

The Collections

by Lynne Belluscio

I finally had to pack up the toys and games in the exhibit room to get ready for the new exhibit that will open on May 3rd at the annual meeting of the Historical Society. So back in the boxes went the Parcheesi game, the Chinese Checkers and the old puzzles. It was kind of sad -- like Toy Story -- games and toys that at one time brought joy and fun to kids, are now back in their acid-free boxes in storage. But in their place is a lot of different "stuff" for everyone to take a look at. The new exhibit will focus on the 75th Anniversary of the Historical Society. Probably the most intriguing part of the exhibit will be about the collections that have come to the Historical Society in the last 75 years.

I have picked out a few things from the many different collections that are usually not on exhibit, including these two recently purchased Lapp Insulator badges which we think date from World War II. (In fact, if anyone knows who these people might be, call me at the office -- 768-7433).

I've also included a piece of sheet music for the Rough On Rats song. I pulled out some interesting advertising pieces, a Lapp Lumber nail apron, and a couple of Lapp insulators from the exhibit two years ago, including a piece of Flameware manufactured there.

We already have a LeRoy Plow exhibit in the basement of the Academic Building, as well as a case about N.B. Keeney and LeRoy Plow, but I thought I'd include in the new exhibit a few things about LeRoy Salt Company -- including the brick of salt. Perhaps the wooden Union Steel Chest and some tools from the collection that came from the Roy McPherson farm. I don't have a lot of space but I'll find room for a Selinger beer bottle and an Elm Dairy bottle and a couple of things that were donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1942 when LeRoy House opened.

The Historical Society is required by the New York State Board of Regents' chartering office to have what is called a "Collections Policy." This governs what we collect and how we take care of it. When items are donated



Can you identify these people?

to the Historical Society, we have to decide whether they are pertinent to the history of LeRoy and whether they help tell the story of LeRoy and LeRoy House. We can't just accept something "old."

When something is donated, it has to be legally signed over to the Historical Society -- especially if the donor wants to claim a tax deduction. We cannot legally appraise the item. If an appraisal is needed, it has to be done by the donor or by an appraiser hired by the donor. Objects have to be accessioned into the collection and numbered and records kept on the object.

We are still trying to catch up with 75 years of donations. We use a software program specifically designed for small museums which allows us to assign a unique number to each object. If necessary we can also add a photograph of the object. Unfortunately, for the first thirty years, objects were not accessioned and assigned numbers.

Not all things in the collections have been donated. We have been fortunate in the last few years to be able to purchase things for the collections. Every couple of days I search on ebay for LeRoy objects, and like the Lapp Insulator buttons above, some very interesting things can be purchased. Sometimes, like some rare LeRoy family photographs that I found about a year ago, go to another bidder. This last year, we purchased art from an Ingham student and her diploma and those will be included in the exhibit.

Please plan to stop by LeRoy

House this summer and take a look at this new exhibit and some of the more unusual things from the collection. I think you will find them interesting. And feel free to come to the opening of the exhibit on Sunday, May 3rd. LeRoy House will open at 1 pm and there will be refreshments in the exhibit room.

The Historical Society's Annual meeting will begin at 3 pm. with the election of Board members. There are four Board

members nominated for election: for a second 3 year term, Bob Collette, Shelia Furr and Anne Frew. And to fill a one year term, in commemoration of the first President of the Historical Society, Roy McPherson, his great granddaughter, Marny Frost Cleere, has been nominated for election to the Board. Her father, David Frost who was President during the 50th anniversary year in 1990, will preside over the elections.



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