



# 58<sup>th</sup> Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering



Programme 10<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> April 2026 (details subject to change) Edition 7

Annual festival of Northumberland's traditional music, dance, dialect, crafts, stories, heritage, family events - + special themed *Vanbrugh Revisited* events for 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Town Hall architect Sir John Vanbrugh.

**Beforehand: Fri. 20th March FUNDRAISING CONCERT**

**Online: Phoenix Folk Pop-Up Ensemble** See 10am Sat.

*Many free events. Prices: adult /school age. Under 5s free. Sorry no card/phone payments – please bring cash/ cheque. Outdoor events schedule/updates: on Facebook & website. Festival office: Fri/Sat - Town Hall; Sun - Chantry front shop*

## Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April:

*During today performers will visit local care homes*

9.30 - 5.00 **CRAFTS EXHIBITION** + refreshments; crafts competitions (entries received Thur.9<sup>th</sup> April 5.30pm–7pm), family craft activities, craft displays, stalls, CDs, books, posters, archive photos *Town Hall 50p at door/ accompanied under-12s free*

10.00– 4.00 **OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS** Punch & Judy, musicians, family history activities *Market Place Free*

10.00 – 4.00 **DANCE WORKSHOPS** 10.00 –11 Historic dances from early 18<sup>th</sup> century; 11.30–12.30 North'd and Durham Clog (bring flat shoes); 1–2 Maypole 3-4 Longsword *Town Hall Ballroom £3/£1 at door per session*

11.00-1.00 **HAVE-A-GO NORTHUMBRIAN PIPES** drop-in (beginners; pipes provided) led by Ednie Wilson *Bagp Mus £3/£1*

1.30 – 2.30 **SHANTIES IN THE CHANTRY** Singalong with Ian McKone *Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door*

2.00 **OFFICIAL OPENING** of Gathering by the Deputy Mayor of Morpeth, Cllr Wendy Fail *Town Hall Exhibition*

2.15-4.00 **TOWN TREASURES** Tours of Mayor's Parlour, Council Chamber, civic silver, Town Hutch, portraits, etc, guided by Deputy Mayor & councillors *Town Hall Free*

3.00 – 4.00 **GAELIC SONGS AND DULCIMERS WORKSHOP** with Linn Phipps and Sandie & Ken Hudson (bring any instrument and/or voice!) *Bagpipe Mus £3/£1 door*

4.30– 5.30 **FAMILY STORIES** Taffy Thomas *Library Free*

4.30 – 5.30 **THE BAILIFFS' BALL** dance event recreating a Morpeth grand assembly of 1726 *Town Hall £3/£1 at door*

7.30 – 9.45 **SIR JOHN'S DELIGHT** Ray Alexander as Sir John Vanbrugh presents his lifestory "A Life of Irony" with musical interludes by Stewart Hardy (fiddle) & ensemble *Woolsington Strings Town Hall Ballroom £9/£5 ticket*

8.00 **SINGAROUND** led by Ed Lawrence and Sam Dodds *Black and Grey Coach House Free (donations welcome)*

8.00 **MUSICIANS' SESSION** *Tap & Spile (donations)*

## Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April: 9-4 FREE Park&Ride at County Hall

9.30 – 4.30 **CRAFTS EXHIBITION** as Friday *Town Hall*

9.45–10.30 **FAMILY STORIES** Taffy Thomas *Library Free*

10.00– 4.00 **OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS** Punch & Judy, music, Ellington Colliery Band, local morris, clog & rapper teams *Market Place, Park, Bakehouse Millennium Green*

10.00 – 4.00 **MORPETH CASTLE OPEN DAY** history, stories & music. Arranged with Landmark Trust *Free*

10.00 – 10.45 **MEET THE NORTHUMBRIAN PIPERS** Drop-in to hear the small pipes *Bagpipe Museum Free*

10.00 – 10.50 **POP-UP FOLK ENSEMBLE** Prepare for tonight's concert (tunes: <http://phoenixfolk.co.uk/morpeth> to download, or just turn up) *St Robt's Ch Hall (donations)*

10.15 **RING O' BELLS**; Clock Tower open 11.30-3.30

11.00 **PROCESSION** Gadgy's Welcome at Market Place (road closed 10.30-11.45am from Chantry to Manchester St., traffic diverted Dark Lane/Stanley Terrace/Wellway).

12.00– 4.00 **STORYTELLER'S GARDEN** Taffy Thomas's stories, dancers, music *Old Bakehouse Yard Millen Green*

12.00 **MUSICIANS' SESSION** *Tap & Spile (donations)*

12.00 - 3.00 **SINGAROUND** led by Ed Lawrence and Sam Dodds *Joiners Arms (free – donations welcome)*

**Competitions:** All-venue passport ticket for Saturday comp'n entrants/audience including craft exhibition £3.00/£1.00. Doors open 30 mins before times below to allow entrants to register.

