

NEWSLETTER Summer 2022  
Editor – Douglas Barr-Hamilton

**Back at St. Martin's**

The Society held its annual general meeting, the first for three years because of the pandemic, on Monday 16th May and the members there were determined to see things burst into life again. There will be no change in the make-up of the committee but it is decided to make immediate arrangements to get back to normal after the pandemic and as soon the meeting was over, fixed 8th July for its Tynwald Cooish and made contact with St Bride's Church enabling them to use the building for the Mhelliagh on 3rd October with lunch following the service.

The need to contain expenditure, especially in the cost of posting newsletters will mean a request to members to receive a copy by email but the society has healthy reserves so there will also be financial incentives to attend some events, especially needed as it would love to attract new members, particularly more younger ones.

**DBH**

**OBITUARY**

**Derek Costain**



The first Society event that I attended was a Tynwald Day cooish at Derek's lovely home in Weybridge so receiving the sad news of his death on 22nd March at the age of 95 very much marked the end of an era for me. It was my privilege to have known him and a privilege for the Society to have had him as a member.

Immensely proud of his Manx heritage, Derek was born in 1926 and grew up in Colby at “Glendale,” the son of William Alfred, who ran the post office shop and bakery and Lillian his mother, the daughter of famous sea-captain John Cubbin; and he went to Arbory School then to King William’s College with a scholarship, leaving there immediately after taking A levels in the week of D-day to join the RNVR. After training and commissioned as a Sub-Lieutenant, he served on HMS Liberty, part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Minesweeping Flotilla based in Singapore which cleared the Japanese-laid minefields off the north coast of Borneo in the South China Sea. In one four day sweep alone, the flotilla destroyed 153 mines. He later served in home waters on HMS Helmsdale on anti-submarine duties.

After leaving the Navy, he went to Corpus Christi College, Oxford and read PPE from 1948-1951.

A successful and fascinating 38 year career in the steel industry with British Steel followed where he was very fondly described as being a strong leader, a perfectionist and someone with an immense capacity for hard work, with ever-present humour and a capacity to relate and gel with whoever he was dealing with of every nation, background, culture and age. After specialising on the international side, he spent several years in India to oversee the merging of British Steel’s subsidiaries in the sub-continent and was rewarded with promotion to a director of the organisation as head of exports.

In 1957 he attended a King William’s London Old Boys’ dinner and met Keke, daughter of Michael Wilkinson, who had a strong Manx connection and had been head boy of King William’s in 1917/18 fell in love and they were married on 15th October 1960. Sadly, Keke died in 2013 and in that year he was her carer and looked after her so well before she died of cancer. He is survived by his daughter Tania and son Nigel and grandsons Harry and Johnny to whom the Society extends its condolences.

A faithful member of the Society, he served as its president in the years 2000 and 2001 overseeing a period of growth, especially of younger members, continuing on the committee for several years and attending the society’s events until he was into his nineties. He was remembered at the Society’s AGM on

16th May and King William's flag flew at half mast on 26th April, the day of his funeral,

**Douglas Barr-Hamilton**

### **Welcome to the Cooish**

This year the Cooish will take place on Friday 8th July, 2022 at Sally and Peter Miller's house in Cambridge. It will be lunch in the garden starting at 1.00pm. Manx kippers will be served - as well as other options.

Address: 225 Chesterton Road, Cambridge CB4 1AN

Tel: 0788 660 4249 or 01223 502007 email: sallymiller7@gmail.com

Contributions towards lunch would be gratefully received. Some suggestions:

A bottle of wine

A salad (eg bags of mixed leaves)

A pudding

French bread

Please let Sally know if you can attend, what you would like to bring and if you will travel by train or car. Trains to Cambridge from London leave from both Kings Cross and Liverpool Street stations. If you plan to arrive by car, call Sally to discuss parking. Please also advise any dietary requirements.

**Sally Miller**

### **Island's Ukrainian resident numbers increase**

The first refugees from the war in Ukraine arrived on the Island in the first few days of April to join family members already resident. It was reported that some eighteen people have been granted permission to come to the Isle of Man and that a further twenty-one applications through the family-related immigration pathway are being considered.

Arrivals from Ukraine will be granted leave to remain for up to three years with access to education, healthcare, benefits as well as the right to work and a further 21 applications were in the pipeline on that day.

