

NEWSLETTER Autumn 2011
Editor – Douglas Barr-Hamilton

Tynwald Cooish

It was both by luck and good management that half a dozen of those who enjoyed the Tynwald Cooish at the immaculate new home of Sam and Mary Weller, had also enjoyed the real event on the Island a few days previously.

Sam and Mary's house in the Girton area of Cambridge is set back from the road and has an extensive garden partly put over to Sam's vegetables and fruit trees. Inside, it is state of the art with shining black marble working surfaces all round and a smart peninsula unit holding jugs of Pimms and fruit punch. Tables outside were set under umbrellas and the traditional kipper fare was augmented by tasty contributions from members. Mary was ably assisted in the kitchen by fellow Cambridge resident, Sheila Gill who was there with husband Colin.

We failed lamentably in the photographic quiz (like last year) but a fresh lettuce and marrow were awarded to the winners; Sam is justly proud of his vegetable patch and some of us are very jealous! Then came the everlasting raffle where Pam insisted we kept going to the bitter end and everyone went home with something. These raffles are a tradition at London Manx and members are very generous. They put some money into the kitty even if they drag on a bit! Next we tried our hand at the games that had been set out on the lawn – men versus ladies at dominoes and “demolition” and I have to report that the ladies won at both.

It was a happy gathering and well supported but we missed a few familiar faces – Maron who was still in the Island, Stewart, Rose and Wendy and Sean to name a few. Many thanks to Sam and Mary for their warm hospitality and we look forward to a return match when we meet at Pam and Mike Fiddick's cooish in November.

Mavis Bell

Bollan-bane

Even before the Vikings came to the Island, it is believed that the bollan-bane was worn by the Celts in order to ward off evil spirits. As well as being placed between the cows' ears to prevent the “little people” from harming them, the bollan-bane was strewn over the threshold, placed in the baby's cradle and worn at important gatherings. Although the Vikings brought their form of parliament, they adopted the habit of wearing the bollan-bane at important gatherings. This custom has been followed down the centuries and is worn by many at the Tynwald Day Fair.

Mavis Bell

World Manx Association Centenary

The centenary activities continue until next March with the AGM and members on the Island may want to make a note of the T E Brown lunch on 22nd October, the Christmas lunch on 10th December and the Manx tay on 11th February. However, the highlight of the year took place in Tynwald week with several members from London joining “Homecomers” from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States - whom I met, and many others, no doubt.

There was so much on that it was almost impossible to get to everything but the opening event was a Homecomers' welcome reception on Friday 1st July hosted by the Crookall family at Woodlands that was greatly appreciated. Next evening most of us turned up at the Sefton for the WMA annual gathering and formal dinner: an excellent meal followed by wonderful singing. On to Sunday, a glorious day with some of us invited to the Governor's garden party at the Nunnery after which a few stayed on and other joined the Homecomers' Service in the marquee. Monday was filled with a fascinating coach tour. Tynwald Day dawned. It poured with rain at St John's and the stands were near-deserted. Such a shame as the weather cleared in the afternoon – and it had been dry in Ramsey! Having dried out, seven London members congregated at Mamma Mia's Restaurant in Ramsey – joined by an eighth who now lives in the town, Ella Slack and passed an enjoyable, if noisy, evening. The Villa Marina was everybody's destination on Wednesday for a concert that featured all the Island's musical talent. And I mean all. The bill was packed with a variety of artistes of every style. Then next day there was a tour of the Manx Museum, Tynwald and House of Keys in the morning and of the

Council Chambers and the Mayor's parlour in Douglas. Then a final farewell reception. Our thanks to all who worked so hard to make it such a success.

Isle of Man Stamps – Postal History of Knockaloe Camp

The opening of the Knockaloe Internment Camp during World War I heralded mixed blessings for the Isle of Man. Based on the west coast (a little south of Peel) at its peak the purpose-built prefabricated huts housed an astonishing 24,000 men, bolstered by a combined military and civilian workforce of 3,000 individuals and its own railway link to Peel.

Housing so many men, classified at the time as 'enemy aliens', also created employment opportunities for Manx people. Arthur Binns Crookall MHK (and later MLC) was a typical example. Known as both a caterer and a philanthropist he was awarded the contract to feed 28,000 people each day during World War I, initially at the Douglas Camp and later at Knockaloe. Famous Manx born artist and designer Archibald Knox also worked at the camp as a mail censor for the duration of the war. There is little trace of the camp today, but in recognition of its place in the Island's history the Isle of Man Post Office has released a selection of items detailing some of the activities at the camp. A miniature sheet focuses on the postal history of the Knockaloe Camp, but a specially formulated Presentation Pack and First Day Cover allows us an insight into the daily life and work of the internees. A number of reproduction postcards show the camp in detail and also the stunning creative talent of some of the internees, with others concentrating more on the postal activity of the camp. This includes a specially designed internal stamp used to send mailed items from one camp to another and a number of cancellation marks specific to Knockaloe Camp.

