

NEWSLETTER Spring 2011
Editor – Douglas Barr-Hamilton

Leadership Crisis at Society's heart

AGM reveals lack of officers

This year's annual general meeting took place on Monday 21st March at St. Bride's Institute in Fleet Street and, having passed a change in the rules, the committee having duly notified the members in advance, it was agreed that administration of the London Manx Society should continue with members of the committee taking turns to act as President and Secretary. With the wisdom and Experience of Treasurer, Sam Weller, to guide them, they think the scheme will work. However, it is far from ideal and members are asked to let a committee member know if they are aware of anyone who would be willing to undertake either role next year or, even better, as soon as possible.

Sam Weller was re-elected as Treasurer and all existing committee members, agreeing to continue to serve, were re-elected with Veen Hill being added to their number.

Earlier, the Secretary had reported on an active year, only the Mhelliiah having been poorly attended but that fact, as the accounts presented by the treasurer showed, increased the excess of expenditure over income for the year to £118. However, the Society's reserves are healthy and his summing up concluded, "The finances are in good health." The membership secretary was able to report an increase of three in the total number of members to 105.

In his retiring speech, the President thanked everyone for their support and Maron Honeyborne proposed a vote of thanks

New Year Cooish and Manx knobs

In January this year 25 of us gathered at Mavis and Dave's lovely house in Hitchin, Hertfordshire for lunch and the added promise of also learning how to make Manx knobs. Knowing how quickly the time passes when we all get together for a Cooish I doubted very much if we'd end up making the knobs. We were welcomed very warmly and if we weren't sure which house it was the Manx flag attached to the front door was a clue. Mavis had been very busy gathering vegetables from her allotment, baking and put on a massive spread. If that wasn't enough members brought food and drink to add to the feast, quiches, bread, cakes, cheese, wine and

chocolates. There was plenty of time to catch up with old friends and new over the fantastic food and a glass of wine. We all looked at Sam and Mary Weller's photographs of their second son's lovely wedding when all the men in the bridal party wore Manx tartan.



We were saddened, however, to learn that Charles Keggan passed away in December, Charles had been a very enthusiastic member of the LMS and had previously been on the committee. We also heard that Preston Glass, another stalwart of the Society, was in hospital in Luton. Our best wishes go to him. Amazingly enough those Manx knobs were made – Sam and Sean following Mavis' recipe to the letter. After Mavis had added more peppermint it was rolled out. They looked and tasted like Manx knobs but I think the amount of difficult washing up left at the end maybe means it'll be back to buying them at the airport!

Wendy Ellis-Kneen

Tynwald Day Cooish

Sam and Mary invite you to a Tynwald cooish at their house in Girton, Cambridge on 10th July. Sheila and Colin Gill will co-host the event and can help provide transportation from Cambridge station to our house. For both catering and transportation, we would need to know in advance that

you are intending to come. For those coming by car, we can provide directions.

Following tradition, there will be a plentiful supply of Manx kippers, plus other buffet/barbecue food. There is no need to bring any food but a variety of drinks would be welcome.

Sam and Mary Weller

2A Girton Road, Girton, Cambridge, CB3 0LJ, 01223 720607

“Who do you think you are?” Show

We know of several members who make their way to this show, previewed in our last newsletter, to find there were three Manx stands there, not just the two we had thought. In addition to the Manx National Heritage and the Isle of Man Family History Society, the Isle of Man Post Office participated. With a recent issue of eight different Genealogy stamps, it was entirely appropriate that they joined the others at Olympia.

However, the two others appeared to be far more popular and for me the star of the show was the new iMuseum which does not open until this month. However, it was running at the show partly to test its system but clearly to show it off. I took a name at random from a facsimile census form from 1881 in a display, entered the name of a comeover resident in Douglas and in an instant an article from the *Examiner* of 28th June 1935 appeared telling of his sudden death the preceding day: very impressive. Unfortunately for UK residents, the facility only goes live immediately for those who live on the Island. Just in case there are teething problems and probably to reduce the size of the demand at launch, the rest of the world must wait until the autumn. There was much more on the stand and a very helpful and friendly staff to deal with visitors.

Olympia was full of Family History Societies representing most counties, other parts of the British Isles, several commonwealth countries and a number of immigrant groups. All seemed to be doing a roaring trade from the thousands of visitors with an interest in tracing their roots and the Island's welcomed its share. With plenty of literature available and a knowledgeable and welcoming team on hand to guide it was a pleasure to spend a few minutes with them. An afternoon I had not expected to enjoy turned out to be a memorable experience.

