

# KIAULL MANNINAGH JIU

MANX MUSIC TODAY

Mayrnt 2022 March

MANX MUSIC TODAY

## Shennaghys Jiu is back!!



Shennaghys Jiu are looking forward to this year's festival from 1st - 3rd April. They're working hard behind the scenes to welcome you all back with a festival full of music, dance and language with a friendly, family atmosphere.

**Friday 1st April** – Evening: Concert and Family Ceilidh at Masonic Hall Ramsey

**Saturday 2nd April** – Outdoor performances at the Ramsey Courthouse (from 10am), Evening: Concert and Ceilidh at Masonic Hall Ramsey

**Sunday 3rd April** – Afternoon: Concert at Peel Centenary Centre, Evening: Concert and Ceilidh at Masonic Hall Ramsey

Visiting guests are from Ireland (see Killarney dancers above), Cornwall, Galicia and Scotland - see over for more details...

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

- *Dr Tootell and the Legend of Mann*
- *David Fisher tells tales of bygone years*
- *Memories of Mann by Thomas Green*



*Shennaghys Jiu (tradition today) was founded in 1998 as a way of bringing young musicians together in a non-competitive environment, giving them the opportunity to “take the stage” without any added pressure. The festival has grown to become an important event in the Manx calendar, taking place mainly in Ramsey around Easter. Organisers say:*



“We are delighted once again to be able to host friends from Ireland, especially such a talented group from Killarney and the County of Kerry. Making a very much anticipated return will be Maureen, Lisa and Padraig, with their very talented group of musicians and dancers. We are very much looking forward to their performances and ceilidhs.

The beauty of a festival is the friendship you make along the way. We have maintained very close friendships with our friends in Galicia since the early years of the festival. We are delighted to welcome back to the Island Xosé Liz and his band. They were due to come in 2020 before the world went crazy, and so we are overjoyed they are able to find time to make the long trip back to the Island and perform at Shennaghys Jiu 2022.

We are delighted to be able to maintain our links with Cornwall at this year’s Shennaghys

Jiu and excited to welcome back more familiar faces and friends to the festival, Splann. The Island’s links with Cornwall is based on years of friendship and mutual support and encouragement, which culminated in a joint year of The Isle of Man and Cornwall and Festival Interceltique de Lorient in 2015. We can’t wait to meet up again, and I know our local schools are once again looking forward to their visits! Another talented Manx musician will be making her way home to Shennaghys Jiu this year. Beccy J Hurst has given her time to the festival consistently for



a numbers years, conducting workshops, performing to groups of children and playing for concerts and ceilidhs. We are delighted she will again be here to help add a familiar sound and experience to Shennaghys Jiu 2022.

We’re delighted to welcome Greta Curtin back to this year’s festival. Greta is a superb and well known concertina player, who will be performing and giving workshops at the festival.

A long-standing friend of the festival, we are looking forward to her return and know that she will once again help provide part of the excellent entertainment on offer and ensure that visitors and locals alike will be made to feel most welcome and right at home!”



More info: <https://www.facebook.com/shennaghys.jiu>

Promo video: <https://culturevannin.im/watchlisten/videos/shennaghys-jiu-promo-337431/>

Supported by Culture Vannin



## Ayres & Braces a huge success!!

Two sell-outs shows saw Dilys Sowrey & friends present an original folk musical based on her ancestors and their neighbours in Bride in the early part of the 20th century. Read about the background to the show in last month's KMJ and look out for the CD of songs in shops soon.

**UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man** is inviting individuals and organisations to take part in a series of Island wide sustainable picnics between April and September known as The Biosphere Bee Community Picnic 2022. *Why not take instruments or voices to your nearest park on the 21st June and have a jam for Make Music Day!?*

More info: [www.biosphere.im/our-projects/biosphere-bee](http://www.biosphere.im/our-projects/biosphere-bee)



The Family Library in Douglas are looking for musical acts to perform at their new monthly 'Shout Out' community lectures and music evenings. If you are interested in performing, get in touch with Sue Jolly:

[sue.jolly@familylibrary.im](mailto:sue.jolly@familylibrary.im)  
or tel. 640650

# Aundyryn Kiaull-Theay Vannin

## MANX FOLK AWARDS 20 - 24th March 2022

The 2022 set pieces for choirs & recitation are themed around

Manx folklore, nature  
and animals

Check out the syllabus:

[www.manxmusic.com/education\\_page\\_92025.html](http://www.manxmusic.com/education_page_92025.html)

Entries close Fri 4th February

# Manx Folk Awards



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

**Sunday 13th March 6:30pm, Peel Centenary Centre**

**Senior (secondary school age)**

**Junior (primary school age)**

Senior Prize—£500

Junior Prize— £300

Best original song prize—£100

Plus chances to record in a professional recording studio!

**Closing date for entries: Friday 18th February**

**Email [iombotb@gmail.com](mailto:iombotb@gmail.com) for a registration form**

**We are grateful for the generous support of the Soundcheck Charity**



**FRIENDS OF THE  
CENTENARY CENTRE**

# A.G.M.

**Friday 25th  
March  
7.30pm**

**CENTENARY  
CENTRE  
Atholl Room**

**Followed by  
refreshments  
and musical  
entertainment  
by 'Sue Harrison'  
- the bar will be open!**



## BRAAID EISTEDDFOD

Braaid Hall, Saturday 19th March, 7.30pm

[www.facebook.com/events/1582260898807034](http://www.facebook.com/events/1582260898807034)

*Competitions include:*

Hymn Raising, Recitation by memory, Mens' Solo, Instrumental Solo, Stump Speech, Ladies' Solo, Original Poem, Quiz, Folk Song, Duet, Humorous Story, Quartet and Choir.



A small side of Perree Bane danced "Moirrey ny Cainle" at Malew church on Sunday 6th February. Perree Bane Beg [pictured] danced "Dance for Three" and "Cutting The Turf" and paraded with lit candles to the font.



## MOYLLEY AS SOYLLEY!

Congratulations to Manx musician **Adam Rhodes** (King Chiaullee, Barrule, Mec Lir, Imar) who married Scottish harpist, **Rachel Hair** last weekend in Glasgow.

Rachel teaches harp for Culture Vannin and is an avid promotor of all things Manx.

*Photo from her blog:*

"Happy Harping Harpenings from Rachel Hair"

<http://eepurl.com/hVZunD>



**For updates & news on Manx music & dance, follow**

[www.facebook.com/groups/manxmusicanddance](http://www.facebook.com/groups/manxmusicanddance)

# Memories of Mann

by Thomas Green (2022) from York

Only twenty years ago! It seems much more. My friend Kath put a question to me. She was another dancer in my club, whom I knew slightly and would soon know much better. Would I be willing to be the musician for a dance team when they attended a Celtic festival? The team was called Rinkaghyn, a group of young people with special needs of various sorts, jointly managed by Kath and Jonathan. I hesitated, and Kath egged me on with lures. It would be a Celtic festival, it would be music and dance, and the clincher: it would be on the Isle of Man – and “Oh yes! I’d love to!” was my reply, for it brought memories of when I was five and my father pointed out the three-legged badge and told me about Manx cats, and IoM had been exotic to me ever since. But – I was a piccolo player, and sprightly though it may be, the piccolo doesn’t have much oomph, so we roped in my squeezebox playing friend, Carole. She, too, I would soon know much better.

