

DICKENS DIARY

Official Newsletter of the Riverside Dickens Festival ♦ Volume 18 - Issue 1

2016
Festival
Feb. 27 - 28

Hurray for the 2015 Festival!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 22nd Riverside Dickens Festival is now history! Our visitors experienced more food vendors, plays, Victorian and Steampunk fashion shows, improved pub location, enthusiastic parade participants, authors, lecturers and much more. As always, the kids had fun in Oliver's Alley and the Steampunk crowd added a bit of spice to the weekend with their creative costumes and accessories. Dancers twirled around the dance floor in all their splendor at Mr. Fezziwig's Ball. My wife noticed that there were more young people attending this year! Hurray for all!

A sincere "thank you and well done" to the volunteers who donated their time and talents. People volunteer for many reasons: their love of the festival, Dickens and all things Victorian, to accrue high school and college volunteer hours or because a friend recruited them. Whatever the reason, it takes many hands for our festival to run smoothly.

I would be remiss if I did not also thank our generous sponsors and donors. We need close to \$90,000 each year to put on our festival. We receive approximately one-third of our funds from the City of Riverside, Riverside Arts Council and County Supervisors, with local businesses, private individuals and our fundraising events providing the remainder. As you can see, every dollar counts.

Every year we say we should do "this", we need to move "that" to another spot, or we're not doing "that" again. If you have some suggestions for the 23rd annual festival or want to volunteer, call the office to leave a message for me or tell a board member so we can consider your ideas and/or get you signed up. While we always receive many positive comments there is always room for improvement and new ideas.

I am looking forward to serving as president for the upcoming year. I'm sure it will be another busy one, and one which will give me great satisfaction by providing such a worthwhile event for Riverside.

My sincere thanks to my tireless and dedicated Board and Chairs. What a wonderful job you do year after year!!

Bruce Spieler
President



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2015 - 2016**

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Dickens Diary is published three times a year by the Riverside Dickens Festival, Inc., at the address below. Editorial submissions and queries may be sent there. We reserve the right to edit submissions.

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Riverside, CA 92502-0113
info@dickensfest.com

For more information on the Festival
visit our website today!
www.dickensfest.com

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Festival Gallery People



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Queen Victoria and her Court

Oliver's Alley



Mayor Rusty Bailey at play - Victorian Style



The Dickens Diary goes Electronic!

To help save trees and due to the high cost of printing and continuously rising postage rates, the *Dickens Diary* will be sent via e-mail and published in a downloadable format on-line at the Festival website, www.dickensfest.com.

Readers whose e-mail addresses are already on file and those who were sent to us subsequent to this announcement receive their Dickens Diary on-line only. If your e-mail address has changed or you want to join our e-mail list for the first time, go to www.dickensfest.com and join on the home page.

Alternately, those who wish to continue receiving a hard copy of the Diary in the U.S. Mail can do so by sending a check for \$6.00 for one year payable to the Riverside Dickens Festival, along with your name and address to:

Riverside Dickens Festival • P. O. Box 113 • Riverside, CA 92502-0113

Meet Mr. Dickens...and Mr. Poe

Thanks to the support and generosity of the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce Downtown Business Council and other private donors, Mr. Dickens and Mr. Poe visited several middle schools this past fall and spring providing educational and entertaining literary programs for the students.

Mr. Dickens, portrayed by the talented actor, playwright and college instructor, Paul Jacques, performed his original one-man show, *Meet Mr. Dickens* at Earhart, Central, Gage, Arizona and Loma Vista middle schools. The performance gives students insight into the social, political and personal events that influenced Dickens' writing.

Mr. Poe, portrayed by actor Travis Rhett Wilson, performed at Gage and Arizona middle schools and at John W. North High School. Wilson presented a riveting rendition of Poe's writings including *The Telltale Heart*, *The Raven* and *Annabelle Lee* for the students.

Middle and high school teachers who are interested in performances by Mr. Dickens or Mr. Poe may contact Education Chairperson Susan Purkart at spurkart@sbcglobal.net. The performances are free of charge to the schools.



Charles Dickens
(portrayed by Paul Jacques) at Loma Vista Middle School



Edgar Allan Poe
(portrayed by Travis Rhett Wilson)



Greater Riverside Area Dickens Fellowship

The worldwide Dickens Fellowship was founded in 1902 with the objective, among others, to promote the knowledge and appreciation of Dickens' works. The local branch is GRAD, headed by chairman, Tim Clark who also portrays Prince Albert at the Riverside Dickens Festival.

