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**Isle of Man
Government**

Reiltys Ellan Vannin

The Council of Ministers

**Annual Report of the Isle of Man Government
Preservation of War Memorials Committee**

July 2014

**The Isle of Man Government
Preservation of War Memorials Committee**

Foreword by the Hon A R Bell MHK, Chief Minister

To: The Hon Clare Christian, MLC, President of Tynwald and the Honourable Council and Keys in Tynwald assembled.

In November 2007 Tynwald resolved that the Council of Ministers consider the establishment of a suitable body for the preservation of War Memorials in the Isle of Man. Subsequently, in October 2008, following a report by a Working Group established by Council of Ministers to consider the matter, Tynwald gave approval to the establishment of the Isle of Man Government Preservation of War Memorials Committee [the Committee].

I am pleased to lay an Annual Report before Tynwald from the Chairman of the Committee.

I would like to formally thank all members of the Committee for their interest and dedication shown in the preservation of all Manx War Memorials and to especially acknowledge the outstanding voluntary contribution by all the lay membership.



Hon A R Bell MHK
Chief Minister

June 2014

**Annual Report of
The Isle of Man Government
Preservation of War Memorials Committee**

As part of its responsibilities, and in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee, I am pleased to present the Fourth Annual Report to the Council of Ministers.

I would like, firstly, to echo the comments of the Chief Minister in his commendation of the lay members of the Committee. I have found them unstinting in their support and enthusiasm for the task at hand. The growing workload of the Committee has been seized upon as an opportunity, rather than a challenge.

I also thank the members of the Committee for their support and inspiration behind the Private Member's Bill I am looking to bring to the House of Keys this year to place a statutory duty on the owners of war memorials to preserve them for the public good.

Finally, we owe a debt of gratitude to our outgoing and tireless Secretary, Linda Webb who has supported the Committee since its inception, and we wish her a happy retirement. We welcome Caroline Mallon to our number, and wish her good luck!



Hon J P Watterson BA ACA MHK

Chairman

Armed Forces Champion

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1. Introduction

At the Tynwald sitting in October 2008 approval was given to the establishment of a Body for the Preservation of the Island's War Memorials to be called the 'Isle of Man Government Preservation of War Memorials Committee' [the Committee].

The Committee is responsible for -

- (a) ensuring a proper registration of War Memorials throughout the Isle of Man;
- (b) encouraging the proper maintenance and upkeep of such Memorials;
- (c) avoiding the destruction of, or overseeing the removal of, such Memorials by encouraging the owners or custodians to advise the Committee that such is likely prior to such actions being taken so as to enable the Committee to ascertain any actions that may be appropriate for them to safeguard the Memorial.

The establishment of the Committee did not remove the responsibility for War Memorials from Local Authorities.

The Committee is required to produce an Annual Report to be published and made available on the Government Website.

The tenure of the membership of the Committee is at the pleasure of the Council of Ministers and by appointment following every General Election. Accordingly, members were appointed to the Committee early 2012. However, during the reporting year Mr Hamish Killip resigned his membership and the current membership is now made up as follows:-

Chairman: Hon J P Watterson MHK

Vice Chairman: Mr R Ronan MHK

Lay Members: Mr R Christian
Mr H Duff, MM, BEM
Mrs F Robinson
Mr K Dalrymple

2. Work Undertaken

(a) To ensure War Memorials are recognised and cared for in the future, the Committee has compiled a database detailing the systematic recording of the details of War Memorials throughout the Isle of Man including the following information–

- location;
- brief description;
- photographs showing the War Memorial and its location;
- (where known) the War, campaign, action or unit commemorated;
- the date of erection and/or dedication;
- transcript of inscriptions and names so that a permanent record exists in case of future damage or loss; and
- (where known) the designer/maker/craftsperson who created the War Memorial.

The Committee continues to add to the data base which is now maintained by Manx National Heritage [MNH] and is available on its digital research facility on the World Wide Web accessed via the IMuseum Website www.imuseum.im.

The Committee has met with MNH to discuss and receive updates on this project and, in partnership, 205 memorial sites, 155 images and 11,807 names have been recorded on the database. MNH has also recorded grid reference, condition reports, historic information and digital mapping. The data is being used for online visitors, teacher training, family history workshops, shared with the Royal British Legion and other online partners.

The Committee has received updates from MNH on its plans to commemorate the start of World War One and has noted that the Chief Secretary's Office [Cabinet Office] has established a Steering Group which is acting as a co-ordinating body for all events being arranged throughout the Island during the four year period August 2014 to November 2018.

I would encourage anyone with an interest in Manx War Memorials to visit www.imuseum.im.

(b) Liaison has continued with The War Memorials Trust, a charity that works for the protection and conservation of War Memorials in the UK and includes the Crown Dependencies in its works. Hannah Gerrard, Assistant Curator: Documents and Records (Tel: 648072 email: hannah.gerrard@mnh.gov.im) continues her involvement with the Charity as the Isle of Man Liaison Officer for the Charity. Her role and responsibilities include:-

- being the point of contact for queries about the Island's Memorials;
- liaising with the Charity;
- keeping a record of War Memorials in the local area; and
- ensuring that the Island's War Memorials have an online presence.

- (c) The Committee has kept a watching brief on planning applications to ensure that the Planning Division checks for the location of War Memorials when a planning application is made which might affect a War Memorial. The Committee would welcome any assistance from the public if they have any concerns about a memorial to bring it to the attention of the Committee.
- (d) Throughout the year the Committee continued its work and contact with various custodians around the island to advise on, and encourage, proper maintenance and care of the Island's memorials.

In particular, the Committee wishes to make a note of commendation for the hard work undertaken by Douglas Corporation and Castletown Town Commissions for the maintenance and preservation of their War Memorials.

The Committee continues to offer support to Andreas, Malew and Peel Local Authorities in relation to the difficulties they have encountered over the preservation of their War Memorials.

- (e) The Committee has liaised with various bodies and organisations in order to raise the profile of the Committee and to generate an interest in the preservation of War Memorials within the wider community. This involved direct contact with educational establishments, local media, the Armed Forces, the Royal British Legion, the War Memorials Trust UK and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.
- (f) In February 2014, the Chairman received permission to introduce a Private Member's Bill into the House of Keys for a War Memorials Bill 2014 which it is hoped will provide protection for the memorials. A draft of the Bill has been produced and will be issued for public and key stakeholders' consultation.

3. Way Forward

The Committee will continue its work to ensure that the remit determined following the Tynwald Resolution is fulfilled and to seek the support of custodians to maintain their memorials in good order.

The Committee will continue to build on the close working relationship with MNH. The Committee and MNH have similar aims regarding the preservation of War Memorials and there is a mutual benefit from working together to establish a single database which will meet both requirements.

We will progress the establishment of a procedure whereby the Planning Officers will as standard practice, engage with the Committee on any planning applications that may affect War Memorials.

The Chairman is continuing the progression of the War Memorial Bill 2014 through the stages; the Committee fully supports the Chairman's endeavour to progress this Bill.