



toshiaght arree 2014 february

manx music today

Ny Fennée's Next Big Thing fabulous final

Ny Fennée were proud to be a finalist in "The Next Big Thing"; a talent competition for 10 to 17 years olds held each year on the Island. Out of 162 participating acts they were so pleased to make the final 15, because it allowed them to perform

on the Gaiety stage and help promote Manx Dancing in our Year of Culture. For the majority of the group it was the first time dancing at a major venue; however, most children were mainly excited about the bright lights in the dressing rooms!

Although Ny Fennée were not placed, each child raised their level of performance from the rehearsal, and after a long day they did not disappoint. Their youthful exuberance and genuine huge smiles shone through to wonderful applause.

A big thank you must go to the organizer of Junior Achievement for their superb work throughout the many stages of the competition, and who showed so much patience towards all the acts during the final. Ny Fennée would also like to thank Katie Lawrence and Peddyr Cubberley for their inspirational compositions, together with Ny Fennée musicians for giving their time to record the track: it was the first time ever that Ny Fennée have danced to recorded music!

Most of all, none of this would be possible without the support from parents and friends so Gura mie mooar eu.

Sue Jaques



In this month's edition...

- Ruth Keggin CD launch
- Manx Music Team in Glasgow
- launch of Culture Vannin
- Ny Fennée wows audiences
- research articles by Stephen Miller & David Speers
- Arrane son Mannin results
- Island of Culture news
- Manx Folk Awards details
- Full calendar of events
- a lovely tune to learn
- and much, much more!

**Culture
VANNIN**

Manx Music Team in Glasgow

Culture Vannin's Manx Music Team travelled to Glasgow to sell Manx music and dance to festival organisers, promoters and journalists from around the world. Showcase Scotland's Trade Fair is an important way of getting acts booked so we were delighted that David Kilgallon took time out of his holiday to give us a hand. We pressed many many CDs into the hands of very important festival organisers and hope that this will pay dividends for all Manx acts. It was also an important opportunity to network and to find out about new projects and ideas - we were delighted to chat to Brian O hEadhra and Ian Smith from Creative Scotland in particular and to catch up with old friends like Lisardo Lombardia, director of Festival Interceltique de Lorient.



Find out more about Feis Rois here: www.feisrois.org



Manx Folk Awards 2014

Entries are now open for this year's DEC Manx Folk Awards/ Aundyryna Kiaull Theay Vannin – competitions for school children which celebrate Manx music, song, dance and poetry.

Infant and primary school classes will be held from 7 – 9 April in the Youth Arts Centre in Douglas, and the closing date for entries is Friday 14 February. As well as a range of classes catering for various abilities, there is the addition of set choir pieces which, this year, are based on the legendary Moddey Dhoo of Peel Castle!



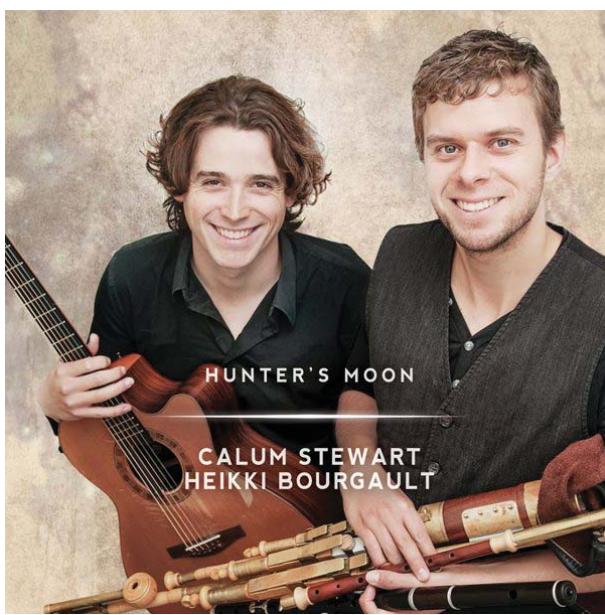
As a refreshing change to previous years, the secondary school classes will all be judged as video entries and displayed online (closing date for entries 14 March). Selected winners will be invited to take part in a concert at Yn Chruinnaght Inter-Celtic festival in July.

This year, there is also a special multi-media competition where one school will win an exclusive visit from top blues guitarist and ambassador for Island of Culture 2014, Davy Knowles. Participating schools can email in a presentation (e.g. video, powerpoint, etc.) demonstrating how their school celebrates Manx culture, particularly through the performing arts.

The Manx Folk Awards is organised by the IOM Department of Education and Children, in coordination with Culture Vannin and Manx National Heritage. The syllabus for all competitions can be downloaded from this wiki:

https://www2.sch.im/groups/manxcurriculum/wiki/4287c/Manx_Folk_Awards_2014.html

For more info, contact Jo Callister: mfa@online.sch.im



TALENTED DUO CALUM STEWART (FLUTE AND PIPES) AND HEIKKI BOURGAULT (GUITAR) WILL LAUNCH THEIR ALBUM HUNTER'S MOON AT BUNSCOILL RHUMSAA ON MONDAY 10 MARCH AT 7.30PM. PHONE 406876 TO SECURE YOUR TICKET OR TAKE YOUR CHANCES ON THE DOOR!

WWW.CALUMHEIKKI.COM

~ SESSIONS ~

THURS 8pm Singing session at The Britannia, Ramsey
FRI 8.30-11pm Green's Tea Rooms, St Johns

FRI 9pm Irish at The Mitre, Ramsey
Shoh Slaynt (1st/2nd Fri of month), 8.30pm, Highwayman, Peel
Last FRI of month 9pm, Kiaull as Gaelg, Albert, Port St Mary
SAT 10pm Manx at The White House, Peel

ARRANE SON MANNIN CONCERT & COMPETITION

BY FIONA MCARDLE

Arrane son Mannin, Song for Mann, has really taken off this year with four sparkling entries to welcome in 'Island of Culture' in 2014. All were of a high standard and much appreciated by the audience at the concert and competition held in Peel's Masonic Hall. After the first part of the concert featuring Isla Callister and David Kilgallon on fiddle and keyboard, the Gaelic Choir Cliogaree Twoaie, who are celebrating 30 years together this year, and Shenn Scoill with Dave and Laura Rowles on guitar and keyboard respectively, together with bass guitarist Frazer Grant and lead vocalist Michelle Jamieson, it was the turn of the four new songs.

First came Shenn Scoill with their song 'Tayrn Mee Thie' (Drawing Me Home), followed by Clein (Clan) a band of 6, featuring the McLean family and friends, with

Alanna McLean as lead singer. Their song 'Nar Lhig Eh Ve Eshyn Vees Ayn' (Don't Let It Be Him) was about one of Dave McLean's ancestors, Joe Moughtin, who was killed in the Snaefell Mines' Disaster of 1897, leaving a wife who was five months pregnant and a small child. Next was Marlene Hendy with her song 'Yn Challoo Yiarn' (The Iron Pier) in which she reminisced about her childhood in South Ramsey when summers were enlivened by the thousands of visitors who came by ferry to the town's hotels and boarding houses and landed at the pier. The fourth entry was Lindsay Ridley's song 'Skeealyn ny Marrey' (Tales of the Sea), a conversation between a seagoing father and his son, who also finds the lure of the sea too strong to resist.

The three adjudicators, musician mother and son Clare and David Kilgallon and Manx speaker Catreeney Craine, found that awarding the £300 prize money sponsored by Culture

Vannin for the winning song was no easy task, but finally declared Shenn Scoill with 'Tayrn Mee Thie' to be the winners. They will now go to Derry to compete in the 6 nation Inter Celtic New Song competition held as part of the 43rd Pan-Celtic Festival from 22nd- 27th April. The Mannin Pan-Celtic Branch also awarded this year a prize of £50 for the song judged to be the best new song in traditional mode which was won by Lindsay Ridley with her song 'Skeealyn ny Marrey'.

Finishing the evening off in style came father and daughter singers David and Jonee Fisher with David Kilgallon again on keyboard for two of Jonee's solos, including last year's winning song in Arrane son Mannin 'Ny Jean Keayney', (Don't Cry), Cliogaree Twoaie with some of their recently composed songs, and Marlene Hendy whose final set ended with her winning traditional solo song from the 2013 Pan-Celtic Festival 'Arrane Oie Vie' (Good Night Song)

Check out www.panceltic.ie for further information on the 2014 Pan-Celtic Festival



"USHAG MOOAR KIONE MAEL"

SONGS IN IMITATION OF BIRDS: A NOTE

by Stephen Miller, Vienna

"A man named Cleator told me of a song which used to be sung by the fishermen, called 'Ushag mooar Kione Mael' in which there was a chorus imitating the cry of the gannet, & the singers dug each other in the ribs, as if pecking. He had forgotten the words, however." This was in Bride on the 19 June 1924, to be precise, taken from that day's entry in Cyril I. Paton's personal diary. This is a title new to the Manx song repertoire and it is unfortunate that Paton's informant did not know the words to it. He did, however, know of the gestures to be played out when the song was being performed. The date too is of interest, showing that collecting of song material was still possible, reinforced by the known collecting of Mona Douglas in this same period. An undated notebook compiled by A.W. Moore and titled by him "Manx 'Odds & Ends'" (MNHL, MS 221 A) contains material that in part was later to appear in *Manx Ballads and Music* (1896). There are two items here that need to be followed up: "Imitation of Songs of birds by Tommy Cormode" (pp. 61–62) and "Imitation of Bird's Songs" (pp. 159e–f). Incidentally, Cormode was later to be one of Sophia Morrison's own informants.

P.W. CAINE WAS
A FOLK SONG
COLLECTOR
AND A MEMBER
OF SOPHIA
MORRISON'S
CIRCLE THOUGH
HIS COLLECTION IS
NOW LOST.

HERE IS A
PHOTOGRAPH OF
CAINE, EVIDENTLY
TAKEN LATER ON
IN LIFE, BUT IT
AT LEAST ALLOWS
US TO PUT A FACE
TO THE NAME; ITS
POOR QUALITY IS
DUE TO IT BEING
SOURCED FROM
NEWSPRINT,
NAMELY HIS
OBITUARY IN THE
RAMSEY COURIER.
Stephen Miller



Wendy Hurst recommends you try these online lessons out:

www.oaim.ie/lessons-a-courses/piano-accordion/irish-piano-accordion-technique

RUTH KEGGIN - SHEEAR - A THING OF BEAUTY

Ruth Keggin is the pure and passionate Gaelic voice of the Manx musical renaissance. Sheear is a thing of beauty which makes the circle of British folk music tradition whole. (Mary Ann Kennedy, BBC Radio 3)

Ruth Keggin's debut album *Sheear* ('Westward') is a live studio recording featuring an eclectic mix of traditional and contemporary Manx Gaelic songs, arranged in a fresh and imaginative way. It features Ruth (vocals, piano and flute) along with guitarist David Pearce and double-bassist Vanessa McWilliam. Irish flautist and sean nos singer Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin and Manx fiddle player Tomas Callister also feature on several songs.

The twelve-track album comprises a plethora of different textures, from unaccompanied pieces like 'Arrane y skeddan' (Song of the herring) through to a more unusual soundscape of bowed guitar, prepared piano, shimmering fiddle and eerie double-bass harmonics used in 'Tree eeasteyrynh boghtey' (Three poor fishermen).

Ruth studies Manx with Jamys O'Meara and sings with Caarjyn Cooidjagh and Nish As Rish. She has studied Scottish Gaelic song with Margaret Bennett and holds a first class honours degree in music from the University of York.

The official release date of the album is **15th February 2014**, but you can pre-order it directly from Ruth today via her online shop: www.ruthkeggin.com



Ruth Keggin
Sheear

SCAMMYLT'S DEBUT EP IS AVAILABLE FOR ONLINE PURCHASE AND WILL BE IN THE SHOPS, SOON. THEY REPRESENTED THE IOM AT FESTIVAL INTERCELTIQUE DE LORIENT IN 2013 AND WERE THE FOCUS OF MUCH INTEREST AT THE SHOWCASE SCOTLAND TRADE FAIR IN GLASGOW LAST MONTH.

WWW.SCAMMYLT.COM

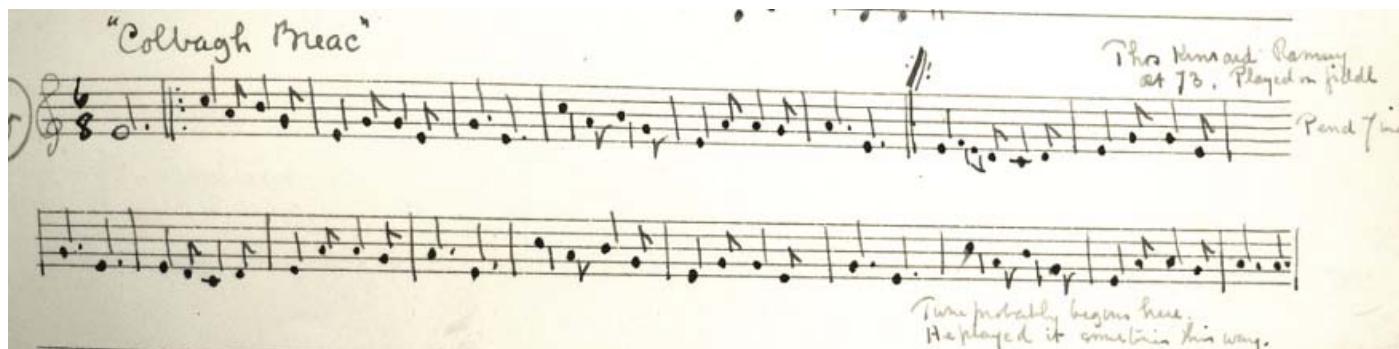


Histories and Mysteries – the secret life of traditional music in the Isle of Man

by David Speers

The tunes in the three music books that are part of the Clague Collection, held in the Manx National Heritage Library, form the bulk of the traditional music recorded in the Isle of Man in the 1890s. They have not been arranged or changed in any way and are the best record of how the music sounded when it was collected. Many of these tunes are related to tunes in Ireland and Britain, a fact bemoaned by some when the collections were first circulated as meaning the Island has nothing to add to traditional music. This series of articles sets out to explore some of these links and discover some of the hidden histories behind our traditional music, and to show that the Island has produced beautiful music to match any found elsewhere.

Colbagh Breac (or Breck)

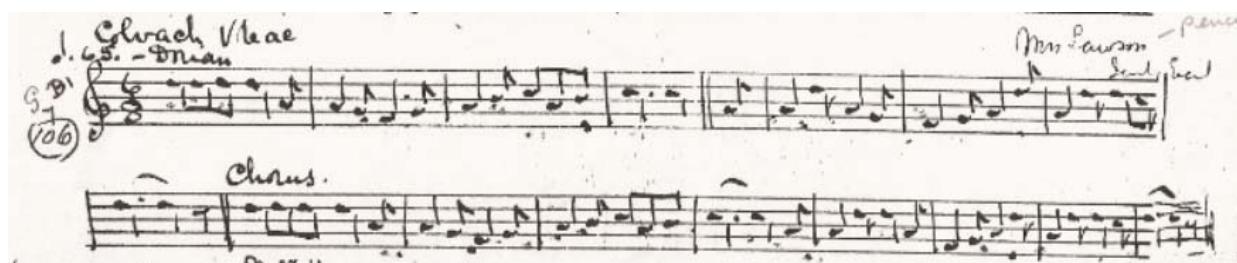


This tune is named after a ballad that was popular in the Island that had versions in Manx and English. It is written in 6/8 (double jig) time with a long introductory note, six bars repeated followed by twelve bars. Double jigs usually have repeated eight bar sections, so Colbagh Breck as recorded in Clague's music books (see above) is quite differently structured from these. How far is this difference due to it being Manx? Or, perhaps, to the words of the song sung to it?

