

KIAULL MANNINAGH JIU

Toshiaght Arree 2023 February

MANX MUSIC TODAY

MANX FOLK AWARDS 2023

The 12th annual Manx Folk Awards, Aundyryn Kiaull-Theay Vannin, will start with a bang on Sunday 26th March at Kensington Arts in Douglas. During the 5 days of friendly competitions, over 1000 young people are expected to take part in the 92 Manx music, dance, song, language recitation and poetry classes, with entrants ranging from preschool age right up to secondary.

Organised jointly by the Department of Education, Sport and Culture and Culture Vannin, the informal competitions take place from 26th - 30th March at Kensington Arts and Rosemount Church in Douglas and in St Johns Methodist Hall.

Each year has a special theme, and for 2023 it is 'Manx Calendar Customs'. This theme is reflected in the choir set pieces and poetry recitation classes, and gives inspiration for new composition. As well as an own choice Manx song, young choirs are asked to learn the same set song, meaning that there is always a hearty communal sing-song after the adjudication! The dance classes also end with a big joint dance, giving performers the chance to watch their peers and perform with others their age.

The emphasis is always on fun at the Manx Folk Awards, ensuring the perfect environment for complete beginners, as well as more seasoned performers, with organisers and adjudicators supporting those who enter by providing positive feedback and advice for future performances. The younger solo performers can bring up a friend onto the stage with them if they need to, which really helps those who are new to the stage or feeling nervous.

Some popular classes include the Feddan whistle class, where whole classes have learnt the penny whistle and take the stage perform together. There is also the Manx Gaelic own choice duologue class where comedy and costume is always a feature, and there is even a comedy Music Hall class.

Dancers are offered the opportunity to perform to live music played by the Manx Folk Awards house band, and the organisers also offer preliminary competitions in schools for those with lots of keen entrants, so the numbers can be whittled down to the four permitted entrants per school.

DESC organiser Jo Callister said; "Chloe and I are hoping that the 2023 Folk Awards will carry on the success of last year. We were bowled over by the entries in 2022 – especially in Manx dancing, where

*In this month's edition...*

- *Laa'l Vreeshey*
- *Mona Melodies complete transcription*
- *100 years of the Cleveland Medal*

Culture
VANNIN

we had to add an extra afternoon of competitions to accommodate. We work closely with schools to provide support and resources to encourage entries and are proud that our adjudicators and programme encourage such a friendly and supportive atmosphere for competitions."

Chloe added that "the Manx Folk Awards gives schools a real focus for learning and creating new Manx songs, tunes, poems and dances, and the friendly atmosphere during the week intends to encourage all schools to get involved in celebrating Manx culture and have a fun time whilst doing it!"

Isle of Man schools and private music teachers are invited to enter - see the syllabus here:

www.manxmusic.com/news_story_753347.html

Deadline for entries: 13th February. Contact Jo Callister for more information: mfa@online.sch.im



TV channel France 24 were in the Isle of Man last week, making a programme about minority languages. They were treated to a Kiaull as Gaelg (music and Manx) session in the Albert, Port St Mary!

Photo credit: Grainney Sheard

Today is Laa'l Breeshey - St. Bridget's Day!

An introduction to the Manx traditions for Laa'l Breeshey at the start of February, delivered in Manx Gaelic and English was a part of 'Shiaght Laa' on Manx Radio (broadcast on Manx Radio, 1 February 2018). This overview by Fiona McArdle and Bob Carswell covers the customs, beliefs, folklore, history, music and the wider cultural context of the British Isles into which the Manx beliefs fit.

<https://tinyurl.com/3xthsz44>

Nagh vel shoh yindyssagh?

Isn't this wonderful? >>

The lovely folk at Moonjor Veggey created this beautiful colouring-in sheet for their nursery pupils to help them celebrate Oie'll Vreeshey (31st January) and they've made it available for anyone to download it and enjoy!

Designed by Mooijner Veggey's own Grainney Sheard (Little Moot Studio), the sheet is available to download, print off, and enjoy here:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9hm3h5>

INVOCATION TO ST BRIDGET

In the Isle of Man, there is this beautiful song which invites 'Vreeshey, Vreeshey, tar gys my hie'... 'Breeshey, Breeshey, come into my house'.

You can learn the song here:

www.manxmusic.com/learn_page_407801.html



'VREESHEY, VREESHEY, TAR GYS MY HIE.



The Manx believed that Breeshey would wander the island on Oie'll Vreeshey (St. Bridget's Eve, January 31), looking for a place to stay. So people would make up a spare bed, leave out food and drink, and recite at the door before bed:

So people would make up a spare bed, leave out food and drink, and recite at the door before bed:

Vreeshey, Vreeshey, tar gys my hie, tar gys y thie aym's noight.
(Breeshey, Breeshey, come to my house, come to my house tonight.)

In the morning, if the food and drink tasted and the bed slept in, it was a sign that Breeshey had visited and your house was blessed, so you could look forward to great luck and fortune ahead.

