



Old Aurora Colony

NEWSLETTER OF THE AURORA COLONY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER/2019

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 9, 5– 11 p.m.

*Aurora Colony Days
Beer Garden*

In the Museum Courtyard



August 10, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

*Aurora Colony Day
At the Museum*

August 24, 4-7 p.m.

*“Celebrate the Colony”
Fundraising Dinner
In the Museum Courtyard*

October 11-20,

10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily

*47th Annual Quilt Show,
“Rhapsody in Blue”*

November 30, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

*Christmas in Aurora
At the Museum*

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

MUSEUM KICKS OFF AURORA COLONY DAYS WITH MUSIC FROM EXCITING NEW BLUES STAR

The city’s annual Aurora Colony Days celebration is next up on our busy summer events schedule, and it opens with the historical society’s own family friendly beer garden in the museum courtyard August 9 from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. , followed on Saturday with hands-on activities and demonstrations at the museum.

Bring the family to the museum courtyard on **Friday, August 9 from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.** There will be brats from Ebner’s, local beer and cider, and great music. Fresh from the Waterfront Blues Festival is **Timothy James**, a 17-year-old singer/songwriter/guitarist from Mulino, who has torn across stages from Portland to Anaheim to the International Blues Challenge in Memphis. Although he has roots in the blues, his passion is mixing R&B and Soul with Pop music.



Saturday, August 10, after the parade until 4 p.m., the museum will be open for Aurora Colony Days, with free admission and lots of activities. There will be pioneer games, and activities such as laundry and possibly penmanship, sawing wood, and grinding grain. The first 50 kids can make and take home a cedar tote.

‘CELEBRATE THE COLONY’ DINNER IS AUGUST 24



With the Octagon Building a construction zone, the ACHS annual fundraising dinner moves to the museum courtyard this year. We will *Celebrate the Colony* August 24 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tickets are \$60 per person and are limited to 100 seats. Dinner will be planked salmon grilled over charcoal, with salads and dessert, and there will be local wines and cider.

New board member Ken Riley has energized the board to obtain new and different auction items. You’ll have the opportunity to win many, many gift cards and experiences from new donors — including Beaver football tickets,

Ducks basketball tickets, winery experiences, dinners, plays, and more. Come help raise funds for museum maintenance and programs!

This year we will *Celebrate the Colony* with jazz vocalist extraordinaire Rebecca Hardiman and her husband Ray Hardiman on piano. Rebecca has been singing in the Northwest since 1990 and is often described as a unique mix of Ella Fitzgerald, June Christy, Anita O’Day and Doris Day.



To purchase tickets, visit www.auroracolony.org or call Caroline at 503-678-5754.

Celebrate the Colony

FARM & VILLAGE CELEBRATE A SUCCESSFUL SEASON

Our wonderful volunteers in the Farm and Village programs for fourth graders celebrated a phenomenally successful program during a potluck on June 13 at the Stauffer-Will Farmstead. Staffers Christina Leder, Jan Becker, and Kathy Hardman presented volunteers with special mementos based on their primary volunteer position during school tour season, such as quilted wall hangings for the quilting teachers, potholders and cookbooks for the bread makers, and wood-burned thank-you plaques for barn workers.



Staff and volunteers hosted 5,000 4th graders, teachers and chaperones this spring at our Farm and Village programs. From left: Patrick Harris, Larry Townsend, Diane Zollner, Steve Fried, and Jan Becker



SUMMER MEMBERSHIP MEETING LOOKS AT STRATEGIC PLANNING

About 25 members of ACHS gathered in the museum courtyard on June 20 to enjoy cider and nibbles, celebrate the Summer Solstice, and talk about their vision for the society. Between now and the end of the year, ACHS will be reaching out to our various stakeholders — the business community, descendants, members, and area residents — to create a new strategic plan. The current strategic plan expires this year.

Guest enjoyed some nibbles along with some excellent Will House Blend cider from the Aurora Cider Company



BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

Our board has been busy with preparations for the new building plus the many summer events that happen at the museum. Our current projects include everything from planning the beer garden and the fundraising dinner, to beginning work on a new strategic plan, overseeing construction of the new building, and painting porches and fences ourselves to save money.

We are still looking for additional board members — we have seven, and our bylaws allow for up to 11 board members. If you are interested in serving on the ACHS board, or know someone who would make a good member, please let Patrick Harris know.

