

**NEWSLETTER Spring 2013**  
**Editor – Douglas Barr-Hamilton**

**Melodie Waddingham to speak at Society's Lunch**

Universal delight has been expressed by all on hearing that Melodie, a member of the Society and star (in our eyes at least) of the film *Quartet* (reviewed by Margaret Brady and Maureen Lomas on page 4) has agreed to be Guest of Honour at our annual lunch. As usual, this has been arranged at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in Southampton Row and we shall assemble at 12.15 for a 12.45 lunch. The cost remains £30 as last year, a price at which the Society makes no profit so do come prepared to support the raffle. A flyer accompanied the newsletter and we would encourage you to confirm that you can come by advising Sam Weller and booking your place as soon as you can.

Melodie will be telling of her singing career from a youngster on the Island, through prestigious performances, to Justin Hoffman's choice for a special part in his first film as director. We expect a big audience.

**Other Activities**

The lunch follows our AGM, scheduled for 25th March and we mention at the end of this newsletter our midsummer cooish on 6th July. Plans are in hand for a Summer outing in September and for our Mhelliagh which will be at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street and the Press House Wine Bar on 7th October. Please make a note of these dates in your diary.

**Commemorating 350th Anniversary of Illiam Dhone's Execution**

An estimated one hundred people gathered at Hango Hill, near Castletown, on 2nd January to commemorate the death of Illiam Dhone (dark-haired William) executed by firing squad close to this spot in 1663 for treason, but subsequently pardoned by King Charles II of England.

Otherwise known as William Christian, he came from a powerful Manx family but became embroiled in the complexities of the English Civil War, which saved the Island from horrific bloodshed but ultimately cost him his life.

People's views on whether he was a patriot or a traitor differ, but the recent publication of a biography about Illiam Dhone by Jennifer Kewley Draskau on this topic will perhaps assist readers to come to their own conclusions. Independent speeches were given in Manx Gaelic by Christopher Lewin and in English by Mark Kermode of the Manx Republican Nationalist Party Mec Vannin before the laying of a wreath in memory of Illiam Dhone at the windswept corner which was also known as Mount Strange.

The event, organised jointly by the Manx branch of the Celtic League and Mec Vannin, ended with the singing of the Manx National Anthem before the crowd dispersed either to the Ship Inn in Castletown, or Malew Parish Church for a service of commemoration for the life of Illiam Dhone.

[www.mecvanin.im](http://www.mecvanin.im)

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**Conservation Battle at Kerroogarroo Fort**

Reminders of the era in which Illiam Dhone lived can be found around the Island.

During the mid 17th Century, James Stanley, 7th Earl of Derby, a staunch Royalist, began to construct a network of defences against Parliamentary attack. These included an earthen fort at Bishops court, the refurbished stone fort at St Michael's Isle and modernised defences for musketeers at Peel Castle. Remote and less well visited is Kerroogarroo Fort, a long walk across farmland at Ballacurry to the north of St Judes in Andreas. It is a large fort, erected in about 1640 and is massive in size, covering some two acres. The thick walls of earth have bastions on each of the four corners. The fort, which would have been a stronghold for the north of the island given its solitary situation, was never completed although some claim it could have been built for training by Royalist troops preparing to fight in England.

Early last year dense bracken in the interior of the fort was cut back to allow detailed survey work to be undertaken and Andrew Johnson, Curator of Field Archaeology for Manx National Heritage, hopes this may reveal more about the history of the fort. Andrew explained, "This earthwork was part of the Earl of Derby's energetic and extensive preparations against Parliamentary attack, all of which came to naught as a result of the rebellion of 1651 fomented by the Manx patriot William Christian."

Two months ago 52 members of staff from PwC contributed half a day of their time to carry out some valuable conservation work there. The margins of the site had become encroached by gorse and scrub growth and the team used bow saws and loppers to carry out clearance work. The teams were coordinated by Andrew Johnson and MNH Property Manager, Shaun Murphy. Shaun Murphy expressed his thanks to PwC for their outstanding work and to neighbouring farmer, John Maddrell, for his assistance.

Find out more at [www.manxnationalheritage.im](http://www.manxnationalheritage.im)  
Shaun Murphy  
With additional material from sundry web sites

### **A Brief History of the Isle of Man**

#### **BOOK REVIEW**

Given the job of producing a brief history of the Isle of Man would be a daunting task for any writer, who then has the unenviable task of deciding what to retain, and more importantly what to leave out. But Sara Goodwins has masterfully taken a huge amount of historical detail and presented the results very successfully in this publication which promotes interest and curiosity and injects enthusiasm into its colourful pages. Written in a refreshingly open and friendly style, Sara's well-presented book is not without humour as she enlivens each page with her personal approach to the subject. Conveniently sectioned into nine chapters, it's obvious that Sara has done her homework and thoroughly enjoyed exploring the Island's past, offering her own considered view of the Isle of Man, but not without sensitivity for its people.

