

February 2021



MANSION HOUSE NEWS

WESTPORT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Winter Closing

Online History Presentation Series!

The Westport Historical Society and the 1855 Harris Kearney House are extremely excited to announce The *History Speaks* series on our website. The goal of the series is to teach about local, state, and national history, and foster interest in preservation. Subjects include information and stories on people, places, things, and ideas. The first program REMEMBER THE LADIES by Alisha Cole* looks at the women's movement in the 20th century.

To access the power point presentation, please go to our website at westporthistorical.com/time-traveler. Select the *Remember the Ladies* power point presentation.

* Alisha Cole is Principal with Arcadia Consulting, a historian, and a Board Member of the Westport Historical Society.

New presentations will be announced, soon.

The 1855 Harris-Kearney House Museum is now closed for the Winter Season. The Mansion will reopen on Friday, March 5, 2021. During the closure, in January and February, the House Museum is available for group tours, private events, and meetings. Please call 913-231-6749 for reservations and information, or send an email to westporthistorical@gmail.com

2021 Membership

Thank you to all who have renewed their membership for 2021 and donated to the 1855 Harris-Kearney House WINDOW RESTORATION CAPITAL CAMPAIGN. We are profoundly grateful for your support. If you have not renewed for 2021, or would like to join the Historical Society, please see our membership information and membership form on our website www.westporthistorical.com or send a request for a form at westporthistorical@gmail.com



Aunt Minerva's Kitchen

Old Fashioned Dinner Rolls

4 ½ cups flour	¼ oz (1 package) yeast; dissolve in the warm water
3 eggs	8 T. butter
½ cup sugar	1 cup warm water

Mix ingredients in order given. Dough will be sticky. Place in a greased bowl, cover with a cloth. Let rise until doubled. Remove from bowl and knead slightly—do not add extra flour when kneading. Pinch off a third and roll in a circle. Cut into wedges; roll starting with the wide end. Place in baking pan. Repeat until all dough is used. Cover and let rise until doubled. Bake 10-12 minutes at 350 degrees. ~This recipe is at least 125 years old

Bread was a significant element in a family's diet in the 19th century. The bread took many forms, some being made more often than others. Biscuits, beaten biscuits, corn bread, johnny cakes, crackers, batter breads, and yeast breads were the most popular. Frequently used grains were wheat, rye, oat, and corn and some were cultivated on the Harris property. At the beginning of the 1800's home bakers start baking bread in tins, rather than casting their formed loaves onto the floor of brick ovens. In 1868, the Fleischmann brothers created America's first commercially produced yeast, a cake of compressed grain, barley malt, and brewer's yeast. Soon bakers were using commercial yeast in their bread recipes instead of natural starters made with wild yeasts.

Hints for Baking Breads:

- Kneading dough for 30 seconds after mixing, improves the texture of baking powder biscuits
- Place small dish of water in the oven to help keep bread crust from hardening
- Dip a spoon in hot water to measure shortening or butter; fat will slip from the spoon more easily
- For best results, preheat your cookie sheet, muffin tins, or cake pans
- For a dough conditioner, add 1 tablespoon cider vinegar when you are mixing. Ginger can also act as a dough conditioner, add 1/4 teaspoon of dried, powdered ginger per 2 loaf recipe. The vinegar and ginger increase the lightness of the dough
- Wet hands when kneading the dough. This will keep the dough from sticking to your hands without adding any heaviness to the dough
- The baking stone increases the heat retention in the oven and gives that crisp brown crust the wood-fired ovens give. Place the bread pan on the baking stone
- Slash loaves diagonally across the top about 20 minutes before baking. This gives space for the loaf to spring in the oven without cracking your bread
- Don't rush bread baking: allow for at least 4 hours to make an awesome, loaf of bread

THE KANSAS CITY
PUBLIC LIBRARY



EVENT SPACE RENTAL

The upper and lower galleries of the 1855 Harris-Kearney House Museum may be rented for luncheons, parties, celebrations, receptions or meetings. The parlor or dining room may be rented for small weddings, and the Mansion House grounds may be rented for outdoor events.

For more information pricing, and availability, please send an email of inquiry to:
westporthistorical@gmail.com

UNCLE MARKS CORNER

Twine

Twine is a strong cord or string composed of two or more thin strands, each twisted, then all twisted together. Natural materials used for making twine are hemp, cotton, flax, silk, and sisal.

Twine has many uses around the home and garden. Training branches on fruit trees is one use of this good twine. It can be used for supporting plants, such as tomatoes, by wrapping twine around the plant and tying to stakes. Twine is often used to mark straight lines for planting rows and to separate areas of the garden. In addition, twine can be used to hang onions, garlic, herbs, vegetables, and flowers to dry.

If you have large acreage and grow straw for your own animals or to sell, twine can also be used to tie straw bales. You can also use twine to tie together bundles of other crops, such as cornstalks.

One popular use of twine is to tie packages. Another is to attach banners or flags to various supports. Twine is also used in knitting, crocheting, decorative sewing, and making jewelry.

