

WASHINGTON REVELS PRESENTS

The Christmas Revels

28th Annual



*English Country Music,
Dance, and Drama
In Celebration
of the Winter Solstice*

Roberta Gasbarre, *artistic/stage director*
Elizabeth Fulford Miller, *music director*
Jim Alexander, *production manager*

FEATURING

The Mellstock Band

WITH

Puddletown Brass

Portesham Singers

Mellstock Quire

Toneborough Teens

Casterbridge Children

AND

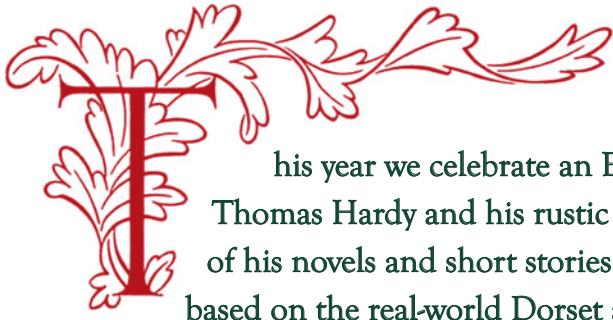
Cutting Edge Sword Dancers

Foggy Bottom Morris Men

LISNER AUDITORIUM
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC

DECEMBER 4-12, 2010

FROM THE DIRECTOR



his year we celebrate an English country Christmas in the spirit of Thomas Hardy and his rustic “Wessex,” which served as the setting for many of his novels and short stories. This fictional region in southwest England is based on the real-world Dorset and its surroundings. One of Hardy’s earliest and most lighthearted works, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, recalls the characters and pastoral atmosphere of the village of Mellstock, the simple pleasures of country living, and the poignancy of a passing era. I want to share a few thoughts about the creative journey we took from old Mellstock to Lisner today.

One of the unexpected pleasures of creating this year’s show was in exploring the rich and colorful world of Hardy’s life and times, as well as his books. We have borrowed or adapted place and character names, as well as poetic and funny lines and scenes, from *Under the Greenwood Tree* and other writings, especially the seasonal word paintings for which Hardy is beloved.

In building an onstage community, Revels always creates multigenerational families. This year, our families have names from Hardy’s books and life—the Longpuddles, for instance. There’s also Nellie Titterington, named after the parlor maid at Hardy’s last home. Robert Penny, Michael Mail, and other characters are from *Under the Greenwood Tree*. Even young Thomas Hardy himself sings in our chorus, alongside his mother, Jemima, his father, Thomas Sr., and various other friends and relations. We hope that the fun of this process will shine through the song, dance, and revelry on stage.

As always, *The Christmas Revels* illuminates the theme of winter solstice and the darkness at the turning of the year, along with the spectrum of emotions that people experience during this time. In this performance, the character Fancy Day, the schoolmistress and Dick Dewy’s new love, has returned to Mellstock after being educated in the city. Like many of us, she is caught in the middle, cherishing the old ways but moving toward the new. During this holiday season, take a moment to look back with us at how all of our lives are changing—and staying the same—in the village of Mellstock.



—Roberta Gasbarre, December 2010

WASHINGTON REVELS 2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 8-9	Jubilee Voices Auditions
Jan. 24-Mar. 21	Winter Workshops (K-5th Grade)
January 30	Pub Sing at McGinty's in Silver Spring
January 22	Jubilee Voices/Heritage Voices perform at Montgomery County Historical Society Conference
February	Jubilee Singers perform at Montgomery County Libraries
March 9	Premiere of Heritage Montgomery Civil War DVD with Washington Revels at Montgomery College
March 20	Spring Fling
April 4-June 3	Spring Workshops (K-5th Grade)
April 9	Maritime Voices perform at Navy Memorial Museum
April 16	Jubilee Voices perform at Emancipation Day Event
April 30	Gallery Voices perform at National Arboretum
May 1	Washington Revels performs at Audubon Nature Fair
May 11	Gallery Voices perform at Happenings at the Harman
May 20-21	<i>Christmas Revels 2011</i> Adult Auditions
June 19	<i>Revels SunFest</i>
June 25-26	Maryland Heritage Days
July 4	Takoma Park Independence Day Parade
July	Community Sing
September 5	Kensington Labor Day Parade
September 9-11	<i>Christmas Revels 2011</i> Teen and Children Auditions
October	6th Annual Harvest Dance and Dinner
November	Pub Sing in Virginia
December 10-18	29th Annual <i>Christmas Revels</i>

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Building tradition through music, dance and drama

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ABOUT WASHINGTON REVELS

The organization. A cultural institution in the greater Washington area for more than 25 years, Washington Revels creates community celebrations based on traditional music, dance, and drama from different times and cultures. Staged or informal, large or small, Revels celebrations usually involve adults and children, professionals and nonprofessionals—and audience participation. By creating celebrations based on traditional material, we seek both to entertain and to foster a sense of the community and connection between people that such celebrations have fostered over the centuries.

