



Old Aurora Colony

NEWSLETTER OF THE AURORA COLONY HISTORICAL SOCIETY | FALL/WINTER 2018-19

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 2019

Museum closed during January; Office open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

February 1, 2019

Museum Reopens

February 9, 2019

Annual Meeting & Volunteer Recognition Luncheon— Noon at Lutheran Church

March 9-10

Spinning Wheel Showcase

May 11

“Remembering Emma” with Jane Kirkpatrick

July 27

Aurora Colony Handspinners’ Guild Spin & Dye Day

August 9

Aurora Colony Days Beer Garden

August 10

Aurora Colony Day At the Museum

August 24

“Celebrate the Colony” Fundraising Dinner

October 11-20

47th Annual Quilt Show, “Rhapsody in Blue”

The Aurora Colony Historical Society promotes interactive lifelong learning by inspiring curiosity about, and preservation of, the heritage of the Aurora Colony.

GROUND BROKEN & NAME ANNOUNCED FOR NEW WILL FAMILY PRESERVATION & RESEARCH CENTER

The August 25 Occasion at the Octagon presented the perfect opportunity to hold a symbolic groundbreaking for the Aurora Colony Historical Society’s new preservation and research facility and to announce its name. With their gifts and pledges totaling \$500,000, Lee & Connie Kearney earned the right to name the building. They decided to honor Lee’s Colony ancestors from the Will family by naming the building *The ACHS Will Family Preservation & Research Center* (P&R).

Lee announced the name to approximately 100 attendees at the Occasion at the Octagon on August 25 as he and Board President Spud Sperb used golden shovels to turn the first ceremonial scoops of dirt.

The ACHS Board of Directors and its P&R Committee have been working steadily throughout the past two years to bring this project forward. Most recently, the committee interviewed three construction firms and selected Pence Northwest, a Salem contractor, to build the facility for a cost of \$1.26 million. President Spud Sperb signed the contract just before Christmas, and construction is set to begin in March 2019. “Substantial” construction is due by November 2019 according to the contract, which puts us in good position to have an occupancy permit in hand by April 2020. That’s the deadline to meet the conditions of a \$400,000 grant from the Oregon Legislative



Lee Kearney, a Will family descendant, broke ground on the Society’s new preservation & research center during the Occasion at the Octagon August 25. Construction should begin March 2019.



Architect renderings of the Will Family Preservation & Research Center, to be built behind 21561 Main St.



Assembly, which made the first significant contribution that helped push this project from dream to reality.

Current contributions for the project stand at just over \$1 million, with another \$500,000 to \$700,000

needed to complete the project according to plan. We need about \$250,000 just to meet actual construction costs for the building, but those costs do not

P&R—Continued on page 2

P&R—Continued from page 1

include the special shelving system that is planned or the building technology that would make the facility function well. In addition, the board would like to restore funds to the account ACHS used to purchase the building site.

How you can help

You can help by donating to the building fund for this project. ACHS will recognize donations of \$1,000 and above on a donor wall at the building entry. Naming rights for rooms such as the library or the textiles room are available at levels of \$100,000 and



Board members voted December 18 to award the contract to build the ACHS Will Family Preservation & Research Center. Front: James Moore, Treasurer Brian Asher. Back: Bill Bennett, President Spud Sperb, Secretary Carol Burger, Luana Hill, Vice President Ken Hartley, Executive Director Patrick Harris

above. ALL donations will be recognized in this newsletter. Best of all, each donor will have the satisfaction of knowing that the documents, research, and treasured artifacts of the Aurora Colony are preserved for future generations.

During November and December

\$69,195 was donated to the Preservation and Research Building Fund, the highlight being a gift of \$50,000 from Barbara Giesy, whose late husband Jerry was a great grandson of colonist John Giesy.