Jonathan produced a pile of tunes, Manx and Cornish and Breton. Hop tu Naa, Moghrey Mie As Maynrays, Moirrey ny Cainle, Kiark Catriney Marroo and more: names I couldn’t pronounce and that made my spell-checker belch, but my job was just to learn them, not to say them. And quickly, because in short order Jonathan had Carole and me round to see whether we had done our homework. (Apparently one year the musician hadn’t learnt the tunes, and it was all very embarrassing.) I did my patchy best, all the tunes recognisable, all needing polishing, but to my horror Carole hadn’t yet learnt them. Oh Carole, I thought, but she was confident that she’d have them ready in time. Soon we found ourselves actually on the island, after a long journey, and setting out to walk to Mooragh Park in our costumes for the first day’s dance. It turned out to be a longer walk than I expected, and my repertoire of tunes for walking, like ‘Piper through the Meadow Straying’, wasn’t really enough, but we arrived and got prepared and lined up to walk on to perform. I don’t know about the others but I was nervous. Never before had I performed with a special needs group; they were lovely people, but so many things could go wrong, like one of them having an epileptic seizure in the middle of the dance.

Nothing went wrong. They danced beautifully. Jonathan and Kath were ecstatic. Alas, Carole still didn’t really know the tunes. Oh Carole! I thought peevishly; but that was unfair – she was still recovering from major surgery, and anyway nobody had noticed, so it didn’t matter, and I kept my peevishness to myself and instead wrote a little tune to commemorate our first performance. Meanwhile Carole went down to the sea front for some serious practice, and she told me later that some teenagers had politely asked about her instrument, a button accordion, and then about the music she was playing; and they had been pleased to learn that it was traditional Manx music. She was impressed by that, and then she was still more impressed, for she could see that some seals had popped their heads out and were apparently listening too.

Once the first performance was over it got so much easier. Carole and I practised together and soon we not only had the tunes in our heads, but we’d learnt to play together as a duo, getting tighter every time; so Kath rewarded us with a day off and Carole produced an astonishing tour de force, a trip all over the island and up Snaefell for the two of us using every single kind of public transport available. How she managed to slot the timings together I have no idea. There are so many ways of getting around on the island! That was such a wonderful day that I quite forgave her and stopped being peevish.

And suddenly it was the last day, the big day, when Rinkaghyn were to perform on the main stage on Saturday night – and Kath and Jonathan patiently went through all the dances, checking everyone was happy, checking we musicians knew our tunes, checking everything. We arrived at the venue and in due course there we

were backstage in the near-darkness watching the act before us. It finished; we were announced; we were on. The dancers trooped through onto the stage and we followed them, everyone blinking in the stage lighting that blinded us and completely hid the audience, presumably somewhere out there in the dark but invisible to us. Some applause, so yes there must have been an audience. The dancers seemed to be perfectly happy in the blaze of light but I was certainly wondering. Jonathan introduced us — the first dance is ready to go – Carole looks at me, I look at her, we throw each other a grin, we lock our movements together and – we’re off. It was good. No problems! The next one the same, and the next one – and Jonathan announced that our final dance was to be the Torch Dance (I’ve forgotten the name) with torches.



What!! Lighted torches, in a marquee?? I can tell you, at least one person was hastily recalling key clauses of his Personal Accident policy ... *“.... except when the Insured shall be in a situation where no sane person, not even a piccolo-player, would go, such as a marquee full of lighted candles in a strong wind ...”* It’s so good to have an aid to concentration while playing.

But it was fine, not a single glitch, Jonathan had judged right: and it brought the house down, clapping and whistling and stamping as the dancers walked off so regally, and I could hardly breathe because I was bursting with pride for them. Well done Rinkaghyn!

And well done Carole, who played so magnificently in that last gig, her squeezebox filling the places where a piccolo couldn’t go. She too had judged it right, just like Jonathan and Kath, and she’d done the dancers proud.

SEE **Transcription of the Month** for the tune “Mooragh Park” by Thomas Green >>

# kiauli noa



Well done to The Ballaghs, the folk-rock outfit fronted by Mike Wade, who won the Quid's Inn's Battle of the Bands last weekend. The Ballaghs have written lots of original songs for you to dance around to, and their album 'Another Broken String' is available on Spotify.

Photo by Isle Photo: [www.facebook.com/islephoto.co.uk/](http://www.facebook.com/islephoto.co.uk/)



**FYN BAR** in Ramsey would love to put on a programme of live Manx music during the TT festival. If you are a Manx band and are interested in playing, get in touch with Tiffany at Fynoderee Distillery with more details about your band, availability during TT and fee.

