



The 2019 Great Dickens Christmas Fair

Workshop Descriptions

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 Beginner's Guide to Life and Times in Our London ~ Shelley Monson

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 who 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.

Addressing Our Difference: Strength in Diversity ~ Tara Rech, Ph.D. & Michi Fu, Ph.D.

Workshop participants will engage in exercises to help develop awareness about privilege and diversity. Facilitators will establish safety ground rules for an optimal learning experience, then share a framework for addressing cultural complexities in an immersive theatrical environment. Attendees will explore various aspects of diversity including gender, race, ethnicity, and learn about the process of becoming an ally. (*Offered Nov. 3rd & 9th - days 2 & 3 only*)

How to Support Neurodiversity at Dickens: All Participants ~ Ari Yovel

The Order of the Golden Needle is an organization within Dickens Fair devoted to supporting the needs of neurodivergent Fair Folk. But what does it mean to be neurodivergent? How does it impact life at Fair? How can you be a better castmate and ally to your neurodivergent friends within Dickens and beyond? Come learn from the Needles themselves at this special workshop! An additional session will be held for Directors and Stage Managers as well.

(Offered Nov. 3rd - day 2 only)

How to Support Neurodiversity at Dickens: Directors ~ Ari Yovel

In this session we'll cover much of what is in the All Participants version of the class, above, but focus on what Directors should know to support our Needles. (*Offered Nov. 3rd - day 2 only*)

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

This workshop is for younger children. We will focus on safety, how to support a show, what it was 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.

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

This workshop is for young adults (11-16) and 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 role play.

Acting Like the Victorian Child ~ Robin Edwards-Harvey & Pam Riby

This workshop is for those who have families with children at Dickens Fair. It will focus 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 (Required for Guardians) ~ **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. We will address guardianship rules and offer helpful information for those who chose to take on this role. **Guardians must attend with their charges.**

(Offered 1st day of workshops [14+ only] and 3rd Saturday at the Cow Palace [all ages])

(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 Wolfe & Beth Hanscom**

If your character was born within the sound of the Bow Bells (or fittin' in with those as was!), start with the basic sounds and move on to phrases and cheeky Cockney charm, cheer or chanciness! Let's learn to balance an argot meant to be obscure to outsiders with our theatrical need to teach the Fair's customers what life was like.

(Prerequisite: None - Actors also encouraged to take Advanced Cockney – See below).

Advanced Cockney (conversation) ~ **Jeremy Wolfe & Beth Hanscom**

Wotcher! Let's get your mouth around those sounds you learned in Beginning Cockney, and learn a bit about your character and others in the process.

*(Prerequisite: Beginning Cockney [Sounds]) **Not** Offered 1st day – Nov. 2nd.*

Talking The Talk and Meeting Your Neighbor (All Dialects Practicum) ~ **Rachel Tevlin**

You will practice communicating, in accent, with the other denizens of our London. You will participate in activities that will help you speak with each other while making you aware of the class and dialect nuances present when speaking to someone of a different class or the same class. You will discuss potential connects you have and how you know each other. Recommended for those who have done sufficient time in the same accent to be comfortable speaking in it.

(The Three Irish classes below offered Nov. 9th - day 3 only)

The Irish in Victorian London - History & Character ~ **Brendan Lee & Darbus Oldham**

Playing an Irish character? This is for you! This beginning history and character workshop will give you the background you need to play an Irish character at Dickens Fair, or the resources to dig deeper into an already-established character. We'll then do exercises to help you meet the other Irish in London and develop connections you can explore further in the stage-and-street workshop.

Irish Mad Libs - Beginning Irish Language ~ **Sara Sweet & Beth Schlueter**

Don't worry, this is in English! (Well, mostly.) This beginning language workshop will give you a couple of distinctive phrases from Victorian sources that will instantly differentiate your Irish character from the other Londoners. We'll also teach you how to shift English word order to match uniquely Irish phrasing. In class, we'll do several Mad Lib-style exercises to create phrases tailored to our roles at Dickens Fair. Then, we'll familiarize ourselves with these phrases in a no-audience, no-pressure format where pairs of people exchange a short conversation, then switch partners several times.