GRAD's meetings this year will focus on *Martin Chuzzlewit*. If you would like to join GRAD, attend a meeting or receive the e-newsletter, please contact Tim at poochclark@earthlink.net or (909) 225-2834. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for these dates: May 23, July 18, September 19 and November 7.

Dickens Universe

University of California, Santa Cruz • August 2-7, 2015 • Featuring *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *American Notes*.

Anyone can attend. You need not be a scholar but you do have to read the books by August and you do have to have a curiosity about Dickens. For more information visit www.dickens.ucsc.edu/universe.

Essay Contest Winners

Sponsored by Provident Bank

Winners of the 2015 essay contest were introduced at the festival on Saturday, February 23 and presented with gift card prizes to Barnes & Noble Booksellers. Middle school students responded to a prompt concerning *A Christmas Carol* and high school students responded to an excerpt from *Little Dorrit*. Prizes were made possible by Provident Bank, which has generously sponsored the essay contest for several years.

High School Essay Winners

First Prize \$100

Briana Fragoso, 9th grade, Patriot High School
David Moberly, Teacher

Second Prize \$50

Minuet McArtor, 10th grade, Riverside STEM Academy
Catherine Murray, Teacher

Middle School Essay Winners:

First Prize \$100

Savannah Petty, 8th grade, Chemawa Middle School
Jacquelyn Vaca, Teacher

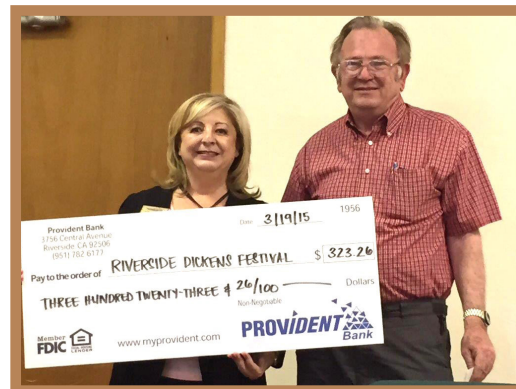
Second Prize \$50

Isabelle Fischer, 8th grade, Earhart Middle School
Suzanne Priebe, Teacher

Third Prize: \$25

Naneeta Desai, 8th grade, Earhart Middle School
Suzanne Priebe, Teacher

Thanks to the students and teachers who submitted essays this year. Please visit www.dickensfest.com in the fall for the 2016 rules and procedures. The winning essays can be found on the festival website at www.dickensfest.com.

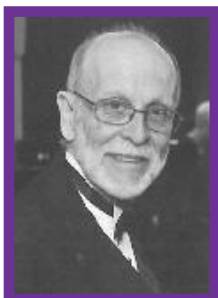


Community Partnership Program Supports RDF

Rita DeLaRosa, representing Provident Bank—a long time and generous supporter of the Riverside Dickens Festival, presented a check for \$323.26 to the Board of Directors at its March meeting. Provident Bank's Community Partnership Program allows account holders to designate a non-profit organization to support. It is easy to sign up and is absolutely free to participate. If you have an account or want to open an account, inform the bank that you want to support Riverside Dickens Festival. Account holders' own money is not affected in any way.

Riverside Dickens Festival Board of Directors applauds Provident Bank's philosophy of philanthropy and is most grateful to be the recipient of its ongoing generosity. In addition to the Community Partnership check, the Bank has also sponsored the middle and high school essay contests since their inception.

A Tribute to Evensong Director, Steve Kester



Steve Kester, director of the Raincross Chorale, passed away on January 17, 2015 in Riverside. He was 71. He and the choir graced the festival with the traditional Evensong program.

Steve taught high school music and science for 32 years and was music director and organist at Victoria Presbyterian Church for 17 years. He retired in 2013. He was founder and conductor of the Raincross Chorale for 14 years until he retired in 2014. Following John T. Hamilton, Steve directed the Evensong program for the festival for 14 years.

Riverside Dickens Festival is indebted to Steve for his dedication and loyalty to the Evensong program and the festival.

