

Manx calendar customs explored at the Big Bree Workshop Weekend 2018

Musical students from all over the Isle of Man gathered at the start of the October half term for the 12th annual Bree Manx music and dance weekend at the Youth Arts Centre, or the 'Breekend' as it has now been dubbed!

This year's workshops were themed around an exciting new range of stamps from the Isle of Man Post Office called 'Manx Folk Traditions' and



designed by Jay Cover. Bree tutors and students took inspiration from the traditional songs, tunes, dances and folklore associated with the images on the stamps; Mheillea, Hop tu naa, Hunt the Wren, Old Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve and the Quaaltagh (first footer on New Year's Day). Over the two days, the students worked really hard to produce pieces for the showcase concert on the Sunday afternoon for family and friends – as always, it was very entertaining!

The dancers started the concert with a balanced programme incorporating Y Mheillea, Hop tu naa and Hunt the Wren, which was choreographed by tutor Caroline Helps and accompanied by a band of young Bree musicians. The composers group followed on with a new tune they had written together, which was based on the rhythm of the original Hop tu naa dance tune [SEE KIAULL NOA]. The singing group then took to the stage with a medley of songs from the various calendar customs – The Quaaltagh song, various versions of Hop tu naa in English and Manx, and a rendition of Auld Lang Syne, sung in Manx Gaelic! A folk group, who called themselves the Wandersquad then performed some traditional tunes associated with the hired fiddler of the 'Kegeesh Ommidjagh' [foolish fortnight] around Christmas-time and the New Year; "Wandescope 1 & 2", followed by "Mheillea Noa"; a new tune which was written by Katie Lawrence as an alternative to the well-known dance tune. The songwriting group, led by tutor Greg Joughin, came on next, and they had taken inspiration from the Manx fairytale, "The Old Christmas", and had penned a catchy and humorous song about Peggy Shimmin from Ballacooil! More hilarity ensued from the drama group, with their interpretation of the Manx fairytale "Tehi Tegi"; the beautiful witch who was turned into a tiny wren by Manannan, and who is still hunted each year on St Stephen's Day. The full cast of Bree students and tutors then joined together for a finale with the song and dance of Hunt the Wren.

Gura mie mooar eu - huge thanks to this year's wonderful Bree tutors; Clare Kilgallon, Greg Joughin, Caroline Helps, Caitlin Bennett, Jo

In this month's edition...

- *Giense with Yn Chruinnaght & Cooish*
- *NEW forthcoming albums from Scran & Clash Voar*
- *Nominate RBV 2019*



Callister and Feagh Joughin, plus Ronnie and Anita Corkish and Jiri Podobsky who have documented the weekend through film and photography. Big thanks to the Youth Arts Centre for providing the perfect venue each year, to the Isle of Man Post Office for their support and members of Ellan Vannin Pipes and Drums for popping in to demonstrate the bagpipes!

The Bree weekend and Manx music youth movement is organised by Dr Chloe Woolley, Manx Music Development Officer for Culture Vannin.



To find out more: www.manxmusic.com/education.html

Photos of the Breekend:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/146057732@N07/albums/72157703019929565>

https://www.culturevannin.im/image_collection_552118.html

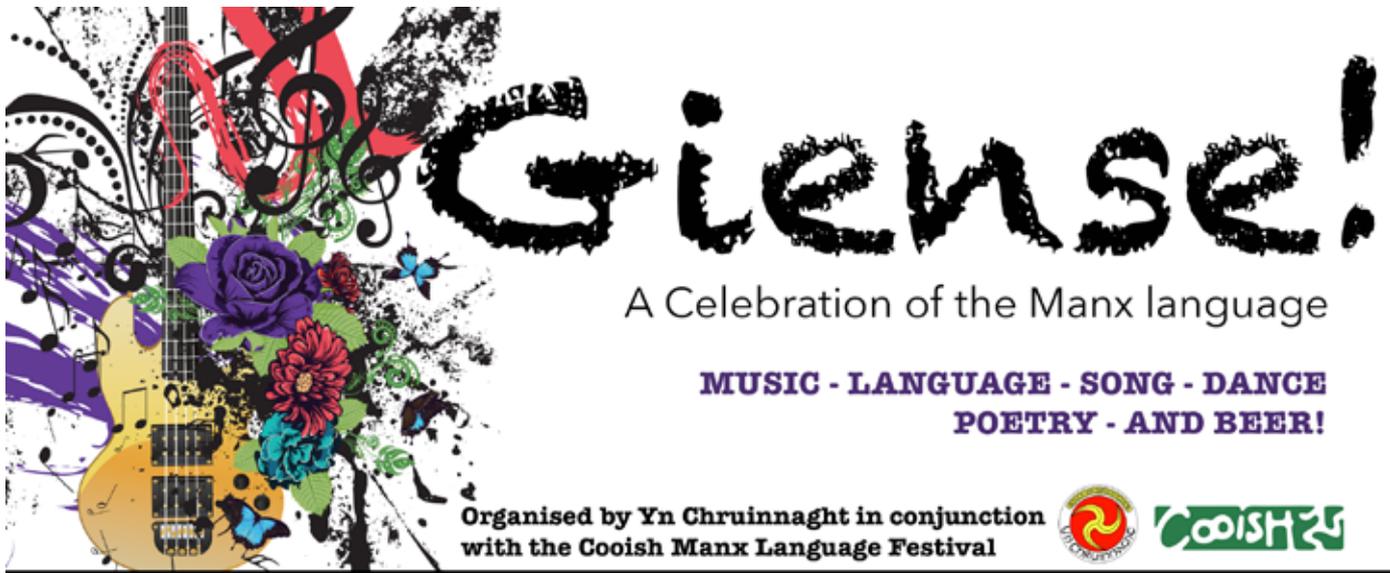


Look out for video highlights of the Bree weekend in the future from Culture Vannin:

More information about the stamp issue:

<https://www.iompost.com/stamps-coins/collection/manx-folk-traditions-/>





Wagglewse!

