

Extra Points

by Lynne Belluscio

I cannot spell. I hated spelling bees when I was in school and in college, I remember more than once having a paper failed because I had more than five misspelled words. When I was student teaching - in a sixth grade in Clyde, New York, I admitted to the class that I had difficulty spelling. I made a deal with them. If they discovered a misspelled word that I had written on the board or in a ditto that I passed out, I would give them extra points on their next test. It put me on my toes and the kids were anxious to find a misspelled word. But now I need a fact checker.

Last week, Sam Zalacca stopped by to tell me that the article about the Ingham art student, Augusta Palmer, had a glaring error. I mentioned that in the background she had painted the steeple of St. Joseph's Church, when in fact, as Sam pointed out, St. Joe's wasn't built yet. "My goodness, Sam you are indeed right. You get an extra point on your next paper." That slipped by me.

Of course it was the steeple of St. Peter's Church. The church was dedicated in 1873. The steeple was struck by lightning and torn down in 1930. Just like a couple of weeks ago, I mentioned that the Triangle Tract marker was on South Street when in fact it was on Summit Street. I hate when I do that, but on the other hand, it's good to know there are some of you out there reading these articles and are checking up on me!

Many years ago, I put an "Errata" article in the *Pennysaver*, to correct some of the mistakes I had made. Heaven forbid, that in fifty years, someone reading these articles is going to cite them for fact. Since most of these articles are now posted on the Internet and are available in a digital format, I have been able to correct them, so I'll call Terry at the *Pennysaver* and ask her correct the Augusta Palmer article.

I'm not too sure what to do about the error in the LeRoy book that I wrote a few years back. On page 82 I included a photo of the Civil War Monument on Trigon Park and the caption read: "This photograph was taken on Trigon Park in front of the Soldier's Monument on dedication day,



May 30, 1906." As it was pointed out to me, in the background is the Union Free School that wasn't opened until 1911, so the photograph could not have been taken in 1906 - - unless it was Photoshopped. (So if you have a copy of the book, turn to page 82 and correct it to read: "This photograph was taken on Trigon Park sometime after 1911 in front of the Soldier's Monument, which had been dedicated on May 30, 1906.")

All those dates and names that we had to memorize are probably written in stone, but occasionally there's something that comes to light that puts a different twist on history. It's like giving Thomas Edison all the credit for the electric light bulb, when we really need to learn about Nikola Tesla. It's also the reason why I hesitate to say that Pearle Wait invented Jell-O. He didn't invent it. He trademarked the brand name. And we believe that it was his wife May that came up with the name.

At the time, there were several other gelatin concoctions being sold, under a variety of names. But it's not right to give Peter Cooper the credit for inventing Jell-O either. Peter Cooper did patent a gelatin-based product in 1945, but he didn't invent gelatin. There were recipes for flavored "jellies" way before Peter Cooper invented his concoction.

As a curious sideline - I was in Gowanda last week to give a talk about LeRoy's Barn Quilt Trail and discovered that from 1904 until 1984, the Peter Cooper Glue and Gelatin Factory was located in Gowanda adjacent to the Eastern Tanners Glue Factory. The tannery supplied the hides for the collagen in the glue. (Another Peter Cooper glue factory was located in Carrollville, Wisconsin but as far as I can tell, none of these factories supplied gelatin for Jell-O. All of the gelatin for Jell-O is produced at the Atlantic Gelatin Company in Woburn, Massachusetts.)

So for some people I will award extra points for fact finding, but I've decided to deduct points when people mispronounce LeRoy. As I have said many times, the Town and the Village are named for Herman LeRoy. He was a descendant of French Huguenots and the name is French and is pronounced *luh roy*, not *lee roy*. I suspect that the family rolls over in their graves every time the name is mispronounced. No one likes their name mispronounced.

I think the next fund raiser for the Historical Society will be a jar in the middle of every table at any meeting in town, at any sports event, and on any bar. The errant person who says *lee roy* will have to contribute a quarter. Maybe cheerleaders from the opposing teams who scream "Destroy LeRoy" will have to apply for a permit or better yet, have a point taken away from the score. Just a thought . . .