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What a night!

The 2022 Hillary House Black & White Ball on October 13th was a night to remember with music, fashion, food, and outstanding support for restoration and preservation of **Hillary House National Historic Site and the Koffler Museum of Medicine.**

Thanks to all of our donors, supporters, sponsors, and when the matching funds from the Town of Aurora are realized, we will have raised over

\$36,000!

In addition, AHS President Patricia announced a recent \$25,000 donation from the Koffler Family Foundation in support of restoration. We thank the Koffler family for their support.



2022 Hillary House Ball Committee. (L-R) Hoda Soliman, Alison Collins-Mrakas, Michelle Primeau, Patricia Wallace, Alan Lambert, Jennifer Bulmer, Helen Burlanette, Sandra Humfries



A captivated Hillary House Ball audience at the Royal Venetian Mansion.

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This issue of *The Attic* is generously sponsored by:



WE'RE OPEN!

Come and visit Hillary House,
Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm.

Please call ahead to ensure staff availability.

While you're here, visit the Gift Shop.
As always, we gladly accept donations of new and gently used items such as giftware, jewellery, home décor, and other household items.

Summer Restoration Work at Hillary House



Carpenter Nicky was hard at work finishing the Hillary House verandah restoration throughout the summer.

The Aurora Historical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to heritage preservation, public education, and enrichment. The AHS owns and operates Hillary House National Historic Site.

We are seeking enthusiastic and dedicated individuals to join our volunteer Board of Directors who will use their leadership and management skills and experience to help the organization move forward in a responsible and relevant manner.

Please send your resume to:
president@aurorahs.com

For more information, you are welcome to contact us at:
 905-727-8991
www.aurorahs.com
 15372 Yonge Street
 Aurora, ON L4G 1N8

2022 Board of Directors

AURORA HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2022

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Newsletter Editor, Volunteer	Christine McLure
Newsletter Layout, Volunteer	Brenda Snape

We invite members to submit suggestions for inclusion in the newsletter. Please email community@aurorahs.com.

AHS Board seeks volunteer Recording Secretary

We are looking for someone to assist the AHS Board of Directors with:

- Preparing and distributing documents for monthly Board meetings
- Attending Board meetings and taking concise and accurate minutes

Contact president@aurorahs.com for more information.

Understanding Victorian Medicine

By Alessandra Falzone

Victorians did not have the same understanding or culture around medicine as we do today. Simply put, Victorians did not know that bacteria and germs existed. Victorians, specifically Dr. Geikie, Dr. Strange and even the two Dr. Hillary's, practiced medicine at a time when ancient applications were met with 'modern' advances. Practitioners were on the cusp of new medical inventions and ideas but still held on to older belief systems on how to treat disease and cure their patients. Newer understandings of illness and disease were still in their infancy when the first three doctors lived and worked in the home.



Victorian Scarificator on display at Hillary House

The major theory during the Victorian Era was the 'Miasma Theory,' a now-defunct understanding that disease and illness were caused by decay and rot (miasmata) emanating into the air, and then causing disease through exposure. Take for example the scarificator. The device was placed on the body and the top lever was pulled, which slashed blades across the skin to induce bleeding. It was used to draw blood out of a sick person in hopes of healing them. A modern audience would not understand the reasoning behind this practice, but to the Victorian mind, this method was completely reasonable. The underlying theory of medicine at the time, prevailing since antiquity, was that the body could only heal itself if the poisons, waste matter, and noxious substances of disease, could be quickly drawn away. It was a system based on Galen's (129 CE-216 CE) humoral system of health. The ancient Greek father of Western medicine reasoned that if all four elements -- yellow bile, black bile, phlegm, and blood -- were balanced, then you were in good health.