A Celebration of the Manx language

**MUSIC - LANGUAGE - SONG - DANCE
POETRY - AND BEER!**

Organised by Yn Chruinnaght in conjunction
with the Cooish Manx Language Festival



Jesarn 17 Mee Houney - Saturday 17 November
Peel Masonic Hall - 7.30pm

Tickets £5 / £3 U16 - from Celtic Gold in Peel, pop into Culture Vannin to buy from
Adrian or Chloe, or email to reserve: info@ynchruinnaght.com

**Kaylee as quiss ec Halley ny Masoonee
ayns Purt ny h-Inshey voish 7.30pm.
Bee yn quiss cooie son slih ta er ve gynsagh
rish tammylt beg. Bee Clash Vooar,
as Kipperceilli cloie as bee Annie Kissack, Yn Bard,
noa ayn neesht!**



**Music from Clash Vooar
Quiz and Raffle
Poetry from the Manx Bard Annie Kissack
Ceili dancing with Kipperceilli**

Please note, you do not have to be a fluent Manx speaker to attend this event
All beginners & enthusiasts welcome! Fun for all the family.

www.ynchruinnaght.com/cooish More info about Cooish events on Facebook

HOP TU NAA MAYHEM!

Hundreds of Manx school children have been learning about Manx traditions over the past few weeks.

Dr Chloe Woolley and Jo Callister, of Culture Vannin & the Department of Education, have been into primary schools over the Isle of Man throughout October, teaching young people something about the music, songs, dances, traditions and stories connected to this time of the year.

As you will be able to work out from the picture, the two main themes have been the Mheillea (& harvest) and Hop tu Naa. So, if your child has come home dancing, or speaking about making a Babban ny Mheillea out of corn, or asking about carving a turnip, it is likely that Chloe & Jo are behind it!

If you would like to catch up on what children have been learning in schools, these links should help...

Yn Mheillea: https://www.culturevannin.im/manx_year_event_491585.html

Hop tu Naa: https://www.culturevannin.im/manx_year_event_468995.html

Jo and Chloe are standing with the Isle of Man Stamps and Coins issue of Manx Traditions stamps by Jay Cover, marking a wonderful coming together of positive forces.

A part of Culture Vannin's remit is to work with the Department of Education in ensuring that children are able to learn about Manx culture and identity, ensuring that what we have gained as a nation will

not be lost on the future generations.



<<

This little group of troubadours entertained UNESCO's Dr Meriem Bouamrane from Paris with renditions of several Hop tu naa songs and a demonstration of the dance!

Hop tu naa 2018

Hop tu naa was on everyone's lips this year, with a big resurgence of turnip lanterns, children singing the traditional songs at doors, avoiding the 'other' H word (!!) and processional dancing at community gatherings.

Here are some pics from events held by Ramsey Town Commissioners and Maughold Parish Social Club.



#MRTaMeeGindys - A spooky Manx singalong

Recorded live at the Dalby Hub by Manx Radio, there was a traditional #HopTuNaa singalong.

It's available here for a couple more days :

<https://www.manxradio.com/radioplayer/od/items/1913/>

HOP TU NAA IN HISTORY Check out the archive references to Hop tu naa activities in the past on the Manx Music and Dance Facebook group. Stephen Miller has delived into the iMuseum newspaper archive to unearth interesting snippets about HTN from days gone by!



Manx harp group Claasagh put on a wonderful concert for a packed audience last month in the Villa Marina Arcade. The group consists of students of Rachel Hair, who teaches harp for Culture Vannin, and the concert also featured ex-student and winner of the 2018 BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Musician of the Year, Mera Royle. The concert was filmed so look out for excerpts on the Culture Vannin website in the future and in a forthcoming documentary about Mera by the Dark Island film company.

Photo thanks: Jiri Podobsky






Manannan's Winterfest

A Magical Manx Christmas!

MUSIC & SONG FROM
ALEXANDRA SLATER
KATE DOWMAN | MERA ROYLE
RAMSEY TOWN BAND
MANX VOICES | GARETH MOORE

WITH MANANNAN'S HOUSE BAND
DAVID KILGALLON, MALCOLM STITT, JAMIE SMITH
KIRSTY LAWRENCE & KATIE LAWRENCE

AND FEATURING
DOT TILBURY &
THE MICHAEL PLAYERS


2018 YEAR OF OUR ISLAND
a special place in time & space


ONE NIGHT ONLY

FRIDAY 7th
DECEMBER 2018
GAIETY THEATRE


ARTS COUNCIL

TICKETS: £20/£24 | CALL: 600555 | VILLAGAIETY.COM


Culture VANNIN

Hartes Ease has once again been requested by the Knockaloe.im Charity, to celebrate with music, Manx Old Christmas. We were delighted to accept the invitation and have arranged, with kind permission of Holy Trinity Church, Patrick, to present by candlelight, "On Christmas Night", Sunday 6th January 2019, 7.30. pm. *(More details later). The Charity is in the final stages of refurbishment of Old Patrick Schoolrooms, which will become the new Visitor and Archive Centre. The organisation must be heartily congratulated for having achieved so much in four years since the project began. We feel sure it will be of great educational benefit to the Island one hundred years on for locals and visitors alike. The camp had a huge effect on the life of the Island and is part of Island history which of course in turn had lasting effects on the lives of detainees and their families too. That won't be the end of the story. Research and other projects surrounding that era will continue...