We are one of 10 independent nonprofit Revels organizations in the United States, each with its own board, office and artistic staff, and finances. An umbrella organization—Revels, Inc., in Cambridge, Massachusetts—maintains artistic standards for all Revels organizations, researches traditional material, and provides or approves scripts and music for *Christmas Revels* productions.

Revels history. More than 50 years ago, John (Jack) Langstaff, then a music teacher in the D.C. area, created the first performances of *The Christmas Revels*: in New York City, in December 1957, and in Washington, D.C., in January 1958. Jack founded Revels, Inc. in 1971. In 1983, Mary Swope founded Washington Revels, the fourth Revels organization. Now Washington Revels is based in Silver Spring, Maryland, with six full-time staffers and many dedicated volunteers.

Revels activities. *The Christmas Revels* is our biggest production, but it's far from the only thing we do. *May Revels*, in which we welcome the spring with an outdoor performance at the headquarters of the Audubon Naturalist Society, is also a major event. And our calendar of events circles the year, from pub sings in the winter to *Revels SunFest* at the summer solstice to a fall Harvest Dance. We've performed at Smithsonian museums, THEARC, the Strathmore Music Center, the National Theatre, and the White House. Our new after-school workshops, year-round performing ensembles, and explorations of local heritage are bringing the Revels spirit to more and more people. (Read more about these new activities, elsewhere in this program.)

What is Revels—really? Revels events are fun and provide a sense of community through shared tradition, stressing the importance of community celebration to all people. Core celebrations address the circle of the seasons and the cycle of life. Winter is followed by spring; dark is followed by light; some individuals die as others are born. Throughout, in times of sorrow and in times of joy, humankind gathers together for support. Exploring these themes through the prisms of different cultures, our performances illustrate specific customs that address universal joys, hopes, and fears, and create “real-time” celebrations in which cast, crew, and audience members experience our shared humanity. The essential message, and we hope the experience, is that all of us—adults, children, people from all walks of life—are part of a community that stretches across boundaries and through the ages.

WASHINGTON REVELS

531 Dale Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910 ♦ 301-587-3835 ♦ www.revelsdc.org

THOMAS HARDY AND THE CHRISTMAS REVELS

This year's *Christmas Revels* is loosely based on the Thomas Hardy novel *Under the Greenwood Tree* or *The Mellstock Quire: A Rural Painting of the Dutch School*, to give its full title and subtitle. This "painting" provides a sympathetic and sometimes funny picture of the foibles of villagers in mid-19th-century rural England. These colorful characters lead us through a rollicking exploration of traditional songs, dances, and drama from that time and place.

Hardy was born in 1840 and grew up during the Industrial Revolution, a time that brought about dramatic changes in English country life. Jobs in factories separated workers from the outdoors and sundered their daily lives from the cycle of the seasons. Factory-made textiles and farm equipment caused unemployment in rural areas.

The major theme of the novel is the tension between change and tradition. Hardy examines this issue by focusing on a single development that took place shortly before he was born: the manufacture and distribution of a new kind of musical instrument—a harmonium or pump organ.

In the fictional village of Mellstock, as in many real English villages, a "quire" of male musicians had traditionally provided the music for church services (see article on "west gallery music," next page). Fearing replacement, unhappy quire members condemn harmoniums as "miserable sinners" and "dumbledores" (bumblebees). Indeed, the introduction of harmoniums contributed to the loss of west gallery songs and tunes. Fortunately, however, some of this music has been preserved.

Values shared by Hardy and Revels

Music and dance. A core belief of both Hardy and Revels is the value of traditional music and dance. Hardy's father and grandfather were fiddlers in the quire at his local church. That quire was replaced around the time of Hardy's birth, but the author grew up with west gallery music, eventually becoming both a musician and an enthusiastic dancer. His books contain many references to dances and songs; he even quotes lyrics. Our visitors, The Mellstock Band, have a CD consisting entirely of songs referred to or quoted in Hardy's novels.

Custom and community celebration. Like Revels, Hardy also valued the community celebrations of which the music and dance were a part. In a 1909 poem, he lamented their loss:

*Now no Christmas brings its neighbors
And the New Year comes unlit
Where we sang the mole now labours
And spiders knit*

Revels seeks to present the kinds of traditions that Hardy considered lost, helping 21st-century people nourish the deep human need to come together in community.

Mummers plays. Hardy also appreciated traditional drama—as do we. Although Hardy is generally seen as an author of gloomy books and poetry, tonight you will see an

adaptation of a riotous mummers play from Hardy's novel *Return of the Native*. (Hardy did depart from tradition, however, by having a girl disguise herself as a boy and join a group of mummers as the Turkish Knight. This also happens in our mummers play.)

Tradition, change, and permanence. *Under the Greenwood Tree* reflects Hardy's love of tradition (and his poetic prose) in his description of the quire's caroling on Christmas Eve:

Then passed forth in the quiet night an ancient and timeworn hymn, embodying a quaint Christianity in words orally transmitted from father to son through several generations down to the present characters...