Up to January 3rd, 2019, 35 individuals or organizations have made at least a \$1,000 donation. Innovative ways of giving have included a group gift of \$1,000 from the Aurora Colony Handspinners' Guild, a \$1,000 Intel match to a larger gift from Cathy & Tom Harper, and a stock gift from Brady & Diane Kocher Downs, which allowed them to bypass capital gains taxes. (This can also work with 401Ks and IRAs.) Other gifts have been pledged through multi-year installments. One way or another, it all adds up, and means that soon our building will be a reality. *Thank you for your support.* Please feel free to discuss giving options with Patrick Harris, 503.678.5754.

**Please direct donations to the P&R Building Fund:
ACHS Building Fund, PO Box 202, Aurora, OR 97002
Learn more at the Annual Meeting February 9**

Thank You

*to the following donors for contributions to the
ACHS Will Family Preservation & Research Center
through December 31, 2018*

BUILDING NAMING RIGHTS: \$500,000

Lee & Connie Kearney

PLATINUM: \$50,000 & HIGHER

Oregon Legislature
Barbara Giesy

GOLD: \$25,000-\$49,999

Anonymous

SILVER: \$10,000-\$24,999

Austin Foundation
AOH Foundation
Reg & Ann Keddie
Brady & Diane Kocher Downs

BRONZE: \$5,000-\$9,999

Shirley Will
Lavina Windh
Bill & Marlene Wettstein
Elisabeth Walton Potter
Chuck Scott

**CONTRIBUTIONS UP TO
\$1,000**

Nic & Billie Kaiser
Cheryl Burks
Johanna Dekay
Elizabeth Heininge
Kim Higgins
Spud & Sally Sperb
Allen and JoAnne Daly
James and Barbara Gentry
Walt & Charlotte Wirfs
Melissa Meacham Stewart
John Schuele
William & Mary Taylor
Sylvia Dion
Margaret Torgeson
Darwin & Sandra Dittmar
Rob & Nancy Downie
Verne Duncan
Nancy Jensen
Della Ward
Darlene Webb
Charles & Edith Weiss
Lee & Ginger Ashworth
Dianne Crisell
Elisa Dale
Mella Dee Fraser
Ann Ransmeier
Dianne Roubal
Silloway Weaving Studio
Dale & Linda Forrest
Bob Jackson & Deborah Ziegler
Paul Minton

PEWTER: \$1,000-\$4,999

Bill & Martha Bennett
Dr. Robert & Mary Ann Moore
Tarbell Foundation
Susan Black & John Berard
Iselin Architects
Gladys Thommen
Cathy & Tom Harper
Intel Match-Harper
Richard & Doris Lauer
Carol Burger
Aurora Colony Handspinners'
Guild
Judi & Alfred D. Aus
Brynn Beals
Susan Hazel & Gene Georgetta
Paul & Linda Giesy Gilham
Norman Hall
Shirley Will Hall
Bill & Margaret Hansell
John Herman
Gary & Elaine Ihle
Bob & Donna Setterberg
Donnie & Pamela Weninger
Karen & James Young

AUGUST 25 OCCASION AT THE OCTAGON RAISES OPERATING FUNDS

The charming and mysterious Octagon Building was once again the setting for our 8th annual fundraising dinner, the Occasion at the Octagon, on August 25. The event raised just over \$20,000 and will provide crucial support for the ongoing operations and programs of the Aurora Colony Historical Society.



Brian Asher and Nancy Nishimura chaired this year's event with the support of the ACHS Board. Dinner featured planked salmon grilled over charcoal. Featured wines included some German-style wines from local Christopher Bridge Winery. Auction and basket raffle items include fine wines, dinners in historic Aurora homes, artwork, and event tickets. There was also a quilt raffle. Special thanks to all our donors, who are listed below.

The 2019 fundraising dinner will be August 24, 2019. Current plans place it in the museum courtyard, as the Octagon site will be a construction staging area for the new ACHS Will Family Preservation and Research Center.