Crossroads Care's Christmas cards and Manx Traditions Calendar 2019 are now available.

Both the cards and calendar have been designed and created by local artist and ceramicist Felicity Wood. Felicity has a love for Celtic knots and enjoys developing these shapes into a modern style. She has been producing Crossroads Care's Christmas cards for the past fifteen years and we are thrilled she also created a calendar for 2019.

The Manx Traditions Calendar 2019 is based on Manx traditions throughout the year, and each month has been created from an old Manx custom. This year's Christmas card, Laa Steaoin, St Stephen's Day, has been designed from December.

Available to buy in the Crossroad Care shops and during the Cooish Manx language festival.

Christmas Cards (pack of 10 including envelopes) - £4.00

Manx Traditions Calendar 2019 - £5.00

More info: <http://www.crossroadsiom.org/>



MANX ACTS TO PERFORM AT 2018 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Next Thursday 15th November at the Villa Marina, traditional musicians and dancers will display the Island's wealth of talent during the IOM Newspaper's annual Awards for Excellence.

Mec Lir, young dance group Skeddan Jiarg and harpist Mera Royle will all perform at the glitzy awards ceremony.

Tickets available from Trudi Williamson:

www.excellence-awards.im

Harrish y Cheayn - Across the Sea

MANX HARP MUSIC IN AUSTRALIA

Carolyn MacDonald from Australia attended the Manx harp workshop by Rachel Hair at the Edinburgh International Harp Festival earlier this year. Once back home, she passed the Manx tunes onto her harp teacher Christine Morphett, who has recently set up a harp orchestra. In their first performance last month at the Fleurieu Folk Festival, they included Arrane ny Niece and Carolyn told the audience a little about the folklore in the Isle of Man. Their next concert will be on 10th November when Carolyn will play Moirrey ny Cainle and Cur dty Vainney as solo pieces, and the orchestra will again play Arrane ny Niece. The group intend to add more Manx tunes to their repertoire.



Manx dance in Brazil

Brazilian dance group, Danças Celtas arallec'h, recently included "Dance for Three" and some Manx dance footwork into their Celtic dance medley.

Watch 2'16"

<https://www.facebook.com/arallech/>

They've been learning a little Gaelg over in Brazil too! >>

Moghrey mie!
Mish Peddyr.
S'mie lhiam cheet dty whaill
Kys t'ou?

Se apresentando em: Manés (Ilha de Man)
"Dú" M'au-ua-ne é P'eddyr. P'eddyr em é lhiam cheet dty whaill
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PC31752130>
C'auel | Live Language
Video: L'auel Language - Anil Bell (2018)

December deadline: CALL FOR MANX MUSIC & DANCERS - LORIENT 2019

If you or your group are interested in representing the Island at the 2019 Festival Interceltique de Lorient in Brittany, get in touch! Please send a promo pack (biog, photos, recordings, etc.) to manxmusic@culturevannin.im to be passed onto the festival and delegate for consideration. If you're interested in volunteering in the pavilion, also get in touch for more information.

Festival Interceltique de Lorient 2nd - 11th August 2019 www.festival-interceltique.bzh

Manx Romances to go worldwide

THE Island is set to get a publicity boost with the recording and publication of 'Five Manx Romances', written by renowned composer Martin Ellerby to mark the Isle of Man Wind Orchestra's 20th anniversary.

The piece, played by students from the Royal Northern College of Music, was recorded in Manchester in the presence of IOM Wind Orchestra musical director Paul Dunderdale and his wife Gill.

The RNCM students are exceptional musicians and were conducted by Dr Jeff Mathews, associate professor of music at the University of Louisiana, USA, a regular guest conductor with the college orchestra.

"It was a wonderful day watching our anniversary piece being played and recorded by stunningly brilliant players," Paul Dunderdale said. "We were delighted and privileged to be invited."

Five Manx Romances was commissioned by the Wind Orchestra with support from the Malcolm Scott Dickinson Charitable Trust, and had its world premiere at St Ninian's Church in July this year, under Paul's baton.

After being approached to write it, composer Martin Ellerby came to the island in 2017 and drew inspiration from the many cultural and historical landmarks he visited, such as Milner's Tower, Laxey Wheel, and Tynwald Hill.

"I am a musician and an occasional composer," Paul Dunderdale said. "When you see a composer of Martin's stature come here and take inspiration from sites and places on the island and compose pieces of that virtuosity, well, it is just amazing and inspiring".

The recording of Five Manx Romances will soon be published as a CD and made available to the public.



"We have provided the germ, the inspiration for a remarkable piece of music which will travel the world with the words 'Isle of Man Wind Orchestra' and 'Manx' stamped on it," Paul Dunderdale said. A fitting way to celebrate 20 years of the Isle of Man Wind Orchestra!

Further information is available from the Isle of Man Wind Orchestra:
Email winds@manx.net Facebook page www.facebook.com/IOMWO/

Youtube/ video corner

Back to the '70s! Triad play the old Manx classic "Sheep under the Snow" featuring Christine Teare on vocal. Recorded by Terry Clough at Kelly Recording Studios.

<https://youtu.be/ucoCW9oSvrk>

kiauli noa

DEBUT ALBUM FROM SCRAN COMING SOON...

