



OIE VOALDYN

Oievoaldyn.com



MANX MAY DAY AND EVENING FIRE FESTIVAL
SUNDAY 4TH MAY 2025

#oievoaldyn  /oievoaldyn



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FAILLT ERRIU DYS OIE VOALDYN 2025 VOISH YN SKIMMEE

A WARM WELCOME TO THE OIE VOALDYN MANX MAY FIRE FESTIVAL 2025



This year marks the fourth Oie Voaldyn Manx May Fire Festival. Growing from the seed of an idea in 2018 (with a few hiccups along the way!), the festival continues to flourish with visitors coming from all over the Island and a growing international visitor presence.

Oie Voaldyn has a cast of over eighty people and new characters from Manx folklore are being added every year. The festival is open to all and we hope plenty of people will buy wax torches and join in the public procession which follow the core parades of Winter & Summer.

We will be inviting our audience to join in singing 'Shee Erriu' towards the end of night to send a message of hope and peace to the rest of the world. Shee Erriu means 'Blessing of Peace to the Four Winds' in the Manx language – please do join in!

The Oie Voaldyn Festival could not happen without the support of our headline sponsors Element Isle, Peel Town Commissioners, Culture Vannin, Domestic Event Fund and Biosphere Isle of Man.



Credit: Simon Park

The contributing advertisers in this programme will help to sustain this free festival for the future. We give thanks to all our supporters and contributors. All donations will be gratefully received and will help us to continue the project in future years. Information about how you can help with that are shown towards the back of this programme on page 37.

MESSAGE FROM OUR HEADLINE SPONSOR



At Element Isle, we are incredibly proud to support Oie Voaldyn, the Isle of Man's vibrant May Fire Festival. This celebration of our Island's rich heritage and the welcoming of summer resonates deeply with our passion for Manx culture and traditions. We look forward to joining the community in Peel for this spectacular event on May 4th. Best wishes, Scott, Claire and all the team at Element Isle.



Culture Vannin is proud to continue supporting Oie Voaldyn in celebrating Manx May traditions.

This festival is a wonderful reminder of how our community comes together to keep our culture alive – sharing the stories, music and customs that make the Isle of Man a special place to call home.

Ta Culture Vannin goaill moyrn ass cur cooney reesht da Oie Voaldyn as yn ardeailley t'ad jannoo jeh tradishoonyn Boaldyn Vannin. Ta'n feailley ny hampleyr yindyssagh jeh'n aght ta'n pobble ain cheet dy cheilley dy reayll y cultoor ain bio - goaill ayn cooidjagh ayns ny skeealyn, kiaull, as shenn chliaghtaghyn ta cur dooin wheesh jeh Manninaghys er-lheh yn Ellan ain.

CHRIS THOMAS MHK, CHAIR / CAIRLIAGH



Peel Town Commissioners are delighted to be supporting Oie Voaldyn once more. We are especially pleased to see this dramatic and exciting event becoming more accessible, with a smaller performance earlier in the day for children. It's also wonderful to see the festival involving more people in Peel, with associated events happening throughout the town over the weekend and a special dance performance by Peel's very own Manx dancing group, Skeddan Jiarg. We're certain that everyone will enjoy the thrilling spectacle, whether they're participating in the show or parades, or watching (safely!) from behind the barriers. And, after last year's dismal summer weather, we're really hoping that Summer wins in 2025!

OPEN
FROM
9:30
EVERDAY

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SUPPORTING
THE OIE VOALDYN

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ALL DAY MENU

SERVING FROM 12 - LATE

SMALL PLATES - BURGERS- SEAFOOD
STEAKS & MEATS - SALADS - MEAT FREE
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BREAKFAST MENU SERVED FROM 9:30 - 11:30

A BIT OF BACKGROUND...

The Oie Voaldyn festival is based on an old Manx tradition and reflects the Island's unique cultural heritage with a fusion of past, present and future.

This evening's story takes its inspiration from descriptions of mock battles which took place between Summer and Winter in the Island's ancient capital of Castletown. A similar mock battle and ceremony to drive out the Winter and welcome the Summer was first described in 1555 by Olaus Magnus. The custom in the Isle of Man is thought to be a remnant from the time when we were under Scandinavian rule.

Oie Voaldyn (May Eve) was believed to have been a time when the veil between worlds was at its thinnest and when people and animals were vulnerable to the

influence of malevolent forces - therefore we mortals needed extra protection:

- Yellow flowers were strewn across thresholds and over doorways.
- On the hills gorse fires were lit, horns blown and drums beaten to drive away and scare off the witches and malevolent spirits.
- The cattle and livestock were driven through the smoke of the fires to cleanse and protect them.
- Crosses made from the broken twigs of the Cuirn tree (Rowan) were bound with sheep's wool. The crosses were put over the doorways of homes and barns, attached to the tails of cattle and hidden on fishing boats.

For more information about Manx customs and folklore visit www.culturevannin.im/manxfolklore/





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JOIN IN!

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED TODAY...

If you would like to join in the parade, torches can be purchased for those aged 18 and over at the Oie Voaldyn merchandising and information stall up to 8.30pm.



You will need to pick your side – choose if you want to support the Ben Rein y Touree (Summer Queen) or Ben Rein Y Gheuree (Winter Queen). Summer strollers will start their journey from Peel Hill, winter wanderers will set off from the old Creg Malin.



Or you can just watch and listen to the story unfold on the shore line and cheer on your chosen champion as they battle it out.