Colouring sheet created by Grainney Sheard (@littlemootstudio) for Mooinjer Veggiey charity no. 783. Text about Ole'll Vreeshey taken from www.culturevannin.im



Hear it performed by Chantelle Smith:

https://soundcloud.com/chantelle_smith/invocationtostbridget

and Emma Christian: <https://youtu.be/EDPDItKYkog>



A lovely arrangement of the melody by Isla Callister on fiddle:

<https://youtu.be/JfGJ7oozwMc>

Greats of the Guild mark 100 years of its top prize

A celebratory lunch was held on Sunday (22 Jan) to mark 100 years of The Cleveland Medal.

Twenty winners of the prestigious award, which is presented annually to the best overall classical solo singer at the Manx Music, Speech and Dance Festival, their official piano accompanists and committee members, took part in the event at The Talk of The Town, in Douglas.

It saw the Cleveland Medallists, ranging from Margaret Summerscales (née Curphey) who clinched the medal in 1960, to 2022 winner Paul Costain, join forces to sing Ellan Vannin, conducted by Julian Power.

Guild press and PR secretary, Zoe Cannell, said: 'It was an honour to arrange this lunch for our Guild greats.

'We are a welcoming family. The sound of our island's most revered classical singers forming a choir was heart-soaring. It was an event I will never ever forget. Long may the wonderful Guild continue.'

Guild chairman Anne Clarke addressed the guests with the Cleveland Medal history.

She thanked the Manx Society of Cleveland, Ohio – now the North American Manx Association– for its generous and ongoing gift of these medals which they have delivered across the Atlantic to the Isle of Man since 1923.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Manx emigrants settled in all corners of the world in search of a better life due to the decline of mining and tourism. Where they settled, they often formed societies to offer each other support and keep their language and heritage alive.



In 1923, a sum of £100 was invested for producing the first medal, which was made and designed in Cleveland itself. This proved to be the making of The Guild, as no other competition was so avidly followed. Packed houses meant trains, buses and trams were even held back until the crowds emerged.

Mrs Clarke said the significance of the Cleveland Medal must not be underestimated.

'It is much more than the pinnacle of achievement at the Guild,' she said.

'It is a tribute to those forgotten voices of the past and a hope for budding voices of the future.'

Entrants of the six voice categories: soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone and bass first must qualify towards the final competition by undertaking two songs.

Adjudicators from off-island look for musicality, rapport and technical excellence.

Each year's victor is invited to be the soloist at the service at The Royal Chapel at St John's on Tynwald Day.

Tynwald president Laurence Skelly MLC, a past president of the North American Manx Association, spoke on its behalf. He said the association was delighted at their enduring connection with the Guild. And he said the society was keen to continue to provide medals going forward – a remark which prompted spontaneous applause. Festival president Lieutenant Governor Sir John Lorimer praised the island's arts scene.

Other notable guests included four-time winners, Allan Wilcocks MBE, Peter Cringle, Barbara Gale and Mandy Griffin; three-time winners Eleanor Shimmin BEM and Graham Crowe; and the overall highest achiever, Karen Elliott, who has received the Medal six times.

Mrs Shimmin, aged 90, one of the vice presidents of the festival, has been associated with the Guild for almost 80 years. She first competed in the singing classes when she was 11 or 12 and soon after the piano classes, before gaining a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music.

Mrs Shimmin won the Cleveland Medal in 1965, 1967 and 1969, the second time four weeks before her daughter was born. She said in those days Border Television flew Cleveland Medallists to Blackpool and taken to the studio to be interviewed and recorded singing.

'I did that but they were a bit worried about taking me in the first place,' she said. 'I had quite a journey but fortunately I was very well!'

At the same time as competing, Mrs Shimmin was also an official accompanist, a role she continued for 25 years. A children's choir she built up in the 1960s, Aeg Threshlyn, also enjoyed big success, winning the top choir prize at the Guild for about nine years. And she has taught countless pupils to sing and play piano from her home, including a number of Cleveland Medal winners.

'When I look back, I think: "I don't know how I did all that".'

She added winning her first Cleveland Medal was 'wonderful' adding: 'The Cleveland Medal is a very prestigious medal – I was over the moon.'

A celebration cake was cut by 1960 winner Mrs Summerscales (*née Curphey*) & 2022 winner Mr Costain >>

Mr Costain, who won in 2022, 2018 and 2016, told Island Life: 'It's an honour to be part of an elite group of singers and musicians.'

He added: 'So much work goes into learning two pieces, you have to learn every minute detail. It teaches you lessons in life – hard work, dedication and reward.'

For Mr Costain, singing on stage is a means of escapism from his life as a farmer.

'It's about doing something as well as I can, and enjoying it. If it brings pleasure to other people, that's great as well.'

The Manx Music Festival runs over eight days at the end of each April. Entries for this year close on February 4. There are classes in the genres of dance, speech, drama, music, singing, composition and even mime; with fresh classes introduced each year including a Drag Class and Presentation Class new in 2023.

