

Workshop Descriptions for The Great Dickens Christmas Fair 2017

Orientation I - All You Need to Know about Dickens Fair – A Survival Guide: Bob & Sharon Collier

This is an introduction for first-timers to what really happens behind the scenes. We'll tell you what you need to do first, how you can communicate with us online and who's who. We'll show you how to get around the Cow Palace and we'll fill you in on the basics of your daily routine – backstage, parking, meals, passes, security, closing routine and lots more. Learn what to expect on that huge stage we call “The Streets of London”. How to stay healthy, have fun and entertain patrons.

Orientation II - A Beginners Guide to Life and Times in Our London: David Batzloff

This workshop will provide a brief overview of mid 19th century London life, pointing out some significant historical happenings and people. We'll also cover some historical who's who, and what's where in our recreation of Dickens' London. This workshop is NOT intended for people that have been recent participants of the fair. If you've taken orientation in the last five years, please skip this workshop and leave room for the new folks. Thanks.

Playing it Safe: Respecting Boundaries in a Theatrical Environment: Tara Rech, Ph.D. and Dr. Michi Fu

There are unique challenges to navigating a large immersive theater space and upholding safe boundaries for yourself, fellow actors, and fair attendees. Power dynamics and cultural expectations can come into play both behind the scenes and in public performance spaces, sometimes making it difficult to play with respect to different safety needs. Come and learn about consent, and how to keep our community free from sexual harassment without spoiling the fun of occupying a role in history. The course will be taught by psychologists with experience working in theater and costume communities.

Home Life, Schools and Child Labor: Robin Edwards-Harvey and Pam Riby

This workshop is for young adults (11-16). The workshop will focus on the Basics of Everyday life for the Victorian Child. Children will learn about the Basic home life for most Victorian Children along with the relationships they would have had with their parents and other family members. We will look at Schools in this era and work with improv to get a better sense of what was expected of Children in schools. Finally, we will explore child labor of the time with more roll play.

Play, Jest and Christmas Traditions: Robin Edwards-Harvey and Pam Riby

This workshop is for younger children. We will focus on safety, how to support a show, what was it like living in London at this time, how to acknowledge their audience, how to identify the major characters, how to help them fill their day, and appropriate buzz words to greet the visitor, fellow performers and their elders.

Acting Like the Victorian Child – Robin Edwards-Harvey and Pam Riby

This workshop is for those who have families with Children at Faire. It will focus is on teaching families with Children, and anyone who interacts with a child at fair, what children did in the Victorian era. There will be on-your-feet acting parts for EACH section of this workshop for ALL participants. *Offered on 3rd Saturday only at the Cow Palace.*

Guardian ↔ Youth Workshop: Robin Edwards-Harvey

Taking on the role of guardian for a minor at the Dickens Fair is more than just signing a piece of paper. It means that you are responsible for that minor, often in their parent's stead. This year we're including a workshop specifically to address guardianship rules and offer helpful information for those who chose to take on this role, and **guardians must attend with their charges.** (Required for Guardians – *Offered on 3rd Saturday only at the Cow Palace.*

(Both Victorian Speech classes below limited to 50 Participants)

Victorian Speech - Beginning: Kate Kravets

If you aren't speaking Cockney (or another regional English dialect), Scots, Irish or "foreign", this is the first language class you need to take. Includes English structure, attention to basic pronunciation, phrasing; spoken language to hear and repeat.

Victorian Speech - Advanced: Kate Kravets

Please have taken the beginning class or be comfortable and experienced with the basics of “Received Pronunciation;” or “RP,” as spoken by the upper classes and the merchants and purveyors of goods to those classes. Review pronunciation and techniques. Develop the nuances of your own character's speech. Adorn your vocabulary to provide our guests with a glorious feast for the ears. Handouts provided – recording allowed with permission of class members.

(Both Cockney classes below limited to 25 participants)Beginning Cockney (sounds): Jeremy with Beth Hanscom

We'll explore all aspects of the sounds of Cockney, discuss various slang and how to make it accessible to our audience. You'll also get a feel for the Cockney's love of language and confident swagger. You'll leave knowing how to talk to anyone, high class or low! Prerequisite: None. (Actors are also encouraged to take Advanced Cockney – *See below*).

