

# Arrane son Mannin

## New Song in Manx Competition

New Song in Manx Competition

Prize money sponsored by **Culture VANNIN**



## Includes a Manx Concert

with:-

Annie Kissack      Erin Loach  
Peddyr & Arabella      Jack Maclean & Owen Williams  
Clioagaree Twoaie      Kilgallons and Co.  
and more...

Peel Masonic Hall, Stanley Road  
Saturday 11th January 2020 - 7.30pm  
FREE ADMISSION - RAFFLE

### *In this month's edition...*

- *Hunt the Wren photos*
- *Ragtime by the Wood Brothers*
- *Exciting news for Clash Vooar*

**Culture**  
**VANNIN**

## ON YOUR DOORSTEP – ARTS AND CULTURE 14th & 15th MARCH 2020

Arts and culture will be the major themes at next year's On Your Doorstep weekend, 14th and 15th March, where the public can discover new activities in their locality and meet practitioners and providers who specialise in the arts and in Manx culture.

The Isle of Man Arts Council and Culture Vannin are joining forces to provide 4 'hubs' over the weekend in the north, south, east and west, where the public can drop in during the day and find out about joining a local arts or cultural society, meet like-minded people, discover a festival or entertainment venue, learn Manx or get involved with an artistic hobby they'd never thought of before! For societies and event organisers, it will be an opportunity to recruit new members of all ages and to reach a wider audience.

The IOMAC and Culture Vannin would like to hear from any Isle of Man arts and cultural organisations who would like to be considered for one of a limited number of information stalls available in the 4 hubs, along with any groups or individuals who can offer a 30 minute 'have a go' taster workshop during the weekend.

Societies and festivals will also be welcome to leave literature at all of the hubs, and through the On Your Doorstep booking portal, organisations, venues and businesses will also have the option to organise their own event, open their doors and offer their own taster sessions over the weekend.

It is hoped that the weekend will appeal to choirs, visual arts societies, studios and galleries, drama groups, film clubs, music sessions, craft workshops, heritage trusts and history societies, creative writing groups, music ensembles and projects, dance schools, Manx language groups, annual festivals, and community venues that would like to open their doors and invite new faces in.

If you are interested in being involved in displaying at one of the 'Arts and Culture Hubs', get in touch with Martyn Cain or Grainney Sheard from the Arts Council or Chloe Woolley from Culture Vannin.



Martyn.Cain@gov.im  
Grainney.Sheard@gov.im  
chloe@culturevannin.im



Or, save the date and add your own event to the Visit Isle of Man 'On Your Doorstep portal' when it's launched in late January. Some events may be eligible for funding to offer a limited number of subsidised tickets.

*Website info coming soon...*

## SAVE THE DATE!!

**Aundyryn Kiaull-Theay Vannin 2020**

**Manx Folk Awards 2020**

Douglas & St Johns

Sunday 29th March - Thursday 2nd April

Syllabus coming soon...

Organised by DESC & Culture Vannin





## THE WHITE BOYS 2019

Shoppers in the Isle of Man were treated to two rounds of the White Boys traditional mumming play, song and dance this Christmas. The first group from the South went on tour around the towns and villages on Saturday 14th (pictured below left) and another group from Peel (above) took to the streets on Saturday 21st December. The mysterious Laare Vane (White Mare) made a surprise visit too! Both groups collected donations for Mooinjer Veggey.

Dhoon School also included the White Boys in their Christmas Concert (below) right.

More info about this ancient custom: [www.culturevannin.im/manx\\_year\\_event\\_505782.html](http://www.culturevannin.im/manx_year_event_505782.html)





## The White Boys are Resurrected



After an absence of a number of years, two sets of entertainers historically known as The White Boys, brought back the traditional Manx version of the mummings play to the towns and villages of the Isle of Man.

Although not distinctive to the Island, it's loosely based on a version of the theme of St George and the Dragon (although the latter is never seen) with some local anecdotes threaded amongst the story - which has been part of Manx tradition for many years.

It's a colourful street performance which amused our forefathers, but still has a place in a contemporary setting amidst busy shoppers who witness the deaths of some of the prominent characters after a mock fight, and who are miraculously revived by the contents of a small bottle from the bag of the mysterious doctor - who seeks payment in vain for his work.

Valerie Caine © January 2020

(Courtesy of the North Western Chronicle)

Photos above - Val Caine

### Films of the White Boys 2019

Peel team: <https://youtu.be/GdUZrBswU6o>

Southern team: <https://youtu.be/xEetupXoc0Q>

# HUNT THE WREN - SHELG YN DREEAN 2019 ~ IN PICTURES

It was the wettest St Stephen's Day for many years, but the rain didn't deter any of the Hunt the Wren groups! Dancers, singers and instrumentalists braved the weather to perform in Ramsey, Douglas, Willaston, Port St Mary, Kirk Michael/Ballaugh/Sulby and St Johns! Photo credits: Jiri Podobsky, Val Caine, James Franklin, Mike Clague, Jen Hampton, Esther Kilgallon, Chloe Woolley.



From top: Kirk Michael; Sulby Glen; Ramsey





From top:  
St Johns;  
Willaston;  
Douglas near Woodbourne  
Road





The wren boys of Purt-le-moirrey (Port St Mary) very sensibly kept dry in the local church hall!



Led by Greg Joughin from the Mollag Band, hear the 4 million verses of Hunt the Wren in the Tynwald Inn after Cammag, Dec 2018!! <https://youtu.be/nmmo9ah3IL4>

# Mollag Ghennal 2019

The Mollag Band's annual Manx trad concert party in Douglas British Legion (29 Dec) featured a whole array of Manx musicians, singers and dancers. Acts included Scran with former members Isla, James and Owen, Mark Lawrence on guitar, David Kilgallon and Malcolm Stitt (with daughters on vocals!), Mera Royle on harp, the Peel White Boys and of course, the mighty Mollags!

*photos by Val Caine & CW*





# The Cammag Stick

Skeel provide the soundtrack to the new Cammag Stick films with the Manx trad tune, Gyn Ennym [trans. No Name]. The music track is called 'Shapp', which is on their Slipway album.

Cammag is the traditional National Sport of the Isle of Man, played on St Stephen's Day afternoon.