Visit www.manxmusicfestival.org for further information

Original article: www.iomtoday.co.im/news/entertainment/greats-of-the-guild-mark-100-years-of-its-top-prize-589184



The Manx Music Festival AKA "The Guild"

22nd to 29th April 2023

Online syllabus: <https://tinyurl.com/mrxhs5mz>

**Deadline for entries
is Saturday 4th February 2023!**



ISLE OF MAN CHORAL SOCIETY
& IOM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
PRESENT

*We are the music makers
We are the dreamers of dreams*

Elgar - The Music Makers & Finzi - For St Cecilia

Musical Director:
Mandy Griffin

Soloists:
Jane Mayne & Lorcan O'Mahony

Sunday 26th March 2023 at 3pm
The Royal Hall, Villa Marina, Douglas

Featuring:
World premiere performance of "Composer of Life"
Music by Ellie Quayle, Words by Zoë Cannell

Tickets on sale from the Villa Gaiety Box Office - www.villagaiety.com
Telephone 600555 - Adults £15.00 - Children & Students £3.00**
For further information go to www.choral.im

**All inclusive of 2% booking charge



**The battle is on to find the best
young band on the Island!**

Sunday 12th March 6:30pm, Peel Centenary Centre

Senior (secondary school age)

Junior (primary school age)

Senior Prize—£500

Junior Prize—£300

Best original song prize—£100

Closing date for entries: Sunday 26th February

Email iombotb@gmail.com for a registration form



Join the Isle of Man's primary schools as they come together to perform songs linked to the exciting theme of magic! The concert, which is directed and organised by Katie Lawrence, will feature a variety of songs from different genres and the songs will be linked together through narration and storytelling. Supported by the Douglas Buxton Music Trust (IOM Charity Number 246).

This year, well known local performer/composer and Manannan's Winterfest organiser David Kilgallon has been commissioned to write two new songs about the Isle of Man in Manx Gaelic, especially for the concert (connected to the theme of magic). The 24 schools will be divided into two big groups and both those groups will each be performing one of David's new songs. Tickets: www.villagaiety.com

CELTIC GUITAR COURSE

Learn how to accompany session tunes on guitar, in a variety of different keys and tunings.

The course will be run by Paul Rogers, guitar player of Jamie Smith's Mabon, Strengyn and Skeel.

Each session will be an hour and a half long. The course will run for six weeks and cost £75 per person.

Course Start Dates:

Monday 20/2/23

Tuesday 7/2/23

paulrogers.musicus@gmail.com



The Arts Council Isle of Man logo is in the top left. Below it is a list of funding categories: GRANTS, TRAVEL, UNDERWRITING, SHORT FILM FUND, and CREATIVE INDUSTRY FUND. In the background, there is a room with a large easel, a stool with a laptop, and a small table with a cup. At the bottom, it says 'FUNDING DEADLINE: Friday 10th February 2023'.

A poster for the Spring 2023 tour of Will Pound & Jenn Butterworth. The background is a dark, moody photo of the two artists. A large, light-colored triangle is overlaid on the right side, containing the tour dates and locations.

WILL POUND & JENN BUTTERWORTH
SPRING 2023 TOUR

24 FEB	ALBUM 'VOLUME 1' RELEASE DATE
02 MAR	THE BLUE ROOM, LINCOLN
04 MAR	CORE MUSIC, HEXHAM
05 MAR	FLOWERGATE HALL, WHITBY
06 MAR	THE TRAVERSE THEATRE, EDINBURGH
10 MAR	TEMPERANCE, LEAMINGTON SPA
11 MAR	QUAY ARTS, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
18 MAR	THE INSTITUTE, LAXEY, ISLE OF MAN

The logo for Shennaghys Jiu 2023 features a stylized red dragon with its mouth open, revealing the word 'Shennaghys' in a yellow, gothic-style font. Below the dragon is a yellow crescent moon with the word 'jiu' in a red, gothic-style font. To the right of the logo, the text 'Shennaghys Jiu 2023' is written in a white, serif font, followed by 'Apríl 6th - 9th' and 'Apríl' in a white, serif font.

Shennaghys Jiu
2023

Apríl 6th - 9th
Apríl

Stay up to date on news and check out photos from the 2022 festival:

www.facebook.com/shennaghysjiu



GUITAR MYTHS

Manx guitarist Mark Lawrence has released his latest EP, **Feayn Skeel**

<https://marklawrence43.bandcamp.com/album/feayn-skeel>

Mark says:

I started to work on "Feayn Skeel" (Manx for "Myth"), 2 years ago during the Isle of Man's second Lockdown. There is a definite truth in "the difficult second album" but I am excited with end results and the tunes I've put together.

Most of the tunes have been learnt from looking through Session.org or recordings by some of my favourite trad artists on YouTube. Enjoy.

Check out Manx music student' Owen William's latest TikTok videos, including this fab rendition of 'Graih Foalsey': <https://tinyurl.com/ym3fkz8m>

'Hunker Down'

Alice Dudley, an Indie-Folk singer-songwriter from the Isle of Man, released new single, Hunker Down.

Listen on Spotify here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3f7uxez7>

Alice was recently featured on BBC introducing...

Check out Alice's other songs, including Marigold here:

www.facebook.com/alicedudleymusic



Youtube corner

Here's Daniel Quayle singing 'The Foxdale Miner' with Ruth Rosie:

<https://youtu.be/bzFbl9NT-Tk>

'The Boaldyn Tune Collection'

A collection of 13 new Manx tunes are now available online as a free PDF download, including brilliant new pieces by some of the leading figures of Manx music today, including:

David Speers, Isla Callister, Frank Joughin, Beccy Hurst, Laura Rowles and others.