Cirque d'Eireann - Irish Stage & Steet ~ Deborah Doyle & Shirleigh Brannon

"I'm Irish!... When I feel well I feel better than anyone, when I am in pain I yell at the top of my lungs, and when I am dead I shall be deader than anybody." — Morgan Llywelyn. This beginning stage-and-street workshop builds on your characters from the first workshop and your "Mad Libs" from the second workshop. We'll share a few easy exercises in visualization, breathing, and improv techniques, in limited-audience, small group settings, to help you look and sound like a seasoned performer even if you don't actually **feel** confident.

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. 9th.*

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.

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, 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 everyday 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, and the differences 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.

Supporting the Actor: An Introduction to Advanced Improv ~ Rachel Tevlin

It takes a lot of work and energy to enjoy multiple Christmas Eve's. This class, through activities and discussion, will introduce techniques to help actors run the marathon that is a season of Dickens. We will go over how to support your fellow actors and how to get the most out of your improv interactions. This is an intro class, available to everyone, and is meant to serve as an introduction to Ana Elizondo-Lossow's improv workshop.

Advanced Improv for Dickens~ Ana Elizondo-Lossow

(Age 13 & above or instructor's approval; a 2-hour workshop – 2 credits, except day 2)

(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.

Improv for Youth (Age 6-13) ~ Jessamy Collier

(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.

Sincerity and Sensibility: Presentational and Representational Acting Styles for Street and Stage ~ Michael Cawelti

Our performances have more impact when the audience perceives our characters are “Real”. The icing on the immersion cake that is Dicken’s London is our ability to show a believable fantasy of our world. Which acting style is best? Join us for hands on exploration of Presentational, Representational, Technical and Emotion based forms of performance. Improve your verisimilitude! *NOT offered Nov 3rd - day 2*

Adapt to Your Audience ~ Joe Schmitz

Every patron and actor bring 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; this is an interactive workshop, but not physically demanding.

Audience Interaction ~ Mark Shanks

Don't perform for the visitors, perform WITH our visitors. Learn living history techniques and tricks to pull the audience into our show.

Transporting the Audience through Connection ~ Jeffrey Weissman

Our LHC motto has always been ‘storytelling that transports and connects educating with environment and history’. We are in an immersive theatrical experience and it’s important to keep our energy up and maintain our interaction with the audience - to keep our fair lives going. How can audience members be included and connected to the big story of fair? Inspired by crossover shows like ‘Dickensian’, we use your character’s story and scenes as a jumping off point, engaging the audience both intimately and broadly

Meet & Greet ~ Paula Christensen with Harry Steeper

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

Trade, Ships and The Navy in Dickens’ London ~ Carl Thelen

The reign of Queen Victoria saw many changes, among them change from wooden sailing ships to iron steamships. Being an island nation with a worldwide empire, Victorians were acutely aware of the importance of the merchant marine and the Royal Navy. Dickens’ works reflect the direct, indirect, and tangential effects of the Nautical Revolution on the sailors, merchants, and child laborers of Victorian England. This class will be about the changes, attitudes, and effects these changes had on everyday people in London.

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.

Victorian Social Reform and You ~ Cathryn Reynolds

This class will present the ideas behind social reforms concerning London's poor, followed by discussion on how your character feels on the subject of the poor.

What Victorians Did for Money: It Still Takes A Village ~ Mark Anderson & Devin Gregory

Using the writings of Henry Mayhew, Charles Dickens and numerous other Historical accounts, this workshop will introduce the participants to the various Victorian side hustles and how this information can be used to bridge the class barriers in the various fair groups, allowing for a more cohesive and interactive experience. The class will pull upon the established rules of improv and require both vocal and physical participation at a personal and group level. Writing implement required.

How The Lower Class Lived ~ Ian Moura

Charles Dickens devoted much space in his written work to describing the realities of poverty, as well as the societal attitudes toward it. In this workshop, we will talk about poverty in Victorian London, with emphasis on daily life of the Victorian poor. Examples of period photographs, documentation, and commentary will be provided. Additionally, we will discuss the importance of creating an accurate portrayal of the difficult circumstances faced by ordinary people in Victorian London, ways to make class references that will be understood by a modern audience, and how highlighting class distinctions can provide new opportunities to interact with visitors to the fair.

