

Detailed Programme

This is the detailed programme of individual shows, workshops and events that will take place over the festival weekend. For details and photos of the Performers, please refer to the website.

Saturday Day 18th July 2026

Purple Marquee

10.00 - 11.00am *River Song – Amy Douglas and Martin Daws (Age 12+)*

Rivers are the life blood of the land. They carry trade, travel, gossip and news ... but now they struggle to breath. These are the songs of the spirits of our rivers - the Goddesses and Monsters. This is an ode and lament for the rivers of Shropshire and Herefordshire, the rivers that run from Pumlumon to the wide ocean beyond.

Two internationally acclaimed performers, Amy Douglas and Martin Daws, come together to combine traditional oral storytelling with contemporary spoken word, song and kalimba.

11.30 - 12.30pm *Will and the Welsh Black Cattle – Phil Okwedy (Age 12+)*

Inspired by the figure of the drover, keep company with a poor farmer as he walks the old drove ways of Wales in the name of love and revenge. Six tales are sown together as the action ranges across Wales, takes in London and flirts with America. Murderous siblings, cunning men, magical beasts, and a gangster, all figure, while a simple riddle resonates throughout.

1.00 – 2.00pm *Trip to the Lakes featuring Paul Davies and Richard and Liz York – Taffy Thomas (Age F)*

A virtual visit to Northern England's beautiful Lake District in legend and lore with Storyteller Laureate, Taffy Thomas - elaborate lies, ghosts, gurning, gingerbread and a touch of Lakeland humour ('as dry as a stick!').

It also features Lakeland tunes from Taffy's guests, Richard & Elizabeth York, and a surprise appearance from a poetic ghost from the home of the home of the English Romanticism movement. An hour that is as tasty as Beatrix Potter's Tatie Pot.

2.15 - 3.15pm *Bean Feasa, Wise Women Stories* – Maria Gillen (Age F)

In a time when formal education was not readily available people put their wisdom into songs and stories. Maria's Great Grandmother was born in 1878 when it was not usual for women to be educated – however their capacity for remembering and communicating what mattered most lived in their stories. Maria was lucky enough to hear stories directly from her Great Grandmother, with wisdoms that served her throughout her life. From practical tips for living life well to an ability to work in the dream space and the middle distance, Maria will weave you tales from this innate but increasingly dormant skill.

3.30 - 4.30pm *Threads of Fate* – James Canvin (Age F)

Threads of Fate gathers some of the great tales of the Norse gods, beginning at the very edge of existence and moving, step by step, towards its undoing. From the slaying of Ymir and the making of the world by Odin and his brothers, the cosmos takes shape beneath the vast branches of Yggdrasil, its roots and limbs binding together gods, giants and mortals alike.

But the pattern is already set. The Norns tend their threads, and even the gods are caught in the weave. Loki's schemes, the theft of Iðunn's apples, and the binding of Fenrir all carry consequences that cannot be undone. Shot through with wit, danger and inevitability, these tales look ahead to a future even the gods themselves cannot prevent - the long shadow of Ragnarök.

5.00 - 6.00pm *Sworded Stories – Premiere* – Jon Buckeridge (Age G, 8+)

Some weapons outlive the warriors who wield them. In every culture around the world, there is something irresistible about stories of heroes with ancient and enchanted blades that bring power, glory, fame and – all too often – disaster. Kings, warriors, a ghost-hunting shieldmaiden, and a cross-dressing opera-diva - these are the stories that steel remembers.

As a former competitive longsword fighter and a fight choreographer for stage and screen, Jon Buckeridge is a storyteller who knows the weight of a blade. In *Sworded Stories*, Jon brings his lifelong passion for swordplay to the stage in this lively and heartfelt show. Drawing stories from history, myth and the far reaches of folklore, *Sworded Stories* guides audiences through moments of courage, mischief, peril and hope. Step into a realm of enchanted blades and timeless adventures and discover why some legends refuse to fade.

(Note: some scenes may unsettle younger viewers.)

Red Marquee

10.00 - 11.30am *Ace of Clubs – Tellers from the Storytelling Clubs (Age F)*

There are many storytelling clubs around Britain, but their role is often underrated. Each has their own particular character and format, but crucially they bring together like-minded folk, who enjoy listening to, or telling, stories. Many are led by one or two experienced and confident tellers, possibly who work as professionals, and they often feature guest (professional) tellers, but also there is the opportunity for anyone to tell a story 'from the floor'. We know many professional storytellers started by telling at a local club and honed their skills from there.

