

## NEWSLETTER Summer 2012

Editor – Douglas Barr-Hamilton

### **Pizza and Policy**

The Real Man Pizza Company on Clerkenwell Road was a novel venue for this year's AGM on 2nd April. The shock of going through the red doors, under the Manx flag and finding the interior full of Manx memorabilia in the heart of the City of London was somewhat unreal but by the time we had completed the business and were ordering dishes with the names, "Dhoon Glen" and "Ballabeg" we were feeling at home.

A group of us had paid a visit to the Dickens' House beforehand just before it closed for refurbishment in this bi-centenary year of his birth and, although she was unable to join us at the museum, we were delighted to see Rose at the restaurant as she had done some research for us on the subject and was looking well after her recent illness.

London Manx is still functioning without a president and we welcomed new member Alastair Kneale onto the committee. Our finances are still looking healthy in the capable hands of Sam Weller and arrangements were discussed for the annual lunch at the end of the month.

### **Mavis Bell**

### **Annual Lunch**

The annual lunch was held on 28th April at the Doubletree by Hilton (Bonnington) Hotel and our Guest of Honour was Mr Edmund Southworth, director of Manx National Heritage.

Following an excellent meal that included such gastronomic delights as chicken liver parfait, walnut bread, roast pork with apricot and thyme stuffing and pear and almond tart, past president Stewart Christian invited us to raise our glasses to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, Lord of Mann and we sang the Manx National Anthem. Alastair Kneale then treated members to a most illuminating talk about St Maughold (whose Saints Day fell on the same date) in his toast, "The Land of Our Birth." In the late fifth century an Irish brigand named Macaille or MaccCuill was converted by St Patrick who put him to sea in a coracle with his

feet in manacles to teach him the error of his ways! He was washed up on Maughold Head and the story goes that a fish caught at Port y Vullen contained a key to free his legs. St Maughold went on to become Bishop and was greatly loved by the Manx people. Alastair toasted the Land of Our Birth, our friends, our memories and traditions.



Sam Weller then proposed the toast to our Guests and the reply was given by our Guest of Honour, Edmund Southworth who had flown over that morning to join us and tell about his appointment two years ago as Director of Manx National Heritage. Familiar with the Island as a child growing up in Lancaster, he recalled the bus journey into Douglas for his interview, watching people surreptitiously saluting the fairies on the way from the airport. Steam trains, lower taxes, pure beer and eating kipper baps on the breakwater at Peel convinced Edmund and his wife that they wanted to stay.

He then gave us a short history of the Manx Museum starting with the first museum in 1927 to protect the national language, literature and music. Harry Kelly's cottage was acquired in 1937, followed by the Grammar School and Peggy in Castletown and Peel Castle and Laxey Wheel in the 1970s. Castle Rushen was transferred from Government Property Trustees in the 1990s followed, more recently, by Rushen Abbey, this acquisition with the help of Friends and the community. House of Mannanin opened in the late 80s and the newly opened iMuseum takes us into the digital age with access to Manx newspapers dating back to 1793 and information on all Manx heritage including the ever-popular Family History Department.

Edmund has encouraged the Museum shop to stock goods made on the Island and spoke about entering a period of challenge with a smaller budget and changes in VAT. Now working with a smaller Board of Trustees, he is confident that the Manx National Heritage with all its assets will continue to ensure that

their legacy is preserved and made available for the Manx people in years to come.

There followed our usual extended raffle and the proceedings concluded with an enthusiastic rendition of Ellan Vannin

**Mavis Bell**

### **North American Manx assemblé in August**

The biennial convention of the North American Manx Association is scheduled for 9-12th August and will take place in the town of Platteville in Wisconsin.

The Manx connection with the state is ancient. Manx artefacts from the region have recently been centralised and the local university has placed them in a new museum which will be dedicated during the weekend; there is even a town named Laxey nearby which the convention plans to visit.

Guest of Honour to the Convention will be Clare Christian MLC president of Tynwald. We wish everyone well.

