

Spring Newsletter

Message from the Director



Often, I am surprised by how quickly the newsletter deadline rolls around; but this time I have been eagerly awaiting the opportunity to tell our members about an amazing find that was generously donated to the Aldrich Foundation. A letter written by Mrs. Aldrich (dated February 23, 1923) to Hettie Bailey was recently located by Mrs. Bailey's family members in Maryland. The letter was in response to Ms. Bailey's request for more information about Mrs. Aldrich for her ladies' club. It gives us some delightful insight into Mrs. Aldrich, her characterization, and her writing routine. I am excited to share an excerpt from the letter and encourage you to attend our Spring Banquet where the letter will be on display and an interpretation given through a character portrayal.

"I've had a terribly busy time since Christmas and was never so behind in my correspondence. If I were only paid by the mile for all the chasing I've done back and forth between here and the new house. I'd make more money than in writing. I'll be glad when we're moved, settled and in the old routine again."

"They (your Ladies Club members) probably know there are four children. Mary Eleanor will be fourteen next week, James Whitsom was eleven this month, Charles Jr. was nine in Sept., and Bobbie will be three next June. James was named after my side of the house and turned out to look and act like his father. Charles was named after his father and turned out to look and act like the Streeters. So I contend that all children ought to be allowed to rename themselves at twenty-one like the Chinese. . . . I've been asked dozens of time if certain characters were from real life. People have insisted that every member of the Mason family was too real not to have been taken from among my friends, but that isn't so. To make a character appear real, take some human characteristics that you see, build a personality on that characteristic, and you have a real human character in a story."

We were excited to find the reference to *Mother Mason* in Mrs. Aldrich's letter because this year the Aldrich Foundation is featuring *Mother Mason*. It is the 100th anniversary of the first story ("Mother's Dash for Liberty"), which first appeared in *American Magazine* in 1919. We will be highlighting this book at our Spring Banquet. The program will include Sue McLain (Yesterday's Lady, Beatrice, Nebraska). Sue's program is entitled "A Century of Fashion: 1870 to 1970" and is being sponsored by Humanities Nebraska. There will also be an enactment of Mrs. Aldrich by Donna Durette before our short story winners are recognized. The Foundation has ordered extra copies of the book and is offering it for sale for \$15 (regularly \$20) through 2019. We hope to see you there! —Kurk Shrader, Executive Director

Join Us at the Spring Banquet



What: Bess Streeter Aldrich Spring Banquet, Honoring *Mother Mason*

When: Saturday, April 6

Where: Social & Vintage Clothing Exhibit, 5 to 6:15 p.m. at Aldrich House
Dinner, 6:30 Elmwood Christian Church, 311 5th Street

Menu: Roasted Pork*, Seasoned Red Potatoes, Green Beans Almondine, Dinner Roll,
Broccoli Salad, and Strawberry Short Cake

*Note: a Vegetarian Lasagna May Be Substituted by Notifying the Director

Entertainment: Sue McLain, Yesterday's Lady, Beatrice, Nebraska
"A Century of Fashion: 1870 to 1970"

Donna Durette, Bess Streeter Aldrich Enactment
Announcement of Short Story Contest Winners

Cost: \$15.00; RSVP by April 1 by Calling 867-4233 or emailing kurkshrader@gmail.com

Spring Banquet Cont.

Part I—"A Century of Fashion, 1870-1970," Sue McLain



Sue McLain, better known as "Yesterday's Lady," lives with her husband in a historic 1887 building, with her vintage clothing collection and shop on the main level in downtown Beatrice, Nebraska.

Sue has been collecting vintage clothing for 25 years and has a wide variety of artifacts, ranging from the 1840's through the 1970's. As a Nebraska Humanities speaker, she has traveled the Midwest entertaining groups with a wide selection of fashion programs and shows.

Yesterday's Lady aims to take you on a trip through time as Sue shares her love of vintage clothing. Sue's guests learn about the fashions from the past and leave with a greater appreciation for why we should treasure these artifacts.



NEBRASKA
CULTURAL
ENDOWMENT

The program is free and will start at approximately 7:15. Individuals wanting to participate in the social event at the Aldrich House and/or enjoy the meal that will be served before the program should make reservations, \$15.

With major funding support from Humanities Nebraska, the Nebraska State Legislature, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, and private donations.