DBH

Uni in September?

The Society is pleased to be able to offer free membership to new undergraduates arriving at university this autumn. With no subscription to pay, they can remain London Manx members until the end of their course. Secondary schools on the Island should be aware of the offer but readers are invited to make it known to family and friends who may enjoy the benefit. Name and address to Douglas is all that is needed.

Charles Keggan

LMS President 1985-87

We are sorry to announce the passing of Charles Keggan, a loyal stalwart of our Society, one of our longest standing members and one of our greatest supporters, attending our meetings when he could even when getting to them was difficult for him: always offering suggestions and advice. Charles was highly respected and regarded by us all and held in deep affection. He was always encouraging us to nurture our Manx heritage and keep it in good stead for future generations. He was particularly interested in Manx music and felt we ought to have more of it, reminding us of the London Manx's long-standing reputation of music and recalling the days of the London Manx choir which even sang in St Paul's Cathedral on one occasion in a concert that was broadcast by the BBC and relayed by speaker to a crowd of hundreds gathered in Athol Street in Douglas.

Charles himself was musical and had a good baritone voice. He also played the guitar on which he entertained us occasionally at our Mhelliah. He was a non-playing member of London Welsh Rugby Club near his previous home in Richmond and is known to have entertained them and us on occasion. He was also at the forefront of the Richmond Historical Society through which he was delighted to be presented to HRH Princess Alexandra last year on her visit to the society. Charles led many walks for the Society and we were fortunate a few years ago to have Charles as our guide when he escorted us on a walk through Richmond Park and the gardens of Richmond leading down to the Thames and ending on Richmond Green where we enjoyed a splendid picnic to end a beautiful summer's day: for those who attended, one of our lifetime idyllic memories.

Charles seemed to have been around for ever. I first joined the LMS in the late 1960s, then meeting in the St. Bride's Institute and I am pretty sure he

was around then. Maisie Sell, President in 1978, remembers well dancing with Charles at her inauguration dinner and dance at the Bonnington Hotel and I remember some years before that meeting Charles on a splendid LMS occasion at the Royal Overseas League in St James's. Those were the days! Charles was born on 25th August 1927 the eldest of three sons to John Ernest Keggen and his wife Leah (née Davies). The Keggens were an old Manx family whose history can be traced back for many generations. They were based in Port St Mary and were originally boat builders, their vessels sailing all over the world then, latterly, builders of houses, painters and decorators and undertakers. John and Leah met in Port St Mary when Leah was "over for the summer" helping in her family's guest house. They later married and set up home near her family in Everton where Charles was born in Walton Hospital. During the war their mother and youngest brother, John remained in Liverpool and his father went to the south of England for important war work while Leah worked in a munitions factory. Charles and brother George were evacuated to Aberystwyth and an unknown world.

With his excellent English and writing, Charles left school at 14, fairly normal in 1941, to work on the "Cambrian News" in Aberystwyth. At 17, he returned to Liverpool to work in his father's building business for the year before National Service in the Royal Navy. He told me he never went to sea, being seconded to the American navy – to a medical unit in Bavaria! There he acquired nursing training which he much enjoyed but also a severe allergy to carbolic, an essential ingredient in hospitals in those days, leading to training in mental health work. It was while home in the UK on leave that he met a nice German girl, also in the nursing profession, with whom he formed a strong relationship that continued after naval service. Sadly for him, she received a calling to become a missionary and so marriage for them was not to be and Charles never married thereafter. On his return to the UK, Charles joined the National Health Service to specialise in mental health nursing where he continued to work, in the Richmond area, to the end of his career.

Charles was hospitalised with heart problems some years ago and was never fully restored to his previous vigour after that. He had been in poor health for some months prior to his death, passing away in his home in Ham (Richmond) on 9th December 2010. His popularity was evidenced by the large congregation at his funeral, held in the Richmond he had grown to know and love. He was thought of affectionately by all, was always thoughtful and caring and had a wonderful dry sense of humour. He was a friend to us all and a loving and dear brother and uncle. Our thoughts and deepest sympathy go out to his brother George and his wife Iris and their family (George was for many years our auditor, his services over the years

being greatly appreciated, and remains a London Manx member) and to his youngest brother John and his wife Beryl (members of the Wirral Manx Society) and their family.

Charles will be sadly missed.

Maron Honeyborne

President 1988-92

Ramsey Reunion

“Formal meetings are just not as popular,” a member exclaimed at a recent committee meeting. “But look at the number who came to Mavis’ cooish!” (see New Year and Manx Knobs). So the decision was quickly taken to add an autumn cooish, Pam Fiddik volunteering her home, in addition to the traditional one at Tynwaldtide, this year’s being guided by Sam and Mary Weller in Cambridge.