Watch David Fisher explain how to make your cammag stick: <https://youtu.be/vdZPLFeOhFo>

Manx version: <https://youtu.be/jixZEIS31wM>

Or watch both here on the CV website: [www.culturevannin.im/video\\_story\\_609245.html](http://www.culturevannin.im/video_story_609245.html)

Gyn Ennym is included in the Steady as She Goes session sets - see Transcription of the Month:

[www.manxmusic.com/learn\\_page\\_144681.html](http://www.manxmusic.com/learn_page_144681.html)



## **A mystery remains unsolved from the traditional Manx Christmas celebrations this year:**

*Who was the Laair Vane?* This white horse, with papier-mâché head and a body covered in a white sheet, was seen a number of times at Manx events in December, but it remains unknown who was behind it.

James Franklin of Culture Vannin says: "We have no idea who it was, but this appearance of the Laair Vane is the return of an anarchic and wonderful part of the traditional Manx Christmas"...

Read the full story here: [www.culturevannin.im/news\\_story\\_609889.html](http://www.culturevannin.im/news_story_609889.html)

And more info about this strange horse here: [www.culturevannin.im/manx\\_year\\_event\\_610609.html](http://www.culturevannin.im/manx_year_event_610609.html)



## **NOLLICK GHENNAL**

*Christmas photo round-up!*

Ellan Vannin Pipes & Drums joined Perree Bane dancers for “Eunyssagh Vona” at the Peel Xmas lights switch-on, and there were Manx music sessions following the Cammag match and Illiam Dhone Commemoration.

Photo credits: Ben Harris, Val Caine, CW

## M IS FOR MANX CAT

A limited opportunity to see this musical sensation with not one but EIGHT shows at FOUR locations around the Island. Come and join the fun in this musical adaptation of the well loved children's book by local author Gemma Hjerth and illustrated by Kim Gee. Join the adventure as two children are taken on a whirlwind journey through music, song, dance, witty dialogue and fun facts all about the Isle of Man. Will Granny ever finish their bedtime story and get them to sleep? Not if these cheeky children have anything to do with it!

Produced and directed by Lisa Kreisky and Kristene Sutcliffe of Stage Door Entertainment and proudly sponsored by the Isle of Man Arts Council, this exciting and educational show is making it's way around the Isle of Man in the first tour of it's kind.



Lisa said "As parents ourselves, Krissy and I are fully aware that it's not always easy to travel with young kids, even around the Isle of Man. But we believe that this should not stop them enjoying the magic of Theatre, so we decided to take it on the road. Bring it to them as such."

Kristene added "The show was so popular when it was first performed at The Studio Theatre at part of Theatrefest 19 back in October. The one criticism we received was that the One Night Only performance was not enough and too few people got to see it. So, we are remedying that."

'M is for Manx Cat: The Musical – On Tour' will be starting at St Paul's Hall in Ramsey on the 11th January, then moving to Laxey Working Men Institute on the 19th January. On the 2nd February they will be

THEATRE FEST STAGE DOOR ENTERTAINMENT ARTS COUNCIL

St Paul's Hall, Ramsey  
11th January 2020 / 1pm & 3pm

Laxey Working Men's Institute  
19th January 2020 / 1pm & 3pm

Erin Arts Centre, Port Erin  
2nd February 2020 / 1pm & 3pm

Peel Centenary Centre  
1st March 2020 / 1pm & 3pm

Book Tickets: [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

down at the Erin Arts Centre, Port Erin and then ending their tour at Peel Centenary Centre on the 1st March 2020. Tickets are only £5 and can be booked through [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) or all info is on the Stage Door Entertainment IOM Facebook page.

Tickets are limited, due to the short run, so please book early to avoid disappointment.

### Trad Music Weekend Fundraiser Session

To raise funds for this year's Isle of Man Trad Music Weekend (25 - 27 September), organisers are holding a session at Sir Norman's Bar in the Sefton Hotel, Douglas on **Sunday, 19th January** from 5pm till 9pm.

[www.facebook.com/TradMusicWeekendIsleofMan/](http://www.facebook.com/TradMusicWeekendIsleofMan/)

# Sharing traditions, cultures and dancing

Two very different groups of dancers put on a display of traditional culture and music in Douglas last weekend.

The Bulgarian folk dance group Rhythm of Bulgaria joined forces with the Manx traditional dance group Perree Bane for a joint concert, held at the Studio Theatre, Ballakermeen high School, on Sunday evening.

The evening was designed to give examples of how the two different cultures could combine and perform together in a spirit of mutual cultural appreciation.

Initially taking it in turns, both groups introduced themselves and briefly explained a little on the backgrounds of each dance before performing them to the large crowd.

The 11 dancers of Rhythm of Bulgaria performed several high energy, eye-catching set pieces, and their dances were accompanied by infectious, shrill cries and whoops and were performed wearing spectacular costumes and traditional dress.

Local group Perree Bane, so-called because of the white coats worn by the male dancers, used three different generations of dancers to display traditional Manx dance.

Children under 10, followed by the under 14s danced the 'Melliah' and 'White Boys', while the adults gave renditions of sword and candle-themed dances and the ultimate test of sobriety, Peter O'Tavey, a delicate balancing dance said to be carried out to find out if it is safe for people to walk home at the end of a night.

Both groups then joined together to perform dances from each other's traditions.

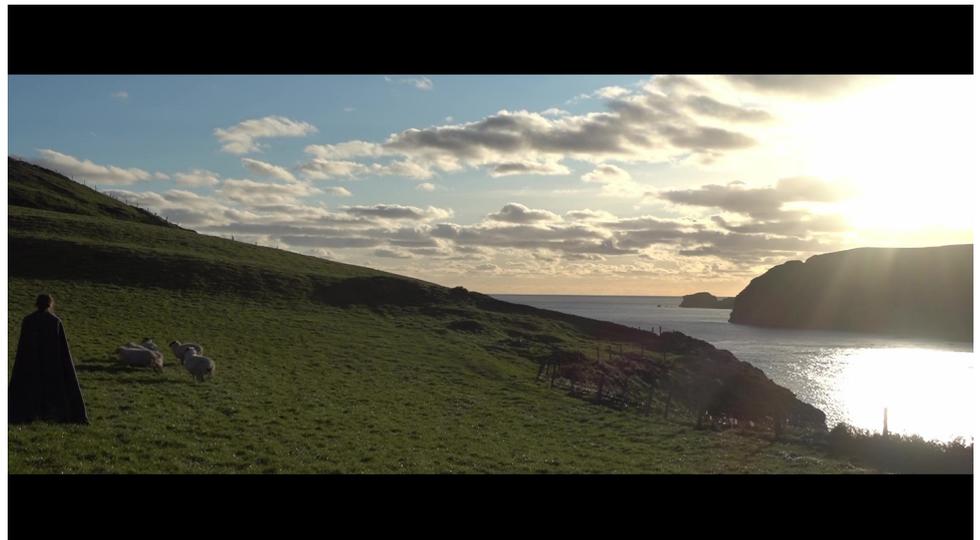
Original article: <http://www.iomtoday.co.im/article.cfm?id=52590>

Photo credit: Jiri Podobsky





Culture Vannin's latest initiative, Mann's Green Footsteps is calling on all musicians with an interest in the environment, climate change, biodiversity, and of course, the Isle of Man. Organised by Culture Vannin's intern, Sarah Mercer, Mann's Green Footsteps is a crowd-sourced short film following the journey of how climate change is influencing Manx culture. It will use clips submitted from people around the Island, and Sarah would also like to use Manx made music as the soundtrack. If you already have a piece centred around the themes of climate change, community and biodiversity, or would like to create a new one, then please send them to [sarah@culturevannin.im](mailto:sarah@culturevannin.im), who will try and include as many as possible in the final production. Everyone who submits a piece will be invited to a (free!) festival in August, where the film will be premiered, there will be the opportunity to share local food, listen to speakers and participate in workshops on all kinds of topics relating to climate and our beautiful Island. Sarah is also interested in pieces that are instrumental only, particularly Viking and Celtic inspired.



## Ballacottier School Infants Christmas Concert

Youngsters from Ballacottier School performed a range of Manx songs and dances in their Christmas show, 'The Perfect Location' last month. During the show, the storyline took the audience to Peel, Laxey, The Fairy Bridge and Cregneash, and included songs Yeesey Chreest, The Laxey Wheel, The King of the Sea and Hello Little People, plus dances, Hunt the Wren and the Flitter Dance. Katie Lawrence is the music teacher at Ballacottier. Her KS2 school choir have been invited to compete in next year's International Eisteddford. Listen to the infants singing "Roll Away" by Manx blues artist Davy Knowles: <https://soundcloud.com/ballacottierschool/roll-away-infants?fbclid=IwAR3EhgT5Hu7Vi2-W16Sa11BFmmmNbY6jrPF6Ba0ytlvsV5ISF60kKd9HLE8>

Ramsey-based group, Croan y Tead with members of Ny Fennee [pic below] entertained residents of Grove Mount this Christmas with a performance of Manx music and dance.



# Harrish y Cheayn - Across the Sea

## Clash Vooar win place in the Liet International Song Contest in Denmark!!

Manx Gaelic band Clash Vooar have been selected in a line-up of 20 participants for the 13th edition of **Liet International 2020** on 3 and 4 April 2020 in Apenrade/Aabenraa, Denmark, with their song, *Lhiggeyder Folley*.

The entrants represent a variety of different regional and minority languages and contrast each other in musical style, with acts ranging from easy listening and jazz to rock. The participants in alphabetical order are:

### Band/Song/Language (Country)

63-72 Mein kleines Lied  
Synnejysk/German (Denmark)  
Bališ Spal bomo če smo hin  
Slovenian (Austria) Brother Sea  
Oll 'Vel Onen Cornish (United Kingdom)  
Bumbe Orchestra Cala  
Sinziya Sardinian (Italy) Carolina  
Rubirosa Sozinha Galician  
(Spain) **Clash Vooar** *Lhiggeyder*



*Folley* Manx Gaelic (Isle of Man) Die Tüdelband Buten an't Meer Low German (Germany) Fiona Cavegn  
Mona Lisa Romansh (Switzerland) ISABELLE Waje de Litt Alsatian (France) Jimi Henndreck Nairobi  
Südtiroler (Italy) Juna Yashel Kuzle Tatar (Tatarstan) Luis Nuñez y los Folganzanes Tengo un sitiü pa ti  
Asturian (Spain) Marcas Mac an Tuairneir le Bogha-frois Dumbbells Scottish Gaelic (Scotland) Noctiluca  
laan Heligoland Frisian (Germany) Roger Argemí La fina línia Catalan (Spain) Saara Hermansson Mov  
laavlome South Sami (Sweden) Sequens Do bist frij Frisian (The Netherlands) Sølo Kærestesangen  
Danish (Germany) Turbokrowodn Mila moja Burgenlandcroatian (Austria) Zaman Aida Yanga Bashkir  
(Bashkortostan).

Liet International is a Frisian (north of the Netherlands) initiative which was organised for the first time in the capital of Friesland, Ljouwert/Leeuwarden in 2002. Since 2006, the festival has travelled around Europe, and since 2008, under the patronage of the Council of Europe, Liet International attracts a lot of media-attention – from BBC to Al Jazeera – and has grown to become one of the biggest events for the promotion of minority languages.

More information: <https://lietinternational.com/>

<< Peel based Manx dance team, **Skeddan Jiarg**, will be representing the Isle of Man at Wales' Interceltic Festival, Cwlwm Celtaidd this March. The group are grateful to the support of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.

*Hilary Morgan tells KMJ that as well as playing Manx music in their recorder group, the choir of her parish church, Newchurch in Culcheth near Warrington, which she conducts, included The Mother's Carol, arranged by Frank Woolley, in their Christmas carol service. Hilary says; Long live Manx music!*



Wales' Interceltic Festival of  
Music and Dance

6th – 8th March 2020

Hi-Tide, Porthcawl

Concerts, Live Music Sessions,  
Workshops, Ceilidhs and more...

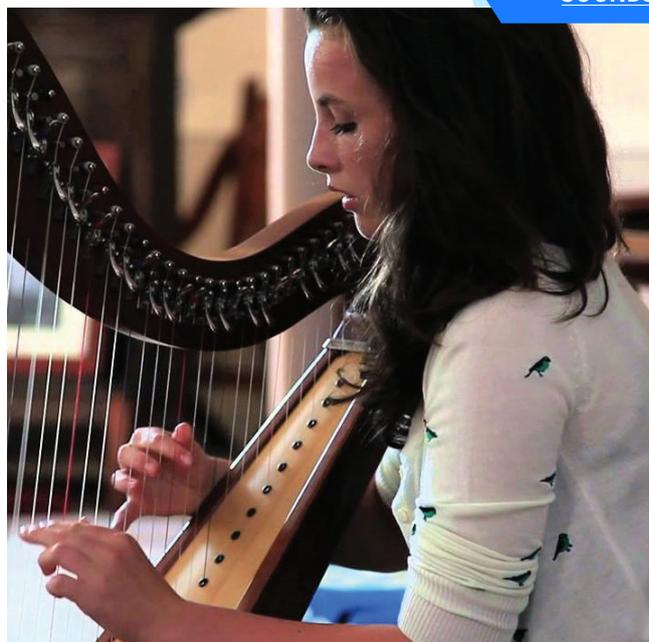
For more information:

[www.cwlwmceltaidd.org/](http://www.cwlwmceltaidd.org/) / 07817 285379



# Mera Royle

*Though just 19 years of age, Manx musician Mera Royle is committed to her craft*



**M**era Royle makes her home in The Isle of Man, a small country with a big music scene. As she notes, the Isle - situated in the Irish Sea between Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the English county of Cumbria - is the geographic heart of the Celtic nations.

"There is a strong sense of culture and identity on the island and the music and language are very similar to the Gaelic traditions in Ireland and Scotland," shares the songstress, who was born in Manchester, U.K., but relocated to the Isle of Man with her family as a toddler. "A Manx language-speaker could be quite easily understood by Gaelic speakers in both Ireland and Scotland."

A professional harpist and violinist, Royle has been playing music for as long as she can remember. "One of my earliest memories is of my uncle teaching me how to tune a ukulele, and I recall not being able to put it down until I had learned how to do it."

She started "properly" playing instruments once she began school, where music continues to be a core of the Manx curriculum.

"I began violin when I was eight and I had this hilarious teacher who was completely bonkers, but he really changed how I thought about music. He taught me how it isn't something you do - it is something that comes from inside of you, and your instrument is just there to help you get it out. More than ten years later, I still think he is one of my biggest inspirations."

Royle was introduced to the harp by another teacher, Mike Boulton, who coordinated the school's folk music club. "Playing the harp was something that I enjoyed right away, and I was lucky because a few of my friends in the folk club were really great musicians and we would learn tunes and play them together. I performed with them in a whole range of concerts - from afternoon tea parties, to church hall events, being involved in the island's music festivals and being allowed to work with visiting musicians - plus playing at the country's main halls, like the 2,000-seat Villa Gaiety Complex."

With the support of the Isle of Man Arts Council, Royle was selected for a monthly class with Scottish harpist Rachel Hair. This helped further hone her harp skills and overcome new musical challenges. She hopes to continue learning from Hair, even now that she is attending England's Newcastle University, where she is studying folk and traditional music.

She currently resides in the village of Maughold, a rural area in the Isle of Man's northern region. The colourful, natural atmosphere offers her endless musical ideas.

*"Living in a place that is so green and beautiful is perfect for finding inspiration when it comes to composing music..."*

"I named my first EP The Ballaglass Set after a glen that me and my mum used to go to after school to walk the dogs."

Last year, Royle won the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Musician of the Year Award, which forced her to confront one of her fears - performing in front of a crowd.

"I have found there really is no better way to learn this kind of thing than on the job when you are thrown in at the deep end. I played at Cropsredy Festival last year and had to perform in front of about 10,000 people, which certainly made me think a lot about my presence on stage and what I needed to do to make sure the audience was as absorbed as possible."

Those audiences range from elderly women "doing their knitting in the front row" of a small church hall, to the likes of Eliza Carthy and Mark Radcliffe.

"The older I get, the easier it is to understand that the audience is there to enjoy the music and that it is best for me to just enjoy it as well and not worry too much. However, the pressure is always on to play well whatever the occasion."

Royle's latest EP, *Woven*, is now available on Bandcamp. It includes two tracks - *Moon at Dawn* and *Deep in the Earth* - which she composed for films, along with her favourite track, a take on Mike Oldfield's *Tubular Bells*, and four other tunes.

"Going forward, I am committed to learning more about my craft - especially the art of composition - and to my evolution as both a player and a performer."

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



A celebration of everything Manx

An evening of short films for the Isle of Man - murder, traditions, dandelion tooters & more

Also a number of films about Maughold - St. Maughold's Well, Cornaa: A film & music journey

Thursday 16 January, 7.30pm

Maughold Church Hall

Tickets £5

Organised by the Maughold Social Club



**10 year old Manx fiddle player Frank Joughin has secured a place in the final of THE NEXT BIG THING 2020! Gaiety Theatre, Saturday 1st February, tickets from £16 [www.villagaiety.com](http://www.villagaiety.com)**

## Ramsey Choral Society Winter Concert

Saturday 25th January

St. Paul's Church, Ramsey at 7pm

Parry: 'The Chivalry of the Sea' Sullivan: Oratorio 'The Prodigal Son'

Music by Saint-Saens and Whitacre.

Soloists: Juliet Tranter, violin; Karen Elliot, soprano; Mandy Griffin, contralto; Bill Creer, tenor and Matthew Quinn, baritone, with John Elliott, organ. Tickets: adults £10; children £5.



# kiauli noa

**Breton Manx Collaboration** Just released - the showcase film of "Near Nesan - the Breton-Manx Collaboration", a musical project supported by Culture Vannin & Thornton Chartered Financial Planners and premiered at *Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering 2019* to a rapturous applause:

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/371374542>

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/0RUfCrHmgJI>

Featuring Manx musicians David Kilgallon and Mera Royle alongside Breton legends, Lors Landat and Thomas Moisson, this unique musical collaboration is ready to take on the Celtic world!

[photo credits:  
Jiri Podobsky >>  
& Culture Vannin, below]



**Biskee Brisht's** third single, 'This Won't End Well', is out now!

Listen to it on Spotify HERE: <https://sptfy.com/8Z7d>

Buy it on Bandcamp HERE: <https://biskeebisht.bandcamp.com/track/this-wont-end-well>

## **Bronty the Dinosaur and the Stolen Fairy Crown**

London-based singer-songwriter (and regular busker in Convent Garden) Wayne Avrili has written a musical story for children based on the Manx folklore of his ancestors:

<https://youtu.be/M-G-ZL30CwM>

- • • • •
- **Youtube/ video corner** •
- The White Boys made a welcome •
- return this Christmas, but you can also •
- enjoy a previous performance from •
- 2000. Doctor played by Colin Jerry: •
- [https://youtu.be/zHcX4Xk\\_oUI](https://youtu.be/zHcX4Xk_oUI) •
- • • • •



## GUITAR PIECE OF THE MONTH

"Eunyssagh Vona" is the latest release with video tutorial from Pete Lumb, plus the sheet music/TAB to download:

[www.culturevannin.im/video\\_story\\_606045.html](http://www.culturevannin.im/video_story_606045.html)

### BRIAN STOWELL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

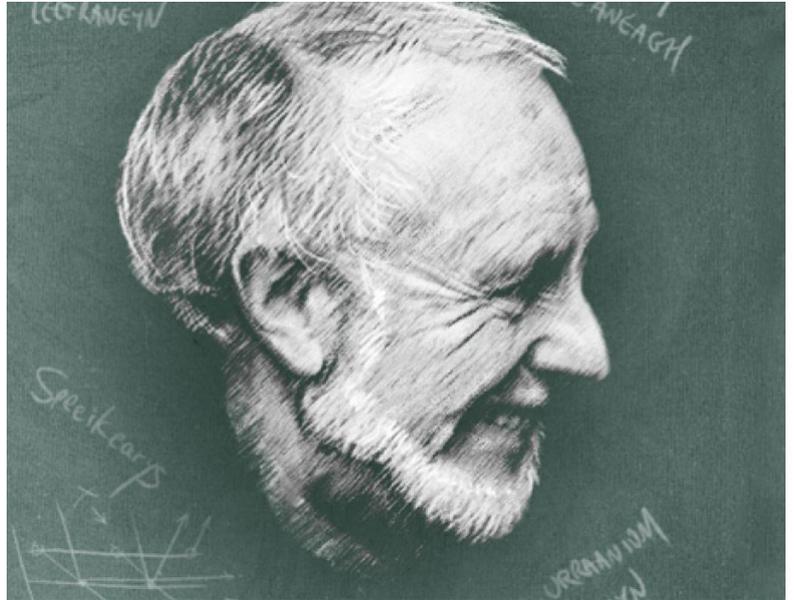
Culture Vannin is privileged to announce the publication of Brian Stowell's autobiography - Gaelg as Fishig: Skeeal my vea – which is the final work produced by this prolific author of Manx and which is published in the year he sadly passed away.

Brian Stowell, more than anyone of his generation, worked tirelessly and enthusiastically for the language and the cultural identity of this country and his autobiography takes us on a journey, of not only the author's cultural and political awakening, but that of this Island nation.

Born and educated in Douglas, Brian worked as a lecturer in Physics at Liverpool John Moore University before returning to the Island in 1991 to take up the new position of Manx Language Officer with the Department of Education. The title of his autobiography, Gaelg as Fishig, reflects these two elements to his life and work: Manx and Physics.

Brian, who received the Reih Bleeaney Vanannan Award in 2008 and the Tynwald Honour Medal in 2010 for his work for the language, is sadly missed but fondly remembered by many people both here and abroad and this book is a testament to a life well lived.

*Gaelg as Fishig: Skeeal my vea* is available from Culture Vannin and in bookshops around the Island retailing at £12: [https://www.culturevannin.im/publication\\_606936.html](https://www.culturevannin.im/publication_606936.html)



Beemayd cur lioar Vrian Stowell roish y theay Jesarn ec Culture Vannin ec mysh 2pm. Bee failt er dagh peiagh cheet dys Culture Vannin fastyr Jesarn as veagh eh yindyssagh dy chlashyn sleih loayrt mychione bea Vrian as yn aght t'ad cooinaghtyn yn dooinney here.

**LISTEN:** Brian singing on Mannin Veg Veen from the Arraneyn album here:

<https://soundcloud.com/culture-vannin/mannin-veg-veen>

**BUY:** Arraneyn CD £12: [https://www.culturevannin.im/publication\\_143813.html](https://www.culturevannin.im/publication_143813.html)

## MANX COMPETITIVE MUSIC, SPEECH & DANCE FESTIVAL

25th April - 2nd May 2020

The 'Guild' Syllabus is now out with plenty of classes open to trad and folk musicians:

[www.manxmusicfestival.org/](http://www.manxmusicfestival.org/)

There is also the Musical Composition prize - 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.

**Entries close 1st Feb 2020**

# RESEARCH NEWS

“CHRISTMAS is ushered in...”

CHRISTMAS is ushered in with a Form much less meaning, and infinitely more fatiguing. On the 24th of December, toward Evening, all the Servants in general have a Holiday, they go not to Bed all Night, but ramble about till the Bells ring in all the Churches, which is at twelve-a-Clock; Prayers being over, they go to hunt the Wren, and after having found one of these poor Birds, they kill her, and lay her on a Bier with the utmost Solemnity, bringing her to the Parish-Church, and burying her with a whimsical kind of Solemnity, fingering Dirges over her in the Manks Language, which they call her Knell; after which Christmas begins. There is not a Barn unoccupied the whole twelve Days, every Parish hiring Fiddlers at the publick Charge; and all the Youth, nay, sometimes People well advanced in Years making no scruple to be among these nocturnal Dancers. At this Time there never fails of some Work being made for Kirk Farmyns; so many young Fellows and Girls meeting in these Diversions, Nature too often prompts them to more close Celebrations of the Festival, than those the Barn allows; and many a Hedge has been Witnesses of Endearments, which Fear of Punishments has afterwards made both forswear at the Holy Altar in Purgation. On Twelfth-Day the Fidler lays his Head in some one of the Wenches Laps, and a third Person asks, who such a Maid, or such a Maid shall marry, naming the Girls then present one after another; to which he answers according to his own Whim, or agreeable to the Intimacies he has taken notice of during this Time of Merriment. But whatever he says is as absolutely depended on as an Oracle; and if he happens to couple two People, who have an Averfion to each other, Tears and Vexation succeed the Mirth. This, they call, *Cutting off the Fidler's Head*; for, after this, he is dead for the whole Year.

This Custom still continues in every Parish, and if any young Lad, or Lass, was denied the Privilege of doing whatever came into their Heads, they would look upon themselves as infinitely injured. This Time is indeed their Carnival, and they take, and are allowed more Liberties, than, methinks, is consonant with their Strictness in other Cafes.

George Waldron, *The History and Description of the Isle of Man* (London: Printed for W. Bickerton, 1744) 97-99.

The Chapter Quest and the Consistory Court have now gone from Island life; indiscretions are now documented by social media and not the Book of Presentments....

STEPHEN MILLER, 2019

## HAYDN & HARRY WOOD RAGTIME NUMBERS

Marjorie Cullerne has arranged for two ragtime piano pieces by Manx musical brothers Haydn Wood (1882 - 1959) and Harry Wood (1868 - 1938) to be recorded and made available on YouTube for the first time. Marjorie provided the sheet music and illustrations, and ragtime specialist Nico Rhodes performed the pieces.

One is Haydn Wood's only piece with the word 'Rag' in the title. It is The "Jimmy Sale" Rag, published in 1918, and was composed for, and dedicated to, a man called James Sale.

Marjorie says; "sadly I don't know anything about this man, James Sale, or where he lived (the Isle of Man?) I can only imagine he was a Music Hall entertainer, because Haydn wrote this during the thirteen years he and his soprano wife Dorothy, and their pianist, were playing the Music Halls throughout Great Britain".

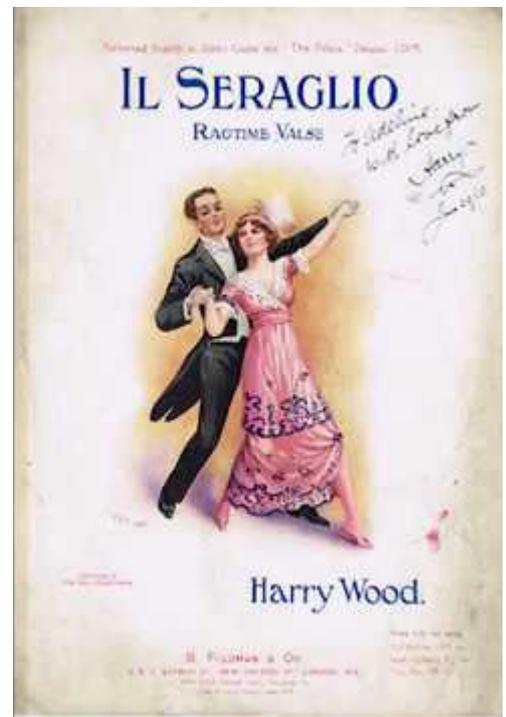
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXGr73gC5m8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXGr73gC5m8)

The other YouTube video is one of Harry Wood's two known pieces with the word 'Rag' in the title. This is "Il Seraglio", Ragtime Valse, which was "played nightly at Derby Castle and The Palace, Douglas Isle of Man". It was published in 1913.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWvH0edcGCE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWvH0edcGCE)

To find out more about Haydn Wood: <http://haydnwoodmusic.com/homeE.html>

Harry Wood: [www.manxmusic.com/publication\\_558095.html](http://www.manxmusic.com/publication_558095.html)



# Making it Our Own: The Gaelicisation and 'Manxification' of Extraneous Ballads in the Manx Song Tradition

David Speers has had a paper published in University College Cork's Folklore and Ethnology journal, *Béascna*. The link to the journal's page (on the University College Cork site):

[www.ucc.ie/en/bealoideas/research/publications/journals/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/bealoideas/research/publications/journals/)

## ABSTRACT

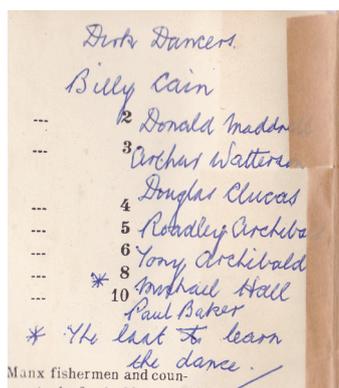
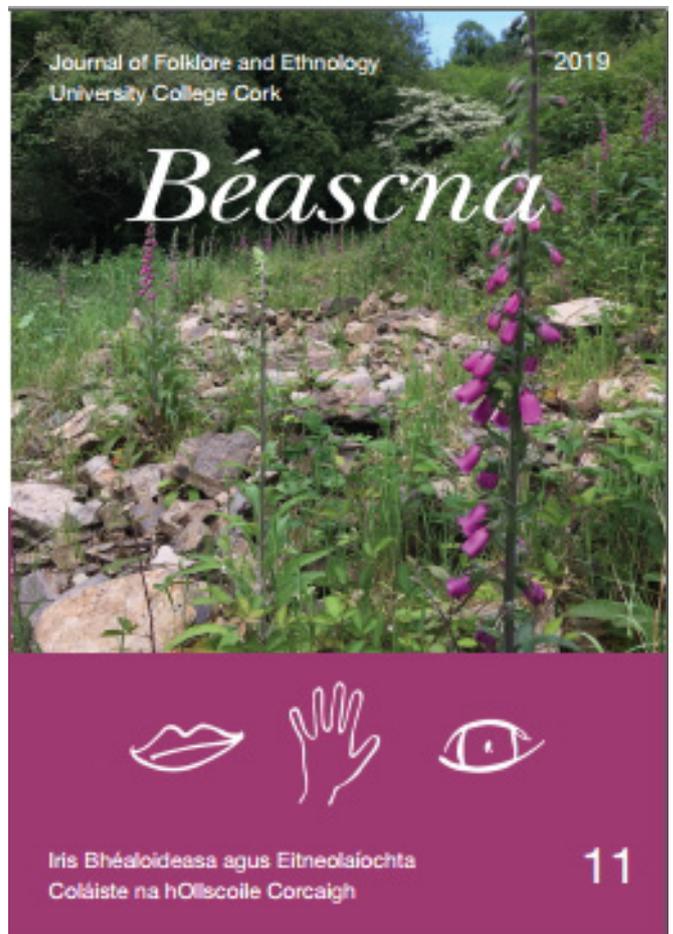
The Isle of Man during the 19th century had a thriving Gaelic ballad singing tradition well into the period in which English was becoming its vernacular language. Despite the fact that this linguistic encroachment resulted in English-language broadsides becoming popular sources of entertainment, there is evidence that, initially at least, these were embraced and absorbed into the Manx ballad singing tradition. Some were Gaelicised: firstly by translating directly from the English, perhaps with some embellishment; and, secondly, by being given completely new and unrelated Manx Gaelic words. A new Gaelic element of the Manx song tradition came to exist alongside the traditional Gaelic ballads and a growing English-language strand, which also included locally composed ballads. The infusion of English-language broadside ballads into the Manx song tradition may have encouraged these new ballads in English. But, more importantly, it provided the musical raw material that, arguably, helped to strengthen the Gaelic strand of the tradition. This article will provide an overview of the collection and publication of traditional ballads and music in the Isle of Man, before examining some examples of Gaelicisation and what I describe below as 'Manxification'. To help avoid confusion, anything described as 'Manx' should be taken as being of the Isle of Man, and 'Manx Gaelic' being of the Manx language.

*Subscription required to read the full article...*

David Speers said; "This is the third article I have had published in the folklore journals in Ireland and it follows on from my article in the University College Dublin's *Béaloideas* a couple of years ago. In that piece, I was able to link around seventy titles in Manx music collections made during the 19th century with broadside ballad titles published mostly in England.

In my recent article, published in the University College Cork's *Béascna*, I have examined notebooks and papers from W. H. Gill, his brother the Deemster F. Gill, Dr. John Clague and others, held in the Manx museum archive. Evidence there shows how Manx people reacted to new ballads in English at a time when Manx Gaelic was still the commonly spoken language."

**READ** other research articles by David Speers here: [www.manxmusic.com/history\\_page\\_472864.html](http://www.manxmusic.com/history_page_472864.html)



## "DIRK DANCERS"

This list of Dirk Dancers was found in Leighton Stowell's personal copy of Mona Douglas, *Five Manx Folk Dances, Set I: Dances and Airs collected from Traditional Sources by Mona Douglas, Dance Notations by Edith Jones, Pianoforte Arrangements by Arnold Foster* (London: Stainer & Bell, 1936) amongst his personal papers (MNHL, MS 09683).

STEPHEN MILLER, 2019

# From Pleasure Isle to Internment Isle

## Summer entertainment in Douglas 1939-45

by Maurice Powell

'Don't be surprised if all records for holiday traffic to the Island are broken this summer', remarked Mr. J. W. Cabourn, a representative of Pickford's Travel Service, during a conversation with an Isle of Man Examiner reporter during a weekend in June spent 'surveying the Island's beauties'. In his opinion, based on his considerable experience in the holiday trade, the state of international affairs was deterring thousands of people from travelling to Germany, Italy, France and Belgium and even Scandinavia, and the Isle of Man should reap the benefits from the situation. 'Many people like a sea passage as part of their holiday', he continued, and 'if only they knew what a delightful trip we had yesterday in the Mona's Queen . . . the Island looked as well as any continental setting I know as we approached it, in blazing sunshine from the sea'.

The summer holiday season of 1939 was indeed a bumper one, with promenades, beaches and gardens crowded by day, and ballrooms, variety theatres and cinemas packed by night. There was every reason to suppose that, with an estimated 552,000 visitors already arrived by the end of August, the total number of holiday makers would exceed even the record-breaking year of 1913. In June the first Sunday sailings in the history of the Steam Packet Company brought 2,000 holiday makers from Heysham, Liverpool and Fleetwood. Over the August Bank Holiday 45,000 visitors arrived, almost equalling the record of 47,000 visitors in 1937. The Steam Packet's thirteen vessels made twenty-five outward and sixteen inward sailings during the Saturday and Sunday, and even those arriving on the 2.30 and 3.30am sailings found a warm Manx welcome awaiting them. Twenty 'horse cars' had been lined up on the promenade near the sea terminal since 4.45am, and by 6.30am some 16,000 visitors had disembarked and were making their way to their accommodation. The promenade illuminations were switched on; the shelters at the Arcade and the Villa Marina were open and many boarding house keepers kept their lights on to welcome the early arrivals. At Cunningham's Camp six thousand breakfasts were served – eggs, rashers, bread and butter and tea – to all those awaiting the allocation of accommodation once they had deposited their luggage in the dining hall. With twelve hours of sunshine recorded each day of the August Bank Holiday, one observer of the Douglas holiday season imagined bleary-eyed young girls disembarking in the early hours of the morning, hastening to their accommodation for a quick breakfast and a wash and brush up, and by ten o'clock that same morning sunning themselves on the beach, 'almost clothed!'

**READ FULL ARTICLE:** [www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/From%20Pleasure%20Isle.pdf](http://www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/From%20Pleasure%20Isle.pdf)



Photo of Douglas in 1939: iMuseum.

## “WHEN I SHOWED THIS DANCE TO N.C.”

HYNDAA YN BWOAILLY

When I showed this dance to N.C. at the time when I was thinking of reviving it in Laxey as part of a village play she said it must be a corrupt revision because it seemed so ragged, & also because it was quite wrong to do any pointing or kicking in a country dance. The 3rd figure she thought wrong & mixed up, & said it probably ought to be the one known as “sideing,” which she showed us how to do. She also said that the stamping ought to be a much lighter and prettier movement known as “setting,” & we altered the dance accordingly. I think it is as well however in this notebook to put down exactly how it was done traditionally; and if it is mixed up with jigs etc. it may be an interesting variant.

Mona Douglas, “Folklore Notebook. | Dances. | Tunes, descriptions & notes”. MNHL, MS 09545, Mona Douglas Papers, Box 9.

The person referred to here as N.C. is Norah Crellin who was involved with Mona Douglas and Leighton Stowell in their folk song and dance activities. She was the pianist for the Manx folk dances displayed at the visit of the English Folk Dance Society to Douglas in 1930, and again the following year at a Manx Entertainment at Laxey Glen Gardens, a fund raiser for the Celtic Congress. In 1932, she played the piano at the Royal Albert Hall where the Albert Road School team were taking part there in the English Folk Dance Festival. She was at the keyboard again in 1935, at a display of Manx folk dancing given at the Picton Hall in Liverpool by the Albert Road School team. The following year, 1936, she was off this time to Cecil Sharp House in London, for another demonstration of Manx folk dancing. She was active playing at other social entertainments in the Island and was once the organist at St Olave’s in Ramsey and latter took the same position at Maughold. Besides the piano she was also a keen ballroom dancer and competed in the annual Isle of Man Dance Championships (the newspaper clipping here is from the 1935 competition). It is that knowledge of dancing that is being drawn on here and put into practice as well. Note, however, the insistence by Douglas to herself that the notebook to contain descriptions of the dances exactly as given to her by her informants.

STEPHEN MILLER, 2019

### A forgotten Manx dancer?

Researched by David Radcliffe (2019)

Whilst researching my mother-in-law’s family tree I came across a half-sister to her father, a person of which she had only a vague recollection. I found a record of the birth of this lady, Kathleen Sumner, but little else; so consulted the online newspaper collection at the Manx Museum, and found a surprising number of stories...

