

DICKENS DIARY

Official Newsletter of the Riverside Dickens Festival • Volume 20 - Issue 1

2018
Festival
Feb. 24 – 25

25th Riverside Dickens Festival!

From Odd Jobber to President by Doug Grant

I have been involved in the Riverside Dickens Festival since it started. As the son of Carolyn Grant, one of the founders, I was always asked to help. The first year the Operations Center was my VW Bus parked in the library parking lot. We had a fashion show on the library steps and two plays, *Great Expectations* and *Oliver Twist* adapted by Joan Patton in the Municipal Auditorium. The festival progressed from there into a street festival where we closed down Mission Inn Avenue. I was the “Odd Jobber” helping with whatever needed to be done: storyboards, signage, and helium balloons. We always got the festival set up and started on time, rain or shine. This gave me the opportunity to get involved in the community and develop many good friends. These friends I now call my Riverside Dickens Festival Family.

This year I have been elected as President. It is an honor to help lead the 25th Annual Festival. I stand on the shoulders of all the past presidents, board members, entertainers, and volunteers who have created a great community event.

We are currently planning the festival to be held February 24th and 25th, 2018. Please volunteer and share your ideas by attending a committee meeting. You will not regret it.



The 2017 Riverside Dickens Festival By Becky Foreman, outgoing president

One of the most enjoyable things about serving as president of the Riverside Dickens Festival over the past year has been the opportunity to humbly share my thoughts with you. Now, in my closing message to you as outgoing president, I suddenly find myself lost for words. Not because there isn't anything to say, but because I am so overwhelmed with gratitude it is difficult to find a place to start.

Let me begin by saying the 2017 festival was a great success. As I walked through our little slice of Victorian England I saw hundreds of people engaging with our marvelous Victorian authors, shopping for unique and fascinating items in our London Marketplace, being entertained by talented musicians, actors, singers and lecturers and just generally enjoying the convivial atmosphere. This did not all happen by itself. It was the culmination of months of hard work, dedication and love poured in by dozens of people. To simply say “thank you” to our board, committee members, donors and volunteers seems inadequate. So I will let Mr. Dickens guide me and say, in his words, “I am most sincerely and affectionately grateful to you all, and am full of pleasure and delight”.

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2017 - 2018**

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Editor - Marsha Loveridge

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Riverside, CA 92502-0113
info@dickensfest.com

For more information on the Festival
visit our website today!
www.dickensfest.com
This is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit
organization, EIN:33-0617090

Festival Gallery



Sponsors







Great Expectations for our 25th Anniversary February 24 & 25, 2018 Historic Downtown Riverside

Riverside Dickens Festival, the brainchild of civic activists Carolyn Grant and Joan Patton, began very humbly one Saturday afternoon on the lawn of the downtown public library. Later moving to Mission Inn Avenue, the old Riverside Convention Center, back to Mission Inn Avenue and now twenty-five years later, to the downtown pedestrian mall between University Avenue and 11th Street, the festival has grown dramatically in size and scope to a full weekend beginning on Friday night with Pickwick's Pub Night and continuing through Saturday and into the evening with Mr. Fezziwig's Ball and on through Sunday's Evensong at the First Congregational Church, the last activity of the day.

As Riverside's longest continuously running literary festival, we are proud to present *Great Expectations* at, our 25th festival in honor of the life and works of Charles Dickens, the greatest writer in the English language of all time.

Mr. Dickens is Coming! *Gerald Dickens returns for his 8th Visit to Riverside*

Internationally acclaimed actor, director and producer Gerald Charles Dickens, a great-great grandson of literary master Charles Dickens will regale Riverside with his one-man theatrical performances over two-days on November 13 and 14, 2017.

Mr. Dickens regularly performs in major theaters, libraries, art centers, schools, colleges and universities as well as at hotels and stately homes through the United Kingdom and the United States. This will be his eighth visit to Riverside.

Plans are underway to bring his energetic and impassioned performances, which are based on his great-great grandfather's novels to the general public as well as to theater and English students in local high schools during his stay.

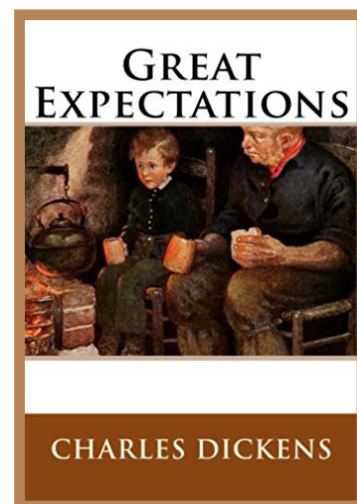
Visit www.dickensfest.com for updated information. You may also enjoy reading Mr. Dickens' blog "On the Road with Gerald Dickens" at www.gerald Dickens.wordpress.com.



Great Expectations is the featured book for the 2018 Festival

Great Expectations, Dickens 13th novel was written in serial form between December 1860 and 1861 appearing in weekly parts in Dickens' *Weekly Journal*. Containing autobiographical elements, *Great Expectations* is called his "darkest work" by some and was well received by Victorian readers. Today, it is still one of his most popular novels and is considered to be the masterpiece of his work by some.

For additional information about *Great Expectations*, visit David Perdue's Charles Dickens Page, a very rich website with many resources for Dickensians at all levels and for teachers. Check www.dickensfest.com in December for announcements about our book discussion, which will be held in the weeks just before the festival.



Raincross Master Chorale presents Evensong



Essay Contest Winners

Sponsored by Provident Bank



From a record number of entries, the winners of the 2017 essay contest were announced on Saturday on Oliver's Stage at the festival. Middle school students were invited to write about the role of charity in Dickens' beloved *A Christmas Carol* and high school students were invited to write about commercialism in this year's featured book, *American Notes*. Prizes for the students were made possible through the generous sponsorship of Provident Bank.

