



# LOAGHTAN BOOKS NEWS



www.loaghtanbooks.com

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**THIS YEAR WILL BE BETTER!**

## A BUSY YEAR AHEAD

For the last couple of years Loaghtan Books has only published two books each year with the now traditional (and boring) excuse of Covid interrupting normal working. Not this year! This year we have plans to publish four, possibly five books. The first will be out in the spring and is a short guide to Tynwald, the history, the hill-top ceremony, the workings of government, and what other countries with Viking roots do. The publication following *A Key to Tynwald* is the autobiography of someone who, in the 1950s, reluctantly ended up running a pub. It's *hilarious!* Watch this space!

## Tracking deliveries

Our office is not far from the Manx Electric Railway so we sometimes use the Victorian/Edwardian railway and rolling stock to make deliveries. This gives a whole new meaning to 'tracking deliveries', but it's only due to enthusiasts that the line has remained open at all. In fact it very nearly didn't, or at least didn't north of Laxey, which includes Dreemskerry, where Loaghtan Books is. As page 111 of *Stops along the Manx Electric Railway* says: 'The MER has much to thank Sir Charles [Kerruish, longest serving Speaker of the House of Keys] for, as he championed the retention of the line between Laxey and Ramsey which led to the triumphant re-opening of this section on 25 June 1977. Sir Charles cut the tape at Laxey as the first tram set off for Ramsey.' Sir Charles' local MER stop was Ballafayle Kerruish at pole 745, and the family still own and run the farm there.

## Overheard - double booked

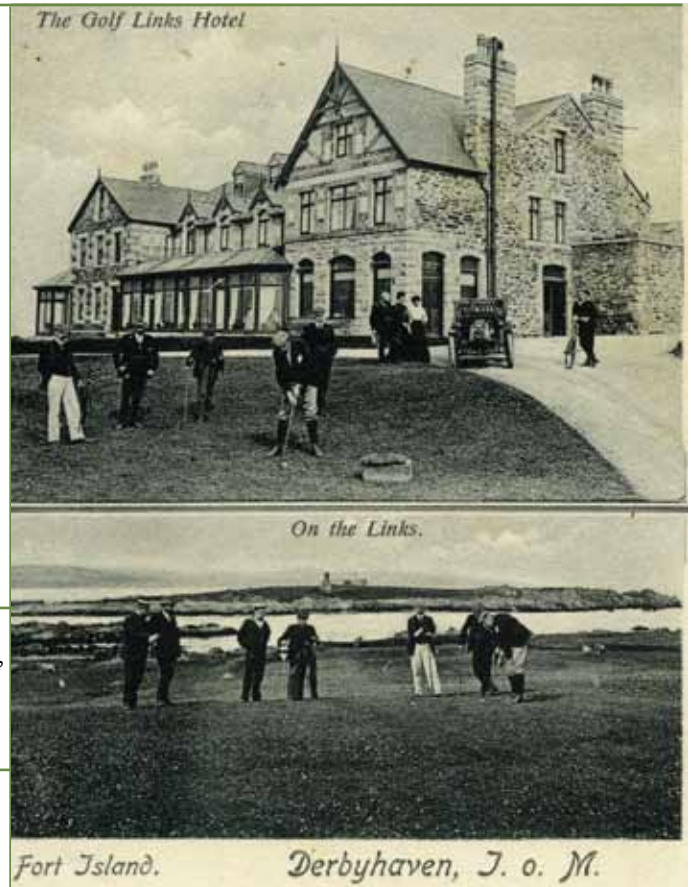
'My boyfriend wanted me to get rid of some of my books.'  
'What did you do?'  
'Got rid of *him*.'

## The elephant in the room

Although important, most of us are growing fed up of the precautions necessary for preventing the spread of Covid. Pandemics are not new, however - as scientists are repeatedly telling us. The Isle of Man, small and surrounded by water, has fared better than many countries over the years because of its natural barriers. Page 110 of *A Brief History of the Isle of Man* explains: 'Living on farms and in relatively isolated rural communities acted as a natural quarantine and the Manx had largely escaped huge population losses caused by the major killer diseases such as plague and measles, although smallpox, brought to the island in 1685, was a regular killer. The insanitary and crowded living conditions of the developing towns were excellent breeding grounds for disease however, particularly when combined with near starvation, and epidemics were the result.'

## Quote of the day

... quartz is reflective in moonlight so was often used as a primitive form of street lighting. The Isle of Man is proud of its dark skies status and has very little street lighting. Even today, topping a gatepost with quartz can help those out after dark find their way home. Possibly because of its luminous qualities, white quartz was also considered a good luck talisman.



## Two hotels

As regular readers will know, we published *Castletown; past & present* in the autumn. The postcard above was one of those we *didn't* use. It was posted to Southport at 3.30 pm on 8 August 1905, but didn't carry the usual holiday news. Instead it was addressed to Mr Schofield, window cleaner, and requested: 'Please call at 4 Queens Road to do the front windows as soon as possible'. Today 4 Queens Road Southport is the Bay Trees Hotel; perhaps it was then?

Don't forget to look at our blog!  
Happy New Year, Sara