

Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation

November 2023

Fall Newsletter



Message from the Director

As I sit at Mrs. Aldrich's desk, I see a 1942 Sunday World-Herald newspaper article entitled "Story of a Story-Teller." It is a regular artifact that we show our guests. The article includes many wonderful pictures that verify the authenticity of the study (artwork and all). Yet, the longer I am the executive director, the more I realize that Mrs. Aldrich is much more than a story teller. Since our last newsletter, we have learned more about two of such ventures.

Character actress, guide, and Aldrich enthusiast Jolene McLaughlin has been conducting research about Mrs. Aldrich at the Nebraska State Historical Society. In her research, she has come across many original poems that Mrs. Aldrich wrote (mainly from the

early 1900's). Mrs. Aldrich included poetry in her writing, but she also liked to write it and was obviously influenced by fellow family members who also were poetic including her mother, brothers, and other family members. This prompted the Foundation to showcase some of this poetry in an exhibit entitled "Poetry in Motion" next spring. Additionally, the board authorized our first poetry contest to go along with our short story contest. The details of the contest are further explained in this newsletter.



Last spring I mentioned that we had much to learn about a movie entitled "The Woman Who Was Forgotten," which Mrs. Aldrich wrote for American Magazine in the 1920's. Her biography relates that a movie right was sold, but there isn't much discussion after that. The discovery of a piece of sheet music "Give to the World the Best You Have," the theme song from the picture, confirmed that Mrs. Aldrich did have another film. A conversation with Aldrich enthusiast Stuart Rosenberg of Fort Worth, Texas, also provided the rest of the story. A librarian for over 50 years, Stuart knows the ins and outs of conducting research and has sent many resources. We look forward to getting this developed in a display for all to see.

Besides learning more about Mrs. Aldrich, we have been busy planning new activities and creating resources for our guests. This newsletter will highlight many that will be implemented next year. I would be remiss if I didn't thank all the granting sources that have helped us achieve these new ventures. We thank the Syracuse Library Foundation, the Berneice Hopper Private Foundation, Midland Community Foundation, and Cass County Tourism for their financial assistance. Continue to read this newsletter or better yet, come visit us and see what we have accomplished with their help. Kurk Shrader, Director

Journey Into Christmas

This year the Aldrich Foundation honors Mrs. Aldrich's short story "The Drum Goes Dead" at our Journey Into Christmas event. Additionally, our decorators have each selected a different Christmas carol and decorated accordingly. We will have extended hours on opening day to correspond with the community's Holiday Extravaganza (November 25, 11 to 5 p.m.) We hope to see you there!



Journey into Christmas



*Bess Streeter Aldrich House
204 East F Street
Elmwood, Nebraska*

*Honoring Bess Streeter Aldrich
with 12 Beautifully Decorated Rooms Based on Christmas Carols
Admission \$5.00; Available for Group Tours and Christmas Parties*

*Save the Dates: Nov. 25 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
Nov. 26; Dec. 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23 (1-4 p.m.)*



Learning Center Update/Elmwood Community Foundation



Three years ago, the Aldrich Foundation and American Legion Post #247 purchased a building at 221 S. 4th Street to serve as our new community learning center and museum. We asked for support to help purchase the building and make renovations, and people generously responded. Then two years ago, the Aldrich Foundation joined the Elmwood Community Foundation as a designated fund. This foundation will serve under Midlands Community Foundation, which provides many benefits including proven investment success, preparation of financial and compliance documentation, legal and marketing assistance, and possible matching funds for gifts received between November 28 and January 5. You can learn more about this funding opportunity at <https://midlandscommunity.org/donor-giving/donate/>.

With grants from Midland Community Foundation, Cass County Tourism Capital Improvement, and generous donations from individuals, the Learning Center will have interior renovations completed this fall including a new ADA compliant restroom and updated interior walls.

