

Alice's antique aprons go on show for Albany Town House fundraiser

By ALISON ALOISIO

"An apron is just a loincloth with ruffles."

That and other interesting tidbits of apron lore and history will be offered up at an Aug. 12 fundraiser at the Albany Town House.

An 11 a.m. luncheon, sponsored by the Albany Improvement Association, will benefit Town House restoration projects. The event will feature a display of more than 50 vintage aprons, most from the collection of the late Alice Kimball of Albany.

Her daughter, Norma Salway, came up with the idea when she came across some 40 aprons in boxes her mother had stored away.

"My mom loved aprons, and I have found proof of that over the past few years as I've gone through her many packrat boxes containing materials she couldn't bear to throw out," said Salway.

Most of the aprons, in both full- and half-

style, are from the 1940s through 1960s.

And because aprons were made to be used, evidence of their use was often apparent.

"I would find one of her old aprons complete with butter-fat stains or tea from her days making our own butter," Salway said.

A long apron displayed over a skirt is likely the oldest. "It's typical of those worn over long skirts and dresses during the late 1800s and early 1900s," said Salway.

Among her mother's aprons Salway also found a scrapbook with hundreds of apron patterns from old magazines and newspapers. They will also be on exhibit.

In addition, several old aprons from the family of Albany resident Ellen Marshall will be part of the display. A purple gingham, hand-smocked apron was made by Marshall's

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ALICE'S APRONS—Lorraine Tanguay and Ellen Marshall with some of the aprons that will be displayed at an Aug. 12 fundraiser at the Albany Town House. The apron Tanguay is wearing was used by Alice Kimball when she made butter in the 1940s and 1950s. The vintage-style apron Marshall is wearing will be raffled.

(Photo: A. Aloisio)

great-aunt in the 1940s. "It's a great example of aprons becoming more fancy and less for everyday wear," said Salway.

Dottie Adams of Hanover, Salway's sister, will join her in the presentation of apron history.

They will describe the origins of aprons (think "men"), their evolution and changing uses (carrying eggs from the chicken coop, drying children's tears, and the 1950s' heyday for aprons in the U.S.

The date of the luncheon purposely coincides with the weekend of the Bethel Historical Society's Heritage Days, to tie in with the history theme.

The fundraiser will benefit the Albany Improvement Association's continued efforts to restore the Albany Town House. "We eventually want to present more historical exhibits and would need portable display cases, lighting, and other display shelves and storage cabinets," said Salway. "Later, in August, we

will have the main floors re-finished. There is more work to be done both inside and outside this building."

Admission on Aug. 12 will be \$5, with attendees invited to wear/share an apron.

A vintage-style apron made by Salway will be raffled off the day of the event, along with a basket of kitchen items.

Advance reservations can be made by calling 824-2305. Both ladies and gentlemen are invited to attend.