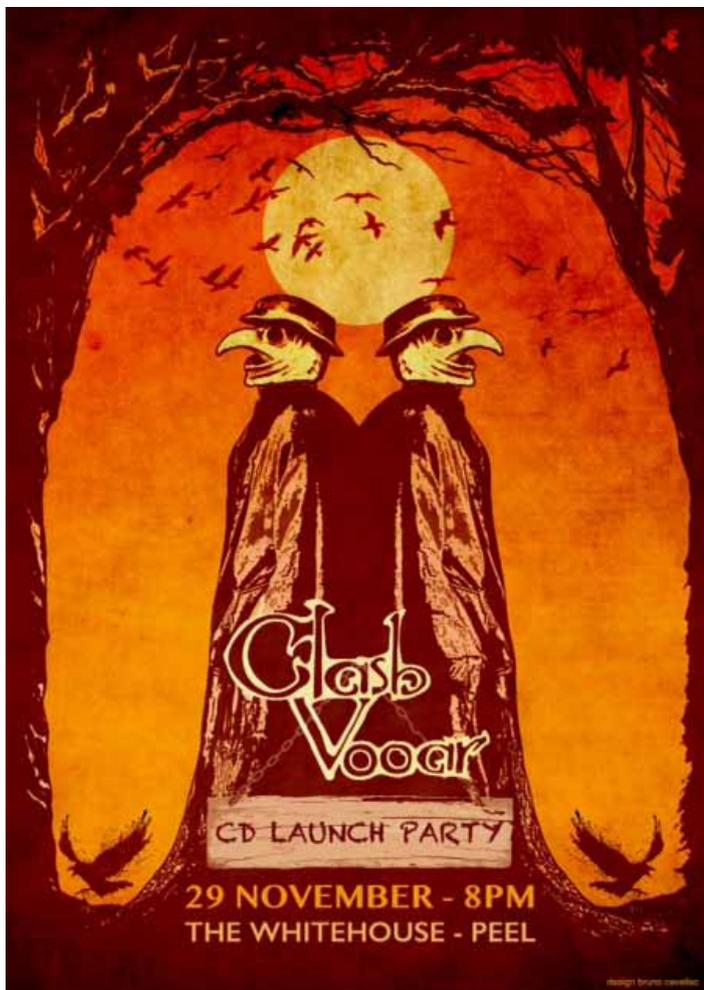
'Nane', Manx Gaelic for number one, is the debut album of young group of talented traditional musicians, Scran.

Scran has grown out of the Manx music youth movement, Bree, which is organised by Culture Vannin, and this 'Bree Supergroup' was set up primarily to develop group-work skills and to provide performance opportunities.

Led by mentor, Paul Rogers (Mabon, Strengyn & Fecktones), the Scran members are aged between 13 and 18 and include BBC Radio 2 Young Traditional Musician of the Year 2018, Mera Royle on harp.

The album features a variety of trad tunes and songs, and includes the lovely Dooraght by Katie Lawrence, which helped the band secure 2nd place in the Next Big Thing last year.

The CD, which will cost £10, will be launched and available in shops very soon, with online sales and downloads through: www.culturevannin.im and manxmusic.com

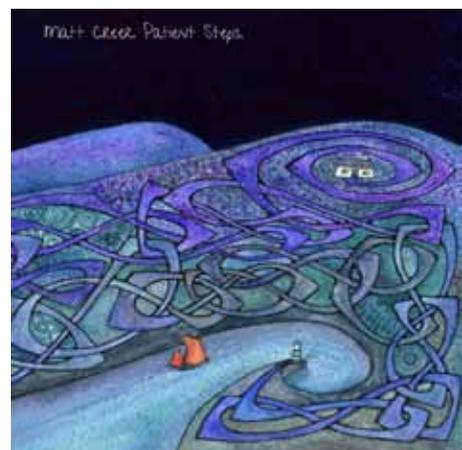


CLASH VOOAR album launch!

Join Manx Gaelic gypsy folksters at the launch of their upcoming Album, **Rumours of Unease <<**

MATT CREER - NEW ALBUM OUT

Almost three years in the making, a well-known and highly-regarded local singer songwriter has taken his time working on his third album. Matt Creer's released his latest CD, 'Patient Steps', a 10-track collection of new and original material.



READ more:

www.iomtoday.co.im/article.cfm?id=43767

Chris and Karen Rewind

A musical duo from British Columbia called "Chris and Karen Rewind" visited the Isle of Man earlier this year to perform at Sir Norman's Bar in Douglas and promote a tribute song that Chris had composed about Sir Norman Wisdom, called "Norman Wisdom Is the One". While they were visiting the Island they were interviewed by Manx Radio's Judith Ley who asked if they might be inspired to write a song about the Isle of Man. On their return to British Columbia they composed "The Isle of Man" and they felt honored when Judith featured the song on her show, Sundown Easter Sunday. Chris and Karen hope to return the Isle of Man next summer and perform. <http://chrisandkarenrewind.weebly.com>

Download the song "The Isle of Man":

<https://itunes.apple.com/ca/album/the-isle-of-man-single/1373433046>



NEW COMPOSITION PRIZE

Next year's Manx Music Festival (The Guild) will be 27th April - 4th May 2019 & the syllabus is out now in shops, post offices, etc. Amongst the many classes on offer, there are lots that relate to Manx culture: Manx Gaelic solo song, folk solo, recorder/tin whistle solos and groups, folk woodwind solo, TE Brown poetry reading, spoken Manx, original poem in Manx dialect or short story/essay pertaining to the Isle of Man, reading in sight in Manx and Manx folk dancing classes. Entries close 9th February 2019.