The Politics of Poverty ~ Ian Moura

Poverty was widespread in Victorian London, and like today, there was significant debate about what caused it and how best to address it. This workshop will cover the political, historic, and social events that contributed to the development of widespread urban poverty in the 19th century, as well as reactions and responses to the large number of poor and working-class people who called London home. Examples of period photographs, documentation, and commentary will be provided. Additionally, we will discuss how to use knowledge of historical context to create a richer, more immersive theatrical environment, and ways references to events of the past can be used to connect with our modern audience.

Practical Etiquette – Melinda Coy

Manners and Etiquette are a part of everyday life for Victorians of every social class. Knowing the rules (and how to break them) is a critical part of creating a world where our guest can truly feel they stepped into a different time. This class will explore and practice etiquette and deportment that can be used on the streets, with our guests, and in our character interactions.

What Dickens Saw in His Life ~ Steve Johnson & Allan Schwartz

Mr. Dickens encountered many things in his travels, which shaped his life and his writings. Many of these are reflected in the places and characters at Fair, which we will explore.

What Victorian Londoners Knew – Laura Ruben

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 Nov 9th- day 3 only.*

Victorian Material Culture ~ Laura Ruben

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 Nov 9th- day 3 only.*

Why We Wear, What We Wear ~ Juliana Gaul

A Social History of Clothing for Dickens Fair and how it affects how YOU dress. Dressing then compared to Dressing now - dress to show your position in society. Know who you are and what you are worth (or what you want society's perception to be of what you are worth!). We'll look at all the reasons we wear clothes, and the structure of society in London in the 19th Century (Lots of pictures).

Paper, Props and Artifakes ~ Mark Shanks

Up your characterization with all sorts of props you can produce on your home computer & printer. Calling cards, money, posters, labels, handbills, letters, and monograms are just a few of the ideas we will touch upon.

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 9th only*

How to Pass Costume Approval (for new and experienced participants) ~ Liz Martin

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.

Ask Liz – Costume Questions Answered ~ Liz Martin

This session is designed for people to bring costumes to Liz when they're not sure if they will pass approval (before you wait in line!). She will also answer any basic costume questions.

* Special costume workshops ~ Liz Martin, Alexandria Volk & Caitlin Leyden

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

Victorian Color Theory ~ Alexandria Volk

There will be an overview of Victorian aesthetics and 19th Century color theory. We'll learn about the Victorian dye chemists and the development of Aniline dyes. We'll learn how to use the color wheel and view examples from textiles, painting, and objects. Not Offered 1st day – Oct 27th

Victorian Millinery (a lab) ~ Alexandria Volk

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

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 27th.*

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.

Dance (Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced) ~ Cathleen Myers & Cassiane Mobley

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.

Tours of London: A Training Workshop – for tour leaders and characters the tours will meet ~ Jeffrey Weissman and Team

Learn how to bring our guests into the heart of Dickens, with interactive interviews, entertainments and demonstrations of Victorian Culture and Literature. We want you if you play a literary, or historical character that may interact with the tours. Very welcome if you are considering being a Character Tour Guide.

I’ve Got A Telegram for... a workshop for “Telegraph Boys” ~ Colin Hammond

The ins and outs of being heard, finding your target customer, moving through a crowd, and generally making a scene as a telegraph delivery person. *Offered Nov 10th, day 4 only*

Cockney, History and Characterization for Beverage & Vendors (All days in Pacifica and Nov. 9th - 2 hours) ~ Rachel Clein-Cunningham ** Mandatory for Beverage

This 2-hour session will cover: 1) Cockney, specifically for Beverage - Cockney accent and dialect for communicating across a counter. 2) History and Characterization for Beverage - How to know who you are and act accordingly. The class is designed specifically for Beverage Servers. *(Offered every day in Pacifica – and – Nov. 9th, 3rd Saturday at the Cow Palace)*

Victorian Speech for Vendors: (new this year) ~ Kate Kravets

New and returning vendors are encouraged to take this class. As in Beginning Victorian Speech, we will cover basic pronunciation and practice useful phrases that can easily be memorized. Particular emphasis on remaining “In character” while conducting transactions in a shop, making change, extending greetings and giving directions. We’ll review some real life “what to do when the customer does/says this” situations, and explore ways to show customer appreciation Victorian style. *Offered at Cow Palace, Saturday, Nov 16th only.*

Dark Garden Window Workshop ~ Carynn Milne

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 ~ Carynn Milne

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 of 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, November 2nd.

Revised 10/30/2019