

KIAULL MANNINAGH JIU MANX MUSIC TODAY

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2009



SHENNAGHYS JIU '09 LINE-UP

Manx Celtic Youth Festival, Shennaghys Jiu, has an exciting line-up for Easter 2009 which includes visiting musicians "Smack the Donkey" from Belmullet, Oris (4 lads ranging in age from 16-42) and a duo made up of up-and-coming young piper from Dublin, Éanna Ó Cróinín and guitarist Catherine Ní Shúileabháin. Éanna has been playing the pipes since a young age, under the tuition of pipers such as Nollaig Mac Cáthraigh, Mick O' Brian, Robbie Hannan and Brian Mac Namara in the piper's club in Dublin. He is joined by Catherine who comes from a long line of traditional singers, dancers and musicians from the Connemara tradition. She has been singing and playing guitar for many years covering many different genres of music.



Both artists come from the same area in Ráth Chairn County Meath, one of the strongest, most vibrant Gaeltacht areas in Ireland. Shennaghys Jiu makes an effort to engage younger people with Manx and Celtic culture and involves school groups like Scoill Ree Gorree, Dhoon, Ballaugh and Bunscoil Ghaelgagh alongside more established Manx groups.

Fri 3 April

7pm Family Concert at Scoill Ree Gorree, Ramsey (Share na Veg, Smack the Donkey, Bee er dty Hwoaie, Ó Cróinín & Ní Shúileabháin, Dhoon School) £3

8.30pm Family Ceilidh at the Masonic Hall, Ramsey (The Reeling Stones, Bee er dty Hwoaie) £2

Saturday 4 April

12 noon Music in the Pub, Mitre Hotel, Ramsey

3pm Bree youth music session, Ramsey Town Hall

8pm Ceilidh (Ny Fennee, Greg Joughin, & visiting groups) Masonic Hall, Ramsey, £3

Sunday 5 April

2.30pm Shennaghys Jiu Unplugged (Ballaugh School, Bunscoil Ghaelgagh & visiting groups) Ballaugh Church FREE

8pm Shenn as Noa Gig (Katie Lawrence, The Reeling Stones, Mollags, King Chiallee & visiting groups) Bar Logo FREE

Monday 6 April

12 noon Music in the Pub. Trafalgar Hotel, Ramsey

8pm Final Night and Session, Ramsey Rugby Club FREE



~ PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME ~

MORE DETAILS ONLINE

www.shennaghys.org

~ SESSIONS ~

THURS 9pm Singing session at The Brit, Ramsey

FRI 8pm Tynwald Inn, St. Johns

FRI 9pm Irish at The Mitre, Ramsey

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

SAT 10pm Manx at The White House, Peel

SUN 4pm Irish at the Traf, Douglas

MOLLAGS WORLD TOUR

The Mollags have been around now for over 20 years, and have undergone several changes during that time. After a period of relative inactivity the band recently returned with a sell out 'Mollag Ghennal' over the Christmas....and a couple of changes to the line-up.

Greg Joughin writes: Our style has shifted slightly to give a lighter, more rhythmical, 'Latin feel'. Our present repertoire comprises some old stuff, some new, and one or two re-jigged numbers. We are embarking on a world tour during March. A tour with a difference for us, because it's one that includes afternoon tea as opposed to the usual evening pub venues. We'll be travelling to the four corners of the earth; Ramsey, Douglas, Castletown and St. Johns. The tour reaches a fantastical climax at the Cwlwm Celtaidd festival in South Wales. We're looking forward to it. Some of the dates we are playing are free, but we may pass the hat around for some good cause or other.

Our bass man Dave McLean recently had a bit of a set-to with one of them four wheeled cars, and will be out of the picture for some of the gigs. We wish him a speedy recovery.



Rev Hammer's Island debut supported by The Ballaghs

Singer-songwriter Rev Hammer makes his Island debut courtesy of Jonno Promotions. With support from The Ballaghs, the gig takes place at the South Douglas Old Friends Club on Sunday March 29, 2009. Doors open 7.30pm, show starts at 8pm. Seated tickets £12 available from Peter Norris Music (Douglas), Ramsey Music Supplies and Shakti Man (Ramsey) & Celtic Gold (Peel) and will be online soon at: www.jonnopromotions.com

When last on the Island he wrote a track called 'Ellan Vannin' which featured on his *Bishop of Buffalo* album released in 1994.

A 25 year career has seen Rev release six studio albums and ten albums of live collaborations. As a solo performer Rev's shows are a heady brew of magnificent songwriting, surreal storytelling and outrageous humour.

Rev works closely with The Levellers and through them he's had two songs on Number 1 albums – "Searchlights" on The Help Album and "Maid of The River" on their best selling album *Zeitgeist*.

The "Freeborn John" album and project charting the life of John Lilburne, the first English Radical, firmly established Rev's folk credentials. The tour of that album - featuring Maddy Prior, Rory McLeod, New Model Army, Eddi Reader and The Levellers - was described as "stomping English folk rock with a blast of punk/country at its heart!" (The Daily Mirror)

"Rev Hammer is an artist of rare charm and wit and a songwriter of beautiful songs. A modern day minstrel with a hilarious tale to tell." (Rock'n'Reel Magazine) www.revhammer.com

CWLWM CELTAIDD 26-29 MARCH - DON'T MISS OUT!

Your chance to see the Red Hot Chilli Pipers, Mabon, Rachel Hair, Calan, One String Loose alongside Manxies The Mollag Band, The Reeling Stones and Perree Bane...

Accommodation is offered at Trecco Bay Holiday Park. Organiser Derek Smith says that: "for the first time in 8yrs, the festival's allocation of Mobile Homes is almost fully booked, so if you're thinking of going to Cwlwm Celtaidd, this is the last chance to book inexpensive accommodation". <http://www.cwlwmceltaidd.com>

On the Fiddle with Bree!

During the spring half term [Saturday 21st February], the Manx music youth group Bree expanded its year's events to include a specific fiddle technique workshop. Local performer and teacher Katie Lawrence led ten violinists between ages 10-16 in an intensive training day at the Philip Christian Centre in Peel. Students came from various schools in the Island and one young player, who luckily had his fiddle with him, was on holiday from Surrey and joined the group for the day!

Using her own compositions [Leyla and Clive's Wedding Tune, Mhelliah Noa, Happy Days, Matt and Lou's Wedding Tune and Memories] along with older Manx folk tunes [Ta Dick Veg er Yannoo Mie, Ta Cashen Ersooyl and Thurot], Katie taught traditional bowing techniques and ornamentation suitable for jigs, reels and slow airs. The group also performed in three-part harmony and explored ideas for putting sets of tunes together and arranging musical material. At home-time, all of the pieces were performed in a fantastic mini-concert for family and friends. Katie also performed a solo set of tunes to showcase her new fiddle purchased with financial assistance from the Manx Heritage Foundation.



It is hoped that the fiddle group will become a regular part of the Bree network and that this project will encourage other young violinists to become involved in Manx traditional music-making.

Try one of Katie's tunes for yourself in the Transcription of the Month: Mhelliah Noa is a new tune designed to fit the Manx trad harvest dance.

Bree will next meet for an informal session at Green's vegetarian restaurant on Saturday 14th March from 3 – 4.30pm. All welcome. The young Manx music & dance group will also hold a session during the Celtic youth festival Shennaghys Jiu in April and will be performing in a Youth Service variety show at the Gaiety Theatre in May. Look out for details nearer the time!

Chloe Woolley

www.manxheritage.org/bree
www.myspace.com/breemanx



KMJ is hoping to develop a section where readers get the chance to share their research or thoughts formally or informally. Contributions should be no more than 400 words and should be sent to the usual address. It may be that you have some comments about a particular song or tune - all musings are welcome, however short.

In this, the first of a few articles on the Manx fiddle tradition, PhD student Laura Payne shares some of her research...

Fiddle Music on the Isle of Man by Laura Payne

What did music sound like on the Isle of Man a hundred years ago? Five hundred? It is impossible to know for sure, as we have very few historical references and fewer archive recordings. However, we can use historical sources to pick up some clues on how Manx music may have sounded. Visitors and new residents to the Island have continually brought new musical trends and instruments with them. However, the one instrument that is consistent throughout history, and which still seems to be growing in popularity, is the fiddle.

String instruments from the Norse period

The first glimpse we have of musicians on the Isle of Man are found on stone carvings from the Norse period, which date from around 1000 A.D. (see Kermode, 1907: 195 or go and see the carvings for yourself in Kirk Michael and Jurby churches). These carvings show two musicians. One is playing a long trumpet-like instrument that resembles a medieval Norwegian lur (<http://abel.hive.no/trumpet/lur/wood/>). The other musician appears to be playing a quadrangular knee harp that Bazin has suggested may be a crwth (Bazin in Davey and Finlayson (eds.), 2002: 152) which is a type of bowed lyre (also known as a 'crowder', 'cruit' or 'gue' in Shetland). The crwth was a precursor to the Italian violin, which was introduced to Britain during the seventeenth century. There is certainly a resemblance between the Manx carving and paintings and carvings of crwth players in Norway and Britain (<http://www.sedayne.co.uk/crwth.html>). It is unlikely that this instrument could have been a harp, as the majority of Norse carvings of harps are triangular. We also have no historical references to harps having been played on the Island. Could the Manx Gaelic word for harp, 'cruitch', (as in Glencrutchery – Harper's Glen) be a version of the Irish 'cruit'?

