

Aurora Historical Society revives Speaker Series virtually

Hillary House National Historic Site has a long history as a public gathering place, offering not only glimpses of Aurora's past but experts to speak on a wide variety of subjects related to local history and the development of our nation as a whole.

The pandemic may have resulted in the dimming of the ballroom lights, at least for the time being, but the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) is gearing up to revive its popular Speaker Series in a virtual format.

The new virtual AHS Speaker Series will kick off next Wednesday, February 24, with historian William Finlayson on the topic of 'Our Lands Speak.'

Join author and archaeologist William Finlayson virtually as he delves into the fascinating history of Ontario, says the AHS. Learn how archaeological digs can provide us with an enriching understanding of the past.

Advanced registration for the event, which will run from 7 to 9 p.m., is required and tickets are \$7 per person through Eventbrite.

The series continues Wednesday, April 28, with Lucy E.M. Black on 'Eleanor Courtown & Medicine in the 19th Century,' a perfect fit for Hillary House, which was not only the home of local doctors prominent in Aurora's early history, but is home to the Koffler Museum of Medicine as well.

Join author Lucy E.M. Black virtually as she discusses her spellbinding novel 'Eleanor Courtown' and the meticulous research she conducted on Canadian historical figures Dr. Langstaff and Dr. Osler to create a realistic portrait of early Canadian medicine and life.

For more information, visit aurorahs.com.

In the meantime, the AHS is continuing its efforts to transcribe historical documents including letters found in its archives for new audiences. The transcription project has been carried out by community volunteers assigned digitized documents for their sleuthing. After a brief hiatus, they are once again looking for your expertise.

Here's your chance to be hands-on with history, right from your own home in your spare time, says the AHS. The Hillary House Collection has many handwritten letters that need to be transcribed for digital preservation. This also allows us to share this interesting historic information online! Starting at the end of February, volunteers will be emailed a scan of a letter and are asked to type up the content and email it back to us. If you are good at reading and writing and would like to help out, please send us an email.

Interested transcribers are asked to contact curator@ahs.com to receive their share of history which they, in turn, can help share with the world.

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter