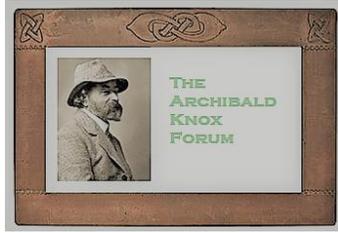


KNOX



NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ARCHIBALD KNOX FORUM

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Newsletter No. 6

April 2018

The AK Forum has had another good three months.

So far we have 65 members, six life members, six website page sponsorships, and 197 recipients of the newsletter.

The website has been well received and a few teething problems have been, and are being, sorted out. During February and March 210 new notes and/or images have been added.

We are very grateful to Culture Vannin for a grant of £663 to purchase an HDMI projector and screen. This is a great help in giving talks, showing DVDs on Knox and his work, plus it will be a much needed addition to equipment and exhibits on the forthcoming UK Roadshows

A talk, together with the 2014 Olympia film, and an exhibition of 40 pieces by Knox, was given on 08 March to the Live at Home Group from the north of the Island. It was attended by over 30 people and enthusiastically received.

Drop-in centre events were held during February and March with ongoing research being carried out into the various properties that Knox lived in on the Island and London. At the March drop-in centre we were treated to an exhibition of Knox items by John Wright who enjoys collecting Knox and other pewter and silver items. Some of his pieces will be shown on the Facebook page in the near future and they will also appear on The Archibald Knox Forum website.

Knox's 154th birthday was celebrated on 9th April and it was a beautiful sunny day on the Isle of Man.

We started at Braddan Church at 10am and then entered No. 40 Cronkbourne Village - where Knox was believed to have been born in 1864 (our thanks go to Braddan Parish Commissioners and the prospective buyers of the village for their permissions to do this).

Then to St George's Church in Douglas where we saw the wonderful St Barnabas War memorial plaque designed by Knox (the plaque was transferred to St George's in 1957 when St Barnabas Church, Douglas, was closed). The lives of 31 parishioners who died in WWI are listed in alphabetical order.

On to the Post Office headquarters at Spring Valley where Knox's memorial to those of the postal service who died and fought in WWI is located. It was so poignant to know that this, and the WWII plaques are side by side, are looked upon proudly by the members of the Isle of Man Postal Service and to learn that a ceremony is held each year in honour of the six men who died and the 100 others who served their country.

Marown new church cemetery has two gravestones either by Knox, or in the style of Knox, and these were visited.

A great lunch at The Hawthorn pub and on to the Cathedral in Peel.

The three pieces of silver in the Cathedral that were designed by Knox (two commissioned by Canon John Quine) were on display and we were blessed with having 4 members of the Quine family with us. Julie Quine read out an account of the origins of the pieces and the history behind the Quine family gifting the pieces to the Cathedral.

Onchan cemetery was the next stop to see two Archibald Knox designed headstones from 1912 and 1920.

The final stop on the 7 hour journey was to All Saints' Church, Lonan. Talks were given by Tony Pass and Julie Quine regarding the history of the church, the Knox war memorials and the grave of Canon John Quine who was vicar of Lonan for 45 years.

A pause for breath and then to Ballacregga Corn Mill Restaurant for a beautifully prepared dinner with the chefs and the two lady waitresses/managers/servers and all-round-fun girls looked after us very well.

At the end of such a great day The Archibald Knox Forum members and friends were treated to the sight and taste of a truly remarkable cake designed by a member and carried out to perfection by Sally Humphries of Manx Artisan Bakes.

Photographs below show Lisa patiently waiting for me to start the trip in her sports car. Lisa opening the door to No. 40 Cronkbourne Village, Margaret Fourie reading out the inscription on the St Barnabas War Memorial Plaque, The Post Office War Memorial Plaque and views of the wonderful cake. Believe it or not the "Bollellin" tray, "Thrym" jardiniere and the silver buckle from the Manx Museum are all hand made.

Thank you everybody for coming and thank you Sally for a cake that Knox would have been proud of.





Approaches have been made to a number of collectors of rare Knox pieces, and to the Manx Museum in the hope that a small exhibition of approximately 30+ such items can be exhibited in the museum during October 2018 (this will be the Month of Heritage during the celebrations of "Our Island 2018"). Permission is still to be obtained from the museum, who will meet in May to decide, and funding grants will be sought from Government agencies to cover the cost of shipping, insurance, security, promotion, marketing and advertising of the event. At this stage I have everything crossed, and I want to put on record my immense gratitude to the collectors who have agreed to participate in this event.

If the above exhibition does go ahead it will be a great occasion for the Manx people to see pieces of Knox work that are normally held in private collections. If any of you, who do not live on the Island, support the proposed event it will be a great chance for you to see other aspects of Knox such as watercolours, memorial and gravestone designs, the Manx scenery and crosses and the places where he lived and worked.

