottery looked like before it became decorative. Thick walls, rounded base, an irregular rim shaped entirely by the maker's hands — this small, unglazed clay vessel carries the honest character of Southwestern and Mexican folk tradition, where similar forms held water and oil for everyday use. Its dimpled, textured surface tells you exactly how it was made: by hand, probably coiled or pit-fired, with no apology for imperfection. Good condition, warm earthy presence, and a history you can feel.



Pottery 004 – Miniature Jemez Style Vessels - pair

Estimated Date:

Late 20th Century

Attributed Style:

Jemez Pueblo miniature pottery; Fragua family influence

Dimensions:

Approx. 1 ½ " wide & 1 ½" and 2" tall

Materials: Hand-coiled clay, natural/mineral pigments

Condition: Good – small vessel has light cracking

Estimated value: \$40–\$150 each



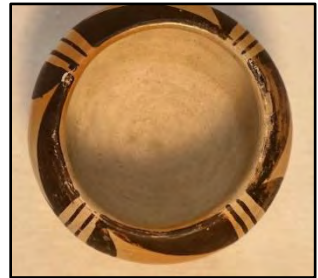
These two pots are barely an inch tall — and they are signed. That tells you everything. One bears the name Guadalupe Jemez, its classic black-on-beige motifs rooted in traditional Pueblo



symbolism. The second is signed M. Fraqua Jemez, reflecting the celebrated Fragua family style: multicolored, with feather-inspired geometric elements that reward a close look. Hand-coiled, individually painted, and made within one of New Mexico's most respected pottery traditions. The small vessel has light cracking, noted in the condition.



Pottery 005 – Miniature Pueblo-Style Geometric Bowl



Estimated Date: Late 20th Century

Attributed Style:

Pueblo-inspired geometric pottery (Hopi/Jemez influence)

Dimensions: Approx. 3" wide and 1 1/2" tall

Materials: Hand-formed clay, mineral-based black pigment

Condition: Good – some signs of wear

Estimated value: \$45–\$95 each

Three inches across, unglazed, and made entirely by hand – this small bowl has a quiet confidence about it. Bold black triangles and linear elements circle the upper register in a pattern drawn from Hopi and Jemez tradition, where geometric design has always carried meaning beyond decoration. This handmade bowl has an organic, tactile quality that no mold could replicate. Some light wear, as you'd expect from a well-traveled piece. A beautifully crafted example of contemporary Native-style miniature pottery at a very fair price.



Pottery 006 – Miniature Southwestern Geometric Pot



Estimated Date: Late 20th century

Attributed Style: Pueblo-inspired geometric pottery

Dimensions: Approx. 2” across and 1” tall

Materials: Hand-formed clay, mineral-based pigments

Condition: Excellent – no cracks or chips

Estimated Value: \$60–\$120

At just 2 inches across, this miniature pot is doing a lot. An intricate band of interlocking red, green, and white geometric motifs wraps the upper body like a mosaic — precise, balanced, and likely painted by hand in a Southwestern Pueblo artistic tradition. The unglazed tan lower body lets the painted register command full attention. No chips, no cracks — in excellent condition. This is the kind of piece that draws people in for a closer look.





Gully House



Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this small house is the oldest surviving home in Aurora. The ranch, house, stables, and corrals that make up the Gully Family homestead were originally located at Mississippi Avenue and Chambers Road. The Gully family emigrated from Ireland, eventually settling in Aurora at what is now Mississippi Ave. and Chambers Rd. Farming proved difficult in our dry climate. To supplement the family income, John was a toll keeper for Toll Gate Creek, collecting coins from wagons as they carried people and supplies up and down the front range.

The City of Aurora purchased the house and stable in the 1980s, moving them to the current site and restoring the house in 1982. It is now part of the DeLaney Farm Historic District. Every year dedicated volunteers decorate Gully house for Christmas.

Notes



Notes

Cover Page Art: The DeLaney Round Barn

The barn was built around 1900–1902 as part of the DeLaney family’s homestead along Toll Gate Creek. It originally served as a grain silo, later converted into a two-story cow barn around 1912. Round barns offered several advantages including structural strength, reduced building materials, and centralized feeding and cleaning patterns.

Welcome Page (page 2) – The Senac Site

The Senac Site, near Aurora Reservoir, is a significant prehistoric archaeological site in the Denver metro area — a campsite repeatedly occupied by Native peoples across thousands of years. Recorded and excavated by Aurora archaeologist Marcia Tate, the site was landmarked by the City of Aurora in 2023. Its collection is owned by the State of Colorado and managed by the city, with artifacts held at the Aurora History Museum for research and education.