

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to be writing once again as Chairman of the Friends of Manx National Heritage. The Friends were established for the charitable purpose of the advancement and promotion of the aims and work of the Manx Museum and Manx National Heritage, and the acquisition or contribution towards the acquisition of suitable exhibits and property.

Here are a few examples of how we have helped preserve our unique cultural heritage and support the acquisitions and conservation of the National collection.

This year we have agreed to help Manx National Heritage with funding to assist with, amongst other projects: the re-patination of the Watcher sculpture at the Manx Museum; refurbishment work at a property to be rented out as a new holiday let at Cregneash; provision of a new adit hut and other works at the Laxey Wheel; and the purchase of a new 4 wheel drive vehicle for use by the wardens on the Calf of Man.

We also received many donations in memory of former Friends Board Member and Manx Museum and National Trust Trustee Martin Moore MBE, who passed away earlier this year. Martin was a great supporter of the Friends, and we will be working with his widow Elaine and Manx National Heritage to ensure the donations are used in fitting way to mark Martin’s lifelong dedication to the history and heritage of the Isle of Man.

When you attend the AGM, you will hear Connie Lovel, Executive Director of MNH’s presentation, giving more details about what has been going on, how support from the Friends continues to assist and where the funds have been spent.

Our wonderful Friends volunteers have helped at several MNH events in the past year. Our gardening volunteers at Cregneash, Rushen Abbey and The Grove make an enormous difference with the continued development of the gardens, enhancing the visitor experience. We have provided volunteers for the Little People’s Picnic at Rushen Abbey, stewards for the ever-popular Heritage Open days and helpers for Hop Tu Naa and Easter at Cregneash, as well as other events at the Grove. Some of our wonderful Friends volunteers are regulars helping in the MNH Archives and on the Calf of Man. Thank you to everyone who has helped for their time and commitment. You are all very much appreciated by us and by Manx National Heritage.

Our members have continued to enjoy access to a full programme of exclusive events this year, with at least one event each month. Highlights have included: an exclusive viewing of the only copy outside the Honda archives of a film made by the company at the 1961 TT, with a fascinating accompanying talk by Matthew Richardson; a tour of the Museum galleries with Conservator Chris Weeks, who told us all about the conservation stories behind some iconic objects; an exclusive tour of the blockbuster Archibald Knox exhibition with Katie King; and a guided tour of Rushen Abbey’s gardens with MNH horticulturist Philip Payne, who explained how he uses naturalistic planting to maximum effect. We were very lucky with the weather on that day! Many thanks to all Friends members who have purchased event tickets and made additional donations – your support has been very much appreciated. Thanks also to all the Manx National Heritage staff and to Yvonne Cresswell for so kindly giving their time and expertise for these inspiring and informative talks, tours and experiences. If you would like to attend any of our forthcoming events, details can be found on the Friends website and in your monthly newsletter. Please contact Emma for more information.

We are constantly updating our records, and we still have hundreds of members for whom we only have a postal address. If you are one of those, please can you provide us with your email address? As you must be aware, staying in touch by email saves so much on postage and administration. Send an email to info@fmnh.im and we will do the rest.

We are sad to be saying farewell to Friends Director Alison Moore, who will be stepping down at this year’s AGM. I would like to record my thanks to Alison for her contribution to our work.

Lastly, my thanks as ever to Mary Bridson for her amazing work running the Membership and to Harley Shimmin, our Treasurer, for all his hard work and all my fellow Directors for their continued support.

Before concluding this report, I must mention that the full programme of events referred to above is organised by Emma, our extremely efficient Administrator and the Directors, and I’m sure you as members, would wish to join me in expressing our thanks to her for ensuring the smooth running of the FMNH.

But we would not be where we are without you – our members – so a continued huge thank you to you all for your support to our Charity. I hope to see as many of you as possible at our AGM on Saturday 8th November.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

 Michael Crowe

 Chairman.