

# Memorandum of Understanding for the foundation of the Federation of European Storytelling: FEST

## Definitions

### The organisation

The Federation of European Storytelling (FEST) is an international collaboration between associations and projects in Europe devoted to the perpetuation and development of live oral storytelling.

### Membership

Membership is open to any national or regional storytelling association, or other organisation in Europe which unites storytellers and storytelling groups in a collaborative framework and subscribes to the aims and purposes of FEST. Applications are made to the FEST Council's Steering Group and approved by the Council.

### Storytelling

Storytelling is understood to be the live oral telling of stories, engaging directly with listeners to create a shared experience of storytelling. While welcoming and affirming technological means of communication, the primary experience is in real time and person to person.

### Traditions

Traditions are storytelling practices and bodies of narrative which have been passed down through the generations. The work of FEST is based on respect for such traditions and the desire to both preserve and develop their essential characteristics for future generations.

### Languages

Linguistic diversity is essential to storytelling in both its traditional and contemporary forms. The work of FEST respects and encourages diversity while also encouraging translation and communication between the languages of Europe.

### Culture

FEST recognises and seeks to apply UNESCO definitions of culture along with UNESCO'S international agreements on cultural expression, languages, minority cultures, education and the preservation of non-material culture.

### Structure

#### Council

FEST is governed by a Council consisting of one representative of each of the members. Including at least one representative of each national association and interest group network, meeting at the FEST Gathering.

### **Steering Group**

The Council of FEST will elect no fewer than five members who will form a Steering Group to support and advance the work of the Council, including the annual FEST Gathering, between the FEST Gatherings.

### **Interest Group Networks**

It is within the power of the Steering Group, with the approval of a three quarters majority of Council members, to form task and theme specific working groups or networks, involving the wider membership of FEST, and any national, international or regional groupings committed to the relevant task or theme.

### **Attendance**

It is within the power of the Steering Group, to approve attendance at Council meetings to ensure a wide and balanced representation of the members, and also including representatives of other international cultural bodies, individual advisers, or observers from storytelling organisations from outside Europe.

### **Administration and Finance**

The Council can appoint professional associations or organisations based in member countries to carry out delegated tasks of administration, finance and event organisation. Such appointments will be time limited and task specific. Appointments can be made by the Steering Group between Council meetings, subject to consultation with Council members.

Professional associations or organisations nominated in this way will be accountable to the Council through the Steering Group and must subscribe to the aims and purposes of FEST.

### **Out of the Mouth of the Morning: Tales of the Celt by David Campbell**

ed. Linda Williamson (Luath Press Ltd)  
ISBN 1-906397-93-8

This long-awaited collection of David Campbell's eloquent story tellings does not disappoint. David seeks throughout to convey the underlying spirit and rhythm of Celtic story. But each individual story is also finely crafted and evocatively told.

The book has three sections: Lore of the Fianna; Legends of the Saints; Celtic Folk and Fairy Tales. It has been meticulously edited by Linda Williamson, who provides an illuminating preface and afterword with additional background notes and references.

All in all, Out of the Mouth of the Morning provides classic versions of classic tales for new generations.

**Dr Donald Smith, Director**  
Scottish Storytelling Centre

### Surfing a Wave of Change? A National Story Exercise:

A Scottish Wave of Change is part of People Making Waves, a four-year ambitious programme exploring connections between people in Scotland and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and using this opportunity to explore what kind of Scotland and future people want. What kind of values? What sort of vision? What is your part in it? And what sort of action?

A Scottish Wave of Change is opening up a commission for stories from established, emergent and hopeful storywriters across Scotland. If you think you have a story in you about Scotland we want to hear it.

