

# Seven special days in Slaithwaite

It's February half term week in Slaithwaite and that can mean only one thing – it's time for the Slaithwaite Moonraking Festival, a week of lanterns and legends.

In 2008 the Festival returned after a year off with a new programme of storytelling to go with the traditional lantern making and the lantern procession. Weird and wonderful things happened in the village that week with storytellers popping up in the cafes and pubs, down by the canalside and at The Watershed, the village's very own arts centre. Independent research carried out during the week revealed a great enthusiasm for the Festival from the people of Slaithwaite and the Colne Valley. As always, the village also welcomed many more people, not only from across Kirklees and West Yorkshire, but also from across the rest of the UK. Many lessons were learnt and this year sees the route of Saturday's lantern procession revert to going clockwise round the village. The opening Ceilidh, which last year packed out the Civic Hall, is being held at the newly refurbished Colne Valley Leisure Centre. More space, more entertainment and a great night out for all the family. Don't miss it.

If you've just moved into the area you may wonder what Moonraking is all about. It's a 19th century legend and tells of smugglers who were bringing barrels of illicit drink by boat along the Huddersfield Narrow Canal when they saw the Constable up ahead. To avoid arrest they pushed the barrels over the side of the boat. Later that evening they returned under a full moon to retrieve them but were discovered once again by the Constable as they were raking them in. They escaped arrest by pretending to be drunk, saying they were attempting to rake in the moon which had 'fallen in the canal', the reflection being clearly seen in the water!

Last year the post-Festival talk was of storyteller Rachel Rose Reid (and she's back again this year). What will people be talking about this year? There's only one way to find out. Come and get involved and YOU will have your own story to tell in the future.

**Slaithwaite Moonraking Festival: Slaithwaite telling its own story through lanterns.**

For full information about Moonraking go to:  
[www.slaithwaitemoonraking.org](http://www.slaithwaitemoonraking.org)  
email [mrmoon@slaithwaitemoonraking.org](mailto:mrmoon@slaithwaitemoonraking.org)  
or phone 01484 843030.

## Lantern Making Workshops

Slaithwaite Community Centre, Bank Gate ①

Sunday 15 February – two sessions – 10.30am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Monday 16 to Thursday 19 February – four sessions each day – 10.30am to 12.30pm, 1.30pm to 3.30pm, 4.30pm to 6.30pm, and 7.30pm to 9.30pm.

**Tickets: £1.50 per person per session (the same price as last year). Pay on the door. Children under 13 MUST be accompanied by an adult.**

This year's Festival theme is 'Lunar Landings' in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the first person to step onto the surface of the Moon. Sculptural lanterns are made from a framework of willow covered with tissue paper, soaked in glue, and lit with candles. The lanterns are suspended on bamboo poles to be carried on the Saturday evening procession around the village. The lantern design should represent the theme of 'Lunar Landings' (e.g. spacecraft, aliens, stars, planets and of course the Moon itself). A simple lantern can be made in a couple of sessions but a more complex lantern may take a third or even a fourth session. There will be special help for beginners at all workshops (except the 4.30pm and 7.30pm sessions on Thursday). Please bring your own secateurs. All other materials are provided. Limited space at the Community Centre means that when you have completed your lantern you will have to take it home. If you have any questions about lantern making just come along and talk to one of the team of extremely helpful volunteers.



## Colne Valley Radio @ Moonraking

There's a new radio station in the Colne Valley and it's going live during the Slaithwaite Moonraking Festival. Colne Valley Radio, co-ordinated by arts company and experienced community broadcasters 'Heads Together', has been set up for local people of all ages to take part. It will bring you a varied mix of music and entertainment. Reporters will be out and about in the valley during February preparing stories and interviews that will be broadcast over the weekend of the 20th, 21st and 22nd. In the run up to the Festival we are holding a series of meetings at Slaithwaite Library to recruit people to take part. For more information on these meetings contact Gill on 01484 843030. To tune in and for details of the special podcast go to [www.slaithwaitemoonraking.org](http://www.slaithwaitemoonraking.org) and follow the link.

## Lunar Quiz Night at The Swan Wed 18 February ⑨

The regular quiz night takes on a lunar theme especially for the Festival.

## Local businesses support Floating Lanterns

Specially designed floating lanterns will be in the canal as the Saturday evening procession makes its way past the 'Moonraker' floating tea room and on to the Guillotine Lock and Howgate Road. The festival organising group would like to thank the following local businesses for their sponsorship of many of these lanterns – Monsoon Tandoori Restaurant, O. Blackburn Menswear, Armitage and Co Chartered Accountants, and the Green Building Company. If you would like to sponsor a floating lantern please contact [mrmoon@slaithwaitemoonraking.org](mailto:mrmoon@slaithwaitemoonraking.org).



