

## Manx delegation wow thousands at Lorient festival

A delegation of about 50 musicians, dancers and artists represented the Isle of Man at the annual Lorient Interceltic Festival.



Grainney Sheard, who was co-delegate for the Manx group alongside her sister Ealee, told Island Life: 'The Isle of Man more than pull their weight in this festival despite being the smallest nation both geographically and in population.

'The ratio of talented artists on this island is disproportionately high and it shows at an international festival like this.

The event brings together 11 Celtic nations in the town of Lorient in Brittany, western France for 10 days and is attended each year by about 750,000 visitors.

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

- *Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering review & photos*
- *"Isle of Mona" - the original melody by JW Gelling*
- *New films - Cliogaree Twoaie, Ny Fennee & Resa Brown*



'The Isle of Man is given equal standing in the eyes of the festival alongside larger delegations such as Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The festival got under way with a grand parade of Celtic nations through the streets of Lorient. Flag bearer for the Isle of Man was Phill Collins.

Manx dance group Skeddan Jiarg performed at the Moustoir stadium for five nights, one night of which was filmed for French TV.

Grainney said their performances 'brought tears of pride to my eyes'.

Jo Davies represented the island at the Euro Celtic Art Exhibition at Hotel Gabriel.

It saw Breton women in their national dress coming to pose with Jo's Stories From Stones figures.

Grainney said the exhibition 'attracted a disproportionate amount of attention in a good way'.

Jo's design was also used as the front cover, art programme and poster for the exhibition.

Her specially commissioned images also provided the backdrop for the members of Creeaght, Isla Callister, Anna Garvin, Kirsty Lawrence, Katie Lawrence, Ruth Keggin and Mera Royle.

Creeaght celebrates significant Manx women and their contribution to Manx culture and community.

Ruby Biscoe-Taylor and her band members in Biskee Beg entered the Loïc Raison Trophée and Grainney said they had the audience in tears at Ruby's original composition about her grandmother.

Isle of Man/ Glasgow band Mec Lir, featuring Tomas Callister, Adam Rhodes, David Kilgallon and Greg Barry performed to a packed audience at Le Kleub.

And Boghnid, which means nonsense or silliness, made their debut on the shared Celtic stage.

As well as with Creeaght, Ruth sang alongside harpist Mera and as part of the collaborative Celtic odyssey project to a 3,000-strong audience.

Ruth said: 'It was a thoroughly joyful experience to be able to take Manx language and song to thousands of people, and to be able to watch and celebrate the other fantastic musicians, dancers and artists representing the Isle of Man so wonderfully.'

The Manx pavilion was decorated with Visit Isle of Man banners as well as a special showcase of Loaghtan sheep and drop spindle demonstrations organised by Julie Matthews.

Manx language freebies with easy to learn phrases and folklore traditions handouts were enjoyed by visitors as well as Manx folklore colouring sheets by Little Moot Studio and Julia Ashby Smyth.

Grainney said the Manx pavilion was a 'great success' with very high attendance. 'The pavilion team have been incredibly positive and enthusiastic advocates for the Isle of Man, talking about what is on offer there for visitors should they wish to make a trip,' she said.

For the festival's first weekend, the Manx delegation was joined by Visit Isle of Man chief executive Deborah Heather. Grainney said Deborah 'enthusiastically joined in and attended many of the delegation's performances and came away with very positive feedback and a newfound appreciation for Manx traditional culture'.

Grainney thanked Culture Vannin, Visit Isle of Man and the Isle of Man Arts Council for their support.

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Original article by Jackie Darbyshire in the *Manx Independent* & more photos:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8bca3a>

Follow **Mannin/FIL** on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/manxlorient>

Watch **Skeddan Jiarg - Manx Dance Team** representing the Isle of Man in the televised Grande Parade at Mannin / the Isle of Man at the Festival Interceltique de Lorient: 1h 35m

<https://youtu.be/17fZOBjGSQI?si=ZdpvOXtfTi0xa4n4>



Photo credits: Grainney Sheard, Cori Philips, Cori Philips, Festival Interceltique de Lorient



kicull\_manningagh\_jiu\_09/23\_culture\_vannin

Official photos from Festival Interceltique de Lorient: <https://tinyurl.com/3nuz5hem>



## NORTH AMERICAN MANX ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Young people have been recognised for making an ‘outstanding contribution’ to Manx culture in 2022. In total, nine awards were handed out at the North American Manx Association (NAMA) awards in Douglas - including language, music and art.

Fraser McKenna, 13 and from Queen Elizabeth II High School, was recognised for music due to his award-winning talent for dance, piano and cello.

Fellow QEII student Elizabeth Radcliffe, 16, and 10-year-old Scarlett Radcliffe of Anagh Coar School, were recognised for their linguistic skills and Castle Rushen High School A-level student Aalin Foster, won the Art prize for her textile work inspired by the Manx countryside.

University College Isle of Man's Joel Kneen, 16, was awarded the culture prize and described as a “future lynchpin” of the Manx cultural landscape while Meri Wade and Matilda Watson picked up the Manx Culture Group Award after setting up a group that co-ordinates opportunities for young Manx speakers outside school.

The final Manx Community Award went to Luke and Cameron Strickett-Morling, aged 21 and 18, who have been hugely supportive ambassadors of Phab, an inclusive sheltered youth club run by DESCs Youth service.

Laurence Skelly MLC, President of Tynwald and Past President of NAMA, also presented awards to students Naiya Myrie and Joseph Kneale for making exceptional progress with the Manx language.

He said: ‘Recognising our heritage and culture gives a sense of unity and belonging so it is crucial to acknowledge these fantastic young people for their outstanding contribution.’

All winners were all presented with a specially minted silver medal by Kelly McCarthy – the President of the NAMA.

# Traditional music festival brings in large crowds

The annual Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering took place last week, with a variety of activities being held all across the island.

Starting on Saturday, July 22 and finishing on Sunday, July 30, every day saw large crowds attend various different events which looked to celebrate Manx and Celtic culture.

Yn Chruinnaght (which means ‘the gathering’) is an initiative that looks to strengthen the relationship between the Isle of Man and the other five Celtic countries - Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany.

The forerunner of Yn Chruinnaght was founded in 1924, and was known as Cruinnaght Vanninagh Ashoonagh (‘Manx national gathering’). It was the idea of William Cubbon, the first director of the Manx Museum, who was also the honorary treasurer of both Yn Çheshaght Ghailckagh (The Manx Gaelic Society) and the World Manx Association (WMA).

This year’s schedule of events began with a boat race at Fenella Beach in Peel, which saw the ‘SS Yn Chruinnaght’ be built in the morning before taking to the sea. Monday saw the first ‘food and folk’ session take place at Noa cafe in Market Hall, North Quay, where participants brought along their instruments to play an array of Scottish folk music.

These ‘food and folk’ sessions took place every day, with each day focusing on different types of music (Irish, Scottish, Manx, Welsh and Cornish).

There was certainly no shortage of events for people to get involved in, with a Manx song night and family ceilidh taking place at Peel Masonic Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday evening.

It was the tale of the two ceilidhs on Friday, with the mini musicians ceilidh for under-fours taking place at Peel Centenary Centre in the morning followed by the mega Manx ceilidh at the Villa Marina later in the evening.

Then came arguably the biggest event of the week: the ‘Saturday gathering’ at St Johns. This included ‘folklore tours’ from Culture Vannin, Gaelg as Golf ‘pitch and putts’, performances from musicians such as Celtic guitarist Mark Lawrence and Cornish band Morvran, plus dance displays from the likes of Perree Bane and Skeddan Jiarg.

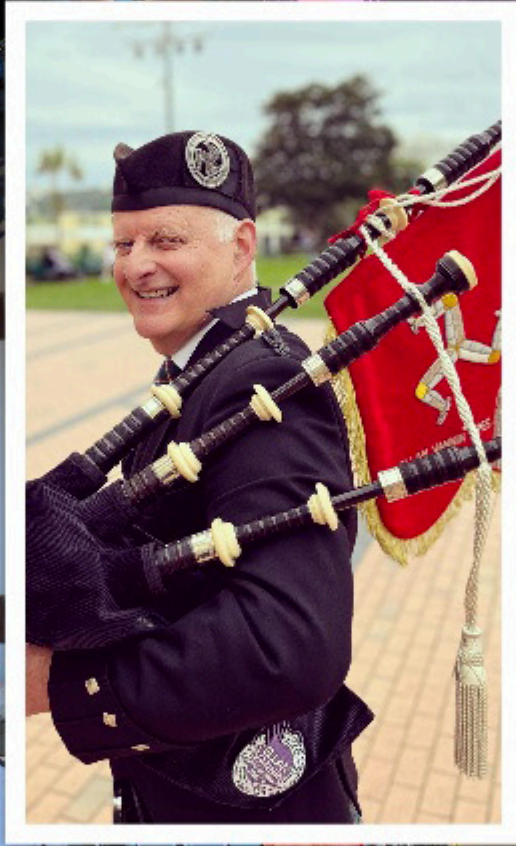
The week’s activities came to an end with a farewell music session at the Black Dog Oven in Peel on Sunday.

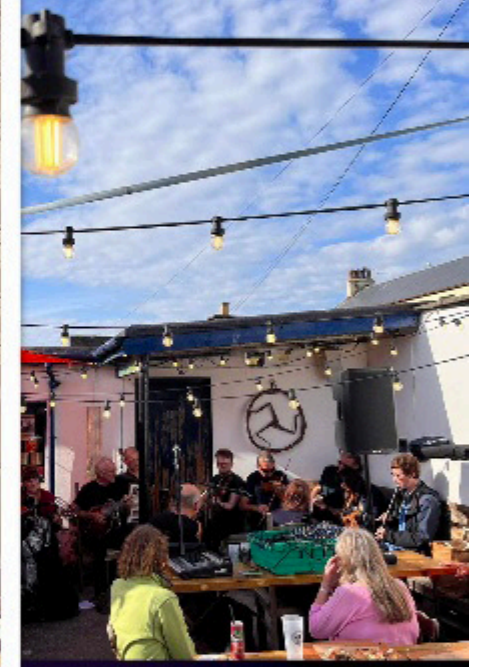
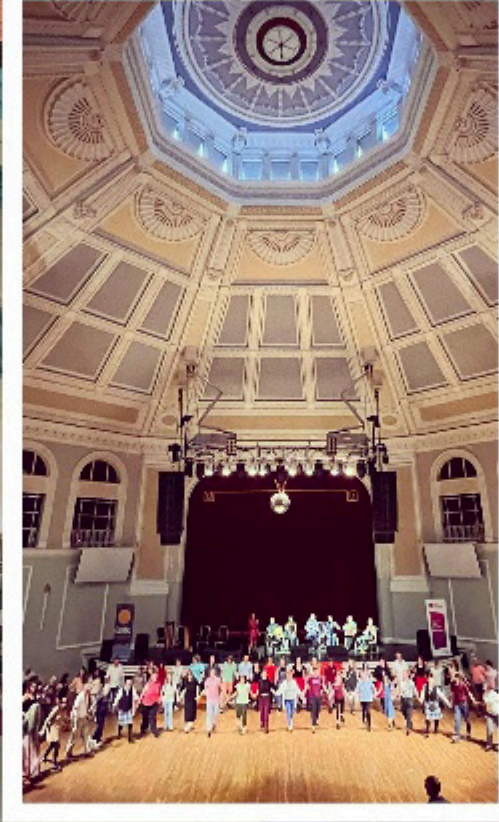
Original article by Adam Norton in the Manx Independent

[www.iomtoday.co.im/news/entertainment/traditional-music-festival-brings-in-large-crowds-630331](http://www.iomtoday.co.im/news/entertainment/traditional-music-festival-brings-in-large-crowds-630331)

The 2023 festival was supported by Culture Vannin, Isle of Man Arts Council, Culture Ireland, IFGL, Digital Group, Soundcheck Charity, Malcolm Scott Dickinson Charitable Trust, Visit Isle of Man, Peel Town Commissioners & others











Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering 2023 - photo credits: Valerie Caine, Jiri Podobsky, Magnus Honeyborne  
Enjoy a glimpse of the Mega Manx Ceili: <https://fb.watch/mEjQEdGEwd/>

# SONGS OF THE SEA

AN EVENING WITH MINE'S A SHANTY



SHANTIES OLD, NEW & MANX  
WITH A CHANCE TO SING ALONG!