THERE'S LOTS OF OTHER THINGS HAPPENING DURING THE DAY...

- ◆ Just chill with the live music
- ◆ Pick your side and get your face painted
- ◆ Make a summery headdress to wear
- ◆ Say hello to the folklore folk
- ◆ Learn the Shee Eriu song for a sing-along later
- ◆ Have a go at poi spinning
- ◆ Make a crosh cuirn to hang above your door to bring good wishes to your household throughout the coming year



See page 10 & 11 for a full timetable of events.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING WHEN

2pm - 9pm

Live music on the Culture Vannin stage

- Please see the board by the stage for the running order on the day

2pm - 6pm

Cod & Castle Craft Tent on the Groyne

- Make a summer flower headdress (small charge)
- Make a bell bracelet (small charge)
- Make a winter pendant (small charge)
- Summer or Winter face decoration
- Colouring competition

2pm - 5pm

On the sea shore

- Story telling
- Make a traditional Crosh Cuirn with Rowan and wool, with John Dog Callister

2pm - 4pm

Corrin Hall next to Peel Cathedral

- Join The Manx Herbalist Jane Prescott to learn about Manx healing herbs and the folklore associated with them. (Fee payable, pre-bookable on Eventbrite)

4pm - 5pm

Oie Voaldyn Beg

- Cheer on the kids as they parade from Fenella Beach to Weatherglass Corner in their finest summer and winter costumes. Free for all to join in.
- Join hands with us to break the record for the biggest Oie Voaldyn dance on record, with the help of the talented Skeddán Jiarg

6.30 - 7pm

On the sea shore

- Learn to spin poi with Skimmee Aile and Bring the Fire Project



WHAT'S HAPPENING WHEN

2pm – 8.45pm At the Oie Voaldyn Stand on Weatherglass Corner

- Make a wish or send a message of goodwill at the Oie Voaldyn Tree
- Sign up to carry a wax torch in the evening procession
- Buy your (safe & solar powered) kids' fire torch
- Make a donation!

6pm – 8pm Along the promenade

Meet the characters – come and say hello to the Summer and Winter Queens and their champions. Meet Fynoderee, Teeval, Tarroo Ushtey, Glashtyn, the two Feeaghs Huginn and Muninn, and the Moddey Dhoo.

9pm – 10pm Oie Voaldyn Fire Festival

A fire will be lit on Peel Hill to signal the start of the proceedings – look left and right into the distance as the torchlight processions make their way to the shore. See the Summer and Winter Queens, their champions and their loyal supporters gather to make their demands. Cheer on your favourite champion as Summer challenges Winter for supremacy.

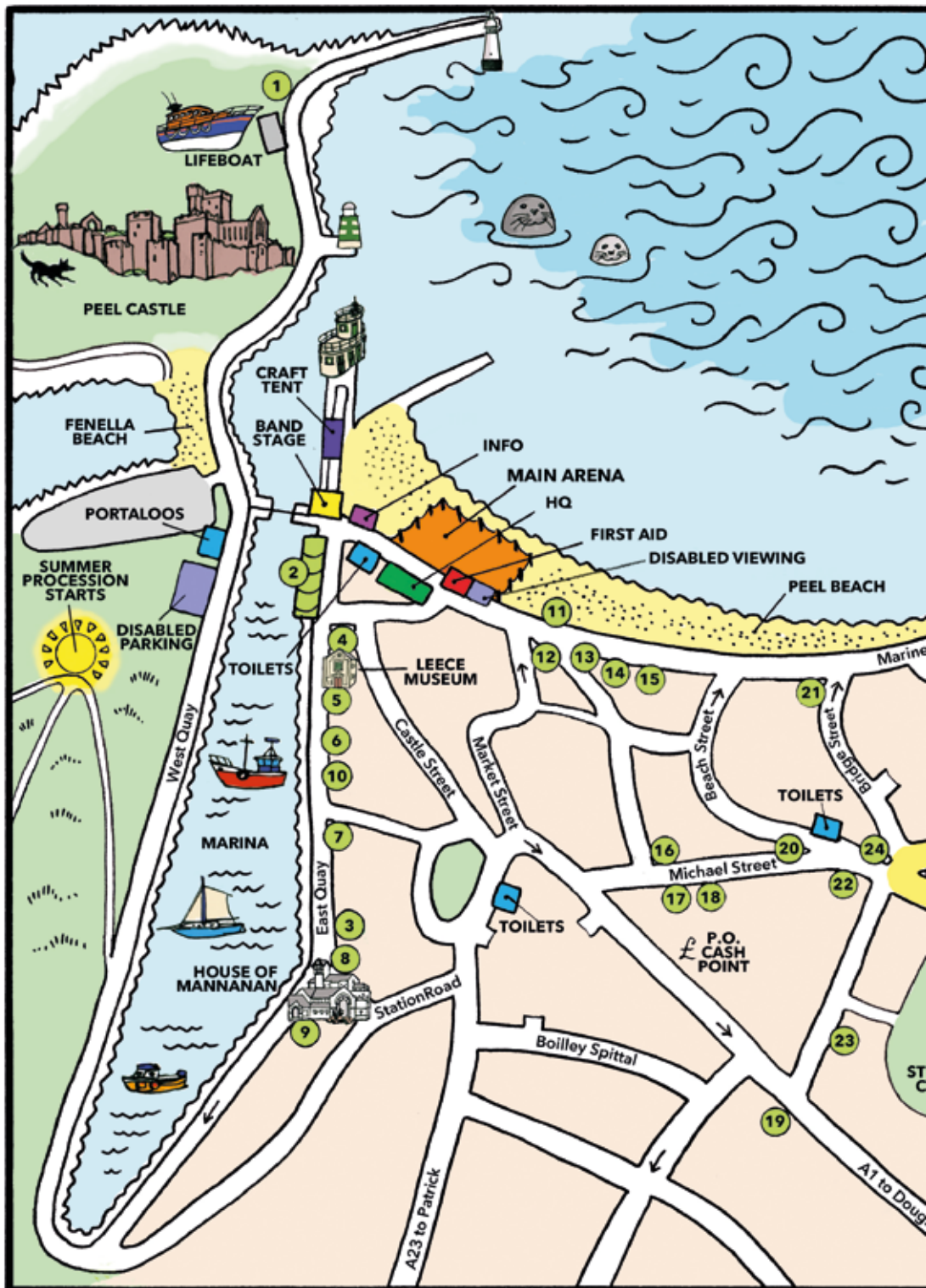
We take a moment or two for quiet reflection as the livestock is cleansed in the smoke of the fires; blessings are given and hopefully the spirits are appeased for another year.