# SLAITHWAITE MOONRAKING FESTIVAL



## A week of lanterns and legends

14 - 21 February 2009

Theme for 2009: 'Lunar Landings'



# MOONRAKING EVENTS 09

## Taffy Thomas Storytelling Workshop

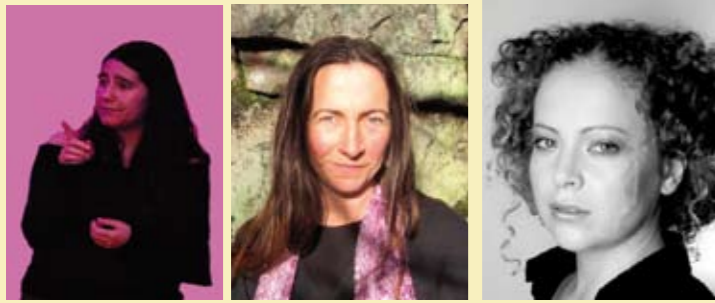
*The Watershed, Bridge Street 2*  
**Saturday 14 February** 1.30pm to 3pm. Doors open at 1.15pm  
 All tickets £5. Pay on the door.  
 Legendary storyteller and raconteur Taffy Thomas returns to Slaithwaite to host a workshop for adults interested in developing their own storytelling skills. Taffy will be dipping into his own repertoire of several hundred stories, tales and elaborate lies, facilitating an informal practical session where participants can swap stories on a one to one basis. This workshop is ideal for teachers, librarians, youth leaders, students, parents and grandparents.  
 For more information contact The Watershed on 01484 843030

## Valentine Moon Ceilidh

*Slaithwaite Leisure Centre 3*  
**Saturday 14 February** 7.30pm to 11pm. Doors open at 7.00pm.  
 Tickets: £6 for adults, £4 for under 16s.  
 Available from 'O. Blackburn Menswear' 4 and 'Chocolate and Gifts' 5 in Carr Lane, and from M. Roberts' bookshop 6 in Britannia Road.  
 Start off the 2009 Slaithwaite Moonraking Festival in great style and celebrate St Valentine's Day with our 'Valentine Moon Ceilidh'. After last year's 'squeeze' we're moving to the newly refurbished Leisure Centre. More space, more entertainment and more fun for all the family. Come and dance to the Moonraker Band with caller Gill Bond. The evening hosts a cabaret of special guests including High Jinx, a brother and sister illusion and magic act. In 2007 they were the youngest ever winners of the country's most prestigious award for stage magic. Taffy Thomas is a legend in himself and we're delighted to welcome him back to the Festival as he tells us some more tales from his famous Tale-Coat. And as if all that wasn't enough the Colne Valley Percussion Ensemble will be presenting the world premiere performance of Moon Dance, and you will see and hear shadow puppets performing the story of Moon Man. It promises to be a great night out for all the family.



above: Taffy Thomas, High Jinx  
 far right: (from top) Christine McMahon, Belinda O'Hooley & Heidi Tidow, Andy Stamps, The Magic Postman  
 below: Ruth Boycott-Garnett, Rachel Murray, Rachel Rose Reid

