

NEWSLETTER Winter 2022
Editor – Douglas Barr-Hamilton

Mhelliah

Held a little earlier this year, on the first Monday of October, we had the pleasure of a church service guided by the rector, Rev. Canon Alison Joyce who, in her interesting sermon told us that her best friend at school had been from the Island. It was also a little different because the president of the Manx Society of Southern Africa was in town and we were able to welcome Kevin Williams to join the congregation of Alastair Kneale, Wendy Kneen, Peter and Sally Miller, Jim Kneale-Wood, Douglas and Margarita Barr-Hamilton, Sam Weller, Robin and Voirrey Carr, Mike and Pam Fiddik, Margaret Hunt and Maureen Wigley with her niece Joanne

The order of service was our familiar one but we needed to remember rather more who had passed away in the past year: Peter Burns, Clare Crellin, Derek Costain, Rose Fowler, Douglas Wellman

As usual, we took lunch at the nearby “Old Bull” in Fleet Street and caught up with individual and Island news.

DBH



Alastair Kneale and Kevin Williams
(Presidents of LMS and MSSA)
outside St Bride's Church, Fleet
Street, London.

Acknowledgement. The Society is most grateful to Mrs Freda Paul, sister of Douglas Wellman who regularly attended the mhelliah for her kind £50 donation in his memory towards the cost of organising it.

White helmets in London; double proclamation on Island

Coverage of life in London in the days following Elizabeth II's death on 8th September was huge including reporting the secondment of over 1,000 officers to the Metropolitan Police. Among them were five members of the Manx constabulary, distinctive in their white helmets although I did not see one nor notice any in television coverage. However, I'm sure members would like to know they were there.

There were slightly different approaches to the state mourning arrangements in the other home countries, also well reported but things were different again on the Isle of Man and LMS members might like to know them.

Flags flying at half-mast is a feature of all such occasions but the island's different status meant the procedure was rather different in recognising the accession of a new king. There were two proclamations: the first, televised for the first time in history, by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, Sir John Lorimer took place at Government House in Onchan at mid-day on Sunday 11th September with flags around the Island returning to half-mast at 9.30 next morning and a second public proclamation of His Majesty King Charles III as Lord of Mann on Friday, 16th at 11am from Tynwald Hill in St John's, the ancient seat of the Kings and Lords of Mann where the public's flowers were laid and flags again flew at full mast for a short time. One participant in the ceremonies was Andrew Cunningham the official sword-bearer who had to precede the governor in the processions; he is related to Society member Maureen Wigley.

DBH

Manx Museum

1st November was the 100th anniversary of the Manx Museum. 'One hour spent in a museum will be worth many hours spent over a book.' These words from His Excellency Sir William Fry were reported on 4th November 1922 by

the IOM Times, which covered the opening ceremony of the Manx Museum. Guest of Honour His Excellency Sir William Fry was invited to be the first visitor through the Museum turnstiles and in his speech noted that for Manx people to ‘preserve their nationality and their own culture...they should have a store house for the antiquities of the past.’ It was announced that admission to the Manx Museum would be free for the winter and admission is still free today, 100 years later!

The centenary is celebrated in MUSEUM 100, a year-long major exhibition, which has been 18 months in the planning and features a kaleidoscope of over 150 objects and treasures from the Manx Museum’s collections.

Lynsey Clague BA (Hons) MCIPR

Communications Manager - Manx National Heritage

Peel to Shine by the Sea

Most can picture the harbour at Peel. That started to change in early September as the tourist season drew to a close when work began on the East Quay regeneration scheme. Members planning to visit the Island will want to know that the eastern bank of the Neb in Peel is having its first major modernisation since the fishing fleet dwindled and work begun as soon as the holiday season ended with diggers moving into the area on Monday 5th September for the first stage. The work will replace the carriageway and footpaths on foundations a metre deep to allow cranes to operate in the harbour for the length of East Quay and to provide a quality road surface and pavements with a minimum width of 1.5 metres, and the work on the section from the Manx Utilities pumping station to Weather Glass Corner is well under way and the new section of sewer under the quay is finished. The remainder is well under way so be prepared for a diversion if driving or a detour if on foot. Every stage requires road closures and some disruption is inevitable. Indeed, members living in Peel tell me passage is sometimes chaotic and car parking is limited but the contractors seem to be doing a good job.