**COMPOSITION CLASS: To maintain a link with our cultural heritage, the challenge is to compose a piece of music for a maximum of five performers on a Manx theme. Competitors may arrange a performance of their piece which will follow the adjudication. Pick up a syllabus to find out more!*

Reminder - ARRANE SON MANNIN - NEW SONG FOR MANNIN: Deadline: 7th December 2018

The International Pan Celtic Festival will take place in Letterkenny 23 - 28 April 2019, but before that, an original song in Manx Gaelic will be chosen to represent the Isle of Man. This heat will take place on Saturday 12th January, 7.30pm in Peel Masonic Hall, so start penning a new ditty or translate your original song now. **more info here:** www.manxmusic.com/news_story_548534.html

Translation and pronunciation help is available, so don't be afraid of singing in Manx for the first time! Contact Manx delegate, Fiona McArdle, for more info and entry form: fmcardle@manx.net

Bree young composers were tasked with writing a new tune to accompany the Hop tu naa dance. Here's the result!

Hop tu naa Noa!

Bree composers group
October 2018



Who will Manannan favour for this year's cultural award?

Nominations are open throughout November for an annual cultural award named after our very own Celtic sea god, Manannan. The 'Reih Bleeaney Vanannan' or RBV is awarded to an individual or group who has made the greatest contribution to the Island's culture. Nominations are considered by a panel of representatives from various Manx cultural organisations and the winner is usually announced in January.

But what kind of person could you think of proposing? You may want to nominate someone who works to promote and support art, dance, folklore, language, literature, music, history, education or the environment, or some other aspect of Manx culture. Last year, Manx language teacher and author Phil Kelly received the award, in recognition of decades of work in education, publishing and the development of innovative online resources. Previous winners include the Michael Players (dialect theatre), William Cain (wildlife and environment), Clare Kilgallon (music, song and dance), the Bunscoill Ghaelgagh (language and culture), Allan Skillan (field-walking and prehistory), and Maureen Costain Richards (Manx artistic heritage, particularly Manx crosses), which shows that the aspects of Manx culture covered by the award really are diverse.

Your nomination should assume that the panel knows nothing about the individual or group. It should show how they have made an impact on the Island's culture either over decades of work or through something remarkable in only a short space of time. If they have been active in one or more areas, or have achieved something remarkable in the past year, detail this – all aspects are considered by the panel.

The winner of the award receives a personal donation of £500 and is invited to name a Manx cultural cause which will receive an additional donation of £500 from Culture Vannin.

Recipients are also entitled to use the letters RBV after their name.

It was Mona Douglas who championed Manannan as the patron of Manx culture, developing the original 'Mananan Trophy' together with Stephen Quayle. Later reincarnated as the RBV, the trophy was designed by the late Eric Austwick, and consists of the figure of Manannan standing on a piece of Pooilvaish marble. Although the trophy is only held for a year, each recipient of the RBV is awarded a medal designed by Jenny Kissack and reproduced by Celtic Gold.

Full details of the award, downloadable nomination forms and rules are available on Culture Vannin's website – just follow links for RBV Cultural Award on the homepage: www.culturevannin.im or email enquiries@culturevannin.im or phone 676169.

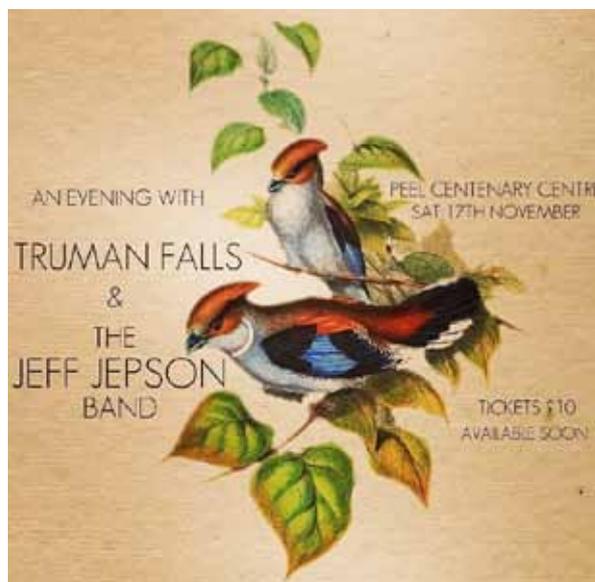
Manannan entrusts nominations to the people of the Isle of Man, so it's up to you to propose Manannan's Choice of the Year. The closing date for nominations is Monday 26 November 2018.

Links: http://www.culturevannin.im/cms/page_286033.html

Brookfield Residential Home

in Ramsey would love to hear some traditional music. If you can volunteer some time to pop in and entertain the residents, they would appreciate a performance of 50 to 60 minutes, preferably on a Thursday or Sunday afternoon. Let Chloe know if you can help out and she'll pass on your details:

manxmusic@culturevannin.im



Save the date!!