12.00 **CLOG DANCE** solos & groups **competitions relaunch** with demo by Two Step *Town Hall Ballroom*

1.45 **SPEAKING & WRITING:** dialect, stories, results of pre-judged written items-deadline 7 Mar. **featuring launch of Alex Swailes Memorial young performer award** *St Robt's Ch.Hall*

1.45 **NORTHUMBRIAN PIPES & LOWLAND/ BORDER /HALF-LONG PIPES** *Chantry Bagpipe Museum*

2.00 **BANDS, ACCORDIONS, FIDDLES, OTHER INSTRUMENTS, DUETS** *St. George's UR Church*

3.30 **SINGING:** solos and groups *Town Hall Ballroom*

1.30 – 2.30 **FAMILY SHOW** Storytellers' Street Band, Jim Eldon + Silly Songs *St James Centre £3/£1 requested at door*

4.00 - 5.15 **WOR HOOSE** Heather Laurence introduces her dialect play on NE life *St Robt's Ch Hall £3/£1 at door*

4.00 - 6.00 **SLOW & STEADY** session led by BITS NE for beginners+intermediates *The Wansbeck, Kirkhill (donations)*

4.00 – 5.15 **MORPETH'S MERRIE MUSICKES** Early 18<sup>th</sup> century music from countryside and theatre (Vanbrugh's vintage) with Bennett Hogg, Matt Seattle and friends on strings and Border pipes *Bagpipe Museum £6/£2 ticket*

6.30– 8.30 **WINNERS' CONCERT** 2025 winners, Pop-up ensemble, guest band Ape House *Town Hall £9/£5 ticket)*

8.00 **MUSICIANS' SESSION** *Tap & Spile (donations)*

8.00 **NORTHUMBRIAN & BORDER PIPING SESSION** *Conservative Club front lounge Free (donations)*

8.30 – 11.00 **BARN DANCE** Blue Hat Ceilidh Band, guest spots. Bring own drinks *Town Hall Corn Exch £9/£5 ticket*

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## Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April: Sorry, no Sunday Crafts Exhibition this year

10.00–4.00 **MORPETH CASTLE OPEN DAY** as Saturday

10.30 – 2.30 **OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS** Duke's Dandy Clog, maypole dancing, etc *Market Place and Park*

10.30 – 12.00 **MORPETH HERITAGE WALK** from Market Place (must book in advance 01670 513308) *Donations*

10.30 – 11.30 **CHURCH SERVICE** Dialect hymns & items from Gathering performers *St George's URC (new venue)*

11.00 –12.00 **GAELIC PIPING SONGS WORKSHOP** with Linn Phipps *Chantry Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door*

12.00 - 3.00 **MUSICIANS' SESSION** *Tap & Spile Free*

12.30 – 1.30 **THE STORYTELLER'S ALMANAC** Mossy Christian & Taffy Thomas MBE with Tales & Tunes of Folk Calendar Customs *St James Cent £5/£1 requested at door*

12.30 – 1.30 **GALLIARD CONSORT** Open rehearsal of recorder music from Vanbrugh's time *Bagpipe Mus £3/£1*

2.00 – 3.00 **DROP-IN DULCIMER WORKSHOP** Nonsuch Dulcimer Club 'Come and Try' session on hammered and mountain dulcimers *Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door*

2.15 – 3.30 **FAMILY CEILIDH** Little Big Blue Ceilidh Band plus storytelling *St James Centre £4/£1 requested at door*

*M.N.G.Committee, part of Morpeth Antiquarian Society, Reg. Charity no. 507640, reserves the right to alter event details.*

**DETAILS/UPDATES:** [www.northumbriana.org.uk](http://www.northumbriana.org.uk) **QUERIES:** 01670 513308 **TICKETS:** Morpeth TIC 01670 623455



**See noticeboards** at Town Hall and outdoor venues, website or Facebook for any last-minute programme alterations or cancellations.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♿ 1 TOWN HALL</li> <li>♿ 2 MARKET PLACE</li> <li>♿ 3 CHANTRY TIC AND BAGPIPE MUSEUM</li> <li>♿ 4 ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH</li> <li>♿* 5 BLACK AND GREY COACH HOUSE</li> <li>♿ 6 ST. ROBERT'S CHURCH HALL (Rear of Collingwood House)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 CLOCK TOWER</li> <li>♿ 8 ST. JAMES' CENTRE</li> <li>♿ 9 TAP &amp; SPILE</li> <li>♿ 10 SANDERSON ARCADE</li> <li>11 ST. JAMES'S CHURCH</li> <li>12 RUGBY FIELD</li> <li>♿ 13 NEW LEISURE CENTRE &amp; LIBRARY</li> <li>♿ 14 CARLISLE PARK (Bandstand)</li> <li>15 MORPETH CASTLE</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♿ 16 THE WANSBECK PUB Abbey Meadows</li> <li>♿ 17 COUNTY HALL</li> <li>18 OLD BAKEHOUSE</li> <li>♿ MILLENNIUM GREEN</li> <li>♿* 19 CONSERVATIVE CLUB</li> <li>♿ 20 JOINERS ARMS</li> <li>♿ 21 WILLIAM TURNER HERB GARDEN</li> </ul> |
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- \* Staff Aided Access