



NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022

INDEX:

Page 2 – QMS
Annual Family Picnic.

Page 3 –New look
Douglas Promenade.
Laxey Wheel. Port
St. Mary landmark.

Page 4 – Manx
Words.

Page 6 –T E Brown
Plaque.

Page 7 – Smoother
Landings.Cammag.

Page 8 –Further to
Walk. Part of 17th.
Century.

Page 9 – Gem of
God's Earth. Which
or Witch.

Page 10 – St. Luke's
Church, Baldwin
Valley.

Page 11 – World
First. Laa'l Breeshey
– St. Bridget's Day.

Page 12 – Annual
Calendar.

Happy New Year to everyone. We hope you have had a most enjoyable Christmas and a riotous New Year celebration. We hope that you have been able to stay safe in these trying times and been able to stay away from this cursed virus. Now we have Omicron to avoid which seems impossible according to the health experts. So, keep safe and guard against casual contacts with infected people and get your booster shots as soon as possible.

Even taking all that into account, we can't stop our lives from happening, so we propose to conduct our events as usual with masks and social distancing a priority. Therefore, our next function will be our Annual Family Picnic at Scarborough on Sunday 27th. February. The Jamieson Park picnic area on Reef Point Esplanade is ideally suited for our event with pavilion cover and food outlets nearby, and close to the water for aquatic views. Why not come and join us for a day of quality company, musical entertainment and good old fashioned Manx friendship. Unfortunately, our picnic falls on St. David's Day celebrations and we will miss out on the wonderful luncheons that the Welsh put on for the occasion.

Other events coming up are the St. Patrick's Day March on 12th. March next, where we combine with the Combined Celtic Council to field an ungraded float to display the flags of the Celtic Nations to the crowd. The CCAQ Pan Celtic Awards presentations will be held at Toowong on Saturday 26th. March and it is a great event in the Celtic calendar for Brisbane. The following day is the Highland Gathering at the BBC College in Toowong.

There is always something on in the Celtic community and it is hard to get to all of them, but as they do in the Isle of Man, we try.

We have been trying to make contact with other Societies and join in on some of their events. Last year we joined up with the Ipswich Historical Society for one of their events and spoke to their members about our Society. This year we have arranged to speak to the Blackbutt Historical Society on 11th. February and the Peachcester Historical Association on 6th. March. We know there are Manx descendants all over our State and we would like to reach out to them through community talks and involvement. Other talks will be arranged throughout the year.



Queensland Manx Society

ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC

10.00 am.to 3.00 pm. Sunday 27th. February 2022

Jamieson Park, Reef Point Esplanade, Scarborough

Bring a comfortable chair or picnic basket and invite some friends or family.

Seafood and coffee/drinks available at nearby shops.

Music and good old fashioned Manx friendship.

New Look Douglas Promenade

I'm told that my first drive down the refurbished Douglas Promenade will be something of a surprise but by the time this newsletter appears it will be familiar to island residents. After years of work and several delays, Manx media reports that the road construction is now complete, the final length of surface having been laid in the first part of November. The Department of Infrastructure described it as a major milestone marking the end of the refurbishment scheme with all significant traffic management and temporary traffic lights removed and traffic flowing freely.

Douglas Barr- Hamilton - London Manx Society

Laxey Wheel still motionless

At the end of September local media reported that Manx National Heritage was seeking quotations for the restoration of Laxey Wheel and anticipating being able to make an announcement of the start of two stages of work in November. To date I have seen no announcement of the tenders or their acceptance and the wheel, completed in 1854 to pump water from mines using water diverted from Glen Mooar to power the wheel, remains motionless.

It had been hoped to get the wheel turning early next year and that the project to restore the Island's most recognised landmark would be under way anticipating that its cost would be around £750,000.

Manx National Heritage was hoping that getting the wheel turning again: the first stage, could be completed by April 2022. That is starting to look unlikely.