In due course Station Place will be improved providing larger pedestrian areas and better accessibility, new street lighting incorporating new low-energy lamps to cover road, pavement and quayside will be installed and service points will be added to provide harbour users with power, fresh water and electrical vehicle charging. It sounds wonderful.

When completed, the new quayside should last forty years but the next few months may be confusing for townsfolk and visitors but the plans anticipate the work being finished by summer next year. Enjoy your visit.

DBH

Source: iomtoday

Laxey Wheel turning again

At last, on Thursday 13th October, 2022 the Lady Isabella re-opened to the public. One of Manx National Heritage's most prized attractions had returned to life. After a long and complex renovation process, the task of officially re-starting the mechanism falling to Lady Philippa Lorimer, wife of the Lieutenant Governor and maintaining a tradition established in 1854 when the wheel was first opened by Lady Isabella Hope.

For MNH project manager John Paul-Walker it was an emotional occasion. The massive wheel had been out of action since September 2020 and turned for the first time in two years in late September after a most comprehensive conservation project

DBH

Source: Manx National Heritage

Sunshine in Castletown?

Running until mid-November, a public consultation has been held into the building of the Island's first solar farm, one that could power up to 7,700 homes: a project of Peel Cubico Renewables. The company says it would help to provide long-term stability and more independence for the Isle of Man's energy supply. At an estimated cost of £30 million, Billown Solar Farm would be located on 84 acres of agricultural land near Castletown.

Stephen Snowdon, planning and development manager, said: "Our vision for this solar farm supports both the Isle of Man's response to climate change and the government's ambitions for renewable energy projects to help secure a bright economic future for the Island.

"We also recognise the cost-of-living crisis facing Island consumers and believe that the scheme will offer a fantastic opportunity for stable, low-cost green energy to be made available to all Island residents and businesses.

"The development could be operational by 2024 and is a no-regrets hedge against future price volatility for the Island as well as a huge opportunity for the Island to take control over its long-term energy needs by exploiting its own abundant indigenous and renewable energy resources for benefit of Manx consumers.

"With energy security at the forefront of people's minds, we are looking forward to engaging with the local community over the coming weeks as we discuss our proposals in more detail and will also look to set up a community benefit fund to support local projects."

An onsite substation is included in the plans which would connect to a nearby grid network.

A battery storage facility would also store electricity generated during periods of low demand and re-distribute it to the grid when demand is high or the network is down.

DBH

Source: Manx Radio

Manx Bronze Age jewellery on display

The Bronze Age ran from around 2000 BC to 500 BC and was a time of great change on the Island. The name comes from the then new technology of metalworking, first with copper then with bronze (an alloy of copper and tin). The process was brought to the Island, but it is probably that local sources of copper were used. The introduction of the new technology demonstrates the movement of ideas and resources around the British Isles in this early period. Burial rituals were also changing, becoming more varied and including cremations and inhumations (burial of the body). Communities were living in simple round houses, often in small settlements, farming the land. Bronze Age finds have been made from all over the Isle of Man and many can be seen in the Manx Museum, Douglas.

An extraordinary set of ancient jewellery discovered on the Island has been declared Treasure by the Isle of Man Coroner of Inquest and went on display in the Manx Museum at the end of September.

Found during planned archaeological excavations at Berk Farm near Kirk Michael as part of the *Round Mounds of the Isle of Man* project, the find

consists of 122 jet beads that make up a complete necklace and a matching bracelet.

The necklace has a terminal plate at each end, and two “spacer-plates” on each side. In between these decorated plates and forming the majority of the necklace are one hundred and three undecorated, but carefully fashioned, barrel-shaped beads. There is also an undecorated triangular-shaped bead which would have been used to secure the necklace around the neck. All of the beads appear to be made from jet (fossilised and pressurised wood) which can be prone to splitting. The maker would have been extremely skilled to decorate the larger terminal and “spacer-plates” beads, as well to produce the large number of hollowed and shaped barrel-shaped beads. What is even more remarkable is the presence of the string-distribution holes in the decorated plates. These allow the number of strings of beads to go from four, to five to seven strings of beads in total. Somewhere inside the spacer-plate beads, a Y-shaped has been formed to allow the different number of strings to be passed through and secured.