New Character Guide Accepted as Humanities Nebraska Speaker Bureau



Jolene McLaughlin of Elmwood, a relatively new guide at the Aldrich House, has taken her admiration of Mrs. Aldrich to the next level. Inspired to do additional research at the Nebraska State Historical Society, Jolene has become a true Aldrich enthusiast. So much so, that she agreed to become one of our three character actresses. Additionally, Jolene contacted Humanities Nebraska about becoming a character actress for their speaker's bureau. We are excited to announce that she was accepted, and your nonprofit organizations can enlist her help as a speaker for a program in your community. This is a wonderful opportunity to promote Mrs. Aldrich, and the Aldrich Foundation is extremely grateful for her support.

New Poetry Contest Compliments Short Story Contest!

The discovery of Aldrich poetry at the Nebraska State Historical Society encouraged Aldrich Board members to implement a new contest that mirrors the Aldrich Short Story Contest, which is now entering its 23rd year. The objective is to honor Mrs. Aldrich and her love for

poetry while recognizing amateur poets and their talent for writing poetry. Children grade 3 to adults are encouraged to generate a poem written in the wholesome spirit of Bess Streeeter Aldrich while utilizing a theme honoring Nebraska, small town living, family relationships, and/or children and their antics. The entries are due by April 15, and prize money will be provided in part by the Syracuse Library Foundation. The complete guidelines for both events are located on our website.

The Syracuse Library Foundation is also providing funds to help us expand the spring exhibit and create an event entitled "Poetry in Motion." February 3 through May 19, guests can move about the Aldrich House and read poetry. Our exhibit chairpersons and helpers will decorate the rooms around a variety of poems, identifying their types, incorporating Aldrich poems, and adding elements of motion. QR Codes will be placed about the house that allow the poems to be read to the guests. Field trip groups may tour the house this spring for a discounted rate of only \$1/student.

This event is being chaired by Jolene McLaughlin, Stephanie Mauck and Kim Zach. Nearly 20 other individuals will decorate their respective rooms in the Aldrich House. Don't miss this exhibit!

**POETRY
IN
MOTION**

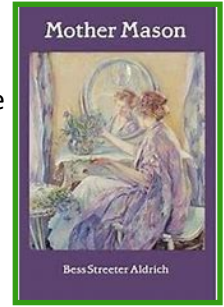
Bess Streeeter Aldrich House
204 East F St., Elmwood
Spring 2024 Exhibit
Feb.3 -May 19

Inspired by newly discovered Aldrich family poetry, our spring exhibit combines the the worlds of word and whimsy. Each room's theme is enhanced with poets works ranging from the wildly famous, to local and familiar. As you tour the house, your senses will come alive with elements of movement radiating throughout. New displays showcase Mrs. Aldrich's personal poetry, in an exhibit that pays tribute to one of her more private hobbies.

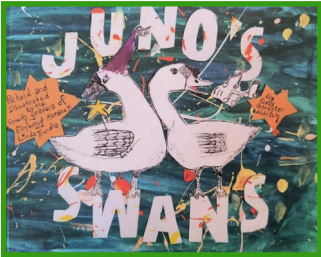
Hours
Nov. thru April- Sat, Sun- 1 pm to 4 pm
May thru Oct.- Wed, Thurs, Sat, Sun- 1 pm to 4 pm
January by appointment

Mother Mason is 100 Years Old!

Originally written as a series of short stories for American Magazine, Mother Mason becomes Mrs. Aldrich's first book in 1924. These stories were so well received by the magazine's readers and by the World War I troops (who said it reminded them of their mothers and small towns) that Mrs. Aldrich's publisher encouraged her to edit them slightly and add transitions to create a book. In honor of its 100th birthday, the Aldrich Foundation will incorporate Mother Mason in many of its events this year and offer the paperback for a mere \$15 (\$5 discount) during 2024.



Juno's Swans



The short story "Juno's Swans" that appeared in Cosmopolitan magazine in 1936 continues to be one of the favorites among Aldrich readers. In fact, Elmwood-Murdock art teacher Linda Trundle adapted the story into a children's story, and the 4th graders illustrated the book. It is a wonderful rendition that children will enjoy. The book (along with last year's Madonna of the Purple Dots) are available in the gift shop for \$18. We are thankful to Linda for introducing the short stories to the children and keeping the next generation interested in knowing and reading Bess Streeter Aldrich.