Mollag Ghennal

in Douglas Legion

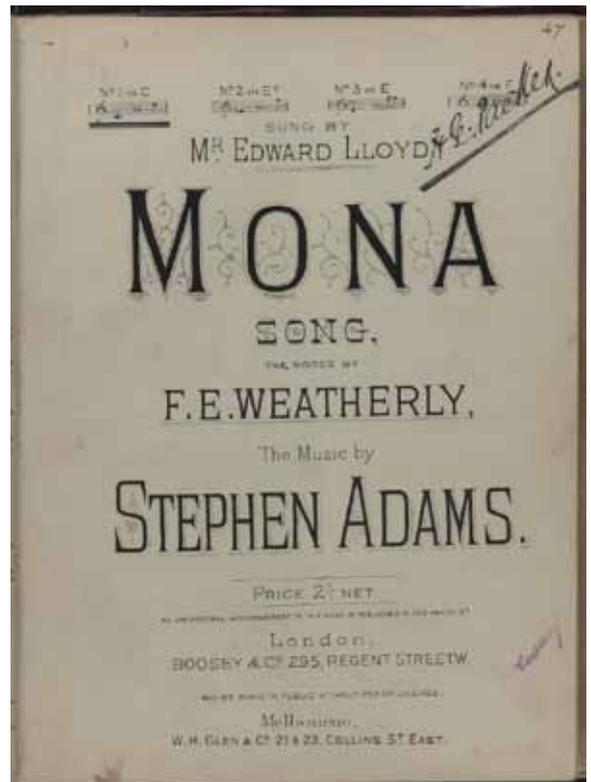
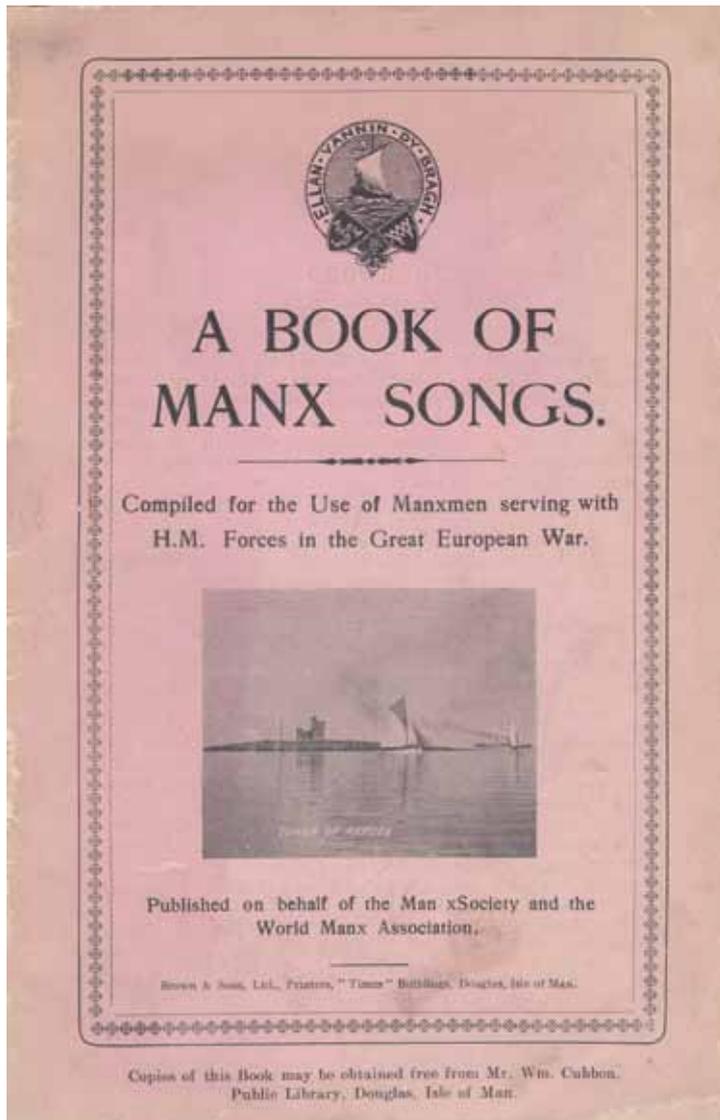
Friday 28th December

More details in next month's

KMJ...

An evening of music from the island's home-grown Truman Falls & The Jeff Jepson Band
17th November, Centenary Centre, Peel, 7.30pm

RESEARCH NEWS



Commemorative edition of WWI Songbook produced for Manx schools

To commemorate the end of the First World War, Culture Vannin has produced a facsimile re-print of a little songbook which has been sent to every school in the Isle of Man. **A Book of Manx Songs** was originally compiled for the "Use of Manxmen serving with H.M. Forces in the Great European War" and published on behalf of the

Manx Society & the World Manx Association 1915.

A limited number of books are available from Culture Vannin for a donation. Contact Chloe for more information.

To view a pdf of the book: https://www.manxmusic.com/news_story_552677.html

There is also a list of the contents with links to sheet music and audio recordings. One of the songs in the book is "Mona" written in 1877 by Stephen Adams & Fred Weatherley:

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-166247952/view?partId=nla.obj-166248074#page/n1/mode/1up>

A Forgotten Isle of Man Song by Maurice Powell

In addition to the 'Kelly' songs and Flanagan popularised by Florrie Forde before the first world war, there are an astonishing number of popular songs from the music hall era, and from the 1920s and 30s, that promote holidays on the Isle of Man, and extoll the virtues of Douglas and the Island in their lyrics. I have a provisional list of over forty such songs, and I hope to produce a short piece about them in due course. Just a few weeks ago in the library of the Manx Museum details of a hitherto overlooked and little-known unknown song: Sticky Backs, with words and music by J.W Knowles, and published by B. Feldman & Co., Ltd., in 1900, were passed to me, and here are the results of some further research into it.

READ the full article here:

<https://www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/A%20Forgotten%20Isle%20of%20Man%20Song.pdf>