The introduction of the harmonium did help end traditions that had developed in connection with English quires. But new traditions will be created, and life will go on. Similarly, all *Christmas Revels* productions address change by honoring the cycle of life and the circle of the seasons. Individuals die, but others are born. The old year dies, but a new year is born. Through it all, in Mellstock, in *The Christmas Revels*, and around the world, people gather together to confront or to celebrate the changes that surround them.



—Terry Winslow

West Gallery Music

by Dave Townsend, Director, The Mellstock Band

The songs and tunes of country church bands and quires of the 18th and 19th centuries form one of the great lost heritages of English music. Suppressed since the 1840s and neglected by recent scholarship, this music—accessible to singers and musicians of all abilities—offers a unique vigor and excitement. This is “west gallery music”—named for the part of the church where the musicians sat—or “country psalmody,” the vigorous harmony singing tradition that flourished in rural English parish churches from the early 18th century until the mid-19th century. It was composed, adapted, and taught by people of humble origins and little formal education, who produced music of extraordinary vitality and variety. It is rhythmic, full voiced, and has a fascinating combination of wild harmonies and unorthodox counterpoint.

The quires and their music are unforgettably portrayed by Thomas Hardy in *Under The Greenwood Tree* and other poems and stories. Some of the pieces in this Revels program come from the Hardy family’s collection of manuscript books, and from other sources from Dorset, the county where Hardy was born and lived most of his life.

By the end of the 18th century, it was common practice to support each vocal line with an instrument, which might also play extra passages or “symphonies.” Descriptions of the last of the Dorset church bands in 1895, and of a group of male singers and string players known as the “Big Set” in 1930s Yorkshire, make it clear that the instrumentalists did not merely double the vocal parts (which are often all that survives), but also improvised variations and independent supporting parts. Often the old bands also played for dancing, a fact which informs The Mellstock Band’s instrumental interpretations of west gallery music.

West gallery tunes and harmonies were brought to North America in the 18th century, ushering in a new tradition of unaccompanied “fasola” or “shape-note” singing that flourished throughout the 19th century, initially in New England and later in the southern states, thanks in part to the legendary publication *The Sacred Harp* and other hymn collections. Back in England, the music survives in the caroling traditions of Northern England and the West Country. These traditions, with their direct links to the old west gallery choirs and singing masters, suggest a style far removed from both the art music of the time and our present choral tradition. American shape-note singers use a powerful, open-throated tone, plentiful individual ornamentation, and driving rhythms, matching the exuberance of Yorkshire’s pub carolers and street carol singers in present-day Cornwall.



Introduction

Many of the customs, songs, and dances that are regularly part of *The Christmas Revels* have their origin in rural England. This year we experience those traditions as portrayed in Thomas Hardy's novel *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

The time is the late 1830s. Soon, steam will power threshers and cotton mills; locomotives will link city to country. In Hardy's fictional village of Mellstock, the tension between change and tradition arises with the coming of a newfangled musical instrument: a harmonium, or pump organ. Will the harmonium replace the village "quire," whose rustic instruments have for generations provided the music for church services?



Travel with us now to Mellstock. On a cold Christmas Eve, young Dick Dewy joins other members of the quire to go caroling. The quire carols the beautiful Fancy Day; the new preacher, Parson Maybold; and Mr. Shiner, a wealthy farmer. Afterward, the quire members retire to Dick's father's house for a lively party, where it becomes clear that Dick isn't the only one who has developed an interest in Fancy.

Later, it's Christmas Day, when we'll visit the village church and a party at Mr. Shiner's house. These Christmas scenes are pure Revels—a collection of songs, dances, and poems that will, we hope, leave you with the experience of having been a full and enthusiastic participant in a Thomas Hardy Christmas.

Part One

I. PRELUDE

Composer George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) was Kapellmeister for the German prince who became England's George I. Handel influenced many of the composers of west gallery music. "With Cheerful Notes Let All the Earth to Heaven Their Voices Raise" is arranged here for brass quintet by Ben Fritz.

PUDDLETOWN BRASS

∞ GOING THE ROUNDS ∞

In early-19th-century English villages, the quire had many duties—playing not only in the pub and for town dances, but also on Sundays in the parish church. On Christmas Eve, the quire would "go the rounds," caroling outside the house of each member of the parish. As in *Under the Greenwood Tree*, we meet young Dick Dewy first, singing "The Sheep-Shearing Song" as he walks to join the quire.

2. REMEMBER ADAM'S FALL

Hardy includes the words of this "ancient and time-worn hymn" in the opening pages of *Under the Greenwood Tree*, as his quire members sing outside the window of the new schoolmistress, Fancy Day.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND & QUIRE

Rachel Carlson, *Fancy Day*
Danny Pushkin, *Parson Maybold*
Josh Sticklin, *Dick Dewy*



3. WITH RAPTURES ABOUNDING

Two of this carol's vocal parts appear in the manuscripts of the Hardy family. The third is adapted from a tune to the same words found in a Dorset manuscript and published in the 1920s by the scholar and antiquarian W. A. Pickard Cambridge. Dorset is the county where Hardy grew up and which served as the basis for his fictional "Wessex."