Illustrated with some beautiful colour photography, the Island is well served by this book which also carries Appendices about Rulers, Bishops and the Tynwald ceremony. But this book covers much more than thatched cottages and Viking raiders, detailing the geological forces behind the Island's formation, pondering over selected myths and mysteries (referred to here as an 'alternative history') and cogitating over events from our recent past.

Widely available throughout the Island priced £9.95.

<http://loaghtanbooks.com>  
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(Courtesy of Manx Tails)

#### **Quartet**

We have been asked to write a review of the film "Quartet", deftly and delicately produced by Dustin Hoffman, script by Ronald Harwood. The story is set against the background of distinguished retired professional musicians preparing for a concert to raise funds to save their retirement home. Two of the musicians are well known to London Manx Society members - Jack Honeyborne and Melody Waddingham. Jack shows his pianistic versatility playing from Bach to Bud Flanagan while Melody gives a really charming performance of "Three little girls from school are we" from the Mikado. The only disappointment for London Manx Society fans is that Jack's solo jazz playing was cut. Also cut we're told, and cannot but think it would have added to the humour, was a scene of Melodie dancing with a person using a zimmer frame.

The setting is a beautiful house, Hedsor House in Buckinghamshire, renamed Beecham House for Retired Musicians for the film. The cameramen take advantage of the magnificent grounds, the trees symbolically in autumn colours, panoramic views and sunsets over the British countryside. The story concerns four one-time opera singers, played by Dame Maggie Smith, Billy Connolly, Tom Courtenay and Pauline Collins, their previous relationships and the unfolding and developing relationships in Beecham House.

Dame Maggie Smith, with her usual quick witted remarks, Billy Connolly, with his cynical earthy humour, Tom Courtenay providing pathos and sadness over his lost love, while Pauline Collins, a dippy foil and constant to the others, form the quartet.

The story line was a bit disjointed to start with until the theme became clearer as the egos, self importance and rivalries clashed but ultimately mellowed in the last performance TOGETHER of the Verdi Quartet.

The witty dialogue makes for a very entertaining, real and heartwarming film with one liners such as "The performance brought tears to my ears" or "You are an artist, I am an artisan" or "We have a chair lift." "How do you propose we get down? Ski ?" And a memorable one that summed up the story's enthusiasm for life, "Live life 'til you die."

We could say much more but we don't want to spoil the film by revealing all and hope we have whetted your appetite. It is definitely a "must see".  
Margaret Brady and Maureen Lomas.

### **Manx Newspapers**

I am grateful to Richard Butt, Editor of Isle of Man newspapers, who picked up the fact that our contributor had not seen much coverage of the life of Marshall Cubbon and he kindly explained how news items were reported. I was not aware that news is not repeated from title to title so the coverage given was as extensive as we should have expected: a page lead in the Manx Independent and the story on the company web site, [www.iomtoday.co.im](http://www.iomtoday.co.im)

DBH

### **Christian May Teare**

LMS member, Ean Ravenscroft has let me know that his grandmother died in late October at the age of 97 at the Corrin Memorial Home in Peel, a near neighbour of Phyllis Long.

Ean writes:

Christian May Teare, known as May, was born on 28th March 1915 and passed away on 28th October 2012 aged 97. She grew up in Foxdale before moving to Peel. She was married to William 'Timmy' Teare and they had three children; Ray, Anne and Ronald both deceased

May was known for her love of animals which led her to work at Knockaloe Experimental Farm and the Manx Cattery. She spent much of her time running jumble sales, bingo nights, auctions and other fund raisers to raise money for the Peel Anti-Cancer Association which contributed to her receiving the honorary Freemanship of the City of Peel in September 1999, "in appreciation of her long and loyal service to voluntary and charitable causes in the City".

She was a regular participant and contributor to the Peel City Carnival, rowed in the ladies Viking Boat, was a Peel Commissioner and a proud citizen of the City and made the best bonnagh on the Island!

### **A Trick Of The Tail**

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Cat flapped       | Cat however          |
| On seeing Bird    | Made no account      |
| Unperturbed       | Of swishing tail     |
| Avoid his surge   | That without fail    |
|                   | Alerted Birds        |
|                   | To Cats travail      |
| Cat undeterred    |                      |
| Did merge         | Then perching Birds  |
| With foliage      | En-masse gave thanks |
| In sneaky         | That Cat was English |
| Feline camouflage | And not born Manx    |

Ean Ravenscroft

## **Manx Language**

### **Excellent article on BBC web site:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-21242667>

It tells of a language brought back from the dead and of its comeback over sixty years, especially over the last twenty-five. There is a lovely feature on the bunscoil ghaelgagh. And, with the admission that it's never going to be at the point where you will hear a whole pub full of people talking in Manx, points out that it can be heard widely in the street. It even suggests a few of us may have left behind a tholtan. Perhaps we had better start learning a little of the language:

... and what better way than:

### **Arraneyn – Manx Gaelic Traditional Song**

Originally recorded on vinyl in Peel during 1973, this collection of unaccompanied Manx ballads under the title of 'Arraneyn Beal-arrish Vannin' has now been re-issued on CD by the Manx Heritage Foundation.