Erin Arts Centre  
Friday 15th September 2023 - 7.30pm  
Tickets £7 / Under 18s £2

THE ERIN ARTS CENTRE IS A REGISTERED IOM CHARITY (CHARITY NUMBER 236A)  
ERIN ARTS CENTRE, VICTORIA SQUARE, PORT ERIN, IM9 6LD  
01624 835858 / HELLO@ERINARTSCENTRE.COM  
BUY TICKETS ONLINE: WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/ERINARTSCENTRE



# Peel Centenary Centre Atholl Room Concerts



## “Clash Vooar”

Paul Reynolds



Free entry  
(donations gratefully received)  
The Atholl Room and Bar  
Friday 1st September 8pm

@evergreenveen

CLOIDERYN THEATRE GROUP  
RAMSEY ISLE OF MAN

160TH ANNIVERSARY  
STAR OF INDIA  
RAMSEY - SAN DIEGO  
SONGS FROM THE MUSICAL

THE OLDEST SHIP IN THE WORLD  
THAT STILL SAILS  
WAS BUILT IN RAMSEY IN 1863

**CATCH US LIVE**

CONCERTS  
ISLE OF MAN

ST PAUL'S HALL RAMSEY SAT 7TH OCTOBER 2023 7.30PM £6

CALIFORNIA, USA

SAN DIEGO MARITIME MUSEUM 9TH - 11TH NOVEMBER 2023

POP-UP GIGS RAMSEY, ISLE OF MAN

RAMSEY COURTHOUSE SAT 2ND SEPT 11AM & 2PM  
ON THE QUEENS PIER SUNDAY 3RD SEPT 3PM  
AND MORE...

ON THE QUAYSIDE NEAR THE TRAFALGAR  
ON DATES TO BE ADVISED

...

# PEEL CHOIR FEST



Featuring 'The Harmony Chorus' from Bangalore, India  
Cathedral Isle of Man Choir  
Peel's Gobbag Groove

GRAND CONCERT compered by Judith Ley

PEEL CENTENARY CENTRE

THURSDAY 31st August at 7.30pm, tickets: £10.00

Or at <https://www.etickets.im/cc/>



Tynwald Fair 5th July 2023 - photo credits: Valerie Caine & Jiri Podobsky



## Northerners' Manx Concert videos

A joint concert by the Manx Gaelic choir Cliogaree Twoaie and the harpists and dancers of Ny Fennee was given at Lezayre Church & Arts Centre on the 31st March 2023.

Filmed and released by Culture Vannin, videos of the concert include choral settings of "Shiaull Ersooyl" and "Birlinn Ghorree Chrovan"; "Scollag Aeg" arranged for organ by David Kilgallon; "Auldyn River" and "Arrane y Chlean" by the Ny Fennee harp ensemble and Manx dances "Dooraght" and "Clare's Jig."

WATCH HERE: <https://culturevannin.im/watchlisten/videos/northerners-manx-concert-793016/>

## Manx Folk Awards 2023 films

There are over 200 videos from the 2023 awards now available to enjoy online!

- <https://culturevannin.im/watchlisten/videos/manx-folk-awards-2023-secondary-766182/>
- <https://culturevannin.im/watchlisten/videos/manx-folk-awards-2023-ks1-767075/>
- <https://culturevannin.im/watchlisten/videos/manx-folk-awards-2023-ks2-song--dance-773833/>
- <https://culturevannin.im/watchlisten/videos/manx-folk-awards-2023-ks2-instrumental-783558/>

All of these films are available on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/10310813>

Culture Vannin has also released a smaller sample of the performances on YouTube

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLB95FuN2S6jO3ZRgiObDVRTF14I2EgI9j>




THE OLDEST SHIP IN THE WORLD  
THAT STILL SAILS  
WAS BUILT IN RAMSEY IN 1863



CLOIDERYN THEATRE GROUP  
RAMSEY ISLE OF MAN

180TH ANNIVERSARY  
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## DAVE MCLEAN MBE

Great news that Manx musician Dave Mclean was recognised in the King's first birthday honours and awarded an MBE.

Dave is one of the founders of the wonderful Centenary Centre in Peel (which celebrates 20 years this October), and he is very well known in the Isle of Man for playing bass with Clash Vooar and The Mollag Band.

Dave also founded the *Our Island Our World* festival.

Read an article by  
David Cretney:

<https://tinyurl.com/3b76vx2e>

## CELTIC GUITAR COURSE

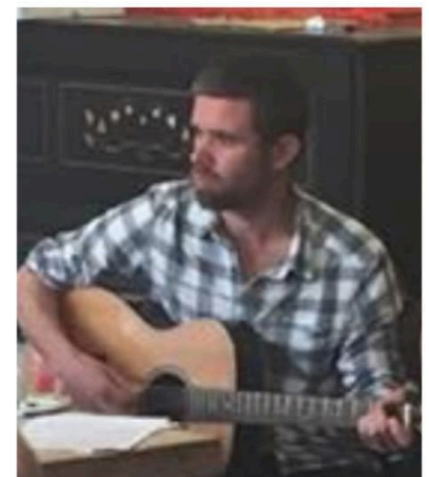
Learn how to accompany session tunes on guitar, in a variety of different keys and tunings. (Standard, Drop D, DADGAD)

The course will be run by Paul Rogers, guitar player of Jamie Smith's Mabon, Strengyn and Skeal.

Each session will be an hour and a half long. The course will run for six weeks and cost £75 per person. Max. 6 people. (3 people per night due to space restrictions)

Course Start Dates:  
Monday 4/9/23, Tuesday 5/9/23

paulrogers.musicus@gmail.com



# kiauli noa

## There's a new band in town - Boghnid!!

Boghnid, the Manx gaelic word for 'foolishness', are a group of traditional Manx musicians and dancers based on the Isle of Man. The group is built of accomplished musicians from many eclectic backgrounds and the group perform traditional and new Manx music.

The band love to perform and would love to hear from you about your next gig, concert or ceilidh!