"TITTLEWHACK" BY GEORGE QUARRIE

In the north of the Isle of Man, where the land is dry and peculiarly adapted to the growth of potatoes, the long winter evenings, ones upon a time, used to be occasionally whiled away by tittlewhack sprees. A case in point occurs to mind, where a large, stone-flagged kitchen was the scene, its ceiling almost entirely hidden by hams, shoulders and flitches of bacon, among which, about the centre, high up and not too much in evidence, was a large Christmas kissing bush, about a yard in diameter, gaily decked in country fashion with ribbons, rosettes, apples, oranges, etc. There were also the literal "hibbin and hollin" decorations still around the walls and on the high mantelpiece, whereon about a dozen candles burned on their various heights of candlesticks—from the short bedroom ones, having trays, snuffers and extinguishers, to those tall, old-fashioned, ornamental ones from fifteen to thirty inches high—all of wellpolished brass. These lights, backed by several tiers of burnished dish-covers and various pewter drinking vessels, metal tea and coffee-pots, etc., etc., gave a bright, comfortable appearance to the still extant remains of the old-time open fireplace. From the "swee," or crane in the chimney, on such an evening hung the big family pot, full to the lid of the favourite "Bill-John" potatoes, boiling away with their skins on. (The "Bill-John" was a long, oblong, rather flat potato, grown from seed potatoes imported from the Orkney Islands.) Around the room on the big, high-backed settles, on chairs, stools, forms, etc., and out in the long back-kitchen adjoining, some dangling their legs from the long table there, and some seated on the stone "bink" among the milk-cans, were the farmer lads and lasses, all bent on fun and mischief, practising everlasting larks on one another, with frequent appeals to the high privileges of the big "kissing bunch," as they generally called it.

When the potatoes were done, they were emptied into many dishes along the tables, and all joined in at the peeling which, as the tubers were steaming hot and liable to fall to pieces, was quite a ticklish kind of work. When peeled, the potatoes were put back into the great pot, and this was set down on the floor on a sheet or tablecloth, a hitch prevents the slipping of the three little pot-legs on the stone floor. All the young fellows now take turns at mashing or "bruising" the potatoes, until not the smallest lump is left in the whole mass. Into this, dish after dish of that night's: milking, new from the cow, is poured, and then commences the long and brisk stirring by which that delightful dish, "Tittlewhack," is made.

The pot-stick—a plain, round wooden porridge stirrer—is briskly moved through the creamy mass so as to execute the figure-eight, the operator all the time moving round and round the pot while so stirring. The sound the potstick makes on the sides of the pot very closely resembles the words, "Tittle-whack." Hence the name of the toothsome dish.

It is utterly impossible satisfactorily to describe the fun and many drolleries accompanying this turn about among a lot of rustics, male and female, old and young! Some of the old cottagers, particularly, provided great merriment. Old Juan-a-Beth, for instance, who, so far as the writer knew, was never seen by mortal man without the broad rim of his old weather-beaten stove-pipe hat resting on his ears and almost entirely hiding his eyes. As Juan put down his cutty clay pipe with the gravity of a man about to lay his neck on the executioner's block, and took hold of the potstick, everybody laughed at what was genuinely and irresistibly funny. It was the very farthest thing from Juan's wish or intention to be funny; but he could no more help making you laugh than lots of others in this world can help making fools of themselves trying to be funny. The screaming stage was reached when Kerry-na-Coolyeh (who well knew Juan's awful austerity) actually attempted to kiss him, as he stood right under the license-giving bush. Juan's resentment of this unparalleled liberty made comedy of the most enjoyable kind.

Johnnie-Willie's fiddle soon covered the floor with dancers. After indulging in some merry hornpipes and reels, the meeting was sort of called to order for something special. The fiddler said he had a new song he would like to sing for them, and hinted that the composer of it was too modest to let his name be known. They were all invited to join in the chorus, which was heartily done. The song, which, by the way, was afterwards credited to Johnnie-Willie himself, was called-

“ TITTLEWHACK!”

O, the English blow a good cheek on beef,
And they'd die if robbed of their beer
And the Scotch must brew and the Irish too,
Some whisky for their daily cheer;
But you know, now boys, how far we would
Forgo their whisky and beef and ale:
As far, I believe, as Billy could heave Ballavarkish bull by the tail !

Chorus

*With a hey-riddle, ho-riddle, riddle-om raa,
Aw, Tommy, don't you know your tack, boy?
Let the potstick rattle
Like a barndoor battle
Rip-a-rap, rip-a-rap,
Tip-a-tap, tip-a-tap,
With a hey-riddle, ho-riddle, riddle-om raa,
Then lay into good tittle-whack, boy !*

Now, Kelly's not over particular. He will not say what he's preferrin',
Put what's in his glass, or what course to pass,
You must give him his spuds and herrin' !
Here's a health to thee, bould king of the sea,
We want you with a good thick back
And a big " Bill-John" with the skin left on,
And once in a while, tittle-whack !-Chorus.

If you're wantin' to please Misther Kelly, now,
Jus' tell him he's the keenest han'
A' bargain or bet that ever you met,
An' there's nothin' he will not stan' ;
But if you would have your revenge on him,
I'll tell you the very way how;
Jus' go to the fair-you'll sowther him there.
Give him all he'll ask for his cow ! - Chorus;

[From *Manx Quarterly*, #26, 1921] <http://www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook/mquart/mq26184.htm>

Hunt the Wren is one of the most unusual, popular and exciting Manx traditions still practised on the Isle of Man today

On St. Stephen's Day (the 26th of December) communities come together across the Isle of Man to dance and sing around the streets. The practice, dating back to Celtic times, is centred on a wren, "the king of all birds," which is hunted and then danced through the streets on a special pole. (In case it needs stating, the bird in the wren pole today is just a replica!)

www.culturevannin.im/manx_year_event_469497.html

Watch Culture Vannin films by Sam Hurt of Hunt the Wren in Port St. Mary in 2016: vimeo.com/202405547

The film is also available in Manx Gaelic: vimeo.com/202398882

Hunt the wren is practiced each year across the Isle of Man. Join others at one of these locations:

<https://www.visitisleofman.com/whats-on/hunt-the-wren-p1324991>



THE ST MATTHEW'S MINSTREL TROUPE (1896)

This photograph appeared in the *Isle of Man Times* for 1953, sent in by a member of the troupe then still living, Clara Barton *née* Fitzsimmons of Colby. The link with St Matthew's was that they were also the St Matthew's Church Choir. They performed first on 23 April 1896, in the Regent Hall, in aid of funds for the Sunday School. "The Watchman" in his regular column in the *Examiner* for 2 May was not, however, taken with their performance, writing that "[t]he singing was on the whole poor." This brought forth a response from a letter signed as "Not One of the Troupe," who pointed out that "[s]uch was *not* the verdict of the audience, as most of the pieces were re-demanded." The letter appeared in the *Times* for 16 May, the *Examiner* in its own issue that day remarking that "[t]he writer evidently takes the criticisms of our contributor who wrote a fortnight ago too seriously." There are no further mentions of the troupe in the newspapers thereafter, but one feels that it is not the criticism they faced that is the factor here, rather that the choir performed a one-off concert. (That said, the newspapers of the day do not capture everything that was going on in the Island).