Recordings of Manx traditional music are in short supply, so this will be viewed by many as a valuable insight into the early stages of the Manx music revival.

'Arraneyn' includes a cross section of songs, using original Manx versions of many well-known examples taken from the Manx National Song Book, and others that dwell on more unusual aspects of Island life, such as dead hens and witches in corsets!

Recorded by Manx speaker Brian Stowell, his clear and distinctive voice provides an opportunity to hear the Island's native tongue at its best, with his energetic delivery and clarity of voice ideal for anyone wishing to learn Manx songs.

An evocative presentation, Brian's recordings have already captured the attention of BBC broadcaster and award-winning Scottish Gaelic singer and harpist Mary Ann Kennedy, who selected 'Arrane Sooree' (The Courting Song) to represent the Isle of Man on the triple CD set 'Beginners Guide to Celtic'.

Full lyrics, translations and extensive notes from the original recording have been retained on the disc as a PDF file for listeners who would like to know more about the songs.

'Arraneyn' is available from all good bookshops and at Manx National Heritage sites across the Island priced at £12.

[www.manxmusic.com](http://www.manxmusic.com)

Valerie Caine

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(Courtesy of Manx Life)

## **Ash Dieback Disease (*Cholera fraxinus*)**

### **Manx Government Takes Action**

Ash Dieback Disease has been causing major problems in the west of continental Europe where it has killed something like 90% of the trees infected. Unfortunately, it has spread to parts of the United Kingdom and Eire and increasing numbers of trees have been infected. It is spread by the wind via fungal spores. The spores can travel up to something like 30-40km from area to area. Its spread to Eire and UK seems to have resulted from human spread of trees and plant material.

So far there are no reported Manx incidents of the disease. In the Isle of Man Ash can often be found in hedgerows and small areas of woodland. However, the Rowan Tree that is common in hedge rows and is sometimes known as Mountain Ash is not part of the Ash family and so not vulnerable to infection. Although the distance of the Isle of Man from Eire and the UK should secure it from natural spread the Manx Government has taken action to prevent the human and plant material road of infection. In early November last year the Isle of Man Government implemented the The Plant Health (Ash Die Back Prevention) Order, which prohibits the importation of Ash products, seeds and plants into the Island. This is to counter the threat to Manx woodland.

In the meantime The Manx Wildlife Trust is helping DEFA-Rheynn Chymmyltaght, Bee as Eirynis (The Department of Environment Food and Agriculture) to monitor existing trees.

The website for the Manx Wildlife Trust - [manxwt.org.uk](http://manxwt.org.uk)

**Alastair Kneale**

### **Visiting LMS web site**

If you get a chance we have a couple of non LMS newsletters on the website. Four times a year we receive the Queensland Manx Society's newsletter. This quarter's edition includes an article about a new app for both Apple and Android devices called Learn Manx (so have we. Ed) which is an introduction to Manx Gaelic.

Another newsletter, which always makes interesting reading, is Manx Music from the Manx Heritage Foundation. Maron's niece Dr Chloe Woolley is the Island's Manx Music Specialist. It's a very easy way to keep up to date with the Island's music scene and filled with articles and colourful photographs. This is updated monthly.

We also receive regular articles from Valerie Caine and we try to keep these up to date.

London Manx Society website – [londonmanxsociety.com](http://londonmanxsociety.com)

Go to NEWS and then MANXLIFE

**Wendy Ellis Kneen**

### **Maron Honeyborne**

Members who have not heard the news (I know it travels fast amongst the Manx) will be saddened to learn that Maron had a fall on arriving home from the OKW annual dinner last month and suffered a broken pelvis. She has been transferred from Ealing Hospital to St George's Hospital, Tooting for specialist treatment. We wish her a speedy recovery.

DBH

### **Margaret Brady**

We are sorry to advise you that Margaret has decided to stand down from the Society's committee after many years of stalwart support and service. A vote of thanks was formally passed at a recent meeting of the committee and I'm sure members will be equally grateful. Do consider expressing them at our AGM on 25th March (notice enclosed) and voting for her successor and to fill a vacancy on the committee while re-electing current members – or not!

DBH

### **Letters to Editor**

What do you know about the London Manx Society Choir? A friend has just given me a CD compilation he has made from old 78rpm records and it includes several tracks from LMS recordings made in 1937 plus a couple of fairly scratchy tracks from a 'London Manx Choir' made in 1928.