What a load of boghnid! <https://boghnid.co.uk/>  
[www.facebook.com/boghnid](http://www.facebook.com/boghnid)



COMING SOON....

Jees - the new album from Scran!

• • • • •  
• **Youtube corner** •

• **Ny Fennee @ IOM 3 Legs World Record 2013** •

• 10 years ago the Guinness World Record for the largest three-legged race was re-claimed by the Isle of Man (6th May 2013). The day included many attractions including a display from Ny Fennee Manx dance group. Firstly dancing "Yn Mheillea" followed by "Creg Willy Syl" performed by the musicians: •

• <https://tinyurl.com/ev67aszj> •

• • • • •

## Lioar yn Doofyr

The Bunscoill Ghaelgagh students gave a marvellous performance in the Centenary Centre of L'ioar yn Doofyr' - the world's only Manx Gaelic version of The Jungle Book!

A complete recording of all the songs from 'Lioar y Doofyr' is now online:

<https://tinyurl.com/ydrcuwj6>

With all the songs composed by Aalin Clague & Annie Kissack, two of the leading composers in the Island today, and with this year's cohort of children including many of the bright young names from the shows in the Gaiety, etc., this album of 17 songs will be of interest to everyone, regardless of whether you can speak Manx or not!



These recordings were made by professional producer, Ballagrove Recording Studios, ahead of the packed-out performances in the Peel Centenary Centre (13/14 July) .

They include many of the favourite tunes being hummed around St John's at the moment;

- Shere Khan, the ominously cool song about the terrifying tiger's rule in the jungle.
- Tar Shiu Dys Y Chreg, the beautiful call of the animals to hear the democratic guidance of Akala.
- Hoght Lurgaghyn, when the Victorian Ladies come across the young spiders with their eight legs!

- Arrane Kaa, the python's hypnotising song.
- O Valoo, the deeply sad lament sung over the body of Baloo the bear, when he appeared to be dead after the great fight with Shere Khan.
- S'mie lhiam cappan dy hey, the eternal crowd-pleaser which always makes an appearance in the Bunscoill plays, 'I like a cup of tea', that great celebration of tea!

Jeant dy mie, the Bunscoill Ghaelgagh, the teachers, the students and all else involved in this amazing play & the recordings.

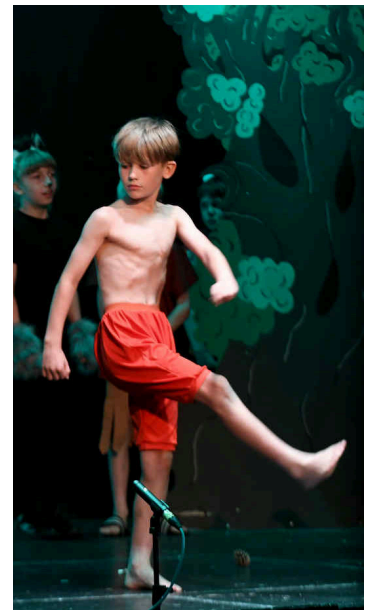
**LISTEN HERE:**

<https://tinyurl.com/ydrcuwj6>

**MORE PHOTOS:**

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

Supported by Culture Vannin



## DOORAGHT - new harp video

Young Manx harpist Resa Brown gave a solo recital in St John's Chapel as a part of Celtic Gathering Isle of Man - Yn Chruinnaght recently. Filmed by Culture Vannin, her beautiful performance of "Dooraght" has just been released online:

<https://youtu.be/luy4OA2Ws9I>

Dooraght is a tune composed by Katie Lawrence and which is, as well as being a popular tune in its own right, it is also popular as a dance, choreographed by Sue Ling Jaques. A performance of the dance by Ny Fennee back in 2014 is available here:

[https://youtu.be/lsk3\\_hhT6VA](https://youtu.be/lsk3_hhT6VA)



## BE off to the weddin', you young people all, For all are expected, the great and the small...

Two Isle of Man weddings had a strong Manx music and dance element this summer, with Beth and Leo sharing their outdoor ceili with the public as part of *Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering*, and Maeve and Lee (over from the USA) inviting guests up to perform the traditional wedding dance, "Peter O'Tavy".



*Moylley as Soylley!*  
*Congratulations to the happy couples!*

Lyrics to "The Manx Wedding"  
by WH Gill from  
*Manx National Songs*:  
<https://tinyurl.com/yr2xhze2>



## Yn Mheillea

Harvest is traditionally a time for celebration in the Isle of Man, and with Culture Vannin's resource page, you can download the dance instructions, audio and sheet music:



<https://culturevannin.im/manxfolklore/yn-mheillea-491585/>



# Harrish y Cheayn - Across the Sea



**Elizabeth Davidson-Blythe & Daniel Quayle** performed at Viru Folk in Estonia last month - it's the second biggest folk festival in Estonia with about 12,000 attendees!

One of their performances was featured on the Viru Folk YouTube channel, as well as on Estonian national news!

Viru Folk YouTube:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YbdsJquVMO](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YbdsJquVMO)

ERR.ee (basically the Estonian BBC):

<https://kultuur.err.ee/1609060160/algas-16-viru-folk>

Early this month the duo are flying to Spain to perform at O Son do Pazo festival in Galicia on 2nd September. And on the 10th September they will be playing back in the IOM at 3pm and 3:45pm as part of the 130th Manx Electric Railway celebration in Laxey.

Then it's off to Lowender festival in Redruth, Cornwall from 25 - 29th October to represent the Island!

[www.lowender.co.uk/festival/performers/](http://www.lowender.co.uk/festival/performers/)  
[www.lowender.co.uk/festival/programme-2023](http://www.lowender.co.uk/festival/programme-2023)

Follow Elizabeth and Daniel here:

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

# International performances for Ruth and Rachel



Fresh from the Festival Interceltique de Lorient, Ruth Keggin and Rachel Hair are about to head over to Normandy to perform in Les Traversées Tatihou, where they will perform on the tidal island of Tatihou, sharing the bill with renowned Scottish band MÀNran. This lovely festival takes place at the start of September in venues across Saint-Vaast-La-Hougue and Tatihou, and sees audiences walking across to the Island at low tide (or taking the 'bus-bateau'), to catch performances, wading back again before they get stranded. Something us islanders can appreciate!

Then, next month, Ruth and Rachel will be jet-setting across to Nova

Scotia, to play in the international festival, Celtic Colours, in Cape Breton. As well as performing on 7th and 8th October, they are delighted that they will be performing on Friday 6th October in the opening concert of the festival, alongside stellar acts including Blazin' Fiddles and Le Vent du Nord. The concert, entitled 'The Universal Language', celebrates indigenous languages and the universality of music, and indeed the whole festival has a theme of languages this year, in recognition of the United Nations' declaration of 2022-2032 as a decade to celebrate indigenous languages.

The duo can't wait; Celtic Colours is a festival that they've always wanted to play, and they're both excited to share Manx music and language with new audiences, find out more about Gaelic in Cape Breton and indigenous languages like Mi'kmaw, and generally let it be known that the Isle of Man is yindyssagh!

*Aigh vie, Ruth & Rachel!*

<https://traversees-tatihou.manche.fr/>  
<https://celtic-colours.com/artists/ruth-keggin-rachel-hair/>

## MANX DANCE IN BRAZIL

Gisele Campos taught Manx dancing when she was back home in Brazil last month. Students on the dance programme at the university UFRGS (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Su) had a go at "Flutter Dance"!



[www.facebook.com/100002031140043/videos/846388106876194/](https://www.facebook.com/100002031140043/videos/846388106876194/)



Festival Interceltique de Lorient in Brittany is the biggest Celtic festival in the world, and for over 40 years, the Isle of Man has been involved in showcasing Manx music, dance and culture to the rest of Europe. The 53rd edition of the Interceltic Festival of Lorient will take place from August 12-18 2024 with the theme: 'Celtic Youth'.

The festival's Isle of Man delegates, Grainney Sheard and Ealee Sheard, are now inviting musicians and dancers to express an interest if they'd like to be considered for next year. The festival favours acts who perform traditional music and/or dance from the Isle of Man, or artists who perform in the Manx Gaelic language.

FIL is a wonderful experience and opportunity for performers. Travel, dorm accommodation and catering are provided by the festival, and performers are normally expected to stay for the whole festival.

If you or your group are interested in representing the Island at next year's festival, contact the Delegates (mannin@festival-interceltique.bzh) along with your promo pack (biog, photos, recordings, website, etc.) which will be passed onto the festival committee for consideration.



The deadline for proposals is the 8th October 2023. You should expect to hear back from the delegates in early December.

Grainney & Ealee look forward to hearing your proposals!

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

[pictured: Owen Williams representing the Isle of Man at the launch of next year's FIL]

**The first ever European Folk Day will take place on Saturday, 23rd September 2023.**

**EUROPEAN  
FOLK DAY**

From grassroots communities to national organisations, and from individual musicians to companies involved in traditional arts at any level, anyone can get involved.

[www.europeanfolkday.eu/events](http://www.europeanfolkday.eu/events)

Bree will be holding a youth session that day to celebrate! More info:

[www.europeanfolkday.eu/event/bree-manx-music-youth-session/](http://www.europeanfolkday.eu/event/bree-manx-music-youth-session/)



Young singers of the Harmony Chorus from Bangalore in India enjoyed a visit to the Isle of Man this week, and during their stay they learnt some Manx songs, phrases, folklore and dances from the Culture Vannin team along with the help of members of Skeddán Jiarg and the Bree Manx music youth group.



**Perree Bane** represented the Island at the Furness Tradition Festival in in Ulverston in July << <https://furnesstradition.org.uk/>

And there were lots of Manx tunes at CORNWALL FOLK FESTIVAL last month: <https://tinyurl.com/bdd83fb9>

**MEC LIR** have been busy performing internationally with gigs at Festival de Ortigueira in Galicia, [https://fb.watch/mMqeN\\_aGjO/](https://fb.watch/mMqeN_aGjO/) Festival Interceltique de Lorient & Tønder Festival in Denmark.

# RESEARCH NEWS

“I HAVE NOT FOUND ANY DANCE OVER HERE TRADITIONALLY  
CONNECTED WITH ANY STONE MONUMENT”

MONA DOUGLAS WRITES TO MAUD KARPELES  
(1935)

(1)

COPY/DS.

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER. | School of Geography, | MANCHESTER.13.

13.11.35.

Dear Madam,

May I trouble you with an archeological query? The name of Dance (Dance of the Giants, Fairies Dance, and so on) is sometimes used by rural folk in connection with ancient stone monuments, though we do not know whether those names are really old.

I have been investigating a great stone monument in the Isle of Man, and have every reason to think that certain standing stones set around part of a paved forecourt symbolise men and women. Two very large ones flank and entry into a chambered area beyond the forecourt, and I designate them as K.Q respectively (King and Queen). Six others stand 3-a-side.

	K	Q	
(M)			(F)
F			(M)
M			F

This is a hypothetical interpretation with M and F indicating the two sexes. Unfortunately it is only a hypothesis as three of the stones (in circles) were destroyed many years ago.

I wonder whether there is any traditional dance in any way resembling this arrangement of persons. Someone without special knowledge told me he thought there was one in which three pairs danced a sort of obeisance to “A Presence”. Probably there is nothing in all this, but I hope you will forgive me for troubling you with a query on the change of some clue to my problems.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) H.J.Fleure

(2)

Thie-ny-Garee, | Laxey, | Isle of Man.

27th November, 1935

Dear Miss Karpeles,

Thank you for your letter of the 18th and the copy of Professor Fleure’s very interesting letter to you.

I don’t know that I can be of much help, as I have not found any dance over here traditionally connected with any stone monument. There is, however, a fragmentary tradition of a dance formerly performed by fishermen in Dalby and also in Castletown (if this latter tradition is the same, as I think) which does seem to correspond somewhat to the formation that he gives, though it was done by nine men and not by both sexes. I have just been working at the amplification and re-writing of an article on the Manx dances which I have been promising Mr Kennedy for the last five years, and a description of this dance, so far as I have been able to obtain one, is included therein, so I won’t quote it in full now as of course you will be able to read the whole thing when I send it along, which will be within a few days as soon as I can finish typing it; but I am abstracting this description and sending it to Professor Fleure in case he may find it of interest. I ought to add that I have not got anything like a complete and workable description of this dance, only an outline, of course it may have nothing whatever to do with the stones or with Professor Fleure’s theory, to which, of course, I have no clue beyond his letter.