The bracelet is made from two strings of barrel-shaped beads, with an undecorated terminal plate at each end. The jewellery would have been tremendously high status objects when buried due to the skill required to work the jet. Even after four millennia, the necklace and bracelet still look extremely attractive. The majority of the beads were excavated in 2019, but it was just this year that excavations on the site were completed and so it is now clear that this collection of artefacts is the complete assemblage from this particular burial.

The beads were worn and buried with someone who was laid in a specially dug oval pit in a grave lined with stones. They lay on their right side in a crouched position, wearing the necklace and bracelet, with at least the wrist with the bracelet on drawn up to their chest. They were facing the coast, looking out towards the Mull of Galloway.

Further afield, only around ninety examples of similar necklaces and bracelets have been found in the British Isles, mostly in northern England and Scotland but with relatively few complete examples

and still fewer “sets” of necklace and bracelet.

DBH

Source: Mans National Heritage



Cleaning the Island's Rivers

The tempting offer of a free beer or soft drink at the Mines Tavern in Laxey drew a good number to attend a Beach Buddies meeting in mid-October. Having overseen the cleaning of Manx beaches for many years, Bill Dale, the group's founder was announcing the formation of a new initiative after discussions with Manx Wildlife Trust and the Department of the Environment to clean inland waterways too. It will be called, "River Buddies" and Bill said, "You would be surprised what is found in our Island's rivers."

DBH

Source: Manx Radio

Peter Burns

The return of our last newsletter has informed us of the death of life member Peter Burns in June 2021 so, very belatedly, we can pass the news to members. The date of his joining London Manx is lost in the midst of time but we feel sure that some members will remember him and wish to receive this sad news.

DBH

The Exile Poem by John Betjeman

The Exile is Part III of one of John Betjeman's earliest poems titled Sir John Piers. Sir John Betjeman (28 August 1906 – 19 May 1984) was a poet, writer, and broadcaster. He was Poet Laureate from 1972 until his death. The subject of

the poem is Sir John Bennett Piers, 6th Baronet, of Tristernagh Abbey, (1772 – 22 July 1845). He was an Anglo-Irish baronet, best known for his part in the Cloncurry case.

The Cloncurry case was an adultery scandal of the early 19th century involving the wife of Valentine Brown Lawless, 2nd Baron Cloncurry (19 August 1773 – 28 October 1853), who was an Irish peer, politician and landowner. John Piers was the subject of a "criminal conversation" trial in 1807. He fled to the Isle of Man to avoid the trial, which resulted in Lord Cloncurry being awarded the sum of £20,000 in damages.

When in the Isle of Man Piers and his partner Miss Denny lived in the parish of Braddan. They were married in May 1815. It seems that John Piers time on the Island was not without scandal. Including fighting a duel. On another occasion he appeared before the Deemster along with two others after being involved in a fight while at a theatre. After spending several years on the Isle of Man, he returned to Tristernagh, in County Westmeath, Ireland. Here it said he lived in a secure house designed to keep out his creditors. Nevertheless, he was eventually forced to pay the damages awarded in the Cloncurry case.

The Exile, by John Betjeman
On Mannin's rough coast-line the
twilight descends
With its last dying rays in thy height,
O Snaefell!
A refuge of dark to the Island is
lending
And to yon cottage ornée that lies in
the dell.

Its helpless inhabitant dare not
appear in
The rain-weathered streets of
adjacent Rhumsaa,
But he sees in his dreams the green
island of Erin
And he sits in an orat'ry most of the
day.
Yet sometimes, at night, when the
waves in commotion

Are tumbling about round the long
point of Ayr,
He strides through the tamarisks
down to the ocean
Beyond the lush curraghs of sylvan
Lezayre.

Alone with his thoughts when the
wild waves are beating
He walks round to Jurby along the
wet sand,
And there, where the moon shows
the waves are retreating,
He too would retreat to his own
native land.

Alastair Kneale



Sir John Betjeman

Star of India, the musical

Ten years ago, we included an article about the world's only surviving iron-clad sailing ship on Sir John Be the 150th anniversary of her launch as the Euterpe in Ramsey where she had been built and now in the Maritime Museum in San Diego in California. At the same time Ramsey Commissioners asked Heather Ruffino, founder and director of Cloideryn Northern Theatre Group, if it could perform an enactment about the Star of India, her name from 1906 after conversion to a barque, as part of the 150th anniversary of her launch and she prepared an acted documentary and wrote a song for the end.