If the October exhibition is held it is hoped that 2019 will be a year where the Isle of Man will be host to one of the biggest exhibitions of the totality of Knox's work. This would attract interest from all over the world and bring Knox and the Isle of Man into the position they should hold in the world of Art and Design. The unique culture, history and scenery of this beautiful island are what inspired and motivated Knox, and the world needs to see these aspects as well knowing the wonderful designs he produced for Liberty & Co.

Chris Hobdell

A fantastic find in March 2018.

Towards the end of March I was sent two images by Anthony Bernbaum of The Peartree Collection in London.

I could not believe it at first but there in front of me were images of a near perfect sundial designed by Archibald Knox and dated 1905. It also contained two other initials apart from AK – they appeared to be JC and WJ.

Anthony was obviously even more excited than me as he had purchased the item. He wanted to find out all about it. I could shed some light on it, as could Dr Stephen Martin, but the hero of the 2 day research project was Alan E Kelly of Mannin Collections Limited.

The text below, and the images of this wonderful Manx object are from the website of The Peartree Collection:

I am delighted to list this sundial pointer / gnomon by Archibald Knox. This gnomon is one of two known and is a product of ‘The Sunnyside Workshops’, Victoria Road, Douglas. This was set up in 1905 by Wilson James Ashburner, a close friend and patron of Knox, ‘to rival in artistic productions the famous workshops controlled by the late Mr. William Morris’. To quote a contemporary newspaper report – ‘Mr. Ashburner is himself an accomplished craftsman and no mean designer, and he is aided in his efforts to revive art in wood and metal work by the designs of Mr. Archibald Knox and the exquisite workmanship of Mr. Joseph Cannell’. Hence the monograms on the gnomon are ‘AK’ – Archibald Knox, ‘JC’ – Joseph Cannell and ‘WJA’ – Wilson James Ashburner. Documentation related to the other known gnomon suggests it was cast by William Knox, Archie’s older brother who ran the family business.

The gnomon is in polished bronze and appears never to have been used. It is in excellent condition. It is designed to be hung on a wall vertically.

I am indebted to Alan E. Kelly, Mannin Collections on the Isle of Man for the cataloguing of this item. I am also grateful to Dr Stephen Martin and Chris Hobdell of the Archibald Knox Forum for their assistance in researching this piece. An image of this piece will appear in Dr Stephen Martin’s forthcoming 3rd edition on Archibald Knox.

It is currently reserved whilst further research is undertaken. Please contact me if you have information on, or interest in, this item.

Maker: The Sunnyside Workshop

Designer: Archibald Knox

Date: 1905

Marks: See images

Material: Bronze

Condition: Very good, see description

Size: 24cm across base, 20cm high

Photographs and description courtesy of The Peartree Collection.



AK for Archibald Knox and the date 1905

Could the inspiration for this be the sails of a Manx "Nobby" or a Celtic Axe?



A Manx "Nobby"



A Celtic Axe



JC for Joseph Cannell and WJa for Wilson James Ashburner



Position if horizontally mounted

In future newsletters there will be updated news on:

How the drop-in centre and visits to sites of Knox interest are progressing.

The outcome re possible Knox exhibition(s) in the Isle of Man.

Latest news regarding the new Knox book by Dr. Stephen A Martin which will have over 1,000 new images in it.

Talks about Archibald Knox that will be given on the Isle of Man and further afield.

The progress on research topics.

Details regarding new information and images added to the website.

Your input

It is important that The Archibald Knox Forum listens to, and responds to, its members and the public to discover what people wish the Forum to be and what topics they would like covered and discussed in the future.

To this end, we would be delighted to receive any ideas, information and suggestions from you and the public in order to make this venture interesting, relevant and, above all, reflect the needs and wishes of everyone.

Our firm belief is that although many people enjoy knowing about Knox - his life, work and legacy needs to be taken to the public as many people's perception is that Knox pieces are too expensive, only appear on "Antiques Roadshow" now and again, and are not for the likes of "ordinary folk." We had that view 10 years ago because much of his work is in museums and private collections. However, The Archibald Knox Forum wants you and the public to see, touch, feel and experience the objects and works that he designed and/or created. We are sure that is what Knox would have wanted.

We have a wonderful cross section of his work. We are custodians of it in our lifetime, we do not "own" it, we have possession of it until another person wishes to purchase it and guard it, or until it is passed on to the next generation of admirers and enthusiasts.

If there are Knox places of interest you wish to visit, or you wish to find out more about, please let us know and we will endeavor to answer your questions or arrange for such visits.

We would like to hear from anybody who wishes to help us with any aspect of The Archibald Knox Forum.

Thank you

Mary and I would like to thank you for your interest and support and we look forward to the Knox revival and trying, with you, to make the genius of this man better known and understood throughout the world, as well as on the Isle of Man.



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