



Are you sitting comfortably...?

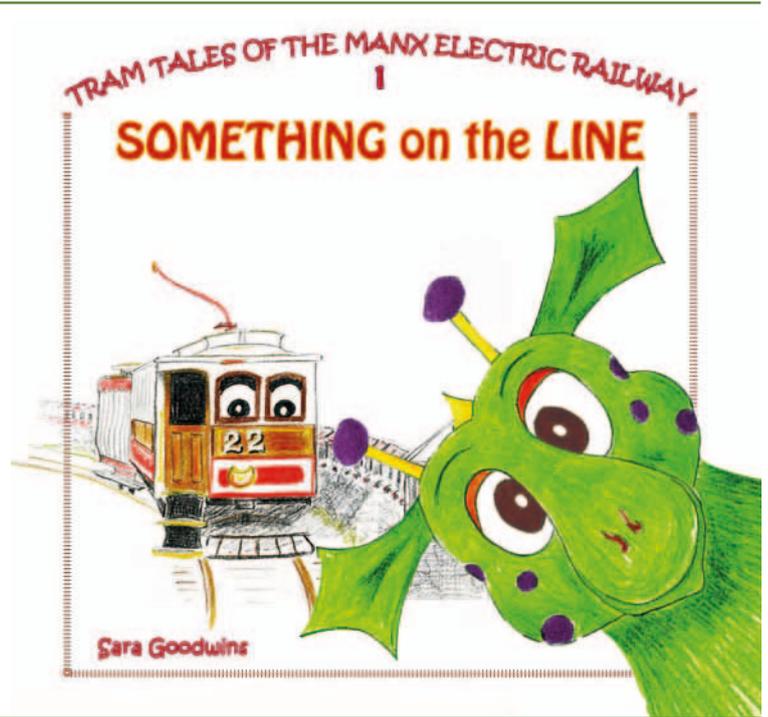
... then I'll begin. Do you remember the fun of being read to? I still enjoy it and am a great fan of audio books. The power of the spoken word was brought home to me when I had to read an extract of our new children's book on Manx Radio. The announcer was almost as excited as me!

Calling all ages

New book *Something on the Line* was published in February. It's the first in our new series Tram Tales of the Manx Electric Railway. Twain (tram number 22) has to be particularly brave when a dinosaur strays onto the MER line. The book is actually based on a true story, as one of the motormen (tram drivers) found a large soft toy menacing his tram one morning a year or so ago.

It's difficult to say exactly the age group the book is aimed at as we've heard of children nine, six and under three all enjoying it, although the under three was probably more interested in eating it rather than reading it. The book is probably aimed at the six to eight year olds. And their parents of course.

Watch out for the second in the series, *Stick to Safety*, starring Pam the Paddlebox (tram number 16) and trailer Tina. We're expecting the book to be published towards the end of April.



Did you get snow?

Considering that we're quite a long way north, the Isle of Man generally doesn't get much snow; as the sea keeps it warm (relatively speaking!). The Manx mountain is the exception and can often be seen white-topped above the rest of the island.

Snaefell summit is home to the Summit Hotel and a couple of towers, one of which is operated by the UK National Air Traffic Control System. In 1977 Don Pemberton worked in the radar station on the summit. Quite often he would take in walkers who had got into difficulty on the top of the mountain, give them hot drinks, and bring them down the mountain when conditions were poor...Today the island has a fully-qualified mountain search dog, part of the Isle of Man Search & Rescue Group and a member of Search and Rescue Dogs (Isle of Man) Association. Female collie, Star, and handler Jim MacGregor qualified in 2012 and since then have been called out many times, not only on Mann but also in England and Wales.

Two Fish for the Summit gives a fascinating insight into life and work on Snaefell, including the special requirements needed to run a cafe on a mountain with no road access!

Mugs!

And the same to you!

In a new departure for Loaghtan Books, and to tie in with the new publication, a chain of gift shops on the island is producing mugs showing characters drawn from the stories. New book, new mug - or at least that's the plan. The first mug shows Twain, of course.

The mugs are available from Presence of Mann in Laxey and MostlyManx in Douglas. (See www.presenceofmann.com)

Words, words, words

Talking about snow, I was delighted to find that not only the Inuit have several words to describe it. In Manx, snow is *sniaghtey*. Apparently *pitchen* is snow that's settling (Bristol, England), *sluppra* is half-melted snow (Shetland, Scotland), *tewtle* is when it snows just a few flakes (Yorkshire, England), and the devil's blanket (Newfoundland) is a snowfall which hinders going to work or school.

Best wishes
Sara

Quote of the day

'Just like you play conkers in the right season, Manxmen were farmers, fishermen and miners in the right season. They worked at farming in the spring (planting) and autumn (harvesting), fished in the summer (herring) and winter (cod) and fitted mining around everything else.'