The name's now that of a musical. Heather explained that even then she felt there was the potential to do a musical, as the ship is so famous and the main attraction at the museum especially as she was built by the shipbuilders of Ramsey. As she enjoys writing song lyrics and script, she teamed up with Marilyn Cannell, renowned as a 'whizz with music and lyrics' to create the musical. Its aim is to give the audience as sense of the launch of the Euterpe, the way of life for shipbuilders, fishermen and wives in Ramsey and the struggle for the crews on ships as well as the emigrants who risked such long voyages. Euterpe started life as a full rigged ship, making voyages to India as a cargo ship and was later used to take emigrants to New Zealand. In 1901, she was renamed and re-rigged as a barque, sailing the Alaska to California route as a salmon hauler.

Looking forward to the opening of the show Heather said, "The cast has been amazing and I am so proud of everyone who has worked so hard as they have learned brand new songs to be heard for the first time ever by the audiences and of course, without the set and stage building skills, technical and stage

management team transforming St Paul's Hall into Ramsey's little theatre, it couldn't happen."

Performances took place over the weekends of 14th and 15th October and 21st and 22nd. Lieutenant Governor Sir John Lorimer and Lady Lorimer attended the evening performance on 15th October and, thrilling audience and cast alike, the museum's director, Dr Ashley and his wife, as part of a group of 15, flew over from California especially for the occasion and presented flags from the ship to Cloideryn and the Governor.

Let's hope the musical transfers to the West End.

DBH

Source: iomtoday

New Zealand loses centenarian member

Its secretary, Robin Bryant tells me that the Manx Club in Hamilton, New Zealand, has recently lost a member who had attained the grand age of 100 years and 8 months.

His name was Ramsey Callister and he attended Jurby school. Born in Canada he moved to Isle of Man with his parents in the 1930s just before the depression hit.

Times were difficult for the family but from this the modelling of a wonderful caring man was made. He married a young lass Kathleen who also attended the Jurby school.

The Callisters then moved to New Zealand around 1953.

Members will miss his jovial and friendly company.

More on Frank Gill

Clarification

The article on Frank Gill in our last newsletter said that Sir Frank Gill had been born in Castletown, information I had gleaned from the press release of Castletown Commissioners. Having seen the article, Di Banks tells me that research that she and Priscilla Lewthwaite had made told them his biological father was Robert Mylroie, a man of questionable character from Lonan and his mother a country girl. Later he was adopted by a Mr and Mrs Gill and brought up in their home in Cumbria. Encouraged to prosper.

1620 celebrated in 2022

Members of the North American Manx Association had been preparing for five years to celebrate the arrival of the first Manx people on their continent: Myles Standish and his cousin, Rose Standish. Myles was in charge of the military attachment that accompanied the Pilgrim Fathers. Sadly, Rose died soon after arrival but her cousin Barbara followed later, married Myles and established a Manx American dynasty that was soon joined by many others. Over a hundred of their descendants met together during the first weekend of August in Plymouth, Massachusetts where the original settlers had landed, sadly delayed two years by the Coronavirus pandemic.

As a result, the Society's attempts to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the "Mayflower" needed to be adjusted slightly and the convention was a little different from usual in that it focussed on Manx language and culture as well as the history: a mixture of ancient and modern.

In the summer heat of the first full day, so different from the chill of the original settlers' arrival late in the year, the members concentrated on their history. First they explored the fascinating contents of the famous Plimoth Patuxet Museum before splitting into two groups to tour the outdoor areas including the reconstructed pilgrim village with its houses, growing crops and re-enactments including their meeting Myles Standish who set aside his duties to greet them. The busy day then continued with a 17th century lunch, eaten with bare hands, a visit to Mayflower II, a replica of the original, a trip to Plymouth Rock and, after a return to their hotel and a cool shower, a Manx evening hosted by a special guest, Culture Vannin's Roth Keggin Gell.

Next morning Ruth began a day of workshops looking into connections between American and Manx culture that proved so enjoyable that they seemed far from academic and the groups, featuring Manx song, language, dance, folklore and music, were enjoyed by all. Indeed, they proved to be an attractive incentive to join the Society: six people who had come to the weekend for the workshops joining the society.

The different format had been a success, one on which NAMA intends to build.

