

Vienna Union Hall News

Winter Revels 2016

Celebrate the Solstice

"Now Christmas comes, 'tis fit that we,
Should feast and sing and merry be.
Keep open house, let fiddlers play
A fig for cold, sing care away."

Chase away the cold and darkness this year with an evening surrounded by family and friends, including local fun, inspiring entertainment, mulled cider and snacks. The fourth annual Winter Revels will take place at the Union Hall on Saturday, December 17.

The lineup this year, introduced by "Master of the Revels", Dan Simons, includes but is not limited to a wonderful *Solstice Play* written, adapted and directed by Clair Dorr-Holman and the return of the "little people".

Finally, Maine's premier Celtic duo, Castlebay, will "drive cold winter away" with joyous and mysterious seasonal songs and tunes from Ireland, Scotland and the British Isles as well as their native New England. The lilting sound of Irish flute, Celtic harp, fiddle and guitar will mingle revelry and lusty wassails with vibrant songs of mystery and wonder.

For the ancient people of the British Isles and Ireland, the celebration of the winter solstice was one of the most important in the calendar. The word "yule" means

"wheel" and symbolizes the turning of the sun-wheel. Many of the enigmatic circles of standing stones that rise from the wind-swept landscape are oriented to the solstice. The music of these people is filled with the symbolism of light conquering darkness, rebirth and the evergreen power of life. Legends and lore abound featuring t h e



affirmation of life-force in the form of the Green Knight, and power animals such as the stag and the wild boar. In addition to these ancient stories and symbols, the lore and music of Celtic Christianity are mysterious and beautiful. Deep in the most desperate darkness the hope that came with the coming of Christ sustained those people of faith. Miracles and magic abound as the sun returns and the joy of a child's birth remind us of the light in our lives.

Here in the New World, the crisp, cold starlit nights, and brilliant crystalline days brought ruddy cheeked family and friends gathering around a crackling wood fire, to share convivial songs with roots in the old country. Castlebay will include some of this homegrown fare honoring new traditions. Come celebrate, sing along and experience a little old and new Celtic Yuletide enchantment.

Tickets for the Revels go on sale on December 1. Make sure to get your tickets early since they have sold out in previous years. Purchase prepaid tickets by calling Dodi 293-2670, Marianne 293-2674 or emailing viennaunionhall@gmail.com

\$8.00 Adults - \$4.00 children 10 and under. Babes in arms are free.

Harvest Dinner a Success

The Harvest Ham dinner held this year at the Vienna Community Center was packed and sold out early. Local folks enjoyed the food and time together and the Vienna Union Hall Association raised over \$500.00 towards our programming and renovations. Thank-you to everyone who attended!

More Updates

Most recently the Vienna Union Hall Association has obtained estimates for two heat pumps to go in the hall at either end of the stage. This winter we will be working to obtain a grant to help pay for them. The heat pumps in this area would keep the stage cool in the summer and warm in the winter.

Light blocking shades for the stage windows are another item that we will work on obtaining over the winter.

In late October, early November we hired carpenter Bob Bassett to refit and close in the old outhouse building making it a perfect location to store tools and old props for the hall since our storage space is severely limited inside the hall.

We still have many projects and plans for future updating and improvements to our lovely building. We are always open to ideas and of course we always need volunteers to help. Please join us!

Next Year and Beyond

We are always searching for new acts, performers, and musicians for next season. Please send your thoughts and ideas to us at viennaunionhall@gmail.com

This is the last Vienna Union Hall Newsletter for this season. The newsletter will resume publication in the spring of 2017. Have a safe and happy winter season. Thanks to everyone for your support of our programs. We hope to see you all in the spring and summer of 2017.



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