Amputation Kit on display at Hillary House

There was little distinction among doctors, surgeons, apothecaries (pharmacists), and midwives - they were all classified as General Practitioners in Ontario. Both Dr. Hillary's were also Obstetricians and Gynecologists in addition to family practitioners. Amputations were commonplace after surgeries, and it was not a question of if but when infection occurred. The amputation kit on display at Hillary House was given to Dr. Robert William Hillary by his brother Dr. Michael Hillary. Home surgeries were common, either at the patient's home or the doctor's office, as the only hospitals in the area during the mid-nineteenth century were located in Toronto. In the Consulting Room at Hillary House there is a chair known as a lancing stool. The doctor sat straddling the chair with their chest against the 'back rest' and placed their forearm on the top of the 'back rest' to steady the arms during surgery. Patients usually kept their clothes on and the doctor would not wash their hands or instruments before or after the surgery. In fact, it was common for doctors to perform surgeries with the bodily fluids from other patients still staining their clothes. It was seen as a mark of distinction in showing off how many surgeries one had conducted.

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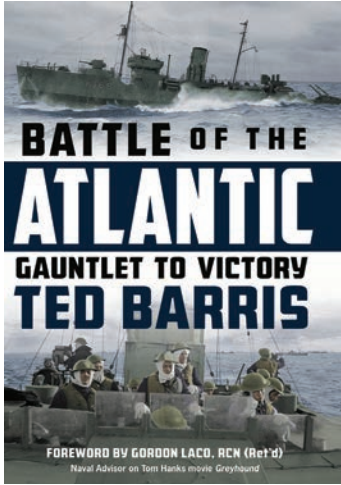
Upcoming Events

Speaker's Series

Wednesday, November 23rd – 7:00pm

In-person or Zoom

Tickets: \$8.50/members, \$10.50/general



Ted Barris: Battle of the Atlantic

In the 20th century's greatest war, one battlefield held the key to victory – the North Atlantic. It took 2,074 days and nights to determine its outcome; the Battle of the Atlantic proved the turning point of WWII. In 1939, Canada's navy went to war with 13 warships and 3,500 sailors. During the desperate Atlantic crossings, the RCN grew to 400 fighting ships and 100,000 personnel in uniform – 4th largest navy in the world. Canada's naval awakening in the bloody battle to get convoys to Britain is a wartime saga for the ages. Join us at Hillary House National Historic Site as author Ted Barris navigates this crucial moment in history in his talk.



Seasonal Programs

Craft something for yourself or get the whole family involved in some fun and exciting programs this season! All programs are in-person and mask-wearing remains optional.

Hot Chocolate on the Verandah

Saturday, November 26th

5:30pm to 7:00pm

In-person
FREE event



Get cozy at Hillary House during the Santa Claus Under the Stars Parade! Stop by our beautifully decorated verandah for some free hot chocolate, while supplies last.



Volunteers Needed.
Contact us for info.

Holiday Wreath Workshop

Saturday, December 3rd

Morning Workshop

10:00am to 12:00pm

Afternoon Workshop

2:00pm to 4:00pm

In-person
Tickets: \$42/person
with supplies included

Grab a hoop and get decorating! Guided by our friends Garden Aurora, enjoy participating in this seasonal craft, in addition to a short tour of Hillary House.



A Family Christmas

Sunday, December 11th –

10:00am to 4:00pm

In-person
Timed-ticket entry
Tickets: \$3.00/child, \$5.00/adult

Festive crafts and treats, Christmas storytelling, and even Santa himself will be at Hillary House National Historic Site! Bring the whole family to spend time at our annual holiday event and take photos on our decorative property.





A huge THANK YOU to our Sponsors, Auction Donors, and Event Donors for their generous support. Special thanks to MC Tim Jones, Mike Smith, Cortney Cassidy, and the After Hours Big Band.

Event Donors



AHS President Patricia Wallace and MC Tim Jones

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Alan Lambert | Dan McGeown | Jackie Stuart | Owen Heritage |
| Alexandra Bonham | Daniel Lajeunesse | John Greenhough | Pamela Farquhar |
| Alison Collins-Mrakas | Donald Webb | John Smale | Rachel Gilliland |
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Event Sponsors

