



Optic Topics

Issue No 110
Winter 2019

**A newsletter for visually impaired people
and connected services**

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Manx Registered Charity No. 132

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Introduction by Kerry Macduffie

MBWS AGM

Our Annual General Meeting is to be held on Tuesday 19 March 3.30pm at Corrin Court, Heywood Ave, Onchan.

Please note this meets the Society's obligation to provide at least 14 clear days' written notice of the date of the meeting.

Notice from Department of Infrastructure (DOI) concerning the works on Douglas Promenade

On Wednesday 9th January we received the following advice from the DOI. In addition to this notice we will be notifying members through the Recorded News Service and our Facebook page.

As part of the Douglas Promenade Refurbishment Enabling Works the Department is to decommission and remove the Puffin pedestrian crossing on Queen's Promenade today after lunch. The crossing will more than likely not be re-instated until the latter part of the refurbishment programme.

Please would you advise all your clients so that they are aware - thank you.

Chief Executive's report by Ian Cooil

Field Vision

On Friday 8 March 7pm at our Offices in Onchan, we will be holding an in-house launch night for our exciting new "field" project which will be developed on the lower field site between our headquarters and St. Ninians lower school. The project incorporates a freedom run for assistance dogs, a mindfulness area for people living with, or adjusting to the challenges of sight loss and a wall and reflection area dedicated to the memory of our beloved animals.

We will be including audible sculptures to aid orientation and the "service park" will incorporate a tactile learning and fun journey for young people who have impaired vision together with those who are completely blind.

We have prepared a short presentation to provide members, volunteers and benefactors with an over view of the project and we hope

to have good a turn out on the night to ensure everyone is involved in the promotion of this wonderful addition to the facilities and services we offer.

If you would like to join us for this special launch night, please contact Kerry/Sinead to book your place. Refreshments and cake will be served following the presentation.

Social & Welfare Officer's report by Ellie Baker

Guided walks

The dates for the next Guided walks are as follows:

Monday 21st January – 360 degree cinema experience, tour of the Nunnery grounds/building and tea/coffee

Monday 25th February – Niarbyl Bay and tearoom

Sunday 31st March – Laxey harbour and promenade and café

Luncheon clubs

Just to let you know that we provide **FREE TRANSPORT** to our luncheon clubs at our centre in Onchan. The clubs run every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 11.45am-3.15pm. Members who are independently mobile and able to address their own personal care needs can attend on one day per week. A home cooked three course meal is served which is £1 for a starter, £3 for a main (which can be served as a small portion) and £1 for dessert. There is also entertainment, an activity or an occasional outing after the meal. The club provides the opportunity to socialise with others who face the same life challenges and build friendships along the way. If you would like more information or to request a place, please contact Ellie Baker, on 674727.

Younger Member's Activities Club

The club is going from strength to strength with a regular attendance of 9 younger members – we have already reached our 6 month milestone and have just released our schedule for the next 6!

During the autumn months, we held a Toad in the Hole cooking competition, where the members were placed into teams and given the same ingredients and equipment and recipe to create their very own Toad in the Hole. The end results were judged by our very own Davey Cookit who gave marks for texture, taste and appearance. Everyone turned out to be budding chefs and the competition was tough but eventually one of the teams was crowned the winner and then we all headed off out for a well deserved chippy lunch. The Toad in the Hole was divided up and everyone got to take a piece of their own one home to sample with their family – with very good reviews.

On Hop Tu Naa day, we all had a pizza tea in Onchan and then ventured down to Hot Rocks Climbing Wall. This was a very challenging experience where the members could choose different walls to tackle and also try out some high rise net tunnels. We had an instructor teaching us the basics and keeping us safe. Our members also made sure to keep encouraging and supporting each other as walls were scaled.

Finally this year, we all battled awful weather to get to the centre to make festive pottery, kindly taught by our volunteer Erica. Everybody had the chance to create lovely Christmas tree decorations out of porcelain clay. Erica brought lots of different shapes of cookie cutters and also a variety of items to imprint into the clay such as tiny wooden snowflakes, lace and ferns. The original idea was for each member to make three decorations but somehow, this ran to 10 or more for the more prolific amongst us. Erica took the decorations home to fire in her special pottery kiln and then we threaded them all with ribbon or cord so that they could be hung on trees across the Island. Once we had packed everything away, various family members arrived at the Centre to join our younger members. We started with a family Christmas quiz, with a gooey chocolate pudding prize for the winning family. We then all enjoyed a lovely buffet with crackers and jokes too. We had a surprise visitor dressed all in red to deliver presents to our members and lastly, we had a couple of rounds of good old fashioned favourite Pass the Parcel. The turnout was fabulous and a wonderful day was enjoyed by all.