Following the success of last year's Ace of Clubs show, the FatE Committee have once again invited storytelling clubs to show off their 'in-house' talent. This show is the result – comprising non-professional storytellers who love telling tales, who are often the life-blood of many clubs. We hope you enjoy the show and support the tellers warmly. And who knows, this may help to inspire more future storytellers to give it a go!

This year Ace of Clubs features five clubs from different parts of the country, each club has put forward a regular, but non-professional, teller. Tellers are:

Merl Fluin - Island Storytellers, The Island Storytellers, Isle of Wight
www.islandstorytellersfestival.com

Francesca Mackenzie - Elephant Tales, Elephant and Castle, London
www.sfs.org.uk/clubs/elephant-tales-london/

Lu Orza - Somerset Story Circle (for more information on the club contact Sharon or Jem on 01458 259553)

Robin Eastoe – Artemis Storytelling, Exeter and East Devon
<https://artemis-storytelling.co.uk>

Tim Ditchburn - Triple Spiral Tellers, Chester
www.sfs.org.uk/clubs/triple-spiral-storytellers/

(For more information on each teller go to our website).

12.30 – 1.30pm *The Invisibility Hat* – Dominic Kelly (Age B)

Young siblings Maria & Gustav are forced to slave away on their uncle's farm in the Swedish forest, eating scraps and shivering through the winter. But then, out of the trees steps a figure: a girl with bare feet and nothing to keep out the cold save a thin dress. For Gustav and Maria, nothing may ever be the same again...

In this warm, funny and thrilling story, Dominic Kelly takes you into the magical world of the Nordic forests and their tricky inhabitants ... the trolls. Though beauty and danger sit side by side out there, a moment's kindness to a stranger can make all the difference...

"Spellbinding Anglo-Swedish storytelling!" Caroline Theobald, Honorary Swedish Consul

"A fabulous story, full of invention and surprise. We didn't want it to end" Litfest

2.00 - 3.00pm *Ukelele Fun!* – Gabriela La Foley (Age F)

Gabriela La Foley delighted FatE audiences 2 years' ago and is back by popular demand. She considers herself to be a travelling musician:

"Since 2002 I have been wandering around the Northern Hemisphere with my trusty ukulele, telling tales and singing songs. My passion is to spread the sunshine and joy of the magic ukulele. An emcee once introduced me to an audience by dispensing with all the usual stage jargon, and announcing me simply as:

"Happiness In A Hat". That title stuck, and it has been my morning motto ever since, as I don my hat and flower, and head off to spread ukulele joy."

4.30 – 5.30pm *The Man Who Went to Heaven* – Phil Okwedy (**Adults only! – Age 16+**)

"The devil doesn't come dressed in a red cape and pointy horns. He comes as everything you've ever wished for." Tucker Max

A young man dies and finds himself in the afterlife. It's beautiful but better still, he can have anything he wants ... only the choices he makes will determine his fate...

A fascinating tale weaving stories within stories ...

Family Marquee

8.00 – 9.00am *Breakfast Club – Scales, Bubbles and Monsters* – Shadow Committee (Age D)

An early morning start for younger festival goers. Come and see what marvellous monsters are on the prowl in this drop-in session!

9.00 – 10.00am Qi Gong and Tai Chi: Start your day in a positive way! – Nicola Day of Beautiful Flower Tai Chi (Age A)

Allow yourself to be led through a series of exercises by Nicola Day, an international Gold Medallist in Qigong and Tai Chi. Qigong is the ancient Chinese exercise system designed to improve mental, emotional and physical health, while Tai Chi is considered an “internal” martial art, which combines movement with meditation. Improve your day with beautiful, soft exercises, giving yourself an acupuncture massage and the space to breathe and connect with nature.

*Drop-in session (no need to sign up at the Box Office) – young children must be accompanied by an adult.

If weather is dry and fine – this will be relocated to a suitable space outside.

10.15 - 11.15am Storytime – Monster Hunting Basics – Ffion Phillips (Age 7+)

Monsters and other strange creatures are found all over the world - your storyteller and guide, Ffion, is from across the border in Wales though, so she'll stick only to her own area of expertise. Hear about some of the monsters she encounters daily as a storyteller in Wales, and pick up some useful basic skills for sorting them out.

11.30 – 12.15pm Storytime - A Stir-about of Tales – Dave Oliver (Age B, 7+)

Dave Oliver will be bringing his vocal skills and humour-laced tale-telling to delight family audiences!