Now it's time to party as our fire dancers spin their magic for us.

10pm Firework Finale

Food and drink available throughout the day from 2pm.







WINTER
PROCESSION
STARTS

MAIN
CAR PARK

A4 to RAMSEY

FOOD/DRINK OUTLETS

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. FOOD CAFE | 16. FOOD/SANDWICHES |
| 2. FOOD STALLS | 17. CHINESE FOOD |
| 3. BAR | 18. FOOD CAFE |
| 4. PUB | 19. PUB |
| 5. FISH & CHIPS | 20. FOOD TAKEAWAY |
| 6. CHINESE FOOD | 21. FOOD CAFE |
| 7. RESTAURANT | 22. INDIAN FOOD |
| 8. PUB | 23. SANDWICH TAKEAWAY |
| 9. FOOD CAFE | 24. FOOD TAKEAWAY |
| 10. MANX KIPPERS | 25. PIZZA |
| 11. FOOD CAFE | 26. FISH & CHIPS |
| 12. PUB | 27. FOOD TAKEAWAY |
| 13. FOOD CAFE | 28. FOOD CAFE |
| 14. FOOD CAFE | 29. FOOD SUBWAY |
| 15. FISH & CHIPS | 30. FOOD CAFE |

OIE VOALDYN **MANX MAY FIRE FESTIVAL**
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MOONIER YN TOUREE

THE SUMMER FOLK

'DREST IN THE GAYEST AND BEST MANNER'

Ben Rein Y Touree: (Queen of Summer)

The emblem of the beauty of Summer and representing the maiden.

Billey Cuirn: (Rowan Tree)

The Summer Queen's bridegroom and the embodiment of the restorative and healing protective powers of Summer.

Thalloo as Aer: (Land and Air)

The Summer Queen's personal elemental protectors.

Champion Y Touree: (Summer's Champion)

The Summer Queen's champion to vanquish the power of Winter so Summer can flourish and prosper.

Teeval: (Princess of the Ocean)

A powerful royal mermaid (Ben-Varrey) who advised the Irish warrior Conchubar to have her image and name fashioned on to a shield by Culann the Smith so that he would be invincible in battle.

Flora:

The guardian, protector and nurturer of the plant kingdom.

Fauna:

The guardian, protector and nurturer of the animal kingdom.

Phynoderree/Fynoderee:

The furry satyr, said to have been a fallen fairy who secretly helps the farmers by herding in the stock and gathering in the harvest, also known to aid fishermen by repairing their fishing nets and boats.

Billey Darragh: (Oak Tree)

King of the trees who connects the sky to the earth and offers wisdom, knowledge, protection and healing to all.



TARROO USHTEY

Among the strange immortals of our land,
Mona's sweet isle, long famed
in verse and song,

A creature that is seen when moon is full,
Yn Tarroo Ushtey, or the Water Bull,
A denizen of marshes, there among
The reeds and rushes would he take his stand
'Mid clammy mists and vapours. So with bland
Unwinking eyes he started out to the hills,
Lonely and secret, none his lot to share,
Opening his snowy muzzle on the air
To bellow faintly as from fancied hills,
Or other bovine fancy to command.

Often when summer's heat gave place to cool
Chill breath of autumn and sun's white fire
Mellowed to golden glow, he could be seen
With strong head lifted, and the silky sheen
Of snowy flanks would glimmer in the mire,
Ere he would fade into the silent pool
Among the slates and bushes of Barrule.
'Twas said by some he waited to devour
Some night wayfarer should
he chance to stray
Too near the pool, or e'en the waterway
Or river, at some dark and lonely hour.
And some said who believed it was a fool.

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MOONIER YN GHEUREE

THE WINTER FOLK

'DREST IN WOOLLEN HOODS, FURR TIPPETTS'

Ben Rein Y Gheuree: (Queen of Winter)

With a heart of the purest ice.

Floag Sniaghteen: (Tiny Snowflake)

The snow princess creates snow storms to protect her Queen from the Summer company.

Champion Y Gheuree: (Winter's Champion)

The Winter Queen's champion to defend her power.

Berree Dhone: (Witch)

The Winter Queen's magician to protect and guide her and help keep the forces of Summer at bay.

Rio as Sniaghtey: (Ice and Snow)

The Winter Queen's watery assistants to help her govern and control the earth.