THE MELLSTOCK BAND & QUIRE

4. PORTUGAL NEW

Inside the manor house, Mr. Frederic Shiner is enjoying a long winter's nap when he is interrupted by the rowdy carolers. This tune by the English composer John Francis Wade (1711-1786) is found in many west gallery manuscripts, with a variety of harmonizations. The instrument Phil Humphries plays is a serpent—a now-obsolete bass woodwind instrument used in churches and military bands until the 1840s.

Dave Townsend, *singer*
Bobby Gravitz, *Mr. Frederic Shiner*
THE MELLSTOCK BAND & QUIRE
PORTESHAM SINGERS



5. O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

The English lyrics of this popular Christmas carol, also known as “Adeste Fideles,” were written in the 19th century by Frederick Oakeley and William Thomas Brooke.

Greg Lewis, *leader*
PORTESHAM SINGERS & HANDBELLS
PUDDLETOWN BRASS CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

ALL SING:

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him, born the king of angels;
O come let us adore him (3x), Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above.
Glory to God in the highest.
O come let us adore him (3x), Christ the Lord!

6. MORRIS DANCE

Border Morris dances have been performed in English and Welsh villages for hundreds of years. This dance is derived from “The Tun Dish,” by John Kirkpatrick. The tune is “The Sportsman’s Hornpipe.”

FOGGY BOTTOM MORRIS MEN

❧ AT REUBEN DEWY'S COTTAGE ❧

The caroling moves indoors as Mellstock village converges on the Dewy family's cottage for the tapping of the new cider and some raucous song and dance.

7. CRANBROOK

First published in 1805, this popular tune is by Thomas Clark (1775-1859), who composed 28 books of psalmody—psalm texts set to music for congregational singing. Here, the carolers sing “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks” to Cranbrook, which is also the tune for the popular Yorkshire song “On Ilkley Moor Baht’at’.” The instrumental parts used here are by Dave Townsend.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

PORTESHAM SINGERS

8. CHILDREN'S SONGS AND DANCES

“Here We Come A-Wassailing” is a traditional Christmas and New Year's carol that refers to wassailing, or visiting door to door. “Wassail” is a contraction of the Old English phrase *wæs hæl*, meaning “be healthy.” The traditional English carol “Dame, Get Up and Bake Your Pies” is related to the venerable song “Greensleeves,” believed by many historians to have been written by King Henry VIII.

CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

Dave Townsend, *concertina*

9. APPLE TREE WASSAIL

The custom of wassailing apple trees persists to this day in some parts of England. Villagers go into an orchard on a winter's night, choose the oldest or best tree to represent the orchard, and drink a formal toast to it, as if it were a living person. The arrangement of the unaccompanied part of the piece is by Dave Townsend.

PORTESHAM SINGERS
CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN
THE MELLSTOCK BAND



10. WASHINGTON HORNPIPE

The hornpipe is best known today as a sailor's dance. But it was once popular on land as well, in set dances and in clog dances like this one.

Guenevere Alexandra Spilsbury, *dancer*

Jamie Sandel, *fiddle*

11. HERE'S A HEALTH TO ALL GOOD LASSES

This short glee—a song in parts for men—was derived from a part-song by Pietro Guglielmi (1728–1804). A favorite of London “Song & Supper” clubs, it found its way into rural tradition in Oxfordshire and Dorset.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

PORTESHAM MEN

12. PORTESHAM FEAST DANCE

A community dance at the Portesham Feast (“Poss’am Fez” in local dialect) in the West Dorset village of Portesham. This tune goes by many names, including “The Tune the Old Cow Died Of.”

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

PORTESHAM DANCERS

13. JOAN'S ALE

In Hardy's novel *Desperate Remedies*, this song is sung by the drunken postman from whom Manston, the villain, is attempting to steal a letter. Many people know the song today as “Jones's Ale.”

Alden Michels, *singer*

14. SANS DAY CAROL

This traditional carol is unusual in that it associates the Virgin Mary with the holly tree, a masculine symbol in folk mythology. Also known as the “St. Day Carol,” it comes from the village of St. Day in Cornwall.

Rachel Carlson, *singer*

Guenevere Alexandra Spilsbury, Elisabeth Myers, Michael Lewallen,
Katie Somers, and Paul Hogan, *singers*

PORTESHAM SINGERS

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

15. LORD OF MISRULE

In many traditions, the solstice is celebrated by overturning the social order for a day. This leads to the fun of high and mighty people serving a fool king or a boy bishop. A Lord or Lady of Misrule is chosen from the populace to preside in topsy-turvy fashion over the celebration. The instrumental piece here is “Alla Hornpipe” from Handel’s *Water Music*, which debuted during a July 17, 1717 royal procession on the Thames River.

CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

PUDDLETOWN BRASS

16. THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

This audience favorite is a traditional English “forfeit” carol—so called because people who sang at the wrong time were expected to forfeit a candy or a kiss (or sometimes, in a pub, a round of drinks) to their neighbors. The arrangement for brass and tympani is by Kenneth Pulig.

Greg Lewis, *leader*

PORTESHAM SINGERS

CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

TONESBOROUGH TEENS

PUDDLETOWN BRASS

ALL SING:

On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me
A partridge in a pear tree.
Two turtledoves,
Three French hens,
Four calling birds,
Five gold rings,
Six geese a-laying,
Seven swans a-swimming,
Eight maids a-milking,
Nine ladies dancing,
Ten lords a-leaping
Eleven pipers piping,
Twelve drummers drumming.



Partridge

17. DORSET FIVE-HANDED REEL

An informal social dance done by working people in a pub rather than in a ballroom. It represents one of the oldest British Isles dance forms, where the dancers dance a “step” while facing one another, then tread an interweaving figure-eight pattern. The tunes played here are “Dorchester Hornpipe” and “Speed the Plough.”

PORTESHAM SINGERS

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

18. AWAKE, AWAKE YE MORTALS ALL

A carol for women’s voices found in the Hardy family manuscripts in Puddletown, where many of Thomas Hardy’s kinfolk lived and made music.

PORTESHAM WOMEN

19. GREAT THINGS

This poignant poem of Hardy’s is set to “The Merry Month of May,” a traditional tune found in his family’s manuscripts. The arrangement is by Dave Townsend.

PORTESHAM SINGERS

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

Rachel Carlson, *singer*

20. CHRISTMAS INVITATION

A festive poem by William Barnes (1801-1886), a schoolmaster, poet, and friend of Thomas Hardy. He devised a phonetic spelling for the Dorset dialect, and in his poetry he chronicled the country life and customs of the region. Phil Humphries recites this poem in the dialect he was brought up speaking.

Phil Humphries, *speaker*



21. LORD OF THE DANCE

Much as the Dewy family invited the whole village to dance in their home, we invite you to join us in this dance through the aisles of Lisner Auditorium. Sydney Carter's modern lyrics to the Shaker Song "Simple Gifts" are here translated into dance using a compilation of traditional Morris dance steps by Carol Langstaff, Martin Graetz, and Jonathan Morse.

Greg Lewis, *singer*

James Voorhees, Nathaniel Brown, Theodore Hodapp, and

Stephen Roth, *dancers (alternating)*

PORTESHAM SINGERS

CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

PUDDLETOWN BRASS

ALL SING AND DANCE:

"Dance, then, wherever you may be.
I am the Lord of the Dance," said he,
"And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance," said he.

Intermission



Part Two

22. PRELUDE

Thomas Clark published 12 volumes of psalm and hymn tunes set for four-part choir. The tune known as Walmer, sung with the text "In One Harmonious Cheerful Sound," comes from the fourth set, published in 1808. It is arranged here for brass quintet by Ben Fritz.

PUDDLETOWN BRASS

23. THE HORN DANCE

This is based on an ancient ritual dance that is still performed every year in the English village of Abbots Bromley. Its four supernumerary characters link it to the rich traditions of British seasonal dance and drama, including May games, Morris dance, and Christmas mumming.

Pete Cooper, *fiddle*

FOGGY BOTTOM MORRIS MEN

CUTTING EDGE SWORD

Jamie Sandel, *fool*; Alan Peel, *hobby horse*; Terry Winslow, *man-woman*;

Emanuel Joseph-Schilz, *boy archer*

24. CHRISTMAS NOW IS DRAWING NEAR AT HAND

This stern, admonitory carol appears on several printed ballad sheets dating back to at least 1826. A favorite with beggars, it was still being sung decades into the 20th century by traveling people in the West Midlands. The somber melody recalls the old ballad tune “Death and the Lady.”

Dave Townsend, *singer and concertina*

∞ IN THE VILLAGE CHURCH ∞

It's the afternoon of Christmas Day, and the new harmonium has been placed in the church. This will be the last service at which the villagers will hear the familiar sounds of the quire.



25. REMEMBER, O THOU MAN

Thomas Ravenscroft (c.1582-1635) published this “suffering ballad” in his *Melismata* and titled it “A Christmas Caroll.” Ravenscroft composed many rounds and catches and compiled collections of British folk music.

PORTESHAM SINGERS

26. NEW YEAR'S EVE

Written in 1906, when Thomas Hardy was nearly 70, this poem recalls Old Christmas—a time to reflect on the frailties of humankind. Perhaps it is too long a message for our tired quire, whose members played late into the night like the musicians in Thomas Hardy's short story "Absent-Mindedness in a Parish Choir."

