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46th ANNUAL DICKENS ON THE STRAND RETURNS DECEMBER 6-8 TO GALVESTON ISLAND'S STRAND NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT

Galveston Island, Texas, October 29, 2019 – For 46 years, Galveston Historical Foundation's (GHF) Dickens on The Strand festival has highlighted downtown Galveston's Victorian-era architecture while providing a one-of-a-kind holiday destination filled with the sights and sounds of Charles Dickens' work. This year's event continues that tradition with new entertainers and events, returning favorites, and family-friendly programming. This annual festival begins Friday, December 6, with free admission to Fezziwig's Beer Hall from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and continues with ticketed entry Saturday, December 7, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday, December 8, from 12 to 6 p.m.

Tickets purchased before December 2nd 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](http://www.dickensonthestrand.org), by calling, 409-765-7834 or at all area Randall's stores beginning mid-November. Attendees in Victorian costumes receive $8 entry.

"There is something about the spirit of Dickens on The Strand that sets the pace for a great holiday season," states GHF Executive Director, Dwayne Jones. "It is always fun and enlivening to partake of the festivities and recall the great literary work of Charles Dickens. Come join the street entertainment, food and craft vendors, and traditional drink of old London."

The annual holiday street festival, based on 19th-century Victorian London, features parades, non-stop entertainment on multiple 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.

Three descendants of Charles Dickens will grace the festival as GHF welcomes Oliver 'Ollie' Dickens, a great-great-great-grandson; Lucinda Dickens Hawksley, a great-great-great-granddaughter; and Jane Dickens Monk, a great-great-granddaughter. All descendants will be at numerous events throughout the weekend.

**NEW IN 2019**

**Complimentary Charles Dickens Finger Puppet to First 1,000 Youth**

A puppet to enjoy in the best of times and the worst of times. On your finger, he's a puppet; on your fridge, he's a magnet; among your puppets, he's an enthralling speaker and master storyteller! This year, attending youth will be able to take Charles Dickens home with them. The first 1,000 youth through the gate, beginning Saturday, will receive a Charles Dickens finger puppet. Created by the Unemployed Philosopher's Guild, these puppets are provided through support from the Alice Taylor Gray Foundation.

**The Queen's Feast**

This special Saturday evening dinner features a four-course meal, a reading from Ollie Dickens of A Christmas Carol, a complimentary champagne toast to the Queen, and more. Held in the breathtaking 1859 Ashton Villa, enjoy an evening surrounded in the warm holiday spirit and an exceptional menu with friends old and new. Tickets are $125 per person, and reservations are required.

**New Festival Activities**

This year's Dickens on The Strand includes numerous additions inside the festival grounds for youth and adults. The Dickens snow yard makes its return, and new areas like Tiny Tim's Play Land and Shopkeeper Skills Village will introduce participants to numerous hands-on experiences. Roaming performers and sets throughout the area will also offer new interactions with Charles Dickens' beloved storytelling.

**RETURNING FAVORITES**

**A Dickens Soiree at the 1892 Bishop's Palace**

The Dickens Soiree features specialty acts, award-winning performers, and carefully curated food and drink. Last year's soiree was one of the weekend's highlights, and it's back again for 2019! Held at the 1892 Bishop's Palace on Friday, December 6th, attendees will enjoy live music, a special acrobatics presentation by Cirque La Vie, and appearances by special guests. Tickets are $80, and reservations are required.

**Fezziwig's Friday Night**

Mr. Fezziwig was everything Ebenezer wasn't, and we pay tribute to his jovial personality at our Fezziwig's Beer Hall. Join us Friday evening, December 6th, from 5 to 9 p.m. for specialty acts, hearty brews, and new friends. There will also be a specialty cocktail chosen from Cedric Dickens' book Drinking With Dickens. Admission is free for this lively start to the 46th anniversary.

**Dickens After Dark**

Holders of this limited ticket will gain access to a specially curated evening of art, music, and performance inside the historic 1878 First National Bank Building located within the Dickens on The Strand grounds. Guests will be greeted with unique performances, drink, and revelry for this special evening addition to the 46th annual Victorian festival. Tickets are $50 per person, 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 and daily parades through Galveston's National Historic Landmark Strand District. Special events also include:

**Salute To Sunset onboard the 1877 Tall Ship ELISSA**

Toast the end of the day and the beginning of the evening onboard the Official Tall Ship of Texas. The 1877 Tall Ship ELISSA welcomes you aboard Saturday, December 7th at 5 p.m. for heavy appetizers, cocktails, cannon fire, and special guests leading up to Saturday night's Pickwick's Lanternlight Parade. Tickets are $60 per person, and reservations are required.

**Holiday Handbell Concerts**

The 1859 St. Joseph's Church, the state's first wooden built church, well known for its exceptional acoustics, hosts three holiday handbell concerts on Friday, December 6th at 5:30, 7, and 8:30 p.m. Tickets are $20 per person and reservations are required.

**Saint Arnold's Strand Walking Tours**

Learn about the history of The Strand and enjoy some of Saint Arnold Brewing Company's signature ales during this new tour. Held daily during Dickens on The Strand, you'll visit three festival pubs as you walk through the National Historic Landmark district with your guide. Tickets are $35 per person and include three complimentary beers. Advanced registration encouraged.

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, Chief Creative Officer at 409-765-3424 or will.wright@galvestonhistory.org.