Commercially, twine is used in upholstery, rug-making, agriculture, the cotton industry, textiles, and in the carton industry.

Some example of twine material and uses of each:

- Hemp Twine is a great choice for beading, jewelry, macrame, and eco-friendly projects.
- Cotton Twine is versatile and used for light duty such as tying small boxes or packets.
- Flax Twine is used for parcel tying, craft work, swing tags, and in upholstery.
- Silk Twine is a wonderful choice to provide strength to sewing projects, crafts, and swing tags.
- Sisal Twine is used for agricultural, landscape and nursery applications, and general industrial tying applications.

Tatting

Tatting is a technique for handcrafting a particularly durable lace from a series of loops, knots, and patterns of rings and chains formed from a series of particular stitches. There is no documentation of, or examples of tatted lace dating prior to 1800. All available evidence shows that tatting originated in the early 19th century. Tatting began as a trim item on collars, and articles of clothing then developed into lace edging on table cloths, napkins, curtains, and doilies, Tatting was also used on accessories such as earrings and necklaces, and other decorative pieces. Many tatting patterns were published in magazines and books. The next time you visit the Mansion House, ask the staff to show you a tatting tool set from the 1800's. See the next page for an example.



The Voice of Winter

The Forest moans and groans and creaks.
Sparrows chitter, chatter, twitter,
that's the way that winter speaks.

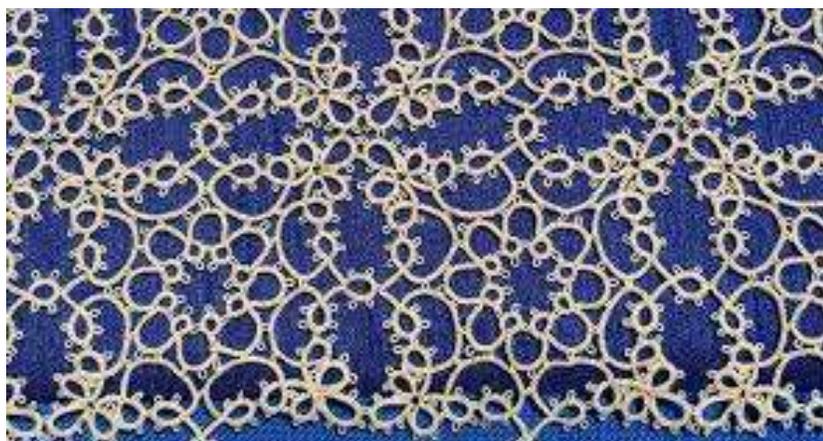
Snowflakes whisper on my cheek
as quaking aspen sssshhhh and flutter.
The Forest moans, and groans and creaks.

In the hush, a squirrel squeaks,
then scabble . . . pause . . . a hurried skitter.
That's the way the winter speaks.

With scratching claws and snatching beaks.
Branches click. They knit and jitter,
as the Forest moans and creaks.

By the stream, a rabbit peeks
at ice that's crack and crunch and glitter.
That's the way that winter speaks.

Coldness creeps and slinks and sneaks
with a voice like metal, sharp, and bitter.
The Forest moans and groans and creaks.
That's the way winter speaks.
~Laura Purdie Salas



PLEASE TAKE CARE

With the continued spread of COVID-19, the Staff, Board of Directors, and Executive Board of the Westport Historical Society and the Mansion House, hope our members, friends, and neighbors will remain well and safe. Please take good care by continuing to follow the guidelines which are noted to help stop the spread of this horrid virus. Staying out of large crowds and social distancing should be practiced in combination with other everyday preventive actions, including wearing masks and avoiding touching the face with unwashed hands. Frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is especially important after having been in a public place or after blowing the nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer which contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of the hands and rub them together until they feel dry. If you find that you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider.

Organizing

During the winter days when the weather keeps us inside, it is good time to do a little organizing the utility room closet. Try these helpful hints:

- Place a hanging rack under a shelf to hold small brooms and brushes
- Use stacking wine bottle racks to hold rolls of trash bags or paper towels
- Use caddies with compartments to hold cleaning supplies. Use one in the kitchen, the bathrooms, and the laundry room.
- Organize paperclips, spare keys, batteries, extension cords, small hand tools, etc. in stackable file drawers.
- Install a lazy-Susan, or two, to make it easier to reach items at the back of the shelves.
- If possible, install an outlet on the back wall to keep handheld cleaning appliances fully charged
- To save added space, hang a collapsible cleaning bucket and stepstool
- Use a 1 lb. coffee can to hold paint brushes, screwdrivers, pliers, etc.
- Use see through, with lid, plastic bins for pet supplies
- Line the shelves with a shelf liner/paper for easy cleaning



Westport Historical Society seeks volunteers:

- Treasurer
- Board member
- Executive Director

-Docents and other volunteers **FOUR HOURS A WEEK;**
we practice safe social distancing 🤝
(Th, F, or Sat, 1-5 p.m.)

If you are interested, or you would like more information, e-mail Alana Smith
westporthistorical@gmail.com, or call (913) 648-0952



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