

## VERMILYEA HOUSE TOUR

ARCH, the Allen County historical preservation organization is presenting "Vermilyea House...A Return to Splendor" on May 22, 2004, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. A tour of the popular Wabash & Erie Canal inn will explore the brick mansion built in 1839 by canal contractor Jesse Vermilyea and his wife Maria.

Bricks for the structure were fired on the property. Most of the woodwork throughout the house is black walnut except for the master's bedroom on the second floor where "white walnut" or butternut trims the space. Vermilyea became the first postmaster for the township and his letter desk remains in place adjacent to the marble-faced fireplace and matches another fireplace in an adjoining parlor. Visitors can see the spent lead bullet embedded in the door that has been left undisturbed as part of its historic past.

The Vermilyea house faced a Wabash & Erie Canal landing that served guests coming and going. Nearby stood the Aboite River Aqueduct No. 2. Its abutments and foundation timbers can be viewed. CSI (Canal Society of Indiana) representatives will be on hand to interpret the canal for interested visitors.

The Vermilyea house has been returned to its splendor by its new owners Todd and Kathy Freeland. The oval restroom with its canal mural is a "must see" for those attending the event. Cost of admission including refreshments and entertainment is \$50.00 for adults 18 years and over. Proceeds go to ARCH.



This group walked a portion of the proposed Laurel-Brookville Canal Trail one Saturday in early March. Photo by Paul Baudendistel

### Laurel-Brookville Canal Trail

A group of citizens are hoping to establish a trail along the Whitewater Canal from Laurel to Brookville in southeastern Indiana. They have had several trail walks trying to increase interest in such a project. Mick Wilz can be contacted at [mick@sur-seal.com](mailto:mick@sur-seal.com) if you wish to be notified of future hikes.

On Sunday March 21 they met at CVS at 1 P.M., made 2 or 3 stops and took a short ¼ mile walk at each stop. On an earlier Saturday walk they heard the following story from a land owner. Paul Baudendistel, CSI Advisory Council, put it into text form.

#### Boundary Hill Folklore

The scene is a strip of land along the old railroad / canal towpath trail just west of the Boundary Hill cut. In the vicinity of the Jim Cox property and overlooking the canal is a group of old pine trees, which mark the site of an early grave yard. (Warne Cemetery). We thought this story seemed real appropriate for a point of interest along the Whitewater Canal Trail.

The man who owns this farm told Mick about a small cemetery on his property, how the gravestones were settled there under the pine trees and how George Washington was buried there.

In the time when immigrants were traveling through this country a party of travelers chose this neighborhood to set up camp for the night. One family, which was camping with this party, lost their small son during the night, and they searched for him for several days but could not find him. In time the party moved on and, after a couple of weeks, the family of the missing boy gave up and left him behind not knowing his fate. Time passed. Then one day the boy weakly returned. Although he survived this period of total panic and confusion, it was too late. It proved impossible to relocate his parents.

As was the practice in that time, the boy was raised by the neighborhood and given the name George Washington. So it came to pass that upon his death George Washington was buried in that small pioneer graveyard under the pines at the west end of Boundary Hill Ridge.