Our scheduled events for the first half of 2019 are as follows:

Saturday 12 th January	12.00- 3.00	3 course formal lunch at Sefton Hotel and boardgames
Saturday 9 th February	12.00- 3.00	Clay modelling, animation and Chinese take out
Wednesday 20 th February	1.00- 3.30	Trip to audio described film and Villa café for lunch and ice cream
Saturday 16 th March	11.00- 2.30	Lemon drizzle cake baking competition followed by pub lunch at Creg ny Baa
Wednesday 10 th April	12.00- 3.00	Climbing wall and McDonalds take out
Wednesday 17 th April	11.30- 3.30	Lunch at Peel Bowling Green Cafe and pony trekking at Ballahimmin
Saturday 27 th April	12.00- 3.00	Grove Museum with talk and lunch at the Grove café
Saturday 18 th May	12.00- 3.00	St Marks country park tour and lunch

Wednesday 29 th May	12.00- 3.00	Rock pooling with Manx Wildlife Trust and picnic on Port Erin beach
Saturday 15 th June	12.00- 3.00	Electric Tram to Snaefell and lunch at Ham and Egg cafe

If you are aged 25 and under and would like to attend any of the above activities, and have not received a form from us, please call Clare or Ellie on 674727 and we will get you signed up. All activities are free of charge and transport is provided.

Crime Stoppers

‘Feeling safe in our homes at night and as we go about our daily lives is a fundamental part of what makes the Isle of Man such a special place to live and work’, says Home Affairs Minister Bill Malarkey MHK.

The Chief Constable’s 2017-18 Annual Report confirms that the Isle of Man remains one of the safest places to live in the British Isles. So, in many ways we are fortunate here on the Isle of Man. However, no-one can afford

to be complacent and we need to support the police in helping us all stay safe.

Ideally everyone who thinks they have information about a crime or anti-social behaviour should provide that information to the police. But we all know that there are people who, for a variety of reasons, feel unwilling to do so. This is where Crimestoppers fulfils an important role.

So, what is Crimestoppers and what does it do?

Crimestoppers is an independent charity that gives people the power to speak up to stop crime, 100% anonymously, by phone or online, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Crimestoppers Isle of Man is a branch of the Crimestoppers charity, set up in the United Kingdom 30 years ago.

Crimestoppers is **not** the police; rather it provides ways to report crime and anti-social behaviour anonymously for anyone who feels unable to contact the police directly.

In addition, Crimestoppers shares advice on how to protect the people you care about from crime, so everyone can feel safe.

Giving information anonymously

Crimestoppers can be contacted by phone free on **0800 555 111,**

or by using a simple, anonymous online form on the Crimestoppers website at www.crimestoppers-uk.org

100% Anonymity Guaranteed

Trust and confidence in the complete anonymity Crimestoppers provides is its foundation stone. As its founder and Chair Lord Ashcroft says, "I am proud that in 30 years we have never broken our guarantee of anonymity. This promise is the key to our success."

Nobody will know you have helped us. The only person who knows you contacted us with information is you.

We **guarantee:**

- **you will not** be asked to reveal your name or any personal details
- we will listen to any information you have on a crime
- your call **will not** be recorded
- we have **no caller line display, no 1471 facility** and **have never traced a call**
- online reports have **the same level of anonymity** as phone calls
- our specially trained call agents will support you through the process and make sure your report **contains no information that could identify you**

- **we do not** make a note of gender, accents, apparent age or ethnicity of any caller
- even if you give personal details, they **will not be recorded**, and we will pass information to the relevant authority without revealing your identity.

Calls from the Isle of Man go directly to the Crimestoppers call centre in the UK, so there need be no concern that people might recognize your voice.

Social Media

You can follow our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/crimestoppers>), Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/crimestoppersuk>), Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/crimestopperstrust/>) and YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CrimestopperSUK>) to see information about our campaigns, rewards and advice on how you can keep safe and support us.

What happens to the information provided?

After receiving your call or a completed anonymous online form, Crimestoppers creates a report that brings together all the information you gave us, making sure it doesn't contain any information that could identify you.

Your report is sent to the relevant authority with the legal responsibility to investigate crimes. In the case of the Isle of Man this is to the Isle of Man Police.

When your report is given to them, they will:

- thoroughly research the information you have given in order to act on it,
- make sure that information is accurate and not given with the intention of 'setting someone up' and
- have other intelligence that supports the information received from us.