Download:

<https://tinyurl.com/48m2n7he>

These pieces were created back in 2020 when we ran a competition for tunes (and songs and dances) inspired by the traditions of Boaldyn (around 1 May).

Although this is an incredibly important part of the Manx calendar, there are few traditional tunes or songs associated with it, so we thought we'd help that. The results were astounding & brilliant!

We hope that making the tunes all available in the one PDF will encourage people to take up these tunes for themselves, adding these wonderful new tunes to their own repertoire and adding to the riches of Manx music to be heard in sessions and concerts.

The PDF is now amongst other brilliant resources available from the Boaldyn page (at the bottom) here:

<https://culturevannin.im/manxfolklore/boaldyn-475492/>

Videos of some of the tunes, songs and dances being performed can be enjoyed here:

<https://tinyurl.com/2wjhfka3>



Harrish y Cheayn - Across the Sea

Flying the Manx flag at Scotland's Celtic festival...

We can all be enormously proud of the Manx musicians leading the way at Europe's largest winter music festival, *Celtic Connections*.

Isla Callister has already been on the big stage performing Manx music with her bandmates from TRIP in an exciting new collaboration with dancers.

Last Thursday Adam Rhodes and fiddler Tom Callister were part of the Celtic Odyssée event which saw its first outing at the Lorient festival last year, and the following night, they performed some highly anticipated new material with their group, Ímar.

www.glasgowlife.org.uk/event/1/celtic-odysee-and-fara

And this Friday 3rd February, Tom and Adam will be joined by David Kilgallon to perform as the enormously popular Mec Lir.

With thousands of people in attendance at the events, let alone the 10,000s more online and beyond, this is the highlight of the Scottish and UK trad music calendar, and we are enormously proud and delighted with this brilliant Manx musicians at the heart of the festival. Yindyssagh!

More information about this Manx contingent at the festival is available in this great article recently published in Isle of Man Newspapers: <https://tinyurl.com/ycknkfwr>

More information (and access to the amazing music!) can be found via the bands' pages or on the main Celtic Connections page here: www.celticconnections.com/



LISTEN to Isla Callister with TRIP (who play Manx tune, Hie Mee Stiagh) featured on BBC Radio Scotland's Travelling Folk:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001hfkp>



For updates & news on Manx music & dance,
follow www.facebook.com/groups/manxmusicanddance



Manx musician Beccy Hurst is back on tour around the UK with the shanty-tastic musical, Fishermen's Friends: <https://fishermanonstage.com/cast-creatives/beccy-hurst/>

Meanwhile, Manx musos Mera Royle, David Kilgallon & Adam Rhodes will join Breton folk stars Lors Landat and Thomas Moisson for a tour in Brittany:

Neez Nesañ

La tournée d'hiver

Jeudi 9 Février
Quimper (29)
LA BALEINE DESHYDRATÉE
19h
CONCERT // Neez Nesañ
FEST-NOZ // Landat-Moisson
MANX / IRISH LATE SESSION
// Adam Rhodes &
David Kilgallon

Vendredi 10 Février
Lorient (56)
LA TAVERNE DU ROI MORVAN
21h
CONCERT // Neez Nesañ
dans le cadre des Deiziou

Samedi 11 Février
Saint-Thurien (29)
Lieu-dit MAGOROU
20h
CONCERT // Neez Nesañ
FEST-NOZ // Landat-Moisson

