

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1999
THE REGISTERED BUILDINGS (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 2005

To: Rose Estates. Fourth Floor, Victory House, Prospect Hill, Douglas.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at a meeting held on the **9th December 2005**, the PLANNING COMMITTEE of the Department of Local Government and the Environment, in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations REGISTERED

'Buck House' also known as 'Agriculture House' and / or 'The Primitive Methodist Chapel' which is situated on the corner of Buck's Road and Merton Bank in Douglas,

(As shown delineated and edged in red as the attached plan.)

as represented by the buildings shown outlined in red on the plan hereto attached, in the PROTECTED BUILDINGS REGISTER by reason of its special architectural and historic interest.

THE EFFECT OF THIS REGISTRATION IS IMMEDIATE and prohibits the alteration or demolition of the structure or appearance of any part of the building except in compliance with an obligation imposed by or under any statutory provision or with the prior written consent of the Planning Committee.

Dated this 20th day of December 2005

By Order of the Committee



J Callow
Secretary, Planning Committee.

1st Floor, Murray House,
Mount Havelock,
Douglas,
IM1 2SF.

NOTE :

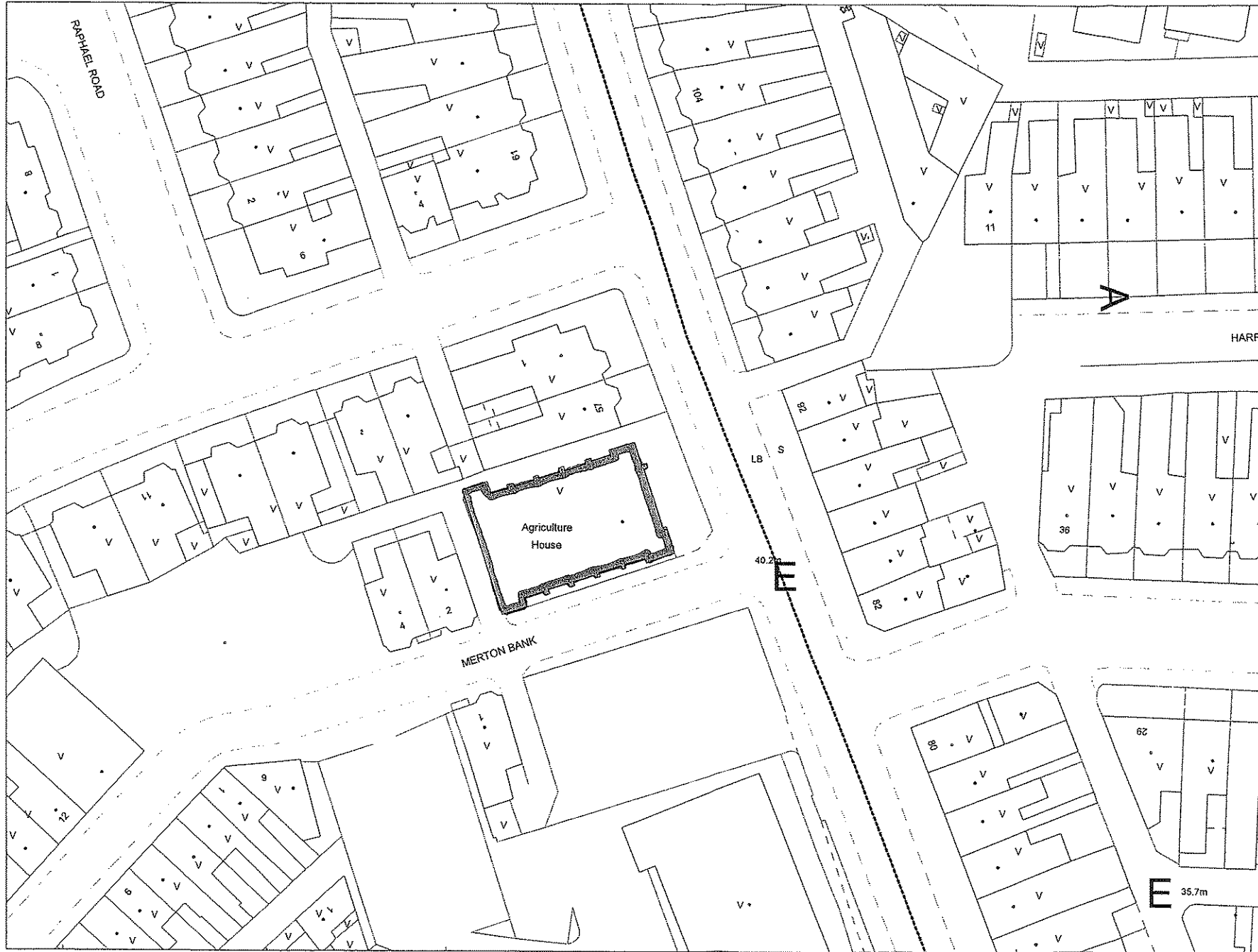
Rights to request de-registration of the building are provided under the Registered Building Regulations and in summary are that:

