

South Carolina Grandmother Shares Her Love for Storytelling

By Rachel M. Anderson, Contributing Writer

(Greenville, S.C.) – No matter what their age, kids love to hear stories. So do kids at heart like Katie Foth of Greenville, S.C. She can still recite many of the tales her grandfather told when she and her siblings went to visit him in Cloquet, Minn.

“He would tell us stories of things that he and his brother did,” said Foth. “Like the time they were rolling logs in the river and he nearly drowned, how they would throw rocks through the open boxcars of passing trains, and the time he first glimpsed my grandmother, an auburn-haired girl standing barefoot in the doorway of the most run-down house in the neighborhood. The stories he told over and over stuck with me.”

Fast forward a few decades and the gift of storytelling is now her own. Foth has authored two books about the whimsical world of Ellandria, a place where animals talk and magic is real.

Penny and the Seer's Ballad is an adventure story about an 11-year-old girl who lives with her father and older sister. Penny knows nothing of Ellandria until after her sister mysteriously disappears in a puff of smoke and an old hunch-backed woman and her unusual cat befriend Penny. They help her unravel the secrets her family has kept from her—namely, her mother's connection to Ellandria and its evil captor, Savino. The prophecy of 'The Seer's Ballad' prompts Penny to travel to Ellandria to rescue her mother and sister despite traitors, dark tunnels, and an ancient foe.

Legends of Ellandria: From the Journals of Whimsey Gatan includes 17 feel-good stories about the creatures of Ellandria. In the stories, brave wolves fight off ruthless invaders, beaver sisters turn the tide of the war with their inventions, a clever skunk outwits a wild boar, and a cat with a deformed claw learns how to turn her weakness into a strength.

The key messages delivered through Foth's tales include believing in oneself, practicing persistence in reaching a goal, thinking in a resourceful manner, valuing friendships and working together. “These are all character traits or skills that children need to develop,” said Foth.

According to the Child Development Institute, helping build a child's character is just one of the many benefits storytelling offers. It also helps children expand their vocabularies and memorization skills, introduces the literary concepts of plot, characterization, climax, conflict and conclusion; encourages imagination and creativity; and opens children's minds to other cultures and life philosophies.

“Some of my characters and their traits are based on people I have known over the years. Others just seem to come to me once I'm in the process of writing,” said Foth. “My characters offer children both practical examples and inspiration. Stories hold a power that instruction alone can't deliver.”



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In addition to her children's books, Foth has written two historical romance novels based on the stories her grandfather told her about his mother. *Annetti*, which is set in the late 1880s, was released in Jan. 2016. Its sequel, *Letters to Elsa*, will be coming out in 2017. *Annetti* and *Penny and the Seer's Ballad* are available as both print and audio books.

To learn more about Katie Foth's work, or purchase any of her books, visit the website, www.katiefoth.com.

About the Author

Katie Foth writes to bring enjoyment, insight, and passion to those around her. She grew up enjoying sledding, skating, and building snow forts in Minnesota. When her grandchildren were born, she began writing stories for them and other young children to enjoy.

Foth's career as a published writer began after retirement. During her working days, she was an administrative assistant, retirement plan analyst, trust administrator, personnel coordinator and educator. She also taught middle school and volunteered as a preschool Sunday School teacher.

Katie Foth and her husband have three children and three grandchildren. They have relished the warmth of Greenville, S.C. since 1984.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is available for use copyright free and cost-free. High resolution photography is available for free as well upon request. If you prefer to work on a story of your own, to arrange an interview with Katie Foth, or request review copies of her books, contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, at 952-240-2513 or rachel@rmapublicity.com.

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