It takes time to research and investigate a crime, but your information can go a long way to helping the police make arrests.

Please Remember

Crimestoppers' message is simple. Speak Up. Stop Crime. Stay Safe. 100% anonymous. Always.

We won't ask your name.

We won't judge.

We will just listen to what you know and pass it on for you.

When you hang up the phone, or click send online, you're done.

0800 555 111

www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Mark Shimmin

Chair

Crimestoppers Isle of Man

First Point Community Portal

Some Peace of Mind Just in Case

The **First Point Community Portal** is a new safe way for you to store your details so that in an emergency, the police and other emergency services personnel can find out who you are, what your needs are, and how to get in touch with your loved ones sooner.

If you want to find out more, please contact Resource Officer Dave Wilson on **674727** or email **DWilson@mbws.org.im** He can help

you store your details and answer any questions you might have.

The Silver Line – a help line for older people

Need help?

Call ANYTIME on: **0800 4 70 80 90**

The Silver Line is the only free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Social Activities by Stacy Menton

Hello everyone, I hope you have all had a wonderful Christmas and New Year, enjoying all the festive celebrations and eating lots of luscious foods.

Our Christmas lunches at Corrin Court were again well attended with over 100 people throughout the 3 days. The cook, Mrs Clare Quayle did a fantastic job in catering for us all with a marvellous array of Christmas food followed by homemade mince pies and lots of chocolates.

Even Father Christmas made an appearance on each day to deliver presents. He brought much joy and laughter with him too!

We enjoyed various entertainments over the Christmas period including the Dhoon School Choir and Folk Band, St Ninian's Lower School Choir and Cronk-y-Berry School Choir. They sang some wonderful carols and Christmas songs as well as playing musical instruments. It was very much appreciated by us all and we look forward to any further visits in the future.

We would like to thank the Onchan Flower Club ladies for once again giving up their time to decorate our Christmas trees at the Centre. They do a fantastic job. Both trees looked amazing!

The Christmas Celebration at Corrin Court was a joyous afternoon. We would like to thank the Reverend Ian Prentice for holding the service and the wonderful Government Choir. Also many thanks to John Riley for his contribution of a more modern reading. Everyone really enjoyed the service, which was followed by

tea, coffee, homemade mince pies and shortbread.

The Christmas lunch at the Palace Hotel was a very happy event. The staff at the Palace were as attentive and helpful as always. The entertainment by the Rockits was fantastic, everyone enjoyed singing along to the varied music including some Christmas classics. I've got to add there were more people on the dance floor than I've seen during the 10 years I've been organising the event which was nice to see.

The main raffle raised £280 and a hamper which was kindly donated by one of our members, Anne Boyes, raised £237. The Society is so grateful for all your generosity and support.

Thank you to Mr & Mrs Walton from Castletown who donated a wonderful hamper full of goodies which raised a fabulous amount of money for our charity.

Just a reminder if you are already a member of the luncheon clubs and have your own transport please aim to arrive at the centre between 11:30am and 12:00pm as there may

not always be a staff member available to assist you before this time.

Spring Lunch

As we are still talking about our social events, please don't forget to put a note in your diary about the Spring Lunch which will be on Wednesday 1 May 2019 at the Ballacregga Cornmill, Laxey. We are hoping you will join us for another enjoyable day. The cost will be subsidised for our members at £10 and £20 for a friend or partner. It's a lovely opportunity to meet members and volunteers of Manx Blind Welfare. The last date for putting your name down is 26 April so please book as soon as possible as it will be on a first come first served basis. Transport will be available, if required, but obviously if you can make your own way it would be a great help. Please indicate if transport is required when booking. Corrin Court will be closed on the day of the Spring Lunch.

Please send a cheque made payable to Manx Blind Welfare Society at the time of booking, as collecting money on the day can be quite an onerous task.

The Menu is as follows:-

Starters

Tomato & Basil Soup

Trio of Melon
Served with a Spring coulis

Mains

Roasted Breast of Chicken
Served with a creamy mushroom Sauce

Slow cooked Manx Beef
Served with Yorkshire puddings

Mediterranean Penne Pasta
Tossed in cream, Parmesan and rocket

All above served with Roast Potatoes and
Seasonal Vegetables

Desserts

Sticky Toffee Pudding
Served with Manx Vanilla ice-cream

Homemade Vanilla Cheesecake
Served with fresh strawberry and mint

Tea & Coffee

Please let us know your menu choices at the time of booking and any dietary requirements. Further details about transport times and the entertainment will be provided in the next edition of Optic Topics

MBWS Audio library

If you use the internet, summaries of most of our books are on our website
<http://www.mbws.org.im/services/audio-library/>

If you need an up to date catalogue either MP3 only or MP3 and cassettes together, please let us know and we will forward one onto you.