Applications in writing for the de-registration of the building may be made by the owners or occupier of, any other person having an interest in the building, within a period of 21 days of service of this notice. Such application should be sent to the Secretary, Planning Committee, 3rd Floor, Murray House, Mount Havelock, Douglas, IM1 2SF.

In the event that de-registration is not requested by any party within the 21 day period described above, then de-registration may not be requested within a period of 3 years.

C.C.:-

- Mr D. R. King, The Town Clerk, Douglas Corporation, Town Hall, Ridgeway Street, Douglas.
- Director of Manx Museum and National Trust, Kingswood Grove, Douglas;
- Advisory Council for Planning and the Environment, 52, Alberta Drive, Onchan;
- Mr. D. Burns. Dalrymple Associates Ltd., Court Row Chambers, Court Row, Ramsey.



Point Detail

- R Boundary Post
- U Boundary Mering
- Q Trig Point
- A Bench Mark
- E Surface Level
- N Pylons
- s Miscellaneous Points
- G Flow Arrow
- v Building Seeds
- v Glasshouse seed
- C Positioned Conifer
- L Positioned Non-Conifer
- B Boulders
- B Boulders (scattered)
- C Coniferous Trees
- C Coniferous (scattered)
- D Coppice / Osiers
- J Marsh/Saltmarsh/Reeds
- L Non-Coniferous Trees
- L Non-Conif. (scattered)
- M Orchard
- I Heath
- O Rock
- O Rocks (scattered)
- H Rough Grassland
- P Scrub
- A Cliff
- A Slope
- F Water
- F Scree
- B Positioned Boulder



BUCK HOUSE / FORMER BUCKS ROAD PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH, DOUGLAS

INTRODUCTION

Buck House is a substantial stone built structure located on the corner of Bucks Road and Merton Bank in Douglas. It was constructed from 1899 to 1900 as a Primitive Methodist Chapel in order to replace the Wellington Street Chapel, built in 1823.

The architect was John Wills from Derby, apparently renowned for his church designs, and the builder was William Kelly from Douglas. The total cost of the architect's fees and the building works was £6,200. The building was located in the upper reaches of Douglas as the town was spreading out from its small centre into the outlying districts during the late nineteenth century. The architect's plans state that the name of the road on which the Church was to be constructed was called "Buckshill" or "Bucks Hill"; this was possibly a local name for that part of Bucks Road at the time.

In May 1967 the Bucks Road Primitive Methodist Church was united with the nearby Rosemount Wesleyan Church and together they formed the Trinity Methodist Church at Rosemount. *"Rosemount and Bucks Road Methodist Churches united in 1967 to form Trinity Church at Rosemount."* (Douglas Centenary 1896-1996, p.186). Subsequently, the Bucks Road building was sold and converted into office and garage accommodation for the Isle of Man Milk Marketing Association and it has remained in office use to the present day.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

The Architect

Buck House was constructed from 1889 to 1900 and was built by William Kelly, a Douglas builder. The architect was John Wills (1846-1906) from Derby. According to the Architect's Directory of 1868, Mr. Wills was then practicing in Devon, but he later moved to Derby and while there, he became one of the most prolific designers of non-conformist chapels, schools and halls in the country. Other examples of his work can be found in Brampton, Bermondsey, Brighouse, Chesterfield, Coventry, Derby, Doncaster, Eastleigh, Kingston-on-Thames, Mexborough, Nottingham, Nuneaton, Peterborough, Redditch, Ramsgate, Rotherham, Sheffield, Stockport, Walsall, West Kirby, Wigan and elsewhere.

