

BARDIC CHAIR STORYTELLING COMPETITION

MR ROOK'S Speak Easy and Openstorytellers are looking for competitors for their annual Storyteller's Bardic Chair of Somerset which returns to Rook Lane Chapel on Thursday 19th October.

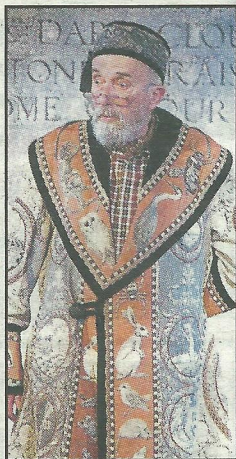
They say that everyone has at least one story to tell and the organisers of the Storyteller's Bardic Chair of Somerset want to hear yours. Although it is called a competition, there are no judges and the winner is chosen by lot, so it really doesn't matter if you are experienced or have never told a story before - you have the same chance of winning!

Previous events have seen some of the most well-known storytellers in the country tell alongside first-timers, leading to an amazing mix of traditional and personal stories. Mr Rook's, which runs storytelling evenings at Rook Lane and the Granary is partnering with Openstorytellers to produce this event.

The MC for the evening will be Taffy Thomas MBE, the first ever Storytelling Laureate and patron of Openstorytellers. Taffy will also be performing on the night. The winner gets to be the keeper of the Bardic Chair itself which was made by The Frome Men's Shed, using locally sourced ash and hazel.

Openstorytellers is a charity that works to enrich and empower the lives of people who are marginalised because of learning and communication difficulties, and is co-run by people with a learning disability. The group inherited what was the Chair of the Avalon Marshes in 2009 and this will be the third year that it will be organised, in association with Mr Rook's Speak Easy. While profits from the evening will go to the charity, the main aim is to raise awareness of its work as well as keep alive a local storytelling tradition.

Openstorytellers exists to give marginalised people a voice, and they say that while it takes courage to



stand up in front of others, the reward for sharing a story that you love with others is enormous. Perhaps you remember a local folk tale you heard years ago, or have a funny anecdote from your own life - either way the Bardic Chair audience would love to hear them.

There will be slots for eight performers to tell one seven-minute story each, poems and songs are also allowed. There are only two rules: firstly entries must either be the performer's own work or traditional, and secondly they must be told from memory without notes. Anyone interested in taking part should contact Mr Rook's through their Facebook page or at mister rooksspeakeasy@gmail.com and they will be happy to give you any further guidance.

The Storyteller's Bardic Chair competition takes place at Rook Lane Chapel, Bath Street in Frome on Thursday 19th October at 7.30pm and tickets are £9/£7, available through Mr Rook's Facebook page www.facebook.com/mister.rooksspeakeasy or from the Openstorytellers office. Competitors get in for free but must book in advance via Mr Rook's. For more information about Mr Rook's Speak Easy please see their Facebook page above and to find out more about Openstorytellers please visit www.openstorytellers.org.uk.

