

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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QUEEN VICTORIA'S REIGN TO BE SHOWCASED AT 41ST ANNUAL DICKENS ON THE STRAND FESTIVAL

Galveston Island, Texas, September 10, 2014 – All hail her majesty, the Queen! The 41st annual event, produced by Galveston Historical Foundation, will feature influences from the colonies of Great Britain during the time of Charles Dickens. This year's festival begins Friday, December 5 with free admission from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and continues Saturday, December 6, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday, December 7, from 12 to 6 p.m. Tickets purchased before December 5 are \$12 for adults and \$6 for children ages 7-12. Tickets purchased at the gate are \$14. Discounted tickets for GHF members are available for \$9 for Saturday or Sunday. Tickets are available online at www.dickensonthestrand.org, by calling, 409-765-7834 or at all area Randall's stores. Attendees in Victorian costume are admitted for ½ price.

"It's exciting for us to offer a new twist to the annual Dickens event," states GHF Executive Director, Dwayne Jones. "This year we bring back some old favorites for those who come annually but we are adding a distinctive historical theme that will add new attractions and cultural experiences."

The annual holiday street festival, based on 19th-century Victorian London, features parades, non-stop entertainment on six stages, strolling carolers, roving musicians, bagpipers, jugglers and a host of other entertainers. Costumed vendors peddle their wares from street stalls and rolling carts laden with holiday food and drink, Victorian-inspired crafts, clothing, jewelry, holiday decorations and gift items.

Two descendants of Charles Dickens will once again grace the festival as GHF welcomes Lucinda Dickens Hawksley, great-great-great-granddaughter of Dickens, and Jane Monk, great-great-granddaughter. Both women will be at numerous events throughout the weekend. Lucinda will be promoting her new book "Moustaches, Whiskers & Beards" at the festival.

"I'm so looking forward to returning to Galveston and Dickens on the Strand this December," says Lucinda Dickens Hawksley. "The festival has become a highlight of the Dickensian calendar and this year promises to be better than ever, with lots of exciting new ideas. My cousin Jane Dickens Monk and I have already got our corsets ready, so I hope you'll come and join us!"

NEW IN 2014

Fezziwig's Beer Hall

Mr. Fezziwig was everything Ebenezer wasn't and we pay tribute to his jovial personality with our new Fezziwig's Beer Hall. Join us Friday evening, December 5 from 5 to 9 p.m. for specialty acts, hearty brews and new friends all hosted by Dickens descendant Jane Monk. Admission is free for this lively start to the 41st anniversary.

Dinner With Dickens at the 1880 Garten Verein

It's a renewed take on a Dickens classic as the annual dinner returns to the breathtaking German dancing pavilion. Held for one night only on Friday, December 5, 6 p.m., "Dinner with Dickens" will treat guests to an evening of specially crafted food, grand storytelling and royal company as the festival's Queen Victoria makes her annual entrance. Returning to the breathtaking 1880 Garten Verein, it's a holiday dinner not to be missed! Tickets are \$80 per person and reservations are required.

Expanded Festival Parade and Vendors

With over 150 vendors throughout the festival, Dickens on The Strand is your opportunity to get a head start on your holiday shopping. In addition to our numerous new craft and specialty vendors, our daily parades will also host new groups and excitement from all of the colonies of Britain!

Breakfast with Dickens

The great-great-granddaughter of Charles Dickens, Jane Monk, isn't just coming to this year's event to take in the sights and share in her heritage, she's also there to cook up a traditional English breakfast! Held on Saturday, December 6 at 8 a.m., join Jane and a celebrity chef as they prepare a one-of-a-kind experience in one of Galveston's most beloved historic homes, the 1859 Ashton Villa. Tickets are \$55 and reservations are required.

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

The festival weekend also hosts a multitude of spirited fun with events such as the crowd favorite Whimsical Whisker Revue, a facial hair contest for the bearded and the dandy; the Dickens Victorian Bed Races; Victorian Costume Contest; Civil War living history encampments and daily parades through Galveston's National Historic Landmark Strand District. In addition, new and expanded events are planned for all days of the event, including:

Oliver's Alley Children's Area

Children by the thousands come each year for the parades, petting zoo, history encampments and more. This year's event will feature the new Oliver's Alley children's area, presented by the Galveston Children's Museum, where specialty programs and events will be scheduled all weekend long. Lucinda Dickens Hawksley will also lead a special workshop at Oliver's Alley for participating youth.

Salute To Sunset onboard the 1877 Tall Ship ELISSA

The Texas Seaport Museum transforms to a London wharf for this toast to the end of the day and beginning of the evening. The Tall Ship ELISSA welcomes you aboard Saturday, December 6 at 4:30 p.m. for heavy appetizers, cocktails, cannon fire and special guests leading up to Saturday night's Pickwicks's Lanternlight Parade. Tickets are \$45 per person.

Holiday Handbell Concerts

The 1859 St. Joseph's Church, the state's first wooden built church and well known for its exceptional acoustics, hosts three holiday hand bell concert on Friday, December 5 at 5:30, 7 and 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 per person and reservations are required.

Saint Arnold's Strand Walking Tour

Learn about the history of The Strand and enjoy some of Saint Arnold Brewing Company's signature ales during this new tour. Held twice, both days of Dickens on The Strand, you'll visit three festival pubs as you walk through the National Historic Landmark district with your guide. Tickets are \$25 per person and include three complimentary beers.

For more information on Dickens on The Strand, Galveston Historical Foundation, or to purchase advance tickets, please visit galvestonhistory.org or call 409-765-7834. For more festival information, please contact Will Wright, Director of Communications and Special Events at 409-765-3404 or will.wright@galvestonhistory.org.