

# Washington - First In The Hearts Of His Countrymen

by Lynne Belluscio

"I've lived in LeRoy all my life and I have no idea where the Washington Block is!" Well if that's your story, you'd better join us for a walk of Main Street this weekend. The group will meet at the Woodward Library at 11 am on Sunday, July 19 and later that afternoon at 3 pm. We're asking for a \$10 donation to the Strengthen the Arm of Liberty Fund. And I promise you will discover two buildings - - one on the south side of Main Street and one on the north side.

It seems like I've been spending quite a bit of my time lately with George Washington. After the second grade walking tours on Main Street a couple of weeks ago, I headed to Colonial Williamsburg for a museum meeting and one of the coordinators of the event was Ron Carnigie, who portrays General George Washington on the Duke of Gloucester Street. Ron has been portraying George for quite a while. When the Historical Society bus trip took us to Williamsburg a couple of years ago, we had the opportunity to hear Ron/George perform.

The Historical Society also visited Mt. Vernon on one of our trips, on a very rainy day. Although we had the opportunity to visit the mill and Washington's distillery, I was disappointed that the weather prevented us from seeing George Washington's

16-sided barn.

But two weeks ago, I met my son and his boys in Washington, DC and we headed down to Mt. Vernon and although it was terribly hot, we did take the shuttle down to see the 16-sided threshing barn. It's quite a structure. It was built so that horses could walk in a circle on grain stalks so the grain would separate and fall through cracks in the floor to the level below where it would be collected, winnowed and sent to the mill. It was quite ingenious and an architectural marvel for the time. The barn has been reconstructed from photographs and written descriptions.

We left the farm for some lunch at the visitor center and as anyone who knows me, I was looking for a LeRoy connection, and there in the self serve section of the desserts were plastic cups of red Jell-O. I couldn't help but take a photo and post it on Facebook, along with a copy of the Jell-O Recipe book with the portrait of George Washington hanging over a sideboard of red Jell-O. Obviously, George's favorite flavor - - if Jell-O had been available when George was alive - - would have been cherry. (LOL)

So after our visit to Washington's home at Mount Vernon, we headed into Washington, DC to meet Amy Burton at the Senate. She took us through the Brumidi corridors to see the portrait of Henry Clay (that was donated to the Senate by the Historical Society). She also took us into the basement to see the Italian marble bathtubs.

It seems that in the 1850s, most of the Senators would come to Washington and take a room at a boarding house, where there were no facilities for bathing. So one of the "perks" of being a Senator was the availability of six huge carved marble bathtubs. (This is no



Jell-O in the Senate cafeteria.



Jell-O recipe book with the portrait of George Washington.



Bathtubs in basement of Senate.

April 1 story! I saw the bathtubs and my two grandsons jumped in one for a photograph.) After all the excitement of the bathtubs and Henry Clay - - I wonder if he ever used the bathtubs? - - we headed up to the gift shop and then to the cafeteria. And

what did we see on the refrigerated shelves? You guessed it - - Jell-O.

So if George Washington was "first in the hearts of his countrymen" maybe it could be said the same about Jell-O.



Menu at Mt Vernon notice kids meal with Jello.