Advanced Cockney (conversation): Rachel Tevlin

You've been to Cockney classes. You've learned the sounds. Now how the bloody 'ell do you actually talk?!? Practice in this fun and also practical way to get more comfortable with the cant, accent and attitude of Cockney. Prerequisite: Beginning Cockney. ***Not Offered 1st day – Oct 28st***.

Irish Character Development: Shirleigh Brannon and Brendan Lee

This workshop will focus on history and background for the development of an Irish character in Dickensian London; will include interaction. Some dialect will be covered. Why is your character in London, family history, where is your character from in Ireland (including town, city, county). If your character is Irish, this class is for you. *Offered 3rd day only – Nov. 4th*.

Victorian Scots - Who And What Were They?: Elheran Francis

We'll cover the characteristics and sounds of a Scots dialect of English, along with some specialized vocabulary. Going beyond just accent or language. Will discuss aspects of cultural, financial, class and other impacts to how one wants to develop their character. Is your character Scots? *Offered 3rd day only – Nov. 4th*.

Voice Projection for The Actor: Joe Schmitz (Limited to 25 participants)

Be heard – not hurt! Practice techniques for proper breathing, support, projection and care of the voice. Understand the body's relationship to breathing, learn to breathe from the ground up and use your “outside” voice correctly.

Meet & Greet: Paula Chritensen with Harry Steeper

Develop an all around tool kit for Meet & Greet. Learn to be aware of the kind of character you are. Learn to perceive territorial space, how to approach a customer, to perceive the nature of the customer you're approaching, and to pay attention to body language. Learn how to enter and to exit a conversation, what to say in a conversation, the “dos and don'ts” of customer interaction and how to handle trouble if it arises. Learn how to interact with them as fellow Londoners.

Physical Characterization, Dickens Style – Lecture: Therese Porter & Rydell Downward

In the tumult and noise of Fair, our audience picks up most of its cues about who we are from what we are projecting physically. What differentiates us, and makes us stand out as “part of the show,” is how we comport ourselves. We will guide you through the process of constructing the physical aspects of your character, using basic tools we all use in our every day lives, showing you how to parse the language of the body and build marvelous Victorian characters from that language.

(Physical Characterization - Lecture, within the past two years, is a prerequisite for all character, acting and improv labs below, if so indicated.)

Physical Characterization, Dickens Style – Lab: Therese Porter & Rydell Downward

We have revised the Lab to include a variety of exercises to help you put what you have learned from the lecture into action to keep your character strong, vivid and grounded. You MUST have taken the lecture workshop within the past two years to attend the Lab.

Beginning Improv: Elizabeth Schluntz

We will be going over the basics of Improvisation, the difference between Long Form and Short Form Improv. We will do Short Form Games and a run through of Silent Theater and how that is appropriate for Dickens.

Advanced Improv for Dickens – (Age 13 & above or instructor’s approval - A 2 hour workshop): Ana Elizondo-Lossow
(A recent Character Lab or Beginning Improv is a prerequisite for this class. Limit - 20 participants)

Note: You must take both sessions (full 2 hours) to receive credit.

This class will focus on techniques specifically needed for Dickens Fair or Immersion Faires. A portion of the class will concentrate on questions and answers, and will help formulate the structure of the class. We will work on theater in the round and silent scenes. Dickens is a loud environment, so it is important to know how to communicate and/or deliver a scene that a patron can enjoy without needing to hear it. We will discover how to give portions of set scenes to as many people as possible while still engaging in the scene. ***Not Offered 1st day – Oct 28^s.***

Improv for Young Folk (Age 6-13): Elizabeth Schluntz

(Physical Characterization Lecture, within the past two years, is prerequisite for this class. Limit - 20 participants)

This class will look at the basics of improv and connection with other characters on the street. The class is formatted to help kids and younger teens begin to use their imagination and connect it to what they bring to the magic of the fair.

Characterization Deep Dive: Anders Hudson

(Physical Characterization Lecture, within the past two years, is prerequisite for this class. Limit - 20 participants)

We will be expanding the concept of "first person characters", not just a back story, but as a personality that reads well and is ready to interact with the streets of London in a fun and entertaining way. A previous Improv class will be very helpful.

Adapt to Your Audience: Joe Schmitz

Every patron and actor brings their own individuality to Fair. But many, especially children, the elderly, and people with special needs, often experience Fair differently. We will practice helping everyone have a positive experience in London. We will discuss common situations and role play how to respond; is an interactive workshop, but not physically demanding.