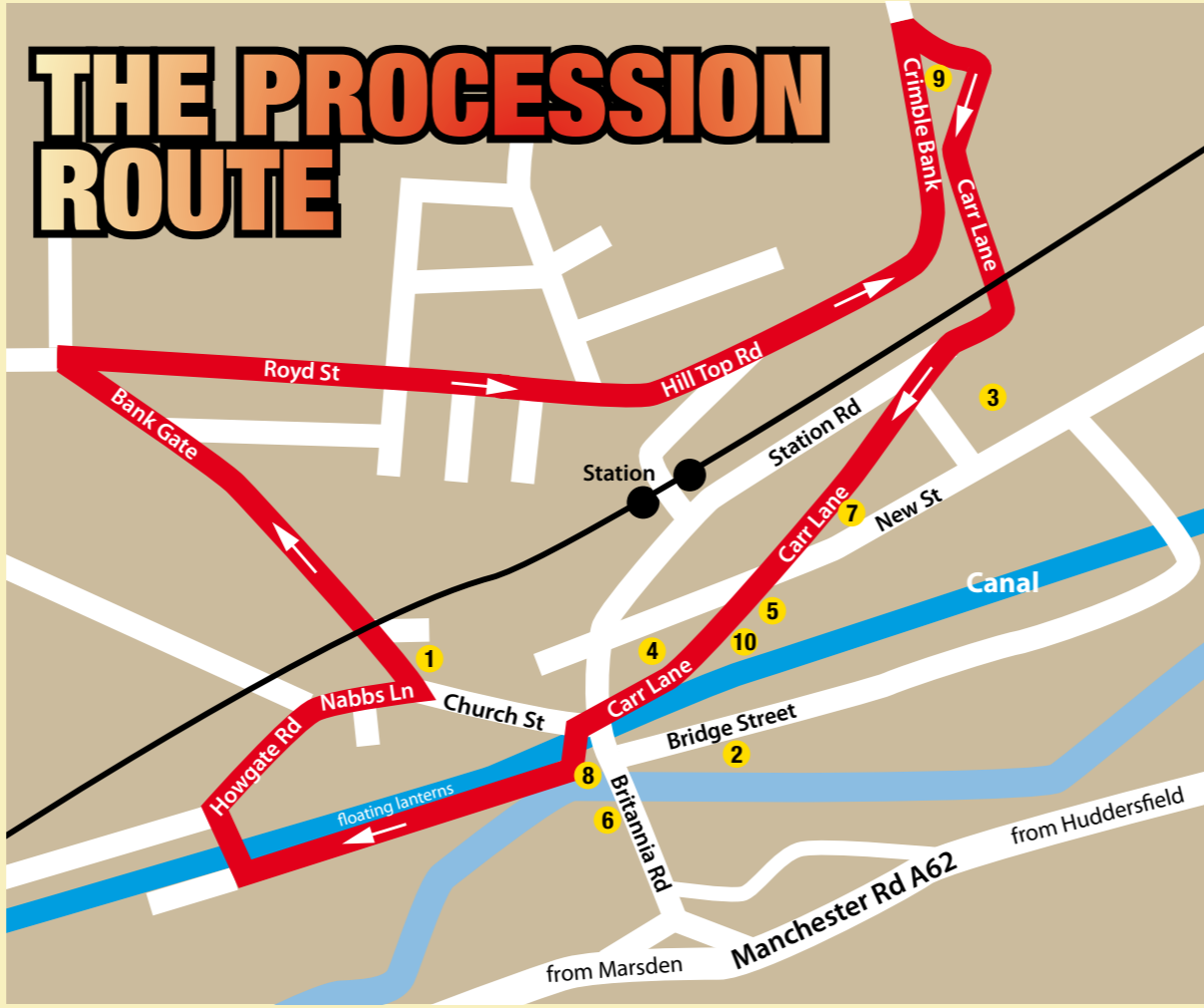


## Tales around Town

*Slaithwaite Centre – Starts at the round car park, Carr Lane 10*  
**Sunday 15 February - FREE**  
 Join story-tellers Ruth Boycott-Garnett and Rachel Murray at the round car park in Carr Lane at 1.30pm as they begin their afternoon journey around Slaithwaite telling tales. Watch out for special posters giving more information.  
 Local girl Ruth Boycott-Garnett is starting out on a storytelling quest. She is also our Moonraking Story-teller 'in residence' and is joining us for the week, popping up at events with a tale to tell.  
 Brought up with a painting of the 'Moonraking Incident' on the sitting room wall, the legend of Moonraking is a story that's been in Rachel Murray's life for as long as she can remember. A Huddersfield lass born and bred, she now lives in Derbyshire but maintains strong links with her roots and is looking forward to telling tales on 'home ground'. Her stories transport audiences from jungles to deserts and from castles to the hearth side. Never failing to entertain, Rachel appeals to audiences of all ages from the very young to the young at heart.

## The Magic Postman

*The Watershed, Bridge Street 2*  
**Tuesday 17 February** Two performances: 11am to 12 noon and 2.00pm to 3.00pm.  
 Doors open 15 minutes before each performance.  
 All tickets £4. Pay on the door  
 A magical show for children and families. Andy Stamps, the Magic Postman, travels via Space on an arctic adventure to The North Pole. There he meets a magic reindeer and rescues a baby polar bear. Lots of fun with live music, magic, puppets and songs. A Satellite Arts production.



