

*The Friends of*  
Manx National Heritage



**Members' Events List  
& Volunteer Programme**

**Oct 2020 - Mar 2021**

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# *The Friends of* Manx National Heritage



October 2020

## **FMNH Chairman's Letter**

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to be writing my first letter to you as Chairman. Who would have thought that a year on from the last AGM we find ourselves living through these very strange times? It has given us the chance to reflect on how lucky we are to be living on our beloved Island and enjoy the freedoms we currently experience. Like me, many of you will have family across and be aware how they are living through quite different circumstances.

We are delighted that so many of you have supported The Friends during this time by continuing to renew your membership. For that we are most grateful. Your membership helps to contribute towards preserving our unique cultural heritage and also supports the acquisitions and conservation of the National Collection. This is now even more important with the lack of visitors to our shores. We hope you made good use of your membership by visiting our heritage sites to help make it worthwhile keeping them open. The air bridge to Guernsey provided our members a chance to visit their National Trust and use our membership card under the new reciprocal agreement.

Throughout the lockdown many of you enjoyed the newsletters circulated by Nicola and she very much appreciated hearing from members, here and abroad, providing feedback on how much they enjoyed being kept in touch with news and events. The events programme got underway again in August with a series of outdoor events and I'm pleased to say were all very well supported. Our first indoor event took place on Friday 2nd October and was fully booked.

Having been on a number of the events myself, I know how much they are enjoyed by everyone and am grateful to Nicola for always thinking of new and interesting things to keep us all entertained.

The volunteer programme has of course been on hold, but I nevertheless wish to thank our core of volunteers for their time and commitment especially at the Grove, Cregneash and Rushen Abbey gardens. You are all very much appreciated.

The Friends office has been using their time in lockdown trying to update many of our members' records where we still only have a residential address for contact details. If you are one of those who we have been unable to contact can you please provide us with an email address? This is the preferred way of staying in touch as it saves so much on postage and administration. Send an email to [nicola@fmnh.im](mailto:nicola@fmnh.im) and we will do the rest.

You will read in the Director of MNH's letter all about what has been going on within Manx National Heritage during this last year and how support from The Friends continues to assist with a number of important projects. For those of you who are planning to attend the AGM, we will be showing a short video at the end of the meeting done for us for free by a Life Member, which will form the basis of any fundraising activity that we undertake for The Friends in the New Year. More details to be circulated later.

Lastly, I must place on record my thanks to Nicola and Mary for all their efforts in keeping morale up at The Friends office during lockdown, and to Harley Shimmin our Treasurer for his hard work supporting them. My thanks also to my fellow Directors for their valuable input into the work of The Friends of Manx National Heritage.

Wishing you all a safe end to 2020 and that we turn the corner in 2021.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Crowe', with a stylized, flowing script.

Michael Crowe  
Chairman



# Manx National Heritage

## *Eiraght Ashoonagh Vannin*

[www.manxnationalheritage.im](http://www.manxnationalheritage.im)

Dear Friend

The AGM of the Friends of Manx National Heritage and the accompanying paperwork always gives me the opportunity to look back at the last year and take a snapshot of our activity. One letter isn't space enough to list everything that has been going on so it forces me to consider what the highlights are.

Much of what we do is highly visible to the public and we pride ourselves in being open and accessible. We've continued to mount some really great exhibitions such as *The Art of Nature* at the House of Manannan and *The Luxury of Time* at the Manx Museum. They celebrated completely different things and were targeted at different audiences – but both were fascinating and rewarding to see.

Making more of a splash this year have been the gardens at the Grove, Cregneash and Rushen Abbey gardens. With the support of funds and volunteers from FMNH the grounds at both sites have begun to look amazing. The planting schemes look different at each season of the year and so the gardens are being visited more frequently than previously by local people. I look forward to similar work starting this coming winter at Castle Rushen.

Also visible to the public but this time to an international audience is our digital activity. We took the decision in March to remove the subscription to the Newspapers available through the iMuseum. This resulted in a significant jump in usage and whilst it was a bit of an experiment we were really pleased with the response and have made the decision permanent. Other online initiatives have been a new collaboration with the Google Arts and Culture Channel – which is a charitable venture making information on museums and historic sites around the world available. We have three exhibits so far: Our sculpture collection; our sketchbooks exhibit; and a selection from our TT collection.

The sculpture exhibit included the amazing portrait of James Brown, editor of the *Manx Times*, by Joseph William Swynnerton. There are very few sculptures of people of colour in the British Isles and the Black Lives Matter campaign during recent months has reminded us that the Isle of Man is part of a wider story and can't stand aside from these critical issues.