The photograph is said to date from 1899, however, the concert details match those for 1896, and so make it more likely to be that year. The names of the St Matthew's Minstrel Troupe are as follows: (Back row) Jack Cubbon, Eddy Cowin, Jack Quayle, George Cain, Willie Gell. (Front row) Frank Naylor, Alice Cubbon, Ben Alexander, Clara Fitzsimmons, John Kneen (conductor), Annie Binns, J.D. Fell, J.P., Marion Langness, John Cowley, Katie Gell, Alfie Kneen, Maud Fitzsimmons.

STEPHEN MILLER

References: Anon, "[Douglas] St Matthew's minstrel" *Isle of Man Examiner* 11 April 1896, 4g; ——. "Fixtures," *Isle of Man Times* 21 April 1896, 4g; ——. "Minstrels in Victoria's Day," *Isle of Man Times* 18 April 1953, 4b–e; *Isle of Man Examiner*, "To Correspondents," *Isle of Man Examiner* 16 May 1896, [page not scanned]; Pseud [signed "Not One of the Troupe"], "[Letter to the Editor] St Matthew's Minstrel Troupe," *Isle of Man Times*, 16 May 1896; Pseud [signed "The Watchman"]. "Miscellaneous Observations," *Isle of Man Examiner* 2 May 1896, [8]c.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MONTH

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

LULLABY OF THE VIRGIN MARY - CHORAL ARRANGEMENT

Frank Woolley has produced a lovely arrangement of this Manx Christmas carol for SSA choir and piano. Download it for free here: https://www.manxmusic.com/learn_page_550695.html

Lullaby of the Virgin Mary
Cadlee ny Moidyn Moirrey

Manx words by High Bailiff H. Kelly
Translated Mona Douglas

Arr. Frank Woolley
(1987 revised 2018)

Andante ♩ = 36

S 1.
S 2.
A.

1. Hush thee, hush thee, love - ly Boy,

Piano. *mp dolce*
Con ped. *Simile.*

5 *p* *mp*
Yab - ban veg vac Yee; Pre - cious lamb, My own, My joy,

9 *p* *mp*
Bee - dty host, Bee - dty host! Peace - ful sleep my lit - tle one,

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

7th Caarjyn Coodjagh singing for Peel Pensioners, Philip Christian Centre, 7.30pm

10th Bree session for young musicians (10-18), Culture Vannin, 2 – 3.30pm

17th Yn Chruinnaght Cooish Giense, Peel Masonic Hall, £5/3 info@ynchruinnaght.com (see poster)

17th Truman Falls concert, Centenary Centre, see poster

24th Caarjyn Coodjagh & Rachel Hair, Taste of Christmas, St James Church, Dalby, 7.30pm SOLD OUT

29th Clash Vooar album launch, The Whitehouse, Peel, 8pm (see poster)

DECEMBER

1st Caarjyn Coodjagh at Tynwald Mills from 2p.m til 4p.m. Any singers who would like to join in from 3 til 4p.m. to sing carols would be very welcome. Collection in aid of M.E support group.

2nd IOM Symphony Orchestra concert with premiere of Charles Guard's St Maughold, Villa Marina 2.30pm

7th Manannan's Winterfest, Gaiety Theatre, 7.30pm £24/20 villagaiety.com

7th Caarjyn Coodjagh Christmas songs in

aid of ME Support, Rushen Parish Church, 7.30pm, free (donations welcomed)
16th Caarjyn Coodjagh Christmas Service at Kirk Christ Malew, 3pm, free
26th Hunt the Wren - Island-wide!
28th Mollag Ghennal, Legion Club, Douglas, details TBC
28th Russell Gilmour Trumpet, David Kilgallon Organ Ramsey, Music Society
Christmas Concert St. Pauls Church, Market Square, Ramsey

JANUARY 2019

4th Kirk Michael Oie'll Verrey

6th Hartes Ease Old Christmas Concert, Knockaloe

12th Arrane son Mannin, Peel Masonic Hall

FEBRUARY

3rd Annie Kissack's Manx Mass sung by Caarjyn Coodjagh, St Matthew's Church, Douglas, 10.30am

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 Session at O'Donnells, Douglas

THURS 8pm Singing session at The Mitre, Ramsey

FRI 8pm Trad session at The Mitre, Ramsey

FRI Trad session at the Manor, Willaston

Last **FRI** of month 9pm, Kiavull as Gaelg, Albert, Port St Mary

Occasional **SAT** 10pm Manx session at The White House, Peel

Monthly **SUN** 12.30pm Trad session in Laxey

~ SESSIONS ~

culture vannin

For information on Manx music & dance contact:
Manx Music Development Officer **Dr Chloë Woolley**: chloe@culturevannin.im

www.manxmusic.com

Call: Chloë: 01624 694758

or write to: Culture Vannin, PO Box 1986, Douglas, Isle of Man IM99 1SR

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