HANDSPINNERS, HERB SOCIETY HOST SUMMER EVENTS

Thanks to the **Willamette Valley Herb Society** and the **Aurora Colony HandspINNERS” Guild** for bringing fun to the courtyard of the museum. Timing of the newsletter left us without pictures from this year, but the herb folks did crafts and shared knowledge on July 13, and the spinners held their annual Dye Day on July 20. Both of these activities draw extra visitors to the museum and share knowledge about crafts used during Colony times. We are so glad to have these partnerships with these good friends of the museum.

DO YOU HAVE BLUE & WHITE OR MUSIC-THEMED QUILTS?

As summer gives way to fall it will be time for our popular tradition, the Aurora Colony Quilt Show, October 11-20. This year’s theme is *Rhapsody in Blue*, and the Aurora Colony Quilters have nearly completed the beautiful blue-and-white raffle quilt (left) that will be won by some lucky ticket buyer on October 20.



Do you have blue and white quilts you would like to show, or quilts with a musical theme? Or any quilt? This is your year! Please contact Christina Leder at the museum for

details on how to show a quilt.

If you’re a quilter (or aspire to be), think about entering a block or two in the annual block contest. The theme of next year’s 2020 show will play off the idea of 20/20 vision, and asks the question “what personally brings you joy?” This is a great opportunity for creativity, as there are no required colors. For a rules sheet, call the museum, or visit www.auroracolony.org/old/aurora/calendar_event/47th_annual_quilt_show/

47th Annual Quilt Show
“Rhapsody in Blue”
October 11-20, 2019, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily
Demos ✦ Featured Quilters ✦ Country Store & Vintage Quilt Sale
Block Contest ✦ Raffle Quilt ✦ Coffee Shop
Old Aurora Colony Museum ✦ 15018 2nd St NE, Aurora, Oregon
www.auroracolony.org @oldauroracolonymuseum

EVENT SPONSOR
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What personally brings you joy? Let your creativity loose and show us in your block design!



For details on this year’s block contest, call the museum and ask for a rules sheet:

503-678-5754

WILL FAMILY PRESERVATION & RESEARCH CENTER IS RISING QUICKLY; MJ MURDOCK GRANT ENSURES SPECIAL SHELVING WILL BE INSTALLED

Construction is proceeding rapidly at the building site of the new ACHS Will Family Preservation & Research Center, with progress visible on an almost daily basis. The roof trusses were set to be installed the day this newsletter went to the printer, meaning the building should soon be closed in according to schedule.

The expected timeline is that the building will be framed by mid-June, roofed by mid-September, and the structure completed by Christmas. This should make it possible to obtain an occupancy permit well before the deadline of April 2020, which is required in order to qualify for \$400,000 in funds from the Oregon Legislature.

One piece of good news is that the MJ Murdock Charitable Trust approved an ACHS grant proposal for the special shelving that will hold artifacts. This specialized shelving rolls on tracks poured into the concrete floor, allowing ACHS to maximize available square footage. MJ Murdock provided \$211,000 for this shelving!

As we close in on completion of what has been a five-year process of planning and fundraising, this project could still use your financial support. Another \$200,000 to \$300,000 would enable ACHS to complete construction debt-free and purchase things like appliances for the preservation room and furniture for the research center. An established bank line of credit ensures adequate cash flow, but it would be better not to use it. If you can make a donation of any size, large or small, or add to a donation you have already made, it would be most appreciated and would make a big difference.

Thanks to all who have donated to ensure that the legacy of the Aurora Colony can be preserved and shared with future generations. Reach out to Patrick Harris should you have any questions as we go through the construction process.



Thank You

to the following donors for contributions to the ACHS Will Family Preservation & Research Center received or pledged through July 9, 2019

BUILDING NAMING RIGHTS: \$500,000

Lee & Connie Kearney (Naming the building the Will Family Preservation & Research Center)

PLATINUM: \$50,000 & HIGHER

State of Oregon * MJ Murdock Charitable Trust * Barbara Giesy * Anonymous Board Member

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

Austin Foundation
AOH Foundation
Reg and Ann Keddie
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BRONZE: \$5,000-\$9,999