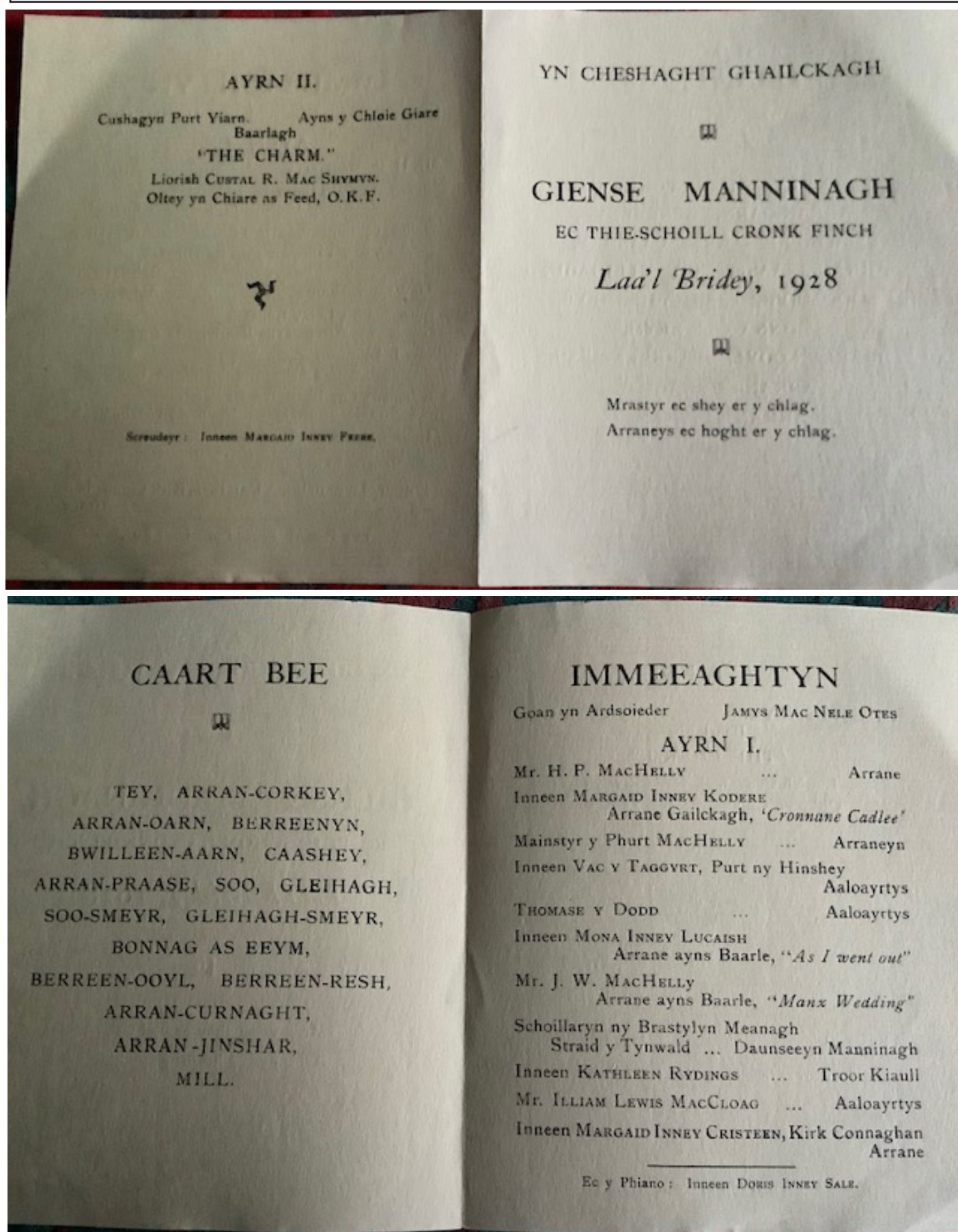
Dimanche 12 Février
Lorient (56)
LE BAR D'EN FACE
18h
MANX / IRISH SESSION //
Adam Rhodes &
David Kilgallon







RESEARCH NEWS



CONCERT PROGRAMME ~ Yn Cheshaght Ghailckagh (The Manx Society) Giense Manninagh ec Thie-Schoill Cronk Finch Laa'l Bridey 1928. The concert included Manx dialect play *The Charm* by Christopher R. Shimmin
[thanks to Sandra Caley for the photos]

Cavalcade of Music
A record of popular music, sung and played in Douglas
during the last fifty years
by Harry Wood

Transcribed and annotated by Maurice Powell

Cavalcade consists of forty-eight pages of notes typed throughout in capital letters, dated 7th May 1938. There is little narrative save for the occasional anecdote; the entries, comprising lists of composers and their music, are in a bland diary or scrapbook form; the style is unsophisticated and was not intended for publication. On the final page of the manuscript Harry Wood acknowledged the encouragement of the musical publishers Fred Day of Francis, Day & Hunter Ltd; Bert Feldman of Feldman & Company; Lawrence Wright of the Lawrence Wright Music Company Limited and Messrs Campbell & Company, together with the producer of revues and variety shows Will Dalton, and band leader Joe Kirkham, most of whom he had enjoyed excellent professional relationships with since before World War I. Copies of the unpublished manuscript are extremely rare today, but an example can be viewed in the Manx National Heritage Library.¹

Reading between the lines of essentially ‘dry’ entries reveals a fascinating story of entertainments in Douglas, a resort that consistently punched above its weight in the quantity and quality of its musical and variety entertainments, that drew thousands of summer visitors during the ‘golden’ decades of the Manx tourist industry. Harry Wood’s recollections of the music performed, the conductors and orchestras he was associated with as a young violinist and later conductor, were probably compiled from diaries, letters and other *memoranda* no longer extant, and the records of the Palace & Derby Castle Company, who owned most of the important entertainment venues in Douglas, and whose overall musical director he became in 1903.

I have attempted little in the way of editing or re-writing except where composers’ or artistes’ names, or titles of pieces of music, are doubtful, or when Harry Wood’s recollections proved to be fallible, which is to be expected of a musician whose every day for fifty years was filled with compiling, sourcing, rehearsing and conducting thousands of pieces of music for hundreds of concerts in several venues. Harry Wood invariably listed composers by their surnames only; I have given their Christian names in brackets. I have also added opus numbers and brief notes about the music, the variety stars and concert artistes, where I considered it helpful. *Cavalcade* was an invaluable primary source of information when writing my book about the era, *Manxland: King of Music, the Life and Times of Harry Wood* (Lily Publications, 2018), which is available from Culture Vannin.

1888

Fifty years ago, in 1888, the most popular tune in Douglas was the popular vocal polka *Hi! Kelly*, composed by Oliver Gaggs,² the popular conductor of the orchestra at the Falcon Cliff Pavilion, a picturesque resort overlooking the bay, and adjoining the Falcon Cliff Hotel. When playing this polka the musicians shout ‘Hi! Kelly!’ ‘Hi! Kelly!’³ just before the trio, in which they sing:

Hi! Kelly! Hi! Kelly! Hi! Kelly! Bring your boat,

Hi! Kelly! Let's quickly get afloat.