Audience Interaction: Mark Shanks

Don't perform for the visitors, perform *with* our visitors. Learn 2nd person living history techniques and tricks to include the audience in our show.

Dickens Undesirables: Rachel Tevlin

The class is intended to help us explore how we, as re-enactors, can portray (and code) social themes with historical accuracy, while considering the sensibilities of our modern audience and our fellow actors. Through improvisational workshops and discussion, we will figure out how your character would react to our villains and the undesirables of Dickens' London while still keeping the spirit of Christmas alive for our audience. We will also look at how the poor folks can interact with their "betters" in a way that is historically accurate and entertaining for our audience.

London Downstairs: Patrick Gaul

With the largest single occupation in 19th century London being domestic service, it is almost certain that your character at Dickens Fair; either has a servant (or servants), has friends or family who are servants, or is a servant! This workshop will bring you up-to-scratch on what all Victorians knew about this essential social institution, and help you incorporate that understanding into your character's psyche. This is not so much a workshop on how to portray a domestic servant, but rather a workshop on how to talk to, talk about (and maybe engage or dismiss, praise, or perhaps even exploit) members of this most ubiquitous London working class.

Dickens at Home: Steve Johnson & Allan Schwartz

What was the home life of Mr. Dickens like? What does the Dickens home at Fair represent? By extension, what was the typical middle-class Victorian home like? We will encourage people to have a really good look at Tavistock House at Fair - the furnishings, decorations, paintings, etc., so they can appreciate the thought that went into accurately portraying the parlor of a London home. We'll also talk about the protocol of visiting The Dickens Family Parlour at Fair.

What Victorian Londoners Knew: Laura Rubin

The history of London is written in the city itself. Do you know Richmond from Greenwich? This course gives you an overview of the City as the Victorians knew it, and an overview of the things that changed their day to day lives (and that they loved to complain about!). *Offered 1st weekend only.*

Victorian Material Culture: Laura Rubin

This class is for folks buying, thrifting, and making props and furnishings for environments at Fair. What might you have in your pockets? What did a period gin bottle look like? Who had that fancy china? What sorts of everyday furnishings could you expect in a house, a restaurant, a pub? Bonus: Laura will bring some of her mud-larking finds - genuine items from the banks of the Thames River. *Offered 1st weekend only.*

The British Empire in the World: Dr. Mark Shanks

Dickensian London is the center of the greatest empire ever formed. What basic knowledge ought our characters know of it? I'll provide a brief overview of the following: Our fractious family (rural England, Wales, industrial Midlands, Scotland, Ireland); our imperial rivals (France, Russia, Austria, Ottoman Empire, emerging & fading European imperial powers); our far-flung colonies (India, China, Caribbean & American; Africa, and Australia). We'll primarily look at the period 1835-1865, although I will give a nod to the results of the Napoleonic wars.

Military Matters of Victorian England: Eric Hess

Will cover military structure, customs and practices employed during the Victorian period, emphasizing development of character backgrounds, interactions between members of the military, and a historical overview of the military's place in Victorian-era London. Includes discussion and practical application. *Offered 2nd Saturday only – Nov. 4th.*

How to Pass Costume Approval: Liz Martin & Juliana Gaul – (A 2 hour workshop - for new and experienced participants)

Note: You must take both sessions (full 2 hours) to receive credit.

Includes all the particulars for dressing in London for the years 1840-64, our Dickensian period. Includes men, women, and children of all classes and social stations; accessories, hairstyles, and footwear; some history on why fashions of the times evolved as they did. Color charts and silhouettes available for perusal. Patterns, fabric and trim swatches adjudicated for approvability and ease of construction. Advice given on repair, cleaning, and retrofitting of old costumes. A PowerPoint presentation will be shown during the first hour. In the second hour, after a short talk, the floor will be open to Q&A. Specific questions and demos may be scheduled for private or small group tutorials at other times.

Special costume workshops: Liz Martin and Alexandria Volk

“**Thrift Store Dickens**” and “**Dressing Down: The True Scum Look**”, offered on particular days. *See schedule.*

Victorian Millinery: Alexandria Volk - (A 2 hour lab)

A hands-on workshop for bonnets at any stage of progress. A full lab with instruction and support – bring your hat project.

