

Interview: On Wednesday and Thursday, July 12th and 13th, I was interviewed by Feliks Banel, producer, host, and historian for KIRO, the CBS affiliate radio in Seattle WA, for a short feature on “Uncovering the mysterious origins of the name ‘Aurora Bridge’.” Mr. Banel had traced Seattle’s Aurora St. back to Aurora IL, and through their historian to our Aurora and wanted to know the reason for its name. Ours was a wide-ranging conversation that included Aurora’s namer, Gen. Benjamin Ledyard, a close cousin of John Ledyard, who is well known in the Northwest as an early explorer of their coast. Because the formal name of the Aurora Bridge is actually the George Washington Bridge, Mr. Banel asked if there was any connection between Gen. Ledyard and George Washington. Indeed, there was: Ledyard was at Valley Forge with Washington. The feature was broadcast on Friday, July 14.

Queries: For the above, work on researching Ledyard’s Revolutionary War service. In addition, attempts are ongoing to find the definitive link between this village and the founders of Aurora IL that was described in early accounts of the latter. On the location and history of the Jonathan Swan House, which is on the 1805 map but burned in 1850 when Henry Wells was living in it. On where Martha Coffin Wright and David Wright lived in Aurora.

Historic Commemoration: I was pleased to assist Town Historian Shirley Egan’s Fourth of July reading of the Declaration of Independence at Ledyard Town Hall, and thank the Aurora Historical Society for all their help; in particular, Pres. Tracy Leffingwell for booking both the band and the horse. A gratifying number of students participated as readers and still more were among the over 200 guests.

Event Planning: On Wednesday June 28, Shirley Egan and I joined representatives of three area museums for a planning session on a proposed “Museum Crawl” to take place the weekend of Oct.7-8. The next planning meeting is July 19.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Schwab, Ph.D.
Historian, Village of Aurora