We are looking in this first stage for stories around a variety of themes about Scotland, its future and place in the world. The Olympic and Paralympic values of excellence, friendship, respect, determination, inspiration, courage and equality can also be used as starting points. We would like to invite story writers to imagine different Scotlands in any shape or form in the future which address one of the following:

- The values of a future Scotland;
- Ideas of change, participation and involvement;
- New forms, ideas and practices of democracy;
- Scotland's changing place and that of small nations in international change;
- The connections and possibilities offered for Scotland and Scottish people by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Submissions are asked for of up to 500 words in the above and related themes. All commissioned stories should be no longer than 5,000 words and will be paid a fee of £350. Stories will be published on [www.peoplemakingwaves.org.uk](http://www.peoplemakingwaves.org.uk) and final project book.

Final deadline for first submissions: **September 30th 2009**

Click [here](#) to read more.

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**STANLEY ROBERTSON**  
**1940-2009**

Friday 7th August was a day for saluting Stanley, and for sharing our sadness about his death. The funeral in Aberdeen was an inspiring occasion with great tributes, real warmth and humour – fit for the man himself.

On the Lumphanan Road folk sang 'Yellow on the Broom' as Stanley asked, and at the Storytelling Centre people sang too in the garden where Stanley helped open the new building. Even in far away Switzerland, at the time of Stanley's funeral, storytellers from all over Europe raised a glass of whisky.

There is a sense of voices there, voices carrying in the wind, and the memory and the soul, round the earth. Stanley was a master of those voices and we shall be hearing them with his tone and accent for many years, many generations to come.

Stanley would always have spoken first of his own family, and forebears and people. It was their traditions of music, song and story that he carried with him on his passage through life and to which he was so true. Few have been born into so rich an inheritance and Stanley made the art and culture of the Scottish Travellers an honoured part of Scotland's culture.

But Stanley was also an individual artist of genius. He had his own vision and imagination and craft, which he practised both as an oral artist and through his unique writing.

He both honoured the tradition and added to it in many ways. Who, apart from Stanley, could have turned the fish gutters' tables into a hearthside of story and experiences shared by all? Who could touch the spiritual nerves like him?

The tradition bearer and the great artist seem bound up though, in our memories, with Stanley the person. The warmth, the insight, the loving wisdom, the humour – wicked at times! – the respect and decency and care for all his fellow creatures; and that alongside his realism, a knowledge of all the tough and hard things life can bring. Yet humanity comes out still on top. Jack wins through in the end.

Stanley has won through now and we are sad but in some strange way happy too. We have lost him but we are still listening to his voices. He is in the Land of No Death.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Johnna and all of Stanley's children and grandchildren.

**Dr Donald Smith, Director**  
Scottish Storytelling Centre

Click [here](#) to read James Spence's Scots version of this eulogy.

## **Freelance Administrator - Scottish PEN**

**Closing date 17/08/2009**

Scottish PEN wishes to engage a professional freelance administrator on a part-time, self-employed basis. The position will be Edinburgh-based, working an average of 18 hours per week, and offered initially on a 12-month contract. Working times are negotiable, but presence is required in the Scottish PEN office during the week, with occasional weekend activities. Essential tasks of the brief are to:

- develop the administrative functions of the organisation
- provide practical and organisational support to the office bearers and committee
- assist in research and development of fund-raising plans

Click [here](#) for more information.

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## **Move On Up: Stories of Hope & Recovery (from addiction)**

Lesley O'Brien, Larry Butler (Lapidus Scotland) and Allison Galbraith are collecting stories of recovery from addiction, to be printed in a brochure and distributed free throughout Scotland by the NHS. If you or anyone you know has a recovery story which could inspire and encourage others on their journey to recovery, they would be delighted to hear from you.

To help you write your story you can try breaking your story into three parts: (Maximum Length 800 words).

Part 1: How / When did your journey to recovery begin?  
What made you want to stop / quit your addiction?  
Was there a trigger? ie. An event or a person?  
Describe how you did it. Who / What helped you?

Part 2: How have you / are you maintaining your recovery?  
What does it feel like now compared to the way you were before?  
What helps you stay clear of the addiction?

Part 3 What do you want for your future?  
What will you do to get this?

Please send your stories by **14th July 2009** to: A. Galbraith, Glenlee Cottage, Kilbank, LANARK ML11 9UJ. For any queries please write to [al.story@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:al.story@hotmail.co.uk) or call 07707 008 209.