**DBH**

Source, Manx Radio

## **City of Douglas**

I thought I had finished typing the newsletter last Friday when I got a message from Society member David Kirkby that Douglas was to be elevated to the status of a city so had to investigate and get tapping on the keyboard once again. Manx Radio told me that Douglas is one of eight new cities announced as part of the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations. For the first time local authorities in crown dependencies and overseas territories had been invited to compete and Douglas was successful but Peel not. They had been two of forty local authorities from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories to ask for consideration.

I had been taught long ago that the definition of a city was a town with a cathedral but the report in the Manx Courier newspaper told us that idea was, “long defunct” and the cathedral method no longer valid. It also described Douglas as the first and only city on the Island and, since Peel, often called the Sunset City, had met the old definition, I rang LMS members Dave and Mavis Bell for their reaction. “We just live here,” was Dave’s reply. They felt the change would not make much difference.



There was delight in Douglas, however, and the Mayor, Janet Thommeny told the paper, “It is an honour for Douglas and everybody who lives and works here to receive this recognition and I’m sure everyone connected with the town, or should I say city, will be incredibly proud.”

I understand it will officially become a city later this year when the palace issues Letters Patent.

**DBH**

## **Peel Castle Conservation Work**

The gatehouse at Peel Castle forms part of the earliest standing defences at Peel Castle. It was built in the late 14th century by Sir William le Scrope and now needs some repair. It was built at the most vulnerable part of St Patrick's Isle forming part of the castle's earliest defences. The ground floor served as the guardroom, while at first and second floor levels there were living quarters complete with grand fireplaces. At this time, there was no causeway between St. Patrick's Isle and Peel, the River Neb flowing out to sea where Fenella Beach now lies with the isle only accessible at low tide.

At the very top were the battlements and it is this area in which stonemasons have recently begun work to secure sections of weathered and storm damaged masonry including wall-heads which protect the integrity of the walls beneath them. These areas of masonry were repaired in the 1870s and what is now taking place is effectively the repair of a repair.

**DBH**

Source, Manx National Heritage

## **Slave trade links revealed**

Manx National Heritage, in collaboration with the One World Centre Isle of Man, has published a trail around the historic City of Peel to explore its links to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The trail explores Peel's links with the Island's slaving past, using artefacts and resources from the Island's national museum collections and archives, based on a guided walk of the town that links buildings and past residents to what was known as 'the Guinea trade'. The trail explores Peel's links with the Island's slaving past, using artefacts and resources from the Island's national museum collections and archives, based on a guided walk of the town that links buildings and past residents to what was known as 'the Guinea trade'.

Manx National Heritage has been working with the One World Centre Isle of Man to acknowledge the part the Isle of Man played in what was the largest forced migration in history, with some 11 million Africans transported to the New World.

Anthea Young, Education Services Officer, Manx National Heritage, said, “We are delighted to have worked alongside our friends at the One World Centre Isle of Man to address stories of enslaved peoples past and present. The trail is launched on 25th March 2022 which is the United Nations International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade”.

Phil Craine, Chair of the One World Centre Isle of Man, added, “Understanding the significant part the Island played in the transatlantic slave trade - and how events from years ago continue to shape attitudes today - is important. The Trail will be an eye-opener for some and it also gives us an opportunity to reflect that, whilst more hidden from sight than in the past, modern-day slavery continues to impact the lives of millions of people around the world”.

Initially beginning with Portuguese and Spanish traders taking enslaved West and Central African people to the American colonies conquered in the 15th century, British sailors became involved in the transatlantic slave trade in the 16th century, with their involvement increasing in the 18th century when the Treaty of Utrecht gave them the right to sell enslaved people in the Spanish Empire. British slave traders sailed from ports including Glasgow, Liverpool and Bristol to West Africa. It was there that West Africans were exchanged for trade goods such as brandy and guns. The terrible conditions on board the ships resulted in the deaths of 2 million people during the journey.

Anthea continued, “The Island’s strategic location in the centre of the Irish Sea and its low import duties contributed significantly to the slave trade, helping generate profit for those who sold and exchanged enslaved people. Through this new walking tour, we hope to offer an insight into the depth of the Island’s links to this terrible trade, including the homes of wealthy merchants and the warehouses once crammed with Guinea Goods”.

