

January 2021



# MANSION HOUSE NEWS

WESTPORT  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Happy New Year

## Online History Presentation Series!

The Westport Historical Society and the 1855 Harris Kearney House are extremely excited to announce The History Presentation Series *History Matters* 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 20<sup>th</sup> century. To access the power point presentation, please go to our website at <https://www.westporthistorical.com/time-traveler> Scroll toward the bottom of the page and 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.

Here's to a bright New Year and a fond farewell to the old; here's to the things that are yet to come, and to the memories we dearly hold. May you have a prosperous New Year, filled with happiness, wealth, good health, accomplishments, adventures, and learnings. Have a wonderful New Year surrounded by those who mean the most!

In the new year of 2021, we wish you

- |                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| More Dreams         | More Love       |
| More Joy            | More Health     |
| More Books          | More Sunsets    |
| More Music          | More Hugs       |
| More Laughter       | More Sleep      |
| More Friends        | More Adventures |
| More Patience       | More Wisdom     |
| And much More . . . |                 |

## Winter Closing

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](mailto:westporthistorical@gmail.com)

## *Aunt Minerva's Kitchen*

People who visit the Mansion House often ask: "What foods did they eat in the 1850s?" Of course, living next to a steamboat landing afforded the opportunity to have some luxury items such as oranges, lemons, limes, crab, sardines, white sugar, and oysters. Some of the most popular foods at the time were soup (pea, beef, bean, veal, fish), bread (corn, potato, rye, and wheat), meat and fish (roast beef, hams, venison, buffalo, catfish, halibut), vegetables (spinach, peas, corn, carrots, onions, greens, green beans, dessert (cheesecake, pudding, sugar cakes, but never any chocolate desserts), drinks (coffee, tea, wine, whiskey, rum).

Rich and poor alike ate a dish called POTTAGE. Pottage is a term for a thick soup or stew made by boiling vegetables, grains, and any type of preferred meat, chicken, or fish. It was a staple food for many centuries.

### POTTAGE

1 cup rolled oats	1 cup diced parsnip
1 cup chopped cabbage	1 cup sliced mushrooms
1-2 tablespoon bacon grease	10 cups chicken stock
1/2 teaspoon thyme	1/2 teaspoon rosemary
2 teaspoon parsley	black pepper and salt to taste
1 cup diced carrot	1 cup diced onion
1 cup diced leek	1 cup diced turnip
1 cup diced green beans	2 bay leaves
4 cups diced chicken, fish, beef, or venison	1/2teaspoon sage

To prepare this one-pot meal, heat the bacon grease in a large kettle. Add the onions, carrots, parsnips, and turnips. Cook for about 5 minutes, while covering it with a lid.

Once the vegetables become a little soft, add the softer vegetables like the mushrooms, cabbage, leeks, and beans. Cook for about 2 minutes.

Next, add bay leaves, thyme, sage, rosemary, and the chicken stock. Cover with a lid and cook for about an hour. Once done, add the salt and black pepper.

Now, add the rolled oats and the diced meat. Cover again and cook for another 20 minutes. Transfer to a serving bowl and serve with slices of warm, homemade bread and butter.

### QUEEN VICTORIA

The British queen, Queen Victoria died on January 22, 1901. Her death ended an era in which most of her subjects knew no other monarch. Known as the Victorian Era, her 63-year, 7- month reign was a period of significant industrial, political, scientific, and military change, and was known for a great expansion of the British Empire. It is said that Queen Victoria's years on the throne saw the growth of an empire on which the sun never set.



**Joe's  
Pizza**  
Buy the Slice

KANSAS CITY ATHENAEUM



### **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](mailto:westporthistorical@gmail.com)**

UNCLE MARKS CORNER

Leather Care

With the dry winter season upon us, this is a good time to take care of your leather goods. Below are some tips and recipes for keeping your leather in tip-top shape.