SAVE
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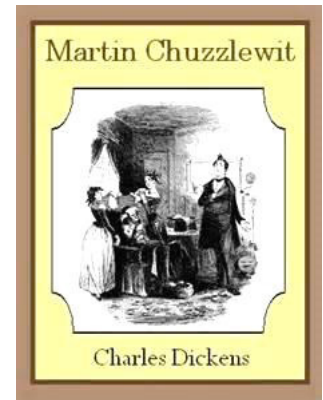
2016 RIVERSIDE DICKENS FESTIVAL

February 27 & 28, 2016 • Historic Downtown Riverside

Martin Chuzzlewit is the featured book for the 2016 Festival

Dickens' sixth novel was published in monthly installments from January 1843 to 1844 after Dickens had taken a year off to visit America for the first time. Dickens believed this to be his greatest novel but it was less than enthusiastically received. The novel deals with the greed of Old Martin's relatives, chiefly, Mr. Pecksniff, hoping to inherit his wealth.

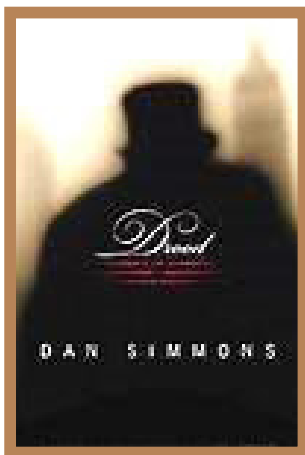
For additional information about *Martin Chuzzlewit*, visit David Perdue's *Charles Dickens Page*, a very rich website with many resources for Dickensians at all levels and for teachers.



Readers' Corner

For your summer reading pleasure try one of these recommendations from the Education Committee.

If you have suggestions for this space in the *Dickens Diary*, please contact us on the website at www.dickensfest.com.

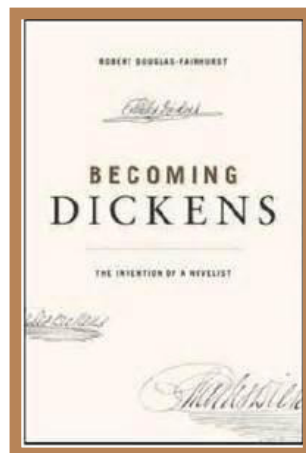


Drood by Dan Simmons.

A fascinating thriller based on Dickens' unfinished mystery novel, supposedly narrated by Dickens' friend Wilkie Collins.

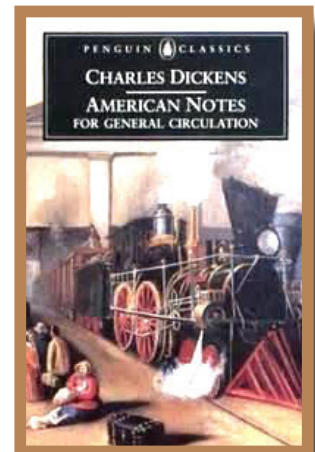
American Notes by Charles Dickens.

Dickens' account of his first trip to America in 1862, the source of the American chapters in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, which is the featured novel of the 2016 festival.



Becoming Dickens :
The Invention of a Novelist
by Robert Douglas-Fairhurst.

How young Dickens overcame a difficult childhood and early obstacles to become one of the world's greatest novelists.



Riverside High Schools Perform *Little Dorrit*

Drama students from Poly and North high schools in Riverside Unified School District performed their version of *Little Dorrit* on Saturday and Sunday on the Grant Family Stage at the festival. Using a script crafted by festival Education Committee Chair, Susan Purkart, the students displayed their considerable talent and skill to give their individual renditions of the 20-minute play.

Thanks to the students and their teachers –Mr. Marker-Morse (Poly) and Ms. Grottness (North) – for their efforts. Each school's drama department received a \$150 donation, which was made possible through the generosity of donors Eileen Ashwal, Dwight Tate and Nick Milazzo.