Yours sincerely,

(1) Copy letter of H.J. Fleure to Maud Karpeles, 13 November 1935, MNHL, MS 09545, Mona Douglas Papers, Box 15, [Folder] International Folk Music Council; (2) Copy letter of Mona Douglas to Maud Karpeles, 27 November, 1935, MNHL, MS 09545, Mona Douglas Papers, Box 15, [Folder] International Folk Music Council.

H.J. Fleure was a Professor in the Geography Department at the University of Manchester. His letter here from 1935, was forwarded with a covering note by Maud Karpeles to Mona Douglas, who, as can be seen here, answered her that same month. Fleure does not make clear which “great stone monument” in his words he was referring to, and Douglas makes no attempt to identify it herself. Regardless, she knew of no such dance. The promised article she mentions working on was eventually published as “Manx Folk Dances: their Notation and Revival,” *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, iii.2 (1937), 110–16. The dances alluded to by Douglas are the Salmon Leap and the Mollag Dance.

Stephen Miller, RBV

“AN ITALIAN INVESTIGATING THE FOLKLORE OF THIS SMALL NORTHERN ISLE”

NIKOLAI GIOVANNELLI WRITES TO MAUD KARPELES (1954)

Greeba Mill, | St. Johns, | Isle of Man.

21st April, 1954.

Dear Miss Karpeles,

I was, naturally, very much disappointed by your letter of the 15th inst. I had thought that my paper would fit into the section for the discussion of folk music in education, but I suppose you know best what your members will appreciate. Actually, there should be some general interest in America, as although the Isle of Man is a very small place, there are large colonies of Manx people all over the American continent, far exceeding the present population of the island itself, while there are also many Italians in Brazil who would be intereste[d] in an Italian investigating the folklore of this small Northern isle.

I am very loath to tell the Manx Folk Dance Society that the film will not be shown, so am quite willing for you to offer it (in the final version, which I send herewith) to the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Perhaps they would also be interested to have my paper read at one of their meetings? Unless, of course, you think it might fit in at Oslo next year, and would prefer to save it for then.

I hope that by now you have heard the record we sent over for your Midsummer programme, and that it, at least, will prove suitable. For one of your later radio programmes, if you would like it, I have the promise of a recording of the last of the traditional Manx Carval singers, an old man who has since died. The tape is the property of the Manx Society, but they will give me permission to have a record made from it, with due acknowledgment.

Yours sincerely,

Copy letter of [Nikolai Giovannelli] to Maud Karpeles, 21 April 1954, MNHL, MS 09545, Box 15, [Folder] English Folk Dance Society.

“I was, naturally, very much disappointed by your letter of the 15th inst.” So opens this letter to Maud Karpeles of the International Folk Music Council. Whilst unsigned, it is taken that the correspondent is not Mona Douglas but instead Nikolai Giovannelli. The reference to Brazil is due to the upcoming conference of the Council at São Paulo in the following year of 1955.

Stephen Miller, RBV



Harvard University's online archive has scanned copies of some very old Manx books, including Mona Miscellany and the rare sequel to Manx National Songs; Manx National Music, arranged and edited by WH Gill:

MANX BALLADS AND MUSIC (1896)

<https://archive.org/details/ManxBalladsAndMusic>

MONA MISCELLANY (1873)

<https://archive.org/details/monamiscellanya00socigoog>

MANX NATIONAL SONGS (1896)

<https://archive.org/details/manxnationalsong00gillgoog/page/n1/mode/2up>

MANX NATIONAL MUSIC (1898)

<https://archive.org/details/manxnationalmus00gillgoog/page/n26/mode/2up>

Find out about the collector, composer and arranger **William Henry Gill** (1839 - 1923) who died 100 years ago this year:

[www.manxmusic.com/bio\\_page\\_130254.html](http://www.manxmusic.com/bio_page_130254.html)

# Vaughan Williams and the 1912 Manx Music Festival

by Maurice Powell

The 20th annual Manx Music Festival, heralded as ‘the Coming of Age Festival’ in a local newspaper in July 1911,\* took place on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 20th - 22nd March 1912, in the Palace Ballroom, Douglas. From the published programme we learn that the adjudicators were Edward Iles, FRCO, Professor of Singing at the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall School of Music, who would judge most the solo classes, and Dr Vaughan Williams (Chelsea) who would principally judge the choral classes. The official festival accompanist was Herbert A. Dowson of Douglas.

\* *Isle of Man Examiner* of 18th July 1911.

Vaughan William’s music was very little known on the Island at that period, certainly in comparison with the music of Elgar who adjudicated at the festival in 1914,\* although the exquisite mixed female chorus (SSA) *Sound Sleep*\*\* had been performed by a Manx Choir at the Morecambe Festival in 1906, and by the ‘young ladies’ of Milntown School at the Ramsey Palace in 1910. Nevertheless, he had written the evocative orchestral works *In the Fen Country* and the Norfolk Rhapsody, the lovely *Linden Lea*, the huge *Sea Symphony*, the song-cycle *On Wenlock Edge*, and the masterpiece, the *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*. However, none of these challenging works would have been suitable for inclusion in a Sunday concert programme during a summer holiday season, whereas Elgar had written several shorter, lighter pieces that became enormously popular and fitted into these programmes with ease.

\* See Maurice Powell, *Dr Elgar visits Manxland*, manxmusic.com.

\*\* Composed in 1903 for the East Lincolnshire Music Festival to words by Christina Rossetti.

Earlier in March a letter was received by the Mrs Laughton, the festival’s indefatigable Hon. Secretary, from Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace, thanking the ‘residents of the Isle of Man’ for a copy of the festival programme, and a second letter from Queen Alexandra, the Queen Mother, from Marlborough House, assuring the festival that ‘Her Majesty’s interest in the Musical Competitions has in no way abated’.

