

# Meet The Ghosts of LeRoy House

by Lynne Belluscio

Next month, on October 18 and 19, the walls will talk -- perhaps I should say the ghosts will talk -- at LeRoy House. We're using documented stories of people who lived in LeRoy House to develop five vignettes that will be presented in the evening at 7:30 during a candlelight tour.

As you enter each room, you will enter a different year -- you'll be a time traveler. From 1822 you will meet Egbert Benson, the land agent for the Triangle Tract. He is quite agitated, because Herman LeRoy, is sending his son Jacob to replace him. Land isn't selling well. The settlers can't come up with the money to pay for the land. The people who own the Craigie Tract on the west side of town are trying to get people to put the center of the village on their land. Things aren't going too well for Mr. Benson, and he'll tell you what he thinks!

Downstairs, in the kitchen it's 1833 and Sylvia, the cook is gossiping with Charlotte LeRoy's maid. What are they going to do? Daniel Webster has married Jacob LeRoy's "old maid" sister and the Websters are coming to visit the "country" relatives. They've heard that Daniel likes spending time on his farm in Marshfield, Massachusetts, but his new bride prefers the city life of New York City. Sylvia will have to prepare some pretty fancy dinners. She's looked through Mrs. LeRoy's recipe book for some ideas. Will she serve turtle soup? How in the world is she going to get her hands on a turtle? And then there's the problem with the silk stockings. Mrs. LeRoy has to have new silk

stockings but they haven't arrived yet. What's she going to do? The whole household is going to be turned upside down and the Websters are on their way.

Things aren't much better upstairs in the back parlor. It's 1863 and the teenage daughter of Samuel Cox is in a lot of trouble. Her father is the Chancellor of Ingham University, and Mary Cox expects Madam Staunton to walk in the door any minute to talk with her father about what happened. Things don't look too good for Mary ... but you'll have to hear her story.

In the front parlor, Allen Olmsted is anxiously waiting for a committee of the Board of Education. The year is 1911, and the old house is in pretty tough shape. There's even talk of tearing it down. But Olmsted has a plan. He just needs to convince the Board of Education.

If you're lucky, when you go into the 1929 kitchen, Mrs. Spry will offer you a couple of fresh baked cookies. She's on her way down to Schuyler Wells' house (last week's *Pennysaver* article) to get ready for the reception for Amelia Earhart. Some of the ladies are going out to the Woodward Airport to see Miss Earhart with her plane, the Friendship, and then they will come back to the Wells house for the reception. It's an exciting day for LeRoy, and Mrs. Spry is almost beside herself to think that she'll meet the aviatrix.

We're having a great time putting this special "living history" program together. Sid Barefoot and Sam Leadley will meet you in the Land Office.



Shelia Furr and Sylvia Fraser are talking about turtle soup and silk stockings. Joanne Graham and Liz Carney are waiting for Madam Staunton in the back parlor. Jim DeLooze is researching Allan Olmsted and I'm looking for a flapper dress for Brenda Beal, so she can meet Amelia Earhart in style. Don't miss this event at LeRoy House.

If you want to meet the ghosts of LeRoy House, you'll need to

buy an advance ticket. (Yes, I know Friday, October 18 is the Caledonia-LeRoy game - but some of you won't be going to the football game.) Tickets are \$8 or \$5 for Historical Society members. The door opens at 7:15. Call 768-7433 for tickets or stop by the Jell-O Museum between 10 and 4. Historical Society Board members also have tickets for sale.



1822



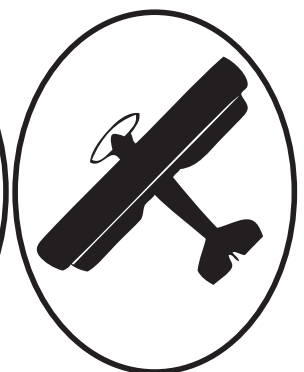
1833



1863



1911



1929