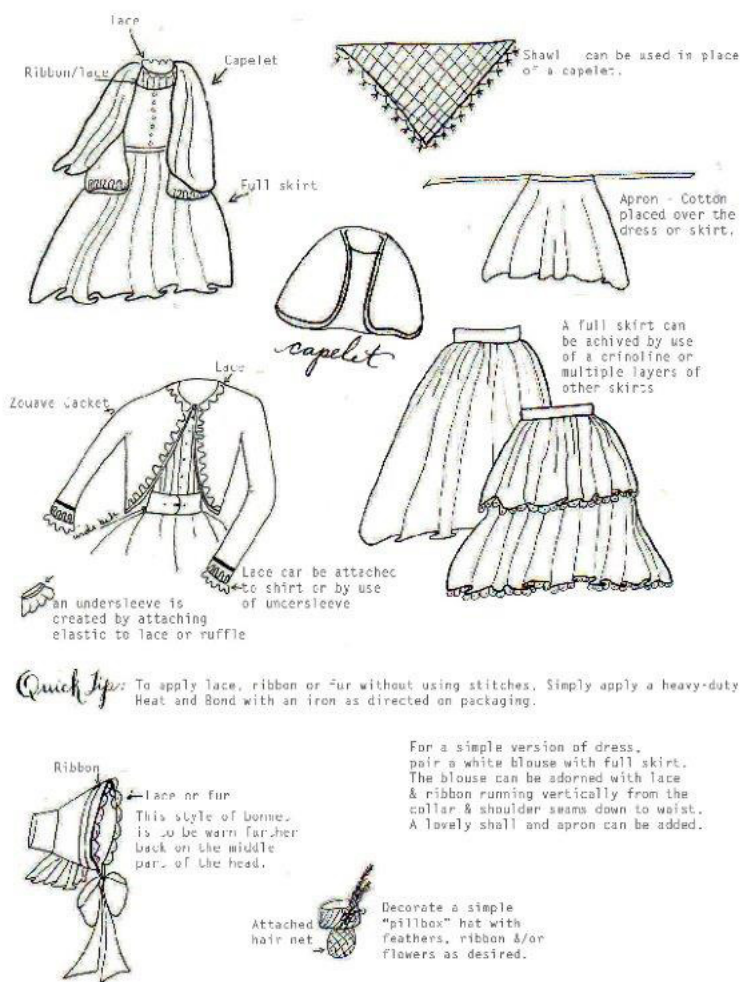
Costuming Tips

Want to Dress Up
for the 2016 Festival?
Start now.

Board members are often asked, “Do I have to dress up to come to the Dickens Festival?” The answer is “no”, of course; but over the 22 years the festival has been in existence more and more visitors do dress in Victorian attire.

Many people start out trying to achieve the period “look” by purchasing inexpensive clothing items in thrift stores or even checking the back of the closets at home for items that will work. This is a good way to get started, not worrying about authenticity. Authenticity can come later when you purchase an outfit or accessory from one of the London Marketplace vendors during the festival or even start sewing your own clothes or working with a seamstress for tailored more authentic clothes.

In the meantime, you can start now to put together your Victorian outfit for 2016. Here are some ideas from the International Printmaking Museum website that might help you get started.



SAVE
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October 8, 2015
5:00 p.m. to Midnight
Historic Downtown Riverside

Riverside Dickens Festival
will participate in the 2015
Long Night of Arts and Innovation.

Don't miss it.

For more details visit
www.longnightriverside.com

Winner of a Lexus for a Weekend

Thanks to the generosity of Lexus of Riverside, Dickens Festival Board member Kathy Wright will have the use of a beautiful Lexus for an entire weekend including gasoline! Kathy's winning \$5.00 ticket allows her to choose from 3 different models to use from a Friday afternoon through Sunday evening at her convenience.

Kathy is the second winner of this opportunity drawing, preceded by Valerie Foucher who took her weekend trip last summer to northern California. Kathy hasn't decided yet where she will go.



Thank you,
Lexus of Riverside
for this generous
donation! All proceeds
from the drawing help
to defray the festival expenses.

Henry and Janet
Funderburk



The Riverside Dickens Festival is made possible through grants, sponsorships and donations. Your contribution is very much needed, appreciated and tax deductible. The Riverside Dickens Festival is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, EIN: 33-0617090. Please mail your contributions to: Riverside Dickens Festival, Inc. • P. O. Box 113 • Riverside, CA 92502-0113

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Thank you to the following supporters of our 2015 Festival.

Planning has begun for the 2016 Festival - Please join us as a supporter by mailing a tax deductible check to
P.O. Box 113, Riverside, CA 92502-0113. (See form on page 9)
or visit our website www.dickensfest.com

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