The Festival Concert took place on the Thursday evening when guest soloists, the English mezzo soprano Elsie Swinton, ‘who sang very tastefully in several songs’, and Johan C. Hoch, ‘cello, who played two solos ‘acceptably’, appeared in front of an audience of four thousand. The climax of the evening was a performance of Coleridge-Taylor’s *Hiawatha’s Wedding Feast* featuring the two winning choirs from the 60 Voice Choral Society class, the Douglas Orpheus and Douglas Festival Choirs, who joined forces for the occasion together with Harry Wood’s Palace Orchestra - essentially his famous students’ orchestra assisted by local experienced players - conducted by Vaughan Williams. We learn next to nothing about the performance of Coleridge-Taylor’s choral masterpiece other than Vaughan Williams ‘brought out some very fine effects’, that the performance was ‘most enjoyable and inspiring’ and that the lovely tenor aria *Onaway! Awake, beloved!* was ‘rendered’ by the winner of the special tenor competition, Mr H. Gray.

Because the presentation of prizes was an integral part of the programme, the evening was overlong, and the guest soloists were somewhat ignored by an increasingly restless audience some of whom were forced to leave before the end to catch even the special late train at 11 o’clock.

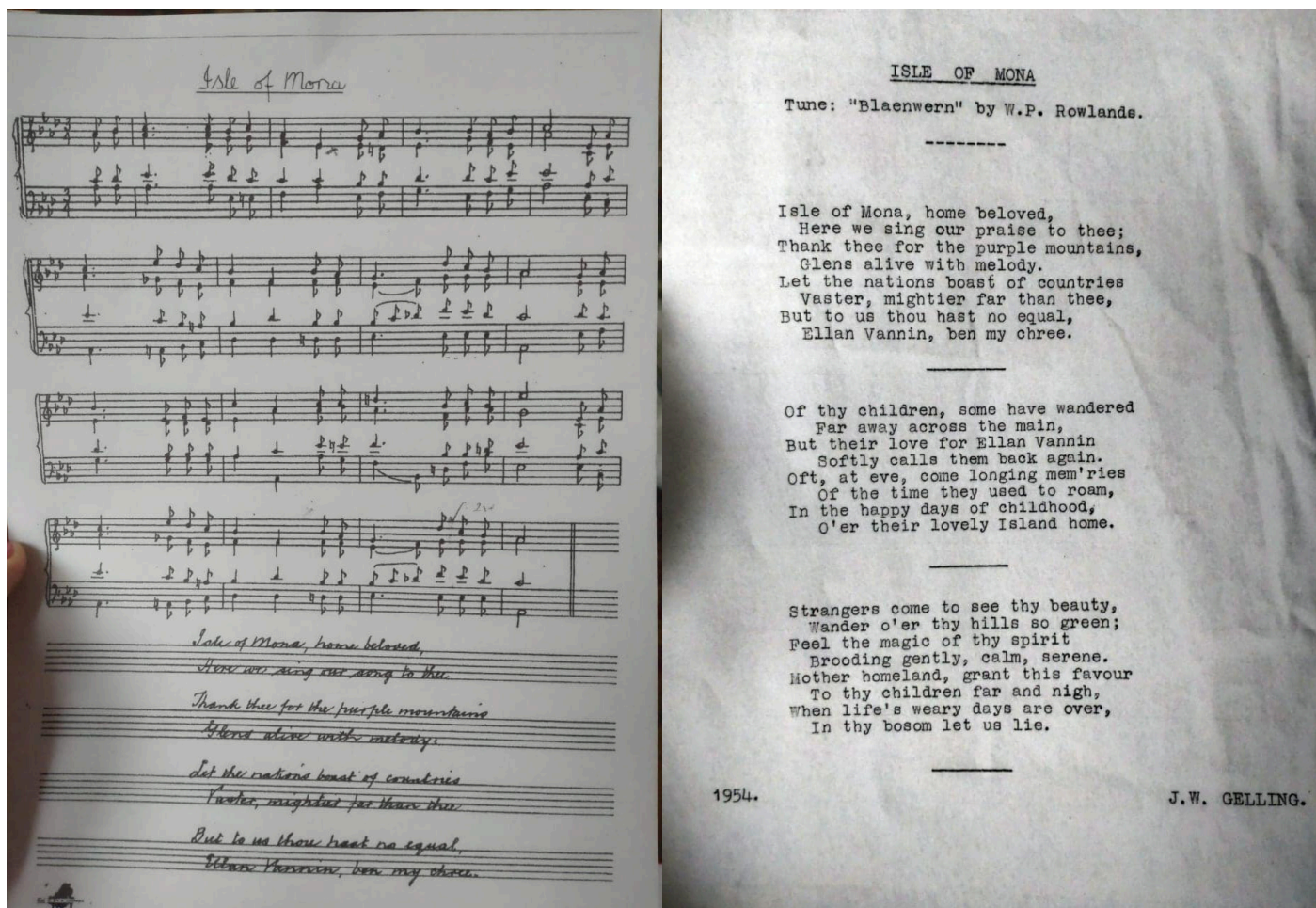
In the aftermath of the festival one un-named commentator\* lamented that choral singing in Douglas was at ‘a low ebb’, that many of the Island’s choirs were ‘scratch’ choirs formed just for the festival, invariably with little time to adequately prepare for the competition and were never heard of again. A suggestion of Vaughan Williams’ that church and chapel choirs should be encouraged to learn more substantial works was dismissed as this might detrimentally effect smaller choirs and would result in divided loyalties.

\* *Mona’s Herald*, 27.03.1912.

As an adjudicator, Vaughan Williams' comments were detailed, scrupulously fair and unfailingly encouraging.\* In addressing competitors told them that in any performance he looked for three things: that a performance should give pleasure; that it should be musical, and should display a natural musical expression. When a solo piano piece was marred by stage-fright he nevertheless praised those passages he considered to be 'very musical'. He paid tribute to the choir directors and said how much he was impressed by the earnestness with which the competition was imbued. I doubt if the Manx Music Festival ever had a kindlier, more sympathetic adjudicator in its illustrious history.

\* He was a founder of the Leith Hill Music Festival together with his sister Margaret and Lady Farrar in 1905 and was the festival conductor from its inception until 1953.