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Auction Donors

- | | | | |
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| Art Gallery of Ontario | Eye Care Optical | Marco Di Girolamo & Family | Royal Canadian Legion |
| Aqua Grill | Filly & Co. | Market Brewing Company | (Br # 385) |
| Artistica Dance Studio | Gaspere Saracino | Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament | St. Andrew's Chiropractic & Wellness |
| Aurora Cultural Centre | Geoff Dawe | MP Leah Taylor Roy, | Story of Love |
| Bijoy's Restaurant | Ginger's Cupcakes | Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill | Sunshine Park Clothing - Hoda Soliman |
| Boston Pizza | Golf Glen Veterinary Clinic | MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, | The Country Look Hair Salon |
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| Chocolate & Company | Kelseys Original | Pine Farms Orchard | |
| Christine Valentini | Roadhouse-Aurora | Ren's Pet Depot | |
| Cormorant Books | Krown Aurora | Royal Ontario Museum | |
| Diamond Groundskeeping Services | La Jolie Cheese Shop | Romy's Restaurant & Lounge | |
| Eric McCartney, Century 21 Heritage Group | Levetto | Rosalyn Gonsalves | |
| | Lori Hoyes, Avon Representative | | |
| | LuxGive | | |



Models Andrea, Jennifer, and Helen show off the latest fashions donated by Hoda Soliman of Sunshine Park Clothing

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

History of the Salvation Army in Aurora & Newmarket

This exhibition co-curated by the Aurora Historical Society and Salvation Army on display at Hillary House National Historic Site showcases the 139-year history of the Salvation Army in the local area.

On display: November 28 – December 23, 2022

Inspirations from a Space of Healing

This is a multi-site exhibition located at Hillary House National Historic Site and the Aurora Cultural Centre's gallery at Aurora Town Hall (second floor). Featuring work by artists of the Society of York Region Artists, this exhibition looks to both medical and domestic artifacts within Hillary House to inspire the creation of new art.

On display: December 10, 2022 – January 28, 2023

Opening Reception: Saturday, December 10, 2022 | 1:00-3:00pm

The Aurora Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of:



Understanding Victorian Medicine

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Throughout the first half of the 19th century, a few notable doctors around Europe began to theorize that illness and disease were caused by microorganisms, contrary to the common Miasma Theory. Agostino Bassi, Dr. Louis-Daniel Beaperthuy, Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis, and Dr. John Snow were conducting their own independent experiments between 1808 and 1855 that led to modern Germ Theory. Dr. Louis Pasteur later furthered the theory when he demonstrated that decay happens from organisms in the air and not from 'bad air' itself. Dr. Joseph Lister worked to implement Germ Theory in the medical field and advocated for better hygiene. Germ Theory harmonized with the established Victorian understanding of how to cure disease. Whereas prior, you were removing the evil miasmas, now you were removing the germs and thus protecting your family from disease. The Victorian Era spanned 63 years from 1837 to 1901, and it wasn't until the late 1870s that the increasingly popular Germ Theory became accepted by the medical community at large.

The Dispensary, the Consulting Room and the Historic Bathroom are all painted white, dating the rooms to the 1890s when Dr. Robert Michael Hillary took over his father's practice. White walls were (and still are) believed to convey a sense of cleanliness, hygiene, and a sterile environment free from germs and organisms.

From practices grounded in ancient tradition to those firmly based in science, Hillary House and its medical collection can be used to showcase the advancement and change in medicine and medical theory during the Victorian Era. Understanding Hillary House and its medical collection mean first having a good understanding of medicine from a 19th-century perspective. We cannot interact with history with the prejudiced stance of current knowledge. We must understand that Victorian medicine is not a monolith, and the difference in cultural attitudes towards medicine in the early Victorian period versus the end is exceptionally stark. With this knowledge, we can look to Victorian medicine not with horror, but with better understanding.

In Memoriam

Dr. Charles Godfrey – (September 24, 1917 – July 24, 2022)

Dr. Charles Godfrey was a renowned physician, politician, and historian. The Aurora Historical Society is home to the Godfrey Collection, an extensive compilation of books, journals, and manuscript material relating to the history of medicine and the social and cultural history of early Ontario. We extend our condolences to his family.



AHS President Patricia Wallace, Murray & Marvella Koffler, Dr. Charles Godfrey and former AHS President Suzanne Reiner at the inaugural Hillary House Ball in 2012.

Highlights from Hillary House



Participants at the Beginners Hand Embroidery Workshop learn the basics of the craft.