Douglas Barr- Hamilton - London Manx Society

Port St Mary landmark disappearing

Isle of Man newspapers tell us that demolition of the former Bay Queen Hotel in Port St Mary, probably better known to members as the Balqueen Hydro, has restarted. Originally build in the 1920s and run by the Kelly family, the once stand-out feature of the village was closed and partly demolished in 1994. Now the rest is being removed and a planning application submitted earlier this year envisages the demolition and then redevelopment of the site to include 23 apartments (with balconies), of two, three and four-bedroom.

We understand that the footpath and nearby parking will be suspended during the work, possibly until mid- March.

Douglas Barr-Hamilton - London Manx Society

Source: iomtoday

Live life as if it is rigged in your favour.....Rumi

Manx Words

Courtesy of -- Bill Cassidy - North American Manx Association

There's more to words than meet the eye, or perhaps the tongue. A word contains history, both a history of its own and the history of the people who use or used the word. Words can shape identity, and our sense of place, how we perceive the world. Manx is a unique community and experience. Manx preserves some old and unusual words that either disappeared or fell out of favour in the other Gaelic languages, Scottish Gaelic and Irish, after the Middle Ages. Let's explore a few Manx words and the stories they tell.

Sheelnaue (Humanity)

Earlier, we discussed how the word **peiagh**, or sinner, became the Manx word for person. "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God", as Romans 3:23 says, Manx also has a unique word for mankind or humanity that also has a very old and religious roots: **Sheelnaue**.

There are a couple of thoughts on the origin of this word and what it means. In his 1835 Manx Dictionary, Archibald Cregeen derives sheelnaue from **sheel**, or "seed" and niau, "heaven". Humanity then, is literally the seed or "offspring of heaven". One of the older Common Gaelic spellings of niau is nem, so an older form may have been sil-nem or **sil-nemhe**.

There is another possibility, however. Sheelnaue could also be derived from **Sil nAdim** or **nAdhaimh**, early medieval Common Gaelic for "seed of Adam". The 'dh' in Adhamh became very soft, so a pronunciation like "sheelnaue" is possible. To me, the seed of Adam seems a likelier term for humanity, as nice as "offspring of heaven" sounds. Although it's hard for us to trace our roots back to "Adam", he may be hidden right there in **sheelnaue**.

In Scottish Gaelic and Irish, the word for mankind or humanity is typically **donnachd** or **daonnacht**, with roots in the earlier **doendacht**. You can see the connection to the Manx word **dooinney** meaning "man" there ("Kys t'ou, whoinney? How are you man?") manx has **dooieaght**, too, but **sheelnaue** is Manx all the way through.

Ard ghloyr da Jee 'syn yrjey heose,

High glory to god on high above,

Shee er y thalloo neesht;

Peace on the Earth also,

Aigney mie Yee da slane sheelnaue,

Goodwill of God to all mankind,

Cur-voylley daue ayns Creest.

Praise them in Christ.

One of the truly old words preserved in Manx is eayst, or moon (eayst rhymes with "taste"). Its origin is **esca**, **escu** or **esc**, an archaic word for the moon in old Common Gaelic.

Perhaps you're wondering why is there a "t" at the end of eayst rather than a "c" or a "k" if it comes to us from Old Irish **esca** or **esc**? That's because sounds expressed by "sc" or "sg" in Irish and Scottish Gaelic - and "sk" sound in/ English - became "st" in Manx. Other examples include **uisge/ushtey** (water), **iasgair/eeasteyr** (fisherman), **leisgeul/leshtal** (excuse).

In Irish and Scottish Gaelic, the moon nowadays is called a **gealach**, with its meaning derived from the word **geal** meaning bright (**gial** in Manx). A similar name for the moon exists in Manx, **giallach**, but the word used for moon is almost always **eayst**.

For example, a full moon is **lane-eayst**; a half-moon, **lieh-eayst**; a new moon, **eayst-noa**.