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## Community of Fools Project

Work at depth with the fool process to improve spontaneity, authenticity and presence process with a small group over a period of 9 months and give birth to more creativity and freedom. Angela works on several levels so each person becomes more confident and free to try all sorts of things in and out of a performance situation. Using a combination of meditation, relaxation, play, clowning, movement, voice, physical theatre, creative writing and stillness, there is a fluid movement between inner and outer exploration.

This group will run from July 2009 to Spring 2010, meeting together for 11 days over 3 workshops. Where possible smaller groups to develop aspects of the fool will take place. There will also be some phone and /or web based support. The level of involvement between workshops will vary from person to person as will the initial impetus to take part.

For some it is a personal inner journey while others may be more interested in applying the Fool in a particular aspect of their lives for example in storytelling, presenting or other forms of performance, performance, teaching, family life or community building. The overall aim is to help you integrate the fool, become more of you you really are, enjoy life more and make a positive difference to how you are in the world where you live.

Dates: Week July 25-Aug 1st 2009, Fellside Alexander School, Kendal  
Weekends November 6-8th, 2009, February 26-28th 2010 Fri pm-Sun pm.  
Cost for all three workshops (11 days in total) £695-845  
Early Bird Fool 10% discount if you book by June 15th.

For registration, accommodation details and more information contact  
Natasha Hood  
[natasha@enthos.org.uk](mailto:natasha@enthos.org.uk)  
0131 228 1538

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## Old Town Family Stories

*Want something fun to do together?  
Interested in learning new skills?  
Do you have a story to tell?*

The **Scottish Storytelling Centre** is running a special 8-week project this May and June with families who live, work, or go to school in the Old Town.

Each week a storyteller tells magical tales from Edinburgh, Scotland and beyond, and over 7 weeks helps you make and tell your own stories, real or imaginary. The final session will be a special event for your family and friends in the Storytelling Centre's theatre – created by you!

The **FREE** sessions start during the week beginning **Monday 11th May**, and the final event will take place on **Sunday 28th June**, during the Old Town Festival. There will be one session each week.

If you or your friends, colleagues or family are interested in taking part, please phone or email **Caroline Budge** at the Scottish Storytelling Centre on **0131 652 3272** or [caroline@scottishstorytellingcentre.com](mailto:caroline@scottishstorytellingcentre.com) . Please get in touch before Wednesday 6th May. Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

This project is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council South Central Neighbourhood Partnership fund.

Click [here](#) to download the flyer of the event.

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## Stories on Safari

The project, inspired by Artlink Central's patron Julia Donaldson, will consist in the creation of quirkily and humorous stories about animals at the Blair Drummond Safari and Adventure Park with help from professional storyteller Bea Ferguson. This will be a chance for the children to create and record their own 'Gruffalo-esque' variations. The Blair Drummond Safari and Adventure Park and Arts in Business are the main sponsors for the project.

On **Wednesday, 25th March, 2009** the children visited the Safari Park to see and learn about six featured animals in the park. Following the visit, each school will receive two sessions with the storyteller – the first to develop ideas, the second to record the stories. The stories will also be used to inspire the creation of wall with the help of

professional artists from Artlink Central over five weekly during 2-hour workshops in late April and May.

On **Friday 12th, June, 2009** at Falkirk Lesser Town Hall, there will be a launch attended by Julia Donaldson, where the storyteller will read the stories, and the wall hangings will be showcased together with storyboards of the work in progress. This will be followed by an exhibition of the wall hangings in The Thistle Centre in Stirling in July before they are sent to their permanent home in the restaurant area of The Blair Drummond Safari Park.

### A Welsh Storyteller in Washington DC

The capital of the United States will take on a distinctly Welsh flavour this summer as 100 Welsh performers and craftspeople will be showcasing their country in the heart of Washington DC for 10 days (June 24-28 and July 1-5) at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival.

David Ambrose, storyteller and artistic director of the Beyond The Border Storytelling Festival at St Donats Castle will be joining the festival.