Commencing at Weatherglass Corner and concluding on Peel Promenade, the walking tour makes its way along East Quay, which was once bustling with activity including shipbuilding and the making of nets, rope and sails. From East Quay, the tour continues to Crown Street and the former home of Sir George Moore. A prolific letter writer, records show that Moore had ‘Guinea’ contacts in Liverpool and on the Isle of Man. His house was reputed to be the finest in Peel, with a yard, storehouse and cellars all located nearby and

accessible at the quayside. Along with his brother Philip, he was involved in the smuggling of brandy, rum, wine, tea, tobacco and ‘Guinea Goods’.

Further stops include the former residence of Manx slave captain George Cannon, who served as a ‘boy’ on the *Rawlinson*, sailing out of Liverpool for Jamaica. Ten months later he arrived back in Liverpool with a cargo of rum and sugar before returning to the Island to enrol in 1781 as a scholar of the Peel Mathematical School on Market Street, another stop on the tour. Its purpose was not to teach maths as we know it today, but to teach the skills needed for navigation: bringing forward a young man intended for the sea, with at least four Mathematical School scholars becoming captains of Liverpool-based Guinea vessels.

Copies of the Peel and the Transatlantic Salve trade tour can be found at the House of Manannan and the Old Bonded Warehouse in Peel or downloaded from [www.manxnationalheritage.im](http://www.manxnationalheritage.im)

**Manx National Heritage**

### **Birling/Lhong liauyr**

What do Manx words have to say to us about Manx life, history, identity? Although it’s related to Irish and Scottish Gaelic, Manx is a unique language, and its vocabulary reflects a unique community and experience. Let’s explore a few Manx words that have an interesting story to tell. The sea is arguably as important in defining Manx identity as the Isle of Man itself. Today we might think the sea isolates or separates the island and its people from the rest of the world, but that’s a modern view. The sea actually connects the Manx to other lands. Remember, the Medieval Kingdom of Man and the Isles stretched from Man to Lewis in the Scottish Hebrides and that the Manx had strong connections to Dublin in the early Middle Ages (King Gorree, or Godred Crovan), ruled Dublin for a time as well as the Isle of Man. The Manx are rightly famed as mariners and there are many Manx words and phrases related to boats, ships, and sailing.

The two words we’ll explore here refer to a specific type of ship, however, the longship that once made the Isle of Man the dominant Irish Sea naval power.

Birling ultimately, and most fittingly, is a word of Norse origin, from byroingr, which originally may have meant a “ship of boards” or “ship of burden” (a cargo-carrying ship). The Gaels adopted the word as beirling, and the modern Irish word has the same spelling as the Manx word (and that’s highly unusual!). Birling is most often translated as “galley” or “barge”. In Scotland the word became birlinn, and the famous Clann Domhnaill and Clann Raghnaill (Clan Donald and Clanranald, a branch of the MacDonalds) who inherited Manx sea power in the later Middle Ages used the birlinn, little changed over the centuries, as late as the 1600’s. As a symbol of the Isle of Man, the longship is second only to Ny Tree Cassyn (the three legs). The ancient arms of the Kings of Mann featured a longship, and the modern flag of Tynwald, the Manx Parliament, features a gold birling on a field of blue. (This is the MacDonald Flag, named not for Clan Donald but Roy Macdonald, a former member of the House of Keys for Peel). The image of a birling above is from the Hedin Cross, Kirk Maughold, Isle of Man, and dates to the period of the Kingdom of Man and the Isles (1079-1265). It is strikingly similar to the later West Highland galley of birlinn. These ships might have 12 or 24 oars. There likely were smaller versions of these clinker-built, single-masted ships, and maybe larger ones, too. They could carry large numbers of men and goods quickly across the Irish Sea. If it took three men to work an oar, as a 17th. Century source suggests, the 12 oared longship would have a crew of 36 plus any additional passengers, and a 24 oared ship might have 72 men at the oars! The Manx kings commanded large fleets. Small wonder English kings John and Henry III in the early 1200s decided to pay Manx kings to patrol and protect – rather than raid – the Irish and English coasts.