Moddey Doo: (Black Dog)

The most famous supernatural resident of Peel, the mysterious Moddey doo. See him awoken from the bowels of Peel Castle led by his last victim and guardian for all eternity.

Feeagh Doo: (Black Raven)

Odin had two ravens that brought him all the 'skeet' of the world. They were Huginn (Thought) and Muninn (Memory). The raven is still part of the Island's present identity and past Scandinavian rule as it is still represented on the coats of arms.

Taroo Ushtey: (Water Bull)

A nimble bull that looks much like any other except for a shinier coat, sharp ears and a whirry sound. Usually found in the marshy 'curragh' areas of the Island and grazing with normal herds (to the fury of the farmer's bull.) They can be controlled with a rowan stick.

Ben Chraue: (Bone Woman)

The Winter Queen's shaman, healer, Caillagh and crone. An emblem of the deformity of winter.

Caillagh ny Groamagh: (Crone)

She is associated with Laa Breeshey. The veiled one, gloomy witch, blue hag of winter, bone mother: "Older than my teeth younger than my tongue."



MODDEY DOO

"Beware the pad of heavy paw"
Bade dying soldier, his last implore.
On Patrick's Isle there prowls a hound
By castle walls no longer bound.
Coal black coat, now tinged with grey
"Look not upon him!" wise ones say.
The Moddey Doo with blood red stare
Would change the fate of those who dare.
Winter, Summer mock their fight
Oie Voaldyn's fires warm hearts this night
While Manx folks sing to herald May,
Their course may change with turn of day.
So guard, dear friends, this May anew
Call, "Fow Royd! Fow Royd!" Moddey Doo.

Isobel Simonds

CAILLAGH NY GROAMACH

At Imbolc I go to gather sticks to build a fire to warm me,

The longer the fire burns the longer winter will last,

If the ditch is empty of water and dry fuel abounds, a wet spring it will be,

If the ditch be full of water with no good wood to burn, a fine spring I forecast.

I am the necessary winter.

As this season turns to change my time is near,

Though I do not leave you with a whimper,

At Hop- tu- Naa as the wheel again turns I will reappear.

Anna Fargher



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YN SKIMMEE AILE FIRE TEAM

Friend or foe? Fire has always fascinated us; it warms the soul but burns the flesh. Against all odds, man learnt to tame its flame, reviving it night after night to cook food for nourishing the flesh, and to gather around it to tell tales to nourish the soul.

Some of us choose to go beyond and befriend the fire, playing with the flames for the amazement of all. Whether dancing with the flame or spinning sparks, our elders' fascination is revived in this art.

Ste, team leader of Skimmee Aile Oie Festival Fire Spinners and the Summer Queen's champion says: "The night of Summer is upon us and I am glad and privileged to represent the Summer's fighting flame with the excellent team of Skimmee Aile. We have new and old members, all dedicated and excited about performing in this festival of fire. Battling flame and sword, throwing light and shadow, I hope we please the spectator's eye, whether they are observing in person or in spirit."

And if fire is your friend, get involved in the fire parade as a torch bearer. Who knows, it may lead you closer to the flame than you may think.... If you would like to try your hand in future, please contact us on info@skimmeeale.com

Gwenaël LaSirène

BRING THE FIRE PROJECT STORY

We are delighted to welcome Bring the Fire Project to the Oie Voaldyn Manx May Fire Festival this year. Bring the Fire Project is a Liverpool based collective of fire dancers, circus skills teachers and flow arts promoters and was founded in 2012 by passionate fire artist Szymon Mamys.

Szymon has run a number of very well attended local training workshops for Skimmee Aile and looks forward to future collaborations.

Over the years Bring the Fire Project transformed into the brightest fire performing group in Liverpool, organising a number of events, performances, workshops and projects working with festivals and productions across the UK and Europe.

They specialise in fire performance, light shows, flow shows, circus walkabouts and working with community through medium of circus, fire and light.

They provide excellent fire and pyro performance based on exploration between modern object manipulation arts and various dance forms. Their passion is to harness the beauty of this dangerous element into a symmetry of patterns. Everything is illuminated with the cascade of colours and patterns created while dancing and moving with light.

<https://bringthefireproject.co.uk/>



Credit: Steve Corran Photography



Skimmee Aile are grateful to the Manx Lottery Trust for their financial support.

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AY BILLYN (THE TREES)

In the evening after harmony is restored between Summer and Winter, a tree blessing and Yggdrasil ritual will take place. The Yggdrasil tree was central to Norse mythology and was thought to connect the nine Viking worlds. The Tree of Life has played a central part in Celtic mythology and cosmology, and is symbolic in many cultures, religions and traditions throughout the world.



















Our Oie Voaldyn tree ritual is inclusive to everyone, offering a way to connect with the many different cultural influences and traditions of the people living on the Island.

Representing rebirth, renewal and the cycle of life, the nine trees bear messages of love and goodwill, remembering loved ones and lost ones, and conveying hopes of healing and peace.

The symbol on the left is the Ogam symbol and on the right the rune symbol for each of the trees.