Middle School Essay Winners

First Prize Winner \$100

Danielle Cabrera, 8th grade, Earhart Middle School
Karen Dutcher, teacher

Second Prize \$50

Ellen Nguyen, 8th grade, Earhart Middle School
Karen Dutcher, teacher

Third Prize \$25

Lalo Martinez, 8th grade, Chemawa Middle School
Jacque Vaca, teacher

High School Essay Contest Winners

First Prize Winner \$100

Nivedita Kanrar, 11th grade, Riverside STEM Academy
Catherine Murray, teacher

Second Prize \$50

Morgan Su, 11th grade, Riverside STEM Academy
Catherine Murray, teacher

Third Prize \$25

Nanna Dam, 10th grade, Patriot High School
David Moberly, teacher

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

Order of Mt. Rubidoux Inducts New Members Sir Richard Reed ♦ Sir Bruce and Dame Roberta Spieler



Mr. Fezziwig's Ball on Saturday night of the festival weekend was again the venue for the traditional knighting of persons who have made a substantial contribution to the Riverside Dickens Festival either financial and/or through their volunteer efforts. Inducted into the Order of Mt. Rubidoux** in a ceremony conducted by Her Majesty Queen Victoria were long time festival volunteers Richard Reed and Bruce and Roberta Spieler.

Sir Richard Reed has served both as a board member and committee chairman for many years. Most recently, he has written and produced three plays, *The Trial of Lizzie Borden*, *The Trial of John Wilkes Booth* and *The Trial of Jack the Ripper*, all of which have become festival favorites.

Sir Bruce Spieler is a past president of the Board of Directors and currently serves as chairman of Pickwick's Pub Night. Roberta has previously served as chair of Tilton Circle. Both have

been avid supporters and have given generously of their time and fortune to the festival.

Sir Richard, Sir Bruce and Dame Roberta join a truly appreciated circle of friends and volunteers first named to the Order of Mt. Rubidoux in 1995.

**The Order of Mt. Rubidoux is a fictitious organization meant all in good fun as a way to recognize exceptional service to the Riverside Dickens Festival. For more information about real knighthoods visit www.royal.gov.uk/MonarchUK/Honours/Knighthoods.aspx, The Official Website of the British Monarchy.



Volunteers are the Backbone of the Festival

Anyone who has worked with or for a non-profit organization, especially one that has no paid staff, understands how vital volunteers are to our success. Without a cadre of loyal, hardworking volunteers our festival simply would not happen. We estimate that over 33 volunteers gave more than 600 hours to the festival weekend this year. Translated into dollars the value of their time is at least \$13,800. Our sincere thanks go out to the many individuals and groups who again made the 2017 festival one of the best ever.

A special shout out goes to these volunteers for going above and beyond the call of duty this year.

JoAnn Coble, Colin & Nathan Anderson—Information Booth Volunteers

Jane & Hugh Ralston—Oliver's Alley Volunteers

Laurel Hampton & Frank Rojas—Fashion Show and Royals Pavilion Volunteers

Sheila Coco—Fashion Show Volunteer

Diana Golbaf, Jan Weiss & Leticia Anderson—Pickwick's Pub Night Volunteers

Lee Kraus and Gwen Melby—Education Committee Volunteers

Newlyweds Enjoy Pub Night



Phil and Susanne have known each other since kindergarten back in their home town of Jackson, Michigan. After high school they went their separate ways, Phil found his way to California and Susanne remained in Michigan. After having lost their spouses, Phil and Susanne met up again this past February 1. They decided to get married on February 24th, which coincidentally was the date of Pickwick's Pub Night, the opening activity for the 2017 festival. Phil had attended Pub Night before and thought it would be a perfect way to spend their wedding night. Phil and Susanne were welcomed by Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Dickens and enjoyed the evening's festivities.

Congratulations Phil and Susanne!



The Riverside Dickens Festival is seeking new board members

The Riverside Dickens Festival, approaching its 25th year is actively seeking new board members who will carry on our great tradition of presenting an outstanding fun and educational event.

Interested persons may leave a message at (951) 781-3168 or at info@dickensfest.com to inquire regarding responsibilities and to request an application.

Please join us!

SAVE
THE
DATES

Riverside Dickens Festival
is active all year long.
Join us for these exciting events
Watch for more details
at www.dickensfest.com

Dickens Universe

July 30-August 5, 2017

University of California, Santa Cruz

Featuring *Middlemarch*

Visit www.dickens.ucsc.edu/universe for details

Long Night of Arts and Innovation

October 12, 2017

Downtown Riverside

Showcasing the latest STEM and creative arts
in schools and business/industry

Visit www.longnightriverside.com

Vintage Home Tour

May 20, 1917

Sponsored by The Old Riverside Foundation

Visit www.olldriverside.org for more information

Students perform *American Notes* vignettes

Theater art students from Poly and King high schools in Riverside Unified School District performed short vignettes based on the featured book, *American Notes*. Using scripts written by festival Education Committee Chair, Susan Purkart, the students displayed their considerable talent and skill to present their interpretations of the story.

Thanks to the students and their teachers, Mr. Marker-Morse of Poly High School and Ms. Scarborough from Martin Luther King High School for their efforts working with the students. Each school's theater department received a \$150 donation, which was made possible through the generosity of donors Eileen Ashwal, Dwight Tate and Nick Milazzo.



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 2017 Festival.

Planning has begun for the 2018 Festival

Please join us as a supporter by mailing a tax deductible check to

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or visit our website www.dickensfest.com

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