Valerie Caine

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A special welcome to Valerie as a contributor to the newsletter. She is a freelance journalist regularly published in Manx Tails and Manx Life and I think we are going to love what she is going to tell us.

Day trip to Belfast, 1967

In the good old days of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co Ltd, day trips were available during the summer from Douglas to almost half a dozen destinations and boats to and from Ardrossan and Belfast called at Ramsey. The two pier tramcars, the engine and coach which was push and pull and the Wickham railcar, ran a shuttle service for half a mile along the Queen's Pier for those who wanted it: adult fare 2d single. The Belfast sailing left Douglas at 8.30 a.m., calling at Ramsey at about 9.20 and arriving at Belfast at around one o'clock. The boat left Belfast at 5.00 p.m. to arrive in Ramsey at approximately 9.10 p.m. and Douglas at 9.30.

In June 1967, when I was in the Army and at the end of my time in Aden, I was on leave. I drove to Ramsey, parked my Mini "Countryman" estate in Queen's Drive West and made my way to the pier. It was a brisk walk along the pier and I purchased my excursion return ticket: fares, in old money, if I remember rightly, were second class 19/6 and first class 24 shillings. I treated myself to first class. The steamer, Lady of Man, built in 1930 came into sight and I, together with the other passengers, boarded the vessel. Many of you will recall the splendid grandeur of first class with lavish public rooms, lounges with comfortable armchairs and sofas, the mahogany wood panelling and the silver service offered to diners. It was lovely sailing parallel to the island's coast, the Bride cliffs and the Point of Ayre lighthouse. Full steam ahead as she headed for Belfast Lough, Bangor on the south side of the Lough and the lovely seaside town of Carrickfergus on the north shores. The steamer turned round and sailed stern first up the narrow part of the Lough and up the River Lagan on which Belfast stands. Disembarkation started shortly after one o'clock and the boat would leave at five, so four hours ashore. However, because of parades in Northern Ireland at that time there was to be an extra sailing leaving around midnight. My ticket would be valid so, having checked it with the Steam Packet, I would have eleven hours ashore. What a bonus! I got the bus to Donegall Square where the City Hall stands, a splendid building with imported Italian marble inside. I took a short train ride from Great Victoria station to Adelaide and back then, later, a bus ride to York Road station for a train to Larne and back riding in pre-war carriages and pulled by a steam locomotive, a former LMS loco and of the Ulster Transport Authority, built in Derby in the late forties, a handsome 2-6-4T general purpose tank engine and its nickname: a jeep. It steamed well, stopping at several stations including Carrickfergus. Larne

had, and still has, ferry services to and from Scotland. What a super run it was to Larne and back with a steam loco pulling the train!

Back at Belfast, time for a cooked meal, a couple of beers then, later, it was time for me to head for the night sailing. We arrived in Ramsey at about 4.30 a.m., not the Lady of Man but one of the post-war "Manxman" class. The vessels of this class were very popular steamers and resembling "mini-Cunard liners. I duly disembarked and walked along the pier to the exit then to my car to get back to Andreas Rectory for breakfast and a kip. A very successful excursion it turned out to be.

Preston Glass

Manx Classes at Ballabeg

As advertised in the last London Manx Society Newsletter the weekend Manx language class for beginners took place on the 23 and 24 of July 2011. As can often be the case some participants, including me, had some feelings of trepidation. The concern being about not being able to keep up and having to haltingly present your attempts at the language in front of others. However, there was no need for concern. The group were friendly and a mixture of genders and ages. The key to the success of the weekend was the superb way that the classes were conducted by Adrian Cain, Manx Language Officer for the Manx Heritage Foundation. Adrian is one of those gifted teachers who is able to be inclusive and offer encouragement to a group with different learning styles and abilities.

The venue was very good and in the picturesque village of Ballabeg. The classes started on each day at 10am and finished at 4pm. This allowed those who wanted to take advantage of the superb weather that weekend and also the lighter Manx nights to experience the beautiful Manx countryside. Walking in the Dhoon Glen, Ballaglass and the walk around Spanish Head with stunning views of the Calf of Man all enhanced the experience of learning the Manx language and appreciating our shared heritage. The aim now is to continue to develop a knowledge of Manx Gaelic.