Credit: Steve Corran Photography

	<i>Shellagh</i> (Willow): Offers protection and healing and is closely tied to women's cycles	
	<i>Darragh</i> (Oak): Associated with strength, resilience and self confidence	
	<i>Hollan</i> (Holly): Connected to unity and courage for warriors and protectors	
	<i>Ooyl</i> (Apple): Long symbolic of love and faithfulness, as well as rebirth	
	<i>Coull</i> (Hazel): Associated with wisdom, knowledge and creativity	
	<i>Beih</i> (Birch): Representative of new beginnings, change, released and rebirth	
	<i>Cuirn</i> (Rowan): Represents insight, protection and blessings	
	<i>Unjin</i> (Ash): A symbol of connections and transitions between the spiritual worlds	
	<i>Farney</i> (Alder): Representative of the evolving spirit	

Each of the 9 trees will be represented by one of the following organisations:

- ◆ Element Isle
- ◆ Culture Vannin
- ◆ Heroes on the Water
- ◆ Peel RNLI
- ◆ Victim Support
- ◆ Ed's Man Club
- ◆ Peel Youth Club
- ◆ Beach Buddies
- ◆ IOM Special Olympics

A team from each will parade their tree to the beach and into the arena where it will be blessed and then cast on the fire.



Credit: Steve Corran Photography

THE GOOD TIMES

THE COCKTAILS

THE VIEWS

THE (SEA)FOOD

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CORAACHYN YN AILE

VOICES OF THE FIRE

Shee Erriu

Peace be with you

Oie Voaldyn

John Bowker

5

Soprano
She - e err - - iu She - e err - - iu

Alto
She - e err - - iu She - e err - - iu

Tenor
She - e err - - iu She - e err - - iu

Bass
She - e err - - iu She - e err - - iu


Soprano
She - e err - - iu She - e err - - iu

Alto
She - e err - - iu She - e err - - iu

Tenor
She - e err - - iu She - e err - - iu

Bass
She - e err - - iu She - e err - - iu

'Shee Erriu' is 'Blessing of Peace' in the Manx language, part of the collection of chants, written especially for the Oie Voaldyn festival by the internationally renowned John Bowker.

The singing will be led by the singing group 'Voices of the Fire' which was formed in February 2020 to learn the chants and bring the music alive on the shore, as part of this event. We are hoping to grow this group so community voices singing in harmony can become an intrinsic and embedded part of Oie Voaldyn. If you would like to get involved in the choir in the future put your details on www.oievoaldyn.com get involved or join the Facebook Group  Voices of the Fire."



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PLEASE SUPPORT US

We hope you enjoy this year's festival which we've planned to be bigger and better than ever! You'll appreciate it takes a lot of creativity and dedication from several individuals and organisations to pull it all together (see the long list of 'thank-yous' on page 39!).

So that we have been able to include as many people as possible and make our own decisions, this year we became our very own not-for-profit organisation, branding ourselves as 'Isle of Man Fire and Folk Festivals'.

Our purpose and mission stay the same: to celebrate Manx culture and its traditions. It's hoped that by doing this via the spectacles of the Oie Voaldyn and Oie Houney festivals, we also help inform our audiences as well as entertain them!

The IoM Fire and Folk Festivals' committee takes its responsibilities seriously. We understand that to put on these amazing extravaganzas, everyone involved needs to work as a team, join in with all the workshops and rehearsals, and be as glorious as possible on the day! So, as part of our 're-boot', we have invited everyone who takes part to pay a £10 annual subscription and become a member, which gives them a greater sense of belonging and gives them opportunity to suggest changes and innovation.

Becoming independent also means we can raise money to ensure the high standards we set ourselves are maintained and to secure funding for next year, and the year after, and the year after that!

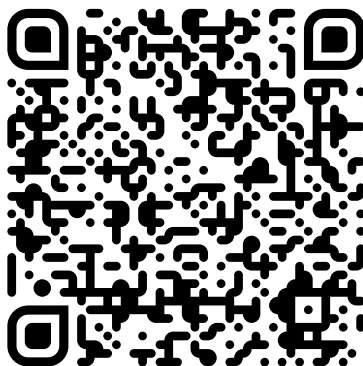
If you would like to become a member, you can sign up on the following link <https://membermojo.co.uk>, or contact us on info@oievoaldyn.com



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FIRE FOLKLORE & LEGENDS

Oie Voaldyn is a Manx fire festival which is a piece of an ancient universal blanket of beliefs, connections, customs, folklore associating fire as a protector, purifier and punisher. The four elements fire, air, water and earth are the warps that run through the universal blanket which touches everyday life. The elements are fundamental to us all.

In the Manx language the four elements are known as **aer** (air), **aile** (fire), **ushtey** (water) and **thalloo** (earth). The Island has customs, folklore, myths and traditions associated with fire. Fire and the hearth had a central role in the lives of all families, it provided warmth, light and enabled the creation of nourishing meals.

Some sources that have said that the domestic fire was put out on **Oie Voaldyn** (April 30th) and relit on **Laa Boaldyn** (May 1st) by rubbing two sticks together or by taking fire from Oie Voaldyn gorse and bonfires. It was also said by some that it was a time not to lend fire to anyone. No one really knows for sure what exactly happened, but what it does hint to is that fire was strongly associated with Oie Voaldyn on the Isle of Man. Cattle, after being in the barns over the winter, were let out at this time of year, and were ran through two bonfires as a purification. This was also a custom in Ireland and other countries, including northern India. Incidentally wood ash and smoke contains disinfecting qualities, fire and sunlight subdue many bovine diseases.

Fire was part of the Manx calendar: in July at Old Midsummers Day, **Laa Tinvaal** (Tynwald Day), bonfires on hills and blazing wheels were rolled down from hilltops. Often the fires were lit in places where the smoke could drift over the fields of corn and another notion was that the height men jumped over the flames would be the height the corn would grow. Bollan Bane (Mug wort) was worn and throw into the fires as a protection against witchcraft, thought to have been especially powerful on this eve. There are similar midsummer bonfires in the Scandinavian countries, possibly a remnant from the Island's time as part of the Viking kingdom.