Perhaps the current LMS should make some up to date recordings?

**Mike Devereau**

Some time ago MNH, of which I am a Trustee, sent a parcel of surplus books from the MNH collection to Platteville and more recently I routed a box of Hall Caine's and the like via the Museum here for our archivists to take their pick and offer the rest to Mary Kelly (NAMA). Other LMS members might consider this if they wish ensure that Manx ephemera reaches a good home. In passing I should say that we (MNH) are always interested in hearing of any Manx related items. With the iMuseum now up and running we know how fascinated people are not just in who their ancestors were but in the social history of the Island they lived on.

**Mike Devereau**

### **Island Quiz**

(open to non-members through the web site)

1. What was the name of the oldest ever Manxman  
a) Arthur Caley, b) Jony Kaighin, c) Ned Maddrell, d) Dan Teare?
2. Where on the island can you find the twelve apostles  
a) Bishops court, b) Cashtal yn Ard, c), Druidale, d) St Patrick's Isle?
3. Where on the Island can you find the Sugarloaf Rock  
a) Bradda head, b) Chasms, c) Maughold Head, d) North Barrule?
4. Where on the Island can you find the Carnanes  
a) north of Ballasalla, b) east of St John's, c) west of Peel, d) south of Cronk ny Iree Laa?
5. Which estuary is crossed by a ferry called the "Three Legs of Man"  
a) Knysna, Western Cape. b) Ohio River, Cleveland, c) Papeete, Tahiti, d) Port Arthur, Tasmania?

Our thanks to Rose Fowler for two more questions.

Answers to the editor by post or email, please. Closing date 14th April.

The first reader to send me five correct answers will receive a ten-day Explorer ticket to Manx National Heritage sites.

Our thanks for their kind support.

Answers to December's quiz:

1. Illiam Dhone is buried at Kirk Arbory.
2. Hop tu naa means New Year's Eve.
3. Bishop Walter Shirley had the shortest incumbency of Sodor and Man.
4. "The Eternal City" is set in Rome.
5. South Barrule used to be known as Wardfell.

No all-correct answer was received.

### **Through the misty panes**

Phyllis Long's son, Christopher has sent me a copy of the family history he produced, a family that includes three past presidents of London Manx. He is happy to furnish a copy to anyone interested in reading it.

**DBH**

### **To a Manx Cat transported to England**

*We remain with youth for our poetry page this quarter with a recently rediscovered poem:*

Do you remember, Finlo?

Do you remember the farm?

And the flashing and the dashing

As the ducks went splashing

And the buzz of the bees

Passing under the trees

On a sun-warmed afternoon?

And the low, soft coo

Of the pigeons, too

And the gold of the harvest moon?

Do you remember, Finlo?

Do you remember the farm?

And the squeaks of the mice

As they nibbled in the barn

And, after that, their rambling,

Gambolling, scrambling in and out and

Round about the sweetly-scented hay?

And a rosy dawn, sweeping over the corn

Standing at attention in the morning light?

Do you remember, Finlo?

Do you remember the farm?

**Maisie McDonald.** Aged 14 (in 1936)

### **Postage Costs**

The number of members opting to read the newsletter on line to reduce the expense of posting has reached fifteen; our thanks to them all for helping the society to keep within its budget. If still a paper reader, do continue to enjoy the paper copy but please consider joining the electronic set.

DBH

### **Acknowledgements**

The Editor thanks Margaret Brady, Richard Butt, Valerie Caine, Mike Devereau, Rose Fowler, Alastair Kneale, Maureen Lomas, Shaun Murphy, Ean Ravens-croft, Maisie Sell for their kind contribution and also the Manx National Heritage 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) or 132 Bush Hill, N21 2BS.

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**Closing date for the next issue, 24th May.**

### **Dates for your diary**

#### **AGM**

Monday 25th March

2.00 p.m. after a 1 o'clock lunch (20% discount if bought with Manx banknotes)

Real Man Pizza Company, 91-95 Clerkenwell Road, EC1R 5BX

(Buses 17, 45 or 46 from King's Cross; 55 or 243 from Old Street or Holborn)

#### **Annual lunch**

Saturday 20th April

12.15 for 12.45 p.m.

Doubletree by Hilton, 92 Southampton Row, WC1B 4BH

Guest of honour will be Melodie Waddingham.

Book early to ensure a place

#### **Midsummer Cooish**

Saturday 6th July

12.30 p.m.

2 Priory Way, Hitchin, Herts. SG4 9BH

The home of Nicolas and Elizabeth Watson

#### **Mhelliah**

Monday 7th October

St Bride's Church and Press House Wine Bar

### **NEXT NEWSLETTER DUE IN THREE MONTHS**

#### **PLEASE SEND NEWS TO:**

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