Lhong liauyr is a direct translation of longship, or in the case, “a ship (that is) long”, as Manx places adjectives after nouns. Lhong is long in Irish and Scottish Gaelic, and the word’s origin may be found in Norse or Latin. Liauyr is the Manx word for “long” as in length. It’s one of those older Gaelic words that survive in Manx but not in the other Gaelic languages. Irish and Scottish Gaelic now use fada (Manx foddey) to mean “long” but once used leabhar or leahhra as well. We find this word in medieval poetry but not in modern usage – except on the Isle of Man.

Courtesy of Bill “Illiam” Cassidy - NAMA

Published in Queensland Manx Association newsletter

## **Mountain Driving**

Since mid-April drivers have been required to stop for red light while a tram is crossing the Mountain Road on its way to the summit of Snaefell. Following a recent review, a traffic-light controlled level crossing with stop lines has replaced the “Give way” markings at the tram crossing at the Bungalow. The lights will show red when a Snaefell Mountain Railway tram is about to cross, instead of the amber warning lights previously used.

The Department of Infrastructure says the change comes following consultation with the Isle of Man TT and won't have an impact on the races.

**DBH**

Source::Manx Radio

## **Fifth decade of Celtic gatherings**

Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering ([www.celticgathering.im](http://www.celticgathering.im)) has been celebrating Manx, Irish, Cornish, Welsh, Scottish and Breton culture for over forty years. Based in Peel, the festival presents six days of music and dance concerts, family friendly ceilis, talks and workshops, Celtic language and literature, delicious food ‘n’ folk sessions, an artisan craft fair and lots of free community events. Held between 25th and 31st July, the 2022 line-up includes an exclusive reunion gig with Scottish band Deaf Shepherd, Irish fiddle maestro Frankie Gavin accompanied by Catherine McHugh, and one of the hottest bands on the Celtic scene today, Mec Lir. There’ll be Manx music and dance galore, with the Mega Manx Ceili and the premiere of a new musical work by young Manx fiddle player Isla Callister. Festival-goers will also enjoy sea shanties from Bryher’s Boys from Cornwall, and colourful dance displays from Welsh team Dawnsyr Gwerin Pen-y-Fai. RL360, the Isle of Man Steam Packet and Thornton Chartered Financial Planners join Culture Vannin, the IOM Arts Council, Culture Ireland, Digital Group and Visit Isle of Man in supporting Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering. The Isle of Man is a short journey from Dublin, Belfast and most UK airports, with ferry links from Heysham, Liverpool and Dublin. Yn Chruinnaght means ‘the Gathering’ in Manx Gaelic, and you’ll be sure to get a warm welcome at this year’s Celtic Gathering! All information on the festival and tickets: [www.celticgathering.im](http://www.celticgathering.im) and [www.ynchruinnaght.com](http://www.ynchruinnaght.com) [www.facebook.com/CelticGatheringIOM/](https://www.facebook.com/CelticGatheringIOM/)

**CultureVannin**

## **Governor's night on Snaefell**

The governor, Sir John Lorimer and his wife Lady Philippa, having braved the waves and freezing water of Douglas Bay on Christmas Day, faced different elements to join a 65-strong team who spent the night of 7th May under the stars and atop the mountain aiming to raise £20,000 for the Manx charity, Breast Cancer Now. They had each pledged to raise at least £300 and in the event they exceeded expectation to raise a total of £24,000.

### **DBH**

Source Manx Radio



## **Noble's Hospital**

London residents have had an hospital for almost nine hundred years: ever since one opened at St. Bartholomew's Monastery in 1123, remaining open ever since, surviving the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII in the late 1530s before being transferred to the City of London in 1546 instead of being destroyed, untouched by the Great Fire of London and despite by being hit three times by bombs during the blitz of WW2. We know it affectionally as Bart's.

Island residents got theirs only in 1850 and I wondered if members would be interested in its development to be able to provide the Covid-19 care of which we have been reading for two years. The first island hospital was in Fort Street, Douglas. With its dispensary, it opened with three floors and an attic where the servants had rooms. The men's ward was on the second floor and the women's on the third, each overcrowded when twelve beds were needed. The first floor provided accommodation for the matron and a room for the surgeon's appointments and the ground floor was dedicated to patient reception and the dispensary. With overcrowding becoming more frequent, by the 1880s it was clear that a new hospital was needed.