**DBH**

### **Knox Tour Boosts Manx Cultural Tourism**

Several members of the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society travelled from various parts of the UK to attend a unique study tour of the Isle of Man recently organised in conjunction with the Island based Archibald Knox Society. They

stayed at The Regency Hotel in Douglas which boasts its own permanent collection of Manx art, including a selection of water-colours by the celebrated Manx designer Archibald Knox. They were also joined by a member of the Archibald Knox Society who travelled from New York.

The Study Tour, which has been fully booked for some time, engaged its participants in a unique visitor experience during an extended weekend visit, immersed in the remarkable work of Archibald Knox, Baillie Scott, John Miller Nicholson and Irish stained glass genius Harry Clarke. Liam O'Neill, Chairman of the Archibald Knox Society commented, "The Study Tour was very quickly sold out and we intend to organise further tours in the future. I think there is a very good market for cultural tourism which we have not fully exploited on the Isle of Man".

Predictably inclined towards the life and work of Archibald Knox, visitors were guided towards many venues and designs associated with the Manx artist, including his birthplace in Cronkbourne, the intricate work of selected memorials and Knox's own gravestone at the new Braddan Cemetery. There was also an opportunity to study examples of his work held in private collections and at the Manx Museum, and revisit the designer's plans to rejuvenate the ruins of the original St German's Cathedral on St Patrick's Isle. In addition lectures were given by Peter Kelly MBE about the renowned architect and artist Baillie Scott, and by the Founder and Chairman of the Archibald Knox Society, Liam O'Neill, on the theme of the life and work of the Manx designer Archibald Knox.

The Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society is an independent charity established in 1973 to promote and encourage awareness of the Scottish architect and designer across the world.

During a short-lived, but significant architectural career, Glasgow born Mackintosh developed his own style incorporating elements of his Scottish upbringing with the influences of Art Nouveau and Asian design. He was also an admirer of Japonism and was a major influence on European design.

Linked by their unique artistic flair for unusual and creative designs, there are many parallels between the lives of Knox and Mackintosh. The work of both men straddled the turn of the nineteenth century, both at the height of their careers 1900 – 1905, and it was only after their deaths that recognition of their work garnered the full admiration of a generous public.

**Valerie Caine**

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(Courtesy of Manx Tails)

### **Record Prices for Archibald Knox Work at Christie's**

Three pieces of work designed by the world famous Manx designer Archibald Knox were auctioned recently and consistently achieved record values far in excess of estimated prices.

Made by Knox for the celebrated Liberty & Co. these iconic pieces formed part of a sale of 20th Century Decorative Art and Design by Christie's of London, one of the world's leading auction houses.

Work by Knox is now in great demand worldwide, with its distinctive style attracting buyers who are prepared to pay substantial sums of money to add the Manxman's work to their collections, as can be seen here:-

Cymric Candlesticks

Estimate £4,000 - £6,000 (\$6,488 - \$9,732)

Price Realised £23,750 (\$38,428)

Cymric Frame

Estimate £12,000 - £18,000 (\$19,464 - \$29,196)

Price Realised £52,850 (\$85,511)

Vase

Estimate £4,000 - £6,000 (\$6,488 - \$9,732)

Price realised £16,250 (\$26,293)

Joy McCall, Head of the 20th Century Decorative Arts Department commented, "The strong results achieved in this sale reflect the interest in 20th Century Decorative Art and Design on the international market. Pieces of fine British arts and crafts and Art Deco sculpture garnered some outstanding results. Some remarkable prices were achieved for extravagant examples of contemporary design highlighted by the top three lots which all significantly exceeded their pre-sale estimates. We look forward to the sale of 'Lalique' in South Kensington on 31 May, 2012, and 20th Century Decorative Art and Design on 23rd October, 2012".

**Valerie Caine**

© May 2012

## **Remembering Kathleen Joughin**

There are some Commonwealth War Graves where the friends and relatives of the dead cannot visit. The Suez Canal zone has Fayid, Moascar, & Tel-el Kebir right inside the 2nd Egyptian Field Army military area and two very close by. This was the first time on holiday since Maurice died suddenly three years ago. I had been in the WRAF some 18 years and I remembered seeing the graves of some of our girls on a previous visit and, as their friends and relatives could not get there, I could, on their behalf, place a wooden cross with a poppy on each grave. So I managed to get a list of the girls and the cemeteries they were in. My branch of the RBL gave me the wooden crosses to place on each WAAF's grave and some ATS graves. After the word Remembrance, I put WAAF/WRAF. RAFA. RBL.

