



Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society

Spring 2017 newsletter

More than Just Lighthouses

To the atmospheric background sound of Douglas Head foghorn, IOMNHAS hosted an additional talk when Mike Bullock, Chief Executive of the Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB), paid a visit to the Island to inspect their “landward” lighthouses and works ongoing to upgrade Maughold and Douglas Head Lighthouses. The talk gave a fascinating, “illuminating” insight to the whole operation of the NLB, its funding, working with other lighthouse boards and “quangos”, as well as the range of navigation aids which the Board puts in position and maintains to aid shipping; plus the fastest tour of some of the 206 lighthouses around over 6,000 miles of stunning Manx and Scottish coastline you could imagine! Despite the short notice the talk was well attended by over 70 people in Loch Promenade Church Hall.



“For the Safety of All”

Summer Walks

Enclosed is the programme card for the forthcoming Summer excursions; the insignia above is on one of the Port St Mary buildings we may see on our first excursion on Sunday 23rd April, with Leader Cathy Clucas a native of Port St Mary. See if you spot it!

This excursion along with others on June 21st with Frank Cowin and July 8th with the “Trammers” are ones that this year include a booking, and paying, element.

The Pavillion at Port St Mary offers a delicious full afternoon tea at £12.50, Frank’s mystery coach tour and supper costs £13.50 and the horse tram experience with the double decker horse tram and guides is on offer for £11.



Please support these excursions - they all offer unique insights into people and places you may or may not already have noticed or visited. All bookings, by the date specified on the programme card please, should be made to Patricia Newton either by phone 861560 / 366269 or email patricianewton@manx.net. Payment in advance should be made – cheques to IOMNHAS – and sent to Hon. Excursion Secretary at 2 Glen View, South Cape, Laxey IM4 7HY. The rest of the programme offers a diverse mixture of walks and talks; please note carefully the varying days and times. Enjoy!

MS Balmoral Sails Again this year. The full provisional timetable may be viewed on www.whitefunnel.com but the following may in particular be of interest to IOMNHAS members.

Thursday 29th June Menai Bridge 07.30, Llandudno 09.00, ***PORT ST. MARY*** 13.45 - 16.45, Llandudno 21.00, Menai Bridge 22.15 (There are several other cruises on adjacent days in the North Wales & Anglesey area that this link to the Island could be tied into.)

Wednesday 5th July “Tynwald Day” Douglas 09.15, ***Cruise around IOM*** via Point of Ayre, Ramsey 10.30, Peel 12.45-13.45, Port St. Mary 15.30, Douglas 16.45

Friday 21st July and Saturday 22nd July Whitehaven 0930, Douglas 12.45 – 13.15, Cruise Calf of Man, Port St Mary 16.00, Douglas 17.30 – 18.15, Whitehaven 21.30

Sunday 23rd July Whitehaven 10.00, Peel 13.45 -14.15, Cruise Bradda Head Port Erin Bay, Peel 17.15-18.00, Whitehaven 22.00.

The latter two combined offer the opportunity to make a repeat attempt to undertake an **off-Island weekend excursion to Whitehaven** staying overnight there for 2 nights. Anyone interested in making a group trip should contact Patricia Newton 861560 / 366269 or e-mail patricianewton@manx.net.

Looking Ahead to 2018, ***Off-Island Excursions*** in the past 3 years have given us the opportunity to explore other parts of the British Isles we can see from the Isle of Man. 2018 will hopefully continue this tour around the Irish Sea to visit the sites and monuments, natural history and smuggling history of Co. Down in Northern Ireland, possibly in September. No plans are in place at the moment but anyone with thoughts on places to visit is welcome to forward their ideas to the Excursion Secretary.

PLANNING - Area Plan for the East

Preliminary Publicity for the Area Plan for the East is being undertaken. When finalised the Plan will show land allocations for all types of landuses and existing and proposed Conservation Areas for the parishes of Laxey, Lonan, Onchan, Braddan, Marown, Santon and the town of Douglas upto the year 2026; it may also include “strategic reserve sites” intended for additional needs beyond that period.

Currently the Planning Policy Division, now part of Cabinet Office, have published details of all the sites that have been put forward both privately and by the Division itself for consideration for use mainly as residential or employment sites. These are **not** allocations of land. The sites have to be assessed in terms of a number of factors. Initially all the sites shown on the plans that accompany this publicity have been assessed on the basis of whether or not they adjoin an existing settlement be that town, village or hamlet. Only where the sites are adjacent have they been carried through to the second stage of assessment; this looks at criteria such as landscape, access, drainage, water supply etc. and a report on each of these categories for each site is given. The public are being invited to add their comments on the sites submitted and these initial assessments of them.

IOMNHAS is keen to identify sites e.g. individual architecturally and / or historically important buildings or groups of buildings and their surrounding landscape or wildlife areas which should be recognised as contributing to an identifiable Sense of Place and accordingly identified as such and protected from development. Do you have any favourite places which would fall into these categories and which may be at risk?

All the current publicity material including maps showing where all the sites which are being assessed is available on the Government website - follow the ‘Preliminary Publicity’ link on www.gov.im/tape The deadline for comments is Friday May 26th.

If you have any comments or thoughts that you would like IOMNHAS to consider submitting, please send them to secretary@manxantiquarians.com by Weds 17th May.

Following this stage the Planning Policy Division will prepare a draft Area Plan for the East including specific landuse allocations and no doubt including some of the sites being currently assessed. This will then be subject to further public consultation and a Public Inquiry.

Tynwald Fair / other events

Our interactive fair stall was a great hit at last year’s Tynwald Fair - fun, not only for us but also for our visitors of all ages. We hope, in addition to the Tynwald Fair, to possibly attend more events this year, but really need volunteers to help run the Society’s stall – please contact Dave Martin if you think you would like to join in and have fun on our stall.

Keeills Research Project

Building on the work of members of the Society in the early 1900s on the Manx Archaeological Survey, the Keeills Research Project is using modern non-invasive scientific methods to try to shed further light on the character and context of these enigmatic monuments. The Manx Archaeological Survey, constrained by time and resources, often only investigated as far as the upstanding boundary; however the Keeills were constructed in an already-occupied landscape, and with relatively few exceptions, not much of that context is known or remains visible to the un-aided naked eye today – indeed it is at risk of, or actually, disappearing.

The project has a range of opportunities for participation – be that carrying out geophysical surveys in the field (when you may well be the first person to see images of a buried feature that may not have seen daylight for hundreds or thousands of years) or at home analysing aerial photographs or collating data or drawing up CAD plans. For more information, details of opportunities to participate and training available etc. please visit www.keeills.im or contact Dave Martin on 880 265 or email Dave.Martin@manx.net

Digitising Proceedings

Preparations are underway to begin the task of fully digitising the Society's *Proceedings*. We have assembled most of the current series of *Proceedings*, but we are very keen to hear if any member has un-bound copies of the first series *Transactions* (1879-1884) and *Yn Lioar Manninagh* (1880-1906) which might be available for us to scan or photograph – if you can help, please contact Hon. Librarian on 880 265 or by email to Dave.Martin@manx.net

IoMNHAS Committee

We have been fortunate to recently welcome Katie Newton and Pauline Stewart to the committee; however Natural History is still under-represented, any member who feels they can contribute in this area is asked to contact the Hon. Secretary 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 (you don't have to be a member of FaceBook to read our page; but if you are member of FaceBook, please "Like" our page and you can be automatically notified when any updates are posted) www.facebook.com/IsleOfManNaturalHistoryandAntiquarianSociety/
- Visit our web site www.manxantiquarians.com