



Central NH Storytelling Guild

Seacoast Storytelling Guild

Monadnock Storytelling Circle

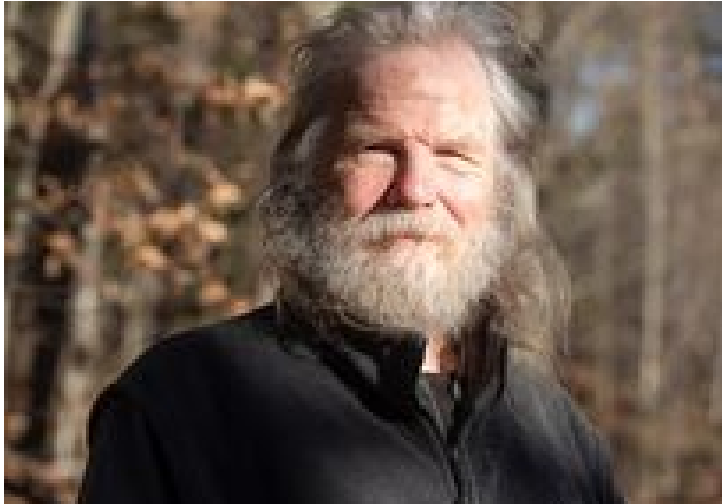
Southern NH Storytelling Guild

Souhegan Storytelling Guild

Where Story Bridges Community

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025



TIM JENNINGS 2025 GSSS KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Granite State Story Swap

Tim Jennings is a legendary Vermont folk storyteller with 40 years of experience, performing all over New England and North America. His highly engaging style has been featured in such venues as The National Storytelling Festival, Kennedy Library, Nantucket Atheneum, Champlain Festival, Toronto Storytelling Festival, King County (Seattle) Storytelling Festival, Champlain Festival, Vermont Midsummer Festival, and countless additional venues. Tim has taught folk storytelling to all ages, from kindergarten to master's programs. His article, "Storytelling: illiterate tool to Teach Reading," appeared in the slick education magazine, "Learning," in the early 1980s and has been reprinted many times in many countries. Several of his articles on folktales he collected and developed into performance pieces with presentation tips appeared in "Voices: The Journal of the New York State Folklore Society." While semi-retired, Tim continues to tell stories and perform as a musician, mainly within an hour's drive of his home in Montpelier.

*GSSS to be held at the Benz Community Center
18 Heard Rd. Center Sandwich, NH 03227 on
May 3, 2025 between the hours of 8:00 - 4:30PM
[Register Here](#)*

STORYTELLING OPPORTUNITIES

SOUHEGAN STORYTELLING GUILD

1ST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH 7-8:30PM

AMHERST TOWN LIBRARY

CONTACT: RICHARD HART RICHHART49@GMAIL.COM

CENTRAL NH STORYTELLING GUILD

2ND SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH 1:00-3:00PM

HORSESHOE POND PLACE SENIOR CENTER,

CONTACT: RUTH NIVEN -RUTHNIVEN@HOTMAIL.COM

KITTERY CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

2ND MONDAY OF THE MONTH 6:30 - 8:30 PM

KITTERY COMMUNITY CENTER

CONTACT: TERE KIPP- THERESAKIPP@CNTRES.COM

TAMWICH PERFORMERS CIRCLE

2ND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH 7PM

THE OTHER BAKERY

CONTACT: VICKY DWORKIN-VICKY.DWORKIN@GMAIL.COM

SOUTHERN NH STORYTELLING GUILD

3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH 7:00PM - 8:50PM

NASHUA PUBLIC LIBRARY (LOWER LEVEL),

CONTACT: KELLI WHITE- DRUMERAH@YAHOO.COM

MONADNOCK STORY CIRCLE

CONTACT SEBASTIAN LOCKWOOD

SEBASTIANLOCKWOOD88@GMAIL.COM

SEACOAST STORYTELLERS GUILD

4TH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH OF

EXETER LIBRARY 6:30 - 8PM

CONTACT BARBARA PASTER -

FRONTSTREETMAMA9@GMAIL.COM

TRUE TALES LIVE

1ST AND 4TH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH 6:30 - 8:30 PM

FIRST TUESDAY - WORKSHOP, FORTH TUESDAY PERFORMANCE

CONTACT: [HTTP://TRUETALESLIVENH.ORG](http://TRUETALESLIVENH.ORG)

NEW HAMPSHIRE STORYTELLING ALLIANCE
PO BOX 202 FRANKLIN, NH 03235
[HTTP://NHSTORYTELLING.ORG/](http://NHSTORYTELLING.ORG/)

RESUSCITATING SAM -- ANDY DAVIS



Each February, the big community event where I live is Winter Fest, which takes place on the grounds of an old inn on the other side of town. There's sledding, snowshoeing, cold water plunging, snow sculpture and other indoor and outdoor activities for all ages, followed by a sumptuous feast and a contra dance in the barn. Oh, and "winter stories from storyteller Andy Davis."