While placing the crosses in the Moascar Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery Capt Paul Collins RN, the new British Military Attaché's came to meet all nine of us, I explained what I was doing and he took my photo.

When visiting the Heliopolis cemetery, my eyes spotted a grave which already had a poppy, to my surprise it had a good old Manx name, someone may know of her:- Private Kathleen Mildred Joughin. NZ Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. Died 28th November 1943 age 24. In the centre of the cross was what looked like a fir tree leaf.

I thought that someone might be interested.

**Maureen Wigley**

### **Beckwith's Mine Chimney Loses Its Top**

Beckwith's Mine lies in an isolated and lonely stretch of countryside located in Glen Rushen, on the west coast of the Island, its ruins a reminder of better days before the mining community left to seek pastures new, but today the mine is in the news again after recent gales finally toppled several feet of its characteristic leaning chimney. Bricks from its wavering stack lie scattered for some distance amongst the undergrowth which grows around the remains of the disused mine which opened in 1831, after the surprise discovery of lead ore, found trapped in the spokes of a cartwheel. It's the most westerly of the Foxdale group of mines, with its vein (known as the Foxdale shear) runs from west to east through Cross's Mine, Dixon's Mine and the main Foxdale group; a total of 13 mines.



The mine experienced many problems and closed in 1879, although it was actually quite productive for some considerable time, eventually reaching a depth of 185 fathoms. The chimney which marks the site of the engine shaft has withstood westerly winds for almost 150 years, but has now finally succumbed to some of the strong gales which battered the Island towards the end of April.



**Valerie Caine**

© April 2012

### **Kentraugh Mill Reveals Its Innermost Secrets**

With the onset of summer, the doors to a lovingly restored Manx historical building were thrown open to the public for National Mills Weekend on 12-13th May in celebration of a once burgeoning and important industry.

Organised by the Mills Section of the 'Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings', Kentraugh Mill based in the south of the Island revealed its innermost secrets of what was once thought to be an unused garage.



Affectionately referred to as 'The Little Mill', it remained with the Qualtrough family for more than 400 years, although it was not always passed from father to son; occasionally 'arranged marriages' ensured its continuity within the family. The surname Qualtrough was a common name in the south of the Island and is said to be derived from the McWhaltrough clan of Kentraugh, historically an important estate in the area. The word 'Kentraugh' itself is thought to mean 'head of the shore'.

Kentraugh Mill was probably a working mill for hundreds of years and believed to have been largely rebuilt about 1832, or earlier, when the current machinery was installed. Prior to this everything was of wooden construction. Although the machinery may look primitive and cumbersome it is in truth a remarkably simple and ingenious concept, demanding dexterity and experience.

Kentraugh Mill remained with the Qualtrough family until 1904 when it was sold to John Woods, a Miller from Ballabeg. It was in use until 1943 when the door was closed for the final time as a working mill and it stayed untouched for more than twenty years. It was subsequently renovated by Mr R. M. Nuttall, the present owner's father, when he purchased the miller's house in 1965.





Visitors over the weekend had the opportunity to take an extensive tour of the three-storey building, see the mill in action, learn more about its interesting history and wander over to the Chapel Garden, once used as a meeting place for the Primitive Methodists before becoming the miller's storeroom. There was also the chance to reminisce with people of the district who recall being sent to the mill as children for oat or barley meal, sample some delicious home-made refreshments in the miller's house and find out why the miller would hang out a red flannel petticoat from an upstairs bedroom window to attract the attention of drinkers at the nearby Shore Hotel!

Admission to the mill was free, but donations towards the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (a mission society of which the present co-owner, Canon Sheen, is a council member and long term representative) were most welcome.

**Valerie Caine**

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(Courtesy of Manx Tails)

(Slightly edited by DBH)

## **Peggy**

In her review of our annual lunch, Mavis mentions the acquisition of Peggy, now at home in the Nautical Museum in Castletown. Peggy is a schooner-rigged, clinker-built yacht, 26ft 5ins long, 7ft 8ins beam and an inside depth of 6ft built in 1789.