Writing and Art Camps Are Great Successes!

The Aldrich Foundation hosted its third writing camp in June and the first art camp in July. The camps were huge successes with both camps reaching capacity. Although the final dates for 2024 have not been determined, we anticipate that the camps will once again be offered during a similar time frame (June & July). Follow us on Facebook or contact the director to be sure your child (grades 3 to 6) has the opportunity to attend.



Grants Offers Technological Expansion Opportunities at Aldrich House and Learning Center

The Aldrich Foundation is extremely fortunate to receive a grant from the Berneice M. Hopper Private Foundation for the purpose of expanding and improving educational opportunities for children at the Bess Streeter Aldrich House. Their \$7,000 gift has enabled us to purchase supplies, acquire technology to enhance instruction, and develop curriculum for future camps including the possible addition of a theater camp. The story "Juno's Swans" has been adapted as a children's play, and we hope to offer children this opportunity next summer.

Other pending technological additions are being planned because of the Syracuse Library Foundation Grant. Our guests will soon be able to scan QR codes at the Aldrich House to enhance their tours and in the Aldrich Gardens to learn about the plantings.

Unusual Collections and Mother Nature's Patchworks Quilt Show Exhibits

This fall's exhibit is entitled Unusual Collections, and the Aldrich House is decorated with a wide variety of artifacts loaned by several collectors. The graphic to the right mentions a few of the items used to cleverly decorate the house. Vintage clothing collector Kodie Whitbeck of Waverly will give a program about his collection on Saturday, November 11, at 2 p.m. Guests are invited to bring five clothing items for him to appraise during the hours of 1-4. A descriptive flyer is included in this mailing.

UNUSUAL COLLECTIONS EXHIBIT

The prairie mansion home of Nebraska Hall of Fame author Bess Streeter Aldrich is cleverly decorated with unusual collections.

To Mention a Few:

-Nebraska-Shaped Rocks Vintage Jean Jackets Bird Nests
- Victorian Era Serving Pieces Vintage Picnic Items Cameras
- World War II Collectibles Antique Magic Tricks Christmas Tree Finials
- Laura Ingalls Wilder Collectibles Pez Dispensers And Many More!

On a biennial basis, the Aldrich House offers a quilt show. Next summer, guests will have the opportunity to enjoy "Mother Nature's Patchwork Quilt Show," where the quilts will be themed around flora, fauna, wind, rain, fire etc. If you have an example to share, contact the director. More details will be provided in our spring newsletter.

Master Gardeners Celebrate Ten Year Anniversary

A mere ten years ago, three dedicated gardeners committed to maintaining the Aldrich Gardens. Bonnie Brewer, Judy Schlosser, and Terri Messner, all Master Gardeners, accepted the challenge of bringing the gardens to a level that Mrs. Aldrich would be proud of. Remember in 1938, Good Housekeeping magazine identified Mrs. Aldrich as one of nine authors who had a beautiful lawn and “Who Wielded a Spade as Well as a Pen.”

During the past ten years, these gardeners have seen the addition of two pergolas, privacy fencing, and 14 gardens. They maintained the gardens and made recommendations for plantings, the thinning of plants, and the overall look of the garden. This has enabled the Foundation to host outdoor events and weddings. Here are before and after pictures of one of the gardens!



Now the challenge—these ladies have decided the time has come to hang up their gardening tools. The Aldrich Foundation would like to see their hard work and dedicated honored by keeping the gardens looking great. Are you interested in helping. Bonnie, Judy and Terri have indicated they would be willing to help train new gardeners next spring,

Monthly Updates

This spring the Aldrich Foundation hired Stephanie Mauck as a part-time employee. She developed a monthly update entitled Stephanie’s “Word on the Streeter.” Are you getting a copy? Email Stephanie at aldrichfoundation.steph@gmail.com to have your name added. You won’t be disappointed.

Are You an Aldrich Foundation Member?