DBH

Source, Kelly McCarthy, NAMA

From Drought to Downpour

With the Island suffering a drought and a hose-pipe ban starting a third week, I began an article for our September newsletter about the Manx experience of this year's lack of rain and it started to pour so hard on the Island that the Grand Prix practice was cancelled. Some more rain followed and with water levels at 73%, the crisis was ended on 7th September and residents could again use hosepipes to water their garden and wash their car. Reservoir levels were some 9% below usual levels for this time of year but, with more rain forecast, Manx Utilities clearly felt confident the crisis was over. Thanking residents for their understanding, the authorities gave an undertaking to continue to monitor water levels.

The newsletter article led to a couple of responses. Island member Dave Martin told me that the land had been even drier than Andreas village nearer the coastline so it must have been tough for Manx farmers.

Queensland Manx newsletter editor George Cowin wrote, "In Australia, we have had the wettest year of recent history, and there are puddles all across the countryside and farm dams are chock-a-block full. Major dams are at their highest level in years, although it is not long back that water restrictions were threatened and there was despair among the farmers. Now there is even water flowing in the salt-pan of Lake Eyre and the famous Birdsville Races were postponed. The world ebbs and flows all the time and its now called 'climate change', instigated by us humans".

DBH

Sources include Manx Radio

Growing skullcaps

A wildflower has been discovered on the Isle of Man for the first time in more than 140 years. Found on marshy grassland, known as a garee on a dairy farm in the south of the island, the skullcaps were the first native examples found on the island since 1880, the Manx Wildlife Trust said.

The plant, which has the scientific name *Scutellaria galericulata*, has tube-like blue flowers of about 0.5 inches (1.5cm) is a perennial member of the mint family and it was discovered by the trust's agri-environment officer David Bellamy while on a farm visit on 4th July.

Botanical records on the island show the wildflower has only been identified twice, once in 1832 and again in 1880, both in the Scarlett area in the south of the island although it was also found growing in a garden in Onchan in the 1940s. However, those plants were not classed as native as they had been imported in soil.

Mr Bellamy added, "The continued cattle grazing of our gares is vitally important for rare wildflowers," and without grazing, these areas quickly get overtaken by sallows, brambles and gorse, stopping rare wildflowers from flourishing."

Botanist Andree Dubbeldam, who identified the skullcap, said the plant was "clearly native to the site where it is abundant over about 100m² of very wet, cattle-grazed marsh".

DBH

Source: BBC

Drinking Water Struck Twice

Our last edition included a mention of the new Sulby Reservoir's submerging of the farm at Crammag, the ancestral home of Rose Fowler (née Cowley). This inspired George Cowin, who edits the newsletter of the Queensland Manx Society to tell us . . .

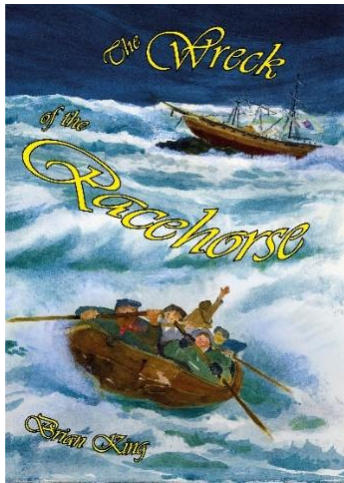
My great-great-great grandfather established a farm on the River Glas of 98 acres with a homestead on the river banks. He was trained as a Stonemason and was involved with the various churches of St Luke's in Upper Baldwin Valley over a number of years. He participated in the building of the current St. Luke's Church, and is in fact buried in the churchyard right next to the steps entrance of the church (along with his wife) in grave number one. His son continued to farm the property even though he was trained as bootmaker. He sired nine children and when the family grew up, the farm could not support all of them and four or five emigrated to England, Australia and America. One being my great grand-father who left aged 17. When my great, great grand-father lost his wife and retired, he moved to a nursing home in Union Mills outside Douglas. He is buried there in the old cemetery.

Later, the reservoir Injenbrec (you mention West Baldwin Reservoir which I think is the same) was constructed and the land flooded and the homestead was submerged intact. However, I believe it was in 1967 there was a severe drought and the water level dropped low enough for the peak of the roof of the homestead to break through the surface of the water. If they are pumping water across from Sulby, then it will not happen again.



The Wreck of the Racehorse

Sara Goodwins has sent us some information which might be of interest. She tells us that 'The Wreck of the Racehorse' is basically Brian King's life's work so has provided a photograph of him near the wreck site (but on land!) plus a picture of the front cover of the book. The cover pic, incidentally, was painted by Manx artist Anthea Radcliffe.