"The moon" is **yn eayst**, as in the phrase "by the light of the moon" - "lesh soillshey yn eayst", or "yn eayst as na rollageyn dy reill yn oie; son ta e vyghin farraghtyn son dy bragh" - The moon and stars to rule by night; for his mercy endureth forever", as is said in Psalm 136:9.

In days before electric power grids and gas or oil lamps, the moon was an important source of illumination, literally ruling the night and all sorts of nocturnal activities. The moon was sometimes called **ben rein ny hoie** - the "queen of the night". In his "A Vocabulary of the Anglo-Manx Dialect" (1924), A.W. Moore calls **ben rein ny hoie** a "sea name" for the moon.

That refers to an age-old practice of sailors calling things by different names at sea than while on land, because "it is not lucky to speak of things at sea by their shore names, "as folklorist Sophia Morrison wrote. "Even the sea is called **Joaney Gorm** ("Blue Joan") by the fisherman in his boat. "At sea, the sun was called **Ree yn Laa** - king of the day.

The moon is mentioned in a rhyme children would recite on **Oie Houney** - now called **Hop tu Naa** - when asking for food or money:

My ta shiu cur veg dou, cur e dou nish

Son ta mish laccal goll thie liorish soillshey yn eayst

If you're going to give me anything, give it to me soon

For I want to go home by the light of the moon.

There were plenty of folk beliefs and customs related to the moon. When seeing the new moon, for example, one would say:

"Bannit dy row yn eaust noa, as bannit dy row mish" or "Blessed be the new moon, and blessed be me", according to John Clague's "Cooinaghtyn Manninagh: Manx Reminiscences" (1911).

If you had coins in your pocket when you saw the new moon you were supposed to turn them *"wish to get plenty of money, and they still have that custom at the present time,"* Clague wrote.

Raise your words, not your voice. It is rain that helps the flowers to grow, not thunder Rumi

Thomas Edward Brown plaque



“Here T E Brown was born 05 May 1830”

The plaque was designed by Archibald Knox and it was placed on the wall of the house where the great Manx poet was born. Since the house was demolished, the plaque has been kept by Manx National Heritage.

The place where T E Brown was born was the old grammar school in Douglas and then it became St Matthew’s Hall from 1882 until it was demolished in the 1930s.



A photo taken by J J Frowde showing the plaque in situ on St Matthew’s Hall.

Photograph courtesy of Manx National Heritage’s Link to imuseum details:

<https://www.imuseum.im/search/collections/archive/mnh-museum-507349.html>

Courtesy of the Archibald Knox Forum - Isle of Man.

Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. It will not lead you astray....Rumi

Smoother Landings

News from the Island is that the runways at Ronaldsway Airport have been strengthened and resurfaced, the project being completed on time and within budget. The short cross runway and the main taxiway parallel with the main runway were also strengthened and resurfaced with the starter strips at each end of the main runway widened too and the runway and taxiway lighting renewed

There were two phases of work. The first began in October 2019 but the start of the second was delayed from March 2020 due to the pandemic. However, work restarted in the Spring of 2021 and finished earlier than anticipated. The total cost was £9 million.

Douglas Barr-Hamilton – London Manx Society

Source: Manx Radio

Cammag

Another Boxing Day activity on the island is Cammag. Culture Vannin describes it as the traditional sport of the Isle of Man, closely related to hurling or shinty in neighbouring Celtic nations. Records go back hundreds of years showing the sport's domination on the Island until only around a hundred years ago when soccer came to Manx shores. As is traditional, the game continues to be played on St Stephen's Day (26th December) after Hunt the Wren when North and South compete at St John's.

Other sources describe it as having been widespread as an Island sport until about 1900 when it ceased to be played and has only been revived in the past twenty years. As with hurling and shinty, players use a form of stick to play a ball and teams can comprise as few as four or as many as two hundred players. The game probably gets its name from the shape of the stick, the gaelic root word *cam* meaning bent, although sticks could be of any size and shape and were frequently made from gorse.