I was due to visit the Ramsey very soon after so wondered whether members who have now returned to live on the Island: and there are quite a few, might like a gathering of their own. A quick telephone call to the ever helpful Harbour Bistro on the Quay in Ramsey and a hasty circular to everyone on the mailing list and it was all organised. The short notice meant that only a handful were able to attend but, given that the governor had organised a farewell party for the only convenient evening during my stay, it was promising and the evening very enjoyable. Such events always throw out useful information and we were delighted to learn, for example, that a new edition of Sue Woolley’s “My Grandmother’s Cookery Book” will come out later this year. Those who came would like to see a repeat so, with this newsletter members resident on the Isle of Man will receive a letter and form so we can judge interest in repeating the initiative with greater notice and more consultation.

DBH

Annual Lunch

“Doubletree by Hilton” is not a familiar name but you will find it a familiar place. Until recently known as the Park Inn and for a long time before that as the Bonnington, we will all be able to find our way from Russell Square or Holborn tube station. We will be at our usual venue.

The Society is privileged to have as its speaker this year Ella Slack, known to some as a niece of Roy Eason but famous in her own right as BBC’s and TV London’s Manager of Sports & Events from 1979-1997. Ella has

returned to the Island after working in broadcasting for 37 years and we look forward to welcoming her back and to a fascinating insight into her experience in London.

It's important for the Society's finances that the raffle is a success and if you cannot get to central London for the lunch, you may like to participate by post in advance by sending a pound or two to Sam Weller (2A Girton Road, Girton, Cambridge, CB3 0LJ). The star prize is a Steam Packet ticket for a car and two adults but we'd prefer if it drew you along to the Bonnington (woops, to Doubletree by Hilton) and we had a great gathering of the London Manx.

Making Contact in Manx

Lesson 7 - Some excuses

A little busy - sorry!

By vie lhiat goll magh noight? - Would you like to go out tonight?

By vie lhiam, agh ta mee tarroogh – Yes, but I am busy

Cha by vie lhiam – No

Cha by vie lhiam, ta mee skee – No, I am tired

By vie lhiam, agh ta çhingys–king aym – I would, but I have a headache

By vie lhiam, agh ta mee niee my 'olt – I would, but I am washing my hair

I can't go out tonight

Cha noddym goll magh noight – I can't go out tonight

Cre'n fa nagh? - Why not?

Ta mee ayns y check – I am in real, real trouble!

Cre'n fa? – Why?

Va mee er y jough riyer – I was on the beer last night!

Ghraiheen veen – Typical (I despair!)

What about tomorrow?

Cre mychione mairagh? – What about tomorrow?

By vie lhiam, agh cha noddym – I would like to, but I cannot

Cre'n fa nagh? – Why not?

Cha nel argid aym – I have no money

Cha nel argid aym agh ta mee foast goll magh – I don't have any money but I am still going out

Sonnys ort – All the best

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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.

Four generations of Kneens and the Vikings

In the summer of 1961 my granddad grew a beard and my grandmother made him a furry waistcoat. It was the beginning of Viking re-enactment in our family and was more about enthusiasm than authenticity and there was certainly no such thing as a safety officer. My granddad's cousin Roy McDonald, also a cousin of Maisie Sell, and a few others had decided it was time our Viking heritage was celebrated. My dad arrived back from 3 years living in Hong Kong with his new wife, was handed a sword and told he was a Viking warrior.

The whole town turned out to see the re-enactment of the Viking invasion of Peel, the finale being the death of the Viking chief and his burial at sea in a burning boat. 1963 was a particularly big year when the Queen Mother came to watch the festival together with 15,000 other spectators. The shelter on the promenade in Peel, part of the sailing club, was built that year for her Majesty to watch the festival from. During the same visit the Queen Mother went to Castletown and was presented with two Manx kittens – Manninagh Dhu and Andreas Fluffy – they apparently ended up onboard Britannia.



Each year up to the early 1980s the locals continued to re-enact the Viking invasion of Peel. I remember in the early 70s taking part with most of my classmates from the Clothworkers and waiting on the beach as the boats carrying the evil Vikings approached. There were four boats, Sea Dragon, Sea Falcon, Sea Hawk and Sea Wolf. Said to have been converted lifeboats from the Britannic, which was sunk in the Aegean Sea, and was sister ship to the Titanic. They were heavy and needed two people on each oar. They have now been replaced with lightweight replicas - much easier to row.