Racehorse was an eighteen-gun sailing ship, a sloop of war, in the early nineteenth century. On 14 December 1822, on what should have been a routine visit, *Racehorse* wrecked on the Skerranes, a reef of rocks off the southern coast of the Isle of Man. The efforts of the Manxmen of Castletown to save those on board proved to be a catalyst in the founding of what became Royal National Lifeboat Institute, the RNLi. One hundred and fifty years later a group of volunteer divers from the Isle of Man rediscovered the wreck and began the slow process of underwater excavation. Written by one of the divers who found the wreck, and including documents such as the captain's report to the admiralty, and the minutes of the crew's court martial, this book offers an unrivalled view of an unparalleled event in maritime history. Pieced together from evidence in contemporary documents and backed up by artefacts found on the seabed *The Wreck of the Racehorse* tells the story of how HMS *Racehorse* was lost – and found.

Sara Goodwins

Title: The Wreck of the Racehorse Written by: Brian King ISBN: 978-1-908060-37-2

Retail price: £14.95 Cover: softback Extent: 68 pages Size: 297 mm x 210 mm

Contact details: Loaghtan Books, Caardee, Dreemskerry Hill, Maughold, Isle of Man, IM7

1BE Tel: 01624 818292 Web: www.loaghtanbooks.com, Email: info@loaghtanbooks.com

Now Ramsey

Loughtan Books' newsletter tells us that a fourth title in its past and present series featuring Manx towns has joined Port Erin, Peel and Castletown in revealing its past through photographs.

With Ramsey Bay offering a safe haven to shipping and the Sulby river creating a usable harbour, Ramsey grew to serve the needs of the seafaring community. Built largely on drained marsh and land reclaimed from the sea Ramsey is the most low-lying town on the island, and the one considered most at risk from flooding by the sea. One hundred years ago fishermen offered their wares at the quayside, children played, and sometimes paddled, in the streets of the old town and tourists landed by steamer at the iron pier.

The old images were supplied by Ray Stanfield and modern photographs by George Hobbs and extended captions by Sara Goodwins. Published by Loaghtan Books it has 128 pages, is priced £14.95 and is available throughout the island and from www.loughtanbooks.com, post-free within the British Isles.

Email from Dave Martin

Regret it is a long time since I've made it to LMS in person, but I always enjoy the newsletter, and it strikes me I ought to contribute.

I'm heavily involved with heritage since I'm back on the Island (President, IOM Natural History & Antiquarian Society; Trustee of the Manx Museum and National Trust and Vice-Chairman, Manx National Heritage etc.) but outwith those I was recently involved in an event which I think might interest LMS members.

Last weekend, Castletown Heritage Trust unveiled a pair of plaques commemorating the former Royal Naval Air Station at Ronaldsway (HMS Urley) and I gave the (brief) core address about HMS Urley. (Also, following your comments re rainfall in Andreas, it will have been even drier out at Sea View (on the road to Rue Point) than at Larivane! – and at some point I could pen something on the Island's rich local climate variations)

Dave Martin

Hunt the Wren

Dance Instructions - Adapted from Rinkaghyn Vannin

Form a large circle of couples. If possible, an extra person holds a wren pole/bush in the middle. Wait for Intro.

Hands joined in a ring, girls on right of boys, all swing right foot over left and stamp it on the first beat, then continue in running step clockwise for 8 beats. All swing L foot over R and stamp it, then continue in running step round counter-clockwise for the next 8 beats.

Girls dance 2 reel steps forward to centre and shake their fists at the [wren bush]. Simultaneously, boys dance 1 reel step backward and 1 forward.

Girls face outwards and dance 1 reel step back towards original places, and a second one turning right again so that they are back in position facing inward, as at the start of the dance. Simultaneously, boys dance one reel step forward, honour the [bush], turn right, and dance one reel step outward, finishing with backs to the centre and facing their partners. In this movement, partners pass each other by the right shoulder.

All couples Reel spin.

Boys cross their partners handing right, move on to the next girl, take her L hand in their right and make one complete turn with her, so that she is in position on their right to start the next round as a new partner.

REPEAT DANCE (Played 4 times on CD52)

Perform these lyrics to the dance melody:

1. "We'll hunt the wren", says Robin the Bobbin,
"We'll hunt the wren," says Richard the Robin,
"We'll hunt the wren," says Jack o' the land,
"We'll hunt the wren," says everyone. H

"Where oh where?" says Robin the Bobbin,
"Where oh where?" says Richard the Robin,
"Where oh where?" says Jack o' the land,
"Where oh where?" says everyone.