*"This is a great opportunity for me to showcase the art of storytelling to a huge audience. The Smithsonian Folklife Festival is a major American cultural festival which receives more than one million visitors each year. I am proud to be one of the participants, who together will be raising the profile of Wales in Washington (...)"*

Visitors will hear a wide range of Welsh music and poetry and the site will reflect the Welsh landscape and include items such as a Ty-unnos (overnight house), rugby posts, slate and metal fencing and stone walls.

For more information about the Wales Smithsonian Cymru and Wales Washington Cymru, go to [www.wales.com/smithsonian](http://www.wales.com/smithsonian)

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### Singing the Stories, Telling the Songs

My first experiences of storytelling were in the context of the family party. Funny stories were inseparable from the singing and other shenanigans that constituted the mandatory performing of the 'party piece. As a child and young person I never told a story – that was the domain of witty and imposing adults, but I was always able to sing a wee song. Now that I am a storyteller myself, whenever appropriate I like to season my storytelling with a song or two. Some songs tell a story, others are inspired by them.

My friend Lee Patterson is a fine singer, musician and song-writer. He is a man who also has many an anecdote to share, with intriguing tales at the heart of so many of his songs.

Many of Lee's songs speak of his experience of life in Leith and Edinburgh, and this coupled with his affinity for the sea reflects something of what it means for him to be a Scot living, working and creating today. His song 'Mary Queen of Scotch' won the Audience Vote at the Edinburgh Folk Club in 1997.

Having worked together in the past, it struck me one day that it would be wonderful to do something together at the Storytelling Centre. This could be an opportunity to weight equally stories and songs, perhaps to explore the way in which the songs we sing and the stories we tell express our beliefs, our values, our hopes, our sense of who we are as 21st century Scots. What we will do is sing and tell together and singly. Our tales and tunes may not reflect the experience of every Scot but we hope that our voices will provide some resonance with listeners, wherever they hail from.

*Marie Louise Cochrane*

*posted 23.03.09*

### **Homecoming at Burns Cottage**

I did my first ever storytelling in Burns Cottage way back in July 2002 and I was absolutely terrified!

The then director of Burns National Heritage Park had employed me to appear in the persona of Auld Betty Davidson of scary storytelling fame. The remit was to tell scary folk stories or if people were not interested, to just talk to them as they passed through the cottage. Coming from a theatrical background, seeing the reactions of the audience was very off-putting at first, but after a while I began to relish the freedom to adapt and craft my stories as I went along. I loved it!

On 31st December 2005 the new Director rang me to say, "could you do something with Tam O'Shanter in 10 days?" "I could do a storytelling version," I replied. It wasn't easy to face 50 school children with an untried 20-minute storytelling of Tam O'Shanter, but I survived. And now 'Auntie Betty' had become part of the school curriculum. And I was glowing with pride when I was asked back next year to appear in Burns Cottage itself.

This was a whole new ball game: move up to 30 school children through the cottage whilst giving them information about Robert Burns and family,

answering their myriad questions and, above all, making it memorable *and* amusing. All in 20 minutes max as another school was right behind them! When Johnny Wheeler came to see me in 2007 on behalf of the Storytelling Forum he asked, "is it storytelling?" and I had to agree with him that it was.

Now the National Trust for Scotland has started on its ambitious plans for Burns' Birthplace. It has been a long time coming due to wrangles over lottery money, but on the 1st November 2009 they officially took over and on the 31st October the original Trust (set up after Burns's death to ensure the survival of his wife Jeannie and children) met for the very last time which spookily coincided with my visit to Burns Cottage for National Storytelling Day where I was doing REAL storytelling for Halloween!

Naturally we have all worried about how the new regime will all work out. But I have seen and heard the plans and although I will regret some of the changes I think that what they will be doing will create a truly magnificent and worthy memorial to Robert Burns.

So now even Robert Burns has somewhere to come home to.