Each fresh'ning breeze shall echo loud,

As we skim o-er the bay,

Hi! Kelly! Hi! Kelly! The burden of our lay.

Even today, if a visitor wants assistance, he shouts Hi! Kelly! Hi! Kelly! and a boatman, or porter, magically appears.

The resort, Falcon Cliff Pavilion, was pulled down in 1900 ⁴.

The next most popular tune in 1888 was the *Pas de Quatre* from the burlesque *Faust Up to Date*, composed by Meyer Lutz.⁵ Like *Hi! Kelly!* it was played and whistled all over the Island.

The Lancashire comedian Lester Barrett ⁶ was very popular at (the) Falcon Cliff (Pavilion), where he was singing his favourite song *Delaney's Chicken*, that 'Double-breasted, iron-chested, Cock-a-Doodle-do'.

At Derby Castle, the orchestra was under the conductorship of Mr. Charles Reynolds, solo oboe from the Charles Halle Orchestra. I was repetiteur violin in his band.⁷ The way in which he played the *Musette* from Gounod's *Mireille* was marvellous. There was no break in his tone. It was one continuous flow, like a watchmaker using a blow pipe.

Notes

1. The copy I examined is in the Haydn Wood Music Library and Archive, Victoria, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada (custodian, Marjorie Cullerne, the great-niece of Haydn Wood), during my research there for *Manxland's King of Music*.

2. See *Oliver Gagg's, the Man who Wrote the 'Hi! Kelly!' polka*, Maurice Powell, manxmusic.com.

3. See *The Origins of Hi! Kelly*, Maurice Powell, manxmusic.com.

4. The Falcon Cliff Pavilion was demolished during the winter of 1898-99 after it was acquired by the new Palace & Derby Castle Company Limited, that emerged as a result of the amalgamation of the four main entertainment venues. See Maurice Powell, *Manxland's King of Music*, p.135-38.

5. Meyer Lutz (1829-1903), the German-born British conductor and composer of light music was well-known for his burlesques of well-known operas. *Faust Up to Date* was composed in 1888. The famous *Pas de Quatre* is a saucy skirt dance and was considered risqué in its day.

6. Lester Barrett was the brother of Thomas Augustine Barrett aka Leslie Stuart, the composer of the musical show *Florodora* and several popular songs in the years before World War I such as *The Lily of Laguna* and *The Soldiers of the Queen*, many written for the 'black face' singer Eugene Stratton.

7. Charles Reynolds (1843-1917) was an oboe and cor anglais player of distinction, composer and conductor. He was principal oboist with the Hallé Orchestra under Hans Richter, and the Liverpool Philharmonic under Max Bruch. Harry Wood was first engaged by Reynolds at the Derby Castle for the summer season of 1887.



A photo in the Manx Nostalgia Facebook group asked the question, why is this bridge in Castletown called the **Fiddler's Bridge**?

David Radcliffe tracked down the answer in the Isle of Man notebook:

Castletown could, some one hundred odd years ago, boast of nail makers, sail makers and rope makers. All of these trades have long since ceased to exist but an echo remains of the three or four rope makers in the "Polrope" (originally pullrope) a lane which connects Hope Street to Mill Street. There is a tiny footbridge, over the Tail Race, connecting Hope Street to the Claddaghs, bearing the rather grand name of "Fiddler's Bridge". Few of the town's present inhabitants are aware of the origins of the name. An English gentleman retired to the Island and brought with him his yacht. The yacht was quite a sizeable vessel and he decided to use it as a house-boat anchoring it in the inner harbour. He lived quietly in the vessel for several years until the authorities decided that in addition to harbour dues he should pay rates. This he considered rather unfair but found a way round the problem by taking the vessel to sea for several days each year, thus breaking his period of residency. He was an accomplished violinist and as his yacht was normally anchored almost adjacent to the little footbridge he would come ashore on warm summer evenings and leaning his back against the rails of the bridge would entertain the inhabitants of Hope Street and the customers of the Ship Inn, then the Railway Inn, and accordingly it came to be known as 'the Fiddlers [sic] Bridge'.

by Teddy Blackburn [printed in the Isle of man Family History Society]

See full MUSINGS: <https://tinyurl.com/pttdxhmf>

ELGAR ON THE ISLE OF MAN



Maurice Powell will be giving a lecture for the Elgar Society in York on the 24th June. *Elgar on the Isle of Man* will be an examination of the island's rich musical heritage and Elgar's contribution to it.

Maurice Powell is a horn player and pianist. Now a resident of the Isle of Man, he has researched extensively into its musical history and connections with Elgar.

www.elgarsociety.org/branches/yorkshire-north-east/

THE DANCES - Excerpt from '*...while the others did some capers*': the Manx Traditional Dance revival 1929 to 1960 by Cinzia Curtis:

1. Rinkaghyn Vannin ~ 1.27 Rinkey ny Ghuilleyn Baney

Also described as the White Boys Dance, this sword dance for six men appears to be a version of the common rapper and sword dances found across the British Isles and predominantly associated with the tradition of Mumming.