In 1893, John Wills took on his eldest son William Francis Wills as an articulated student and subsequently from 1898 to 1903 as his assistant. His younger son John Ross Wills was articulated in 1899 and in 1903 both sons joined John Wills in partnership as John Wills and Sons, Victoria Chambers, St Peter's Churchyard, Derby.

In 1912 both sons became members of the R.I.B.A. Licentiate and William, the eldest, opened and ran a branch office in London.

The Design

John Wills described the chosen style of architecture for the Bucks Road church as "*traditional between Norman and Early English*" (Manx Star, 12/11/1977, p.4)

The following description of the Church was reported in Mona's Herald, 25th July 1900,

The new buildings occupy a very fine and commanding site in Buck's Road. The style adopted is transitional, between the Norman and Early English. The walls are built of native stone, with Monk's Park stone freely used for ashlar. The plan of the building is a rectangle 64 feet 6 inches long by 43 feet 3 inches inside, exclusive of choir stalls. The front is flanked on the right with a projecting stairway, which runs up and finished with coping and carved finial. The left of the front is flanked with a square tower which terminates at a height of 78 feet. There are octagonal buttresses at the corners, which terminate with pinnacles and carved finials with battlements between. There are two massive doorways in front, richly moulded with goblets over; and over these is a large circular front window, with cusped tracery; all other windows of the church throughout are either circular or segment headed. There are galleries at two sides and one end, with stairs leading to the same in front and one in the rear. There are also in the rear two vestries, and over these an organ chamber and choir. The roof is partially open, with arched timbering and pitched pine ceiling. The glazing throughout is in cathedral glass, with leaded squares, diamonds, margins, etc., the large front window and choir window being specially treated in handsome designs. The approach to the front is by a broad flight of steps, and advantage is taken of the slope of the road to put a large room under the front part of the church, which will also have a classroom and cloakroom in connection with it. The whole of the internal fittings are in pitch pine, and the rostrum is a very handsome structure, on a central pedestal and the sides supported with columns. The gallery front is elaborately treated, also the choir front to match. The pews have solid ends with reclining backs with modern arrangement of book boards, etc. The church will seat a congregation of 900 persons, and the cost of the scheme, including the architect's fees, will be about £6,200.

A copy of an archive photograph from Manx National Heritage is included with this report. The date of the photograph isn't known but it shows the church interior to be the same as it is found on the architect's drawing, no. 5902 of the cross section.

The design took the fall towards Bucks Road into account and the architect used this to his advantage. A partial excavation of the site and raising the level of the ground floor, provided space for the creation of the schoolroom underneath the church. This floor was particularly useful during the late 1960's when the Church was converted into office accommodation for the Isle of Man Dairies and the schoolroom had become a garage for cars and milk floats.

1960's Conversion

The Planning Committee at the time had imposed strict conditions on the conversion of the building, as was stated in the Isle of Man Courier (22/12/1967, p.1).

"The conditions state that no advertising matter is to be exhibited on the exterior of the premises without written permission from the Planning Committee.

That the petrol pump which the Association proposes installing must not be used before 8am, so that residents in the area will not be disturbed.

There is to be no unloading of milk bottles or crates and they are not to be left in the premises.

And the exterior of the building is to be maintained and painted to the satisfaction of the Committee."

The only external alterations which took place were the removal of the steps at the entrance of the building onto Bucks Road. This was in order to provide access to the new garages which were located underneath the building in the old schoolroom. The 1960's conversion was designed by S.F. O'Hanlon (Manx Star, 12/11/1977, p.4).

The Building Today

The building is easily recognisable from the architect's drawings dating from April 1898 (a copy of these is included with this report). However, it is apparent that the tips of the pinnacles from the corners of the tower and on the Bucks Road elevation have at one point been removed. An article in the Isle of Man Courier dating from 22nd December 1967 shows a photograph of the building before the 1960's conversion took place and the spires look much larger here than they do in the present day, although not as complete as in the architect's drawings. The building is otherwise intact and appears to be in good repair.