Clockwise from right: Enjoying the Occasion at the Octagon; Volunteer Dale Rushton helps prep the dinner; Susan Black scouts some of the great raffle items, including some watercolors she donated; Plank-roasted salmon fresh off the fire.



Thank You

To all those who helped with the Occasion at the Octagon

BUSINESS DONORS:

ACE Hardware-Canby
 Amy's Pet Grooming/ Amy Tovar
 Asher Traditional Homes/ Brian Asher
 Aurora Colony Pub/ Stacey Young
 The Aurora Company/ Stephanie Sutch
 Aurora Family Dentistry/ Dr. Joe Young
 Aurora Family Health & Birth Center/
 Susie Corcoran
 Aurora Mills Architectural Salvage/
 Mike Byrnes
 Clackamas Repertory Theatre
 End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive
 Center
 Fir Point Farms/ Jessica Romaine
 French Prairie Perennials/ Kerry Naylor
 Highway 99E Antiques Mall/ Tracy
 Schafer
 Historic Art & Services/ Sean Moen
 Oregon Symphony Orchestra
 Pacific Hazelnut Farms
 Portland Walking Tour Company

Schreiner's Iris Gardens
 Suburban Door/ Barry Heinz
 The Human Bean
 Time After Time/ Karen Townsend
 White Rabbit Bakery/ Emily Arreola
 Wilco Farm Stores

INDIVIDUAL DONORS:

Brian Asher & Nancy Nishimura
 Susan Black
 Carol Burger
 Cheryl Burks
 Tony Crawford
 Patrick Harris
 Ken Hartley
 Luana & Bob Hill
 Joyce Holmes
 Deborah Hutton
 Roberta Hutton
 Bernice Ivey
 Annette & Dr. Frank James
 Jessica Gibson
 Lee & Connie Kearney
 Reg & Ann Keddie
 James & Cheré Moore
 Guy "Spud" & Sally Sperb
 Michael & Stephanie Sutch

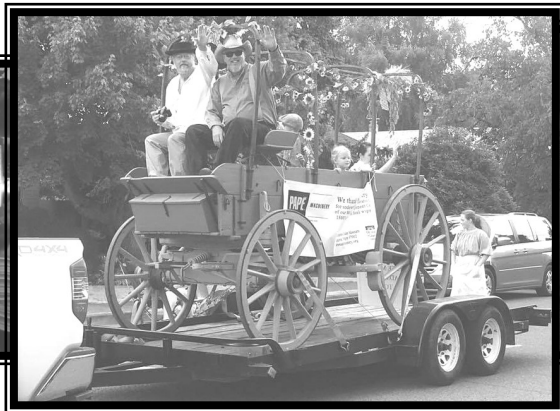
Lyallyn Temple
 Larry Townsend
 Walt Wirfs
 Nancy & Steve Woodyard

VOLUNTEERS

Aurora Fire Department
 Samantha Bonser
 Sarah Bottemiller
 Cheryl Burks
 Emily Burks
 Elisa Dale
 Steve Freid
 Roberta Hutton
 Annette James
 Kaitlyn Kirkman
 Aiden Leder
 Royann Lund
 Colton Moore
 Nancy Nishimura
 Eileen Nuffer
 Old Aurora Colony Quilters
 Shelby Parrack
 Dale Rushton
 Sally Sperb
 Pamela Weninger
 ACHS Board of Directors

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY—ACHS HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018

Aurora Colony Day— The Friday night Beer Garden drew a friendly local crowd to the Octagon Building. Patrick Harris and Spud Sperb rode our Moline Wagon in Saturday's parade. Museum activities included a make it/take it project assisted by Ken Hartley and Aiden Leder.



46th Annual Old Aurora Colony Quilt Show

Guests were SEEING STARS at the 2018 Quilt Show. Clockwise from right: Featured quilter was Charlotte Wirfs, who also donated numerous quilts from her own collection to sell as a fundraiser for Colony quilt preservation— a much-appreciated gift! One of the People's Choice awards went to this Feathered Star by Iris Bingham. Below, owner Thomas proudly displays the star-themed quilt made for him by his mom, museum volunteer Samantha Bonser.