Tying Neckwear: Jeffrey Schoenberg

Learn the proper techniques and methods of tying a variety of Victorian neckwear. (As men should be capable of lacing a corset well, ladies should be able to tie a gentleman's tie to perfection.) *Offered 1st and 3rd weekends only.*

Hair Styles for Women - 1850s-60s: Bridget Bradley-Scaife

This class will demo how to style your hair for the 1850s-60s with the use of hairpieces. You will also learn the basics of hairpieces, such as how to match your hair color, where to buy, and even how to make your own.

Mid-Victorian Jewelry: Bridget Bradley-Scaife

Learn about popular styles and trends of Mid-Victorian jewelry, 1840-1870. *Offered 2nd Saturday, Nov. 4th only.*

Carols & Songs of The Times, Place, and Season: Bob & Terri Crabb

Sings the songs of the time and season - and get a quick refresher in how not to trash your voice. Learn and sing some important songs and some just for fun. Emphasis on songs of the season with a bit of history thrown in for good measure.

Hallelujah Chorus: Bob & Terri Crabb

Sing along with the Hallelujah Chorus on your appropriate part for your vocal range. Come, even if you don't read music. Offered 1st day only – Oct 28th.

Vocal Projection: Bob Crabb

Learn breathing and support techniques to survive both singing and speaking in our challenging performance space – The Cow Palace. Taking care of your voice.

Introduction to Traditional Irish Music & Dance Forms: Shirleigh Brannon, Michael Riemer, & Edith Summers

Love music and dance? Plan to portray Dickens Irish? Either way, bring your dance shoes, instruments, a way of taking notes (if you like), and join in as Siamsa's dance and music historians share our research in the history and regional styles of the many forms of traditional Irish dance - and its accompanying music. Join in street music and dance gigs with confidence and portray period-appropriate forms of Irish dance with greater authenticity. Current scholarship in the history and evolution of traditional Irish dance, demonstrating and teaching older traditional styles and rhythms, including an introduction to beginning Irish solo dance steps and group dances. All Dickens Fair dancers and musicians welcome.

Please note: this class is geared specifically towards adults and not well suited as a children's workshop.

(offered 3rd weekend only, at the Cow Palace)

Dance (Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced): Cathleen Myers

VICTORIAN DANCE 1: This is a class for newcomers as well as for experienced dancers who would like a brush-up on the Victorian rotary (turning) waltz and polka – our two essential Fezziwig dances. Emphasizes dance safety and partnering, and will also include the essential figures of the Grand March.

VICTORIAN DANCE 2: Prerequisite: Victorian Dance 1 or ability to dance the turning waltz and polka. Dances to be taught include the dashing Military Schottische and the Bronco, the elegant polka mazurka and polka redowa, the Esmeralda Polka, and a review of the wildly popular “Congress of Vienna Waltz.” The class will emphasize partnering and Victorian ballroom etiquette that everyone who visits Fezziwig's should know!

VICTORIAN DANCE 3: Prerequisite: Victorian Dance 2 or intermediate to advanced level social dance skills. Dances will include variations on the Victorian waltz, polka, mazurka waltz, including the redowa and Varsouvienne, and some of the special dance choreographies danced in Fezziwig's, including the Lancers' Quadrille, the original “French Quadrille, the Bohemian National Polka, and the Coppelia Mazurka Waltz. The class will emphasize partnering and period style.

Dark Garden Window Workshop: Autumn Adamme

The Dark Garden corset modeling workshop this year will be required of "new" models only. **If you are interested in modeling for us this year, but did not model last year, or if you modeled for the first time last year, please plan to attend this workshop.** Our experienced models need only turn in a completed model worksheet at the Dark Garden windows in the Cow Palace on dress rehearsal Sunday, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. (See note below.)

Corset Lacing: Autumn Adamme

Have you been asked to lace a lady, only to find your fingers tangled in knots? This workshop will debunk corset myths and educate you as to the proper ins and outs of ribbon and grommet. This workshop will include hands-on practice with real corsets and offers vital information gleaned from over 20 years corset lacing experience, and with a review of the underpinnings worn in all walks of Victorian life. (See note below.)

Note: The Dark Garden workshops are only given once, 2nd and 3rd periods respectively: Saturday, October 28th.