In Irish literature the instrument is described as having three metal strings: one being used to play the melody, and the other two strings being used as drone strings (Buckley in Sadie (ed.), 1980, Vol. 18: 826). This description is similar to one by W. H. Gill: 'the older Manx fiddles were fitted with only three strings, the two lower ones supplying a continuous "pedal" harmony like the drone of a bagpipe, while the highest string was reserved for the melody.' (1896: 13).

The Manx carving of the musician also shows another figure holding a drink, sitting at the musician's feet. The drinking vessel may suggest that the musician was playing for entertainment. The position of the figure at the musician's feet may also suggest that musicians were important people within the society.

Even though the fiddle, as we would recognise it today, was probably not introduced into the Isle of Man until the seventeenth century, there is still some evidence that stringed instruments were played on the Island before this point.

Laura Payne



Laura Payne performing at the Yn Chruinnaght Competitions 2008 in St Paul's Church, Ramsey

The Committee of Festival Interceltique de Lorient has confirmed Skeel and Ny Fennee as the two Manx groups for the 2009 festival: <http://www.festival-interceltique.com/>

THE CARDIFF MANX CONNECTION

Most readers of KMJ will remember Cinzia Curtis - she was the founding editor and Manx Music Resources Coordinator for MHF, after all. Well, it seems a long time ago that she left the sunny Isle of Man to pursue a PhD in Ethnomusicology at the Cardiff University. She is now settling into her second year where her PhD is coming along well and she is getting down to finding canon theories that may help explain why Manx musicians and dancers play and dance what they do, and why they don't play and dance other things. It may seem relatively obvious (Manx musicians play Manx music surely?) but there is a complex story of collectors, pan-European movements, specialists and institutions. We're hoping that Cinzia will have a chance to come back to the Isle of Man to let us all know what she has found. In any case, she'll be back now and again to do fieldwork, so you'll see her at one festival, session or other. In fact you may see her in some unexpected places and costumes...either 'participant observation' or what Cinzia might describe as 'having a bit of a go with some other groups to see what they do - and to have a dance and a play!'

As well as her studies Cinzia has started teaching undergraduates at the University, second year ethnomusicology mainly, but also first years and MA students. Not only is this an opportunity to practise teaching, but also to get more about the Isle of Man known within the context of Celtic, European and World musics.

You know how the old saying goes - you can take the girl out of the Isle of Man... no matter how much Cinzia pretends she is in Cardiff to study, the lure of playing is just too much and any chance to play tunes, including Manx ones is one not to be missed. Earlier this year, Cinzia managed to get a bit of an inter-Celtic session going in a well-known Cardiff pub. It was the culmination of a few conversations and requests and centres round a previous Irish session, with some other Welsh and general Celtic musicians from South

Wales. Every other Tuesday a variety of tunes can be heard including lots of Manx ones. Grainne Joughin and Jamie Smith have been spotted playing away, and it has been an opportunity for some of the local musicians to show off their knowledge of Manx tunes - Flitter Dance and Eunyssagh Vona are firm favourites at the moment.

As if that is not enough, Cinzia has also started a predominantly Manx duo with partner Sion Trefor on guitar (and maybe keys, but we'll have to see). Named 'Whistle in the Dark' (They Might Be Giants fans may spot a link) they have a debut performance at Cwlwm Celtaidd lined up and hope to record an album of popular and not so popular Manx material through local record label Zillorecords. It is hoped that an album of music from the Manx traditional repertoire as well as the 19th century manuscripts and new material will help illustrate some of the points in Cinzia's thesis, not to mention provide a good excuse to keep playing!

www.myspace.com/cinziacurtissiontrefor



Perree Bane dance group is now well-established in new practice premises in the Village Hall, Ballasalla, where the wooden floors are great for our hard-shoe style, The White Boys making a wonderful racket. The youth team are working up some great routines under the tutelage of Sue and Carol for The Guild. There are fewer ladies than usual practising at the moment for various reasons, so if anyone would like to join us would be very welcome on a Sunday evening from 7pm onwards.

The calendar is filling up nicely too: Cwlwm Celtaidd in March, with gigs at schools and church fayres scheduled for early summer, and even some dancing for the tourists, who this year will be woefully neglected with the demise of the Port Erin Royal Hotel and its Manx nights.

Perree Bane vio!!

John Dowling



THE IOM ARTS COUNCIL IS DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN MANX DANCE ENTRIES TO THE YOUNG DANCER OF MANN COMPETITION. ENTRIES COME FROM NY FENNEE AND PERREE BANE, AMONGST OTHERS. THE FIRST ROUND TAKES PLACE ON 15TH MARCH AT THE STUDIO THEATRE AT BALLAKERMEEN, DOUGLAS, DAYTIME AND THE FINAL IS ON 25TH APRIL AT 7PM, AGAIN AT THE STUDIO THEATRE.

