

# MANSION HOUSE NEWS

WESTPORT  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Mansion House is Open for Tours

We welcome visitors to step-back-in-time with an informative, fascinating tour of the beautiful Mansion House. The tour invites you to hear stories and get up close and personal with various objects and historical documents. So, take a break from the confines of your four walls and delight in interiors that are steeped in early Kansas City history.

Due to the ongoing concern of COVID, Mansion House hours are:

**Friday and Saturday from 1 to 5 (social distancing and masks still in place, thank you!)**

For updates, please check our website: [www.westporthistorical.com](http://www.westporthistorical.com) or our Facebook pages: 1855 Harris-Kearney House; Westport Historical Society. If your group would like to book a group tour, or book a private event or celebration, call 816-561-1821 or 913-231-6749. Written requests may also be sent to westporthistorical@gmail.com.

## May Holidays

- May 1 is May Day
- May 15 is Armed Forces Day
- May 31 is Memorial Day

## May!

Do you remember back in childhood  
 How we loved the first of May?  
 When we hung the flower-filled baskets  
 On doorknobs, then ran away?  
 Do you remember how the sweetest basket  
 Was for the one we loved the best?  
 And in it went the blossoms  
 That were fairer than the rest?  
 Such a beautiful and gracious custom,  
 Somehow got lost along the way.  
 But the memories still linger  
 As we welcome in a bright new May.  
 ~author,

## Word of the Month

May's word of the month is **PERSERVERENCE**.

**Noun:** Perseverance is the continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, obstacles, failure, or opposition; trying and sticking to that something until the desired outcome is achieved.

## *Aunt Minerva's Kitchen*

### Fresh Blueberry Cobbler

Blueberries are uniformly blue when they are ripe and ready to be picked. The berries are covered in a protective, powdery coating known as the "bloom," so be sure to wash them very well before serving or cooking with them." Blueberries are sweet when they are mature which is typically in the middle of the growing season, but that season depends on how long the cold, spring weather lasts. The harvest season for blueberries is considered to be from May to August. Once you have your sweet crop of blueberries, try this cobbler recipe.

1 ½ tsp. baking powder	1/3 C. white sugar
1 ¼ C. flour	1 tsp. vanilla
¼ tsp. salt	½ C. white sugar
¾ C. whole milk	2 C. fresh, washed, cleaned Blueberries
1/3 C. butter, melted	

Fry [sauté] herbs in one-quarter of a pound of butter until slightly brown and softened. Add the water with the salt & pepper. Bring to a boil, and simmer until reduced to three quarts and vegetables are tender. Additional water may be added if needed. Serve with fried, toasted bread which is made by browning buttered bread in a hot skillet. Season with salt and pepper and these little morsels are a nice addition to many soups.

### It's Spring

Winter is over and the temperatures are rising! It is spring and a perfect time to enjoy some outside activities. Gather your family and plan and enjoy some fun things to do that will get everyone out of the house. Here are a few, fun ideas:

- Get a group together and attend a baseball game.
- Go for a five-mile bike ride.
- Design a neighborhood scavenger hunt for family and friends.
- Go for a two-mile hike.
- Organize a game of basketball or volleyball at your house.
- Plan a picnic/BBQ at a local park.
- Sleep under the stars in your backyard.
- Take your dog for a mile-long walk or go to the local dog park.
- Visit historical sites.
- Plant a flower garden with a birdbath.
- Project a movie onto your garage door, or side of your house and invite the neighbors-don't forget the popcorn!
- Watch the sunrise and the sunset.
- Sell cookies and lemonade in your front yard.
- Plan a jump rope competition.

~Joe Mason

### 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 remain well and safe. Please take good care by continuing to follow the guidelines which are noted to help stop the spread of this virus. We ask that everyone follow the guidelines laid out by our state, counties and towns. Social distancing should be practiced in combination with other everyday preventive actions, including wearing masks. 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.

### EVENT SPACE RENTAL

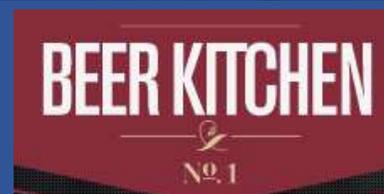
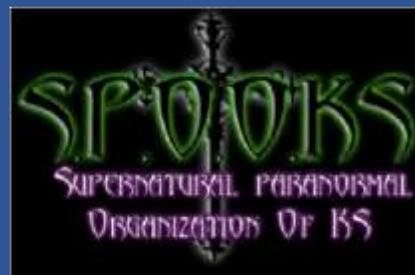
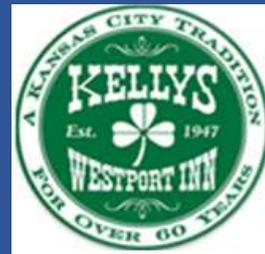
The upper and lower galleries of the 1855 Harris-Kearney House Museum may be rented for luncheons, parties, celebrations, receptions or meetings. The parlor or dining room may be rented for small weddings, and the Mansion House grounds may be rented for outdoor events.

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

## UNCLE MARKS CORNER

Something to think about: Dandelions are NOT weeds!

- Dandelions are from the same family as sunflowers.
- Dandelions probably were brought to North America on the Mayflower for their medicinal qualities.
- Every part of the Dandelion is edible.
- Dandelions are more nutritious than most of the vegetables in your garden.
- Dandelion wine and tea are enjoyed by many.
- Dandelion greens can be sautéed and tossed with crisp bacon for a hearty side dish.
- 1 cup of dandelion greens equals 535% of our daily recommendation of Vitamin K and 112% of Vitamin A.
- Dandelions are good for your lawn. Their wide-spreading roots loosen hard-packed soil, aerate the earth, and help reduce erosion.
- Dandelion seeds can travel up to 5 miles before they land.
- Up until the 1800's, dandelions were seen as extremely beneficial.
- People would remove grass and plant dandelions.
- Dandelions are one of the first sources of nectar for bees in the spring! Save the bees. Plant—allow—dandelions! Do NOT spray dandelions! "Pardon our 'weeds,' we are feeding the bees!"



## Spotlight: Courting Candle



In the 1600's through the 1800's, courting candles in iron-forged candleholders were used by the man of the home to set Courting Boundaries for his daughters. When a daughter's suitor came calling, her father lit the courting candle in the parlor where the young couple conversed. When the candle burned down to **the metal shield at the top** of the candle holder, it was time for the suitor to promptly leave. However, the father could change the height of the candle, at any time, based on how comfortable he felt about the suitor: the taller the candle, the more the young man was deemed acceptable. Also, the father could immediately snuff out the candle if he viewed that the courting was not progressing. The pliable, beeswax, coiled candle was fed through the top shield in increments of 3 in. or more, or less. Three inches of candle would burn for approximately one hour. The scissors at the top of the holder cut the candle to begin a new courting candle when the length before had reached its limit. This courting candle was a quiet, yet firm reminder to the enamored suitor that it was time to end his appointment.

The courting candle was used by fathers from all economic backgrounds. It became a lesson to the daughters to respect their parents' judgment. The courting candle also taught the suitor to defer to the father's ability to judge a man. Although it may sound like a crazy notion by today's standards, the courting candle served as an important boundary line in the family and dictates of society.

~From the *Westport Historical Society* files

For 20somethings:

What's this?



**New Donation to the Kansas City Public Library**

Annual Picnic - Donnelly Garment Company (Nelly Don) - Winnwood Beach



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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