

No Ghosts of Christmas Past required ? step back in yuletide time at Hillary House

By Brock Weir

Travel back in time to the yuletide of yore this holiday season with the Aurora Historical Society at Hillary House. This month, the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) in conjunction with the Aurora Horticultural Society, have been hard at work transforming the National Historic Site into a Christmas paradise, not to mention the ubiquitous Winter Wonderland. Patrons had their first chance to glimpse their combined handiwork this past Sunday with A Family Christmas. If you missed it, however, get ready for a musical interlude this Sunday, December 10 from 1 ? 4 p.m. featuring the best Christmas Hillary House has to offer, accompanied by classical and holiday music performed live by acclaimed pianist Ellen Meyer. The Musical Christmas will feature not only Miss Meyer, but light refreshments, the ongoing Art at the Manor exhibition featuring the work of local artists, children's activities, a gift shop and more. ?Everything is beautifully decorated by the Aurora Horticultural Society and we have refreshments so people can come in, sit for three hours while Ellen Meyer plays classical music, if they like, or wander through the house listening to the music, taking in all the greenery decorations, as well as our two beautifully decorated Christmas trees ? one decorated to the 1900 period and one for the 1950s ? as well as the gift shop for holiday shopping!?" says Mary Beth Hess of the Historical Society. ?The Horticultural Society [have partnered with us for years] and they have always done a beautiful job. A small team of three does the exterior decorations and we had about 12 or 15 members this year for the interior decorating. One of them even comes back to water the plants inside.? Art at the Manor, which has been ongoing since November 16 running through January 26, features the work of the Aurora Artists Studio Tour ? Carol Beaver, Shirley Binns, Judy Bobsin, Karen Bowen, Deborah Campo, Claire D'Aurore, Willo Rodrigues, and Christine Valentini. ?It is a really nice Christmas event which gets you into the spirit of things, lets you do a bit of shopping, see Hillary House [and the proceeds] help us restore a 150 year old house,?" says Ms. Hess. ?It was built in 1862 and it is one of the main treasures of Aurora. It helps in preservation and restoration and at this event we just want everyone to enjoy themselves.? Tickets for Christmas at Hillary House: A Musical Christmas are \$7 for adults and \$3 per child. For more information, visit www.aurorahs.com or call 905-727-8991.