

Nollick Ghennal as Blein Vie Noa – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – *Manx music and dance at Christmas*



‘At Christmas play and make good cheer, For Christmas comes but once a year.’

In the Isle of Man, a key element of Christmas in past-times was taking a break from routine. This holiday from the usual hard and relentless routine was called the ‘Foolish Fortnight’ or in Manx Gaelic, ‘Yn Kegeesh Ommidjagh’, and this began on the shortest day, Black Thomas’ Eve (now 21st December) and ended on Twelfth Night (6th January or Old Christmas Day).

Much like today, ‘Foolish Fortnight’ was a time of socialising and revelry. Very little work was done; the time instead spent singing, dancing, eating, drinking, dancing, sports, games and visiting. Fiddlers were hired during Christmas to play for dancing and their fee was known as ‘Yn Unnysup’ – a word thought to be linked to Wanderer’s cup or Wandescop and which features in several tune titles.



White Boys Play

A tradition associated with Christmas in the Isle of Man and elsewhere in the British Isles was the the White Boys mummers’ play. Referring to local topics and current affairs, the folk drama features St. George who fights various opponents who are then brought back to life by the Doctor! Usually performed by men, the characters were dressed in white dresses decorated with ribbons, beads and tinsel and high hats decorated with evergreens [<< trad costume in the Manx Museum]. The performance also included the White Boys Carol and the impressive White Boys Dance where blunt-edged swords were interlinked into a 6 pointed star performed to the tune, “Creg Willy Syl”.

Carvals at the Oie’l Verrey

Another tradition peculiar to the Isle of Man was the singing of Carvals on the Oie’l Verrey (Eve of the Feast of Mary or Christmas Eve). When the evening service was over and the vicar had gone home, the Parish Clerk and congregation stayed in the church to perform or listen to carvals (carols) in Manx Gaelic. These carvals rarely referred to the nativity, but instead to matters of Christian duty, judgment, salvation, redemption, the joys of heaven and the terrors of hell! They were usually performed unaccompanied by a male singer and the duration was determined either by the length of time taken to walk and sing from the back of church to the altar, or the length of time a lit taper lasted until the flame went out. Some carvals were 320 verses long!

Friendly rivalry was part of the evening as the congregation would shout encouragement at the end of each verse, or the women would fling parched peas at their bachelor friends! Afterwards, all retired to nearest tavern for hot spiced ale and they ended the evening in the small hours by singing ‘Arrane Oie Vie’ – the Goodnight song or Parting Song.

AW Moore published a collection of carval text manuscripts in Carvalyn Ghailckagh (1891) and many of the melodies were taken down by Dr Clague and the Gill Brothers in the 1890s. e.g. “Carval ny Drogh Vraane”.

In this month’s edition...

- *A new Christmas carol to learn*
- *Sophia Morrison centenary*
- *Christmas Events*



Christmas Day

Early on Christmas morning, fiddlers called on households to wake everyone up to receive their gifts!

Hunt the Wren – Shelg yn Drean

Another music and dance tradition that has been continuous in the Isle of Man is Hunt the Wren or Helg yn Drean which is performed on St. Stephen's Day. In the past, people would beat the bushes to catch a wren and kill it, before parading the bird in a bush decorated with evergreens and ribbon. The traditional circle dance is performed around the bush to a lively song [>>> photo credit: Peter Killey]. Similar to the legends found in surrounding islands, one story behind the tradition is that a wren betrayed St.



Stephen by alerting Roman soldiers to the bush where he was hiding. Another tells of a beautiful siren who lured Manx men into the sea to their deaths. When one attempted to catch her, she turned into a wren and escaped, so each year since, men and boys tried to catch the bird. A feather from a hunted-down wren was considered very lucky as it gave protection against shipwrecks and witchcraft. Hunt the Wren revellry must be finished by midday, when it then customary to gather on Tynwald Fairfield for the annual cammag match between the North and South; a dangerous stick and ball game similar to hurling and shinty!

The party is over! Twelfth Night marked the end of Kegeesh Ommidjagh (foolish fortnight), and this was known as Laa Giense, a feast day when young people were paired off. Just in time for back to work!

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS IN MANX

Nollick Ghennal as Blein Vie Noa = Happy Christmas and a Good New Year

Lesh yeearreeyn share = With best wishes

Lesh Shee as Graih = With peace and love

Hee'm oo 'sy vlein noa = See you in the New Year

Shee erriu car ny bleeaney shoh cheet = Peace to you throughout the coming year.



A traditional Christmas greeting is as follows:
Nollick Ghennal erriu, as blein feer vie
Seihll as slaynt da'n slane lught-thie;
Bea as gennallys eu bio ry-cheilley,
Shee as graih eddyr mraane as deiney
A Merry Christmas to you, and a very good year
Long life and health to the whole household;
Life and joy to you living together,
Peace and love between women and men.

Christmas Card = Kaart Nollick / Christmas Carol = Carval / Christmas Day = Laa Nollick / Christmas Eve = Oie'll Voirrey / Christmas Tree = Billey Nollick / Father Christmas = Jishag y Nollick / Snowman = Fer sniaghtee / Shelg yn drean = Hunt the wren

SEE INSIDE KMJ AND THE CALENDAR FOR THIS YEAR'S MANX TRAD CHRISTMAS EVENTS



2017 marks the centenary of the death of Manx folklorist SOPHIA MORRISON and commemorative events start this month...

Sophia Morrison: The First Curator

-10/12/2016 – 06/05/2017

-Open Monday to Saturday 10am - 5pm (plus Sunday 11 December 10am - 5pm)

-Manx Museum

-Free - donations welcome

Sophia Morrison is probably most well-known now for her storybook 'Manx Fairy Tales', but she did much more than collect Manx fairy stories.

Learn about her varied life and work from promoter of Manx language and culture to her involvement in Manx politics and publishing – Sophia Morrison was a person who made things happen.

www.manxnationalheritage.im/whats-on/detail/sophia-morrison-the-first-curator/

Manx Christmas Concert

-11/12/2016

-2pm (Museum open 10am to 5pm)

-Manx Museum

-Tickets: Adults £10, Child £5 from the Manx Museum Gallery Shop and online. Members receive 10% off. Tickets

A distinctly Manx Christmas concert, with plays, carols and stories celebrating the force behind the Manx cultural revival, author and collector, Sophia Morrison.

Soak up some Manx Christmas spirit with renditions of the Queltagh song, Hunt the Wren and performance of Morrison's Old Manx Christmas Tale.

Complimentary Manx Tay served in the interval.

Featuring Michael Players, Bree, Perree Bane young dancers and many more...

www.manxnationalheritage.im/whats-on/detail/manx-christmas-concert/



Commemoration of Sophia Morrison on the Centenary of her death

Saturday, 14th January 2017

Event organised by Celtic Congress, The Celtic League and Mec Vannin

1.30pm Laying of wreath at Sophia Morrison's grave (Peel Cemetery)

2.30pm Talk on the Life of Sophia Morrison by Dr. Breasha Maddrell, Director of Culture Vannin, in The Guild Room, Atholl Street, Peel.

7.30pm Manks Concert featuring the Manx Dialect Play, 'The Charm' at The Centenary Centre. Peel plus performances of Cushag poetry and musical items.

Tickets £5 available from Celtic Gold, Peel and Shakti Man, Ramsey
or can be reserved on celticmann1@yahoo.com

More info on Sophia Morrison: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophia_Morrison

Search SOPHIA MORRISON on manxmusic.com and you'll lots of articles about her by Stephen Miller.

www.**Knockaloe.im**

Registered Charity No 1150

"Kiaull ny Nollick Veg Knockaloe"

A candlelit evening of seasonal renaissance music and song to celebrate Manx Old Christmas with Hartes Ease

8.00pm on Friday 6 January 2017
Holy Trinity Church, Patrick, Isle of Man

Tickets £10 each include complimentary interval Glühwein & sweet treats from the internees' home countries



All funds from tickets and interval raffle go towards the Knockaloe.im Registered Charity

Limited seating so early booking recommended via www.knockaloe.im
Or contact: Rachael Wood on 648477 or via email info@knockaloe.im

[KnockaloeInternmentCampIsleofMan](https://www.facebook.com/KnockaloeInternmentCampIsleofMan)

Oie'll Verree

7.30pm

Thursday, 5th January 2017

Ebenezer Hall Kirk Michael

Traditional Manks concert featuring the Michael Players in the Manks Dialect play, *The Charm*, by Christopher Shimmin and supporting music and poetry acts. The evening will conclude with a hearty supper.

Tickets: £6

Available from Michael Heritage Trust
Secretary, James Kennaugh 878342

Kiaull ny Nollick Veg Knockaloe

Join Hartes Ease for a special night celebrating the Old Manx Christmas. Enjoy seasonal 16th and 17th century Renaissance music and song by candlelight on the evening of 6th January 2017 in the newly renovated Holy Trinity Church, Patrick.

All funds from the £10 tickets and interval raffle will go towards the Isle of Man registered charity www.knockaloe.im which is developing a Visitors Centre for Knockaloe Internment Camp on the Isle of Man and a digital database of all WW1 internees. The Patrick Community are running the Charity on a 100% not-for-profit basis and it seeks to save the Old Patrick Schoolrooms and give this crumbling historic building a future, both for the community and for the descendants of the thousands of men who lived at Knockaloe in Patrick Village 100 years ago.

Tickets are available via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/celebrating-the-old-manx-christmas-for-knockaloe-seasonal-renaissance-music-by-candle-light-tickets-29434240606?aff=efblike>

This promises to be a very special evening, in the setting of the intimate, candlelit Patrick Church - situated right next to the camp and where the internees created "Camp 5" in the churchyard. We will be providing interval refreshments inspired by the internees' homelands, including a glass of warming Glühwein.

Hartes Ease was founded in 1989. Our repertory is music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from the Renaissance, both sacred and secular for voices, viols and recorders. Our instruments are modern copies of authentic instruments of the period. We specialise in 'one to a part' polyphonic vocal and instrumental music, with each voice or instrument taking a different part or line.

For our Knockaloe concert, which marks over a hundred years since the WW1 Camp was set up, we have used as our theme the music of the various nationalities connected with it, including internees, authorities, guards etc. and of course Manx Old Christmas. Archives detail many musical events held by the internees, including concerts at Christmas time. There was no lack of musicians amongst the men.

The programme will include music from Britain; the Isle of Man; Germany; Italy and also music 'a la Moresca' to represent the Turkish internees.

For further details go to: http://knockaloe.im/page_455892.html

Or contact Rachael Wood by email: info@knockaloe.im or tel: 648477 (Mon to Fri 9.15am - 1.15pm)

Great feature on the IOM, Manx music & Yn Chruinnaght festival in the latest FolkRoots magazine!



They Mean It, Man

There's something happening on the Isle of Man, and a lot is as a result of the annual Yn Chruinnaght. Steve Hunt hopped on the ferry to find out more.

Available to buy from: www.frootsmag.com

Regular attendees at any of the major inter-celtic festivals in recent years can't fail to have noticed something different and exciting happening.