Danny Pushkin, *Parson Maybold*

27. WINCHESTER TUNE

Winchester is now a familiar tune for "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night," but our villagers don't sing that verse; this is one of a set of tunes to which many words can be sung. We first hear the tune played on the harmonium, then sung with instrumental accompaniment.

Rachel Carlson, *Fancy Day*
PORTESHAM SINGERS

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

28. GOD'S DEAR SON

The children of the village create a living Nativity in the waning light of the afternoon. This carol is in the original two-part setting from *Some Ancient Christmas Carols* (1822), a collection compiled by the scientist and antiquarian Davies Gilbert from Cornish manuscripts. The tune is a variant of "Chestnut" or "Dove's Figary."

Rachel Carlson *with* Elisabeth Myers, Elizabeth Spilsbury, Megan Siritsky,
Bailey Sibert, Zoe Alexandratos, and Jane Bloodworth, *singers*
PORTESHAM WOMEN CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

29. RADIANCE

Charles Wesley (1707-1788) first published the words to this "Hymn for Christmas-Day" in his *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739). The tune used here is "Radiance," from *Sacred Music* by J. Massey, published in Manchester around 1840.

PORTESHAM SINGERS

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

30. HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Charles Wesley's original words "Hark! How all the welkin rings/Glory to the King of Kings," were later changed to the now familiar version. "Welkin" is an archaic word for "heavens." In 1855, the English musician William H. Cummings set these revised words to a tune by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847).

Greg Lewis, *leader*

PORTESHAM SINGERS & HANDBELLS

PUDDLETOWN BRASS

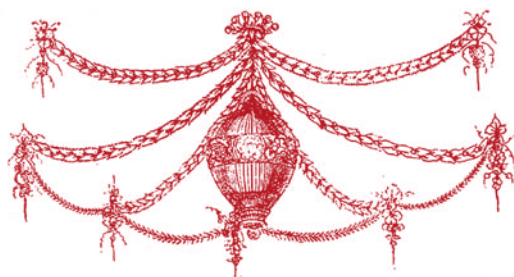
CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

ALL SING:

Hark! the herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies,
With angelic host proclaim: "Christ is born in Bethlehem."
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ by highest heav'n adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come, offspring of a Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die.
Born to raise the sons of earth. Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King!"



❧ CHRISTMAS AT THE MANOR HOUSE ❧

Mr. Shiner welcomes us to his annual Christmas party, inviting one and all to feast, dance, and enjoy his generosity.

31. WALTZ

The partygoers waltz to a minuet from Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks*. Handel composed this work for a fireworks display in London's Green Park on April 27, 1749, celebrating the end of the War of the Austrian Succession. Originally scored for a huge wind ensemble with 24 oboes, nine trumpets, and much more, it is arranged here by Ben Fritz.

PUDDLETOWN BRASS

32. BOAR'S HEAD CAROL

This carol has been sung at Queen's College, Oxford, since the 17th century, as the celebrated dish is borne into the dining hall.



Bobby Gravitz, Terry Winslow, and Alan Haeberle, *singers*

CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

PORTESHAM SINGERS

PUDDLETOWN BRASS

ALL SING:

Caput apri defero, reddens laudes Domino.

("The boar's head I bring, giving praises to God")

33. I SAW THREE SHIPS

This popular carol has many variants; it is sung here to a dance tune from the village of Helston in Cornwall. At this brisk tempo, the carol can be sung and danced in the true spirit of the early "carole"—a festive song or medieval dance.

CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

Dave Townsend, *concertina*

Jamie Sandel, *fiddle*

34. SADLER'S BALLOON AND ARCHER'S DANCE

These are two great jigs from the music manuscripts compiled by the Northamptonshire poet John Clare.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

35. THE TRIUMPH

First appearing in printed country dance collections in the mid-18th century, this dance remained popular into the early 20th century, when the longways country dance survived in only a few rural communities. This version comes from the Hardy family manuscripts. The villagers dance “The Triumph” at a party in *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

PORTESHAM DANCERS

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

36. TIME TO REMEMBER THE POOR

“Cold Winter is come with its cold chilling breath” begins this song, reminding the partygoers—and all of us—that “when in plenty you’re sitting by a warm fireside, that’s the time to remember the poor.” This song, to this tune, was collected in Yorkshire by the Victorian musicologist Frank Kidson.

Shauna Kreidler, *singer*

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

37. ROUNDS

Prayers for peace and joy. This year we offer “Dona Nobis Pacem” and “Sing and Rejoice.”

Greg Lewis, *leader*

CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

PORTESHAM SINGERS

TONESBOROUGH TEENS

ALL SING:

1.



Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem, do - na no - bis pa - cem.

2.



Do - na no - bis pa - cem, do - na no - bis pa - cem.

3.



Do - na no - bis pa - cem, do - na no - bis pa - cem.