Kathleen was born in 1920, the daughter of Robert Sumner and Fanny Callin of Foxdale. Robert and Fanny had married in Douglas in 1915, when Robert was a Private in the 5th King’s Liverpool Regiment. Fanny was the youngest of 7 children of Robert Callin (a miner) and Margaret Callister. Fanny had already had 2 children, and appears in the newspapers in 1905 trying to get a maintenance payment out of the father of her first child. Kathleen first gets a mention in the papers in aged 8  $\frac{3}{4}$  when Fanny Sumner is summonsed for not ensuring that her daughter was regularly attending school in Foxdale. She claimed that Kathleen had been suffered from ill health, however it turned out that the Court was aware that young Kathleen had been attending dancing classes in Douglas!

**READ FULL ARTICLE:**

[www.manxmusic.com/news\\_story\\_608643.html](http://www.manxmusic.com/news_story_608643.html)



**MISSSES NORAH CRELLIN AND  
SHIRLEY CONNELL**

# TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MONTH

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

Here are a couple of popular session tunes from the Isle of Man:

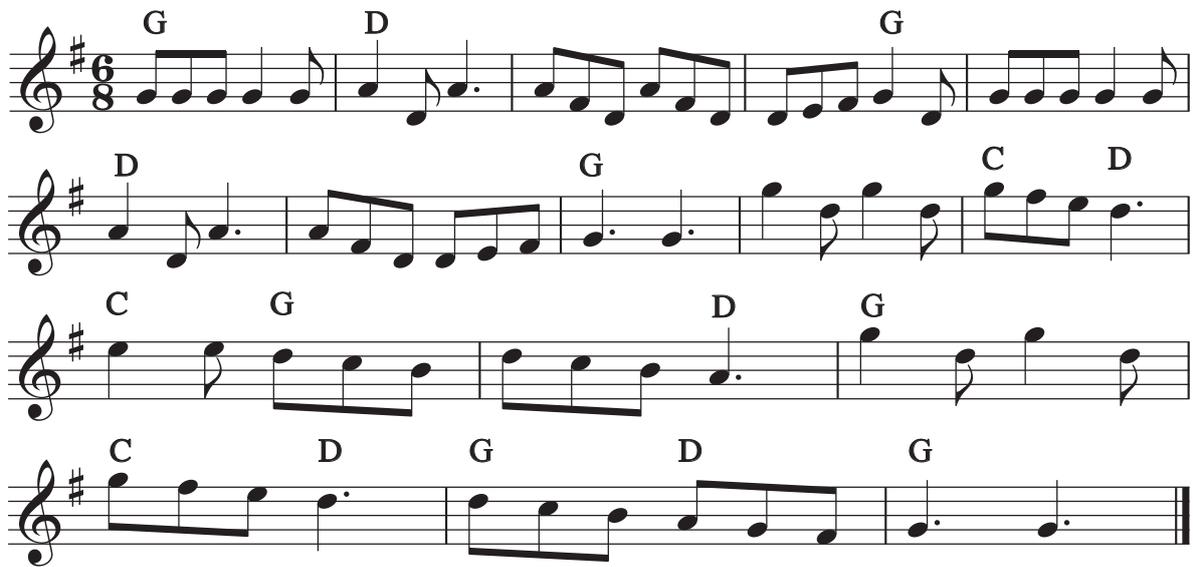
**"Peter O'Tavy"** (also a traditional wedding dance) and **"Gyn Ennym"** [Manx Gaelic for no name!] This second jig, as played by Skeel on the new Cammag film, is known in Ireland too, as "St Patrick's Day in the Morning". This page is from a free resource called *Steady as She Goes Session Sets*.

Download the sheet music, plus discover many more free materials here:

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

## Set 4

### Peter O' Tavy



Musical notation for "Peter O' Tavy" in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in eighth notes and quarter notes. Chord symbols G, D, and G are placed above the first three measures. The second staff continues the melody with chord symbols D, G, C, and D above it. The third staff has chord symbols C, G, D, and G above it. The fourth staff concludes the piece with chord symbols C, D, G, D, and G above it.

### Gyn Ennym



Musical notation for "Gyn Ennym" in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in eighth notes and quarter notes. Chord symbols G, D, G, and C are placed above the first four measures. The second staff continues the melody with chord symbols G, C, D, and G above it. The third staff has chord symbols C, G, and C above it. The fourth staff concludes the piece with chord symbols G, C, D, and G above it.

# CALENDAR

## JANUARY

11th Arrane son Mannin, Peel Masonic Hall, free, 7.30pm

11th M is for Manx Cat, St Paul's Hall, Ramsey, 1pm & 3pm £5

18th Culture Vannin Oie Fillym, Maughold

19th M is for Manx Cat, The Institute, Laxey, 1pm & 3pm £5

19th Session at Sir Norman's, Trad Music Weekend fundraiser, 5-9pm

25th Ramsey Choral Society Winter Concert, St Paul's Church, 7pm

31st Oie'll Vreeshey: [www.culturevannin.im/manx\\_year\\_event\\_469776.html](http://www.culturevannin.im/manx_year_event_469776.html)

## FEBRUARY

1st Next Big Thing 2020, Gaiety Theatre

1st Guild entries CLOSE

2nd M is for Manx Cat, Erin Arts Centre, 1pm & 3pm £5

## MARCH

1st M is for Manx Cat, Peel Centenary Centre, 1pm & 3pm £5

6th - 8th Cwlwm Celtaidd, Wales

14th - 15th On Your Doorstep Arts and Culture

29th - 2nd April Manx Folk Awards

## APRIL

3rd - 4th Liet International Song Contest, Denmark

3rd - 6th Shennaghys Jiu Celtic Festival, Ramsey

14th - 19th Pan-Celtic Festival, Carlow, Ireland [www.pan Celtic.ie](http://www.pan Celtic.ie)

25th - 2nd May The 'Guild' [www.manxmusicfestival.org](http://www.manxmusicfestival.org)

## MAY

2nd Oie Voaldyn, Peel

## JUNE

21st Make Music Day

## JULY

5th Tynwald Day

20th - 26th Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering [www.celticgathering.im](http://www.celticgathering.im)

## AUGUST

7th - 16th Festival Interceltique de Lorient [www.festival-interceltique.bzh/](http://www.festival-interceltique.bzh/)

## SEPTEMBER

11th - 12th Our Island Our World festival

25th - 27th IOM Trad Music Weekend

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

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