HUMANITIES NEBRASKA

Part II—"A Visit from Mrs. Aldrich"

Enjoy a visit with Ms. Aldrich and learn a little more about her life as a busy mother, devoted Elmwood citizen, and successful writer. Aldrich guide Donna Durette assumes the character of Mrs. Aldrich and answers some of Aldrich enthusiasts' most commonly asked questions.



Guests Now Offered a "Mrs. Aldrich Experience"

If you belong to a civic group that would like to include an Aldrich House Tour as a program for your group, you are encouraged to contact the director. Tour groups of five or more can choose alternative times for tours other than regular hours.

Groups also have the luxury of adding a visit from Mrs. Aldrich (one of our wonderful guides in character) during a garden tea, luncheon and/or dessert event. The Christian Church Women's Group offers several lunch and dessert options, the local community center offers a \$5 lunch option, and the Quonset, a local eating establishment, may be open for lunch before or after the tour. Ask the director about the options.

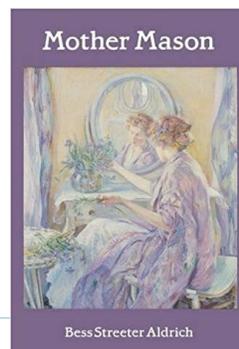
Tours at the Aldrich House remain \$5, but if you would like to take the tour with the guide in character, consider touring at 2 p.m. the 1st Sunday of every month (\$8). Guide Donna Durette "becomes" Mrs. Aldrich giving you a personal tour in character, sharing her vast knowledge of Aldrich history. It is recommended that guests pre-register to confirm availability of the guide.

Aldrich Letter, A Second Excerpt...

"People have a variety of questions they like to ask. One favorite seems to be how long it takes to write a story. I work for three weeks on one; and by three weeks I mean all the time I can get which doesn't belong to cooking and overseeing the house. By the time the children are off to school, I begin to plan the day's work for the woman who comes in to help, start my dinner, and have everything going systematically and then get to my desk by nine-thirty or ten and work until noon, barring the dozens of time I've had to jump up. I try to work again from two until four. I write a story usually four times, the first in long hand and the other three copies corrected, worked over and finally published. The fourth week I use to answer accumulated correspondence and relax from other writing."

Book Club Discussion Questions

The Aldrich Foundation is excited to announce that materials are being developed for book clubs. Gretchen Garrison, "Odyssey Through Nebraska," has graciously created our second set for Mrs. Aldrich's first book Mother Mason. If your book club is contemplating reading an Aldrich book, you will want to check our website (bessstreeeteraldrich.org) under "Book Club Materials." Here, we will be adding discussion questions as they are developed for most of Mrs. Aldrich's books. This is a great resource! Not only does it include discussion questions, but the facilitator link includes the suggested answers for the questions. If your book club needs multiple copies of the book, contact us. Thank you, Gretchen!



*"Fifty-two! She went on thinking, and she had never had a day to herself to do just as she liked. From that day, twenty-five years ago, when the nurse laid the red and colicky Bob in her arms, her time had belonged to others. In memory she could see Henry's white, drawn face as he knelt by her bed and said: 'Molly, you'll never, never have to go through that again.' But she had! Oh land, yes! Bob was twenty-five, Katherine was twenty-two, Marcia twenty-one, Eleanor sixteen, and Junior eleven—all healthy, good looking, fun loving, and **thoughtless.**"—Mother Mason*

Seeking Additional Guides and Aldrich Characters

Making the Aldrich House available for garden events, weddings, other group events has stretched the guides at the Aldrich House; and we need your help. If you or someone you know is interested in helping us supervise events and/or give tours, please contact the director. Our next training day for guides is Wednesday, March 13, at 1 p.m. at the Aldrich House.

As you are aware, the Aldrich House now has an individual willing to assume the role of Mrs. Aldrich. Once Donna Durette has perfected the script for these presentations, we will be seeking other individuals who might be interested in assisting the Aldrich Foundation with tours and presentations to groups. Of course, an additional resource we have is Cheryl Paden and N.L. Sharp from the Fremont. They give a wonderful presentation as well.

Want List

In the past few newsletters, I have listed a "want list" for the Aldrich Foundation; and I have been amazed at the response. Thanks for your assistance. Here is the next list:

- 1) 8' Tables for the Garden
- 2) Small plants and/or decorative items for Fairy Gardens
- 3) Curtains
- 4) Shelving for the Basement
- 5) Gardening Tools: spade, loppers, and rake

Original Floors are Beautiful!