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continued

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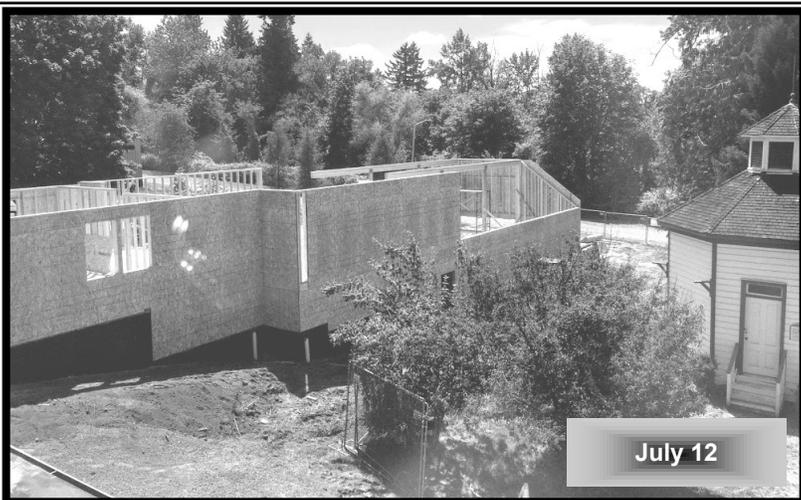
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CONTRIBUTIONS UP TO \$1,000

continued

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July 12



July 12

REMEMBERING JACK FOSMARK

Patrick Harris, Executive Director

With the death of Jack Fosmark on July 2, 2019, the Aurora Colony Historical Society has lost one of its finest historians. Beginning in 1984, just one year after I first started at Aurora as the Museum Director, Jack Fosmark began a systematic documentation of his colony relatives. This research work expanded in a variety of directions over the years and by the early twentieth century, Jack was doing his research on a weekly basis at the museum. Because of Jack's diligent work, much of the story of the David Zimmerman and Elizabeth Wolfer family is now well known and appreciated—not only by family but also as part of the museum archive collection.

David Zimmerman married Elizabeth Wolfer at Bethel, Missouri, on October 14, 1860. And, as Jack recalled, a baby they named Kate followed:

"The Zimmerman baby quilt, with baby Kate swaddled in it, came across the Great Plains in 1863 in the arms of Kate's mother. Oral family legend handed down to me via my mother, Grace, has it that Elizabeth walked all or most of the way to Aurora. That was not unusual for womenfolk of the day, as it lightened the load for the ox teams and also allowed the walker to avoid the huge cloud of dust kicked up by the wagons, 42 of them in this case. From what I know about it, the average distance covered daily was about 15 to 18 miles. At my encouragement Bette (Krueger) Thompson donated the quilt to the Aurora Museum several years ago. Bette was the daughter of Katie (Ritter) Krueger, my mother's sister."

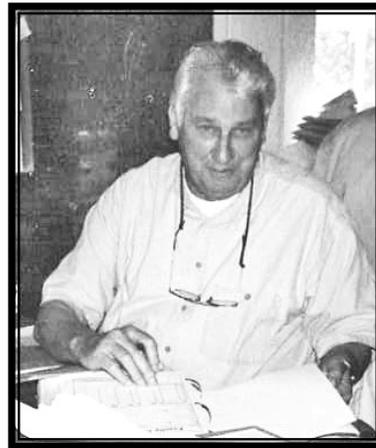
Thus were family artifacts rediscovered, some of them eventually making it into the museum collection.

One such artifact was the wedding shirt made by Elizabeth in 1860 for David. His initials are visible on the front. Its exhibition in a recent museum show got Jack's attention:

"One of the things we wanted to see again was the 'shirt' made by my great-grandmother Elizabeth Wolfer Zimmerman. My wife Lee, who has worked in retail clothing sales for more than 30 years, KNOWS clothes. She noticed immediately that in the photo of my grandmother Kate Ritter in a swing, placed near the shirt (Lee called it a blouse) Kate was wearing the very same garment! It must have been a special occasion! Could it have been Kate and Jake's wedding anniversary? They were married in Oregon City in 1880! Or could it have been Elizabeth's shirt, made two decades

earlier in Bethel for her own 1860 wedding to David Zimmerman II, and then handed down to her eldest daughter Kate?"

The beginning of Jack's serious research dovetailed nicely with my own efforts to organize the museum's history files by subject and family. Over the years we both realized the value of our efforts even as the topics did not always cover colony subjects. Jack ably answered this question with *"I realize such history is out of the time frame of Keil's Aurora colony. But my family history sprang from that colony era. I find myself going back over these newer avenues to treasure and knowledge."*



Jack Fosmark

In fact, Jack was ahead of his time in realizing the significance of the other families who lived near the colonists in the Willamette Valley. His research helped to prove that despite some earlier assumptions, the colony was not isolated from its neighbors.