Manx Radio described last year's game thus:

Reports South 'greatly outnumbered'

The North was victorious over the South in the annual Cammag match this week. The traditional team sport has recently been held each year at St John's on St Stephen's Day, pitting the opposite ends of the Island against each other.

Players use a cammag stick to whack a ball between staked goals This time, the North beat their southern rivals 4-2 in the game which was held in cold conditions.

It was remarked that this year the South was greatly outnumbered and some have suggested an alternative score-line to the one reported. Promoter Culture Vannin has issued a call to arms - for citizens to get themselves ready. It takes place after you've been to Hunt the Wren in the morning. You're encouraged to "find yourself a good stick from a hedgerow somewhere, and make sure you're at St. John's for 2pm."

Held on the Tynwald Fair field, the sport is somewhat close to hockey, with the full rule set available on Wikipedia.

Douglas Barr-Hamilton – London Manx Society

Further to walk and an easier ride

The Island's Heritage Trail is being made more accessible to all since a hard-pack surface was laid some years ago on the old Steam Railway line between Douglas and Peel which closed in 1998, the same treatment is to be carried out on the route between St. John's and Kirk Michael. Visiting Manx beauty spots will be easier for walkers and runners, cyclists and wheel-chair users with the additional amenities of picnic and information sites along the way and there will be links to existing walks to Foxdale and Sulby. Glen Mooar and Glen Wyllin made much more popular.

The existing path does not quite follow the old railway tracks. At the Douglas end it starts near the Quarter Bridge and in Peel it finishes near the House of Manannan car park. It has proved very popular even attracting in 2011 the traditional Douglas to Peel "Marathon" won by Joe Karran when it was first staged in 1909.

When I was a child, one of my father's sisters arrived on the Island by boat and cycled to Andreas via Kirk Michael and Sulby Bridge. It will be rather easier for anyone who wishes to emulate her.

Douglas Barr-Hamilton – London Manx Society

Part of 17th. Century Peel Revealed

The old quay has been identified at Peel. Surveys in preparation for the replacing of the water main and sewers in Peel by Manx Utilities late last year exposed the old red sandstone quayside, believed to date from the 1700's, buried under East Quay when today's layout was built.

Although a number of old dwellings and warehouses remain, most of the old buildings had been demolished to be replaced by what we can now see and their foundations remain, so care will be taken to avoid them as the new pipes are laid. Manx National Heritage who has been working closely on the project preparations with the utility company, explained that two hundred years ago Castle Street in Peel had been home to a number of the city's more prosperous merchants, and they would have had adjacent vaults, yards or warehouses. They may be, they added, the source of rumours that smugglers' tunnels run underneath Peel.

There may be more to find. The route of the First World War temporary railway line used to transport internees to Knockaloe ran along East Quay. Manx National Heritage hopes parts of it can be found.

Douglas Barr-Hamilton – London Manx Society

Source: Courier, BBC

GEM OF GOD'S EARTH

A title well known to Manxmen around the world. In 2020, Tim Price had time on his hands due to the Covid-19 virus lockdowns and he composed a new orchestral suite and captured it on a CD and digital download, as well as getting an online premiere! He featured in the November 2020 kiuall manninagh jiu newsletter to explain its merits.

"*Gem of God's Earth*, a title taken from the Manx Anthem, is a 7-movement suite inspired by the diverse range of natural features that make the Isle of Man such a special place. The piece is made up of nearly an hour of original music, written by local composer Tim Price."

"As a composer, I have often found inspiration in the Manx landscape. I've been working on sketches for this piece for a few years, but 2020 has given me a great chance to actually get it finished! The places and features I have chosen for the 7-movements represent some of the natural variety that is packed into this small island. I've tried to use a rich instrumental and harmonic palette to create a piece that depicts something of the beauty, diversity, and atmosphere of these natural features.

The composition and release of this music has been supported by the Isle of Man Arts Council's Covid-19 Resilience Fund. As a self-employed recording engineer, lockdown meant that all the jobs I had lined up were cancelled, so this support has been a great help for those like me in the creative industries."

