

Spotlight on Santa Barbara Revels

A Toast to 10 Years of Tradition, and a new production celebrating Santa Barbara's Rich History

Since 2007, The Christmas Revels have transported audiences around the world to Scotland, Ireland, England and Andalusia and enjoyed the traditions of each time and place. This year, the Revels will be staying home.

The new show—*An Early California Celebration of the Winter Solstice*—is set in Santa Barbara in the year 1836, and is based on an actual historic event, when young Harvard student Richard Henry Dana took time off from school and sailed on a merchant trader ship up and down the West Coast. While anchored in Santa Barbara Harbor, he and his shipmates were invited to the wedding of Anita de la Guerra—daughter of the Presidio's *Comandante*—and Alfred Robinson, an agent for the Boston-based hide and tallow traders.

Lobero audiences are invited to the wedding—aka, the social event of the 1836 season! Wedding guests at the time traveled from near and far to enjoy the mid-winter festivities and all the activities surrounding the nuptials. This gathering provides a perfect opportunity for the American and European sailors to experience the wealth of music and dance of life in Rancho days, when sovereignty of *Alta California* was transferred from the Spanish to the Mexicans. Musical selections include Mission music, early Spanish material, the *fandango*, and *la jota*. The seamen have a few tricks up their sleeves as well: including sea shanties, Christmas carols and stylized dramatic fare. Plus, there will be tradition-bearers and special guests participating along with a large ensemble of singers, dancers and instrumentalists.



The original script is written by award-winning historian and writer Erin Graffy, in collaboration with Santa Barbara Revels Founder and Artistic Director, Susan Keller. The music is selected and arranged by Erin McKibben, an instrumentalist and choral director who led the talented Children's Chorus last year and has taken over the position of Revels Music Director this year. She is assisted in her research by music historian Nicholas Jurkowski, who is unearthing wonderful material from that era, and by James Garcia, an expert in the music of this period. Stage Director

Matt Tavianini draws on his extensive experience with Boxtales Theatre Company and his many directing assignments around the community.

Beloved Revels touchstones in practice by each of the nine Revels communities throughout the U.S. will be included in this new production; from the traditional musical and theatrical elements that enliven and enrich each performance of "The Christmas Revels" to the lively audience participation, "An Early California Celebration of the Winter Solstice" is sure to satisfy history and holiday buffs alike.

"Join us and be Joyous!"

The Christmas Revels: *An Early California Celebration of the Winter Solstice*

Dec. 15-17 Fri 7:30 PM, Sat 2:30 & 7:30 PM, Sun 2:30 PM