His enthusiasm often ran ahead of the interest expressed by relatives:

"I have so much history to share with my newfound cousins, but it is impossible for me to compile it for each of them. I recommend that you all visit me at least once in your lifetime, to view my collection of family history."

It was gratifying for me to receive this vote of confidence of Jack concerning our common efforts:

"Because of Oxbarn Museum and its staff, my files are achieving a semblance of order. Thanks for your cooperation and efforts. Best regards Patrick. Keep up the excellent work. ACHS is fortunate indeed to have such dedicated servants as you and your associates there at the Oxbarn."

While Jack's notes include many memories passed down through his family members, perhaps one of his most poignant concerns was that of his mother during her last days.

Kate Zimmerman married Jake Ritter on February 4, 1880.

“The original Zimmerman farm of 1863 was part of the James & Luvina (Mark) Shirley DLC #OC-898, consisting of 596.62 acres which William Keil purchased in 1863 for the Aurora Colony for \$3,000, anticipating the arrival that fall of the 42-wagon train from Bethel. David Zimmerman Jr. established the Aurora Colony Tannery and Zimmerman Cemetery across the road from their house.

“As the firstborn Zimmerman child, Kate's inheritance, in addition to the prime 75 acres included the original Zimmerman house, two barns, numerous outbuildings and two orchards. The once beautiful farm, laid out in typical old German fashion, was located one mile north of Needy, on the east side of what is now S. Needy Road (the original Zimmerman Road).

“Kate (Zimmerman) Ritter inherited this portion of the original Zimmerman farm when her mother Elizabeth (Wolfer) Zimmerman died in 1920, but she and husband Jake Ritter had moved here from their own adjacent 65-acre farm much earlier, when Jake took over management of David Zimmerman's farm around the time of David's death in 1906.

“Jake and Kate's former house was in sight of the Zimmerman house, but nearly a half mile distant on the opposite south side of Bear Creek, nearer to Needy School. The first Needy telephone switchboard, operated by my mother, was still in that house. On quiet evenings, the two places were within shouting distance of one another. In her last two years of life, mother, brother Bob and myself lived with the ailing Kate.

“She sat all day in the south sun room off the kitchen, wrapping and unwrapping her silk-embroidered handkerchief from one hand to the other. Sometime she rocked me in the old creaking willow chair her son John had long ago made for her. She constantly gazed out through the many small windows and through the climbing rose for a glimpse of her old house where all ten of her children had been born and raised. Then tears would well up. She would wipe them away with her pretty little hanky and stop rocking long enough to use her thumb to push in one of the nails that had worked up out of the arm of the old willow rocker. Then she would resume rocking and looking wistfully to the south.”

All of this kind of personal information would simply have been lost without Jack's patient recording of same.

RECENT DONATIONS TO THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

Byron & Dorothy Schriever – Carpenter's Wheel quilt made by Elizabeth Giesy Kraus

Joyce Holmes – Household artifacts from the Stauffer, Will & Kocher families

Carol Yoder – Aurora town calendars from the 1940s and 1950s

Donna Setterberg – Pillow sham made by Clara & Lizzie Will

Wayne Lowrie – \$10 bill from the Aurora First National Bank, 1929

Suzan Joy of Retro Revival – Photos from the Keil family

Marge Geiser Barnhart – Sewing & embroidery items from Ursula Becke Pierce

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Sue Danz in honor of Jack Fosmark
 Shirley Craddick in honor of Dale Wolfer
 David Brandes in honor of Dale Wolfer

NEW MEMBERS IN 2019

Marilyn Hill, Albany	Carol Cooper, Lake Oswego
Arlene Anderson, Aurora	Gail Yazzolino, Oregon City
Scott and Cindy Caufield, Aurora	Bill Boyce, Portland
Ken and Cindy Riley, Aurora	Eileen Fitzsimons, Portland
Richard & Lynne Sadler, Dundee	Ron Knight, Portland (Charles Knight descendant)
Shirley Craddick, Gresham (George Wolfer descendant)	Carol Cooper, Lake Oswego
Mary Pardo, Keizer	Karen Mitchell, Tigard
	Mimi Chitty, West Linn

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!

- ◆ Costume repair and cleaning
- ◆ Fence fixers & trim repairers/painters
 - ◆ Weeding in the herb garden
- ◆ Building & grounds maintenance workers
 - ◆ Living history tour guides
 - ◆ Tech support/website design help
 - ◆ Special event helpers
- ◆ Farm and Village program volunteers for 2020

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



Old Aurora —Colony—

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- *Veterans with ID*
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