By kind permission of Manx National Heritage.

A1.27.1 Members of an early White Boy's troupe in Ramsey. (MNHL PG1150/1)



By kind permission of Manx National Heritage

A1.27.2 Young White Boys from Ramsey. (MNHL PG1150/1-2)

Relatively early photographic depictions of the white boys can be found and Clague (1896) alludes to Mumming as does Gill (Manx Scrapbook date). The tune now associated with the dance is included in the 1924 edition of the JFSS and categorised as a dance tune.

Douglas does not appear to have collected the dance as in correspondence between Douglas and Stowell in 1935 Stowell is 'still working on it' and cannot find a definitive description of the final movement (MNHL 09545 Box 21). However, the dance was performed at the Albert Hall in 1936 and in 1937 appears as complete in Douglas paper on the revival of Manx dances. It is posited that the dance was allowed by the church as it was deemed as harmless as carols and while it is recognised that the dance is similar to the English, it is stated that this dance is different and does not finish with the swords locked into a star shape. In her 1948 address to the Scottish Anthropological Society Douglas links the dance with the play 'St George and the Turkish Knight' now more commonly known as the White Boys play, although photographic evidence implies that this was the case long before this paper.

It would appear, however, that Stowell and Douglas had different versions of the dance (Bazin: 1998) and it is possible that discrepancies in descriptions and performance can be explained by this. For example, the dance as published in Rinkaghyn Vannin ends with the swords in a lock. However, this is also cited as the version collected by Stowell and it is Douglas that states that it is not a part of the Manx dance. As the dance is very standard in England it is possible that Stowell's version has been influenced by his knowledge of other versions of the dance already, but this will remain pure conjecture until further evidence can be found. However, the similarity of this dance to others and its common appearance in early sources may explain the lack of information to be found. It would appear that there was little to discuss and little about it sufficiently surprising or new to warrant extended debate or exposé. It is a dance well established on the Isle of Man and evidently based in a strong tradition found across the British Isles and has enjoyed this status since before the turn of the twentieth century.



By kind permission of Manx National Heritage.

A1.27.3 Whiteboys c. 1979 in Castletown. (MNHL PG6821/1)

READ THE FULL THESIS:

www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/MANX%20DANCE%20THESIS%20Cinzia%20Curtis%202006.pdf

Something nice about the Isle of Man

The University of California Santa Barbara Library has recently released digitised audio from 1000s of cylinders in their *Early Recordings Initiative* (ERI), and Gyp Buggane came across a few Manx numbers. One the cylinders is "Something nice about the Isle of Man" sung in 1913 by Billy Williams (1878-1915) and you can hear it here:



www.library.ucsb.edu/OBJID/Cylinder7703

It is also on YouTube with biographical info:

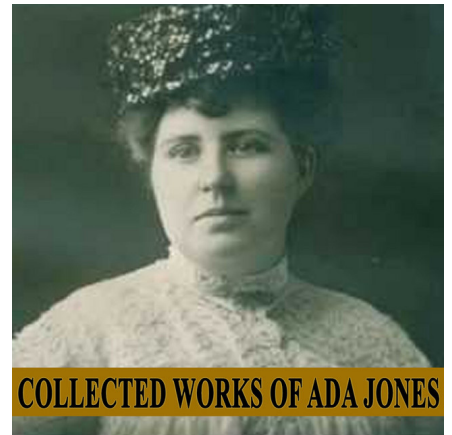
<https://youtu.be/qhAskaZRwv0>

In the digital collection, there is also "Has anybody seen Kelly (from the Isle of Man)" performed by Ada Jones in 1910:

<http://www.library.ucsb.edu/OBJID/Cylinder7142>

Ada Jane Jones (1873-1922) was an English-American popular singer who made her first recordings in 1893 on Edison cylinders.

This song had different versions of the lyrics, and some were themed about Ireland, rather than the Isle of Man, such as "Has anybody seen Kelly (from



the Emerald Isle)", sung here by Billy Murray in 1910:

www.library.ucsb.edu/OBJID/Cylinder4990

And finally, here is Sousa's band playing an instrumental version "Has anybody seen Kelly?"

www.library.ucsb.edu/OBJID/Cylinder9419

MONA MELODIES 1820

A transcription of the first Manx music publication, *Mona Melodies*, is now available to download: www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/MONA%20MELODIES%202020%20full%20transcription.pdf

The bi-centenary of the book was celebrated in 2020 with the online *Ian O'Leary lecture* for Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering presented by Bob Carswell RBV with demonstrations by Mandy Griffin (mezzo-soprano) and Frank Woolley (pianoforte):

<https://youtu.be/2dD0IJG08Dw>

The publication featured 10 songs and 3 piano solos.