"As a full orchestral recording of this scale would not have been impossible due to social distancing and budget restrictions, so the recordings have been made using virtual instruments. Tim added 'I'm hoping that some day the piece will be performed by a live orchestra, as nothing really beats that for the quality of expression, but this sounds pretty close.' "

"The full work lasts around 54 minutes, and is in 7-movements: The Ayres, Ballaglass, Langness, The Curraghs, The Chasms, Dark Skies, and Cronk ny Arrey Laa.

Gem of God's Earth was released on Monday 2nd. November 2020. As part of the release, the piece was premiered in an on-line concert alongside photos and videos of the areas and features that inspired it. This is available on Tim's Youtube channel www.youtube.com/TimPriceComposer from the 2nd. to 7th. November 2020.

The CD will be available from local shops including Rachel Price Photography in Ramsey, the Lexicon Bookshop in Douglas, and the Bridge Bookshops in Port Erin and Ramsey. The album will also be available to order or download through Bandcamp (visit tim-price.bandcamp.com)"

WHICH OR "WITCH" HOP tu NAA DO YOU SING?

BY Dr Chloe Wooley, Culture Vannin

The Island is witnessing a renewed surge of interest in the ancient tradition of Hop tu Naa. More than ever, schools, businesses, government and the general public are intentionally calling the festival its distinctive Manx name.

Relating to Hogmanay, Sauin and the Celtic New Year's Eve, Hop tu Naa joins Hunt the Wren as one of the Island's oldest continuous traditions. As well as scooping out turnip lanterns and fortune-telling, there is a dance and a plethora of songs passed down through the oral tradition.

The songs are well documented. Back in 1845, Joseph Train collected the singing rhyme: "Hop tu Naa, if you are going to give us anything, give us it soon. Or we'll be away by the light of the moon", and in 1890, the Manx celebration attracted the attention of J. G. Frazer in his study of magic and religion, *The Golden Bough*: "Bands of young men perambulated the Island by night, and at the door of every dwelling-house they struck up a Manx rhyme, beginning "Noght oie howney hop-dy-naw", that is to say, "This Hollantide Eve".

There are many variants of the Hop tu Naa rhyme and over time, elements have been transformed. The grinning pole cat in the Manx Gaelic song is called a wild cat, bull cat and witch cat in other versions; and depending on the storyline, the singer can discover an old woman "baking Bannocks and roasting collops" in Scotland, "baking cakes", in London, or back on home turf, "baking bonnags"!

Although I was brought up in Maughold, my mum was originally from Peel and so she taught me and many of my Dhoon School friends the Peel song she was familiar with:

Hop tu Naa, Put in the Pot,

Hop tu Naa, Scald my trot (*throat*),

Hop tu Naa, I met an ole woman,

Hop tu Naa, She was baking bannags,

Hop tu Naa, I asked her for a bit,

Hop tu Naa, She gave me a bit, as big as my big toe,

Hop tu Naa, She dipped it in milk,

Hop tu Naa, She wrapped it in silk,

Hop tu Naa, troll la laa.

Jinny the witch went over the house, to catch a stick to lather the mouse.

Hop tu Naa, troll la laa.

If you don't give us something, we'll run away with the light of the moon.

The vocabulary of the Anglo-Manx Dialect (1924) quotes a very similar version from Peel and explains: "the children repeat the rhyme of Hop-the-nei and collect coppers for a 'taffy spree' to be held later in the evening among themselves. If money is refused, the boys bang the doors with cabbage-stalks and turnips."

The now infamous Jinny the Witch makes her first appearance in song around 1893 when T. E. Brown was in Castletown and heard "Jenny Squinney went over the wall, To get a rod to

beat the foal. Hop tu Naa. Jenny Squinney went over the house, to get a rod to beat the mouse. Hop tu Naa." Over time, Jenny or Joney has become Jinny, and as well as being a standalone rhyme, her refrain close most of the other songs."