Whether they've witnessed Barrule tearing the roof off Celtic Colours in Nova Scotia, Mec Lir doing likewise at Lorient (and becoming an instant YouTube hit into the bargain) or Ruth Keggins leaving audiences open-mouthed at Celtic Connections, there's a generation of Manx musicians making waves that are reaching far beyond the shores of their own dear Ellan Vannin. For a country with a population of less than 89,000 and whose most celebrated manifestation on the global music stage hitherto has been its status as the birthplace of the Bee Gees, that's actually quite astonishing.

Mollag Ghennal

7.30pm, Wed 28th Dec, Peel Masonic

One of the most eagerly anticipated events of the Foolish Fortnight is the annual 'Mollag Ghennal'. Hosted by the legendary Mollag Band, the evening's fun will include performances from Manx Gaelic Choir Caarjyn Coodjagh, Malcolm Stitt, David Kilgallon, Jamie Smith, Isla Callister, Daniel Quayle and Matt Kelly. The Mollags themselves are trying something new with a selection of pop songs in Gaelic, and a new group called Clash Vooar (Big Groove) will be bring a touch of jazz to some well-known Manx tunes!

Tickets priced at £13 available from Shakti Man, Celtic Gold and Thompson Travel.

If you're extra keen or can't make the MG, you are invited to the Mollags' pre-Ghennal rehearsal at the Sailor's Shelter in Peel on Wed 14th Dec.

CAROLLING IN RAMSEY

Cliogaree Twoaie will be singing carols (in Manx) around the pubs of Ramsey on Mon 19th December.

Meet at the Traff, 7.30pm for an 8pm start.

All welcome



The Manx Folk Dance Society

spent a lovely evening with Tynwald Cub Scouts recently sharing Manx dancing and telling them the tale about hunting the wren.

The welcome from all the cubs was very enthusiastic and the visit has helped them gain their dance badges.

Photos:
thanks
to Norma
Hodgson



We are very sorry to hear that bodhran player **Stuart Stacey** passed away recently – he would've have turned 80 just a few days ago. A familiar face at the music sessions for many years, his musical companions will miss that trademark smile that could light up any room! Stuart left his bodhrán to Stevie White to play - he'll always be remembered at the O'Donnell's sessions.

[photo – thanks to Ann-Marie Murphy]

Obituary:

http://announce.jpresse.co.uk/isle-of-man-today/obituary/george-stacey/48389239?s_source=jpnw_iom#contribs_header

BREE SUPERGROUP 'SCRAN' WIN PLACE IN THE FINALS OF THE NEXT BIG THING!!

Teen Manx trad group Scran dazzled adjudicators in two rounds of auditions last month to gain a place in the Junior Achievement Grand Final of 'The Next Big Thing 2017'.

More than 100 young people aged 10 -18 applied for the talent competition. The live final will be held at the Gaiety Theatre on Saturday 4 February. The winner will take away £500 in cash donated by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.

Scran brings together talented musicians from various secondary schools around the Isle of Man:

Top L-R Aerin, Mera, Jack, James

Bottom L-R Owen, Ray, Fraser and Callum

Tickets: <https://villagaiety.ticketsolve.com/shows/873505486/events>



KIAULL NOA ~ NEW MUSIC

NEW KIDS ON THE ROCK!!

Manx folk quartet Birlinn Jiarg are pleased to announce the release of their debut album 'Seamount'! The album was engineered and produced by renowned musician and producer Angus Lyon (Blazin' Fiddles, the Halton Quartet) at his Gran's House studio in rural Lanarkshire and mastered by Iain Hutchison at GloWorm Recording in Glasgow. 'Seamount' showcases the band's unique sound and features many of their innovative settings of old Manx tunes as well as their own compositions.

Birlinn Jiarg was brought together by multi-instrumentalist Beccy Hurst to perform the traditional Manx music she grew up with as well as her own compositions. Having performed with various Manx bands and dance teams over the years, Beccy moved to England to study on the Folk Degree at Newcastle University.

At the center of Birlinn Jiarg's sound is the combination of Beccy's whistle and concertina playing and the clarinet and flute of Freya Rae (Freya Rae and Louis Bingham, Tom Kitching Band). The unusual combination of low whistle and clarinet was what originally inspired the band's formation and sets Birlinn Jiarg's sound apart from more traditional line-ups.

Having performed in a duo with Beccy for a few years, Scottish guitarist and bouzouki player Alasdair Paul (Pons Aelius, Kimber/Paul) was a natural choice for Birlinn Jiarg. Completing the quartet's line-up is bodhránist Callum Younger (Pons Aelius, Trio FCT). Callum and Alasdair have worked together on a variety of projects and their inventive and powerful accompaniment provides a great platform for Beccy's and Freya's melodic interplay.



BIRLINN JIARG

Seamount Birlinn Jiarg BJCD16-01

Groups from the Isle of Man are currently riding the crest of the Celtic wave, with the likes of Barrule and Mec Lir wowing the crowds at the major festivals worldwide. New kids on the rock Birlinn Jiarg look sure to follow suit, whilst bringing something refreshingly new to the party.

Includes unlimited streaming of Seamount via the free Bandcamp app, plus high-quality download in MP3, FLAC and more.

Birlinn Jiarg album £8 Download or £10 CD:
<https://birlinnjiarg.bandcamp.com/releases>

Supported by Culture Vannin

*BIRLINN JIARG's album also got a rave review in the latest issue of fRoots music magazine.
<< Here's a glimpse...*

LAST CHANCE! ARRANE SON MANNIN Write a new song in Manx Gaelic and you could win £300 and a trip to Carlow in Ireland to represent the Isle of Man in the Pan-Celtic song contest. Get in touch with Manx delegate Fiona McArdle by the 2nd December and perform your song (or get someone else to perform it!) at the Arrane Son Mannin contest on 7th January 2017. Full info here: http://manxmusic.com/news_story_450380.html [SEE BACK PAGE KMJ]



There's some lovely Manx Christmas music on Soundcloud for you to listen to while you're peeling your spuds and prepping the sprouts!

<https://soundcloud.com/culture-vannin/sets/manx-christmas>



Hunt the Wren : 26th December

Join revellers around the Island to celebrate the old tradition of Hunt the Wren through song and dance - no wee birds harmed these days, thankfully!

RAMSEY - meet outside St Paul's Church at 10.30am. Newcomers welcome to learn the song and dance.

ST JOHNS - meet at 10.30am in the Arboretum car park. Musicians, singers and dancers welcome!

PORT ST MARY - meet at 10am in the Scoill Purt-le-Moirrey car park. We will teach you the dance if you have never done it before or if your brain has blanked it out! Around the village ending at the Albert for tunes. All ages welcome. Bring a home made Wren pole!

KIRK MICHAEL - meet at 11am the Raven, then onto The Raven in BALLAUGH 11.20am and SULBY Glen Pub at 11.40am.

DOUGLAS - meet outside the Woodbourne Pub at 10.15am for 10.30am start. Musicians needed!

Singing and dancing and hunting the wren must be over by 12 noon to avoid bad luck! Then everyone down to ST JOHNS for the annual Cammag match!

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR
PICS FOR KMJ JAN
2017!



Plea for Moot photos!

Did you take a photo of your Hop tu naa turnip lantern and are willing to share it with the world?

If so, ping it over to James Franklin at resources@culturevannin.im

www.iomtoday.co.im/what-s-on/manx-entertainment-news/save-hop-tu-naa-tradition-by-uploading-moots-on-net-1-8215352



Youtube/ video corner

• Here is Rushen
• Silver Band
• playing conductor
• John Kinley's
• arrangement of
• "Hunt the Wren":

• <https://youtu.be/BeRbZPGIY-A>



Hunt the Wren

Shelg yn Dreean

*Celebrate the old Manx tradition
by singing, playing and dancing around Ramsey on
St. Stephen's Day / Laa'l Steaoin*



Monday 26th December 2016 /
Jelune 26 Mee ny Nollick 2016

Everyone welcome to come and join in!

Meet 10.30am
outside St. Paul's Church, Ramsey



Lesh Shee as Craik

St Ninian's Church
FRIDAY 16TH DECEMBER

The Jeff Jepson Band
TRUMAN FALLS
ANNA GOLDSMITH
Christy De Haven

From 7.30pm
Tickets £5 available from
www.jeffjepson.co.uk and on the door.



ALL PROCEEDS GO TO WWW.GRAH.ORG.JM

SONGS FROM THE SOFA

2016 finale special

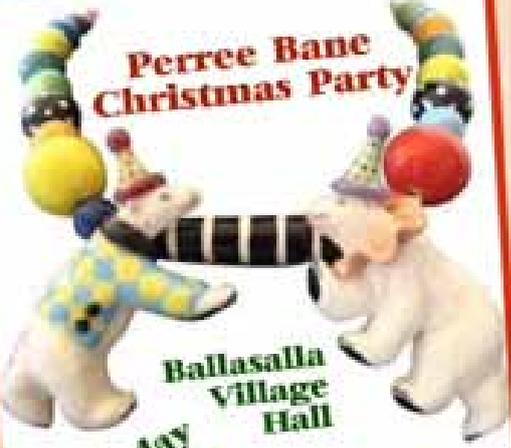


An evening of live music showcasing the Island's finest singer songwriters and musicians

Saturday 3rd December 2016
Amber Bar, Douglas
free entry/doors 8pm

[facebook.com/songsfromthesofa](https://www.facebook.com/songsfromthesofa)

Perree Bane Christmas Party



Ballasalla Village Hall

Sunday December 18th. From 6.30pm.

Everyone welcome. Bring a plate of food.

The more musicians the merrier



PICCOLAGE

ISLE OF MAN
Symphony
ORCHESTRA

Gala CONCERT

Sunday 4th December 2016
Villa Marina 2:30pm

With guest soloist
Tasmin Little
Playing the
Haydn Wood Violin Concerto
and music by
Humperdinck & Tchaikovsky
Conductor: Maurice Powell, Leader: Tom Field



Tickets (including 2h parking fee)
Circle - Adult: £15.00, Concessions: £11.00, Child/Student: £5.00
Stalls - Adult: £13.50, Concessions: £12.50, Child/Student: £5.00
Available from Villa Marina Office, Welcome Centre
www.ilmso.co.uk or Hotline: 600555

Gough Ritchie
www.ilmso.co.uk

Harrish y Cheayn - Across the Sea



Manx Music in Spain

report by Paul Rogers

In June I visited the local school in the small village of Angüés in Aragón, Spain and played some music from various Celtic countries and taught the children how to dance Flitterdance. I also taught Duna (nice Manx sounding name!) the eight year old daughter of the family I was staying with how to play some Manx tunes such as Flitterdance and Chanter's Tune by ear on her violin. She attends the Conservatorio de Musica in Huesca and learns in a very classical manner. Her teacher, Beatriz Fanlo was so impressed at how well she learnt the Manx tunes by ear she asked if I would come and meet her the next time I was visiting as learning by ear was something new for her.

So in November I was staying with the family again helping them build their low-impact straw bale eco-house and practising my spanish, and meeting the violin teacher turned into doing an hour long workshop of Celtic fiddle playing for ten pupils ranging from 8 years old to 18, followed by a concert for the parents! I taught them a Manx tune by ear and for most of them this was the first time they had ever done anything without any sheet music so it was a very new experience for them! We also compared an Irish polca they had been learning from sheet music to the version I had picked up by ear from pub sessions on the Isle of Man and we did a bit of rhythmic accompaniment. I also tried to coerce them into improvising a bit and add in some ornaments and to try and break free from the printed music!

It went very well and I definitely think some of the children were inspired and it provided an interesting diversion from their classical training. Hopefully I haven't ruined their technique too much!

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### BRIGHT JEWEL OF AN ALBUM

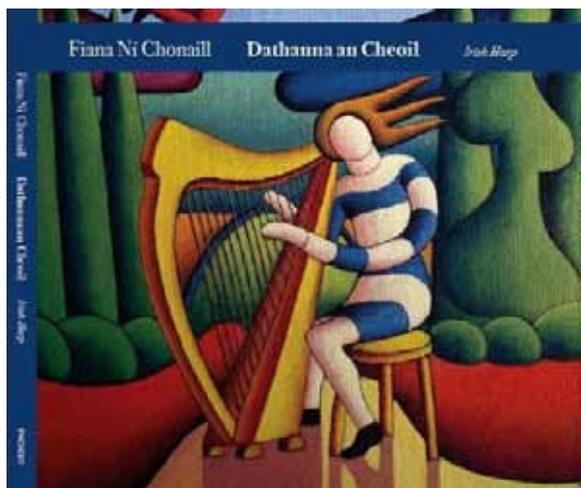
Ruth Keggins receives a glowing review of her latest album *Turrys* in the Dec/Jan issue of *The Living Tradition*.... Describing it as "assured, innovative and beautiful", reviewer Clare Button says it's "a bright jewel of an album from this leading voice in the Manx music revival".



# Fiana Ní Chonaill: Dathanna an Cheoil | Album Review

A Personal Perspective: Refreshing!

by Peddyr Cubberley. October 2016



A little more than 12 months ago Irish harper Fiana Ní Chonaill visited Mann by invitation of Manx trad band Mactullagh Vannin. During her visit she toured several schools, and gave workshops and concerts throughout the Island and was very encouraging to our own young trad musicians, and harpers in particular. In return, her visit was reciprocated by a group of young Manx musicians - "Croan yn Tead", who travelled to Ireland in the Spring of this year, playing concerts and giving workshops in the Limerick and Tipperary areas, including the University of Limerick's Irish World Academy. Next year in 2017, Fiana is planning to bring a large group of harpers back to the Island. An opportunity not to be missed by fans of

traditional music, and lovers of the harp in particular! More details to follow in due course.

Meanwhile, if you don't fancy the wait until next year to hear Fiana's harp playing, she has just released her debut CD – "Dathanna an Cheoil". It can be purchased by contacting her from the contact page of her website - [www.fianaharpmusic.com](http://www.fianaharpmusic.com). "Dathanna an Cheoil" is definitely a must have album and a great addition to anyone's traditional music collection, and if you're looking for that ideal Christmas present for family and friends alike, then you wouldn't go wrong with this album!

**READ ALBUM REVIEW:**

[http://manxmusic.com/news\\_story\\_457411.html](http://manxmusic.com/news_story_457411.html)

Isle of Man based group, *Rhythm of Bulgaria*, put on a concert in Douglas last month with samples of their traditional food, interesting facts about the country and a fabulous display of traditional music and dance.

Photos thanks to Jiri Podobsky.



# RESEARCH NEWS



## THE WRECK OF THE BRIG LILY

"Wreck of the Brig 'Lily,'" *Isle of Man Examiner*, 22 January 1926, 10b. Written by Thomas Shimmin ("Tom the Dipper").

Verse 1

1 You tender parents and neighbours dear,  
Now pay attention and you shall hear,  
An awful story I here relate,  
And sure to bear a lasting date.

FULL SONG: <http://manxmusic.com/media/News%20images%202016/Wreck%20Brig%20Lily%20Thomas%20Shimmin.pdf>

## MOOIRCHOOIR Y VRIG LILY

"Wreck of the Brig 'Lily,'" *Isle of Man Examiner* 29 January 1926, 9b–c. Written by John Nelson.

Verse 1

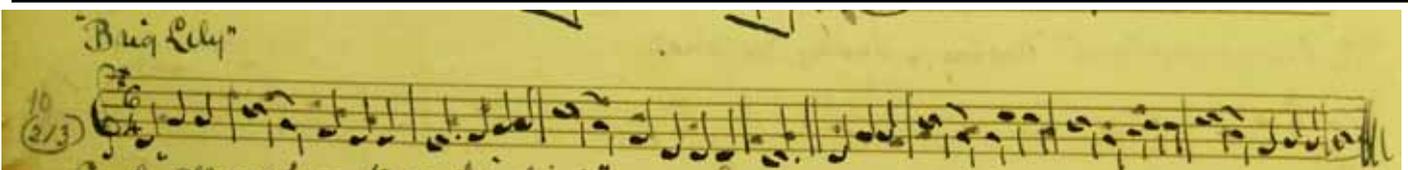
Blein hoght cheead jeig gaa yeig as daeed,  
Va'n atchim shoh nagh bione dooin lheid,  
Nuy deiney as feed dy jeean va stroit  
Lesh poodyr as aile feer doaltait.

FULL SONG: <http://manxmusic.com/media/News%20images%202016/Wreck%20Brig%20Lily%20John%20Nelson.pdf>

## "Brig Lily" - the ballad

There can be few who have not heard of the Brig Lily, a vessel which exploded in a spectacular fashion at The Sound on 28 December 1852, but sadly with considerable loss of life. That incident led to two songs being composed, one in English by Thomas Shimmin, better known at the time as "Tom the Dipper," and a second in Manx by John Nelson whose name is all that is known about him. They were reproduced in the *Isle of Man Examiner* in January 1926 and are reprinted here to make both tests better known (Stephen Miller): **READ MORE:** [http://manxmusic.com/news\\_story\\_457404.html](http://manxmusic.com/news_story_457404.html)

*Melody below: Clague Collection 1890s / photo at top: Nautical Museum, Castletown*



# A Trip to Manxland

## A Victorian light music curiosity and a sequel

by Maurice Powell

August 1892. The summer season was in full swing; visitor numbers were healthy and the principal entertainment venues were crowded. At the Falcon Cliff Pavilion: J. H. Greenwood's 'famed orchestra'; at the Derby Castle: Douglas's youngest musical director, Harry Wood, and at the Palace, the irrepressible Oliver Gaggs (1) with his new waltz *Estella* and a new novelty-piece for the season: *A Trip to Manxland*, described as a serio-comic fantasia for orchestra, and 'a concert in itself.' (2) The music has sadly disappeared, along with many of the waltzes, lancers, polkas and schottisches that entertained the holiday-makers during the Victorian and Edwardian eras in Douglas, but the following scenario – slightly adapted - gives us some idea of the flavour and character of the piece:

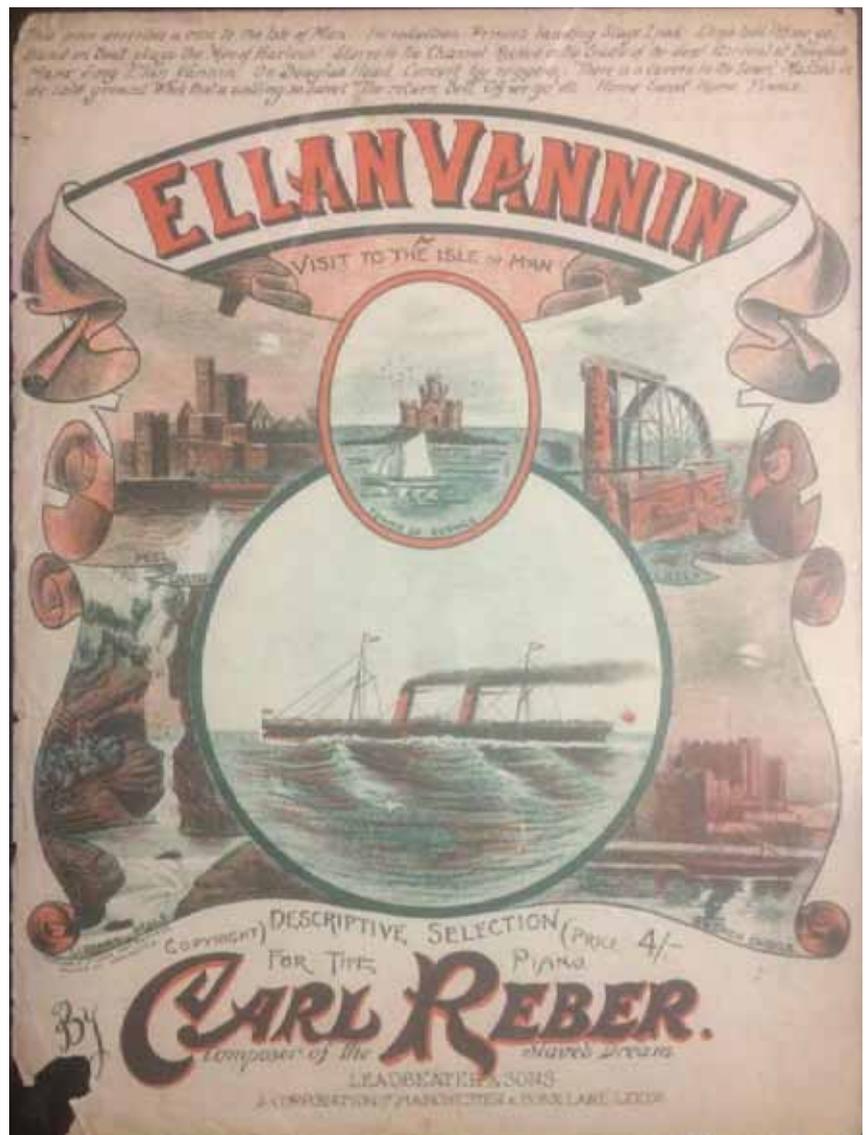
Introduction: Tempo di Marcia- rush for the boat - bells ring and the ships whistle sounds - all aboard - the band on the boat and a group of itinerant singers perform *A Life on the Ocean Wave*;(3) Landing in Douglas - all ashore - Strand Street and the latest Douglas nuisance: the horrid German band; a flourish of trumpets announce a trip on the *Manx Fairy* -thunder in the distance and a storm off Ramsey - breaking clouds - sunshine and a safe return; tram to the Palace for the afternoon concert including Verdi's *Anvil Chorus* - an evening at the Palace - fireworks, cannon shots etc and a grand finale; off home.

Gaggs' doubtless entertaining musical travelogue quickly became a favourite with the visitors and was demanded frequently throughout the rest of the season, after which it disappeared from the repertoire of the Palace orchestra.

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Sometime later – circumstantial evidence suggests after the appearance of *Manx National Songs* in 1896 – a sequel entitled *A Trip to the Isle of Man* appeared, published as **Ellan Vannin, A Visit to the Isle of Man**, 'a descriptive selection', and written by Carl Reber, a little-known composer of light, descriptive salon pieces for piano. (4) Though not a masterpiece of the genre - the picturesque and dramatic gestures are all simplistic, hackneyed, well-used clichés – the inclusion of the famous Manx melody *Ellan Vannin* together with well-known popular songs made it an attractive parlour entertainment for a pianist of moderate ability, with the added opportunity for the listeners to join in the songs. (5) The extent to which this piano 'fantasia' mirrors the scenario of Gaggs' orchestral work might suggest an acquaintance with the earlier piece, although Reber does not appear to have ever visited Douglas.

Introduction: The Prince's Landing Stage, Liverpool - preparing to start - the ship's bell sounds - Stand by the rope! - Ready! Let go - the paddle wheels revolve - getting up speed;

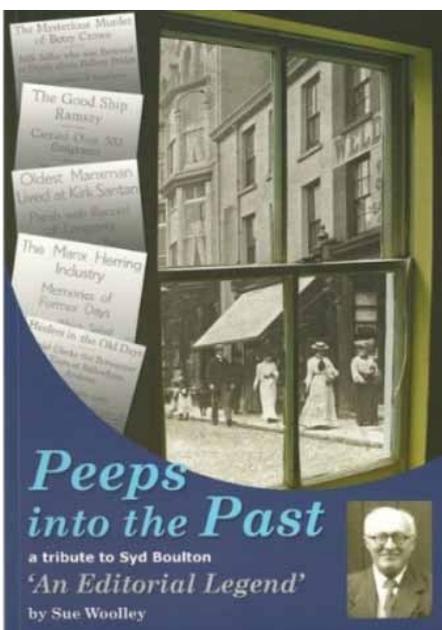


Tempo di Galop: 'Off we go' -down the River Mersey - the band on the boat play *Men of Harlech* - crossing the Mersey Bar – first waves - rough weather in the Channel,(6) *Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep* (7) - approaching storm - in the midst of the gale – thunder - the storm dies away - in sight of land - a sailor hails Land ahead! Land ahead! Arrival at Douglas: on the quay - the band plays Bevan Douglas' vocal polka *Breezy Douglas* - a choir sings Ellan Vannin; Douglas Head and a concert by the Niggers (sic Minstrels): There is a Tavern in the Town,(8) Stephen Foster's *Massa's in the Cold Ground* and an American ranch song, *Who's dat calling so sweet?* The Return – ship's bell – Stand By! – Ready! Let's go – the paddle wheels revolve –getting up speed; Tempo di Galop: Off we go - Good Bye – Home, sweet Home - Finale.

The popularity of such entertaining pieces appearing just before and just after the completion of *Manx National Songs*, provides a musical snapshot of the Island during the first golden age for holiday-makers, when traditional Manx melodies and popular dances and songs of the era happily rubbed shoulders together and blended into the tapestry that was musical entertainment on the Island at that time.

## Notes

1. Maurice Powell, Oliver Gagg, the man who wrote the *Hi! Kelly! Polka*, Supplement to New Manx Worthies, Culture Vannin. KMJ and manxmusic .com.
2. Isle of Man Times, 16th August, 1892.
3. Words by Epes Sargent (1838) set to music by Henry Russell. In 1882 it became the regimental quick-march of the Corps of Royal Marines.
4. Reber's best-known piano piece is the romance sans paroles, Remembrance, (Memoria) op. 73. He also wrote a series of 12 'Life Pictures' for piano including The Soldier's Life, The Sailor's Life, A Showman's Life, The Shepherd's Life, A Chorister's Life and The Bellringer's Life, and other descriptive pieces of the 'fantasia' type including The Lifeboat, The Emigrant Ship and The Soldiers Homecoming which portrays the arrival of a troopship in Sidney Harbour.
5. Copy in the music collection of Culture Vannin. The attractive coloured front cover is in the private collection of Frank and Sue Woolley, Ramsey, and pictures Peel Castle, the Tower of Refuge, Castle Rushen, Glen May Falls, the Laxey Wheel and a two-funnelled Steam Packet paddle steamer, possibly Snaefell (2) or Mona (3), assuming that the picture is accurate. The publisher is Leadbeater & Sons, Manchester and Leeds.
6. The Irish Sea was once known as St. George's Channel.
7. A hymn by Emma Hart Willard, music by Joseph P. Knight.
8. A traditional folk-song appearing in William H. Hill's Student Songs of 1883.



## *Want to know more about Christmas in the Isle of Man in ye olden days?*

Syd Boulton's "Peeps into the Past" newspaper articles written in the 1950s and 60s are a treasure trove of interesting information.

Read online:

### **CHRISTMAS IS COMING AND... Old Customs Recalled Singing Of Carvals**

[www.manxmusic.com/media/News%20Images%202014/Peeps%2013%201965%20Christmas%20Old%20Customs.%20Singing%20of%20Carvals%20EDITED.pdf](http://www.manxmusic.com/media/News%20Images%202014/Peeps%2013%201965%20Christmas%20Old%20Customs.%20Singing%20of%20Carvals%20EDITED.pdf)

You can read more music-related articles here:

[www.manxmusic.com/learn\\_page\\_233711.html](http://www.manxmusic.com/learn_page_233711.html)

<< BUY from [www.lexiconbookshop.co.im](http://www.lexiconbookshop.co.im)



Young dancers in international looking costumes performing at Peel Deanery Eisteddfod in 1937!

<<

**JUVENILE DANCERS.**—Competitors going through their paces at the Peel Deanery Eisteddfod yesterday.



<< WHO ARE THE MUSICIANS??

Wendy Hurst has sent in a photo that belonged to her late aunt, Joan Quine. She was a founder member of Rushen Ambulance and the sign shows it was a fund raiser for them.

Can anyone can identify the musicians and when it might have been taken!?