He will be serving up a ‘stir-about’ mix of folktales where trolls, giants, boggarts, talking animals - and even a giant worm - all getting ladled out of his word hoard for your delight. These charming and funny tales will engage everyone, of all ages – from child to adult!

Dave Oliver is a storyteller, puppeteer and poet residing in Devon. He studied drama at Bretton Hall in Yorkshire in the mid-eighties. He has toured many times with AngelHeart puppet theatre over the years as well as with his own company Rattlebox Theatre. He brings an infectious energy and humour to his storytelling.

12.30 – 1.30pm Sweet and Sour – Lunchtime Tales to Tickle the Tastebuds – Sue Bailey (Age A)

Bring your butties, wolf down your water and make yourself comfy as Sue tells tales that have an element of food in them somewhere. Great for all ages from 3 – 103!

2.00 – 3.00pm *Sword Fighting for Beginners – Jon Buckeridge* (Age 12+, under 16s to be accompanied by an adult)

Ever dreamed of swinging some steel in a swashbuckling adventure? Now you can give it a go!

Come join Jon Buckeridge – former competitive Longsword fighter, Historical European Martial Arts instructor, and fight choreographer for stage and screen – in this exciting introduction to swordplay. Learn the basics of sword combat, cross blades with friends and family, and get the feel for the life of a travelling sword-fighter!

No previous experience necessary. All equipment provided.

Limited to 30 attendees per session. **Attendees must wear sturdy shoes, strictly no bare feet or flip flops.** Sign up at the Box Office.

3.30 – 4.30pm *A Cauldron of Dragons (and other beasts) – Halo Quin* (Age A)

Deep in the earth and hiding high behind the clouds, there are dragons! Sometimes they are friendly, sometimes they are mean, and sometimes they turn into pigs.

Dragons have been our friends (and enemies!) for as long as people have existed. Some say they created night and day, some say they reveal the future, and some say they flew away a long time ago... but maybe they didn't go far, we just forgot how to spot them.

Discover stories of dragons and how to find them with Halo Quin.

4.45 – 5.45pm *Make Cardboard Swords – Drop-in Craft Workshop* (Age A)

Another fun craft session to make items for the Children's Parade. Led by the Shadow Committee.

*Drop-in session (no need to sign up at the Box Office) – young children must be accompanied by an adult. Please let the workshop leaders know if your child has an allergy to pvc glue or similar products.

6.00 – 6.45pm *Full Folk Fables – Dave Oliver* (Age B, 7+)

Don't miss a second chance to see Dave Oliver with another set of tales – this time, folk fables, all aimed to delight everyone, whatever their age. This energetic set delves into the antics of a selection of folk fables.

Dave Oliver is a storyteller, puppeteer and poet residing in Devon. He studied drama at Bretton Hall in Yorkshire in the mid-eighties. He has toured many times with

AngelHeart puppet theatre over the years as well as with his own company Rattlebox Theatre. He brings an infectious energy and humour to his storytelling.

For more children's activities see: Walled Garden (Storywalk).

Blue Marquee

9.45am – 11.30am *Threading and Weaving Workshop – Maria Gillen* (Age A – All ages and all experience levels)

Walking along in your day on an Irish road, you could be asked 'Did you have a dream, who was in it? What were they wearing? How were they feeling? How did you know by looking at them? These ceist eolais (wise questions) encourage a deep internal dialogue with yourself and in co-creation are the basis for the best craic (fun) you'll ever have! Come along and find out for yourself, the age-old community story weaving techniques and the threads of story that live in all of us.

Max 45. All levels of experience. All welcome - sign up at the Box Office.

11.45 – 12.45pm *Storytelling for (Almost) Beginners – Xanthe Gresham-Knight*
(Adults only! Age 16+)

You know that a workshop with Xanthe on storytelling is going to be inspiring and informative. This fun session makes use of games to inspire confidence and simple storytelling techniques, the perfect session for (almost) beginners!

Max – t.b.c. Sign up at the Box Office. Some experience required.

1.00 – 2.30pm *Working with Paper (1) Workshop – Bunty Gotts* (Age A, younger children to be accompanied)

This workshop, suitable for both adults and children is an introduction to the joys of working with paper. A child friendly activity, using paper which is readily available, affordable, and importantly, recyclable.

Origami, perhaps the most well-known of the papercrafts, can be surprisingly simple, so the task will be to make an origami box from two squares of paper without using glue. Bunty will then guide you to make decorations for the box from small odds and ends of paper which would be often thrown away. All materials will be provided, and to save time, a selection of ready-made decorations will be available. The aim is to have fun, and to take home something that is both pretty and practical, that you are proud to have made. There may be a story or two along the way ...

Max 20. All experience levels. Sign up at Box Office.

3.00 – 4.00pm Harmony Workshop – Melrose Quartet (Age F)

If you are keen on singing and would like to know more about singing in harmony with others, there is no better way to learn than from the fabulously melodic Melrose Quartet, who are widely known for their beautiful harmony singing. Come along, get those lungs filled with air and ready to join in the fun!

Max t.b.c. Please sign up at the Box Office.

4.15 – 5.15pm Nature in Storytelling Workshop – Lisa Schneidau (Age G, 14+)

This workshop is for storytellers with some experience, who want to investigate nature, landscape and elementals in their stories. Lisa will guide you through a series of story games to help you enhance your storytelling through curiosity about the natural world.

Please bring a short story, or part of a story, that you know to tell and would like to work with.

Max: t.b.c. Please sign up at the Box Office.

5.30 – 6.30pm Laughter Yoga – Jenny Moon (Age A, younger children to be accompanied by an adult)

Have you ever “caught” a laugh? Someone else has started laughing, and inexplicably, you have, too? Laughter is contagious! And laughter is known to be good for us emotionally and physically, so why not get some therapy by joining the laughter yoga workshop? In this workshop, laughter will be generated through a quick-succession of party-like games, where it is hard not to laugh! Some of the activities are very active, but can also be done from a seated position, and you decide whether to take part or not. Suitable for all ages from 3 – 103!

Max – venue capacity. Drop-in Workshop.

Main Field

Various times: The Roaming Riddler (aka Paul Davies) (Age A)

Look out for the man in the glorious multi-coloured outfit - the Roaming Riddler – (also known as Paul Davies) who will rhyme you a riddle, muster some magic and he may even tell you a tale or two ...

Since retiring from being a GP, Paul has been honing his storytelling techniques, learning from mentors Taffy and Chrissy Thomas. He also performs in plays and pantomime, and performs comedy street theatre and outdoor theatre. His talents come together here as The Roaming Riddler.

Story Walks (please meet in the Main Field):

10.00 – 11.00am *An Encounter with our Green Friends – Lucy Wells and Pip Waller* (Age G, 5+, young children must be accompanied by an adult)

Greet and discover the names and medicines of plants and trees along the way and hear the dreaming of their stories. Lucy and Pip are the perfect guides to the countryside around Bromyard.

Walking may sometimes be over rough terrain, so please wear sturdy shoes.

11.30 – 12.00pm *Leominster Morris* (Age A)

and

1.00 – 1.30pm *Leominster Morris* (Age A)

The current Leominster Morris was formed in 1983 originally by men who had danced in other sides but who found themselves with a common desire to revive the old Leominster tradition.

They dance predominantly traditional “Welsh Border” dances but also some Cotswold dances, and the side regularly performs dances of their own creation. The year of morris dancing starts with January 6th and their famous Wassail and Mummers play, which many hundreds of spectators look forward to. From the “Sun Up” dance on May Day they perform at festivals and local pubs, often with other sides, and then dance at events throughout the summer.

Leominster Morris are noted for the speed and style of their dancing which has become a hallmark of their spirited performances.

2.00 – 3.30pm *Story walk - Discover the New Festival Site – Lisa Schneidau* (Age B, young children must be accompanied by an adult)

Join Lisa Schneidau for a fascinating story walk exploring the countryside around the new FatE festival site in rural Herefordshire, discovering its nature through storytelling. The walk will be 1.5 hours on even ground with some rough ground underfoot in places. Sturdy shoes recommended.

Bar

At various times

Come All Ye! – Archie Best and The Leominster Folk (Age F)

Music for you, made by you. These sessions are designed to create a friendly space where everyone can participate in classic shared folk music sessions. These

sessions are led by Archie Best & The Leominster Folk, comprising 2 melodeons, a concertina and a fiddle. Their main common interest is in English and morris tunes but each of them has their own sub-interests, meaning all brands of folk are both welcomed and encouraged here. Archie is joined by Tony Locock, Adam Glyn-Jones and Allan Pearce.

Bring your instruments, voices and a tune or two and join in with the atmosphere and fun of these lively bar sessions.

For Saturday evening events – see Saturday Evening Detailed Programme!