In 2005 the Viking festival in Peel was resurrected. In 2009 Sean and I went over to the Isle of Man to take part and persuaded my 15 year old niece she would look lovely in a Viking dress. We spent a few days living in the Viking village, the highlight being the beach invasion on the Saturday night with of course the Viking funeral finale – the Peel Viking festival wouldn't be complete without the boat burning. Sean was asked to row a Viking ship, Louise and I crossed sides and became villagers on the beach. Authenticity and safety are at the forefront now though. Not a single horned helmet to be seen nowadays. Vikings continue to come from all over the world to take part.

Wendy Kneen-Ellis

A hundred years and still going strong

World Manx Association celebrates its centenary

Fastyr Mie!

As the World Manx Association will be celebrating its Centenary this year, I thought I would take this opportunity to update you on the events we have in place to commemorate this milestone as well as details of the Centenary Literary/Media Competition and Centenary Book and CD, which we hope our overseas friends will participate and contribute towards.

Our main events will take place in Tynwald Week (1st - 8th July) and are outlined below:

Friday 1st July - Welcome Reception for Homecomers and Members

Saturday 2nd July - Annual Gathering and Dinner. Sefton Hotel, Douglas.

We are hoping to organise a link-up with other societies around the world and the award ceremony for our Centenary Literary/Media Competition will take place. (This could interest members of our overseas societies - please see further details below)

Sunday 3rd July - Homecomers Service. The Nunnery Grounds, Douglas. The service will be take place in the Marquee, after the Governors Garden

Party and will be taken by John Kennaugh, with Crosby Silver Band and local choir, Encore.

Monday 4th July - Tour, visiting various places of historical interest associated with the WMA and Civic Reception.

Tuesday 5th July Tynwald Day

Wednesday 6th - Centenary Concert. Promenade Suite, Villa Marina , Douglas. Evening concert featuring some of the best Manx singers and the poetry of TE Brown, narrated by John Kennaugh.

Thursday 7th July - Further Tour and Civic Reception

Friday 8th July - Farewell reception for Homecomers and Members.

Should anyone be contemplating a trip to the Island at this time, Regency Travel have put together a complete travel package incorporating the events as above. They can be contacted at sales@regencytravelholidays.com

Centenary Award:

Details of our Literary/Media Centenary Award are as follows and entries from anyone overseas are most welcome:

The theme for the award is “Manx in the Media”. It is open to two age groups 11-15yrs of age, and 16-25 yrs of age.

The participants can create a short film, an interview, or literature, to promote the Isle of Man, or additionally for those offshore to highlight their ancestors’ plight leaving the IOM and what being Manx means to them. First and second prize in each age group. IOM and Offshore. (8 prizes in all)

First prize £150, second prize £75

Entries to be received by the WMA by May 1st 2011

We hope these Centenary Awards will be the first of what will become annual awards, which will not only be a lasting memorial to the World Manx Association but help many youngsters to develop their potential in this field.

Centenary Book and CD

Lastly our Centenary Book and CD still need contributions from members from other societies. We would really like to hear from anyone who could send us an account - either by CD or the written word, of how they came to emigrate, their first impressions of their new home, why they decided to emigrate, details of family members and what part of the Island their family originally came from. We hope this will be another lasting memorial of our Centenary,

Carol Gray (Secretary, WMA)

<http://www.worldmanxassociation.co.uk/>

Commonwealth sport to fill Island's autumn

The Commonwealth Youth Games are to be staged on the Island from 7th to 14th September when Manx sport will welcome thousands of competitors from all parts of the Commonwealth. Seven sports participate so you will be able to enjoy athletics, badminton, boxing, cycling, gymnastics, rugby sevens and swimming.

If you can make the Island that week, the perfect opportunity to see performances from star athletes of the future.

New Year's Honour

In January 2010, I missed the news that London Manx member Mrs Doreen Underhill was awarded the MBE for services to the wives of foreign Military Attachés. My apologies for the omission and our congratulations to Doreen.

George Taubman Goldie

When I go "deep sea" I take a couple of books with me. One is to delve into – a history book –How Britain made the modern world.

The chapter I opened it at was "Maxim Force."

A name I recognised came up, George Goldie. Vague memories of a Highland Gathering at the Nunnery before the war. That had Goldie Taubman connections.