She can be found in the boat cellar of the museum. For many years almost forgotten, she had rested in this cellar undisturbed for more than a century and a half and, at some point in that time, the opening through which she used to pass into the harbour had been walled up and the ground filled in within the enclosure. She was "re-discovered" just after the war and immediately recognised as being of great interest. The Society for Nautical Research made a detailed record of her and plans and photographs were exhibited at the Science Museum, South Kensington.

In 1941, when Bridge House, the old home and town-house of the Quayles was sold, the Peggy was presented to the Manx Museum Trustees, together with the boathouse but not until 1950 did it become possible to start the necessary repairs. Happily, she had survived her long confinement almost intact and only the keel, the stern post and two planks of the hull where she had lain on her starboard side, required replacement. She was repaired by local craftsmen and placed in a cradle. (Her original keel is now preserved in the loft of the Nautical Museum). Finally, in 1951, the Trustees were able, with the aid of much generous support, to put the Nautical Museum and the Peggy on view to the public.

Most of the spars and both masts are still intact so it has been possible to reconstruct her sail plan with some accuracy. The rig appears to have consisted of a gaff mainsail, a gaff foresail, and a jib. An unusual feature which made her an advanced boat for her day was her drop keels (called "sliding keels" by Quayle), the slots for which can be seen and which made her much more manoeuvrable. Her transom stern is a particularly attractive one; the paintwork has survived and has been carefully preserved with its decorative motif and the inscription George Quayle Castletown. An earlier phase of the decoration of the stern can just be made out, with the name "PEGGY" in gilt on a green background. Altogether, the Peggy is a fine craft, and full of historic interest, showing as she does the skill and knowledge of her builders in her durability and the excellence of her design.

**DBH**

Source Manx National Heritage

## **Glen Mooar**

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My cousin and her husband recently enjoyed a week on the Island staying on the campsite at Cronk Aashen near Kirk Michael and began their stay with an early morning walk to Glen Mooar, one of the Islands seventeen “National” glens. They enjoyed the site with its beautiful views across the sea to both Scotland and Ireland. The glen too is beautiful.

“Wait a minute!” someone is saying. Rightly so: there are two other Glen Mooar on the Island, “Mooar” meaning big or great. This one is about a mile south of Michael and in the centre of the glen are the remains of 'Cabbal Pherick', a keeill, burial ground, and priest's cell from the 8-10th century. A path from the glen leads to Spooyt Vane (white spout waterfall in English): clearly an attraction to the glen and easily seen from it.

One used to be able to reach the glen by railway on the line that ran from St John's to Peel from 1879 to 1968 and spanned the glen on an iron railway viaduct, the stone pillars of which are all that remain and can be seen in the glen while the long distance footpath, Raad Ny Foillan (Road of the Gull in English) follows the old railway route in this area. The glen can, of course, also be reached by bus.

**DBH**

Source: I.O.M. Government, DEFA

## **Ramsey Park Hotel**

I am not looking for work but a job advertisement in the *Courier* of 11th May caught my eye. It was for an Operational Hotel Opening Consultant for the new Ramsey hotel that was seeking someone on a six month contract to prepare, open and start running a new hotel. The long anticipated replacement for the Grand Island Hotel that closed just after Christmas 2008, with its lovely views over the Mooragh Park, seems to be on its way.

**DBH**

## **Flights from London City Airport**

On 22nd March, I received an email from Aer Arann to say my flight to the Island on 14th May had been cancelled; they were cutting the route from 11th April. I was able to reorganise my visit using another carrier from the much less convenient Gatwick.

Fortunately, the inconvenience is not permanent. In early May the Island's Economic Development Minister, John Shimmin MHK announced that the airlink with City Airport would be restored on the 28th of that month. My next trip will be on a British Airways flight operated by BA Cityflier.