Golfers enjoying the green while supporting Hillary House at the AHS Golf Tournament. Thank you to all of the sponsors, golfers, and volunteers who made the day successful.



The weather was beautiful for the 3rd Annual Victorian Harvest Tea in September. Guests enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by the Aurora Legion Ladies Auxiliary and Hurst Bakery. Thank you to the volunteers who helped make the event a great success.



Aurorans learn about the History of Wellington Street on a walking tour led by AHS Programming & Outreach Coordinator Selin in partnership with the Aurora Public Library.



Attendees at A Haunted Halloween at Hillary House enjoy the festivities.



Thank You to Our Summer Staff

The AHS was fortunate to have two summer employees join our team for the summer season, thanks to a federal grant from Canada Summer Jobs.

Grace returned to Hillary House for her third summer, this time as the Assistant Museum Curator. She spent the summer accessioning and cataloguing artifacts, organizing the Archives for better access, and updating some of the long-standing displays. Grace has just begun a graduate program in Library and Information Science at the University of Toronto.



Grace accessioning museum artifacts in May.



Alessandra assisting with the Just 4 You Program in August.

Alessandra joined the AHS team as the Museum Educator this summer and spent her time creating our engaging social media content and assisting with the various events and youth programming. She was also the primary docent, leading our guests on extraordinary tours around Hillary House.

We thank Grace and Alessandra for all of their hard work during the summer and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

Get to Know Aurora

1 Charles Doan (1808-1895) was a prominent citizen during the town's early development. He was a businessman, postmaster, and reeve. There were three buildings in Aurora associated with the Doan name. What were the names of the buildings?

2 What was the town called before Charles Doan changed the name to "Aurora" after the Roman goddess of the dawn?

3 What year did the Ontario, Simcoe, & Huron Union Railroad Company operate the first steam train in Canada West from Toronto to Aurora?

4 The Hartman's Corners Schoolhouse is thought to be the oldest surviving schoolhouse in Aurora, York Region, and the GTA. Built circa 1837, the building was moved from its original location at Hartman's Corners to its current location at 118 Wellington St E. Where was Hartman's Corners?

5 Hillary House is designated a National Historic Site because it's one of the best examples of what type of architecture?



This 1909 image shows Yonge Street looking South from Wellington Street.

Photo courtesy of the book, Postcards of Olde Aurora by Bob McRoberts.

#5 Gothic-Revival

Street East

#4 Intersection of Bayview Avenue and Wellington

#3 1853

#2 Machel's Corners

#1 Castle Doan, Doan Hall, Doan's General Store

Volunteer Opportunities

- * Board of Directors – Director
- * Board of Directors – Secretary
- * Garden Volunteers
- * Tour Guide Volunteers
- * Gift Shop Volunteers
- * Event Volunteers
- * School Programs Volunteers
- * Administration & Special Project Volunteers
- * Collections Volunteers
- * Remote Volunteers

For more information contact community@aurorahs.com



Membership Update

By Julie Preston, Administrative Assistant

It is time to renew your membership for 2023! It's easy. Contact the office, mail in the membership form below, or pay online from our website here www.aurorahs.com/become-member

Your AHS Membership not only entitles you to voting rights at the AGM, but also grants you special **members' discounts** and invites to **members-only events**.

A strong membership base is extremely important to successful grant applications. Having a strong membership base allows AHS to successfully apply for grants for operations or capital projects. For example, without the Town of Aurora's annual grant and the annual Community

Museums Operating Grant, AHS would not be able to keep Hillary House open to the public for tours, exhibits, programs, etc.

Annual memberships are valid from January 1 to December 31 of each calendar year.

Please help us in 2023 by becoming a member or renewing your annual membership.

Thank you to all who are Life Members – your continued support is a valued asset.

Membership Application or Renewal

Annual Fees (January 1 to December 31)



Name: _____

 Address: _____

 Town: _____
 Postal Code: _____
 Telephone: _____
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Membership Fees	One Year	Two Years
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$10.00	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$30.00	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$40.00	\$70.00

Payment can be made by cash, cheque, credit, or debit. Please make cheques payable to the Aurora Historical Society.
15372 Yonge Street, Aurora, ON L4G 1N8 (905) 727-8991
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