Henry Bloom Noble came to the rescue. He had arrived on the island from Westmoreland to work for a wine merchant and is believed to have made his fortune in share speculation including Laxey Mines and the IOMSPCo to become the Isle of Man's richest man and live at Villa Marina (not the present building). Now he was to donate the money to construct and furnish the badly needed hospital, the building that now houses the Manx Museum. It comprised two ten-bed general wards: one men's and one women's, four single wards, four private wards and four lock wards (for sexually transmitted diseases) and was opened with great ceremony on 4th September 1888. It was named Noble's Isle of Man Hospital.

Noble died in 1903. Patient needs were starting to bear on his hospital and in 1907 Ramsey Cottage Hospital was opened which eased them for a while but a larger one in Douglas soon became necessary and in 1912 a new hospital was opened in Westmoreland Road that could care for 122 and later 137 patients when the Cubbon Wing for the chronically sick was added in 1951, financed

entirely from the estate of Thomas Cubbon although by then the National Health Service had been established. In 1953, a new Nurses Home was built.

Neither the Douglas nor Ramsey hospital provided maternity services. Most of these could be found at the Jane Crookall Maternity Home, founded by Alderman Arthur Crookall as a memorial for his first wife who died in 1922 and opened in 1927 in a modified boarding house with eleven beds. After the alderman's death in 1935 a larger home with 21 beds was built in Desmesne Road: a legacy from his estate, and it opened in 1938. It has been administered by the health service since 1965 and the separate home was closed in 1991 to be replaced by a wing at the hospital and is the East wing of the present hospital. In 1942 Ramsey Maternity Home opened in Brookhill Road, near the Cottage Hospital. Although popular in the north of the Island, demand for its services diminished when the war ended and the home closed in 1947.

With the Westmoreland Road hospital ageing in a modern health service, a new hospital was needed for the 21st century and it duly opened in July 2003. Situated to the west of Douglas at Strang in Braddan, it is an impressive single-story building with large parking space, necessary on an out-of-town site, although it is served by eight bus routes from Douglas and one each from Peel and Ramsey. The welcoming café just inside the entrance is invaluable. The hospital has twenty wards, most with four-bed bays, and can care for 314 patients. After a 2020 review by Sir Jonathan Michaels, Manx Care, similar to the United Kingdom's health care service, was formed to provide health care at arm's length from government and it manages the hospital, coping admirably during the Coronavirus pandemic. It is still known throughout the island simply as "Noble's"

### **DBH**

Sources: St Bartholomew's Hospital, Culture Vannin, Manx Care, Manx Museum iMuseum newspapers, C G Pantin.

### **Pandemic Update**

At the time of our last report case numbers had crept above a thousand and the situation appeared to be deteriorating. Soon it was even worse and before the end of March the total exceeded 2,000 and the Island had the largest percentage of Covid patients in the British Isles. However, that proved to be the peak and the number infected has slowly decreased although the number of deaths continued to mount, exceeding a hundred at the beginning of May.

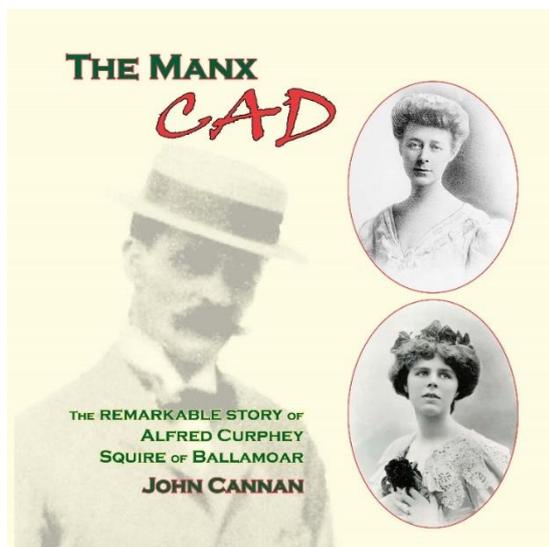
All remaining Covid-19 restrictions on the Isle of Man, including border measures, were dropped from Friday, 1st April, the government having announced the week before that the Island would move to an 'endemic' approach. As well as removing the legal requirement to isolate on testing positive for the virus, all border restrictions were lifted including the need for isolation or testing for all travellers and the requirement to complete a travel declaration or landing card.

The pandemic is therefore technically over but the virus continues to reap its harvest.

