

Getting Ready For 2012

by Lynne Belluscio

As some of you know, next year will be the 200th Anniversary - the Bicentennial of the Town of LeRoy. On April 6, 1812, the Town of Bellona was severed from the Town of Caledonia by a State resolution in the Senate and Assembly.

The resolution went into effect on the first Monday in March, 1813. The Town was named for the goddess of war, which probably made sense at the time considering we were at war with the British in what was to become known as the War of 1812.

Apparently the folks in the area didn't like the name and petitioned the state to change the name. Herman LeRoy from New York was part owner of the Triangle Tract which encompassed Bellona and perhaps he put a little pressure on the politicians in Albany, to name the town after him. On April 6, 1813, Bellona was changed to LeRoy, and a few weeks later on May 10th it became official. (It wasn't until May 5, 1834 that the Village of LeRoy was incorporated.)

I've been trying to come up with an appropriate Bicentennial project that the Historical Society could oversee and a few days ago I discovered "Barn Quilts" and thought this would be a wonderful LeRoy project. Barn quilts are made of two 4x8 sheets of plywood, painted with a quilt design and hung on a barn - very much like the hex signs on Pennsylvania barns.

The idea of barn quilts goes back to a farm in Ohio in the 1980s. A woman had purchased an old farm and the barn was in pretty tough shape. She decided to spruce it up and add a wooden barn quilt. A year later, another barn quilt was erected on a nearby barn, and soon there were several barns in the area with these wonderful pieces of folk art.

People began to drive around looking for the barn quilts. Maps and brochures were printed. The idea caught on and today there are barn quilt projects all over



North America. The closest barn quilt project is in nearby Kendall, in Orleans County. I drove up to Kendall to Partyka Farm Market to talk with Laura who started the community project. I also spent a lot of time on the internet looking at other barn quilt projects.

So the LeRoy Historical Society will be coordinating LeRoy's Barn Quilt project for the Town's Bicentennial. We will be looking for people who would like to have a barn quilt on their barn. Others might be interested in designing and painting a barn

quilt. This Historical Society will be painting a couple of quilts for people to purchase. Some people have already indicated that they would like to duplicate a quilt design from a family quilt. We will have a couple of informational meetings and information on what kind of materials you will need and construction hints. All the quilts will be registered and you will need to supply information about the history of the barn or your family or the business.

The quilts will be photographed

and put together in a notebook. We suspect that if we can put up enough quilts - perhaps 20 by next year, there will be bus tours who would sign up for a "step on" tour of LeRoy's barn quilts. Kendall has mapped a bicycle route. We will print brochures and maps. This project is still in the planning stage, but if you are interested in any aspect of the

project, make sure you stop by the Historical Society's tent on Trigon Park during the Oatka Festival or call the office any time so we can put together a list of interested people.

Our first barn quilt will be a smaller version of the 8x8 size. I have picked out a design called "goose tracks" (very appropriate for LeRoy). The other name of the design if it is done only in red, green and white, is Italian Beauty. I have decided to do the design in Jell-O colors, so maybe we will name it Jell-O Beauty.