When this opportunity arises again I would encourage others in the London Manx Society to participate in the weekend classes if they can. For those interested we can then look at the best way to jointly increase our knowledge and form Manx language practice groups. There is also www.learnmanx.com which also gives a great introduction to the language.

Alastair Kneale

Alastair also kindly sent this beautiful illustration.



Calf of Man



Governor, Adam Wood with Noel Cringle and Jim Corlett (NAMA)



Tynwald parade in the rain

Manx Band Win Top Prize at Europe's Biggest Celtic Festival

Manx Band 'Nish as Rish' proved they were the best when they walked away from this year's 'Festival Interceltique de Lorient' with the prestigious Trophée Loïc Raison. Given annually to the best new folk group at the festival, 'Nish as Rish' performed alongside other groups from Ireland, Brittany and Asturias in the final which was reported to have been the fiercest competition for 20 years. The band was presented with a cast bronze trophy, featuring a trio of folk musicians, and prize money totalling €1200.

Nish as Rish in Lorient



Singer and flautist, Ruth Keggins, said, "I was so proud to be able to represent the Island this year in Lorient – for us to win the trophy on top of that was a dream come true. The support we had from the audience was just fantastic and it was lovely to see the three legs being flown so proudly by so many people. It's a real achievement for the Island and for Manx music to have won twice in four years". Manx band 'King Chiaullee' won the trophy in 2008.

Music graduates from the University of York, members of 'Nish as Rish' perform both traditional and original music. Acclaimed for their sensitive and bold arrangements and their infectious stage rapport, the group performed alongside a number of top class acts and were singled out to perform live for local and national radio.

Official delegate to the festival, Aalish Maddrell, commented, "I'm delighted that 'Nish as Rish' did so well this year – the crowds and committee of the festival totally fell in love with them. They quickly sold out of CDs and they developed a strong following. At a festival which attracts over 800,000 visitors over 10 days this is no mean feat!"

'Nish as Rish' recorded their debut album on the Isle of Man earlier this year which is currently available through the following outlets:-

nishasrish@manx.net

www.manxmusic.com

Manx National Heritage Shops

Valerie Caine

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London Riots

I received enquiries from members of sister societies in Australia and America and was able to assure them that, as far as I was aware, all our members were unscathed. Our thanks for their concern.

DBH

Manx Language Week

This year, the "Cooish" will be between the 1st and 8th of October. Highlights will include a fun-day at the Villa on the 1st and the Ned Maddrell on the 2nd with Christopher Moseley, a teaching fellow in Latvian at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at UCL. He is also the General Editor of the third edition of the UNESCO Atlas of World Languages in Danger. Elwyn Hughes, Senior Co-ordinator for Welsh courses at the University of Wales, Bangor, will be on hand to provide training for adult tutors of Manx whilst the week will finish at the Erin Arts Centre with 'Samling'. Specialising in combining song traditions from Norway and Scotland, the band is recognised as part of a new movement within the European roots scene.

More details later about the Cooish but let me know if your organisation would like to help with this celebration of Manx Gaelic.

Adrian Cain

Learning Manx

"Ynsee Gaelg," some readers will translate. After eight lessons, I thought it time to stop our quarterly "Making contact in Manx" for beginners. Partly because it makes no provision for new students to join but mainly because learning our Island language has made huge strides in the two years we have published it (and before that) and technological advances make it much easier, and certainly much better, to do it through our computers. Start now! www.learnmanx.com.

DBH

Mhelliah

The church service will be in St Bride's Church on October 10th at noon.

Canon Teare will again preside and Margaret Brady will be our organist.

Afterwards we are having our social in The Press House Wine Bar (almost under the Church!)

We look forward to a big attendance and an enjoyable occasion.

Alan Tupper

We are sorry to inform members of the death at his home on 25th May at the age of 80 of Alan Tupper who had lived in recent years in Onchan.

The funeral service will take place Wednesday June 15 at Douglas Borough Crematorium. Our condolences to his family.

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome two new members to the Society:

June Wright from Wandsworth.

Margaret M Hunt, a resident of Cambridge.

We hope to meet and get to know you both at an event soon.

We also have two new patrons this year. The lieutenant governor, Mr Adam Wood who took over his Island responsibilities in April and Mrs Clare Christian, the new President of Tynwald. Both have graciously agreed to fill the roles.

Undergraduates

It's the perfect time of year to benefit. Undergraduates at universities in the London area are able to enjoy free membership of the society for the duration of their course. Name with address and dates of the course to Douglas Barr-Hamilton is all that is needed. Do you know someone about to pack his or her bags? Tell them about the offer.

