

# Marcellus "Wassail" Olde English Christmas Pageant Workshops with Bells & Motley Consort

Workshop Day: Saturday December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Workshops 10:00 4:00

Performance Day: Sunday December 21<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Performers Assemble 2:00, Performance 3:00

For resources, ideas, and background about Wassailing and Mummer's Pageants, see Sondra & John's webpage [www.bellsandmotley.com/wassailpageant.html](http://www.bellsandmotley.com/wassailpageant.html)

## SATURDAY'S WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

-- Many participants will want to take part in ALL of the workshops. Read on!

### 1. Music and Fanfares

Description: We can use extra singers, musicians, and percussionists to join with our Sunday concert, and accompany the dancers. We can also use brass players of modest ability to train for improvising easy fanfares. Bring your instruments. Almost anything portable is welcome. We'll find a way to use you! A sign-up sheet will be available in the library. You can also call the Bromkas at 673-2995, or email [bellsandmotley@earthlink.net](mailto:bellsandmotley@earthlink.net), at least one week before to "pre-register," so they can best prepare to include your musical instrument. Led by John Bromka, with Meghan Kiniry.

Length: 1 hour+

Number of participants: about 12

Age: 12 through seniors

Time: 10:00 am – 11:00

### 2. Costuming From Your Closet

Description: A hands-on crafts workshop for all performance participants (which means anyone who plans to be in our audience!). We introduce costuming ideas through how-to demonstrations and a slide show of Medieval art, then we will be making costumes for the performance on Sunday. No sewing necessary! Participants will be asked to bring materials kits from home, as specified in a costuming letter that you will find in the library, and on the artists website. Led by Sondra Bromka, with Vanessa Belcher.

Length: 1 hour

Number of participants: about 30

Age: All ages. Young children should have an adult with them.

Time: 11:00 – 12:00

Notes: Costume-making can continue as an activity during lunch, and also through the afternoon, with newcomers receiving ideas from those who have already begun. Please bring materials as listed. Extra materials will be welcome.

### Lunch:

Description: Bring your lunch and chat with the artists! Hot drinks available for purchase in the library. Also use this time continue music and costume-making, and do some singing together.

Length: 1 hour

Number of participants: All who will

Age: All

Time: Noon - 1:00

### 3. "Wassail" Christmas Mummers' Pageant, Introduction + Practice

Description: In the style of an Olde English participatory "trunk show," a group of disguised villagers pretend to be "actors" to enact this traditional Christmas Mummers' pageant. Over the centuries, these symbolic plays were performed on the Solstice, the shortest day of the year, as the Darkness gives way to Light.

The mummers' play will involve mostly physical comedy with guided improvisation and very few spoken lines, all of which will be prompted by the workshop leaders. The play will also interweave music, dances, fanfares, lots of audience participation, and the making of a ceremonial Wassail Bowl.

Length: 1-1/2 hours

Number of participants: 6-12

Age: 10 through seniors

Time: 1:00 – 2:30 pm

#### **4. Olde English Sword Dance**

Description: A traditional ceremonial village dance in the form of a circle, with 6 dancers connected hand-to-hand by their wooden or steel “swords” (provided by the workshop leaders.) As the dancers weave the circle into a variety of challenging knot patterns, the dance culminates with a triumphant Star of Swords. (Others: Finish making your costumes!!)

Length: 30 minutes

Number of participants: exactly 6

Age: 12-50 (must be quite limber and fit, and same height)

Time: 2:30 – 3:00

#### **5. Olde English Country Dances and Songs for the Season**

Description: As a feature of any Christmas Celebration, these ceremonial songs and dances were enjoyed by folks from Charles Dickens to Queen Elizabeth I. Much fun and easily learned, with live music on historic instruments.

Length: 1 hour

Number of participants: 6-20

Age: 10-60

Time: 3:00 til 4:00

- Updated 11/22/08

#### **Bells & Motley Consort of Olden Music, Dance, and Storytelling**

**Sondra Bromka, John Bromka**

**Musicians, Performers, Historians, Teachers**

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