Taking the last question first, the words of the song are set out in four line stanzas and don't fit well to the six bar pattern. Something else must be responsible for the structure. Returning to the first question, is this unusual structure a feature of Manx tunes? The overwhelming majority of Manx tunes conform to the same structure as the overwhelming majority of those found elsewhere, so the answer to that is it is very unlikely that this is a "Manx" structure.

The tune has never (as far as I know) been played as it is written in the music books. It begins with a long introductory note (a dotted minim). Both this note and a dotted crotchet in bar six and in bar twelve are left out. These notes seem to be extra to the tune and without them the tune has a clear feel of a hop jig, another dance time in 9/8. Could it have been noted incorrectly, or not remembered correctly by the source of the tune, Thomas Kinrade of Ramsey? A note next to the stave says Thomas was 73 when he played the tune for the collector, which may or may not have affected his ability to recall the tune. He did have difficulty remembering it because another note says "Tune probably begins here. He played it sometimes this way". Thomas would have been born around 1823 and it seems from other evidence that playing this kind of traditional dance music at mheillias and gienses was declining in popularity from the mid-century onwards.

The music books contain another version of this tune, called Colvach Vleac (also another version of the spelling). This is also written in 6/8 but has a repeated four bar structure. However, on closer inspection, this tune also has its peculiarities. Bar four is one quaver short, made up by a quaver in bar five, which introduces the second part of the phrase. Bar eight, as written, is also one quaver short:



Fortunately there are other versions of this tune that may help show how the tune might have sounded. The first, called Cucanandy, was heard in a session some years ago. Then I was told of a similar tune by a fiddler friend, Miguel Navarro. This tune is called Time of Day, collected by George Petrie in the mid 1800's. More recently, another similar tune was heard in a session. It is called My Mind Will Never be Easy, found in the O'Neill's Music of Ireland, first published in 1903. These tunes were popular in Ireland and they are all hop jigs.

If we compare all five tunes there may be similarities, other than the melody, that might help explain why the Manx versions are different in being notated in 6/8 but with seemingly extra or missing notes.

1 All the tunes have two parts (let's call them 'a' and 'b' tunes), one reaches high on the scale, the other dips lower, a standard feature of dance tunes. The 'a' and 'b' tunes of Colvach Vleac are more or less the same melody (so there is no 'b' tune as such).

2 Each 'a' and 'b' tune is made up of two parts, or phrases. The first phrase ends on a note one whole tone lower than the second (for Colbagh Breck, we have to ignore the dotted crotchet mentioned that seemed extra to the tune).

3 Each of the 'a' and 'b' tunes end with the same phrase.

4 Three of the tunes are asymmetrical, having the first tune repeated but not the second. It may be significant that the two others, Cucanandy and Colvach Vleac definitely have songs sung to them, the first was recorded by Clannad in 1976, the second has "chorus" written above the 'b' tune in the music books (shown above).

It is clear that all the tunes have melodic and structural similarities but these don't explain the unusual structure of the Manx versions. Perhaps a look at the differences between those tunes and the Irish tunes will provide an answer.

Looking first at Colbagh Breck, it has a long introductory note, whereas none of the others (even Colvach Vleac) have such a note. The first note of Colbagh Breck is the third note of the equivalent phrase in the other tunes, which may mean the 9/8 time was misunderstood and the bar lines were incorrectly placed. Once this possibility is accepted, we can attempt to re-structure the tune along the lines of the hop jigs. So, placing the introductory note at the beginning of the phrase and moving the bar lines so the melody makes sense, the tune looks like this:

Colbagh Breck (Revised)

The tune here is transposed to Em, matching the Irish versions (it is usually played in the Island in Bm, but was collected in Am). One or more of the dotted crotchets that begins each phrase can be played as a triplet of B notes, or BDB, to vary it. Other variations can also be made.