Last spring, the Forget-Me-Nots Quester organization (620) submitted a grant request on the Aldrich Foundation's behalf for the purpose of removing the carpet and refinishing the hardwood floors in the sun, living, and dining rooms at the Aldrich House. We thank them very much (especially the leadership of Karyl Neuman, Jenny Pfeifer, and Lee Harlon) for making this happen.

We were closed in January, and Jim Parriott of Murray started the renovation, finding the original floors in pretty good repair. Darlene Middleton, Bill Conour, and John Golden of Elmwood volunteered to update the woodwork, and we reopened for Mrs. Aldrich's birthday on the weekend of February 17.



Calendar of Upcoming Events, Aldrich House and/or Gardens

Musical Exhibit. In March guests at the Aldrich House will be able to see a wonderful display of vintage musical instruments, music boxes, and various other musical items. A number of individuals have loaned these items for the display. Cindy Drake of Avoca has coordinated a portion of her sheet music collection to give each room its own musical theme.

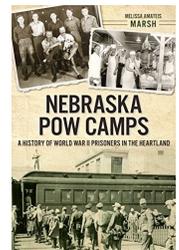


Vintage Clothing Exhibit. Each room of the Aldrich House will honor a different decade with a display of clothing. A number of individuals have agreed to contribute items during April and May. Besides regular hours, this exhibit will be open from 5 to 6:15 p.m. on Saturday, April 6, for a social hour prior to the Spring Banquet. Remember we are open four days a week starting in May (Wed., Thurs., Sat. & Sunday).

Mother/Daughter Style Show, Aldrich House Exhibit, and Tea. On Sunday, May 19, at 2 p.m. there will be a style show in the beautiful gardens at the Aldrich House. Our volunteers will model vintage and contemporary clothing. Guests can also tour the Aldrich House to see the clothing exhibit and participate in a garden tea. Pre-registering for the event is encouraged (\$15/ ticket). In case of inclement weather, the show will be held at the Christian Church.

A Symphony of Flowers/Fairy Gardens. In June, our blooming gardens will be rivaled by the floral displays in the Aldrich House. Whether it is floral textiles, china, or actual flowers, the Aldrich House will be blooming all over. To draw attention to our beautiful gardens, we will also be offering two Fairy Garden workshops on Sunday, June 9, and Saturday, June 29. For \$15, guests (adults & kids) can tour the exhibit and then move to the garden to create a Fairy Garden (Open 1 to 4 p.m.)

Book Review. Join us at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, June 11, when Melissa Amateis Marsh of Lincoln will tell us more about her book, *Nebraska POW Camps*. Learn more about the role Nebraska played in housing the World War II prisoners of war (including those who were housed in Weeping Water). This is being sponsored by the Novel Approach Book Club, and admission is **FREE**.



Backyard BBQ. Gather up your lawn chair and come to the Aldrich Gardens to enjoy an evening of good food and music. From 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, June 22, Aldrich House guests can listen to the musical stylings of Dory Marsh (Lincoln) and enjoy a delicious BBQ meal. Tickets are \$10 (\$9 for Foundation members) and \$5 for children 10 and under; pre-registration is recommended. Rain Site: Christian Church.

The 50's. Whether it's fashion, music, politics or other social components, the collection of artifacts in the Aldrich House will be a "Blast From the Past." This July our decorators are putting together a memorable display to take you back to the 1950s!

Textiles, Textiles, Textiles. Barbara Bond and several other contributors will share their beautiful textiles with the Aldrich House in August. The dates and times are yet to be determined but there will also be textile demonstrations on the weekends.

Art Glass. In September, the exhibit will include beautiful glass including candy dishes and other art glass from past decades.

Primitives. A wide variety of primitives will enhance the beauty at the Aldrich House in October through mid-November. Watch for future updates when we announce demonstrations that will take place at the Aldrich House and in the beautiful gardens.



Journey Into Christmas. The tradition continues; every room in the Aldrich House will be decorated for Christmas with a theme after one of Mrs. Aldrich's short stories. The dates for tours include November 30, December 1, 7-8, 14-15, 21-22 and by appointment.

Leader-Echo Searchable Database Added to Aldrich Website

The Aldrich Foundation has added a new research link to our website. This search tool enables the user to research the Elmwood Leader, Elmwood Echo, and Elmwood Leader-Echo newspapers from 1896 to 1950. The funding for this was provided by Kirby and Cindy Drake in memory of Kirby's parents Arthur & Gwineth (TenBroeck) Drake and their 15 children who grew up in Elmwood and graduated from Elmwood High School. The George Blessing family granted copyright permission for the last decade of the Elmwood Leader-Echo. Thank you, Drake and Blessing families.