**DBH**

## **The Manx Cad**

I wondered whether the London Manx Society membership would be interested in Loaghtan Books' most recent publication *The Manx Cad: the remarkable story of Alfred Curphey, Squire of Ballamoar*.



Alfred Curphey wasn't a very nice man! He went all over the world living on other people's wives, and using their husband's money to build himself a fine manor house in the north of the island at Ballamoar.

The book, researched and written by John Cannan, is a fascinating story of a largely forgotten Manx 'rake', an inveterate rogue who seduced the wives of the rich and famous and was quite prepared to disappear quickly leaving a trail of

debts behind him. Using money paid from a cuckolded husband to leave his wife alone, Alfred built a palatial mansion at Ballamoar, Jurby where he enjoyed a lavish lifestyle with his latest conquest. In short, he was an example of the type of character we associate with the late Victorian and early Edwardian era, namely a notorious ‘cad’

I hope your members find the tale interesting. Our books make excellent gifts and we will giftwrap (free of charge) and ship anywhere (p+p free within the British Isles; for global shipping charges check our website).

**Sara Goodwins**

### **Chicago's 2019 winner strikes again**

The latest London Manx quiz was won once again by an overseas reader of Manx descent. After recent wins for Richard Moore of Durban, South Africa, originally from Kirk Michael, it was the turn of Brad Prendergast of Chicago Manx Society who is a vice president of the North American Manx Association. His prize is £20 of fuel kindly donated by Mylchreest Car Hire when he rents one of its vehicles next time that he is at Ronaldsway. It was a close-run thing. He beat one of the regular London winners by getting his answer to the editor one hour ten minutes faster.

### **June Island Quiz**

(Open to non-members through the web site)

1. How many Manx residents have died with Covid-19 during the recent pandemic? Answer - find the number published by Manx Public Health Directorate on the date of your entry.
2. Is the furthest point of the Island from Douglas landing stage (a) Caigher Point, (b) Point of Ayre, (c) Rue Point, (d) St. Patrick's Isle?
3. Was the designer of Laxey Wheel (a) Robert Casement, (b) Mark Cosnahan, (c) Alfred Jones Lusty, (d) Sir William Hillary?
4. Is the Manx family whose estate was at Milntown (a) Christian (b) Kewley, (c) Maddrell, (d) Skillicorn?
5. “Cre gollrish yn emshyr jiu ayns Purt ny hInshy whooinney” means (a) How long has Port St Mary been larger than Peel? (b) What's the weather like in Peel? (c) When will the wind stop blowing in Peel? (d) Why is Peel no longer a city?

Closing date 16th July. The first reader to send me five correct answers will receive a Manx £20 note.

### **Answers to Spring Quiz**

Mann was ceded to England in the Treaty of (b) Perth.

The memorial at Bishops court is to (d) Thurot.

The first diesel powered IOMSPCo vessel was (c) Peveril.

The 1821 Potato Riots took place in (c) Peel.

“Caisht sonney dhyt” means (b) Happy Easter.

Congratulations to Brad Prendergast from USA who was first to supply a set of five correct answers and earn £20 in petrol when he visits the Island and hires a car from Mylchreest Car Hire.

Brad tells me that the North American Manx Association is planning its 2024 Convention for the Isle of Man and we hope he will be there to enjoy both the driving and the island.

### **Acknowledgements**

The editor thanks David and Mavis Bell, Sara Goodwins, David Kirkby, Sally Miller, Brad Prendergast, for their kind contribution and also Isle of Man Newspapers, Culture Vannin and Manx National Heritage as well as the North America Manx Association and the Queensland Manx Society. 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](mailto:barrhamilton@btinternet.com)) or mail to 132 Bush Hill, N21 2BS. Copyright is retained by the contributor. Opinions expressed are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the editor or of the Society.

Closing date for the next issue, 23rd August

## **Dates for your diary**

### **Tynwald Cooish**

Friday 8th July at 1.00 p.m.  
225 Chesterton Road, Cambridge, CB4 1AN  
Sally Miller Tel: 01223 502007

### **Mhelliah**

Monday 3rd October at 12 noon  
St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, EC4Y 1DE  
followed by lunch nearby

NEXT NEWSLETTER DUE IN THREE MONTHS  
PLEASE SEND NEWS TO  
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