

# *Our Monthly Letter*

September 2024

*We Are Fun, Friendship and Learning*

## **117th International Conference of the Dickens Fellowship**

The Friends of Dickens New York had three representatives at the conference held in Portsmouth from August 5th to 8th: **Su Quinn**, **Mary Jane Mallonee**, and **Kristin Dennehy**. Some delegates stayed at a hotel close to the Guildhall Square, where the statue of Dickens was dedicated in 2014, and also near the university building where the conference's lectures were.

Monday's activities began with a late-afternoon walking tour which took delegates into the dockyard pay office—where John Dickens worked when Charles was born in 1812—and the Beneficial Society building—where Elizabeth Dickens attended a dance the night before her son Charles was born. At dinner that evening delegates were entertained by a men's group singing sea shanties. On Tuesday the formal meeting of the Fellowship dealt with the administrative aspects of the organization and announced that no branch had yet offered to host the conference in 2025.

Wednesday's boat trip to the Isle of Wight featured Ian Dickens talking about his great-great grandfather's visits to the island. There were tours of Queen Victoria's home, Osborne House, and the village of Bonchurch, where the Dickens family spent time in 1849. Thursday featured some lectures relating to the theme of "Dickens on Holidays." The evening's reception was on the 1860 warship HMS Warrior, and then an elegant banquet in the Princess Royal Gallery ended the Fellowship's gathering for this year.



## **Our September Meeting**

Saturday, September 7th, 2024, 1pm - 4pm  
**NYPL Kips Bay Branch**  
446 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Program: *Sketches by Boz*  
"Our Parish" (The Beadle  
to Our Next-door Neighbor)

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## **Dickensian Summer Brunch at The Churchill Tavern**

Thanks to the organizational efforts of **Ken Wachtell**, a number of the Friends of Dickens New York were able get together for an English breakfast at The Churchill Tavern on East 28th Street on Saturday, July 27th. There was no program on the menu, just fellowship and good food!

At our next meeting, we will begin our year-long discussion of *Sketches by Boz*, a series of stories that originally ran in various periodicals, then were later collected together in book form with illustrations by the great artist George Cruikshank. The Penguin edition contains all of Dickens's sketches and also all of Cruikshank's illustrations. This edition is suggested, but not required.

During most meetings over the next year, we will discuss a few different sketches. However, in January we will be discussing *The Chimes*, one of Dickens's "Christmas Books" that actually takes place over New Year's. We will have our traditional Dickens Birthday Luncheon in February and resume our study of *Sketches by Boz* in March.



On **September 7th** we will discuss the "Our Parish" section. This begins with the sketch "The Beadle" and continues through to the last sketch we'll discuss this month: "Our Next-door Neighbor." (This is pages 17 - 66 in the Penguin edition.) Our new president **Joe Fodor** will lead the discussion. We hope you will be able to join us, either in person or over Zoom.

Please join us on **Saturday, September 7th** as we discuss the opening of *Sketches by Boz*.

If you cannot attend in person, you can join us virtually using Zoom, which is best viewed on a computer with a camera, but can also be accessed via phone.

Beginning at **1:00** on Saturday the 7th, our meeting can be accessed on the web at:

**<https://ccny.zoom.us/j/89099704779?pwd=G0ncebda1WvFa46CCtUtDHmy6j4yz9.1>**

The meeting ID is **890 9970 4779** and the password is **1812**.

You can also dial in using the number **1-646-558-8656**. You will then have to enter the meeting ID, the pound key (#), a one, the pound key (#), the password, and then the pound key (#) again. We hope you will be able to join us.

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Dear Members,

Please renew your membership for the September 2024 - August 2025 year by September 30th.  
You can fill out this membership form and return it with your check to:

The Friends of Dickens New York  
c/o Warren Wyss  
50 Lexington Avenue, 15F  
New York, NY 10010

Memberships are \$20.00 per year.

Thank you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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