**Store** leather out of direct sunlight.

**Clean** your leather goods, regularly. First, wipe the surface with a soft cloth.

Take a damp cloth and wipe it across saddle soap and lather onto the leather. Don't rinse – buff for a nice shine. This method may be repeated as needed because of use.

**Remove** spots from leather by dipping a soft cloth into rubbing alcohol and rubbing the spot. This can work for removing ink spots, as well. Leave it on overnight and wipe it off with a damp cloth. Make sure to test the cleaning method on an out-of-the-way spot first.

**Another method** for removing spots is to mix 1-part lemon juice and 1-part cream of tartar into a paste. Work the paste into the spot with a soft cloth and wipe clean. If the stain remains after drying, apply a little more paste, work it in and wipe clean.

**Water spots** can be removed from leather by mixing 1-part white vinegar and 2 parts linseed oil. Pour the solution into a jar with a lid, shake well and apply to the leather with a soft cloth. Let it sit for 12 hours and buff. If the cloth starts to soil, be sure to change it often. Do not dry in the sun. Store the leftover solution for future use.

SNOW CREAM

Outside, the new-fallen snow offers up the opportunity to make old-fashion Snow Cream. Fun to make and yummy to eat!

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1 cup heavy cream                              | 1/3 cup powdered sugar |
| 1 tsp. lemon essence, or syrup, or lemon peel* |                        |
| 1 tsp preserve syrup                           | 4 cups of fresh snow   |

Take the richest cream you can procure, season it with essence of lemon, or syrup, or lemon peel, and powdered white sugar. If you choose, add a spoonful of preserve syrup. Just before serving, mix-in light, clean, new snow till it is nearly as stiff as ice cream. \*use flavors of your choice  
~Elizabeth Nicholson, 1858



## MANY THANKS

We continue to be overwhelmed by the generosity of our members and friends. The new donations of family heirlooms from the McCoy descendants reflect an incredible aspect of history which the Mansion House Staff is privileged to share with our visitors. The new donations pair perfectly with previous donations from the descendants of the Harris and Kearney families, the Weidenmann family, families of many Westport pioneers, the Manor Bakery, and items for the Battle of Westport exhibits, among others. All of the items have stories to tell about the times in which they were made and used—a marvelous window into the past.

The donations from Westport resident and Westport Historical Society Board Member Tom Platt must be recognized as incredibly important to the Mansion House. Whenever there has been a “need,” Tom has stepped in to make sure that the “need” is addressed. There are not enough words to say *Thank You, Tom*, and to express our gratitude and appreciation for helping us preserve and protect the history of old Westport, the Town of Kansas, and Kansas City for future generations to explore and learn.

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](http://www.westporthistorical.com) or send a request for a form at [westporthistorical@gmail.com](mailto:westporthistorical@gmail.com)

## JANUARY

January is the first month of the year and the first of seven months to have 31 days. As the second month of winter, it is, on average, the coldest month of the year within the Northern Hemisphere. January gets its name from the Roman god of doors, Janus, because this month is the door into the new year. Janus is also called the two-faced god as it is said that he represents all beginnings and possesses the ability to see the past and the future. The first day of January is typically welcomed through a celebration of great merriment and mirth – not to mention a usually-unachievable new year's resolution!

## CELEBRATE LIFE

All living things need rest and renewal especially during difficult times. Now, the comforting rhythm of slow winter days affords an opportunity to recharge. The new fallen snow provides a time to pause and take stock in what we have and what we want for the future. Outward circumstances, the stress of hectic modern living colliding with the priorities of work and home may batter and weary us, but if there is peace and tranquility in the home, we, too, can find respite to weather the storms of life. Make time to enjoy winter's pleasures—spending time by the fire, reading, playing games, watching movies, working on handicrafts, talking with your children, and sipping the perfect cup of hot chocolate. Celebrate life with family and friends as you continue to be safe and well.

~unknown author

## 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.



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](mailto:westporthistorical@gmail.com), or call (913) 648-0952



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