Within this newsletter, you will find the current dues renewal form. A new year begins on January 1, 2024. Our records indicated the following people are current members (one asterisk indicates a 2023 membership and ** denotes 2024 or beyond). An updated list is also kept on the website. Contact Kurk Shrader if you have questions.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Rosalie Ahrendsen* Rim | Elmwood Christian Church* Spring | Roger Lempke** Rim | Ross & Judeen Rikli* Spring |
| Nancy Anderson* Rim | Fred Eriksen* Rim | Sherry Lighter* Lantern | Jim & Grace Ronhovde* Lantern |
| Cindy & Curt Backemeyer* Rim | Bill & Bev. Fischer* Spring | Elizabeth Little* Spring | Kris Rosenow* Lantern |
| Joyce & Merle Backemeyer* Spring | Connie French* Lantern | Deborah Luna* Lantern | Helen Sake* Spring |
| Jolane Bakley* Spring | Angie & Dave Friesell* Lantern | Ana McCracken* Journey | Esther Scarpello** Spring |
| Beverly Banks* Rim | Mary Gillespie* Rim | Susan McKinnon** Journey | Kathy Seureau** Lantern |
| Diane Bartels** Spring | John & Carolyn Golden* Spring | Jim & Jolene McLaughlin* Lantern | Diana & Craig Shaffer* Spring |
| Kathy Benecke** Spring | Cheryl Gonzales Yancey** Spring | Pat Meierhenry* Lantern | Kent & Loretta Shields* Rim |
| David & Marsha Bergstrom** Lantern | Owen Goodenkauf* Rim | Fred & Pat Meisinger* Lantern | Steve Shively* Rim |
| Dale Betz* Spring | Bonnie Guinn** Rim | Renee Menary* Journey | Kurk & Kris Shrader* Lantern |
| Eugenia Bornemeier* Spring | Kay Lynn Haas* Lantern | Barb & Clayton Miller* Lantern | Doug & Karyl Smith* Journey |
| Martha A. Bornemeier* Spring | Gary & Cindy Hall* Lantern | Janice & Elmer Miller* Lantern | Jeanette Stolen* Rim |
| Steve & Bonnie Bruttig* Lantern | John Hall** Rim | Pat & John Miller* Journey | Streeter Family Assn.** Spring |
| Angie Buckner** Rim | Sheri Harrington* Rim | Barb & Lynn Minch* Lantern | Marsha Streeter* Lantern |
| Phyllis Buell* Lantern | Jim & Judy Hendrix* Lantern | Margaret Moore** Lantern | Thomas Sutter* Rim |
| Roger & Carol Casteel* Lantern | Jackie Henman** Lantern | Kathy Moss* Spring | Hugh Thomas Taggart Jr.* Lantern |
| Bain Chadsey* Journey | Linda Homan* Lantern | Mary & Kurt Mueller* Rim | Hersh & Betty Talley* Spring |
| Richard & Maechelle Clements* Spring | Dolores Hydock* Lantern | Carol Nannen** Lantern | Connie Terbrueggen* Spring |
| Robert & Peggy Clements* Spring | Adalay Idler** Rim | Ruth Neeman* Lantern | Linda Trundle* Spring |
| Rick & Laurie Collins* Lantern | Bruce Johnson* Spring | Dennis & Margie Nielsen* Lantern | Beverly VanArsdel* Lantern |
| Bill & Sue Connour* Lantern | Mary Johnson* Journey | Gretchen Northrup** Spring | Randi VanDyne** Lantern |
| Charles and April Cover** Spring | Rosanna Johnson* Spring | Dave & Barb Oehlerking* Lantern | Village of Elmwood* Spring |
| Betty Demster* Spring | Jeff Johnston/Bonnie Brewer* Lantern | John & Carae Oehlerking* Rim | Brenda Vogt* Journey |
| Linda Denyer* Rim | Katharine Kilgour* Rim | Walter/Carolyn Oehlerking Jr.* Spring | Nancy Vogt* Journey |
| Donna Dornbusch* Rim | Dan & Becky Kruse** Spring | Jon & Suzanne Oliver* Rim | Joan Waldrop* Spring |
| Dean & Judy Douglas* Spring | Nina & Rick Landwehr** Lantern | Barbara Oliver* Journey | Chloe Weber* Student |
| Bill & Suzanne Dover* Lantern | Billie Lefholtz* Rim | Denene Owens* Spring | Dee Weyeneth* Lantern |
| Bonnie Drake* Lantern | | Diane Parker* Spring | Dottie & Doyle Wolverton* Lantern |
| Cindy & Kirby Drake* Rim | | Gretchen & Randy Reinke* Spring | William & Marilee Wood* Lantern |
| Julie & Jerry Druery** Rim | | Paul & Susan Rice** Lantern | |
| Donna Durette* Lantern | | | |
| Cyndi & Paul Dwyer* Lantern | | | |

Do You Geocache?

Geocaching is an outdoor recreational activity in which participants use a Global Positioning System receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers. Geocaches or caches are marked by coordinates all over the world. One has been added to the Aldrich Gardens. As a newsletter recipient, you get this pictorial hint, but there are other registered details at geocaching.com. You can find more information about our cache at BessStreeterAldrich@geocache.com. This spring there will also be QR Codes added to the gardens. If you access the code, you will be able to identify the flowers in each garden and a description of the Aldrich books they represent. The Syracuse Library Foundation helped fund this project.



Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation, 2024

PO Box 167, 204 East F Street

Elmwood, NE 68349

aldrichfoundation@gmail.com

bessstreeteraldrich.org

402-994-3855

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 receive two newsletters and recognition in one of them.

_____ Student Level, \$10; Any student, up to 18 years of age, can join. They also receive recognition in the newsletter and \$5 off and book purchase.

_____ Spring Came on Forever Level, \$25; receive newsletters and \$5 off any book purchase;

_____ The Rim of the Prairie Level, \$50; receive newsletters and two tickets for house tours;

_____ Lantern in Her Hand Level, \$100; receive newsletters, two complimentary tickets for house tours; and a free book choice of book (circle one): Lantern in Her Hand, White Bird Flying, Rim of the Prairie, Spring Came on Forever, Mother Mason, Journey into Christmas; The Cutters; Letters from the Elms; or Madonna of the Purple Dots.

_____ Journey into Christmas Level, \$250; receives newsletters, four complimentary tickets for house tours; two season passes, and a free book choice of book (circle one): Lantern in Her Hand, White Bird Flying, Rim of the Prairie, Spring Came on Forever, Mother Mason, Journey into Christmas; The Cutters; Letters from the Elms; or Madonna of the Purple Dots.

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:

Make Checks Payable to: The Aldrich Foundation

House & Museum Hours:

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

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

Notes of Appreciation!

We are thankful for many thoughtful gifts that were given to the Aldrich House this past summer. From cash donations, vintage copies of Aldrich books, and decorative pieces, we have benefited greatly. Of special note is the donation of the cash register from Greene's Pharmacy, gifted from Lori Meisinger, daughter of Jerry and Eunice Patton. We are also thankful for all who contributed time as decorators, guides and assistants in the maintenance, operation and beautification of the Aldrich House and Gardens. A special thank you is also to given the Elmwood-Murdock Future Business Leaders of America Chapter who have been instrumental in helping us update technology and prepare for Journey Into Christmas, 2023. Finally, we thank the Forget-Me-Nots, Questers Chapter who have helped us receive grant funds for new awnings. You will want to see our new look next spring.

2024 Schedule of Events/Exhibits

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| January | Closed or Tours by Appointment |
| Feb. to May 19 | "Poetry in Motion" Exhibit |
| April 15 | Short Story Contest Deadline |
| | Poetry Contest Deadline |
| April 26 | "Jewelry through the Decades"" |
| | Tea and Jewelry Appraisal |
| May 4 | Plant Exchange |
| May 22 to Aug 25 | Mother Nature's Patchwork Quilt Show |
| June 9 | Summer Social |
| | Awards Program |
| | Dan Holtz, Heroism on the Plains |
| | Humanities Nebraska |
| June, TBD | Aldrich Writing Camp |
| July, TBD | Aldrich Art Camp |
| Aug. 28-Nov. 17 | "Kindred Spirits Then & Now" Exhibit |
| Nov. 30-Dec. 22 | Journey Into Christmas |
| | Also Available by Appointment |



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**

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