Are You an Aldrich Foundation Member?

If you are unsure if your membership is up to date, check behind your name on the mailing label of your newsletter or find the "Membership List" link (then "current members" on the left column) of the Bess Streeter Aldrich website. The Membership List was last updated on February 20. Your membership dues enable us to plan programs, maintain the Aldrich Home, and stay connected in our community. Personally, you may be entitled to discounts on books, free admission to the Aldrich House, and even free books! Contact Kurk Shrader if you have questions.

Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation

PO Box 167, 204 East F Street

Elmwood, NE 68349

aldrichfoundation@gmail.com

kurkshrader@gmail.com

bessstreeteraldrich.org

402-994-3855 or 402-867-4233



Contact Information:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Membership Levels (Mark One): Your membership in the Aldrich Foundation demonstrates your commitment to encourage the reading of exceptional great plains literature and to illustrate a sense of community pride by specifically promoting Elmwood and the works of Bess Streeter Aldrich. All members will be recognized in one of our two newsletters.

- _____ Spring Came on Forever Level, \$25; receive two newsletters and \$5.00 off any book purchase;
- _____ The Rim of the Prairie Level, \$50; receive two newsletters and two complimentary tickets for house tours;
- _____ Lantern in Her Hand Level, \$100; recognition in Aldrich Foundation publications, two newsletters, two complimentary tickets for house tours; and one Aldrich paperback book (one that remains in print). Indicate choice of book (circle one): Lantern in Her Hand, White Bird Flying, Rim of the Prairie, Spring Came on Forever, Mother Mason, or Journey into Christmas.
- _____ Journey into Christmas Level, \$250; receive two newsletters and two passes for free monthly admission.
- _____ Student Member, \$10; any student, up to 18 years of age, can join. They receive recognition in the newsletter and \$5 off any book purchase.

Other:

- _____ Cash Donation: Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of \$ _____.
- _____ Volunteer. Please contact me about volunteer opportunities at the Bess Streeter Aldrich House and/or Museum (provide guided tours, decorate house, assist with house and garden maintenance, help with fundraiser, and/or become a board member.)

Comments:

House & Museum Hours:

Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday: 1 to 4 p.m.; May through Sept.

Saturday and Sunday: 1 to 4 p.m.; October through April

Or by Appointment

Calendar of Events, 2019

March	Music Theme (Vintage Instruments, Music Boxes, and Sheet Music)
April 6	Spring Banquet, Sue McLain Yesterday's Lady, Beatrice "A Century of Fashion: 1870-1970"
April May	A Vintage Clothing Exhibit
May 19	Mother/Daughter Tea & Style Show
June	A Symphony of Flowers Exhibit Fairy Garden Workshops, June 9 & 29 Backyard BBQ/Music, June 22
July	The 50's Exhibit
Aug.	Textiles Exhibit, Demonstrations, TBA
Sept.	Art Glass Exhibit
Oct. to Nov. 16	Primitives Exhibit, Demonstrations, TBA
Nov. 30	Holiday Extravaganza
Nov. 30	Journey Into Christmas Dec. 1, 7/8, 14/15, and 21/22

Thank You!

We are very appreciative of friends and family members who have chosen to honor their loved ones by giving memorials to the Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation. Most recently, we received memorials in honor of Tim Dunn, Karyl Newman, and Eleanor Fleischman. Thank you!

We also thank Joann Hill of Elmwood for donating the beautiful antique bedroom set in the Mother Mason room. The set, which had been on loan from Tom Hill, belonged to Joann's mother and was purchased by Joann so we can all enjoy it for many years to come.

Thank you to those who continue to contribute to our 2016 porch project, which cost \$22,500. Our current loan balance is only \$7,693.11. Two trees in the garden remain unlabeled. Contact the director if you want to provide sponsorship.

Finally, we thank Foundation members who renewed their membership. Together, we will continue to help the next generation appreciate Mrs. Aldrich's outstanding qualities.



Stay Up-to-Date with the Latest Events at the Aldrich House

by Liking Us on Facebook:

Bess Streeter Aldrich House and Museum

This newsletter is funded in part by Cass County Tourism., www.visitcasscounty.com.

Aldrich Foundation
Box 167, 204 East F Street
Elmwood, NE 68349
aldrichfoundation@gmail.com

PRESORT
STANDARD U.S.
POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 4
ELMWOOD, NE