Looking at Colvach Vleac, if bar four, one quaver short, includes the single quaver in bar five, the 'a' tune makes more sense: except that the last bar of the 'a' tune is still one quaver short. However, if the (incomplete) last bar of the 'a' tune is written the same as the (complete) last bar of the 'b', the whole tune is playable (or singable):

Colvach Vleac (Revised)

Unlike Colbagh Breck, this version of the tune doesn't seem to fit as a 9/8 tune; there are no seemingly 'extra' notes. However, as a 6/8 tune it is a nice - and, in bars seven and eight - a quirky tune. It doesn't have a 'b' tune, which is quite usual for a ballad tune and, as already mentioned, the second part has the word "chorus" above the first bar. But there is a template for a 'b' tune in all the other versions.

In examining the Manx tunes in this way, we can see that we have some fine versions of tunes found elsewhere; they can be interpreted with reference to those tunes where needed; in the case of the two Manx tunes here, it looks like Colbagh Breck was a 9/8 (hop jig) version of the Irish tunes, possibly taking its name from Colvach Vleac, being a 6/8 ballad version of the same tune.

Scanned images courtesy of Manx National Heritage

*David Speers is the author of **Manx Traditional Music for Sessions** which discusses history and revival of Manx traditional music and dance (available from the Manx National Heritage Bookshop, manxheritageshop.com). The various versions of these tunes can be seen and listened to on thesession.org. If you wish to contact David about anything in these articles please email: manx_trad_music@yahoo.com*

Thanks to Phil Gawne MHK for this picture of The Michael Players who were brilliant at the mid Winter concert he organised at Ballabeg last month. The concert raised over £550 for Southern Befrienders.

Peter Hayhurst kindly sent in some other shots including one of the Rushen MHKs doing a Father Ted sketch and Annie Kissack reading some Manx poetry. Other acts included Ruth Keggin and Caarjyn Cooidjagh.



We welcome your stories, photos, reports, musings - all on Manx music and dance, of course. Just send something in if you want to share it with hundreds of direct KMJ readers worldwide and thousands more online!

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MONTH

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

Christopher R. Shimmin (1870–1933) was a Manx dialect playwright and MHK. This song comes from his 1913 play *Illiam Kodhere's Will* which was published by the Manx Language Society. It was successfully performed in Peel, Douglas and Liverpool in 1912–13.

Sing it, Kirrie.

Kirrie Sings.

PHYNODEREE.

Once I danced with Phynoderee!
Shee bannee mee! Shee bannee mee!
Once I danced with Phynoderee!
Shee bannee mee! Shee bannee mee!

Chorus.

Oh, sweet Glenmaye, and Cronk-ny-lirree Laa,
Where fairies dwell,
By stream and dell,
Oh, Oh, hear their merry laughter!
The fairies came with the Lhiannan Shee!
Shee bannee mee! Shee bannee mee! etc.
We tripped o'er the green hills by the sea,
Shee bannee mee! Shee bannee mee! etc.
Oh, 'twas a night of revelrie!
Shee bannee mee! Shee bannee mee! etc.

PHYNODEREE.



*Hope you don't mind craning your neck to read this one - it comes from Christopher Shimmin's dialect play *Illiam Kodhere's Will* - it might be nice to try. A good find from Chloe!*

IT'S OUR ISLAND OF CULTURE!
GET INVOLVED AT
WWW.ISLANDOFCULTURE.IM



LEARN THE MANX TIN WHISTLE

An adult crash course for *absolute beginners*

Part 1 - Wednesday 26 February 7-8pm
Part 2 - Wednesday 5 March 7-8pm

Northern Lights Community Centre, Ramsey

FREE TO ATTEND

bring your own whistle or buy one at the class

LIMITED PLACES - BOOKING ESSENTIAL
email manxmusic@culturevannin.im or tel. 695787

Try something new for Island of Culture 2014!!



TRY SOMETHING NEW FOR ISLAND OF CULTURE 2014

Island of Culture 2014 is the perfect time to 'try something new', so if you're an absolute beginner who fancies having a go at playing the Manx penny whistle, now is your chance!