ALL SING:



38. REJOICE YE TENANTS OF THE EARTH

Originally published by the Somerset composer William Gifford as “A Hymn for Christmas Day 1817,” this became a favorite of southwest England’s west gallery caroling parties, turning up in countless village manuscript books. This version, edited by Dave Townsend, is based on the parts found in the Hardy manuscripts, collated with versions from various other Dorset manuscripts.

PORTESHAM SINGERS

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

39. THE PLAY OF ST. GEORGE

Our play is based on a version published in 1921, which was in turn based on the play in Hardy’s novel *The Return of the Native*. This hero-combat play is typical of those performed throughout Dorset in the 19th century. We also borrow a bit of the plot from *The Return of the Native*, in which our heroine becomes one of the “guisers,” playing the role of the Turkish Knight in order to engage her sweetheart in heroic combat. The ancient theme of the passing of the old year and the birth of the new echoes the villagers’ sense of the seasons.

Will Wurzel, *Grandfather William, Father Christmas*

Alden Michels, *Robert Penny, Valiant Soldier*

Ray Carlson, *Fancy Day, Turkish Knight*

Josh Sticklin, *Dick Dewy, Saint George*

David Rothman, *Reuben Dewy, Doctor*

Bill Hoffmann, *Benjamin Trout, Saracen Dragon*

Darrow Sherman, Abby Ehrenstein, and

Patrick de La Beaujardière, *Dragon’s Tail*

40. SWORD DANCE

This contemporary choreography borrows from a variety of English sword traditions, including a dance performed by weavers near the town of Carlisle in the 1780s.

CUTTING EDGE SWORD

Sarah Foard, *fiddle*

41. OLD FOSTER

Another setting of “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night,” this tune is named for its composer, John Foster (1762-1822), of High Green, Yorkshire.

PORTESHAM SINGERS
THE MELLSTOCK BAND

TONESBOROUGH TEENS
PUDDLETOWN BRASS

42. THE SHORTEST DAY

This poem, written for Revels by Susan Cooper in 1977, has become a traditional part of *Christmas Revels* performances throughout the country.

Michael Lewallen, *speaker*

43. SUSSEX MUMMERS' CAROL

This traditional carol is sung as an ending to the folk play in Horsham, Sussex. In all 10 American cities where Revels is produced annually, this carol is sung with the audience at the conclusion of each performance. The brass arrangement is by Brian Holmes, with descant and final verse harmonization by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Greg Lewis, *song leader*
REVELS COMPANY

ALL SING:

1. God_ bless the mas - ter_ of this house, With hap - pi - ness be -
2. God_ bless the mis - tress_ of this house, With gold chain round her_
3. God_ bless your house, your_ chil - dren too, Your cat - tle and your_
side, Where - e'er his bo - dy rides or_ walks, His God must be his
breast; Where - e'er her bo - dy sleeps or_ wakes, Lord send her soul to
store; The Lord in - crease you day by_ day, And send you more and
guide, his God must be his guide.
rest, Lord send her soul to rest.
more, And send you more and more.

REVELS NEWS

2010 has been a great year for beginning new traditions, building new partnerships, and expanding our program offerings.

Awards and Recognitions

Washington Revels was proud to receive several awards and accolades this year. We were recognized as “one of the best smaller nonprofits in the Greater Washington region” by Catalogue for Philanthropy-Greater Washington, a very competitive and highly-selective designation. New grants from the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, Heritage Montgomery, and the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority have allowed us to expand our programs and workshops.

Le temps des Fêtes

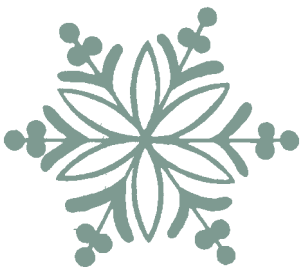
We launched our own recording label—Washington Revels Recordings—with the release of a new CD, *Le temps des Fêtes*. Featuring material from our 2008 *Christmas Revels*, this exciting CD includes 31 tracks of French Canadian music, dance, and tales. Be sure to get one (or more!) today at our merchandise tables in the Lisner lobby or pick one up later by checking revelsdc.org for buying options. These CDs make excellent holiday gifts for everyone!

Washington Revels SunFest – Fun for Everyone Under the Sun!

Our first Summer Solstice celebration in downtown Silver Spring was a big success, bringing in 8,000 people and performing groups representing 12 different countries across 5 continents. Join us in 2011 for this free festival in celebration of Summer on Sunday, June 19.

After-School Workshops

After successful programs last spring and this fall, we are offering a new line-up of workshops this winter. Participants explore in informal and fun ways a variety of traditional stories, games, songs, dances, and mumming. Classes range from *Mittens & Mufflers* for the K-1st grade crowd to *How Deep is the Snow* for 2nd and 3rd graders to an exciting and fast-paced *Theater Quest* for 4th and 5th graders. See details below. Space is filling quickly, so reserve your child's space soon.