HISTORIC INTEREST AND ASSOCIATION

Finch Hill Estate

The area containing Buck's Road was originally part of the Finch Hill estate and had been in the Finch (originally Vinch) family for two hundred years by 1801 when it passed to Elizabeth Buck, nee Finch. Elizabeth Buck was married to William Buck from Liverpool who became a successful nurseryman in Douglas. Their home, 'Bucks Place' was located between the Ellan Vannin Home and Windsor Road. *"From about 1810 the road past his house was known as the 'New Ramsey Road' and it was long after his death in 1826 and after Finch Hill had passed to the Christian family, that his name was perpetuated in Bucks Road."* (Slack S., 1996, p.30).

Origins of the Church

During the second half of the nineteenth century Douglas was experiencing a period of rapid growth as the town spread out from its centre into the surrounding areas.

Upper Douglas became where the expanding middle class were choosing to buy property and large numbers of visitors were staying.

The Primitive Methodist Wellington Street Chapel was constructed in 1823 and enlarged in 1842. Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century the increasing population put pressure on the small Wellington Street Chapel and it was decided that larger accommodation would be needed in order to cater for the growing numbers of residents. As a result of this, the new Bucks Road Primitive Methodist Church was planned for construction towards the end of the century.

Church Construction and Opening

The building was constructed between 1899 and 1900. *"The foundation stone laying ceremony took place on 13th April, 1899 when no less than 15 foundation stones were laid by various dignitaries. The principal stone was laid by the Mayor, Samuel Webb, and beneath it was buried a bottle containing a copy of 'The Primitive Methodist', the 'Loch Parade Monthly Magazine', a plan of the circuit, a programme of the proceedings, a list of trustees and a few coins."* (Manx Star, 12/11/1977, p.4).

J. Sharp, the then Mayor and a Miss Cowley opened the Church on 19th July 1900.

Amalgamation of Methodist Churches

It was reported in the Mona's Herald on Tuesday December 14th 1965 that at a quarterly meeting of the Douglas Methodist Circuit, it was believed that *"amalgamation of Methodist societies in the town area would be of great benefit, and that the pooling of resources of man-power, buildings and finances would make possible the creation of three new societies, better equipped in every way to meet the challenges of the times."* (p.1). The initial stage of the merger was to unite Bucks Road and Rosemount Churches into a single unit at Rosemount, which was excellently sited and had the largest school premises of the two. A statement issued by the Methodists at the time was through the superintendent, the Rev. John Dodds. He said, *"Bucks Road is a strong, virile church whose members regularly demonstrate their love of the church. The members of Bucks Road Church at this stage witness to the truth that to serve the Kingdom of God is a way of life and a way of sacrifice for the greater good. With past divisions healed, the new Bucks Road – Rosemount Church, bringing together the traditions of both, and with a new unity of purpose, can look forward to a new release of power for its witness and freedom to advance."* (Mona's Herald, 14/12/1965, p.1&5).

1960's Conversion

In October 1967 the Isle of Man Examiner reported of plans to sell the building to the Isle of Man Milk Marketing Association, the article read as follows,

Office Plan for Douglas Church Trustees Sign Agreement to Sell

Bucks Road Church, Douglas, closed earlier this year following amalgamation with Rosemount, is to be sold to the Isle of Man Milk Marketing Association.

Association Secretary, Mr. H.T. Robinson, confirmed yesterday that an agreement for sale had been reached between the Association and the Trustees of the Church.

It is subject, however, to approval being granted by the Planning Committee to major structural alterations to the church.

Plans have now been lodged by the Association for the conversion of the church into offices and an underground car park for staff vehicles and light vans.

Mr. Robinson said the plan is to centralise all the Marketing Association offices throughout Douglas in the one building. At the moment they are scattered between the Abattoir, Bucks Road and Spring Gardens.

A clerical staff of about 30 will be brought together under the one roof if the plan goes ahead.

Said Mr Robinson: "The idea if that centralisation should increase our general efficiency and give a considerable saving to the Marketing Associations."

Plans for the church show that the underground garage will be sited in the cellars and the new offices will be built into the structure of the existing church. A false ceiling will be built separating the ground floor and the gallery.

Externally the church will look as it does at the present moment.

Mr. Robinson said that if planning approval is given shortly it is hoped that the new offices will be completed later this autumn.

This is the second church in Douglas to be chosen for offices. Already a proposal to demolish and rebuild offices on the site of the old St. Barnabas Church has been announced.

LANDMARK QUALITIES

The building occupies an imposing corner site on one of the main thoroughfares in Douglas. Its scale and architectural value make it an important feature in the local landscape, as can be seen from some of our photographs which are included with this report.

