



Presentations by Robert Lowell Goller

Aurora Town and East Aurora Village Historian

Please email historian@townofaurora.com for more information or to make arrangements.

All the presentations are about an hour long, including time for questions.

East Aurora After the Lusitania

An examination of the intriguing transitions at the Roycroft and in East Aurora following the deaths of Elbert and Alice Hubbard aboard the RMS Lusitania on May 7, 1915.

A Tempest in the Village Teapot

An examination of Roycroft founder Elbert Hubbard's love-hate relationship with the Village of East Aurora. Elbert Hubbard was a controversial and eccentric character, whose personality and writings were often at odds with the leaders and residents of the small village in which he founded the Roycroft.

Who Were the Roycrofters?

Elbert Hubbard attracted hundreds of creative types to his Arts and Crafts community on South Grove Street at the turn of the 20th Century. Some, like famed artist Alexis Fournier, were invited. Others simply showed up, in the hopes of landing a job at the Roycroft, a place where putting "head, heart and hand" into one's work in equal measure was encouraged in a world otherwise dominated by the assembly-line mentality of the Industrial Revolution. This presentation discusses what it was like to work at the Roycroft and shares the stories of some of the personalities—both famous and not-so-famous—who made The Roycroft Campus and East Aurora their workplace and home.

Why Did Elbert Hubbard Pick East Aurora?

Of all the places Elbert Hubbard could have picked to establish his Roycroft Campus, why did he choose East Aurora? This presentation discusses the possible answers to that question and how Hubbard's decision to locate The Roycroft Campus (and purchase a lot of land) on South Grove Street impacted the small community of East Aurora.

The Little House That Could

An examination of how President Millard Fillmore's honeymoon cottage, built in 1826, went from near destruction to National Historic Landmark.

Abolition in Aurora

This presentation examines the Town of Aurora's unique role in helping runaway slaves reach freedom in Canada and explores the validity of some of the local Underground Railroad stories that have been told over time.

Aurora and the War of 1812

The Town of Aurora was in a unique geographic position during the War of 1812. Discover how the war impacted the early settlers and the development of this small community.

The History of West Falls

This small hamlet on the southwestern edge of the Town of Aurora has a unique history of settlement, several name changes and industrial development.

Who Is the Town Historian and What Does He or She Do?

Did you know that President Franklin D. Roosevelt was also his town's official historian? New York is the only state in the U.S. to require municipal historians by law. Learn about the origins of the Historian's Law, on the books since 1919, and the resources available from the Historian's Office.

Legendary Locals of East Aurora

Robert Lowell Goller discusses his 2014 book, which tells the stories of some of the community's more interesting citizens—both past and present.

A Tale of Two Villages

Before 1874, the Village of East Aurora was two distinct communities. This presentation examines the events that led to the merger of them into one village and the great community debate over what to name it.

Does East Aurora Legally Exist?

For nearly a century, no one had any reason to question the existence of the Village of East Aurora, but for a few weeks in February 1968, East Aurorans were worried that their village might not be real. Learn about the uproar that followed a judge's decision that called into question the village's legal existence.