

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**PLANS FOR SECOND DICKENS VICTORIAN VILLAGE UNDERWAY,
EXPANDING GROWTH FROM SUCCESSFUL FIRST SEASON**

CAMBRIDGE, OH – Plans are being developed for a second successful Dickens Victorian Village season, with an expanded schedule of events set to open Nov. 5 and run through Jan. 21, 2008.

New this year is the creation of Rotary Square – a replication of a Victorian-era village on the Guernsey County Courthouse lawn – and an increase of 20 more of the classic life-like scenes.

“We are expanding the presence of the scenes to include downtown’s second-story windows,” said Bob Ley, project founder and Dickens Victorian Committee co-chair. “We have beautiful architecture downtown, and this may inspire visitors to appreciate our historical heritage by looking above street level and imagining what life might have been like in Cambridge in the late 1800s.”

Other new developments in the project include special events like the Great Expectations Chocolate Walk that will serve as a kick-off to this year’s event. Other additional events and entertainment created specifically for the Dickens theme, and expanded Peddler Weekends – four in all – will add to the excitement.

“The success of this project has come from community partnerships that we continue to develop and grow,” said Jonett Haberfield, co-chair of the Dickens Victorian Village committee. “Individuals, organizations, and businesses are working together in creative ways to help leverage the success and impact of this event county-wide.”

The Rotary Square village will feature heritage artisans and vendors, and is made possible through a grant from the Rotary Foundation.

Other supporting funds for the 2007-08 season have come from the Kiwanis Foundation, scene sponsorship renewals, and corporate donations.

Each scene is available for sponsorship which helps provide support for the materials and maintenance necessary for the mannequins.

Bob Ley is the artistic developer of the Dickens Victorian Village scenes and creates each scene sketch detailing the number of figures, poses, and supporting scene items.

Mannequin frames are built by students at the Mid-East Career and Technology Center's Buffalo campus. Then, members of the Eastern Ohio Art Guild sculpt individual faces while the costume committee puts the final touches on the life-like mannequins by dressing them in period clothing.

Promotional scenes have also been placed at five area hotels and lodges and the Pritchard Laughlin Civic Center.

"Last year, we had tour groups from several states come to Cambridge just for this experience," said Haberfield. "Our committee is grateful for the community volunteers and donations that have helped support this project and make it the growing success that it is."

Haberfield is currently working with groups from Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania who are making plans to travel to Cambridge this season to experience the Dickens Victorian Village and its related experiences.

"In February, we attended Heartland Travel Showcase, a regional motorcoach trade show," said Haberfield. "We have also placed advertising in group tour trade publications which has generated a lot of interest. In addition to a guided tour of the Dickens Village and meals, the groups are including the Byesville Scenic Railway, the Colonel Taylor Inn Bed & Breakfast, and various shows and concerts in their itineraries."

Volunteers are sought for Dickens Victorian Village ambassadors whose role will be to greet and escort tour groups visiting downtown during the season. Free training and costume items will be provided to ambassadors.

Dickens Victorian Village committee meetings take place at 6 p.m. the first Thursday of every month in the Guernsey County Administration Building conference room. Members of the community are invited to attend.

For more information, including sponsorships, volunteer and material needs, and the special event schedule, please see www.dickensvictorianvillage.com, or contact Jonett Haberfield at 740-432-8789.

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