This year's was the third annual. I try not to repeat stories, and in putting together my wintry set list, the only thing I know for sure is that I'll recite something from Robert W. Service, "The Bard of the Yukon." The thing is, I did "The Ballad of the Blasphemous Bill" at the first annual, and "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" at the second annual, so the only thing "Serviceable" I had left was "The Cremation of Sam McGee."

I have nothing against "Sam McGee." In fact, I quite like it. The vivid Arctic imagery and macabre humor fit my peculiar northern temperament well. But the trouble is, it's Service's best-known poem, and so very many people do it. There are old men that trot it out at every family gathering. There are multitudes for whom it's their only party piece, and if they're asked to contribute something to an evening's entertainment, Sam McGee from Tennessee rears his southern head. More power to them, I thought —I have other stories.

(continued on next column)

So, years ago I had put it on a shelf, like Bill McKie's coffin, and I hadn't touched it since.

To give an idea of how widespread the Sam McGee cult is, twelve years ago Mrs. Fortin taught it to my daughter Fiona along with her thirteen 6th grade classmates at The White Mountain Waldorf School. Fiona still had enough of a grasp of it that when I told her I was going to do it at the Winter Fest, she immediately started spouting "There are strange things done in the midnight sun by the men who moil for gold..." and as I set about recovering it, she was able to prompt me. We went walking between the snowbanks down Cleveland Hill Road with Darby the beagle, trading stanzas.

The storytelling at the Winter Fest takes place under a timber frame pavilion outside the barn, with a big stone fireplace cheerily consuming logs at one end. I stood in front of the fireplace, with my backside toasty and my frontside cool, and faced a bunch of bundled adults and a few children taking a break from sledding.

When Sam McGee's moment came, in my intro I introduced Fiona, standing in the rear left of the audience, and her history with the poem. I launched, and surfed the rhythmic story wave all the way to Sam's last line, then began to climb onto the table in front of me to give the repeated postscript a bit of additional flair. On my way up, I transposed a couple of lines, and Fiona came to my rescue, to generalized chuckles. (Thank you, Mrs. Fortin!)

Inside, a man whose name-tag said "Michael" came up to me and told me that for years his father-in-law had recited Sam McGee to the gathered family at the end of each Thanksgiving dinner. "Well, Andy," Michael said, "The old boy passed away this year, so it was especially meaningful to hear you do it. My wife wasn't able to be here today, so I made a video of your performance. Would you mind if I share the recording with her and the rest of my family?" Well, of course I wouldn't.

The life of stories is mysterious, and it's not always clear which ones to tell and which ones to leave undisturbed in the village where stories live when they're not roaming among us, but in that moment I knew that on this particular day it had been the right decision to resuscitate Sam McGee.



Storytelling News...

Sharing the Fire

March 28-30, 2025 Glendale, New York

A Three-day Festival of Storytelling Workshops, Story Swaps, Concerts and Contests

Dynamic Listening

Keynote Presenter Elizabeth Ellis & Featured Performer Vijai Nathan

Listening is a dynamic mix of paying attention, clarifying, and reflecting. As storytellers, we often focus on speaking, but our listening skills are equally fundamental. To be effective storytellers, we must be effective listeners. We listen to the small voices within and the big voices without to better grasp which stories best serve a particular audience or occasion. Listening is essential for authenticity in ourselves and in our stories.

[For further information and registration click here](#)

A New Storytelling Festival is Planned for New Hampshire.

Produced by Greg Marsello, it will take place at the Whitney Community Center in Jackson, NH. The festival is scheduled for the 19th and 20th of September 2025. Bill Harley, Simon Brooks, Motoko, and Charlotte Blake Alston are 2025's featured performers. More information to come - Save the date!

Introducing the NEW Tamwich Performers Circle!

Calling all storytellers, poets, musicians, and other performers from Sandwich, Tamworth, and the surrounding area from the mountains to the lakes. Come together to share stories, poems, monologues, and music. Listeners are welcome!

2d Tuesday of the month, 7:00-9:00 pm

First meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 11,
at The Other Bakery, 77 Main Street, Tamworth, NH 03886.

Location of future meetings to be decided. For more
information, call 603-374-4460 or email:

vicky.dworkin@gmail.com



GSSS SHAKER VILLAGE AT CANTERBURY, NH

ANNUAL STORYTELLING EVENTS

ALL DAY 1ST SAT IN MAY GRANITE STATE STORY SWAP

A FEATURED STORYTELLER'S KEYNOTE PLUS CONCERT AND STORYTELLERS SITTING AROUND AND SWAPPING STORIES ALL DAY.

SAT BEFORE THANKSGIVING TELLABRATIION

A CELEBRATION OF STORYTELLING HELD ALL OVER THE US AND MUCH OF THE WORLD. LOCALLY IN CONCORD, NH AND ON THE SEACOAST.