George Goldie is described as the son of a Manx smuggling family. As a lad, he dreamt of painting the world red (Empire building) and after being a dissolute soldier of fortune went to Africa. He formed the West Africa Company in 1879. For Goldie as for Rhodes what was good for his company was self evidently good for the British Empire. With the Maxim gun he conquered several of the Fulani Emirates and launched wars against the settlements of Bida and Ilorin.

When I got home I googled both the Nunnery and George.

In 1776 the Taubmans bought the Estate of the Nunnery and in 1823 built a house in Strawberry Hill Gothic. George Taubman Goldie was born in 1846. He was born into money; his family made its fortune from smuggling goods into Ireland and England. His father was Speaker of the House of Keys for two years.

George played a major role in the founding of Nigeria. He was honoured in many ways. In 1905 he was made President of the Royal Geographical Society for three years, in 1908 Alderman of the LCC, in 1887 a KCMG, in 1898 a Privy Councillor. Many other honours: Fellow of the Royal Society, Hon DCL of University of Oxford, LLD from Cambridge.

A colourful character, very successful but didn't seek publicity. He rejected various offers of colonial governorships. He destroyed his papers during WW1 and never wrote his intended memoirs.

Sir George died on 25th August 1925.

Rose Fowler

Spring

The short day lengthens,
The weak sun strengthens,
The grass looks greener,
The air is cleaner.
Through pearly light can I gaze
On the willow trees' haze
Of jade buds, soft and slender,
A promise of splendour.

Maisie Sell

Island Quiz

(open to non-members through the web site)

1. London's "Journalists' Church" shares its saint's name with
a) Bride? b) Lezayre? c) Lonan? d) Malew?
2. If Douglas' Tesco store is closed, is the next nearest:
a) Holyhead? b) Kirkcudbright? c) Ramsey? d) Whitehaven?
3. In which American state is Laxey?
a) Colorado? b) Ohio? c) Utah? d) Wisconsin?
4. Which Royal Navy warship was wrecked on Langness in December 1822?
a) HMS Greyhound? b) HMS Pigeon? c) HMS Racehorse? d) HMS Whippet?
5. What does "Nollick ghennal as blein vie noa" mean?

a) Fog will make the journey slow? b) How many people were at the concert? c) Merry Christmas and a happy New Year? d) What time is your birthday party?

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

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) Hon Anne Craine MHK represents Ramsey in the Keys.
- 2) The Manx Maid was not sunk at Dunkirk on 29/30th May 1940.
- 3) TE Brown's Renshent was in Jurby.
- 4) My Fair Lady was performed in Douglas last month.
- 5) Andreas' old school house is now Ohio House.

Congratulations to Sam Weller, winner of our Spring quiz.

Sir Paul Haddacks leaves

Vice Admiral Sir Paul Haddacks has been a popular governor and I was delighted to have the pleasure of meeting him, accompanied by his wife, on my mother's 100th birthday. They stayed much longer than I had expected, chatted with all present and seemed to take a genuine interest in everyone. Sadly, he is almost at the end of his term.

Manx papers report that in his farewell address to Tynwald before leaving the office he has held for five years, there with his wife Penny, he paid tribute to the Island's sense of community, culture and history and said he will be leaving the island with treasured memories. Sir Paul said the fundamentals of the lieutenant governor's job were to represent the Lord of Mann (the Queen) and on her behalf to ensure there was good governance adding, "I have never had a moment's doubt that the Isle of Man is a well-governed, internationally respected jurisdiction and that has made my job very easy,"

The island's next lieutenant governor, Adam Wood, will be sworn in at Castle Rushen on Thursday, 7th April. Mr Wood recently retired from the

British Diplomatic Service his last post being Africa Director at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, managing Britain's African Embassies having previously been British High Commissioner in Kenya. He has also worked in Uganda, Brussels, Bangkok and Washington. Mr Wood has, of course, been invited to be a patron of the Society.

DBH

Acknowledgements

The Editor thanks Carol Gray (WMA), Rose Fowler, Maron Honeyborne, Wendy Kneen-Ellis, Maisie Sell, Sam and Mary Weller 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.

Closing date for the next issue, 25th May.

Dates for your diary

LMS Lunch

14th May 2011

Guest of honour Ella Slack.

Cost £30.00

Details on page 6.

Keep the date free to come and hear our interesting speaker.

World Manx Association

Centenary Week 1-8th July 2011

Various events on the Island

See www.worldmanxassociation.co.uk

The Island will be full, but do join the crush.

Tynwald Day Cooish

10th July at Sam and Mary Weller's house in Cambridge.

Details on page 2.

The sun always shines on our Tynwald Cooish

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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e-mail: barrhamilton@btinternet.com

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