Behind the scenes we have continued to develop schemes either to repair our buildings or improve our facilities. Some of these are high profile and attract considerable interest – such as the Nautical Museum or the Courtroom at Castle Rushen. Others have proceeded quietly, such as the refurbishment of Thornbank, the Baillie Scott House in Douglas. This

now has planning permission and we are about to go to tender for the buildings works. Thornbank is very generously supported by FMNH. The other scheme you are directly supporting through the acquisition of material is the new TT Gallery at the Manx Museum. We started to prepare the gallery for this in January and construction work will start in earnest this winter coming. Concept designs are now in place and we remain on track to open this gallery in May 2022. It will focus on the human stories behind the course and the machinery, and will be a world-class exhibit.

Friends remain important to MNH and we've continued to engage with you during the year. I was delighted that we were able to establish reciprocal arrangements with the Guernsey National Trust this summer and welcome as a result a new audience. I know many of you have taken advantage of this new link and I hope it will continue.

I couldn't complete this letter without reference to Covid-19 and the impact this has had on the Island. You may not know that some MNH staff were seconded to other roles and I am proud that so many of my team contributed to the efforts to save lives and support their community during the early part of the pandemic. Museums and heritage services are not emergency services and we rightly take a back seat during a crisis. However, the mental health and well-being of our community is hugely important and so we tried our best to provide activities online at first and then open up our sites as soon as it was safe to do so. We were also mindful of the impact on our commercial tenants and cafés so we waived rents to protect local jobs.

The financial impact on MNH of closed borders and other restrictions has been substantial with the loss of over £1m of income likely this year alone. We have a very positive relationship with our sponsoring Government Department and the IOM Treasury and we have been given assurances that we can continue to deliver our services for the foreseeable future.

However, we live in very uncertain times and the next few years may need us to be even more flexible and fleet of foot in responding quickly to changing circumstances and priorities. We may not be able to satisfy everyone but I hope that FMNH will stand at our side as we go forward. I remain grateful for the support from FMNH – which is not simply financial or through volunteering but through kind words, moral support and speaking up for the organisation and the team. Thank you.

With best wishes,

Edmund Southworth

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Edmund Southworth', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Director

# Members Events Programme 2020/2021

## NOVEMBER

**Tuesday 17th**

**Crime and Punishment in the Archives – Sarah Christian, MNH Library Archivist**

Sarah's talk explores themes of crime and punishment using resources from Manx National Heritage's Library & Archives, as well as other online resources to produce case studies of individual criminals. We are always seeking explanations but can research overturn some expectations? What circumstances lead to law breaking behaviours? What happened to people afterwards? In studying crime and punishment, can we get a flavour for what the Isle of Man was like in days gone by? Sarah seeks to answer some of these questions with a PowerPoint presentation followed by the opportunity to look at the mugshot books.

**Time: 2pm    Venue: Manx Museum Lecture Theatre    Max 60    FREE**

**Tuesday 24th**

**Vikings Through the Looking Glass – Allison Fox, MNH Curator Archaeology**

A closer look at the lives and finds of the Vikings – how well do we really know them?

**Time: 11am    Venue: Manx Museum Lecture Theatre    Max 60    FREE**

**Saturday 28th**

**You are never too old to believe in the magic of Christmas**

Enjoy a relaxing afternoon making Christmas decorations. All materials supplied plus refreshments.

**Time: 1pm    Venue: Manx Museum Lecture Theatre    Max 25    £8pp**

## DECEMBER

**Friday 4th**

**What is Paper Conservation? Emma Le Cornu, MNH Conservator, Library and Archives**

A look behind the scenes at the MNH Library and Archives and how to care for your own treasured documents and photographs.

**Time: 11am    Venue: Manx Museum Temporary Gallery    Max 25    FREE**

**Friday 11th**

**Fun Quiz Night**

Pictures, music, themed rounds, general knowledge, and fun. Something for everyone - not too difficult (not Mastermind!). Come along and meet the Quiz Masters who entertained us through lockdown via the FMNH newsletters.

Make a team of up to 8 or we can make one up for you.

Hot pot supper. Bring your own wine. Prizes, raffle.

**Time: 7pm**

**Venue: Ballasalla Village Hall**

**Max 60**

**£15pp**

**2021**

**JANUARY**

**Tuesday 12th**

**A Place to Nurture Manx Art - Yvonne Cresswell, MNH Curator Social History**

The History of the Douglas School of Art (illustrated talk and tour of exhibition in the National Art Gallery, Manx Museum)

**Time: 11am**

**Venue: Art Gallery Manx Museum**

**Max 30**

**FREE**

**FEBRUARY**

**Wednesday 10th**

**Manx Language Awareness – Nicola Tooms, MNH Assistant Curator**

Our updated Manx language policy has refocused our commitment to use and support others to use Manx. Find out why we think Manx is important and learn a little about the history of Manx, how our island came to speak it and why it declined. The session is about 40 minutes long with plenty of time for questions and answers.