[tiffany@fynoderee.com](mailto:tiffany@fynoderee.com)

## AYRES & BRACES

Dilys Sowrey and friends have recorded the songs from the folk-musical *Ayres and Braces*, and the CD will be available to buy soon from Bridge Bookshop and Shakti Man in Ramsey,



# All About Connection: Making Waves in the Manx Music Scene and Beyond

by Owen Atkinson

What does it mean to “make it” as a band? How do you know if you’ve got there? (Or if you’re “on your way”?) Crucially, do you even want to?

February is a good time to start thinking about realistic goals; we all have a tendency to want to do everything in the New Year, but it can’t all be sustainable. Now is a good time for to reflect on the reality of what it is that you want, and whether you think you can achieve it.

Over the past couple of months, I’ve spoken to a range of people involved in the island’s music scene in some way in order to get a better picture of personal success in the industry as defined by those who seek it. The thanks go to musicians Ben Donaldson (Voodoo Bandits), Lily Wolter (Penelope Isles), Simon Pott (Isvisible Isinvisible) and the boys from Man in the Woods, plus promoter Kevin Madigan, for helping me figure this all out.



It’s worth noting that this isn’t a how-to guide: success comes in different ways for different people, and there is no magic key. We are simply sharing the experiences of people passionate about music on the Isle of Man and trying to find their way. There are just as many ways to do this as there are musicians! A lot of it can come down to luck, but there are ways to make your own luck too.

What has your approach been to music on the Isle of Man? Have you tried to follow the paths of other success stories in the music industry, and where has that led you? Message, comment, share and we can all continue to learn from each other’s experiences....

**READ THE FULL ARTICLE:** <https://tinyurl.com/2p9epb9a>

pictured: Penelope Isles

# Harrish y Cheayn - Across the Sea



Chris J Marr & Karen P Hennessy are a singing duo from British Columbia, Canada who visited the Isle of Man in 2017. Whilst here, they performed a successful show at Sir Normans Bar in Douglas featuring their tribute song to the comedy star; "Norman Wisdom Is The One". They also performed at Tynwald Day festival in 2019 where they sang their self-penned song "The Isle of Man" and were aired on Manx Radio on Judith Ley's programme. The duo have since written another song about the special place which they've fallen in love with, called "Song of the Island".

Listen to their songs: <https://soundcloud.com/user-68372769>

Music video for "Song of The Island" with images of the Island: <https://youtu.be/euNXLmCysw4>

And "Isle of Man" <https://youtu.be/RN-zSX63uyo>

American harpist, Tiffany Schaefer has recorded a lovely rendition of Manx melody, "The Sheep Under the Snow". This video features Kristen & Brian Bigley:

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



## Youtube corner

### IRON MAN

An original song written and performed by Sue Harrison from the Isle of Man (2020).

Recorded at Ballagroove Studios.

Harmonica played by Ken Crellin.

<https://youtu.be/BZjbFyX236I>

# RESEARCH NEWS

“GET UP A NATIONAL BAND CONCERT IN THE SKATING RINK” (1885)

SIR—Your humble servant begs to draw your attention to a way by which the poor of Douglas may be assisted this winter, if some gentlemen would unite, and get up a National Band Concert in the Skating Rink; and get the Douglas, Peel, and Ramsey Bands to come and play their choice music. It would be a novel way of helping the poor. If these gentlemen would be so good as to write a line to the several Bandmasters and state the reason, I am sure no fellow-being would be so mean as to refuse to help a fellow creature in time of need. The Railway Company can accommodate late trains for the occasion with reduced fares. It would be an attraction as well as a help. Hoping that the suggestion will be carried out,—I remain yours &c.,

A HELPMATE

Pseud [signed as “A Helpmate”]. “[Letter to the Editor].” *Mona’s Herald* 16 December 1885: 1e.