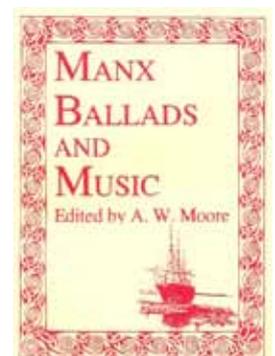
**AW Moore's Manx Ballads and Music** (1896)

Stephen Miller has now added an INDEX to the TEXTS OF MB&M:

<http://manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/Mand%20Ballads%20&%20Music%20Index%20Texts.pdf>

Alphabetical INDEX to the TUNES - also useful to print out and keep in your copy of the book: [http://manxmusic.com/news\\_story\\_453297.html](http://manxmusic.com/news_story_453297.html)

See the book online: [www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook/fulltext/mb1896/](http://www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook/fulltext/mb1896/)



# TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MONTH

see [www.manxmusic.com](http://www.manxmusic.com) for more printable pieces of Manx music

Tony Archibald has written this lovely new carol. Hear him sing it here:

<https://youtu.be/cQoEtrmiEiw>

## Christmas Song Leave Your Sheep

A R Archibald

D D G

Shep - herds come! Hear the song! Hark the her - ald  
Have no fear! We are here! Make your way to

4

an - gels sing: Leave your sheep! We will keep  
Beth - le - hem! Leave your sheep! We will keep

7 D A7 D G

watch o'er them to - night! There you'll find a  
watch o'er them to - night! Wise men too will

10 D A7 D

new - born child, Ma - ry' - s son so - meek and - mild.  
come to him. Cost - ly - gifts to the babe they will bring.

13 G D A7 D

in a man - ger gen - tly laid. Come to - bring us - joy.  
Join with them and prais - es sing: Peace be - to all - men!

17 D G

Shep - herds come! Hear the song! Hark the her - ald  
Have no fear! We are here! Make your way to

20 D D

an - gels sing: Leave your sheep! We will keep  
Beth - le - hem! Leave your sheep! We will keep

23 D G A7

watch o'er them to - night.  
watch o'er them to - night.

# CALENDAR

## DECEMBER

2nd Caarjyn Coodjagh concert, Onchan Methodist Church, 7.30pm. Donations to ME charity

3rd Songs from the Sofa, Amber Bar, 8pm FREE

4th IOM Symphony Orchestra with Tasmin Little performing Haydn Wood, Villa Marina, 2.30pm, £15

10th – 6th May 'Sophia Morrison: The First Curator' - Exhibition at Manx Museum, Free

11th Manx Christmas Concert, Manx Museum, 2pm £10/ £5

11th Caarjyn Coodjagh Christmas Service, Malew Church, 6.30pm

15th Dec Caarjyn Coodjagh Carol service, St Cath's, PE, 7pm

16th Lesh Shee as Graih – concert with Jeff Jepson, Truman Falls, Anna Goldsmith, Christy de Haven, St Ninian's Church, 7.30pm £5 [www.jeffjepson.co.uk](http://www.jeffjepson.co.uk)

18th Perree Bane Christmas Party, Ballasalla Village Hall, 6.30pm

19th Cliogaree Twoaie carols in Ramsey pubs

26th Hunt the Wren – All around the Island!

26/27th Davy Knowles PSM Town Hall SOLD OUT

28th Mollag Ghennal, Peel Masonic £13

## BLEIN VIE NOA!! HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

## JANUARY

5th Kirk Michael Oie'll Verree, Ebenezer Hall, £6

6th January Kiaull ny Nollick Veg - Hartes Ease concert at Patrick's Church, 8pm, £10

7th Arrane son Mannin competition, Peel Masonic Hall, 7.30pm, Free

12th Caarjyn Coodjagh joint concert with Rushen Silver Band, St Cath's, PE

14th Commemoration of Sophia Morrison – events organised by the Celtic League

- 1.30pm laying of wreath

- 2.30pm talk on the Life of S Morrison

- 7.30pm Manks Concert, Centenary Centre (see p. 3 for info)

## FEBRUARY

4th The Next Big Thing final, Villa Marina

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

[www.manxmusic.com](http://www.manxmusic.com)

~ SESSIONS ~

**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 Crosby  
Last **FRI** of month 9pm, Kiaull as Gaelg, Albert, Port St Mary  
Fortnightly **SAT** 10pm Manx session at The White House, Peel

~ SESSIONS ~

## culture vannin

For information on Manx music & dance contact:  
Manx Music Development Officer **Dr Chloë Woolley**: [chloe@culturevannin.im](mailto:chloe@culturevannin.im)  
[www.manxmusic.com](http://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

# Arrane son Mannin – Song for Mann

## Ferrym Entreil – Competition Entry Form

**Co-hirrey 07 Jerrey Gheuree 2017 - Competition 07 January 2017**

**LEEDEILAGH/ CONTACT**

**ENNYM/ NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ENMYS/ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**POSSAN/GROUP** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(ENNYM/NAME)**

**ENNYM YN ARRANE/  
TITLE OF SONG** \_\_\_\_\_

**FOCKLEYN LIORISH/  
WORDS BY** \_\_\_\_\_

**KIAULL LIORISH/  
MUSIC BY** \_\_\_\_\_

Cur-jee coip hym, **Fiona McArdle**, jeh ny fockleyn ayns Gaelg as ayns Baarle, as coip jeh'n chiaull neesht, roish **30 Mee ny Nollick 2016**, my sailliu.

*Please send a copy of the lyrics in Manx, with an English translation, and a copy of the music to me, Fiona McArdle, by 30 December 2016*

Ta mee/ shin ayns cordailys dy vel ny fockleyn as kiaull crooit dy noa as bunneydagh as ta mee/ shin soiaghey jeh reillyn yn cho-hirrey.

*I/we agree that the music and lyrics are newly composed and original and accept the rules of the competition.*

**Ennym/signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My enmys/ my address:** Cooil Beg, Douglas Road, KIRK MICHAEL IM6 1AR

**Post L/ E-mail:** [fmcardle@manx.net](mailto:fmcardle@manx.net)

**Ferrym Entreil roish 02 December/ Entry Form by 02 December 2016**