

For Immediate Release - 10th September 2010

Celebrating the first Settle Storytelling Festival

Settle Stories launches its first Storytelling Festival in the historic & picturesque market town of Settle, North Yorkshire. The festival runs from the 7th - 10th October 2010 at a range of venues in Settle.

The Settle Storytelling Festival is devoted to the oral tradition of storytelling where the story is created between the teller and the listeners. Storytelling gives audiences a live experience and a chance to encounter authentic voices from different cultures and traditions. The Festival will capture the imagination of audiences of all ages from 5 to 95 and provide people with a rich and memorable experience.

Highlights of this year's programme include:

- An afternoon of Tea and Tales with BBC Radio 2's multi-talented Mike Harding who has entertained audiences for decades. He performs alongside Settle's own Alan Hemsworth, a Yorkshire man through and through who is well known for entertaining audiences in Yorkshire.
- Opening the festival is Jackie Oates who has been described as a genius and "*... is deservedly becoming yet another young celebrity in the new folk scene.*" *The Guardian*
- International artist Jan Blake - Born in UK to Jamaican parents Jan is one of Britain's outstanding storytellers who performs across the world.
- Late night ghost stories at the Falcon Manor. Listen to spooky tales of hauntings and the supernatural with Lebanese actress and storyteller Alia Al Zougbi and Settle storyteller Sita Brand.
- An evening for three generations with Taffy Thomas, England's most experienced storyteller and first Storytelling Laureate.
- The Middle Yard - A compelling evening of Irish mythology and song with harpist and storyteller Nick Hennessey and gifted wordsmith Simon Heywood.

There's also a chance to take part:

- Learn the tricks of the trade in an informal practical workshop with Taffy Thomas MBE. Swap stories and ask questions.
- Take a storytelling walk in the company of Taffy Thomas and listen to tales along the way.
- Write a story on a postcard which will be displayed as part of an exhibition in Gallery on the Green.

Emmerdale actor Tom Lister says, *"With the rise of film and video games the oral storytelling tradition has moved into the background. The Settle Storytelling festival is a great idea for families and children and a fantastic opportunity to participate in storytelling."*

Settle Storytelling Festival Director, Sita Brand, says, *"We're delighted to announce the first Settle Storytelling Festival. The essence of storytelling is not only in the telling but in the listening. So as the nights draw in, and a cold wind begins to blow, audiences are sure to find the Festival a warming autumn experience. Except of course if you come to the late night ghost stories that are sure to send a shiver down your spine."*

Bill Mitchell recently voted Yorkshire Dales National Park, greatest living cultural icon says, *"Storytelling takes us back to the pre-television days when stories were really lived. "*

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Notes to Editors:

Established in 2010, Settle Stories is dedicated to celebrating stories and storytelling. The storytelling festival is the first major event. Other events and activities are planned for next year, 2011.

Schools workshops are currently being planned to take place in the run up to the main festival.

For more information, interviews and photographs contact:

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A press launch will take place on **Tuesday 28th September at 6pm** at Settle Victoria Hall. Bill Mitchell recently voted Yorkshire Dales National Park, greatest living cultural icon supports the festival and will be present at the press launch.

For a full programme go to www.settlestories.org.uk



Lift your spirits
Engage your mind
Inspire your imagination
with Settle Stories

for more information about the Settle Storytelling Festival go to www.settlestories.org.uk