For children aged 7 and above, the Family Library in Douglas will be hosting a short Manx penny whistle workshop at 2pm on Saturday 8 March led by the Culture Vannin Manx music development team. Keep an eye out for further details: www.familylibrary.co.uk For more mature students, you can have a go at the Feddan Manx whistle course which has now been successfully delivered to 1000 school pupils. This crash course for adults will be held over two sessions at Northern Lights Community Centre in Ramsey on Wednesday 26 Feb and 5 March from 7-8pm. Please contact Chloe to sign up: chloe@culturevannin.im or tel. 695787.

President of Tynwald, Clare Christian MLC, with two students from St Johns Primary School who were 'roving reporters' at the Island of Culture launch at the Villa Marina last month. Musical entertainment was provided by Ballakermeen's excellent Otto, directed by Nick Roberts.

The launch saw the release of fantastic new stamps by Juan Moore.

Photo courtesy DEC

www.islandofculture.im



Culture VANNIN

Culture Vannin is the new name for the Manx Heritage Foundation! Our new website www.culturevannin.im will be launched mid February when we present the Reih Bleeaney Vanannan award. As most of you know, we have a strong and proud history of supporting and promoting Manx culture through development, education and grant-giving work since the Manx Heritage Foundation was set up by Act of Tynwald in 1982.

As a key funder for the Island of Culture celebrations throughout 2014, we have decided to change our name to reflect how we work to promote our culture in inclusive, engaging and creative ways.

Set your web browsers to **www.culturevannin.im** and update your contacts:

manxmusic@culturevannin.im

enquiries@culturevannin.im

breesha@culturevannin.im

manxlanguage@culturevannin.im

adrian@culturevannin.im

chloe@culturevannin.im



Culture Vannin: taking our culture forward

www.culturevannin.im

CALENDAR

February

1st Manks Concert organised by IOM Celtic Congress, Centenary Centre, Peel, 7.30pm, tickets £7.50 from usual outlets (see newsletter for full details of acts)

1st Shenanigans Banned 'Songs of the Sea' at PSM Town Hall, 8pm £10 in aid of RNLI

8th Bree Trad Youth Music Session, Douglas Youth Arts Centre, Douglas, 3pm FREE

15th Ruth Keggin album launch, Centenary Centre, Peel, 7.30pm, £7.50 in advance, £10 on the door (from usual outlets)

15th Ceilidh with Calor Gas, Onchan Village Hall, 7.30pm - see www.iomwo.com/whatson.html for more details

March

8th Bree Trad Youth Music Session, Douglas Youth Arts Centre, Douglas, 3pm FREE

10th Calum Stewart and Heikki Bourgault album launch, Scoill Ree Gorree Hall, Bunscoill Rhumsaa, Ramsey, 7.30pm Tickets from 07624 406876 or on the door. See www.calumheikki.com

23rd JonnoPromotions presents Ewan McLennan, Jabberwocky, Douglas, 7pm, £15 see Facebook event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/608623369194051>

April

7th-9th Manx Folk Awards, Douglas Youth Arts Centre

9th Archibald Knox Society musical celebration featuring Barrule, Rachel Hair's Claasagh, Caarjyn Cooidjagh and much more, St German's Cathedral, Peel, 7.30pm, £5 See www.archibaldknoxsociety.com for details

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

www.manxmusic.com



EVPD at RNLI service (photos: Fiona Shimmin)

culture vannin

For information on Manx music & dance contact:

Manx Music Development Officer **Dr Breesha Maddrell**: breesha@culturevannin.im

Manx Music Specialist **Dr Chloë Woolley**: chloe@culturevannin.im

www.manxmusic.com

Call: Breesha: 01624 695784 **or** Chloë: 01624 695787

or write to: Music Team, Culture Vannin, The Stable Building, The University Centre, Old Castletown Road, Douglas, Isle of Man IM2 1QB

Written and edited by Breesha Maddrell 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