GROUP VALUE

Following the construction of Bucks Road Methodist Church in 1900, there was a visible group of churches located along the Woodbourne Road, Bucks Road and Prospect Hill area of Douglas. These included Rosemount Wesleyan Methodist Church (1886, tower added 1911), Bucks Road Primitive Methodist Church (1900), Finch Hill Congregational Church (1866, extensions in 1872, 1877 and 1898), St. Mary of the Isle Roman Catholic Church on Prospect Hill (1859) and the nearby St. Andrew Presbyterian Church (1867). The towers and spires of these churches dominated the Douglas skyline throughout most of the twentieth century.

Today only the Rosemount Church (now Trinity Rosemount Methodist Church) and St. Mary of the Isle are still in use as churches. Bucks Road Church is now referred to as Buck House and is used for offices, Finch Hill was demolished in 1997 in order for offices to be built on the site and only the tower and spire of St. Andrew remain

after that was also demolished to make way for offices. With the demolition of these buildings the skyline of Douglas has gradually been eroded and unfortunately some of the unique style of the town has been lost.

AGE AND RARITY

During recent years other church buildings in Douglas have been demolished in order to make room for new office accommodation. Due to its successful and early conversion, Buck House is unique, demonstrating that it is not always necessary to demolish redundant churches as they can be successfully reused.

To conclude; Buck House, Douglas is judged worthy of entry into the Protected Buildings Register by virtue of its special architectural and historical interest on the following grounds:-

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:- The rose window on the front elevation is a distinctive feature of this building and it would be a loss to the architectural style of Douglas if such a characteristic was lost

HISTORIC INTEREST AND ASSOCIATION:- The architect John Mills (1846-1906) was renowned for his church designs and other examples of his work can be seen throughout Britain.

LANDMARK QUALITIES:- Buck House occupies an imposing site on Bucks Road, which is one of the main thoroughfares in Douglas and it pays an important contribution to the local landscape. From the early twentieth century the towers and spires of Buck House and its neighbouring churches dominated the skyline of Douglas. Due to the loss of other ecclesiastical buildings in the town the character of the skyline has gradually been eroded so it's important to preserve the unique buildings we still have which contribute to the unique character of the town.

GROUP VALUE:- Following the construction of Bucks Road Methodist Church in 1900, there was a visible group of churches located along the Woodbourne Road, Bucks Road and Prospect Hill area of Douglas. For over a century Buck House has remained part of the social and architectural heritage of Douglas. Having close links with the nearby Trinity Methodist Church at Rosemount, which it merged with in the 1960's.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

REFERENCES

Isle of Man Victorian Society Newsletter, no.3, September 1980, p.2.

Kniveton G.N., Forster R.E., Kelly R., Slack S., Cowin F., *Douglas Centenary 1895-1996*.

Kniveton G.N., 1998, *Douglas Centenary Album*, The Manx Experience, Douglas.

Slack S., 1996, *Streets of Douglas – Old and New*, The Manx Experience, Douglas.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Mona's Herald, Tuesday 14th December 1965, p.1.
Methodists Plan Amalgamations to Form New Church.

Isle of Man Examiner, 18th May 1967, p.3.
(Photograph and note of opening service to mark the amalgamation of the two churches).

Isle of Man Examiner, 5th October 1967, p.1.
Office Plan for Douglas Church – Trustees Sign Agreement to Sell.

Isle of Man Courier, 22nd December 1967, p.1.
Douglas Church Conversion Approved – Will Become Office and Garage Accommodation (copy of article included with report).

Manx Star, 12th November 1977, p.4.

Victorian "Where is it?" (historical notes by Peter Kelly – copy of article included with this report).

PLANS FROM DOUGLAS CORPORATION ARCHIVES (ref 709)

Architect – John Wills, Victoria Chambers, Derby. April 1898.,

Primitive Methodist Chapel, Bucks Hill, Douglas

Drawing no. - New Plan of Site

Drawing no. 709 Block Plan

Drawing no. 5901 Basement Plan, Ground Plan and Gallery Plan.

Drawing no. 5902 Block Plan, Front Elevation, Cross Section and Section CD.

Drawing no. 5916 Back Elevation and South Elevation.

OTHER SOURCES

Current photographs.

Archive Photograph, **Manx National Heritage.**

Manx Note Book website – www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook