

Fly "Old Glory" on Sunday, June 14th

by Lynne Belluscio

I didn't plan it on purpose, but my daughter was born on Flag Day. (You'll have to ask her what year that was. And I am not old enough to have children as old as mine!) With that said, I called her the other day and said – "Hey I'll pick up chicken BBQ on Sunday on Trigon Park from the Historical Society (Hint: the BBQ starts at 11 am and you can buy chicken and ribs – drive up and pick up only.) I hope we sell out early so I can get over for my daughter's birthday.)"

American flags have been a part of our activities at the LeRoy House this week. We've put together a Civil War program. The kids get to sample some army food – beef jerky, hard tack, and coffee and we expect each of them to enlist in either the heavy artillery, the infantry or the cavalry - - for three years. I think the heavy artillery has the most volunteers. Then they work on sewing an American flag.

According to the story that we have about Myron Pierson, his two sisters, while he was away fighting in the 100th New York Volunteers, sewed a huge flag that was flown after Union victories. We have the flag in the collection, packed away safely in an acid-free box rolled in acid-free tissue.

After the kids do a little sewing, they are given a card with the name of a Civil War soldier from LeRoy, whose name can be found on the monument in Trigon Park. They are asked to write a letter to the soldier telling him about what they have learned about a soldier's life. Then they are given a ribbon on which they are to write the soldier's name. The ribbon will be tied to an American flag and at the end of the week, the students will go to the monument and place the flags - - there will be about a hundred flags. There were more than 240 men from LeRoy who fought in the Civil War. At the monument, Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address will be read. So as you drive by this weekend, you'll notice the flags around the monument.

Flag Day is commemorated on June 14, because on that date

in 1777, Congress, which was meeting in Philadelphia, adopted a resolution declaring "that the flag of the United States shall be of thirteen stars of white in a blue field . . ." And by now all of you know that the story about Betsey Ross is more of a folk story than the truth. The Betsey Ross story surfaced in 1870, when her grandson, William Canby, told the "family story" to the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson established June 14 as Flag Day. It is not a national holiday, but traditionally schools have held flag day celebrations. I remember in grammar school a marching program that we rehearsed for weeks that we presented to the rest of the school in the gym. We each carried a flag and marched in a variety of configurations. It was also on Flag Day that two students from each school (in Rochester) participated in a city-wide "transfer of the flags." Each school had a graduating salutatorian and valedictorian that passed the flag on to the incoming senior class.

As you drive by the LeRoy House this week you will notice a white canvas tent pitched in the front yard. That is Lieutenant Myron Pierson's tent. It is filled with dry straw. It is much bigger than an enlisted private's two-man tent. Next year, we hope to have the smaller tent pitched next to it.

You will also notice that we are flying a Civil War era flag. At the beginning of the Civil War, most flags had 33 stars. That was the flag that was flying over Fort Sumter when it was shelled at the beginning of the war. The State of Kansas was admitted to the Union in 1861 and the flag then could include 34 stars. Even after the Confederate States seceded from the Union, their stars were not removed, because President Lincoln believed that they were all part of the United States, even



though they were in Rebellion.

In 1863, West Virginia joined the Union and in 1864, Nevada joined the Union and two more stars were added to the flag. At that time there was no "official" arrangement for the stars, so they were often hap hazzardly placed in the blue field.

There is a story that when Union troops captured Nashville in Tennessee in February 1862, an old shipmaster, Captain William Driver, was living there, and

when the Union troops arrived, he pulled out a flag that he had hidden. Though it only had 24 stars because he had been given the flag in 1831 - - it was raised above the Tennessee capital. He called the flag "Old Glory" and the nickname stuck.

So remember to fly "Old Glory" this weekend on Flag Day. It's just another reason why LeRoy is one of America's Best Communities!!!!

LeRoy Historical Society

Chicken 'n Ribs Barbecue

Sunday, June 14th

on Trigon Park, Le Roy

11:00 am Til Sold Out!

BBQ 1/2 CHICKEN - \$10.00 • BBQ 1/4 CHICKEN & RIBS - \$12.00

w/salt potatoes & cole slaw, roll, cookies

THE CHICKEN & RIBS SELLOUT EARLY!!

Carry Out Only

"Drive Through" On Trigon Park



Prepared By
Phil Tooze