Courtesy of kiaull manninagh jiu 11/20 Culture Vannin

World First was in Ayre

It had been on 31st. January 1881 that Tynwald became the first national parliament to give some women the right to vote in a general election - those who owned property in their own right. The first women to have cast their vote in the Manx general election in March of that year are recorded in eminent local historian, Dr. Robert Fyson's book, "The Struggle for Manx Democracy" as Mrs. Catherine Callow of Ballaskilley, the first to vote at Bride polling station, Miss Eliza Jane Goldsmith of Ramsey, the first at Lezayre polling station and Miss Esther Kee of Leodest, the first at Andreas polling station, the first contested election having begun in the sheading of Ayre where four candidates stood for three seats, the date set for the elections for six sheadings and four towns being spread between Tuesday 22nd. and Wednesday 30th. March.

So, 2021 was the 140th. Anniversary of a woman casting a vote in a general election anywhere in the world and it happened in the north of the Isle of Man. Expecting increased interest in the historical event, Tynwald has been looking for information about that election and wonders if anyone remembers tales from the time passed down their family.

If you are keen to find out more about women's enfranchisement in the Isle of Man, visit <https://www.tynwald.org.im/women/Pages/Women.aspx> .

Douglas Barr-Hamilton - London Manx Society

LAA'L BRESHEY - ST. BRIDGET'S DAY

It was customary to keep this festival on the eve of the first of February, in honour of the Irish lady who came over to the Isle of Man to receive the veil from St. Maughold. The custom was to gather a bundle of green rushes, and, standing with them in the hand on the threshold of the door, to invite St. Bridget to come and lodge with them that night saying:

| | |
|---|--|
| "Bridget, Bridget, come to my house, | Vreeshey, Vreeshey, tar gys my hie, |
| Come to my house tonight, open the door | Tar gys y thie aym nocht. Vresshey tar |
| To Bridget, and let Bridget come in." | Gys y thie aym nocht. O fashil jee yn dorrys da Bresshey, as lhig da Breeshey cheet stiagh. |

After these words were repeated, the rushes were strewn on the floor by way of a carpet or bed for her. A parish church, a nunnery, or no less than seven of the ancient keeills (chapters) or cells are named after her in the Isle of Man, where she seems to have been a great favourite.

ANNUAL CALENDAR

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---------|
| 27 th . February | QMS Annual Family Picnic | Jamieson Park, Reef Point Parade, Scarborough | 10.am. |
| 27 th . February am | St. David's Day Luncheon | Caloundra Power Boat Club | 11.30 |
| | Welsh Society Sunshine Coast | | |
| 12 th . March | St Patrick's Day March | Alice St., Brisbane | 10 am. |
| 26 th . March | CCAQ Pan Celtic Awards Night | West's Rugby League Club Sylvan Rd., Toowong | 12 noon |
| 27 th . March | Highland Gathering | BBC College Toowong | All Day |
| 30 th . April -1 st . May | Australian Celtic Festival | Glen Innes | |
| 22 nd . May | The Gathering | Bundamba Turf Club Ipswich | All Day |
| 26 th . June am | CCAQ Friendship Day | 590 Creek Road Mt Gravatt East | 11.00 |
| 2 nd . July am | QMS Tynwald Day | Arana Leagues Club Dawson Pde., Keperra | 11.00 |
| 23 rd . July | Scottish Clans Tartan Day | King George Square | All Day |
| 30 th . July am | CCAQ Annual General Meeting | Coorparoo Services Club Holdsworthy St., Coorparoo | 11.00 |
| 20 th . August | QMS Annual General Meeting | Arana Leagues Club Dawson Pde., Keperra | 1.00 pm |
| 20/ 23 th . October | Family & Local History Assoc. 4 th . Qld State Conference | Redcliffe | |
| 26 th . November | CCAQ Christmas Party | TBA | |

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