Please find below quite a selection of new MP3 books. If there is a particular author or book you like please contact us and we will try our best to source it.

New MP3 books

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
FI8409	A Brighter Day Tomorrow	Pam	Evans
MM1506	A Christmas Railway Mystery	Edward	Marston
MM1488	A Close Run Thing	David	Donachie
MM1476	A Cursed Inheritance	Kate	Ellis
FI8414	A Cut Above	Millie	Gray
RO423	A Dark and Brooding Gentleman	Margaret	McPhee
MM1492	A Deadly Habit	Simon	Brett

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
MM1501	A Lethal Frost	Danny	Miller
FI8406	A Life Without You	Katie	Marsh
RO495	A Marriage of Convenience	Janet	Woods
MM1478	A Measure of Darkness	Johnathan & Jesse	Kellerman
MM1484	A Murder Too Soon	Michael	Jecks
MM1504	A Noise Downstairs	Linwood	Barclaay

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
MM1466	A Painted Doom	Kate	Ellis
FI8411	A Place to Call Home	Evie	Grace
RO493	A Respectable Woman	Susanna	Bavin
MM1483	Act of Vengeance	Michael	Jecks
FI8419	An Island Christmas	Jenny	Colgan
FI8403	As the Sun Breaks Through	Ellie	Dean
MM1500	Bad Luck	Linwood	Barclay
RO496	Bay Tree Cottage	Anna	Jacobs

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
FI8288	Betrayal	Martina	Cole
MM1485	Blind Defence	John	Fairfax
FI8418	Blood's Revolution	Angus	Donald
MM1509	Bloodmoon	Peter	Tremayne
FI8420	Burial of Ghosts	Anne	Clereves
MM1368	Changing the Odds	Jeff	Dowson
MM1518	Choked Off	Andrea	Frazer
FI8416	Christmas at Tuppenny Corner	Katie	Flynn
MM1519	Cold Case	Quintin	Jardine
MM1495	Crisis in the Cotswolds	Rebecca	Tope

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
MM1522	Dark Sacred Night	Michael	Connelly
RO489	Daughter of Dark River Farm	Terri	Nixon
MM1263	Death Du Jour	Kathy	Reichs
MM1467	Death is Not Enough	Karen	Rose
SF48	Doctor Who - City of Death	James	Goss
SF39	Doctor Who - Krikkit Men	James	Goss
SF40	Doctor Who - Men of War	Justin	Richards
SF41	Doctor Who - Rose	Russell T	Davies

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
SF42	Doctor Who - The Ark	Paul	Erickson
SF43	Doctor Who - The Day of the Doctor	Steven	Moffat
SF44	Doctor Who - The Mark of the Rani	Pip & Jane	Baker
SF49	Doctor Who - The Master Collection	Various	Artists
SF45	Doctor Who - The Monsters Collecton	Various	Authors
SF46	Doctor Who - The Thing From The Sea	Paul	Magrs
SF47	Doctor Who - Twice Upon a Time	Paul	Cornrell

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
RO486	Duke's Diamonds	M. C.	Beaton
MM1505	Fall Down Dead	Stephen	Booth
MM1482	Fugative From The Grave	Edward	Marston
FI8399	Gteyfriars House	Emma	Fraser
FI8421	Head Wound	Judith	Cutler
FI8402	Her Mother's Daughter	Evie	Grace
BM382	I am I am I am	Maggie	O'Farrell
MM1516	Iceberg	Clive	Cussler
MM1498	Intrigue in Covent Garden	Susanna	Gregory
MM1479	Last Time I Lied	Ridley	Sager
MM1487	Lethal White	Robert	Galbraith

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
MM1472	Look for Me	Lisa	Gardner
MM1511	Lord Harrington and the Christmas Mystery	Lynn	Florkiewicz
MM1507	Lost Creed	Alex	Kava
BM365	Maggie Smith a Biography	Michael	Coveney
MM1515	Mayday!	Clive	Cussler
RO485	Million Love Songs	Carole	Matthew
FI8415	Molly's Christmas Orphans	Carol	Rivers
FI8392	Monday's Child	Linda	Finlay
MM1508	Murder for Nothing	Veronica	Heley
MM1517	Murder Out of Tune	Lesley	Cookman
FI1837	Nation	Terry	Pratchett

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
MM1449	Night Moves	Jonathan	Kellerman
MM1514	Night Probe	Clive	Cussler
MM1489	Nighthawk	Clive	Cussler
FI8396	One Cornish Summer	Liz	Fenwick
FI8405	One Special Village	Anna	Jacobs
MM1469	Only the Dead Can Tell	Alex	Grey
MM1520	Open Your Eyes	Paula	Daly
FI8360	Pacific Vortex!	Clive	Cussler
FI8412	Peace Comes to Honeyfield	Anna	Jacobs
MM1513	Raise The Titanic	Clive	Cussler

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
MM1475	Raven Black	Ann	Cleeves
MM1473	Russian Roulette	Sara	Sheridan
MM1496	Shadow Play	Cynthia	Harrod-Eagles
MM1510	Shell Game	Sara	Paretsky
MM1422	Sleeping in the Ground	Peter	Robinson
MM1474	Snap	Belinda	Bauer
BM305	Some Sunny Day	Dame Vera	Lynn
MM1465	Sunburn	Laura	Lippman
MM1491	Tall Order	Stephen	Leather
FI8397	Templar Silks	Elizabeth	Chadwick
MM1497	The Baby Snatcher	Ann	Cleeves

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
FI8394	The Cornish Dressmaker	Nicola	Pryce
MM1486	The Crow Trap	Ann	Cleeves
FI8400	The Death of Mrs Westaway	Ruth	Ware
RO497	The Desirable Duchess	M. C.	Beaton
MM1471	The Friend	Dorothy	Koomson
FI8401	The Hideaway	Sheila	O'Flanagan
MM1464	The Killing Habit	Mark	Billingham
FI8393	The Liverpool Matchgirl	Lyn	Andrews
MM1503	The Long Silence	Gerard	O'Donovan
FI8404	The Mallen Girl	Catherine	Cookson

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
RO498	The Mallen Litter	Catherine	Cookson
MM1499	The Mariage Hearse	Kate	Ellis
MM1480	The Old Religeon	Martyn	Waites
FI8390	The Palace of Lost Dreams	Charlotte	Betts
RO494	The Paper Princess	M. C.	Beaton
MM1493	The Plague Maiden	Kate	Ellis
BM383	The Prisoner's Defence	Ann-Marie	Einhaus
MM1477	The Punishment She Deserves	Elizabeth	George
RO488	The Rest of Me	Katie	Marsh

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
FI8410	The Scool at the Top of the Dale	Gervase	Phinn
RO499	The Sins of Lady Dacey	Beaton	M. C.
FI8417	The Sister's Secret	Jennie	Felton
FI8407	The Songbirds of Collier Row	Jennifer	Hart
RO490	The Spark Girl's Promise	Fiona	Ford
NF146	The Spy and the Traitor	Ben	Macintyre
FI8398	The Viscounts Revenge	M. C.	Beaton
MM1490	The Wanderer	Michael	Ridpath

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
FI8422	This Beautiful Life	Katie	Marsh
RO491	Till The Boys Come Home	Cynthia	Harrod-Eagles
MM1481	Twenty-One Days	Anne	Perry
MM1502	Two Kinds of Truth	Michael	Connelly
MM1521	Typhoon Fury	Clive	Cussler
MM1470	Under Attack	Edward	Marston
FI8391	Victoria	Daisy	Goodwin
RO492	Victory Girls	Helen	CCarey
MM1512	Vixen 03	Clive	Cussler
RO487	Walking Back to Happiness	June	Francis
FI8408	We'll Meet Again	Katie	Flynn

Item Number	Title	Author Forenames	Author Surname
FI8395	When Midnight Comes	Beryl	Mattews
MM1494	Wild Fire	Ann	Cleeves
MM1468	Wobble to Death	Peter	Lovesey
FI8413	You Are My Sunshine	Katie	Flynn

Isle of Man Fund for the Blind report by Debbie Thomson

We have a busy year coming up with a number of new events within our schedule. The following events will all be held at Corrin Court in Onchan.

We start the year with our Quiz Night. This ever popular event is on February 8th with the quizmaster Phil and Brenda Kennaugh. A light supper will be provided. Tickets are just £7.00 from MBWS and booking is recommended. Our Spring Coffee Morning is on Friday March 22nd at 10.30am, tickets are £1.50 and include

refreshments and biscuits, with our fantastic cake stall, raffle and fancy goods.

A new event for this quarter is a Pudding Party on Friday 12th April at 7pm with tickets just £7.00. Have your dinner before you come along and enjoy an abundance of puddings and desserts – bring one along yourself and let others sample your culinary delights! Entertainment will be provided but it will be a great night to meet up with friends old and new and eat lots of cake! To reserve your place at this sumptuous evening call 674727.