**DBH**

## **Ella Slack**

Many of you will have seen from your morning paper of 26th May that Ella, Guest of Honour at our 2011 lunch, was interviewed in the Daily Express and Daily Mail about her standing in for the Queen during rehearsals for the pageantry for the recent Diamond Jubilee. Maisie Sell kindly drew it to my attention - I take a different paper - but I was soon very aware as I received enquiries from as near as Fleet Street and as far away as New Zealand from people for whom Google had picked up the link from our web site which has a record of the talk she gave us. We had intended to include an article in this issue to describe what Ella was going to be doing during the Olympic Games but, after discussion, we decided to keep it a secret lest the details attracted more attention. Suffice to say, she will be working in London from 11th July so please be on the lookout for her should you be in the centre of town. It's amazing how often Manx paths cross!

Ella will be celebrating her birthday while she is here so, should you meet, the Manx greeting is, "Laa ruggyree sonney dhyt."

**DBH**

**Do visit our web site: [www.londonmanxsociety.com](http://www.londonmanxsociety.com)**

## **Island Quiz**

(open to non-members through the web site)

1. The 2012 mhelliah will be held at  
a) The Bonnington, b) St Bartholomew the Less, c) St Bride's, d) St Martin in the Fields?
2. Yn Chruinnaght 2012 will be held from  
a) 7-14th July, b) 14-21st July, c) 21-28th July, d) 28th July to 3rd August?
3. The Real Man Pizza Company is situated in  
a) Clerkenwell, b) Islington, c) Kensington, d) Soho?
4. In which T E Brown poem does the narrator remember, "Chasin' the bumbees hummin' so cross,"  
a) Alma Mater, b) Betsy Lee, c) Braddan Vicarage, d) Tommy Bigeyes?
5. The former Tynwald Club flourished in  
a) Ballabeg, b), Bavaria, c) Queensland, d) St John's?

*Answers to the editor by post or email, please. Closing date 12th July.*

*The first reader to send me five correct answers will receive a crisp Manx £20 note (worth more at the AGM)*

Answers to March's quiz:

1. There are 15 parishes in the Isle of Man (after the amalgamation of Andreas, Jurby and Ballaugh).
2. Mark Cavendish is World Road Racing world champion..
3. Laxey Woollen Mills recently acquired Manninkilt.
4. Elfin Glen runs from below Albert Tower to the Hairpin.
5. HMS Ramsey is a current Royal Navy warship.

*No all correct answers were received. My "test" in the first question to see if an article had been read caught everyone out!*

## **Peel Hill**

Oh, the peace, the blessed peace of it all!  
The warm, sweet air like wine,  
The scent of gorse, the drifts of purple heather –  
How can I truly paint it with this pen of mine?

'Mongst the bracken wandering, heart at ease,  
On golden afternoons, blue skies above,  
The only sound the droning of the bees;  
Serenity and sweet content go hand in glove.

To rest awhile on soft, green springy turf,  
As fitting to my comfort as a bed,  
The chirruping grasshoppers for my company.  
As I gaze at seagulls overhead.

Lazily they glide their way 'gainst azure sky,  
White, sweeping wings, high-lighted by the sun,  
Till homing fishing vessels they spy –  
Then sudden raucous greediness in unison.

I watch the sheep while leisurely they graze  
On pastures succulent in hollows there.  
Betimes they lift their head and with suspicious eyes  
They fix on me a long and solemn stare.

A ridge of dark green pine trees I recall,

Tall sentinels above the harbour stand,  
Whose aromatic branches fill the air  
With pungent perfume wafting o'er the land.

I savour those delights on summer days  
To store against the coming winter's gloom,  
When all the joyous memories of my holidays  
Return and lend enchantment to my room.

**Maisie Sell**

### **Acknowledgements**

The Editor thanks Mavis Bell, Valerie Caine, Maisie Sell, Maureen Wigley 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*) otherwise 132 Bush Hill, London N21 2BS. Copyright is retained by the contributor. Closing date for the next issue, 28th August.

### **Dates for your diary**

#### **Midsummer Cooish**

Sunday 1st July at 132 Bush Hill, London N21 2BS from about one o'clock.  
(contact editor for travel directions 020 8360 8001)

#### **Mhelliah**

1st October has been chosen for this year's mhelliah and we shall be going back to St Bride's for our gathering and to the Press House Wine Bar for our meal. The combination worked well in 2011 and was appreciated by all who attended. They hope to be joined by many more members and guests this time. More details in our next issue.

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

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

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