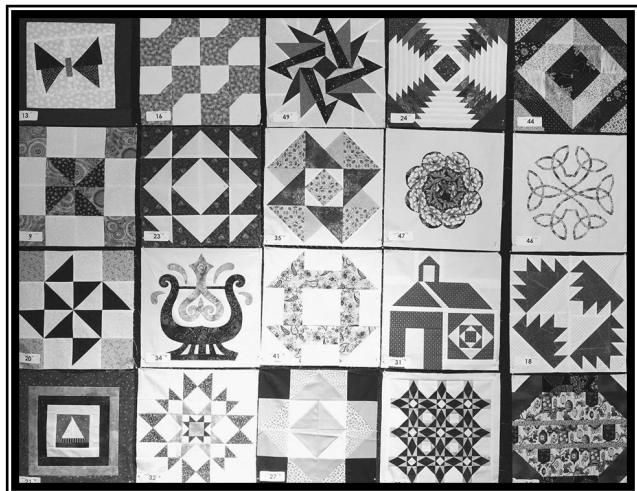
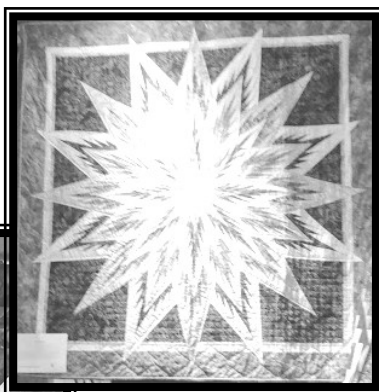


Aurora Colony Handspinners' Guild Dye Day—

We enjoyed hosting the Aurora Colony Handspinners' Guild for their Dye Day on July 21 and appreciate how willing they are to share their knowledge with museum visitors.



Special thanks to Cheryl Burks and Annette James for their weeks of work setting up the special Colony Store during the Quilt Show! They say this is their last year organizing the store, so if you are interested in stepping into their shoes, contact Christina at 503.678.5754.



Winning Quilt Blocks—Rhapsody in Blue for 2019 ↑

Fifty-four blue and white quilt blocks were entered in our contest during this year's quilt show and the 20 winning blocks will be assembled into a quilt by the Aurora Colony Quilters Guild for raffle at the 2019 quilt show. Top to bottom, left to right, Row 1: Nancy Savonick, JoAnn Wozniak, Judy Kilgore, Claire Kellogg, Paulette Merrill; Row 2: Cecelia Leno, Sally Rogers, Jill Holden, Renee Baird, Carol Gassman; Row 3: Karen Stephens, Theresa Fritchie, Robin Schar, Theresa Fritchie, Marilyn Hill; Row 4: Claire Kellogg, Lynda Reed, Phyllis Hogan, Pat Cronin, Cheri Stuller.



THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS — YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Can you dig it? →

Jan (pictured) and Ken Becker have been working on our grounds, installing a drip irrigation system, removing overgrown sections and planting more appropriate and manageable plants. Here is a picture of Jan at work.



Let there be light ↓

Victor Leder generously donated his time and talent to install new LED light fixtures on the ox barn, and he did it in 100 degree heat, with a smile



↑ Scrub a dub

A July 23 work party brought out Bill Bennett, Ken Hartley, Dale Rushton, Aiden Leder, Claire Leder, and Bob & Luana Hill to dust, scrub, and spruce up the artifacts in the tie shed and wash down some of the museum buildings and fences.



175th Oregon Trail Anniversary in Oregon City

Patrick Harris and Bob Hill prepped the Moline wagon for a tow to the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center 175th anniversary celebration for their 2-day event. Regular desk volunteer Cathy Harper and her husband Tom represented Aurora as historic interpreters. Cathy shared her knowledge of period quilting while Tom demonstrated cooper skills by making buckets. Patrick Harris gave a talk on Sunday on the Aurora Colony story.



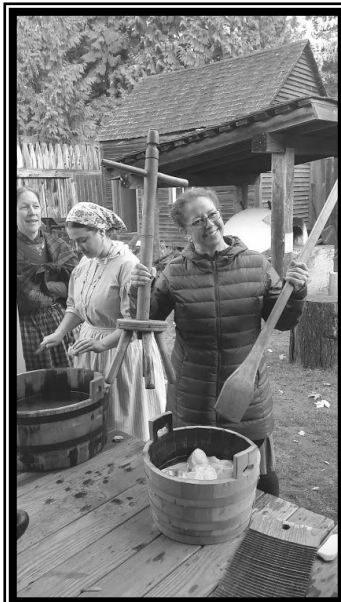
Christmas Candlelight Tour

Eight members of Dr. Joe Young's family and nearly 50 other cheery volunteers staged a series of vignettes in the museum buildings for the 2018 Candlelight Tour. Heartstrings provided the beautiful period holiday music.



ACHS ATTENDS ALHFAM CONFERENCE

Christina Leder, our Programs & Volunteer Liaison, and Board Member Luana Hill attended the western regional conference of ALHFAM in Tacoma in November. The four-day event gave them exposure to programming, exhibits, and networking with representatives of living history sites all over the west, including Fort Nisqually, the Harbor History Museum, Fort Steilacoom, and the Washington State History Museum.



THANKS FOR DONATING...



Becke Bowles Barnes donated an alto horn that belonged to her grandfather, Aurora Colony band member Henry Becke. The gift included original Colony music manuscripts; one was signed by Dr. Keil's son Frederick.

Joyce Holmes donated several family photograph albums from her Stauffer, Will and Kocher ancestors. Many members remember that Joyce and brother Alan Yoder are the children of Zane and Vera Yoder, longtime ACHS supporters. Vera edited the cookbook we still sell at the museum.

FARM & VILLAGE PROGRAMS READY FOR 2019. CAN YOU VOLUNTEER?



Another 4,000 4th grade students are headed to the Stauffer Will Farm and the Old Aurora Colony Museum Village to experience pioneer life this spring! Christina Leder, Kathy Hardman and Jan Becker will be on hand with a dedicated crew of volunteers to help the children make dinner rolls, quilt blocks, candles, candle holders, and wood projects. Christina, who is both our volunteer coordinator and farm program coordinator, reports that available school time slots are almost completely filled at both locations. All that's needed are volunteers! We provide the training, and there are almost always dinner rolls to eat at lunch. It's a great volunteer experience. If you are interested or just want more information, contact Christina at 503.678.5754 or 253.324.1582, email christina@auroracolony.org. She'll be emailing volunteers soon to work out the volunteer schedule.

FARM PROGRAM

March 4 & 5, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Clean up days at the farm. Soup will be provided, or BYO lunch.

March 11, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Training for new interpreters or those who want to learn a new station. This will be the only day for people to watch a presenter as they present a station. Soup and rolls will be provided, or BYO lunch.

March 12, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Training for all. At this meeting, we will discuss presentation techniques, managing groups, discipline, policies & procedures, and have a Q&A for each station. Soup or sandwiches will be provided-or BYO lunch.

March 18-22

Farm program begins, then off for Spring Break

April 1 (no joke!) to June 12

Schools scheduled every weekday!