Volunteer co-ordinator's/fundraisers report by Debbie Thomson

In October I was lucky enough to attend the Talking News Federation Conference in Leamington Spa to gain some insight into how other talking newspapers across the UK operate and to enhance our current service. Following this we have now introduced a few exciting new changes to the news service!

Online service

The weekly news recording will now be available on the internet. It will be available by Friday at <http://manx.talking->

news.info/listen/latest/ManxRecordedNews or you can navigate to it via www.mbws.org.im through 'Our Services'. The website will hold the last four editions of the News plus audio versions of Optic Topics and Manx Life

Alexa

If you have an Amazon Alexa enabled device you can listen to the news.

To utilise the Alexa skill – use the following command prompts:-

Alexa, enable My Talking Newspaper

Alexa, open My Talking Newspaper (she'll give you some basic instructions the first time you open her!)

Play Manx Recorded News Service (or optic Topics/Manx life) – it will automatically play the latest edition and will remember where you were if you exit the skill.

Once it's all enabled then you can subscribe and be notified when the next edition is live. You can also listen to other talking newspapers from around the UK – simply say which town you want to hear the news from and if there is one nearby it will play it.

Magazines and extra content

Not only do we issue the news on a weekly USB stick but we also include extra content. For a while we have been including Manx Radio programming and the BBC Radio 4 In Touch programme but to further enhance the news service we are now including some magazines every week. These have included Woman's Weekly, New Scientist, Gardeners World and Top Gear. The technology behind the news service means that if you do not wish to listen to an item you can skip it!

We will not be removing the current format of listening using the postal service – we are enhancing it so people with different technologies can listen.

If you'd like to trial the postal news service, which is free, with the regular magazines attached, please get in touch.

RNIB Report by Julie Lee – Services Manager IOM

There have been some internal changes within RNIB but these have not affected the services that are provided here on the Isle of Man. We thought it a timely reminder to let you know

about our services and how you can access them.

We have a small team here based at Corrin Court and our Eye Clinic Liaison Officer based at the eye clinic at Nobles.

The team is as follows:

Julie Lee – Manager

Carole White – Rehabilitation Officer and Low Vision Therapist

Tanya Shimmin (and Bailey) – Eye Clinic Liaison Officer

Eva Gay – Administrator

We provide Rehabilitation and Low Vision services and an ECLO service. The Rehabilitation service is available to anyone who is having difficulty seeing. We can help with the practical everyday things such as getting out and about, cooking, accessing welfare benefits, communication skills – such as Braille or keyboard skills, and personal care. Call us on 677626

Our Low Vision Service provides an assessment of your functional vision (that is how you use your vision) and can issue aids to help with reading or watching the t.v. for example. You can be referred to the low vision service by your Optometrist or

Consultant at the eye clinic. If you think you would benefit from a visit to the service, please talk to your Optometrist or Consultant or call us for further information on 677626. The Eye Clinic Liaison Officer is based within the eye clinic at Nobles. Tanya can offer advice and information on a range of subjects that may assist you. If you have been newly diagnosed with an eye condition and are needing support, please do see Tanya at the eye clinic or give her a call on 650420.

Manx Macular Support Group

Registered Charity 1258 Manx Macular Support Group

LOSS OF CENTRAL VISION

On behalf of the Trustee and all 72 members may we wish everyone reading this article a prosperous and peaceful New Year. Most of us enjoy stability in our lives and both Nobles and Aintree have struggled to deliver a constant service in 2018 despite many problems that have arisen and in the main overcome. In my own case I was due a new slow release steroid implant in my right eye last August. Since October I've been to Aintree three times and am about to go for that implant to the right eye later this week. This is due to

circumstances beyond everyone's control and despite their best efforts but in the main due to the collapse of the Construction Company Carillion and leaving the new Liverpool hospital unfinished.

To bring you up to date about Aintree the latest situation was explained to me when I visited on the 21st of December. The good news is that Leo Makris has returned to Aintree on a minimum but extendable six months basis. He told me he will continue his new job working in Southport but by combining his time between both locations he will give cover whilst Mr. Kamal remains on indefinite sick leave. Work is resuming on the new Hospital and it is now forecast to be up and running within two years.

At this juncture it is appropriate to thank Oliver Radford for all he has done to help expedite matters. As it happens he is moving on and took over responsibility for the A&E Department on the 1st of January this year. His replacement, James, who we've yet to meet is from across but Oliver has promised to introduce us to him once he has settled in.