"In yonder green bush," says Robin the Bobbin,
"In yonder green bush," says Richard the Robin,
"In yonder green bush," says Jack o' the land,
"In yonder green bush," says everyone.

2. "How'll we eat him?" says Robin the Bobbin,
"How'll we eat him?" says Richard the Robin,
"How'll we eat him?" says Jack o' the land,
"How'll we eat him?" says everyone.

“With knives and forks,” says Robin the Bobbin,
“With knives and forks,” says Richard the Robin,
“With knives and forks,” says Jack o’ the land,
“With knives and forks,” says everyone.
“Who’ll come to the dinner?” says Robin the Bobbin,
“Who’ll come to the dinner?” says Richard the Robin,
“Who’ll come to the dinner?” says Jack o’ the land,
“Who’ll come to the dinner?” says everyone.

3. “The King and the Queen,” says Robin the Bobbin,
“The King and the Queen,” says Richard the Robin,
“The King and the Queen,” says Jack o’ the land,
“The King and the Queen,” says everyone.

“Eyes to the blind,” says Robin the Bobbin,
“Legs to the lame,” says Richard the Robin,
“Luck to the poor,” says Jack o’ the land,
“Bones to the dogs,” says everyone.

The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
St. Stephen's Day was caught in the furze [gorse],
Although he is little, his family's great,
We pray you, good people to give us a treat.

A condensed version of the traditional song it is often performed to accompany the dance. Activity Ideas:

1. As it is a very fast song, divide the lines between different groups of singers e.g. Group One could sing the first two lines and Group Two sings the last two lines. Everyone could sing the final verse.
2. Add untuned percussion to accentuate the beat
3. Try accompanying the Hunt the Wren dance with the song.

December Island Quiz

(Open to non-members through the web site)

- 1, “Once on the top of Tynwald's formal mound
(Still marked with green turf circles narrowing
Stage above stage) would sit this Island's King,
The laws to Promulgate, enrobed and crowned,”
was written by (a) T E Brown, (b) Hall Caine, (c) Tennison, (d) Wordsworth?
2. The Kitterland Disaster of 1852 was (a) an explosion, (b) a fire, (c) a flood,
(d) a shipwreck?
3. “The Sandy” in Ramsey is (a) Bowring Road, (b) the golf course, (c) the
North Shore, (d) the shore at Ballure?
4. “Hunt the Wren” is traditionally performed on (a) Christmas Eve, (b)
Christmas Day, (c) Boxing Day, (d) New Year’s Eve?
5. “Nollick Ghennal” means (a) Good Health, (b) Happy Birthday, (c) Happy
Christmas, (d) Happy New Year?

Answers to Autumn Quiz

1. The Archibald Knox painting in the Manx Museum signed by the artist is (c)
Kella Mill, Sulby,
2. The Isle of Man’s first hospital opened in 1850 in (b) Fort Street,
3. During WW2 Derek Costain served (a) on HMS Liberty,
4. Returning after a voyage from Peel to Australia, the schooner, “Vixen” was
wrecked (d) on the Calf of Man?
5. A Manx speaker would describe 2022’s summer as (a) charrey,

There was no correct set of answers received this quarter.

Closing date 17th January. The first reader to send me five correct answers will
receive a Manx £20 note.

Acknowledgements

The editor thanks Dave and Mavis Bell, Robin Bryant, George Cowin, Sara Goodwins, Dave Martin, for their kind contribution and also NAMA, Isle of Man Newspapers, Manx Radio, Culture Vannin and Manx National Heritage. 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 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 February, 2023.

Christmas Wishes

*Nollick Ghennal erriu, as blein feer vie Seihll as slaynt da'n slane lught-thie;
Bea as gennallys eu bio ry-cheilley, Shee as graih eddyr mraane as deiney.*

Merry Christmas to you and a very good year. Long life and health to the whole household; Life and joy to you living together, Peace and love between women and men.

Dates for your diary

Annual lunch, 13th May 2023
Bloomsbury Suite, Doubletree by Hilton Hotel,
Southampton Row, WC1B 4BH.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DUE IN THREE MONTHS
PLEASE SEND NEWS TO
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