VILLAGE PROGRAM

April 15

Village cleaning and set up

April 22

Village training

April 29—June 11

Village program Mondays-Thursday

CELEBRATING FARM & VILLAGE PROGRAMS

June 13

End of season potluck for both programs at the Farm

EDITH "EDIE" C. TORGESON



Edith Crisell Torgeson, longtime ACHS member, died August 28 at the age of 97. Edie became especially active with the museum in recent years as a contributor to our exhibits on the connection of the Aurora

Colony to the French Prairie settlers. She was a descendant of 1847 pioneers Robert & Rachel Bird and William & Elizabeth Whitney. In 2008 she arranged for the donation of the Whitney family goose platter. Here is a snippet from her memoirs:

"Mr. Robert Southwick greeted us warmly in the fall of 1926. There were no preschools or kindergartens and since my birthday came



just two days ahead of the January cut-off date, I was enrolled as a petite five-year-old first grader. That September was the beginning of the Union Hill school district consolidation with Aurora. It was a revolutionary step for the mid 1920s. Especially so since Union Hill was located in Clackamas County and students were to be transported across the Marion County line to a newer four room school. Aurora voters had turned down building their own high school and so some people considered their having a modern grammar school a surprisingly progressive step.

"My two older brothers, William and Glenn, and two older cousins, Roberta and Elmer Crisell, often talked about how much fun they had had at school but in the summer of 1926 they thought it would be different. A man would be the principal. He had been a soldier in the world war and probably would be a lot meaner than any of the lady teachers they had previously.

"We would be riding to school in a new bus and Mr. Southwick was not only the principal he was also the bus driver. He told me that my first grade teacher had the same name as mine, Edith. She was his wife. Several years would pass before Oregon school boards stopped hiring married women under the premise that men with families or single men and women needed the job more than a woman with a husband did.

"I recall the bus rides home. On a fall day Mr. Southwick stopped the bus and asked the "big boys" to pick apples for everyone from a windrow tree near Ernie Becke's home. No apple ever tasted any better."

BOARD REPORT

The Board of Directors has directed much of its activity in recent months to fundraising, interviewing contractors, planning for the new preservation and research facility, and working through the many special events that take us from summer into fall into winter.

The next order of business is to hold the annual meeting of the Society on February 9, 2019, where a balanced budget will be presented and at least two new board members will be elected. Should you be interested in serving on the board, there are still some openings. Contact Patrick Harris, 503.678.5754.



Members & Volunteers Invited
**Combined Annual Meeting &
Volunteer Recognition**
February 9, 2019 at Noon
Christ Lutheran Church, Aurora

*Potluck items welcome but not required—
main dish and dessert will be provided*

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Gail Clark Stiffler
Arlene Anderson
Gail Yazzolino
Richard & Lynn Sadler
Mary Pardo
Ken and Lucinda Riley
Charles and Edith Weiss.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

- ◆ Tuesday desk volunteer, 3 to 5 hours
- ◆ Costume repair and cleaning
- ◆ Building & grounds maintenance workers
 - ◆ Living history tour guides
 - ◆ Tech support/website help
 - ◆ Special event helpers
- ◆ Farm and Village program volunteers

**Call Christina at 503.678.5754
if you can help!**



Old Aurora —Colony—

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KEEP IN TOUCH with ACHS

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www.auroracolony.org

Find us:

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Street address: 15018 Second Street NE
(Corner of Second & Liberty Streets)
Aurora, Oregon 97002

Phone: 503.678.5754 **Fax:** 503.678.5756



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Guy Sperb, *President*

Ken Hartley, *Vice President*

Brian Asher, *Treasurer*

Carol Burger, *Secretary*

Bill Bennett Luana Hill

James Moore Cheré Moore

Sincere thanks to Nancy Woodyard, who recently resigned for health reasons. We appreciate your dedicated service.

STAFF

Patrick Harris, *Executive Director*


Caroline Queer, *Business Manager*

Christina Leder, *Programs & Volunteer Liaison*

Janus Childs, *Weekend Tour Guide*

Kathy Hardman, *Farm Program Assistant*

Jan Becker, *Village Program Coordinator*

We are a **Blue Star Museum**

 Free admission for:

- Veterans with ID
- Active duty military & their families with ID

arts.gov/bluestarmuseums

REVIEW US!

