



Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society

Autumn 2017 newsletter

Welcome to our Autumn 2017 newsletter. Enclosed is the programme card for the forthcoming Winter 2017-18 lecture series; this newsletter is intended to give a summary of the activities of the Society during the last six months, and other selected topics of interest to members.

Excursions

We have enjoyed a run of splendid excursions this summer, with knowledgeable and enthusiastic guides, and great weather so far.

Our summer season started with sixty five of us guided on a walk round Purt Le Moirrey (followed by a delicious afternoon tea), then IOM Beekeepers gave us a fascinating insight into the complex life of bees. An afternoon walk to the hidden gem of Glen Dhoo was followed by an all-day walk to the almost equally unseen Corony valley.

Two excursions with 'horse power' then - a tour of the Douglas Bay Horse Tram stables and a guided trip in a double-decker tram; and a motor-coach mystery tour which took us through Onchan and Lonan to Keeill Abban and St. Lukes. Back on foot, we were given a tour of the Ayres National Nature Reserve, watched bats at Port Soderick, and explored promontory sites and forts on the South coast.



Iron Age Promontory Fort and Viking Longhouse at Cronk ny Merriu

Off-Island Excursion

Following on from our very successful trips to Dumfries & Galloway, and Anglesey, planning is now under way to visit the sites and monuments, natural history and smuggling history of Co. Down in Northern Ireland, possibly in September 2018. Further information will be available shortly, or contact the Excursion Secretary, Pat Newton.

Planning and Building Conservation

The Society remains active in promoting conservation of our built heritage - in relation to specific buildings, in striving for an environment that supports sustainable building conservation, and in raising public awareness.

A great deal of in-depth casework by members of the Society contributed greatly to the decision, at appeal, to overturn the decision to de-Register Lorne House and all its curtilage. The repercussions of this case are significant. Your Society continues to push for an effective, transparent and robust Registration system.

The Alliance for Building Conservation (the group co-ordinated by the Society) has been working to raise awareness of the plight of, and the need to find ways of sustainably conserving, our built heritage, and promote best practice. Our "Buildings at Risk" features continue to appear fortnightly in the IOM Examiner - links to all the features/articles at: www.manxantiquarians.com/news_story_434127.html

Awards

We are delighted to report that the British Association for Local History has once again recognised the expertise of one of our members and local authors, in this case Paul Quayle from Narradale.

Paul's research and subsequent article on the effect of the enclosure on the commoners' hill lands was published in vol XIV of *Isle of Man Studies*. Each year BALH receives and scrutinises well over a hundred journals from organisations across the British Isles. Paul's article was shortlisted by the reviews editor and a panel of experts judged that Paul should be recognised for the quality of his article.



Marshall Cubbon Bursaries

Every year, the Society offers up to two bursaries of up to £250 each in memory of the late Marshall Cubbon. They are available to full-time students who are researching a Manx-related natural history or cultural history topic at a recognised institution of Higher Education. Applications for the 2018 bursaries will open on 1st November 2017, more details and the application form can be found on the Society's web site www.manxantiquarians.com

Tynwald Fair / Food and Drink Festival

Once again, we ran our interactive “How well do you know YOUR Island” challenge at the Tynwald Fair – great fun for us, and also for our visitors.

In an exciting new venture, we also enjoyed our first year at the Isle of Man Food and Drink Festival. The food and drink themed version of the challenge was taken up and enjoyed by over 400 visitors of all ages. The youngest person to recognize somewhere was aged three, and a gentleman in his nineties found the questions stimulated memories and he enjoyed reminiscing.

With a range of questions on Manx food and drink, fishing and agriculture, all the visitors to the stand found it testing. No-one could recognise or decode all the clues, and everyone left having learnt something new. Chatting with visitors to the stall, and helping them work out the locations of the clues, gave us the chance to talk about a wide range of topics, both current and historic, and about the Society itself, and a number went on to join IoMNHAS. It was a very rewarding day and our thanks to all those members who helped out.

We were also delighted to meet quite a number of off-Island visitors, and whilst they could not recognise that many Manx clues, quite a number stayed for a chat about the Island giving us the opportunity to explain some of our food & drink related photographs.

Thanks to the success and popularity of “How well do you know YOUR Island” at this year’s festival, the organisers have already invited us to return for the 10th anniversary Food & Drink Festival next year!



A quiet time on our stall at the Food and Drink Festival!

Research Projects

Round Mounds

Members may have been keeping up to date with this fascinating project through the regularly updated blog at <https://roundmounds.wordpress.com/blog/>. The excavations in the summer (which included IoMNHAS members) were of course only part of the story. Research continues, and Dr Michelle Gamble will be returning to the Island to study cremated human remains from similar sites on the Island, held in the national collections at the Manx Museum. Project co-Director Dr Rachel Crellin will also be returning to assist the excavation of this Bronze Age urn uncovered at Berk during the summer. The contents of the urn are completely unknown (except to those who buried it!), so we await the results with great anticipation.



Keeills Research



Members of the Society are also involved in the Keeills Research Project and have recently participated in geophysical surveys at Corrody and in the area of Keeill Bow on Sky Hill – more details at www.keeills.im



Isle of Man Studies

The Society regrets that volume XV of *Isle of Man Studies* has not yet gone to press – the Hon. Editor hopes it will go to press during the Autumn and it will be despatched to members and subscribers as soon as it is available.

IoMNHAS Committee

Natural History is still under-represented on the Committee - any member who feels they can contribute in this area is asked to contact the President, Dave Martin, on 880 265 or email Secretary@manxantiquarians.com

Keeping in touch

- If you haven't already done so, you can join our e-mail list used to keep members informed – details & privacy policy: www.manxantiquarians.com/page_72633.html
- Visit our FaceBook page, for information from the Society and selected other items of interest to our members. You don't have to be a member of FaceBook to read our page; but if you are, please “Like” our page to be automatically notified when updates are posted www.facebook.com/IsleOfManNaturalHistoryandAntiquarianSociety/
- Visit our web site www.manxantiquarians.com