



Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society

Autumn 2022 newsletter

Welcome to our Autumn 2022 newsletter. Enclosed is the programme card for the forthcoming Winter 2022-23 lecture series and notice of the brief EGM to be held before the lecture on 19th November 2022 (more on which below); this newsletter is intended to give a summary of the activities of the Society during the last six months, and highlight other selected topics of interest to members.

Excursions Officer

Following a summer of varied and sunny excursions Pat Newton is indicating her desire to step down from the role, and is looking for someone to work alongside her as she progressively hands over the reins. Pat says it's a job (unpaid, of course!) with many rewards – the great outdoors, discovering corners of our island that you didn't know existed, learning about and often meeting the Manx characters that make this 'fair jewel' so fascinating.

The role could be split between two people: one who knows sites of interest from a natural history / geography / flora and fauna perspective, and could organise – or even lead - walks around them; the other is an equivalent role for historical and archaeological sites. There is no requirement to be a specialist in both, what is needed is curiosity and time to explore. Pat usually has more than enough suggestions from members for next year's visits and enjoys checking them out for herself beforehand.

Please note, there is no requirement to attend every Committee meeting, though of course you would be most welcome. You need stout boots, an ability to herd cats, and a computer connection that works. If you want to share your spirit of adventure and discovery with like-minded folk, please get in touch. You can join us following in some pretty remarkable footsteps.

EGM to fill a Trustee vacancy

In with this mailing you will find notice for a brief EGM to be held before the lecture on Saturday 19th November 2022. David Allwood, who has served on the Committee for some years as a Research coordinator and latterly as a Trustee, has had to step-down from the Committee (both roles) due other pressures. We wish David well, and look forward to the fruits of his research in due course

The Society's current Rules which were approved by the Attorney General as Charities Regulator, and then by the Society's members last November, require seven Trustees: the President, Vice-President, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary who are *ex-officio* Trustees plus three other members who are elected for an annual term at the AGM. As David was one of the three elected Trustees, the Society needs to elect a replacement, and we are delighted that Frank Cowin has offered his name as a candidate to serve as a Trustee for the remainder of the Society's year.

This EGM on 19th November is solely to vote on the proposal to elect Frank as a Trustee and will take place immediately before Dr John Callow's talk on *The Prince, the Earl, and the Lieutenant's Daughter: The Struggles of the Manx Quakers for Life and Liberty, 1655-89*.

The Trustees and Committee have undertaken to keep the Rules under review, and a modicum of flexibility to deal with situations like this without having to call an EGM is one of the items on the list to be considered for the next iteration of the Rules.

Excavations

Following a COVID-19 enforced break, Rachel Crellin and Chris Fowler, with a team of University students and IoMNHAS volunteers, returned this summer to the Round Mound excavation at Cronk Guckley, by kind permission of Robert and Anne Cannell of Berk Farm.

The field excavation was completed this season; the major task of post-excavation analysis and reporting is now under way. There have been glimpses already but the ongoing analysis will no doubt continue to give greater insight.



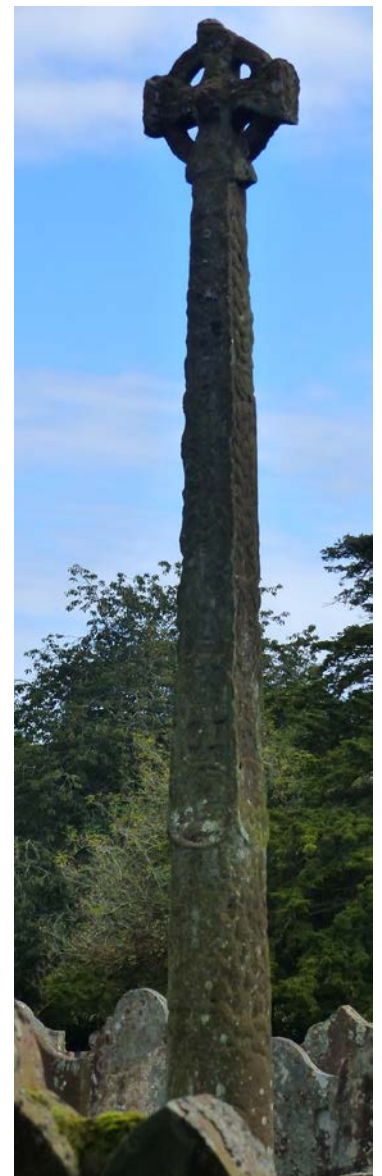
One of the most stunning finds – visually, in terms of craftsmanship, and in preservation – they were buried some four thousand years ago - was the 122 jet beads that make up a complete necklace and a matching bracelet (pictured above).

All of the beads appear to be made from jet (fossilised and pressurised wood) which can be prone to splitting. The maker would have been extremely skilled to decorate the larger terminal and “spacer-plates” beads, as well to produce the large number of hollowed and shaped barrel-shaped beads. What is even more remarkable is the presence of the string-distribution holes in the decorated plates. These allow the number of strings of beads to go from four, to five to seven strings of beads in total. Somewhere inside the spacer-plate beads, a Y-shape has been formed to allow the different number of strings to be passed through and secured.

Part of this is now on display in the Manx Museum, to be joined ASAP by the remaining beads which are still undergoing conservation.

Cumbria 2022

In September, a party of sixteen intrepid IoMNHAS members set sail for Cumbria, for a tour meticulously organised by Pat Newton – here are a couple of Pauline Stewart’s photographs:



Building Conservation and Planning

The Society has continued to try and promote knowledge of, and conservation – where practical - of our Island's Built Heritage, including a major submission to the Tynwald Select Committee on Built Heritage.

When it first opened, the Society made a detailed submission to the Cabinet Office's Area Plan for the North and West (including highlighting where policy and Tynwald were being ignored); when the draft was published recently it was extremely disappointing that almost all of the Society's input had been ignored – a suitable follow-up was submitted

The Society continues to respond to planning applications, benefitting greatly from members who contribute their significant knowledge and experience.

Fair Stalls

We attended the IOM Family History day, Tynwald Fair, and the Southern District Agricultural Show, all very successfully; but regrettably had to pull out of the Food and Drink Festival due to ill-health and unavailability of volunteers.

Marshall Cubbon Bursaries

Each year, IoMNHAS awards up to two bursaries, each of up to £250, in memory of Marshall Cubbon to students (undergraduate or postgraduate) who are researching a Manx related topic at a recognised institution of Higher Education.

Applications for the 2023 bursary round will open 1st November 2022, details and the application form can be found on www.manxantiquarians.com

Research co-ordinators

Following the recent resignation, we currently have only one Research co-ordinator on IoMNHAS Committee; our Society Rules allows up to four. Natural History in particular is still under-represented - any member who feels they can contribute in this or other areas 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, 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