

December 2025

*Query:* An important query was received from a Village Trustee about the history of the property that is becoming the Gateway Park. This property is of great historic significance as part of Maj. Edward Paine's holdings. Paine was a Revolutionary War veteran, a very early settler, and was the mail carrier for the postal service (an extremely important position at the time) in its first several years. He had some interesting connections, still being worked out, within Indian trade. (I think he might have played a major role; his son-in-law, Jasper Parrish, was one of the interpreters for the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua.) Promoted to General of militia, Paine also served in the legislature, and in 1800-1801 moved west to found Painesville OH.

Paine's property is drawn and described on the 1795 map, still held by Wells College; he had a "pocket mill" and a distillery, as well as his homestead, on the Gateway Park site. Note that this map has quite specific contemporary value for Aurora. That Aurora as we know it was founded by Revolutionary War veterans is very significant with the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War; a great tie-in, with excellent opportunities to connect with additional NYS advertising. There are living Paine descendants, by the way; I'm occasionally in touch with two.

*Village Celebration:* "Christmas in Aurora" at Patrick Tavern featured seven artisans, two non-profits, and one hot-food station, with about 122-124 visitors stopping by, several staying a while to watch (and even film) demonstrations. By the way, all participating locations reported lower attendance this year, perhaps a combination of weather concerns and competing events in Moravia, Lansing and Auburn.

*Education:* I gave Ithaca College student Travis Conway, who is preparing a documentary about Aurora after the Wells closure as a class project, almost an hour-long review of Aurora history and answered many questions.

*Display:* The display "From Main to the Kicking Tree: Daily Walks in Aurora Circa 1905" closed on Tuesday, Dec. 2. An approximate total of 102 people attended over its 3 month run, with at least 55 volunteer hours logged.

*Acknowledgment:* Volunteer Ken Larson has continued the longitudinal study of temperature and humidity in the Archives Room in Patrick Tavern, and we are very pleased that both these critical numbers are staying within the range prescribed for historic documents. This was achieved by a stepwise approach aiming for minimal expense but maximum efficiency.

In addition, to ensure the safety of building visitors during Christmas in Aurora, Ken shoveled by hand the part of the parking lot (about a third of the area) that Aaron and Tony were not able to address. This kind of citizen commitment to care for a Village historic resource deserves being known and appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Schwab, PhD

Village Historian