

## **A Message from the MNH Director**

Dear Friend

I want to start this letter with a thank you for your continued support of Manx National Heritage and the work that we do.

The past three years have been both unique and challenging for Manx National Heritage. We are working in a difficult economic environment and have faced a significantly reduced budget, losing an accumulated total of 20% of our revenue funding from the Isle of Man Government. Despite this, I am delighted to say that a great deal has been achieved.

We have welcomed a new Board of Trustees who bring additional experience and expertise to our work. The new Trust is streamlined, with only half the number of Trustees we had previously. Mike Fayle, your Chairman, has already joined us for meetings and we have some exciting plans for the future.

A significant amount of work has been done to inspire understanding and support for the Isle of Man's heritage. We have adapted our site opening hours to enable us to lengthen the season and have launched some exciting new events and exhibitions, securing loans from both local artists and major international institutions including National Museums of Scotland, The British Library and The British Museum.

Much of this could not have been achieved without the support of our Friends, who continue to show dedication and commitment to our work.

We continue to adapt and rise to new challenges, shifting our thinking about how the Friends support our work, increasing the amount of voluntary support, whilst becoming more efficient in the ways we work, generating more income and reducing our expenditure across the board.

This is having a big impact. Some projects can only go ahead with volunteer and donor support. We are targeting this support into areas where government funding is not available and where it will make a big difference. For example, the new education and activity space at the House of Manannan in Peel will make a significant impact on our public

programming and provides opportunities for enhanced income through weddings and venue hire. Likewise, the current refurbishment of Quirks Croft at Cregneash will transform visitor comfort and provide new a space for learning.

Almost all aspects of our work are supported in some way by the Friends. Indeed there are now so many of you volunteering that we are looking at new ways of training and recognising the skills that you bring to our work.

We are looking at new ways to engage and thank our Friends members including offering enhanced rewards to all those who volunteer their time to our work. Alongside this we will be reviewing our range of membership benefits to reduce focus on discounts and increase the number of exclusive events available for enjoyment by our Friends. We hope that this will give you the opportunity to further engage with MNH and the wider heritage community on the Isle of Man.

Many large museums in the UK have now set up membership schemes in addition to their Friends organisations. Most of these schemes are just about raising money and we have no plans to implement a second membership scheme on the Isle of Man. I think that what we have here on the Island is already both different and special.

As a member of the Friends of Manx National Heritage you demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting the Island's wider community and provide a vital contribution to our work in helping to promote national identity and supporting the economy of the Isle of Man. Both myself and the team at Manx National Heritage greatly appreciate your support.

I am proud to be associated with such a strong and active group of supporters and I hope you will be able to join with us as we develop our ideas and activities.

Yours sincerely,



Edmund Southworth  
Director, Manx National Heritage