Andreas, July 2023



## Isle of Mona – with original tune by JW Gelling

Laura Derbyshire recently shared the lyrics of "Isle of Mona" by her Great Grandfather John W. Gelling on the *Manx Nostalgia* facebook page, and a few people were intrigued to find out that there was also an original tune!

"Isle of Mona" is best known as being sung to the melody of Welsh hymn tune "Blaenwern" by William R. Rowlands, [<https://tinyurl.com/y72z4pt8>] but in the photo above and TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MONTH at the end of this KMJ, you can see the original tune by JW Gelling, ca. 1954.

Gelling also composed "The Mother's Carol" which appeared in the December 2011 KMJ, with words by the Manx poet Cushag : <https://tinyurl.com/345r6ytv>

Discover all of the *Transcriptions of the Month* songs & tunes here:  
[www.manxmusic.com/learn\\_page\\_467456.html](http://www.manxmusic.com/learn_page_467456.html)



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

## 2. The Leighton Stowell Book of Manx Dances

### - 2.6 Daunse Noo George

Collected as part of the White Boys Mummer's Play this is the only dance in Leighton Stowell Book of Manx Dances (1981) that was not composed or compiled by Stowell. This dance was performed at the end of the play if the actors could not perform the proper dance for six, and was performed by the character of St George, hence the name. Within Stowell's notes (MNHL 09683) the words to a purt y beayll in Manx and English appear, although these were not published.

Stowell came across the dance when searching for a dance that could be performed on a small stage. Lizzie Corrin remembered a dance sometimes performed at the end of the Mummer's play that only needed the space taken by two crossed swords. Stowell himself was instructed how to do it by Tommy the Councillor, Ada Corrin and James Mylchreest, although found it difficult to learn from their instruction. Stowell remodelled the tune from one found in a book of tunes owned by his father and Douglas composed a purt-y-beayll for it, which was regularly sung by Stowell's daughter, Aileen Hall. It was traditionally a man's dance, although some women did perform it. The dance was performed in 1960 at the crowning of the festival queen in Castletown Square.

#### READ THE 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)



Watch performances of 'Daunse Noo George' from this year's Manx Folk Awards:

<https://vimeo.com/814723000> and <https://vimeo.com/814725414>

Stephen Miller RBV has published hundreds of Manx music & dance research articles in KMJ over the years and you can find links to most of them here:

<https://chiollaghbooks.com/kmj/>

# TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MONTH

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

"Isle of Mona" is a well loved song in the Isle of Man. With lyrics by JW Gelling, it is commonly sung to the Welsh hymn tune, Blaenwern. However, Gelling's family recently shared the original manuscript which shows the song once had another melody as transcribed below.

For the published version: <https://tinyurl.com/sz539uk8>

## Isle of Mona

Melody & lyrics by  
John W Gelling (1954)

Soprano  
Alto



1. Isle of Mo - na, home be - lov - ed, Here we sing our song to thee; Thank thee  
2. Of thy child - ren, some have wand - ered, Far a - way a - cross the main, But their  
3. Strang - ers come to see thy beaut - y, Wand - er o'er thy hills so green; Feel the

Tenor  
Bass



5



for the pur - ple moun - tains Glens a - live with mel - o - dy. Let the  
love of El - lan Van - nin Soft - ly calls them back a - gain. Oft, at  
ma - gic of thy spir - it Brood - ing gent - ly, calm, ser - ene. Moth - er



9



nat - ions boast of count - ries Vas - ter, might - ier far than thee. But to  
eve, come long - ing mem - ries Of the time they used to roam, In the  
home - land, grant this fav - our To thy child - ren far and nigh, When life's



13



us thou hast no equ - al, El - lan Van - nin, ben my chree.  
hap - py days of child - hood, O'er their love - ly Is - land home.  
wear - y days are ov - er, In thy bo - som let us lie.



# CALENDAR

## SEPTEMBER

- 1 Clash Vooar, Centenary Centre, 8pm
- 1 Kiaull as Gaelg, Albert Hotel, Port St Mary, 9pm
- 1 Ruth Keggin & Rachel Hair  
<https://traversees-tatihou.manche.fr/>
- 2 Star of India Pop-up gig, Ramsey Courthouse, 11am & 2pm
- 2 Elizabeth Davidson-Blythe & Daniel Quayle, O son do Pazo festival, Galicia
- 3 Star of India Pop-up gig, Queen's Pier, Ramsey, 3pm
- 3 Informal Scran youth session & album launch, Black Dog Oven, 1pm
- 3 Trad music session, Laxey Sailing Club, 1-4pm
- 3 Clash Vooar at the Black Dog Oven, 6pm
- 10 Elizabeth Davidson-Blythe & Daniel Quayle & Perree Bane dance group, MER celebration, Laxey, 3pm
- 9 Biskee Brisht, Mad Jack's, Douglas, 8pm
- 15 Songs of the Sea with Mine's a Shanty, Erin Arts Centre, 7.30pm, £7/£2
- 23 Bree European Folk Music session, Culture Vannin, 2 – 3.30pm

## OCTOBER

- 7 Star of India concert, St Paul's Hall, Ramsey, 7.30pm, £6
- 6-14 Celtic Colours, Cape Breton Island
- 8 Soundcheck Charity concert, Douglas, details TBC
- 9-11 Star of India concert, San Diego Maritime Museum, California, USA
- 12 Safeguarding training session for festivals and community music and dance group leaders, St Johns Methodist Hall, contact [manxmusic@culturevannin.im](mailto:manxmusic@culturevannin.im)
- 22 - 23 Bree Workshop 'Weekend', St Johns Methodist Hall, 10am -4pm – application form in the next KMJ
- 25 – 29 Lowender Peran, Redruth, Cornwall
- 31 Hop tu naa!! Island-wide!!

## NOVEMBER

- 1 – 5 Cooish Manx Language Festival  
[www.learnmanx.com/](http://www.learnmanx.com/)

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 R.A.O.B. (Buffs) Club, Ramsey
- FRI** 8.30pm 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 1-4 Trad session in Laxey Sailing Club
- Third **SUN** of month 1-4 Trad session in The Mitre, Kirk Michael

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