**Time: 11am**

**Venue: Lecture Theatre Manx Museum**

**Max 60**

**FREE**

**Monday 15th**

**Close Leece Farm 2 Course Lunch.** With soup starter and a trio of Close Leece

Farm sausages, plus tea and coffee. The sausages are one of the farm's main products. Close Leece will talk about them, how they are made, where the idea came from etc. Please contact Nicola for any dietary requirements. Raffle.

**Time: 12.30pm**

**Venue: Close Leece Farm Cafe**

**Max 60**

**£20pp**

# MARCH

## Tuesday 2nd

### **Parasites and why they are amazing – Laura McCoy, Curator Natural History**

A look at the crazy and wonderful world of parasites, from cuckoos to zombie making fungi. 'Alien' isn't so much science fiction as science fact!

**Time: 11am      Venue: Manx Museum Lecture Theatre      Max 60      FREE**

## Friday 12th

### **Murder Mystery Dinner - 'A Question of Murder'**

The Suspect Players are delighted to present the premiere of the latest FMNH 'whodunit'. (No acting / active participation required). Bring your own wine.

**Time: 7pm      Venue: Ballasalla Village Hall      Max 70      £20pp**

## Saturday 20th

### **One for the Road**

Join Blue Badge Guide, resident of Castletown and FMNH Director, Helen Leigh, for a short-guided walk in not just the Ancient Capital of Mann but also the 'Home of Prize-Winning Ales'. Highlighting where Castletown inhabitants and tourists alike would have looked for suitable liquid refreshment - and not just of the alcoholic variety!

**Time: 11am      Venue: Meet at Costa Coffee Castletown, IM9 1LD      Max 25 FREE**

**Also, a request for raffle prizes for future fundraising events! Do you have any raffle prizes you could kindly donate?**

**Do you have any spare 9 – 12 cm potting on pots? Nicola would be delighted to collect if you do.**

***Do you have any ideas for fundraising events? Please let Nicola know.***



# Volunteers needed ...

## Can you help?

We are really grateful to all our members who volunteer to help FMNH. Your contribution greatly assists our work and without you we couldn't achieve all that we do. We are always pleased to welcome new volunteers.

Please fill in the details below if you would like to give some time to help the work of FMNH. It can be rewarding and fun! More information and times will be confirmed nearer the time of the events.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Postcode .....E-mail .....

Telephone (Home) .....

(Work) .....

(Mobile).....



Please tick the box with any areas you are able to help:

## ASSISTING AT FMNH EVENTS

### Fun Quiz Night Friday 11th December

- ☐ Help with setting up
- ☐ Assist with food and clearing up

### Murder Mystery Dinner Friday 12th March

- ☐ Laying the tables, setting up
- ☐ Assist with serving food and clearing up

### ☐ **Supporting MNH Education Department.**

Assisting with preparation for their Schools workshop days.  
Anthea runs a great programme and FMNH are delighted to support her. Workshops are at the Manx Museum or House of Manannan. Dates to be confirmed

### Gardening at Rushen Abbey, the Grove and Cregneash.

We have had a successful summer with help from many volunteers who have made such a difference to the gardens. We are looking for more volunteers who might be able to give some time to work alongside Philip on a Monday at Rushen Abbey, on a Friday at The Grove, and Tuesday and Thursday morning with Karen at Cregneash. We would love to hear from you if you can help.

☐ Rushen Abbey

☐ The Grove

☐ Cregneash





# Friends of Manx National Heritage Booking Form Nov 2020 - Mar 2021

Fill in the booking form and either email Nicola on [nicola@fmnh.im](mailto:nicola@fmnh.im) or return with your cheque, made payable to FMNH, to: Mrs N Pemberton, FMNH, Ballachrink Mill, Santon, IM4 1HE.

**Alternatively**, you can do a bank transfer. Just contact Nicola for details.  
**Please ensure you add your name as the reference.**

NB: to save on postage **WE DO NOT SEND OUT TICKETS**. We will contact you if you are not successful. Events on a “first come, first served” basis.

Name .....

Address .....

.....Postcode .....

E-mail .....

Telephone .....Mobile.....

Date	Event	Price pp	No's	Cost
Tues 17th Nov	Archives	FREE		
Tues 24th Nov	Vikings Through the Looking Glass	FREE		
Sat 28th Nov	Christmas Decorations	£8		
Friday 4th Dec	Paper Conservation	FREE		
Fri 11th Dec	Quiz	£15		
Tues 12th Jan	Manx Art	FREE		
Wed 10th Feb	Manx Language	FREE		
Mon 15th Feb	Close Leece Lunch	£20		
Tues 2nd Mar	Parasites	FREE		
Fri 12th Mar	Murder Mystery	£20		
Sat 20th Mar	One for the Road	FREE		

