

WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



May 2018

Aunt Minerva's Kitchen

THIMBLE COOKIES

1 cup butter
½ cup sugar
4 egg yolks
1 tsp. vanilla
2 cups flour

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream together butter, sugar, egg yolks and vanilla.

Stir in flour. Chill for one hour.

Roll into walnut sized balls and place on an ungreased cookie sheet.

Press floured thimble into the center of each ball.

Fill each hole with raspberry jam and sprinkle with finely chopped hazelnuts.

Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until golden brown. Do not over-bake.



May 13: Mother's Day

Mother's Day celebrates mothers, grandmothers and all mother figures on the second Sunday in May. It is a day set aside to appreciate the wonderful ladies who give so much of themselves to their families. Relatives give gifts, cards, flowers, candy, and a meal in a restaurant to commemorate this special day.

May 28: Memorial Day

Formerly known as Decoration Day, Memorial Day is observed on the last Monday of May. The day commemorates all men and women who have died in military service for the United States. It is also an opportunity for many families to pay respect to their deceased relatives. Flags across the country are put at half-mast until noon before they are raised to the top again, and parades take place in towns and cities across all fifty states. At 3pm a national moment of remembrance takes place across the country.

Traditionally, Memorial weekend is thought of as the start of the summer season.



Reading in the Spring Sun

Spring is here, and mild, sunny days have started happening! This is the perfect weather in which to relax and lose you in marvelous works of literature. To help you with a regimen of daily, summer reading, a list of suggested reading follows:

- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
- *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens
- *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte
- *Clarissa* by Samuel Richardson
- *Sybil* by Benjamin Disraeli
- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
- *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane
- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll
- *Lark Rise to Candleford* by Flora Thompson

Your Spring Garden

May's warm temperatures are here and we don't have to worry about any more frost. You may think it's too late to grow all your favorite vegetables from seed but warm May temperatures have made the soil perfect for doing just that. The warm soil will allow for fast germination and growing plants. Some good choices for May planting are listed below:

Beets	Cucumber	Lettuce	Thyme
Beans	Corn	Melons	Tomatoes
Basil	Dill	Onions	Turnips
Cabbage	Oregano	Peppers	Broccoli
Carrots	Sage	Squash	Eggplants



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May Day



In ancient times, May 1st, also known as May Day, was the day set aside to celebrate the return of Spring. It is thought that this observance originated in Greek and Roman agricultural rituals which were intended to ensure the fertility of crops, humans and livestock. Through time, the celebrations began to include the gathering of green branches and colorful wildflowers, the weaving of floral garlands, crowning a May king and queen, and erecting a Maypole around which people danced.

While the exact origins of the maypole remain unknown, the annual traditions surrounding it can be traced back to Medieval times. The ritual began with villagers entering the woods to find a "pole" to set up in the town square. Once set, the "pole" was decorated in colorful streamers and ribbons. The ancients used the pole as a symbol of male fertility and the baskets of greens and flowers symbolized female fertility. The festivities would commence with the "dance of the ribbons" which wove the ribbons or streamers around the pole as musicians played merry music and flowers were thrown to onlookers.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, May Day was celebrated across the country by filling baskets with flowers, candies and other treats and hanging them on the doors of friends, neighbors and loved ones. Today, in many areas, school children make and distribute May baskets to their families, and have fun Dancing Around the May Pole.

Collecting Rain Water

Rain barrels have been used for centuries to conserve water. A rain barrel is a container used to capture and store runoff rainwater. Most rain barrels have a large opening in the top or side to allow the water to run in from the downspout so that each time it rains, the barrel will be filled.

Modern-day rain barrels can lower water bills and improve stream-ways by reducing water consumption. Fifty-five gallon barrels can be incorporated into your landscape by planting shrubbery or flowers around it or by painting the barrel as part of a creative art project.

Rain barrels and parts kits can be purchased at local hardware or farm stores for a low cost and the businesses offer instruction on how to assemble.



Questions or Comments?

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