Oie Houney (31st October) brings with it a number of associations with a household's future and the hearth. **Soddag Valloo** (Dumb Cake) contained ashes of the fire and was made in silence, by young women whilst dreaming of their future husbands. The ashes of the fire were smoothed out before bed by the woman of the house, in the morning they would be inspected for footprints. Those which appeared to be heading towards the fire would signify a birth and those which led to the door, a death.

Turnip lanterns lit with candles were meant to represent the souls of those who had passed and walked amongst us on this night. In Ireland fires are lit on this night, and nowadays the bonfires lit in the UK are associated with Guy Fawkes and the festival is commemorated on 5th November.

On **Oie Vreeshey** (31st January) St Bridget's eve: a saint and goddess linked to the home and hearth, and fire. She was invited into the home on this night with fresh rushes strewn on the floor, food and fresh water offered and a bed made. It foretold good luck for the household for the coming year.





ADSYN DY BRACH BEAYN

She traa bun-chorvaal v'ayn: traa va'n downa noa as gyn cummey,

Trooid dorraghys y folmid shen haink ushtey casherick ny Mayrey, Danu, cur bioys da dy chooilley chretoor er fea'ny-cruinney, as glass ayns dy chooilley ghlione.

'Sy thalloo dorragehy haink rish billey ard as lajer, as trooid coyr-cooidjagh ushtey casherick Danu as y billey shoh huitt daa chro-darragh, yn chied-er jeu fyrrynagh as y nah-er jeu bwoirrynagh. She yn Dagda, Yn Jee Mie, Ayr ny Jeeghyn, daase veih'n chied-chro, as Breeshey, Yn Ven-Jee Ooasle, Moir ny Jeeghyn, veih'n nah-chro. Mastey nyn baitçhyn - Paitçhyn jeh Soilshey as Mieys - va inneen yial as ghraihagh derragh çhiass stiagh ayns annym peiagh erbee vaikagh ee. Hug ad yn ennym Sourey urree, as haink ee dy ve Ben-Rein Mooninjer yn Touree.

Dinsh Breeshey da e paitçhyn ooilley nagh row ad nyn lomarcan 'sy theihll, son va shuyr ec nyn Moir Vooar, Danu, as she Domnu yn ennym v'er y çhuыр shoh. Cha row Domnu gollrish Danu, er-yn-oyr dy row ny shuyraghyn soie noi-ry-hoi.

Rish ymmodee bleeantyn va'n thalloo fo reill paitçhyn Domnu, paitçhyn jeh Dorraghys as Olkys. Mastey nyn gloan hene va inneen feayr as jymmoosagh derragh rio stiagh ayns annym peiagh erbee vaikagh ee. She Geurey yn ennym va currit urree, as haink ee dy ve Ben-rein Mooninjer yn Gheuree.

Rish traa foddey ren ny Paitçhyn jeh Soilshey as Mieys caggey noi ny Paitçhyn jeh Dorraghys as Olkys, derrey yn

traa dooar Soilshey as Mieys barriaght er Dorraghys as Olkys. Dyllee Yn Morrigan veih mullagh dagh slieau:

*Ta shee goll seose dys niau
Ushtey casherick tuittym er y thalloo
Lhig da nyn mea gymmyrkey mess
Ta'n thalloo fo nieau
Ta shin jeh'n thalloo nish
As ta dy chooilley pheiaagh lajer.*

Agh choud's va boggey er ny Paitçhyn jeh Soilshey as Mieys, haink goo Domnu harrish y thalloo:

*Ta dy chooilley red floghey
Eer laaghyn ny Paitçhyn jeh Soilshey as Mieys
Hig yn traa vees ad er nyn gastey.
Ta'n traa çheet vees Sourey gyn blaa
As y keayn gyn eeast
Ny booaghyn gyn bainney
As dagh peiagh er-y-thalloo faase.*

Lurg tammylt mie, va ny jeeghyn as ny caggaghyn oc jarroodit ec sleih as hie ny Paitçhyn jeh Soilshey as Mieys dy chummal ayns plaaseyn fo thalloo ny cruink. Ta phadeyr Domnu bunnys jarroodit, neesht, agh ve currit er Mooninjer yn Touree as Mooninjer yn Gheuree tannaghtyn erskyn y thalloo, freayll yn caggey eddyr Soilshey as Dorraghys goll. She Oie Voaldyn as Oie Houney ny h-Oieghyn ta ny sheshaghtyn-caggee oc çheet noi-y-cheilley, as t'eh grait dy beagh Mooninjer yn Gheuree geddyn barriaght er Mooninjer yn Touree er Oie Voaldyn, harragh phadeyr Domnu dy ve feer.

Peddyr Mac Niallan



THE EVERLIVING

It was a time of primeval chaos: a time the world was new and without form.

Through the darkness of that emptiness came the holy water of the Mother, Danu, giving life to every creature around the world and putting green in every glen.

In the dark ground there appeared a tree both tall and strong, and through the joining of Danu's holy water and this tree two acorns fell, the first male and the second female. It was the Dagda, The Good God, Father of the Gods, who sprang from the first acorn, and Brigid, the Exalted Goddess, Mother of the Gods, who sprang from the second acorn. Among their children - the Children of Light and Good - was a bright and loving girl who would put warmth into the soul of anyone who would see her. They called her Summer, and she came to be Queen of the Summer Folk.

Brigid told all her children that they were not alone in the world, for their Great Mother, Danu, had a sister, and this sister was called Domnu.

Over many years the land was under the rule of the children of Domnu, the Children of Dark and Evil. Among their own children was a cold and vengeful daughter who would put ice into the soul of any person who would see her. She was named Winter, and she became Queen of the Winter Folk.

For a long time the Children of Light and Good fought against the Children of Dark and Evil, until the time that victory was won by Light and Good over Dark and Evil.

The Morrigan called from every mountain:

Peace ascends to heaven
Holy water falls on the earth
Let our lives be fruitful
The earth is under heaven
We are of the earth now
And everyone is strong.

But as the Children of Light and Good were joyful, the word of Domnu came over the land:

All is transient
Even the days of the Children of Light and Good
The time will come when they will be cast out.
The time is coming when Summer will be without flower
And the sea without fish
The cows without milk
And everyone on the earth will be feeble.

After a good while, the gods and their battles were forgotten by people and the Children of Light and Good went to live in palaces under the hills. Domnu's prophecy is almost forgotten, too, but the Summer Folk and the Winter Folk were made to remain above ground, maintaining the battle between Light and Dark.

Oie Voaldyn and Oie Houney are the nights their armies come against one another, and it is said that if the Winter Folk were to defeat the Summer Folk on Oie Voaldyn, Domnu's prophecy would come true.

Peddyr Mac Niallan

Based on The Ever-living Ones by Peter Berresford Ellis, The Mammoth Book of Celtic Myths and Legends (2002)

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OIE VOALDYN

Here on this wind-swept
Beach, between the jutting headlands
Beneath the castle rising gaunt
And grey, the breeze rises
The banners furling, red
Three-legged; and the mood shifts
Within the rank, among the waiting
Crowd of bird-beaked, death-masked,
Helmeted and be-feathered spinners
Of tale and fire. The torches
Light and flame, the drums
Begin to beat, the feet shuffle
Then stride, intent and meaningful
Across the drying sand, towards
The watching eyes, the resplendent
Shards of dying sun. The horns
Bellow and blow, ancient memories
Rekindled, of hordes
And time-held ritual.
Winter is on the march,
Swaying to the beat, eyes fixed
Behind the ice-white Queen of the night,
They come, nearer, growing tall
In the darkness, shadows of a fading day,
And then the ring
Filled with expectant face and burning pyre
A stage on which to meet the light
The flowing robes and colours bright
Of Summer, born anew, here
On the sand-sifted beach of Peel
And battle is fought,
Champion to champion,
Throng to throng.
Swords arcing, falling, glittering
In the sparks of iron,
Until the day is won
And night is banished
Into the depths once more,
And the carnival begins
Of dance and joy and burgeoning
Life, beneath the fireworks climbing high
And splintering across the star-filled sky,
And all is one, dark and light,
Lost in the embrace, the chuckling grip
Of friendship, of laughter,
Of harmony.
Beltane has arrived, the summer
Has come, pregnant and full
Of hope, driving back the fears,
A future born again, re-awoken
In this old, eternal rite.

Nigel Siddall May '19



As winter loses its power, our ancestors welcomed in the season of growth and renewal at Oie Voaldyn. This ancient fire festival, marking the transition from winter to summer, is a celebration of fertility, new beginnings and optimism.

Fires were lit at sunset in rites of purification to safeguard the people, their homes and livestock. At the heart of these traditions are the healing herbs that have been used for centuries to ward off illness, bring protection and safeguard against unseen forces.

For our forebears, this seasonal shift was not just symbolic, but also a time of vulnerability. The cold months would have been tough, ensuring food supplies lasted until the new growing season and with keeping disease at bay. Spring herbs, such as Nettle, Wild Garlic, Dandelion, Chickweed and Cleavers were valuable sources of nutritious fresh green leaves and all are also powerful tonic herbs, helping to detoxify and eliminate the stagnation of the winter months. Others, such as Yarrow were used to heal wounds and keep fevers at bay.

At this time of year, when the boundaries between worlds were thought to be thin, protective herbs were used around the doorways to home, carried on the person, or tied to livestock. Mugwort, deeply connected to both Norse and Celtic traditions, was known for its protective qualities, clearing away negative forces and aiding communication between the real and dream worlds. Hawthorn, which heralds May with its bountiful blossom, aids physical healing as a heart tonic herb, promotes emotional healing and is also connected with the spirit world.

Today, we can still embrace these traditions – drinking cleansing herbal infusions, crafting protective herbal sachets and working with the growth and wildness of Nature to support our health and wellbeing.

Join me for a hands-on workshop where we will explore the ancient wisdom of these powerful plants, you will craft your own herbal blend and leave ready to welcome the magic of the summer season.

Jane Prescott

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THE GLASHTYN

There are few tales of the Glashtyn, but perhaps the most well-known is one that takes place near Castletown, in the South of the Island. Late on a stormy night, whilst left at home alone, a young lady, Kirree Quayle, had a terrifying encounter. The Glashtyn knocked on her door during the fiercest part of the storm, seeking shelter and despite her father's warning about not letting strangers in, she takes pity on him and lets him sleep by the hearth.

Although he seems to be nothing but a harmless fisherman at first, she notices his pointed ears, like those of a horse – now she knows he certainly isn't human. Poor Kirree endured a sleepless night, constantly vigilant, as she prayed for the morning to come. Although The Glashtyn does not speak, he attempts to bestow a gift of pearls upon her, which she wisely does not accept. Becoming restless now, he gestures to her to come with him down to the shore, becoming increasingly angry when she does not give in to his silent requests.

Kirree was saved by the crow of the cockerel who was awakened by her screams as the Glashtyn grabbed her. Scared off, he fled back to the sea without his prize this



time, but she knew she had narrowly avoided ending up on the bottom of the ocean.

After her ordeal, Kirree married and moved to the only parish on the Island that was not within sight of the sea – Marown. So, if you find yourself wandering along the shore late at night or early in the morning, be wary if you meet a beautiful white horse or a quietly brooding handsome man. You yourself may meet a watery end.

Ealee Sheard

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TEEVAL

As an Island nation, we have been as obsessed with supernatural beings in the sea as we are with those on land. One such being is Teeval, Princess of the Ocean. A beautiful mermaid who found herself captured and tied up after falling asleep on the beach. Her captor, a man named Conchubar, was an ambitious young Irish man who had designs on becoming King of Ulster. Seeking counsel, he had been advised by the Druid of Clogher to travel to the Isle of Man to find the smith Culann (also known as Culain) to commission him to make a sword, spear and shield with which he would, one day, claim the kingship of Ulster.

It was whilst he was waiting for these weapons to be forged that he went to pass the time on the strand. He stumbled upon Teeval sleeping peacefully on the shore and, for fear she would swim away upon waking, he tied her up. She begged him to untie her and set her free, but he was too afraid she would leave him. Such was her beauty that he always wanted her near him.

She eventually won him over with a promise, that if he gave instructions to Culann to engrave her name and paint her image onto his shield, he could call upon her in battle to help him. By doing this, his enemies' strength would leave



them and instead go into him and his men. He let her go, following her instructions, and her image was emblazoned on his shield.

Whenever Conchubar went into battle, he would call upon Teeval to vanquish his enemies, eventually becoming King of Ulster, as foretold. Although her promise to him came true, he never did see the beautiful mermaid princess again. Perhaps she has learned to be more selective about where she chooses to rest.

Ealee Sheard

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The Isle of Man was recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 2016, and is currently the only whole nation in the world to hold this prestigious status. So what does it mean for us as an Island, why is it so important, and where does Oie Voaldyn fit in?

A UNESCO Biosphere is a place where people and the rest of nature exist in harmony, balancing the conservation of biodiversity and culture with sustainable development, underpinned by research and education to ensure the best methods are explored and implemented. It is also important to share what we learn outside of the Isle of Man, building valuable connections and networks with other Biosphere Reserves and the wider world of which we are all residents.

The Biosphere status belongs to everybody in our Manx community and recognises that our landscapes, wildlife, and way of life are something to be celebrated, protected and shared. Our landscapes, glens, and waters are not just beautiful - they sustain us, inspire us, and shape who we are.

Oie Voaldyn sees our community come together to celebrate fire as a force of renewal and protection, just

as those who walked before us did. As they marked the changing seasons and gave thanks to the natural world, so too must we play our part in shaping the future of our Island. Our biosphere status reminds us that we are all connected and that our actions today affect the environment, the wellbeing of our communities, and the generations to come.

Culture and nature are intertwined. The stories we tell, the traditions we celebrate, and the land upon which we walk all contribute to our shared heritage. By collectively embracing our biosphere status, we can commit to caring for our Island and working together to build a thriving, sustainable future to be proud of.

Whether we are preserving our rich Manx folklore, protecting our diverse wildlife or uplifting the local economy, each of us has a role in maintaining the balance between people and place.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Should any emergency arise you can find our Operational HQ upstairs in Peel Sailing Club on Shore Road.

A core ethos of the Oie Voaldyn Festival is to have a minimal impact on the environment: Please **Reduce, Reuse or Recycle** whenever you can. Please remove any of your debris from the shore so it does not go into the sea and cause harm to marine life. Thank you.

Water refill stations along the quay and promenade area are: Leece Museum, Boatyard Restaurant, Davidson's Ice Cream Parlour, Cod & Castle and there is a drinking fountain on the promenade.

There is limited disabled parking available on the West Quay, just before the entrance to Fenella Beach.

Accessible toilet facilities are available on Shore Road to the right of Peel Sailing Club.

This year we are providing a raised platform opposite Peel Sailing Club, to accommodate a small number of wheelchair users. For further information and to reserve a space please contact info@oievoaldyn.com

BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

See www.iombusandrail.im

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From the east turn right at the Ballacrairie traffic lights and take the Poortown Road A20 to Peel. After Tesco turn right into Church Street, right at the end and head up the hill. Parking will be signposted.

From the south via A3 from Foxdale, straight across at the Ballacrairie traffic lights and take the Poortown Road A20 to Peel. After Tesco turn right into Church Street, right at the end and head up the hill. Parking will be signposted.

From the north take the A4 coast road by Kirk Michael School to Peel. Parking will be signposted.



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OIE VOADYN PRODUCTION TEAM

John Shakespeare - Production manager

Jo Shakespeare - Wardrobe, programme

Cathy Clucas - Script, charity liaison

Lulu Gillow - Operational planning

Ealee Sheard - Band liaison, editorial

Grainny Sheard - Communications, social media

Kirsty Dencheva - Fund raising liaison

Steve Corfield - Skimmee Aile Fire Team lead

Alan Kneen - Fire chief

Christa McCartney - Voices of the Fire lead,
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Peddyr Mac Niallan - Fight choreography



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- Jane Prescott, The Manx Herbalist
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