*Val Parsley*

*posted 23.03.09*

### **The Story of the Silver Keys**

'The Story of the Silver Keys' is a special programme of graduated songs, music and stories designed for pupils of the lower, middle and upper stages of primary school. It features the folklore of Scotland's Western Highlands and it was inspired by 'Jack and the Silver Keys', a story Duncan Williamson told me when the children were very small.

I feel Duncan's presence through his stories, a presence which surround me on many levels. First, of course, is the magnitude of his reach. The storytellers he met on his travels to the five continents, all the festivals and all the audiences, every single person who heard Duncan remembers his words: 'a story is a gift, the greatest gift you can give anyone, for a story never wears out, it never breaks, but only continues with the love of the soul that never dies'. Through all my own travels here, there, twice across America recently, nothing means as much to me as Duncan's words.

Here in Bruntisfield I stay near 'holy corner' where five churches meet, each of different denominations. So one night I was reading the legend of Peter the Apostle and I saw in it my own pocket full of keys, all my problems of late

getting in and out of locked doors...what was this telling me? Duncan would always say, for any problem in life, look to the story. And yes, there it was!

'The Story of the Silver Keys' is just a tiny morsel of the legacy Duncan left all of us in the storytelling world: stories for children in our hearts, stories which answer any problem in life and show in the gentlest way possible how to cope with sorrow and life's deprivation.

My plans for the future are to continue with the book work, hoping the collections of Duncan's stories can be printed again, fuller editions, with some previously unpublished tales.

For more information please contact me on [lindajwilliamson@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lindajwilliamson@hotmail.co.uk) or 0131 229 7655

*Linda Williamson*

*posted 23.03.09*

### **The Battle of Prestonpans storytelling tours**

Over the past few months I have had the privilege of running a series of workshops for Prestonpans' very own community storytelling group, giving them tips and ideas that will enable them to lead interpretive site specific storytelling tours of Prestonpans Battle site in East Lothian.

The Battle of Prestonpans was the greatest victory of the Jacobite army, led by Bonnie Prince Charlie: in less than fifteen minutes his Highlanders decimated the Hanoverian army in Scotland – a victory that gave the impetus for their subsequent march into England.

Yet the actual site of this decisive battle is incorrectly marked and under increasing pressure from housing development. There is virtually nothing to interpret or present the Battle to visitors that do find their way there. And although practically everyone in Prestonpans knows the significance of 21st September 1745 to their community, many are not precisely sure what took place that day.

One local history teacher, Peter MacKenzie, has been determined to remedy this situation. For many years he has led interpretive Battlefield walks and campaigned to have the site's importance recognised. His efforts have now inspired the community to accept responsibility for this important aspect of Scottish heritage and the determination has grown that it must be better preserved and interpreted. The Battle of Prestonpans Heritage Trust was formed to harness the ideas of the community and bring the dream to the attention of the nation.

The storytelling walks which will begin in July this year are one of the many ways the arts, which are flourishing in Prestonpans, will draw audiences to the Battle site to hear tales, tunes and songs themed around the Battle. The walks, which will take in wonderful views of East Lothian looking across the landscape to Edinburgh, over the sea to Fife and down the coast to Dunbar and North Berwick, will be led by gifted storytellers and musicians and allow the audience to stand on the very earth where this Battle was fought.

Glasgow University archaeology department have been excavating the Battlefield and unearthing many artefacts and a magical handling collection is being developed for the walks for a truly hands-on experience.

For more information on The Battle of Prestonpans Heritage Trust and its storytelling tours contact [www.battleofprestonpans1745.org](http://www.battleofprestonpans1745.org)

*Marion Kenny*

*posted 23.03.09*

## **Doors Open Days 2008**

The first Doors Open Day took place in 1990 in Ayr as part of the European City of Culture celebrations and proved so successful that it has since been taken up all over Scotland. Throughout the month of September over 800 buildings not normally open to the public open their doors: a great opportunity to find out what lies within.

In 2008 I was involved in storytelling at two such buildings in Angus. The first was The Signal Tower Museum in Arbroath. While this fascinating Museum is open all year round, the tower itself is not. It was to be the once-a-year chance to climb the tower and look out to sea, hopefully sighting the Bell Rock Lighthouse, whose keepers' families once lived in the houses which are now the Museum. Sadly the weather was so wet, wild and windy that all tours up the tower had to be cancelled for safety reasons. As a result visitor numbers were much lower than previous years. I did have a lovely family who stopped into the schoolroom for some stories though and they were delighted to hear I was to be at the Mortuary Chapel, Arbroath on the Sunday.

When I told friends I was telling stories in the Mortuary Chapel, they all said what a wonderful place it was. They were not wrong. It is a most amazing, beautiful, atmospheric building in which to tell stories and as it's only open once a year, on that day it receives lots of visitors. The building was specially commissioned by Patrick Allan-Fraser and gifted to the people of Arbroath. It was built in 1884 by one man, John Peters, a stonemason not an architect, and he had no drawings or plans to work from, only his own skill in his craft.

No two columns are the same and there are lots of animals to search for among the carvings.

Again it was a wet day but that didn't put off the visitors. I was lucky enough to have an assistant, Katie, the 5 year-old daughter of one of the Council staff. She was a great asset in telling everyone who came in about 'The Storyteller'. The family from the Saturday visit to The Signal Tower Museum sought me out to hear more stories. The acoustics were superb and lots of visitors stopped to listen as they passed by. I had a marvellous chorus of 'Three crows sat upon a wa' with some Grannies. It was a most enjoyable day, meeting lots of different people and sharing stories with them.

I would highly recommend taking up any chance of telling stories during the Doors Open Day events.

*Robbie Fotheringham*

*posted 23.03.09*

### **And the winner is...**

...Jack Martin! His tale of reincarnation, baboons, crows and Judy Garland was judged the best one by the enthusiastic crowd that gathered at the Scottish Storytelling Centre for the Tall Tales Oscar 2009.

Jack, who last won in 2007, dedicated the Oscar to Millie Gray.

*posted 23.03.09*

### **A welcome to the new Directory storytellers**

A warm welcome to the new entries of our Storytellers' Directory!

[Greg Truckell – Stripey Dog](#), [Margaret Smith](#), [Mara Menzies](#) and [Renita Boyle](#)

Click on the names and give their profiles a look.

*posted 23.03.09*

### **Tall Tales Oscar**

**Saturday 14th March, 7.00pm**

Scottish Storytelling Centre, 43-45 High Street, Edinburgh

Calling all fibbers! Please contact Donald on +44 (0)131 556 9579 or [donald@scottishstorytellingcentre.com](mailto:donald@scottishstorytellingcentre.com) to reserve a slot in this year's Tall Tales competition.

The audience votes for the most convincing Tall Tale. Michael Kerins, last year's winner, is the host for the evening. Following an audience vote for the most convincing Tall Tale, he will present the prestigious Tall Tales Oscar to the winning Tall Tale teller.

Tales must be **under 10 minutes** in length and in the running order organised by the host.

*posted 13.02.09*

### **World Book Day**

Celebrate the 12th **World Book Day**, the UK's largest celebration of books and reading on **Thursday 5 March 2008** with a specially produced World Book Day £1 book. Over 13 million school children will receive a World Book Day £1 Book Token which can be exchanged for a World Book Day £1 Book, throughout March, from over 3,000 participating bookshops and book retailers across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Visit [www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com) for more information.

*posted 13.02.09*

### **Ken Shapley: The Half Seen World**

**28th February to 25th May 2009**

Scottish Storytelling Centre, 43-45 High Street, Edinburgh

Over the past year storyteller Ken Shapely has been taking a close look at the natural wonders in and around Edinburgh. Whether it be the momentary murmurings of The Water of Leith or the age old Salisbury Craigs, if you look in the right way you'll find a hidden world which only needs a mirror to reveal its wonders. Along this mirror's edge, hidden in stillness are rock goblins and fairy flowers, water spirits and even steam genies.

The Half Seen World is exhibited for the first time, a wonderful chance to see these amazing symmetry photographs, some 2.8 x 1.4m printed on silk. The images also provide a great way to weave and create stories from the archetypal images. From 2pm on 7th March there will be a chance to do just this, and also make symmetric images of your own at a 'meet the artist' workshop, the first in the UK. The workshop is suitable for adults and children of about seven and up, and is bookable through the Storytelling Centre.

For a preview of the wonders in store, visit Ken's website at [www.kenshapley.ifp3.com](http://www.kenshapley.ifp3.com)

*posted 13.02.09*

### City of Literature: The Lost World

**One Book - One Edinburgh** has returned this month as part of The Lost World Read 2009 – it's City of Literature's third citywide reading campaign, following the success of *Kidnapped* (2007) and *Jekyll & Hyde* (2008.) Together with Glasgow, Bristol and other regions of England, they'll be reading Edinburgh-born author Arthur Conan Doyle's tale of dinosaurs and exploration, *The Lost World*.

Following on from the campaign's launch on 31st January, there will be a month of events, a schools programme and they'll be giving away thousands of free copies of *The Lost World*.

For more information, visit [www.cityofliterature.com](http://www.cityofliterature.com) or contact Anna Burkey on +44 (0)131 557 9821 or [anna@cityofliterature.com](mailto:anna@cityofliterature.com)

*posted 13.02.09*

### Contemporary Storytelling: Theory and Practice SQA

#### **New course launched at Newbattle Abbey College in partnership with Scottish Storytelling Centre**

This autumn the Scottish Storytelling Centre launched a pioneering new storytelling qualification in partnership with Newbattle Abbey College near Edinburgh.

Contemporary Storytelling: Theory and Practice is a unique course combining two residential weekends at Newbattle, with a personal project between them. It is designed for storytellers in professions as well as professional

storytellers and leads to a Professional Development Qualification (SQA Level 7) recognised by all academic institutions and professional associations.

Traditionally, the art of oral storytelling has been recognised as significant both culturally and educationally. In contemporary society however, the mass media have led to a shift of emphasis away from a book led culture which has in turn highlighted the importance of oral communication.

This unit helped professionals rediscover the art of oral storytelling and use storytelling skills to enhance their professional practice. Professionals using this unit to support Continuing Professional Development include teachers, librarians, literacy workers, museum and heritage interpreters, health professionals, clergy, youth workers, environmental rangers, community development professionals and arts animateurs.

The course combines theoretical perspectives on how oral storytelling works as an effective form of communication, with practical experience of how it is applied in specific professional contexts. Outcomes relate to the skills involved in delivering effective narrative communication in specific situations, relating to professional practice, including:

- Analysing the purposes and relevance of oral storytelling
- Sourcing and selecting oral stories
- Editing and developing oral stories
- Presenting oral stories effectively
- Presenting in written and oral form, an effective evaluation of the above outcomes as they apply to your profession.

A fuller course description is available, please click [here](#).  
The course is nationally validated by SQA (Level 7 on the SCQF framework).

*Posted 20.11.08*

### **Festivals Edinburgh website goes live**

The Scottish International Storytelling Festival is one of the featured events on a new website bringing together all of Edinburgh's major arts festivals – [www.edinburghfestivals.co.uk](http://www.edinburghfestivals.co.uk)

Information about the dates, themes and guests at our 2008 Festival can be found on the site, together with images that give a flavour of the event. This will be added to over the coming months with news of highlighted shows, special offers, competitions and video as the Festival programme is confirmed and more details become available.

*Posted 05.08.08*

### **Myths, Mountains, Lakes and Legends - SFS Annual Gathering 2009**

The Society of Storytelling will hold next year's Annual Gathering at Rydal Hall, near Grasmere, on Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th April 2009. Hosted by Taffy and Chrissie Thomas of the Northern Centre for Storytelling, it's a weekend celebration of the art of storytelling along with the Society's AGM. Further details will be made available on [www.sfs.org.uk](http://www.sfs.org.uk) and [www.taffythomas.co.uk](http://www.taffythomas.co.uk) or on 01539 435 641.

*Posted 30.6.08*