## Slick Sticks Sambastic – Open Rehearsal

*The Watershed, Bridge Street 2*  
**Tuesday 17 February** 7.30pm to 9.30pm. Doors open at 7.15pm.  
 All tickets £2. Pay on the door. Suitable for people aged 13 years and over.  
 Slick Sticks Sambastic will be rehearsing in readiness for Saturday's Moonraking procession. Come along and learn some funky rhythms AND get the chance to play with the band in the procession around the village. You can see photos of the band at www.slicksticksambastic.com

## Tunes and Tales Night

*The Watershed, Bridge Street 2*  
**Wednesday 18 February** from 7.30pm. Doors open at 7.15pm.  
 Tickets: £5 for adults. £3 for under 16s and for anyone taking part. Pay on the door.  
 The floor is yours in this 'Open Mic' evening. Come and tell a story, play a tune or sing a song. This delightful patchwork of an evening is woven around two wonderful acts, Christine McMahon, and Belinda O'Hooley and Heidi Tidow. If you would like to take part please email gill@satellitearts.org.uk for a floor spot.  
 Christine McMahon is a vibrant Storyteller with a growing international reputation. Her ready wit and love of traditional folktales combine with her background in drama and psychology to create wonderful worlds of stories. Not only a performer, Christine has a unique talent for improvisational Storymaking, guiding audiences of any age to have the confidence to create stories from their own imaginations. She is a regular at the Shaggy Dog Club in Hebden Bridge.  
 Songwriter and pianist Belinda O'Hooley is joined by co-songwriter and performer Heidi Tidow. Northern folk, rock, contemporary classical, plus a touch of comedy have all been used to describe Belinda's music. In reality, her performances contain all this plus much more. Together, Belinda and Heidi combine a well-crafted songbook interweaving sublime harmonies with a touch of (very funny) northern banter.

## The Story Train

*Slaithwaite to Stalybridge – and back again! NEW for 2009*  
**Friday 20 February** Meet at Slaithwaite Station at 10.30am or 12.30pm. Ideal for children and families.  
 Come on a storytelling adventure as we take the train from Slaithwaite to Stalybridge, hearing stories as the train climbs out of the Colne Valley and makes its way through Standedge Tunnel, the third longest in Britain. We arrive at Stalybridge where we will be met by storyteller Rachel Rose Reid. Leaving the train we will enter the magical station buffet where Rachel will help us to follow our dreams with tales of Mermaids and moon-gazing. Refreshments will be available. Rachel is making a return to the Festival after her extremely successful debut in 2008. You can see more about her at www.rachelroseid.com. We return by train to Slaithwaite arriving back at the station two and a half hours after leaving.

## Special Story Train tickets – save money and book early

Tickets for this unique storytelling adventure include all the storytelling and refreshments, and return train travel from Slaithwaite to Stalybridge. Prices are £8 for adults and £5 for children. These special Moonraking tickets MUST be booked in advance by Friday 13 February. After that date the ticket price goes up to £12 for adults and £8 for children. So book early and save money. Telephone 07507 722 946 to make your booking and remember to state which train you wish to travel on.  
 Please note that these special Moonraking Story Train tickets are only available by calling the number above and not from railway ticket offices.

## Moonraking Lantern Finale

*Carr Lane in the centre of Slaithwaite 10*  
**Saturday 21 February** starting at 6.00pm. FREE  
 Come to the centre of Slaithwaite for a unique and memorable evening of spectacular entertainment. From 6pm Carr Lane will be closed to traffic as people of all ages from across the valley start to arrive with their specially made lanterns ready to start the procession around the village. This year the theme of the Festival is 'Lunar Landings', celebrating the 40th anniversary of the first person to step onto the surface of the Moon, so watch out for the many different designs. The centre of Slaithwaite will come alive with street music and entertainers and many shops and business will be staying open throughout the evening. At 6.30pm the Moon will be raked from the canal and carried through the crowd to head the procession. This year the procession will move off from Carr Lane, across the mini roundabout at the junction with Britannia Road and down to the canal side. After climbing Bank Gate, making its way along Hill Top and down through Crimble, the procession will return to Carr Lane for the spectacular finale and fireworks – a fitting end to a wonderful week of lanterns and legends.

Note: car parking in the centre of the village is limited. Please consider using public transport. For information go to www.wymetro.com or telephone 0113 245 7676.

## and the entertainment continues...

Once the finale is over why not call in to one of the many pubs in the village. Venues such as The Wharfside Inn 7 and The Little Bridge 8 will have live bands to entertain you through the evening. Watch out for details.

## Are you brave enough to take part in the Alien Hunt?

The theme of this year's Moonraking Festival is 'Lunar Landings', and who's to say that aliens haven't been watching what's been going on? In the run up to this year's Moonraking Festival, children from schools across the area will be taking part in a competition to design their own alien. The winning selected designs will be displayed in the windows of many of the shops in the village. On Saturday 21 February the Alien Hunt begins. It's designed for all the family to take part, walking around the village, hunting for the Alien pictures. There is a prize for the correct first entry pulled out of the hat. If you would like to take part you can download an entry form from the Moonraking website at www.slaithwaitemoonraking.org, or pick one up at Slaithwaite Library, or from the lantern making workshops. Good luck!