In the meantime Oliver confirmed that the current extended satellite service arrangement

with Aintree has now been put in place for at least 12 more months, hopefully giving sufficient time for the planned new service to be introduced.

For those that haven't been on the new Patient Transfer service from home to Ronaldsway and back I can say it seems as efficient as the Taxi service was beforehand. I understand it is only being trialed in the North at present and the only visible difference is it's now a silver grey Mercedes 17 seater with bright orange lights down the side. Pulling up and at in my case at 0450 in the morning. Having used it four times the only word of advice I would give is to alert your neighbors the first time you use it who in my case awoke and wondered what was happening at such an early time in the morning.

Of course this service is being run by Bus Vannin and any member of the public can be collected and taken to the Airport (or brought home) for £10 a person per trip. It runs throughout the day if you have a later flight and you simply phone Bus Vannin to book your pickup point and time if going privately. If not then Patient Transfer arranges it. If paying, you do so when boarding paying the driver by cash or by card.

Moving on the MMSG was part of those charities involved in the annual Flu Jab day in St. Paul's Ramsey. Whilst manning our stand it was clearly seen to be as popular as in previous years. Sadly they ran out of the "over 65's" injections by early afternoon on the first day. One of the attending doctors explained that this was because this year it had been identified there were various strains of the Flu Virus and the UK Government decided the best way of giving protection was to classify those being treated by age and therefore dosage.

So instead of one vaccine good for all as in the past the same manufacturer had to produce three separate and different vaccines. One type for 18 years and under, one for the 18 to 64 year olds, and the last one for 65 year olds and upwards. Hence by lunchtime on the first day we still had plenty of the first two types but had run out of the 65 year olds and over.

The result was that many over 65 had to be turned away but told they hoped to receive more doses once the manufacturer had caught up with demand. This is a brilliant free service provided by the Doctors and staff at Ramsey Group Practice. Despite the shortage those that received the injection are grateful for

such an annual service and well appreciate the demands upon the staff administering the injections.

It was the first time we displayed our new Charity name and being placed alongside the queue for injections meant we were engaged in conversation with those waiting in line about all things Macular and the problems it raises, throughout the day.

For anyone reading this that already has an eye condition it would have astounded you to see how many spoke to us on behalf a "friend". Describing symptoms we suspected were their own but our advice was constant. The first thing to do is go and see your optician to have an eye test. I was amazed at the number who hadn't been near an optician for years, so we handed out Amsler charts and Macular pamphlets along with the request to book an appointment immediately with their local optician. Surprisingly enough this lack of having an eye test was more prevalent in children and teenagers as many of the Mums we spoke to didn't think it was important. We hope we changed that opinion.

Yet again we had many a conversation about the damage that sugary drinks caused in

macular terms and explained how any more than 6 teaspoons or 24 grams of free sugar a day is potentially very dangerous as far as vision goes. If you remember we mentioned this theme some time ago and we ask again PLEASE, if nothing else, you draw to the attention of your friends and family the threat to their eye sight by over loading the system with sugar. One can of "Coke" has two days of allowable sugar. Remember it is said that excess sugar in the system acts like an acid on the capillaries behind the eyes. These are the weakest in the body hence their vulnerability and why the numbers being diagnosed are continuing to increase.

In November and as mentioned Oliver Radford kindly attended our monthly meeting and gave us all the latest information about Nobles "Ophthalmic services" and the continued contractual relationship with Aintree. He also told us and we wish him all the best as he takes up his new managerial appointment heading up the A&E Department at Nobles.

December saw over 40 members attend the annual Xmas luncheon which this year was held in the Pavilion at Douglas Golf Club. A pleasant venue that suited all those that

attended. Resulting in a good time was had by all.

So another year passes and we look forward to taking our Group forward. This year we will be endeavoring to contact those that may benefit from being in touch with a society such as ours. A recent UK survey showed only 25% of those diagnosed with a Macular condition had any further contact with organisations such as the Manx Macular Support Group. That means 75% of those diagnosed could or perhaps would like to be in touch but don't know how to. If you know someone like this and they would like to please ask them to contact me in the first instance.

One initiative will be to see how we can arrange to bring such potential members who are house bound along to some of our meetings.

Of course our AGM is due on Friday the 18th of January in the MBWS starting at 1100hrs. Anyone is welcome to attend the AGM which we anticipate being no more than 15 minutes duration as this is the first AGM for our new Charity. Alex Koyfman will also be attending to give an update and presentation following on the AGM.