Washington Revels Winter Workshops in Silver Spring, MD

Fridays, Jan. 28-Mar. 18, Mittens & Mufflers, Grades K-1

Mondays, Jan. 24-Mar. 21, How Deep is the Snow? Grades 2-3

Thursdays, Jan. 27-Mar. 17, Theater Quest, Grades 4-5

Workshop details & registration at revelsdc.org/education

CELEBRATING LOCAL HERITAGE

The Christmas Revels takes its theme from a different part of the country or the world every year, but Washington Revels is a local organization. Drawing on our unique blend of traditional performing arts, education, and audience participation, we are deepening our commitment to preserving and presenting cultural traditions from the Washington area. Our first major venture in local heritage was the production *Bridges of Song*, which celebrated the songs, stories, and history of the people and communities of southeast Washington. Recently, we have begun developing programs on the history of Montgomery County.

Some longtime Revels performers lent their voices to the Montgomery County Historical Society's *Montgomery Connections*. This innovative program combines striking images on banners and print ads with monologues by historical characters (available by phone) and a website in English, Spanish, and Chinese. Topics include slavery, agriculture, transportation, immigration, and the growth of suburbs. Listen in at montgomeryhistory.org/mc/index.html.

Revels has embarked on several new endeavors as part of Montgomery County's five-year commemoration of the Civil War sesquicentennial, which started last month on the anniversary of President Lincoln's election. County residents took part in the war as soldiers and spies. Some residents were slave-owners; others were conductors on the Underground Railroad, guiding fugitive slaves to freedom. In Montgomery County, Northern and Southern sympathizers lived side by side and in the same families. Revels is helping commemorate this history by presenting events at county historical sites and helping with a DVD that explores some of these stories.

In 2009, Revels launched a partnership with Heritage Montgomery to develop interactive programs honoring Montgomery County's connection with the Civil War and Underground Railroad. These programs are staged at historic sites and other venues. Revels created background information and scripts for use in portrayals of several personages from local history: a Quaker woman trying to free her family's slaves, an ex-slave who bought his freedom and became the most successful African American landowner in the county, a former slave turned preacher, and Abraham Lincoln himself. Ensembles of singers—the new group Jubilee Voices and a chorus that will debut in 2011 (see article on ensembles, next page)—perform period songs, dances, and dramatic presentations, bringing Montgomery County's cultural and historical legacy to audiences at historical sites.

Also in partnership with Heritage Montgomery, Revels is creating the soundtrack for a new documentary, *Life in a War Zone: Montgomery County During the Civil War*. This 60-minute video includes period photos, on-site video, and music and voice-overs by Revels performers. Our executive director, Greg Lewis, serves as narrator. The video, together with a companion CD organized by Music Director Betsy Miller and engineered by longtime Revels Artistic Associate Charlie Pilzer, will premiere in March 2011.



This project has been financed in part with funds from Heritage Montgomery.



This project has been financed in part with state funds from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, an instrumentality of the State of Maryland. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

WASHINGTON REVELS' SIGNATURE PERFORMING GROUPS

Many of our productions feature both professional and nonprofessional performers, but our volunteer choruses—adults, teens, and children—are the heart of Washington Revels. Some members perform at specific times of year; others are part of our new year-round ensembles, performing on stages, in museum galleries, and during street parades.

Gallery Voices

Since 2002, this ensemble has specialized in vocal music for small ensembles. Its repertoire spans the centuries from the Middle Ages to the present. The group has sung for many years at the U.S. National Arboretum and at the Shakespeare Theatre's Harman Center for the Arts, among other venues. Its members recently collaborated with Jubilee Voices for a joint concert at the Corcoran.

Maritime Voices

This Washington Revels ensemble celebrates the sea—the men who worked the great sailing ships and the women who sustained the shore-side communities. Formed in 2008, this group performs lively songs, instrumental music, dances, folk dramas, and other nautical traditions. The Washington Revels Maritime Voices has performed at the Smithsonian Institution (the National Museum of Natural History and the National Museum of American History), the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the National Harbor, the Alexandria Waterfront Festival, the Magical Montgomery Festival, and numerous other community venues and events.

Jubilee Voices

This newly formed group is committed to the preservation of African American history and traditions. Through singing, drama, and dance, its members present songs and stories of struggle and perseverance, trials and triumphs. The group debuted at the Corcoran Gallery of Art earlier this fall and has since performed at community events around the Washington area. In the coming months, Jubilee Voices will perform at the Montgomery County Historical Society Annual Conference, at Montgomery County libraries, and for a number of Black History Month events..

Heritage Voices

In early 2011, Washington Revels will inaugurate a new chorus dedicated to celebrating the history and cultural traditions of the Washington area. This group will focus initially on material relating to the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, recording songs for a DVD and companion album commemorating Montgomery County's many-faceted involvement in the conflict (see previous article, "Celebrating Local Heritage").



For information on auditions for Washington Revels choruses, as well as Revels events and other news, and to sign up for our monthly e-newsletter, visit our website at

www.revelsdc.org