Besides taking us back to the time when Douglas had a skating rink, the letter here is a reminder that the brass band was an innovation in the musical life of the nineteenth century. The railway in the Island allowed for greater mobility, such that a contest as proposed here could feasibly now take place. It also take us back to the time when National was used to describe an All-Island event and not the word “Local” as is heard all too frequently these days.

STEPHEN MILLER RBV

## Dr Tootell and the Legend of Man

by Maurice Powell

Dr George Tootell was a pioneering cinema organist of genius – the first British organist to play a genuine cinema organ – with a Europe-wide reputation; church organist, composer, conductor, teacher, secretary of the Manx Music Festival and an important figure whose contribution ‘. . . to the furthering of the musical life of the Island’ was acknowledged to be ‘outstanding’. Furthermore, he was the composer of one of the largest scale choral works ever written by a resident composer and premiered on the Island by a Manx choir and orchestra directed by the composer himself.\*



READ THE FULL ARTICLE:

[www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/Dr%20George%20Tootell%20FRCO.pdf](http://www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/Dr%20George%20Tootell%20FRCO.pdf)

Listen to Dr Peter Litman perform 'Reverie' on *St Peter* by Dr George Tootell

<https://youtu.be/9ha08-TVteU>



## ORAL HISTORY FROM DAVID FISHER

Culture Vannin have released conversations with David Fisher about his childhood in St. John's, and his central involvement in the revival of Manx language, music, dance and more in the 1970s and 80s.

Born in 1953 David Fisher's conversation ranges over his childhood home on Pretoria Terrace in St. John's, manx family and community life in the 1950s, the old railway line, the old St. John's School, Sunday School and its outings, Tynwald Day (and his own protest there in 1974), the archaeologist Sheila Cregeen, hop-tu-naa and other calendar customs, the beginnings of the Manx language and cultural revival, and how much the village has changed since then.

Enjoy more photos of Manx music and dance in the past 50 years, and listen to extracts of David talking on subjects including personalities like Doug Fargher and Mona

Douglas, dance groups like Bock Yuan Fannee and Perree Bane, the earliest organised trips to the Lorient festival, organising the Chruinnaght in the 1990s, the personalities and importance of the people around "Pa Jerry and the Folk Pistols" and more.

<https://culturevannin.im/watchlisten/oralhistory/david-fisher-510786/>



Culture Vannin has also created several films with David, including this one about making a traditional wren pole: <https://vimeo.com/195772256>

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

### 1. Rinkaghyn Vannin ~ 1.16 Car ny Rankee

Once again, this dance has no historical evidence associated with it to confirm its provenance. Its first concrete datable reference is on the early 1970s recording Daunseyne Theayagh Vannin and the only information given is that it is a six hand reel for two men and four women that can be danced either progressively or as a discrete set. There are other references to it, one a handwritten set of notes in Stowell's papers titled 'Car ny Rankee (as taught by PLS [Philip Leighton Stowell])' and signed PLS at the end, and a fragment of paper in Douglas's papers with four tunes written on it, evidently as a set list (MNHL 09545 Box 29):

Car Ny Rankee: 6 hand reel  
Hie Mee Stiagh: 6 hand ring dance  
Jemmy as Nancy: 4 hand reel  
Moghrey Mie as Maynrys!

There is little in this to give an exact date, although the appearance of Hie Mee Stiagh and Moghrey Mie as Maynrys would imply that this sheet was written relatively late in the formation of a Manx dance canon as can be seen in later notes on these two dances.

The final reference comes in 1983 in Rinkaghyn Vannin and states that the dance was collected by Douglas but additional information is not given.

