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DICKENS DESCENDANTS TO VISIT 43RD ANNUAL FESTIVAL WITH PREMIER OF NEW BOOKS AT SPECIAL CHAMPAGNE RECEPTION

Galveston Island, Texas, October 3, 2016 – Each year, Galveston Historical Foundation's Dickens on The Strand invites descendants of the festival's namesake to the island. This year, GHF welcomes Lucinda Dickens Hawksley, great-great-great granddaughter and Jane Dickens Monk, great-great-granddaughter to the annual Victorian event. To welcome them, a special champagne reception will be held in the 1892 Bishop's Palace on Thursday, December 1 from 6-8 p.m. Tickets are \$20 per person and are available at www.dickensonthestrand.org.

"Spending the first weekend of December in Texas has become the highlight of my Dickensian calendar! I'm really looking forward to returning to Dickens on the Strand this year and to seeing all the familiar faces and meeting friends again," says Lucinda Dickens Hawksley. "I have really enjoyed seeing how much the festival has expanded in recent years and to taking part in so many events. I am looking forward to working on children's events again this year, as well as to the parades and book signings. If you're coming to Galveston this December, come and say hello to me and my cousin Jane Dickens Monk."

Jane Dickens Monk continues, "This is my fifth year at Dickens on The Strand and I'm just as excited about it as the first time I attended. There always seems to be new events to see and do, as well as the ones that everyone loves, like the fantastic parades which I'm always thrilled to be part of. Coming from the UK, I always keep my fingers crossed for some wonderful Texas weather for the weekend of Dickens. I look forward to seeing everyone there."

Charles Dickens and His Circle

Historian and writer Lucinda Hawksley explores the life of her great-great-great-grandfather, Charles Dickens – one of the first people to whom the term 'celebrity' in its modern sense was applied, and whose extensive circle of friends and associates embraced many of the most eminent and influential figures of the Victorian age.

My Life: Cedric Charles Dickens

Dickens' great-great-granddaughter, Jane Dickens Monk, painstaking work in collecting and finishing her father's, Cedric, personal memoirs receives its welcome in "My Life." Hear about the amazing life of Dickens' great-grandson through his own words and personal photos.

ABOUT THE 1892 BISHOP'S PALACE

The Bishop's Palace (a.k.a. Gresham House) is a contributing building in the East End Historic District, a National Historic Landmark. The house is listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance in the area of architecture. Architectural historians list the Bishop's Palace (Gresham House) as one of the most significant of Victorian residences in the country.

The house was built from 1887 to 1892 for Colonel Walter Gresham and his wife Josephine, with whom he had nine children. The small lot and oversized house make it an anomaly among similar houses of its period and architectural style. In Galveston's great period of mansion building – the 1870s, 80s and 90s – Gresham's commission of Nicholas Clayton, Galveston's premier architect, resulted in Clayton's most spectacular residential design and arguably the finest of the "Broadway beauties."

ABOUT DICKENS ON THE STRAND

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.

This year's festival begins Friday, December 2 with free admission to Fezziwig's Beer Hall from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and continues with ticketed admission Saturday, December 3, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday, December 4, from 12 to 6 p.m. Tickets purchased before December 2 are \$13 for adults and \$7 for children ages 7-12. Tickets purchased at the gate are \$15 for adults and \$9 for youth. Discounted tickets for GHF members are available for \$10 in advance or \$12 at the gate. Tickets are available online at www.dickensonthestrand.org, by calling, 409-765-7834 or at all area Randall's stores beginning November 6. Attendees in Victorian costume are admitted for \$8.

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.