



Working Life: Belief, Custom, Ritual, Narrative

A Folklore Society conference, **Friday 27 to Sunday 29 April 2018**, at the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading, 6 Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5EX

PROGRAMME

NB: the conference talks will take place in Room L022 G01 the University of Reading's London Road campus, 4 Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5EX, 5 mins walk from the Museum of English Rural Life.

Friday 27th

- 13:00-14:00 Registration opens at Room L022 G01
- 14:00-14:30 **Welcome** to the conference, by Dr Oliver Douglas, Curator, Museum of English Rural Life, and member of the FLS Council.
- 14:30–15:30 **Prof. Patricia Lysaght, The Folklore Society Presidential Address 2018:**
“From ‘Collect the Fragments...’ to ‘Memory of the World’. The Irish Folklore Commission (1935–1970): Achievement, Legacy, and the Digital Era.”
- 15:30-16:00 Tea/Coffee
- 16:00-18:00 Session 1 **Folklorists, Monks, Millers and Drinks**
Dr Paul Cowdell: “Second Impressions: What We Make of What Makes us Folklorists”
Dr Anne Lawrence-Mathers: “The Monks of Reading Abbey as Creators and Custodians of Images of Working Lives.”
Jeremy Harte: “‘How Many Sacks Hast Thee A-Stole?’ The Miller as Folk Villain.”
Dr Matt Cheeseman: “Friday Drinks.”
- 18:00-19:30 Friday Drinks Reception at the Museum of English Rural Life: with folk music
- 19:30 Free to roam and forage for food. Conference pub: The Mercure George Hotel, RG1 2HS

Saturday 28th

- 9:30-11:00 Session 2 **Work Songs**
Dr Devender Kumar: “Peasantry in North Indian Women’s Folk Song *Jakari*.”
Hasmik Matikyan: “Lullaby as Work Song.”
Ernie Warner: “Work Songs and Occupational Identity in Song and Dance.”
- 11:00-11:30 Tea/Coffee
- 11:30-13:00 Session 3 **Spinning Yarns**
Rosalind Kerven: “Spinners, Servants and Midwives: Women at Work in British and Irish Folk Narratives.”
Mark Norman: “Spindle, Shuttle and Needle: The Folklore of Wool and Yarn.”
Dr Kate Smith: “From Hard Labour to Art and Leisure”
- 13:00-14:00 Lunch

Working Life

- 14:00-15:00 **Keynote talk: Prof. David Hopkin:** “Lace Legends, Patrons and Celebrations: Craft Pride and Women’s Work.”
- 15:00-16:00 Session 4 **Potters and Publicans**
Dr Ceri Houlbrook: “‘A Folklorist Walks into a Bar...’: The Publican as Curator of the Concealed Revealed.”
Dr Meredith McGriff: “Individuals Together: Independent Professional Potters as an Occupational Folk Group.”
- 16:00-16:30 Tea/Coffee
- 16:30-18:00 Session 5 **Rural Labour, Landscape and Legend**
Fiona Mackenzie: “‘Bho mhoch gu dubh’: From Dawn to Dusk—a Day in the Working Life of a Hebridean Crofter.”
Dr Nick Jones: “Encountering Tolpuddle: Landscape, Ritual and Power.”
Robert McDowall: “William Cobbett: a 21st-Century Evaluation of Rural Rides.”
- 18:00-- Free to roam and forage for food. Conference pub: The Mercure George Hotel
- Sunday 29th**
- 9:30-11:00 Session 6 **Grave-digging, Corpse Roads and Funeral Handicrafts**
Dr Helen Frisby & Dr Stuart Prior: “Law, Lore and Landscape: Gravedigging in 19th- to 20th-Century England.”
Dr Stuart Dunn: “Corpse Roads: Connecting archaeology, folklore and landscape.”
Dr Mu Peng: “Doing Handicraft: Balancing Diversity and Uniformity in Rural China.”
- 11:00-11:30 Tea/Coffee
- 11:30-13:00 Session 7 **Fairies, Toadmen and Charcoal-burners**
Dr Jo Hickey-Hall: “Fairies and Labourers.”
Dr Maureen James: “‘Catch a ‘walking toad’: Exploring the Rituals and Practices of the Toadmen of East Anglia.”
Dr Tommy Kuusela: “The Charcoal-burner, the Hunter and the Female Forest Spirit.”
- 13:00-14:00 lunch
- 14:30-16:30 Tour of the Museum of English Rural Life