

Following The Barn Quilt Trail

by Suzi Parron - May 11th at 7 pm

by Lynne Belluscio

Imagine quitting your job, buying a motor home and driving around the country writing stories about barn quilts. Well, that is exactly what Suzi Parron has done for the past five years, and on May 11 she will be in LeRoy for another chapter of her story.

She was in town in 2013, when she talked at LeRoy House about her first book, "Barn Quilts and the American Quilt Trail." She had written about the barn quilt trails in Never Sink, New York, and Orleans County. She was already planning to write another book and wanted to collect the stories about LeRoy's Barn Quilt Trail.

I took her around town looking at some of our quilts and she had a chance to chat with folks who had barn quilts. She spent quite a bit of time with Marny Frost Cleere and her mom, Carol Frost. They brought out the family quilt that was used for their barn quilt at McPherson Farms and Suzi took some photographs. Suzi also talked with Shelley Stein about the quilts that are on the Stein barns on Gully Road and Conlon Road. Suzi has included their stories in her new book, "Following the Barn Quilt Trail." A box of Suzi's new books are being delivered to LeRoy House, hopefully in time for her program on Thursday, May 11, at 7 pm.

Suzi will share her odyssey with her husband Glen, their dog Gracie, and their converted bus "Ruby." They have traveled through thirty states, across thirteen thousand miles gathering stories, pictures and a lot of experiences. Over the past three years, I have kept track of Suzi through her website and occasionally we have emailed back and forth. She sent me the text for her book to read through. I think she was in California at that time. She emailed a few months back to say she would be in Western New York in May and wanted to stop by. And if we were interested, she'd be able to share some of her stories and sign books. So without hesitation I said, "You bet! We'll be having our annual meeting and we need a speaker."

If you met Suzi when she was here in 2013, you'll remember that she is a quilter, a folk art

collector, and an avid kayaker. She is originally from Florida, and was an English teacher, before she decided to follow the barn quilt trail. She has spent a lot of time with Donna Sue Grove, who is credited with starting the barn quilt project in Ohio about fifteen years ago.

Contrary to some of the recent barn quilt history that has been written, barn quilts were not brought to the United States from Europe, nor were they part of the Pennsylvania Dutch history. The barn quilt trail in LeRoy is one of the largest in New York. Recently, there have been a few new quilts added to our trail, and Wyoming County has had an initiative to paint barn quilts in their area. We still have people who stop by The Jell-O Gallery asking for one of our maps. Unfortunately the maps need to be updated and I just haven't had a chance bring the information up to date, but it's on my to do list.

So plan to join us at 7 pm at LeRoy House for a great story about Suzi Parron's travels along the barn quilt trail. The Historical Society will be voting on

their new Board of Trustees that evening. We will welcome a new member, Sam Zalacca, and will be electing Michele Panapento and Susan Privitera for a second three year term. We are most ap-

preciative for Joanne Graham's and Cheryl Fernaays' six years of service and are glad that they have accepted an appointment to fill two vacancies on the board for next year.

FOLLOWING THE BARN QUILT TRAIL

Suzi Parron

FOREWORD BY
DONNA SUE GROVES



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