

“I’ve Lived In LeRoy All My Life, But ...”

by Lynne Belluscio

If I had a dollar for every time I have heard, “I’ve lived in LeRoy all my life but I’ve never been in LeRoy House or I haven’t been to the Jell-O Gallery” I’d be rich.

We often joke that if all these people show up on one day, we’re in trouble. But we’re ready for you. Don’t tell me you won’t pay \$4.50 to visit the Jell-O Gallery, because on Oatka Festival weekend it’s FREE - - It’s always free on Festival weekend. So bring your relatives, your classmates, your grandchildren, your in-laws - - the more the merrier.

The Jell-O Gallery is open during our regular hours, 10 to 4 on Saturday and 1 to 4 on Sunday. Don’t expect a guided tour because it’s a little hectic, but there’s plenty to see. And I can guarantee the air conditioning will be on and the transportation exhibit in the basement is “cool” both figuratively and literally. (For all you LeRoyans, who used to climb into the building to see the Cadillac, it’s still there and so are nine other horse-drawn carriages and sleighs. And so is the ox cart.)

As you walk down the Jell-O Brick Road, you will notice 16 new bricks that were recently installed. If you are looking for a brick, we will have the card index available and there will be flags marking the different sections. If you want to buy a brick, the forms for ordering a brick will also be available.

While you’re visiting, make sure you take a few minutes to enjoy the beautiful gardens. And if you know Linda Keister, she needs a special thank you for making sure everything is in tip top shape. She volunteers several times a week weeding and transplanting. This year all of the first grade students from Wolcott Street School helped weed and mulch and planted over 100 marigolds.

We want to thank Ron Paganin for painting the white trellises for us. We also had the services of a GCC student who did some edging and mulching. My personal project, is to pick the little green worms from the fragile Ingham Roses. (We were



totally amazed that they survived the brutally cold winter.)

Don’t miss an opportunity to visit LeRoy House this year. The house will be open 12 to 4 each day. Our new exhibit “Let’s Play” has created a lot of interest. And we have furnished the LeRoy bedroom for the three oldest LeRoy girls, Charlotte, Helen and Catherine. The boys, Thomas and Augustus have left their archery equipment in the corner. And the girls have been playing the latest game from France known as Les Grace. Across the hall are the puzzles and board games, as well as Lincoln logs and several marble collections. (Don’t get mad because you missed the Lapp Insulator exhibit - - that was last year).

We rely on over 30 volunteers to keep LeRoy House open, seven days a week during the summer, and they will be helping out during the Festival. Shelia Furr coordinates all our house docents, and if you think you might want to join our dedicated team, make sure you fill out a volunteer form and leave it with the docent.

Now I’m going to share a secret with all of you. When the hub bub and noise of the Oatka Festival becomes a little overwhelming, there is a shady, cool porch at the back of LeRoy House that provides a quiet refuge. There are white wicker chairs and tables. (I

think we need a hammock!) We’ll have some cold water available or pick up a lemonade across the street and come and sit as long as you want. Plan to meet your friends on the porch, and enjoy LeRoy’s best kept secret.

This year we are taking part of LeRoy House across the street to the Festival site. Yes, we will have some of the new Jell-O shirts for sale, and hats, but most of the museum shop will be at the Jell-O Gallery this year. This year, in the shade of the big tent, you can stop by and play some of the many pioneer games that the kids enjoy when they participate in our Pioneer Sampler program. We are bringing over the skittles game and we’ll have a high points

board each day, with some prizes. If you’ve never played shut the box, you’ll get hooked on this simple “no batteres required” 19th century game. We’ve also cleaned up an old table bowling game that was found on the curb several years ago, and the pins will be set up for everyone to try. The new crinkinole board is ready as are the ever popular marble races. Have you ever played “Farkel”? Well now’s your chance and if you like this dice game, we have special Jell-O Farkel sets for sale.

So don’t let this year go by without stopping by the LeRoy House or the Jell-O Gallery. And stop by the tent on Trigon Park. There’s no excuse.