She is from "First Point". Dave Wilson and I have already given a brief outline about this initiative to the members and due to the interest shown Alex is happily attending to fully brief us on the potential of this new system and the benefits it can accrue. It promotes "Peace of mind during an emergency". Working with and in collaboration with the Police, Fire Brigade and Ambulance services plus many other worthwhile organisations such as the MBWS it is offering a free service to help give those enrolled and their next of kin better safety and more security of mind.

This presentation is again open to all and due to start at 1.15 pm lasting about 30 minutes including a Q&A session with Alex circulating afterwards to answer any private questions. Our full agenda of events will be decided by the members again and a questionnaire will be handed out at the AGM for suggestions to be forwarded to the Trustees no later than February 15th the date of our February meeting. After which we will publish the upcoming events which as mentioned previously are open to all.

Nigel Malpass - Group Chairman

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The VIP Store

What a wonderful 2018 was. All thanks to the generosity of volunteers who give up one of the most precious things we have – Time! Then of course you, our members and friends, who have donated some beautiful and interesting items.

It is always worth reminding everyone that as well as women's wear, we sell men's and children's clothing, books, CDs and DVDs, bric a brac and household furnishings.

Volunteering in a charity shop can be very interesting and rewarding. We can find some amazing finds in the sorting room from a donation bag. If you fancy joining us for a "journey of discovery" in the stock room or you enjoy helping customers, why not contact us for a chat and see what opportunities are available.

Sometimes donations do not make it into the shop as when we check each item we feel it can raise more at auction or in the classified

section of the paper. We will say who the vendor is so people know that they are supporting the Charity.

The Winter Sale began during the 1st week of January but as with the previous years we plan to have a number of “Flash” sales during the year. These will be advertised on our Facebook page VIPstoreIOM

Donation Stations

Would you like to donate without leaving your office? Why not try one of our donations stations. The 85 centimetre-tall freestanding cardboard collection points are available free to any business which would like to make it easier for staff to donate to charity. The Society will deliver the donation station and can pick up donations whenever required.

Recipe

Slow Cooker Meatballs

Prep: 1 hour serves 4-5

If you have a slow cooker at home, why not try this delicious recipe?

Ingredients

1 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 onion, finely chopped
2 carrots, finely diced
2 celery sticks, finely diced
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
500g carton tomato passata
2 tbsp chopped parsley

For the meatballs

400g lean turkey mince
4 tbsp porridge oats
Pinch paprika
1 garlic clove, crushed
Spray of oil

Method

Heat the slow cooker if necessary. Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan and add the onion, carrots, celery and garlic and fry gently for a

minute. Pour in the passata, add the parsley and stir, then transfer the lot to the slow cooker.

To make the meatballs, tip the mince into a large bowl. Add the oats, paprika, garlic and plenty of black pepper, and mix everything together with your hands. Divide the mixture into 20 lumps about the size of a walnut and roll each piece into a meatball. Spray or run a non-stick pan with a little oil and gently cook the meatballs until they start to brown. Add them to the tomato base and cook on Low for 5 hours. Serve over rice or pasta if you like, or with a green salad.

Recipe from Good Food books

Luncheon club calendar for February to April For further information about attending the Luncheon Clubs please contact Stacy Menton or Ellie Baker at the Centre.

TUESDAY

February 5, 12, 19, 26

March 5, 12, 19, 26

April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

WEDNESDAY

February 6, 13, 20, 27

March 6, 13, 20, 27

April 3, 10, 17, 24

THURSDAY

February 7, 14, 21, 28

March 7, 17, 21, 28

April 4, 11, 18, 25

Special dates for your diary

Friday 8 February – Quiz Night

Monday 18 February – Volunteers Afternoon

Friday 22 March – Spring Coffee Morning

Friday 12 April – Pudding Party

Wednesday 1 May – Spring Lunch at

Ballacregga Cornmill, Laxey

Saturday 29 June – Summer Ball

Donations

Thanks to everyone who gives us donations because as you are all aware the society is entirely reliant upon fundraising, donations and legacies.

Sickness

Please remember that if you are suffering with a sickness and diarrhoea type illness, it is essential that you do not attend the centre until 48 hours after your last episode. If however you require assistance, please contact us immediately.

Complaints Procedure

Whilst we appreciate the positive feedback that we receive on a regular basis, there may be times when we have not provided an acceptable standard of service. If you do have a problem or concern and you are able to make a member of staff aware of it at the time, they will endeavour to resolve the matter quickly. If this is not possible then we have a complaints procedure available on request in your preferred format.

A standard digital version of Optic Topics can be obtained from the Manx Blind Welfare Society on request.