#### READ FULL THESIS:

[www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/MANX%20DANCE%20THESIS%20Cinzia%20Curtis%202006.pdf](http://www.manxmusic.com/media/History%20photos/MANX%20DANCE%20THESIS%20Cinzia%20Curtis%202006.pdf)

**LISTEN:** Dance accompaniment to Car ny Rankee played by the Manx Folk Dance Society

<https://soundcloud.com/culture-vannin/car-ny-rankee-manx-folk-dance-music>

### “WITH SEVERAL INCAPABLE CORNETS” THE DOUGLAS SALVATION ARMY BAND (1893)

The Salvation Army in Douglas is represented by a body of very estimable men and women, who labour under the delusion that the outward and visible sign of repentance is the making of as much noise as possible on a “musical” instrument. With several incapable cornets, half a dozen tambourines, and a drummer who bangs away as if the salvation of the world depended upon his muscular power, we get a truly horrible din, enough to scare believers and unregenerate alike from the scene of operations. What the residents in Victoria street have done to deserve this ear-splitting every Sunday evening we know not. We do not desire to interfere with the Army's methods, but there is a limit to endurance. The drummer in especial should be taught that there is temperance in all things, even drum-beating.

Anon. “The Salvation Army ....” *Manx Sun* 23 December 1893: 4b.

While the Band of the Salvation Army in Douglas was not to the liking of the *Manx Sun* in 1893, a reminder as ever of the role that music played in the work of such bodies as the Salvation Army, and how they added another layer to the musical soundscape of the Island, whether appreciated or not as the case may be....

THE NEW "ELLAN VANNIN" ?

=====

When the selling splurge is over,  
And the fly-by-nights have flown,  
I'll stand beside a street light,  
And wish I was alone.

Then rises, like a nightmare,  
Garish, gross and nothing free,  
An ugly mass of concrete,  
Where my green hills used to be.

And I hear our people murmur,  
As they touch their forelocks low,  
And they'll curse the men of Tynwald,  
Who betrayed them long ago.  
As the whole Isle's gone for booty,  
All our youth has crossed the sea,  
From our own dear Ellan Vannin,  
Where the green hills used to be.

Stop our Isle being up for tender,  
Tell the rogues and crooks to go,  
From the heart of Ellan Vannin,  
Let us fish and reap and sow.  
So we make this plea to Tynwald,  
That they'll keep our people free,  
And leave for Ellan Vannin,  
All her green lands by the sea.

# TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MONTH

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

'Rinkaghyn', a dance group of disabled performers who included lots of Manx dances in their repertoire, used to be regulars at Yn Chruinnaght in the 1990s and early 2000s (see article: Memories of Mann). Thomas Green played in the piccolo in the band and wrote this jig for the dance team when they visited Ramsey in the Isle of Man.

## Mooragh Park

a tune for Rinkaghyn

Thomas Green



# CALENDAR

## MARCH

13th Battle of the Bands, Centenary Centre, Peel, 6.30pm

19th Braaid Eisteddfod

<https://tinyurl.com/mpvc9s7p>

20th - 24th DESC Manx Folk Awards

25th Centenary Centre AGM, with music by Sue Harrison

## APRIL

1st - 3rd Shennaghys Jiu Celtic Festival

23rd - 30th The Guild, Villa Marina

## MAY

14th A Manx Celebration - concert with Culture Vannin in collaboration with Cathedral IOM

## JUNE

21st Laa Jannoo Kiaull / Make Music Day -worldwide!

## JULY

5th Tynwald Day

25th – 31st Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering

[www.celticgathering.im](http://www.celticgathering.im)

## AUGUST

31st - 4th SEP Once, Gaiety Theatre



David Fisher in his 1st year as Director of Yn Chruinnaght

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 Trad Session at O'Donnell's, Douglas  
**THURS** 8pm Singing session at The Mitre, Ramsey  
**FRI** 8pm Trad session at The Mitre, Ramsey  
**FRI** 8pm Trad session at the Colby Glen

Last **FRI** of month 9pm, Kiaull as Gaelg, Albert, Port St Mary  
First **SUN** of month 12.30pm Trad session in Laxey Sailing Club  
Third **SUN** of month 12.30pm Trad session in Ginger Hall, Sulby

Stay up to date: [www.facebook.com/TradMusicWeekendIsleofMan](http://www.facebook.com/TradMusicWeekendIsleofMan)

~ 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 (answerphone)  
**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