

# The New Driveway

by Lynne Belluscio

George Carlin once asked "How come we drive on a parkway and park in a driveway?" Well finally, we are driving on our driveway – and you can drive on it too! There's no room for parking on the driveway, but there's plenty of parking in the parking lot - although we didn't have enough money to pave the parking lot too.

The project was more than paving the driveway. The problem started in 1976 when the State resurfaced Main Street. The new curbs and the cement apron from the street were too steep. Cars, trucks and especially buses bottomed out coming in and especially going out as evidenced by the scrape marks in the pavement. One bus had to ask everyone to get off and then the driver angled the bus to go out to the street. Here we are with a new wheelchair lift but I can't get the buses in to let people off next to the wheelchair lift!

So I guess, I wasn't too apologetic when Senator Mary Lou Rath offered to make State grant money available to change the pitch of the driveway and to have it paved. Not only would it change the pitch of the approach from the street, but it would get rid of those awful potholes that seemed to get worse every year. Each spring I was convinced that someone would really wreck their suspension or get a flat tire. The driveway was getting wider just because people were driving around the potholes. The only advantage of the potholes was that during Little League season, people couldn't drive like maniacs. They had to slow down and the kids playing in the driveway would have a chance to get out of the way. I considered the

potholes inverted speed bumps.

So now with the paved driveway, I worry about the maniacs, who think they can tear down the driveway to drop off their kids at the Little League field. To remind them that they need to slow down, we have put up 10 mph signs in both directions and a "slow kids at play" sign. Hopefully people will heed the signs. If not, maybe I can get the Village Police to put up their speeding machine that flashes your speed.

Or maybe I'll get someone to sit outside with a hair dryer aimed at people coming in the driveway. They might think we have a radar gun to check their speed.

Never the less, it is great to have a new driveway and we certainly appreciate the efforts of Senator Rath. The grant came through the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservations. We had to fill out an awful lot of paperwork. The State Historic Preservation Office had to approve all of the plans to make sure there was minimal impact on LeRoy House and the Academic Building, both of which are on the State and National Register. Then there was the State Department of Transportation. If Loren Wetzel hadn't stepped in at that point, I don't think I would have had the time or energy to go through all the hoops necessary. And luckily we had the money to post the construction bond - something we had no idea was going to be necessary. In the meantime, our request for the funds for the



Main Street Le Roy With Tarvia

project were being processed in Albany and unlike the wheelchair lift project, the approval didn't have to go over State Attorney General Cuomo's desk. Someone must have been looking out for us, because three days before the project was completed, the money for the project was transferred to our bank account and we paid the bill.

So we have gone from the age of mud and dust to asphalt. It's hard to imagine what it was like 100 years ago, when streets were all like our old driveway. Le Roy's Main Street was "transformed" in 1919 with "Tarvia." According to the *Literary Digest* of September 1, 1923, an ad for Tarvia includes a photo of Main Street Le Roy with the description:

"What are the stages of America's Main Streets? First the Age of Mud and Dust – the age of the sprinkling cart – the age when spring thaws turned Main Street into a mud hole. Unpaved and untended, the old-fashioned Main Street was a daily affront to the community. Today ... the Age of Tarvia. Main Street has been extended. Instead of a short stretch of ultra-expensive pavement, there are miles of moderate priced, low maintenance cost Tarvia roads – radiating out into the country, and bringing business into the town by automobile and truck. Hundreds of towns and counties have found that Tarvia roads are the economical solution of the good roads problem."



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