Society's Website

Our website is managed by Sean and Wendy Ellis and officers have been delighted at hearing heaps of praise about it. A visit to www.londonmanxsociety is highly recommended.

Harbour Lights in Douglas

The Island Restaurant chain has recently added a Douglas branch to its outlets in Peel, Ramsey and Port St. Mary. Situated at 24 Castle Street, it occupies the premises previously occupied by Copperfields Edwardian Restaurant. The notification received tells us it's open daily from 10 a.m. for breakfast, offers its "comfort classic menu" throughout the day and, during the day, will welcome customers for a quick coffee and cake.

Data Protection

The London Manx Society has received and maintains information about members in the form of a mailing list which includes name, address, telephone number and email address, in accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998. Under the Act, individuals may check their record held on the list. This information will and should be used only for administration and furtherance of London Manx Society activities. We will not release this information for any other purpose.

Anyone wishing to have his or her data removed from our mailing list should contact the Newsletter Editor.

Island Quiz

(Open to non-members through the web site)

1. Which Manx Family built the present building on their Nunnery estate in 1823?
a) Crookall, b) Dumbell, c) Noble, d) Taubman?

2. When will the 2011 elections for the Keys be held?
a) 29th September, b) 20th October, c) 10th November, d) 1st December?

3. Who is President of the World Manx Association?
a) Adrian Cain, b) Jim Corlett, c) Peter Kelly, d) Wynn Kneale?

4. T E Brown's fictional Ranshent was in Jurby. Where is the real one?
a) Ballaugh, b) Foxdale, c) Port Soderick, d) Scarlett?

5. Which sheading contains two parishes as opposed to the normal three?
a) Ayre, b) Garff, c) Glenfaba, d) Middle?

Answers to the editor by post or email, please. Closing date 30th September.

The first reader to send me five correct answers will receive a Manx £20 note, useful when next on the Island.

Spring quiz answers:

- 1) Loco No. 13 is named Kissack.
- 2) We made Manx knobs at the Hitchin cooish.
- 3) Moghrey Mie means Good Morning.
- 4) 2001 was the last time the island hosted the Island Games.
- 5) John McGuinness won the 2011 Senior TT.

Congratulations to Colin Gill for again being first with a list of all-correct answers.

A boy's paradise

Aw, Peel's the place f' boys, yissir,
Peel's the place f' boys; y'c'n lerrem run loose,
Barefut if they want, free as air,
No need for their shoos.
Acorse the san' as quick as the win' –
Yer naver saw such a fine shore –
Or building stone boats at the edge of the say,
Or listenin' wide-eyed at the fishermen's lore.
Theer's pools at the back o' the castle,
Lil wans or deep, tek yer pick –
Not so deep, o'course, that yer drowneded,
Jus' fer catching lil fish, if yer quick.
An' Peel Castle itself's jus' the thing, boys,
F'r enjoyin' a rale creepy game
In the dungeons all dark an' mystayrious,
Or explorin' the caves where the smugglers came.

If it's cowboys an' injuns y' fancy,
Then up on Peel Hill y'c'n roam,
Aw, the fun y'c'n have in the bracken
Till hunger'll be callin' yer home.
The famous Red Dub's up the river,
The lumpers love swimmin' up yonder,
Then after the dip, back to Glanfaba
And down ter the bridge they'll meander.
The headlan's another oul fav'rite,
Cops and robbers is the game up there,
Wi' the gorse an' the hedges to hide in,
But the brambles are so bad ter tear.
But I'm thinkin' the harbour's the bes' o' the lot,
Fer who want ter bother with toys?
When messin' about in lil boats is far batter –
Aw, yisl Peel's the place f' boys.

Maisie Sell

Acknowledgements

The Editor thanks Mavis Bell, Adrian Cain, Valerie Caine, Preston Glass, Alastair Kneale, Maisie Sell, for their kind contribution and also the Manx Heritage Foundation and Manx Radio. News about you and articles (of around 450 words) about Island life are welcome and of interest to all. If in doubt, please contact me – contributions can be sent at any time for inclusion in the next newsletter, if possible by email (barrhamilton@btinternet.com) otherwise 132 Bush Hill, London N21 2BS.

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Closing date for the next issue, 25th November.

Dates for your diary

Mhelliah

October 10th at noon. Service in St Bride's Church, Fleet Street.
Afterwards, social in The Press House Wine Bar

West London Cooish

27th November

At Pam Fiddik's house in Ickenham.

More details later or contact Pam at 01895 634185

Brighten up your autumn with a touch of Manx conviviality.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DUE IN THREE MONTHS

PLEASE SEND NEWS TO:

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Visit the Society's web site at www.londonmanxsociety.com