

Not an Ordinary Tour of LeRoy

by Lynne Belluscio

The Historical Society is offering a rare opportunity to see some hidden treasures of LeRoy on Monday October 8. The tour will begin at Mercygrove, where the group will meet for coffee, tea, juice and pastries. Folks will gather in the dining room for an informal talk about the spectacular Burchfield wallpaper, which at one time was valued at over \$400,000. Learn about the man, Donald Woodward, who built this expansive house and why he never lived here. And if you have wondered about how the Opus #1559 Aeolian Organ was “discovered” recently by the Organ Historical Society. It was installed within the walls of the house when it was built and this will be a rare opportunity to hear it being played. Sam Zalacca has chosen some music from the 1920s for a short concert. Jim Gombrone who owns Mercygrove, has allowed us to bring out some of the original blueprints to show the little details that were built into this magnificent home. And luckily, there are some photographs and landscape drawings that show the expansive gardens at Mercygrove. After the morning at Mercygrove, a motorcoach will pick us up and during the day it will serve as a theater on wheels as we visit the Donald Woodward Airport on Asbury Road. Built in 1928, it was the home to the “Friendship” – the tri motor Fokker that flew across the Atlantic with Amelia Earhart on board. We will be able to watch some clips from the movie “Amelia” with footage of the full-sized model of the bright orange Friendship. Then it will be off to the Marion Steam shovel and some phenomenal footage of these mammoth beasts working in a quarry. If the weather allows, everyone can pose for a “selfie” with Maid Marion.

The D&R Depot will host a quick lunch, and the bus will continue through the countryside for a short tour of the



Wrought iron handrail at Mercygrove

Underground Railroad and an opportunity to see some of LeRoy’s newest barn quilts. If you have ever wondered what the inside of the Woodward Mausoleum looks like, you will want to make sure to join us. We will visit the cemetery in the afternoon when the light comes through the stained glass window. If plans are approved, the bus will have access to the railroad bridge over Buttermilk Falls, for a once in a lifetime view of one of LeRoy’s true hidden treasures. The day will

end with dinner at 6:30 at Farmer’s Creekside Restaurant. A special menu is being offered to us, and you will be able to order from a selection of entrées. This unique tour, is open to the public, but reservations and a \$50 deposit are necessary. The cost of the tour, is \$175 per person which includes membership to the Historical Society (\$155 for members of the Historical Society) This includes all three meals, and the motorcoach. If you chose not to stay for the dinner at the Creekside, the fee

is reduced by \$50.

Don’t miss this opportunity to discover our town’s history. And bring your camera and enjoy this tour from the comfort of a Covered Wagon Coach. If you have any questions or want to make a reservation, don’t hesitate to call 768-7433.

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