Listen to the individual pieces here:

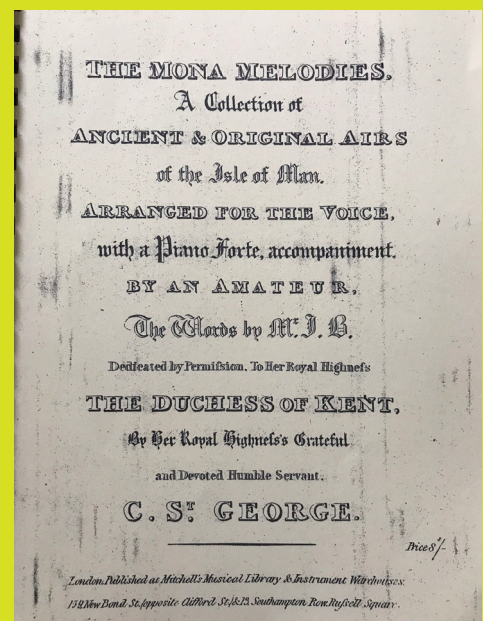
<https://www.youtube.com/@BobbyBob102493>

Culture Vannin also staged a complete performance of the book later in the year in Government House, again performed by Mandy Griffin and Frank Woolley with introduction by Chloe Woolley & history by Bob Carswell.

Watch the whole concert:

www.culturevannin.im/watchlisten/videos/mona-melodies-686022/

or <https://youtu.be/4uNzswJ3Wpk>



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MONTH

see www.manxmusic.com for more printable pieces of Manx music

The last song in *Mona Melodies* (1820) is "My Graih Nagh Nare Doin Farraghten".

Listen to the song performed by Mandy Griffin and Frank Woolley in 2020 for the bi-centenary of the publication: <https://youtu.be/x4CCEU1t-TQ> and <https://youtu.be/4uNzswJ3Wpk?t=2528>

Download the transcription of whole book:

www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/MONA%20MELODIES%202020%20full%20transcription.pdf

Transcribed from The Mona Melodies
MNHL J48/2x 2593/4
by Culture Vannin

Air. "My Graih Nagh Nare Doin Farraghten"

("Had we not better wait, my dear")

Voice

Maestoso

Piano

Oh! Free-dom, though no gems thy brow surround, Yet
in thine eyes there beams a fire di-vine! Thy laurel wreath, by pub-lic
vir-tue bound, Shames all the sparkling lus-tre of the mine!

The musical score is written for voice and piano. The voice part is in treble clef, and the piano part is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked 'Maestoso'. The lyrics are written below the voice staff. The score consists of four systems of music. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a piano introduction. The second system contains the first line of lyrics. The third system contains the second line of lyrics. The fourth system contains the third line of lyrics and ends with a double bar line.

You can access all of the KMJ Transcriptions from the first edition to the present day:
https://manxmusic.com/learn_page_467456.html

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

3 Mec Lir at Celtic Connections, Glasgow, Scotland <https://celticconnections.com/>
9 – 12 Neear Nesan tour in Brittany

MARCH

11 Battle of the Bands, Centenary Centre, Peel, 6.30pm
18 Will Pound & Jenn Butterworth, The Institute, Laxey
26 – 30 Manx Folk Awards
26 IOM Choral Society & Symphony Orchestra concert, Villa Marina, 3pm

APRIL

6 – 9 Shennaghys Jiu Celtic festival
22 - 29 The Guild
www.manxmusicfestival.org/

MAY

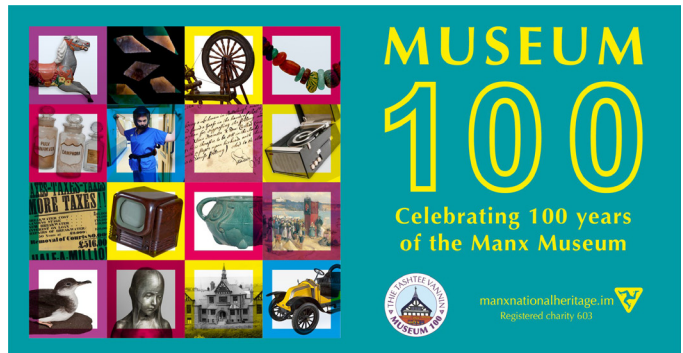
7-11 Edinburgh International Harp Festival
www.harpfestival.co.uk/
13 Manx music and calendar customs – illustrated talk by Dr Chloe Woolley & family, London-Manx Society annual lunch

JUNE

26 Elgar in the Isle of Man, lecture by Maurice Powell, Elgar Society, York
28 Sound of Magic, Villa Marina, 7pm

JULY

5 Tynwald Day
24 – 30 Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering
www.ynchruinnaght.com



Please send in dates so that we can publicise events here & online:

www.manxmusic.com

~ SESSIONS ~

TUES 8pm Singaround at The Manor, Douglas
WED 8.30pm Trad Session at O'Donnell's, Douglas
THURS 8pm Singing session at R.A.O.B. (Buffs) Club, Ramsey
FRI 8pm Trad session at The Mitre, Ramsey
FRI 8pm Trad session at the Colby Glen
Last **FRI** of month 9pm, Kiaull as Gaelg, Albert, Port St Mary
First **SUN** of month 12.30pm Trad session in Laxey Sailing Club
Third **SUN** of month 12.30pm Trad session in Ginger Hall, Sulby
Stay up to date: www.facebook.com/TradMusicWeekendIsleofMan

~ SESSIONS ~

culture vannin

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Written and edited by Chloë Woolley for Culture Vannin
The Editor welcomes submissions but reserves the right to edit for style and space
PRESS: please feel free to pick up articles without named authors to spread the word about Manx culture