WWW.IOMARTS.COM



John Kaneen's Folk Show features an interview with Stephen Miller talking about A W Moore, Charles Roeder, Sophia Morrison amongst others. Listen again until 3 March:

<http://www.manxradio.com/audiovault/Folk.wma>

Do you have a talent and passion for entertaining people?! If you are a bagpiper, harpist, solo singer or ceilidh band (Manx, Scottish, Irish, etc.), then Douglas-based entertainment agency, Switched On Entertainment and Events Ltd., may be interested in hiring out your services. Request an application form on 661210 and send in with your demo and photos.

Furthermore, Switched On can cater for your own events, by providing marquee, bar or PA hire, entertainers, catering, costumes, casino and much more!
www.switchedonevents.com



Cooish festival featured in Irish Music Magazine

www.irishmusicmagazine.com

Aidan O'Hara offers a wonderful review of the Cooish Manx and Inter-Gaelic Festival, referring to the sessions, concerts and visit to the Bunscoil Ghaelgagh which introduced him to what Manx traditional culture has to offer:

'This is a warm intimate festival where friendship and love of all things Gaelic, music and the language, are shared and celebrated. I recommend it highly and guarantee that it will reward the visitor with its freshness and unexpected delights.'

Transcription of the month see www.manxheritagemusic.org for more printable pieces of Manx music

Mhelliah Noa

© Katie Lawrence,
Isle of Man



This tune was written by Katie Lawrence to go with the Mhelliah dance and was used as one of the studies at the Bree Fiddle School (hence the bowing marks!). If you've got any tunes or songs which you'd like to share with KMJ readers, please send them in to Breesha on: mhfmusic@mhf.org.im or at the address at the end of the newsletter - all formats are welcome.

CALENDAR

March

7th various Manx bands at Bright Ideas Expo at the Villa Marina, 10am-4pm.

8th Mollags at the George Hotel, Castletown, 3pm.

14th Bree music session, Green's Douglas, 3-4.30pm.

15th Mollags at the Mooragh Park Cafe, Ramsey, 3pm.

15th Young Dancer of Mann, Studio Theatre at Ballakermeen, Douglas, daytime: www.iomarts.com

21st Mollags at Green's Restaurant, Douglas, 3pm.

26th-29th Perree Bane, the Mollag Band & The Reeling Stones at Cwlwm Celtaidd, Porthcawl (see www.cwlwmceltaidd.com for details).

April

3rd-6th Shennaghys Jiu Youth Music Festival, various venues in the North and East: www.shennaghys.org

25th Final of the Young Dancer of Mann competition, Studio Theatre at Ballakermeen, Douglas, 7pm

Please send in any dates for the months ahead so that we can publicise events here and on various Manx music & dance websites.



manx heritage foundation undyns eiraght vannin

For info on Manx music & dance contact:

Breesha Maddrell: mhfmusic@mhf.org.im

Chloë Woolley: manxmusicspecialist@mhf.org.im

See: www.manxheritage.org or

www.manxheritagemusic.org

Call: 01624 695159

or write to: MHF Music Team

Centre for Manx Studies,
6 Kingswood Grove, Douglas,
Isle of Man, IM1 3LX

posters for you to print out and share follow...

The Mollags



WORLD TOUR

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH, 8.00PM
SNYP CEILI, ST.JOHNS FOOTBALL CLUB

SUNDAY, MARCH 8TH, 3.00PM
THE GEORGE HOTEL, CASTLETOWN

SUNDAY, MARCH 15TH, 3.00PM
MOORAGH PARK CAFE, RAMSEY

SATURDAY, MARCH 21TH 3.00PM
GREENS RESTAURANT, DOUGLAS

SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH CWLWM CETAIDD,
S.WALES

Jonno Promotions

proudly presents

Rev Hammer

Rev Hammer is a singer-songwriter in the Irish folk tradition. He works very closely with The Levellers and through them two of his songs featured on No. 1 albums.

“Stomping English folk rock with a blast of punk/country at its heart!” - Daily Mirror.

“Rev Hammer is an artist of rare charm & wit and a songwriter of beautiful songs. A modern day minstrel with a hilarious tale to tell” - Rock’n’Reel Magazine

Support act - The Ballaghs

a local band who play serious “folk’n’roll”!



South Douglas Old Friends Club

(Corner of Finch Road and Prospect Hill, Douglas)

Sunday 29th March 2009

Doors open 7.30 p.m. for 8.00 p.m. start

**Seated Tickets: £12 available from Peter Norris Music, Douglas
Ramsey Music Supplies - Celtic Gold, Peel and Shakti Man, Ramsey**

www.JonnoPromotions.com