



SIGHT MATTERS

Optic Topics

Issue No 129
Autumn 2023

**A newsletter for blind & visually
impaired people**

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Manx Registered Charity No. 132



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Sun-Raising Appeal

On Friday 22 September, Bright for Sight day, the Sun-Raising appeal was launched!! We are raising funds towards installing solar panels on our building and improving our energy efficiency. As you are aware, recent fluctuations in the energy market combined with high levels of inflation have put unprecedented strains on many organisations – and we have not been immune. In order to better protect ourselves from future energy market problems and to align ourselves with the Isle of Man's Net Zero ambitions, we are looking to replace our Legacy Gas Boilers with renewable power.

We will keep track of our progress through our newly installed "**Sun-ometer**", where some of our key supporters will have their names recorded. We believe that raising these funds to install the solar panels is currently one of the best things that can be done to protect our members' interests, keep our services **free-at-the-point-of-delivery** and sensibly invest in one of our most valuable assets: our premises

You Matter

Being told you or someone you care for has a visual impairment that can't be treated can be difficult to come to terms with.

At Sight Matters we are here to help and our new 'You Matter' course is designed to support our members who are **new** to sight loss, by providing them and their carers with the necessary information to enhance their future independence.

This 6-week course runs from our premises in Onchan and starts on **Wednesday 11th October at 3.30pm**

Topics include:

- Emotional effects of sight loss
- Daily living aids and technology
- Benefits & entitlements
- Audio services
- Sighted guiding
- Other sight loss organisations
- Activities
- Mobility & navigation
- Magnification
- Our community
- Eye health

For more information contact 674727 or email [**enquiries@sightmatters.im**](mailto:enquiries@sightmatters.im)

Dying to talk about Death conference

The topic of death is often considered taboo, something we avoid discussing until absolutely necessary.

However, being prepared and informed about end-of-life matters can alleviate stress and ensure that the wishes of our loved ones can be honoured.

Sight Matters are honoured to host the conference to present the "Dying to Talk About Death" - an event aimed at shedding light on the administration and practicalities of end-of-life matters.

Why Discuss End-of-Life Matters?

Why should we talk about death? Because it's an inevitable part of life, and being prepared can make a world of difference when the time comes. Whether you're planning for your own future, assisting a loved one, or a professional in the field, this conference will offer valuable insights and resources into end-of-life matters.

What to Expect:

"Dying to Talk About Death" will feature local experts who will provide guidance and knowledge on various aspects of end-of-life matters. Here's a sneak peek at some of the topics that will be covered:

1. **Legal Considerations:** Understanding the legal aspects of end-of-life planning, including wills, trusts, and estate administration.
2. **Personalised Assistance:** The role of end-of-life personal assistant and how support and comfort can be offered during this sensitive time.
3. **Meaningful Celebrations:** The importance of creating personalised and meaningful end-of-life ceremonies and celebrations.
4. **Compassionate Funeral Planning:** Guidance on planning and organising funeral services with compassion and sensitivity.
5. **Navigating Grief:** Resources and support for individuals and families coping with loss and grief.

Speakers:

Marc Furness:

Marc Furness is an Advocate, Notary Public and Commissioner for Oaths. Marc is a partner in Callin Wild LLC and head of the Private Client department.

Marc qualified as a Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales in 2009 (non-practicing) and following relocation to the Island qualified as an Isle of Man Advocate in 2013.

Clara Barker:

Clara Barker is a freelance Personal Assistant who has worked as a consultant for Callin Wild LLC since September 2022.

Clara has spent her working life in customer service, banking and co-ordination-based roles and now provides first rate administrative and practical support to her clients.

Clara has a great deal of experience in Bereavement Services and specialises in end-of-life planning and estate matters.

Keith Salmon:

Keith Salmon is the Regulated Training and Development Manager for Edgewater Associates, one of the Isle of Man's leading financial advice firms, with over 25 years' experience in providing financial advice to Island residents.

Keith supports the Edgewater team of financial advisers to look after the needs of customers when needed most, both in good times and times when things don't go according to plan.

Vicky Christian:

Vicky is a Humanist Celebrant, offering non-religious support and ceremonies.

After a family is bereaved, Vicky meets them to discuss their wishes for the funeral. She learns about the person who has died, and prepares a meaningful script for the family's approval. On the day of the funeral, she is there to greet the family, prior to conducting the ceremony.

John Boyde:

John is a professional Funeral Director who offers comprehensive funeral arrangements. His extensive first-hand experience with end-of-life matters means that he is perfectly placed to explain the practicalities people face after losing a loved one.

Mary Doyle:

Mary is the CEO of Cruse Bereavement Support Isle of Man, a local charity which provides one-to-one support for adults, young people and children

Why Attend?

"Dying to Talk About Death" is a unique opportunity to learn from local experts who are dedicated to helping individuals and families navigate the practicalities of end-of-life planning

and support. You will gain the knowledge and resources needed to make informed decisions and provide comfort during a challenging time.

Event Details:

Date: Friday 03 November 2023

Time: 9.00am - 4pm

Location: Corrin Court, Heywood Avenue,
Onchan, IM3 3AP

- **Cost:** £20 including lunch and refreshments

Email events@sightmatters.im to register and secure your spot, or call 674727.

Blind date

Calling all singletons!!! Applications are now open for our first 'Blind Date'.

Ooooo la la! Are you ready for the dating event of a lifetime? Get ready to spice up your love life and turn up the charm. On 9th February, just in time for Valentine's day, Sight Matters is rolling out the red carpet for the Isle of Man's very own Blind Date extravaganza!

Hold onto your hats (and maybe even your hearts), because we're about to dive headfirst into the wild world of love, laughter, and surprise connections!

Imagine this: You're standing on stage at the Legion, bathed in dazzling lights, your heart pounding like a bass drum, as the audience eagerly awaits your big reveal. You can't see your date, and they can't see you – it's all about personality, chemistry, and that irresistible Manx charm! Welcome to Sight Matters' Blind Date event, a dating experience that will leave you laughing, guessing, and just maybe falling head over heels in love.

Want to take part? Well, now's the time

Why Blind Date, You Ask?

If you've ever tuned in to the legendary UK TV show "Blind Date," you know that it's a recipe for hilarity, surprises, and unforgettable moments. And guess what? We're bringing that iconic TV magic right here to the Isle of Man! It's like a real-life game show, but instead of guessing what's behind curtain number three, you're guessing who's behind the screen! It's all about genuine

connections, unfiltered fun, and a healthy dose of banter. Who said dating can't be an adventure?

How Does It Work?

Here's the scoop: we're handpicking a batch of bold and charismatic contestants who are ready to take a leap of faith into the world of blind dating. Each contestant will be behind a screen using their wit, charm and banter to get picked by another singleton. Or, perhaps you could be the one asking the questions. We're talking about real-time dating decisions, folks. Will you choose contestant number one, two, or three? The suspense is real, and the sparks are bound to fly!

What's In It For You?

Aside from a night of unforgettable entertainment and potential love connections, your participation supports us. By entering our Blind Date event, you will help fund essential services, ensuring that you, our members have the support they need to thrive. Love is in the air, and so is the spirit of giving!

So, Isle of Man singles, are you ready to embrace the unknown, take a chance on love, and enjoy a

night of laughter, surprises, and maybe a bit of risqué humour?

If so, download a form from our website, email **Khealey@sightmatters.im** or phone 674727 and enter our Blind Date event. Could love just be one daring decision away? Love may be blind, but it's about to shine brighter than ever in the Isle of Man!

Application admin fee is £5, with all funds going to Sight Matters. Those chosen to take part have a chance to win a real date with their chosen contestant. And for those who just want to watch, keep an eye on this space: audience tickets will go on sale in the not-too-distant future. Note, applying does not guarantee taking part

Last date for application's is **Thursday 30th November, 2023**

Adults Monthly Activity Club

The summer has been busy with a variety of different events ranging from listening to brass bands - the wonderful Wurlitzer organ - the fabulous Andre Rieu - dancing to Abba - playing virtual reality games and being entertained by the Full Monty. There has also been visits to Jurby

Transport and Motor Museum as well as to exhibitions on the steam railways, the TT, the post office and the Wildlife Photographer of the year.

Upcoming members' events

If you are interested in any of the events below please contact Julie Cannon on 674727 or jcannon@sightmatters.im Please be aware that numbers in some sessions may be limited. Transport is provided for all the events.

Thursday 19th October 10am - Guided Tour Manx Museum 100

The Manx Museum is home to an extraordinary collection of artefacts and archives that help tell the story of the Isle of Man and its people. There are some tickets available to attend one of their guided tours of the exhibition.

Tuesday 24th October 10am – Guided Tour of Peggy

Would you like to join me to see the world's oldest schooner 'Peggy', learn about her maker, Captain Quayle and hear an update on her conservation story.

Sunday 29th October 10.30-12 – Christmas Market at Mount Murray Golf Club

This is a great opportunity to shop local and get some early Christmas presents with over 70 stalls.

Thursday 2nd November 7.30pm – Buddy Holiday & the Cricketers at the Gaiety

Transport yourself back in time for this breathtaking rock 'n' roll show where the hits just keep on coming - That'll Be the Day, Peggy Sue, Heartbeat, It Doesn't Matter Anymore, Raining in My Heart, Oh Boy! –and much, much more. Whatever the season, whatever the excuse to party, make your heartbeat a little faster & get those feet a tapping and hands clapping.

Thursday 9th November 5.30pm - South Social Meal Falcons Nest Port Erin

Get in touch with Julie (674727) if you live in the South and fancy meeting up for a chin wag and a lovely meal.

Monday 13th November -Have a go Acoustic Shooting at Corrin Court (1/2 hour slots)

Back by popular demand. Try something new and have a go at shooting an air rifle by listening to sound to. This is a sport for any degree of sight loss and you do not need to have any previous experience. The session is safely supervised. Acoustic shooting uses specially adapted rifles fitted with special sights, which measure the level of light reflected from a target. Participants wear special headphones to hear a sound, which becomes more frequent and a higher tone the closer they are to the target.

The monthly activity groups have been a great success in the East and North of the island. The sessions which are a mix of craft, games and social activities are a great way to try new activities, meet new people or catch up with old friends. Transport is provided.

Great news - there is a new group due to start in the West of the Island in October. Hopefully a group for the South of the island will follow shortly. If you are interested in attending any of the monthly groups please contact Julie for details.

Authors Breakfast

The breakfast will be held at the Comis Hotel on Monday, 27th November at 9.30am. The tickets are £25 per person to include a full English breakfast buffet.

This year's author is the wonderful local writer, Joanne Clague who was born and raised in Sheffield and now lives in Laxey with her husband, Children and dogs.

As a journalist, Joanne has worked in the north west for thirty years in print, radio and broadcast media before becoming a novel writer of historical fiction, set in nineteenth century Sheffield. Her series, set in Sheffield in the mid 1800's, begins with 'The Ragged Valley', which follows the Great Sheffield Flood of 1864

Call 674727 or email events@sightmatters.im

Christmas Coffee Morning

Our fabulous festive Coffee Morning will be on **Thursday 7th December at 10.30am** - pop along for Christmas gifts, raffle, cakes or just

coffee and chat with your friends at Sight Matters. Entry is £2, payable on the door

Coast 2 Coast

In the six years since its inception, Sight Matters' Coast 2 Coast walk, sponsored by Conister Bank, has become a well-known and well-loved symbol of community participation. Due to its non-competitive, inclusive nature, the walk is popular with many who may not feel confident to take part in a walking event – including those with sight loss, mobility issues, hidden disabilities and other life challenges.

The 2023 C2C walk was a huge success, raising thousands of pounds for Sight Matters (though the final figure has yet to be determined) as well as raising awareness about what we do and the issues facing blind and visually impaired people in the Isle of Man. Nearly 500 walkers took part, including some familiar faces, such as the Lieutenant Governor, (his Excellency), Sir John Lorimer, a certain gentleman by the name of Charles Fargher and even Super Mario.

A big thank you to Conister Bank for sponsoring this event!

The Arts Exhibition

The Sight Matters Arts Exhibition was a huge success, far better than we could have imagined. Members demonstrated what people with a visual impairment CAN do! The work was of a very high calibre - it was amazing to see. A big thank you to everyone that helped to make it happen and all who attended the exhibition. Also, an extra big thank you to all the members who submitted their work to exhibit.

At the private viewing of the art work, the Lieutenant Governor, (his Excellency), Sir John Lorimer, was given the very hard task of judging the Sight Matters Christmas card competition. There were two categories, under and over 18's. 5-year-old McKenzie Holmes won the under 18's with his card 'It's nearly time' and 101-year-old James Fenton won the over 18's category with his 'Snow family' card. Well done to both. The cards will be on sale soon at the Centre, the VIP Store & in all Shoprite stores. Price is £6 for a pack of 10 or £10 for 2 packs.

The Best Summer!!

What a fun filled summer our Younger Members have had!!

They firstly took part in an art class with Anna Clucas, to produce some expressive masks for the Sight matters art exhibition. This included cutting, sticking, gluing and finally painting. Lots of hard work and concentration went into producing these wonderful pieces of art, which looked amazing at our exhibition.

A fun session of crown green bowls was organised at Peel Bowling Green, the sun shone for us that day, and everyone had a great time. Our members showed real potential and skill. One little member even made up her own game which we all had a go at. They then ended the day with a well-deserved lunch at the Bowling Green Café.

Unfortunately, our next activity at the Great Laxey Mine Train was cancelled due to the typical Manx weather but the group still managed to meet up at the Centre to view the Sight Matters art exhibition, with Mackenzie being super excited as he had won his category in the Christmas card competition. Well done Mackenzie!

Kayaking on the Mooragh Lake with the Venture Centre was tricky – well the trickiest part was actually getting on the kayak!! Luckily no-one fell in and with the instructor's guidance all the group managed to master the art of paddling a kayak. A few games were played with it getting very competitive however no-one got completely soaked – there were just a few wet bums and feet which added to the giggles!! After all that fun and paddling the group were ready for a meal at the Mitre in Ballaugh.

The following Monday the group took on the challenge of Apemann. Everyone was very nervous at the start, but with a little bit of help from the instructor's and some words of encouragement everyone managed to complete the course with some even doing it twice! Those that struggled slightly were exceptionally pleased with themselves for completing it. They all did amazingly well and should be very proud of themselves – we are! When everyone's adrenalin levels returned to normal, we enjoyed lunch at the Coffee Cottage Café.

For their final summer activity, the group enjoyed lunch at Peel Breakwater Kiosk. Luckily the seagulls left us alone this time!

After lunch everyone headed up to Ballahimmin Riding and Pony Trekking Centre. This activity proved to be the most popular of the summer with glorious sunshine and beautiful scenic views.

Some of the younger members had never even sat on a pony. Some were showing a few nerves at first but once they relaxed and the trek began they all had a very enjoyable experience.

Here are a few of the comments we've received from the children

"I had a fantastic time we all went well horse riding and we groomed too"

'I was frightened at first because I had never ridden a horse before. I really liked Charlie Brown because he was a nice horse, he was big and brown. I'm not frightened of riding horses now.'

From a parent:

“ has had a blast at all the activities and she has also been talking about the other girls and is excited to see them again. Our groups promote independence, build a support network, help the children to socialise and are fun”!!!**

If you would like more information on this group or to help support it, please contact us.

From tiny acorns, mighty oaks grow

Stuck for that Christmas gift or want to remember that special person? Why not purchase a lasting memory with an engraved leaf or acorn, to be placed on our **Giving Tree?**

The giving tree is a handmade, 3D, wooden display of a large oak tree, attached to a wooden board, with branches running of it. It is situated on the wall in our headquarters Corrin Court.

Prices start at £25 for a silver leaf (5cm x 3cm) and go up to £500 for a gold acorn (9cm x 7cm). Your message can be up to 35 characters on smaller items and 45 on larger. For more details contact us on 674727 or

enquiries@sightmatters.im or download a form at www.sightmatters.im/support-us/the-giving-tree

Safeguarding Matters

A copy of our Safeguarding policy is available in your preferred format on request.

Our Safeguarding Officer is Cathryn Bradley
Our Deputy Safeguarding Officer is Michelle Ferrer

Sight Matters Audio Library

Please remember if you need an up to date catalogue, please let us know and we will forward one onto you.

Item No	Title	Author Surname	Author Forenames
FI8713	A Cornish Betrothal	Pryce	Nicola
FI9104	A Daughter's Wish	Gill	Elizabeth
MM2065	A Death in the Parish	Coles	Rev. Richard

FI9099	A Place Called Home	Dean	Ellie
FI8859	A Very Special Christmas	Jacobs	Anna
FI9115	A Wartime Welcome	Meddon	Rosie
MM2059	Assassins	Eldridge	Jim
MM2064	Black Fell	Hannah	Mari
FI9073	Blackpool's Angel	Mason	Maggie
FI9112	Catherine	O'Byrne	Linda
MM2077	Clean Kill	Leather	Stephen
MM2079	Cold Blooded Liar	Rose	Karen
MM2078	Constable Country	Aird	Catherine
FI9100	Courage of the Railway Girls	Thomas	Maisie
MM2084	Dark Hollow	Connolly	John
MM1774	Dead Letter Drop	James	Peter
MM2063	Dead Mans Grip	James	Peter
FI9105	Dear Neighbour	Claire Bradley	Jane

MM2055	Death at the Terminus	Marston	Edward
MM2062	Death Do They Part	Whitelaw	J.D.
MM2058	Death of Mr Dodsley	Ferguson	John
MM2056	Dirt	Sultoan	Sarah
MM2053	Don't Look Back	Spain	Jo
MM2054	Double Illusion	Nadel	Barbara
MM2080	Dr Spilsbury And The Camden Town Killer	Douglas	D L
FI9095	Empire	Iggulden	Conn
FI9124	Eternal	Scottoline	Lisa
MM2081	Fearless	Craven	M.W.
FI9106	Golden Dreams	Jacobs	Anna
FI9005	Her Nanny's Secret	Baynham	Jan
FI9116	Heritage of Folly	Cookson	Catherine
MM2052	Identity	Roberts	Nora
FI9107	Jessie's Little Bookshop by the Sea	Ferry	Kirsty

MM2066	Killing Moon	Nesbo	Jo
MM1568	Lizzy Flowers & the Family Firm	Rivers	Carol
FI8191	Lullaby Girl	Sidgwick	Aly
FI9108	Maybe Tomorrow	Parkes	Penny
FI9109	Memories of the Cottage by the Sea	Alexander	Rebecca
MM1537	Mrs Jefferies Pinches the Post	Brightwell	Emily
MM2067	My Other Husband	Koomson	Dorothy
FI9098	Napoleon's Spy	Kane	Ben
FI9080	One Enchanted Evening	Fforde	Katie
FI8287	Pengelly's Daughter	Price	Nicola
MM1607	Silent Voices	Cleeves	Ann
MM2057	Small Mercies	Lehane	Dennis
BM412	Spare	Harry	Prince
MM1174	Super-Cannes	Ballard	J G

FI9074	TARA the Terrier who Sailed Around the World	Forrester	Rosemary & Robert
FI9122	The Air Raid Book Club	Lyons	Annie
MM2071	The Black Spectacles	Dickson Carr	John
FI9102	The Blitz Girls	Bell	Johanna
MM2000	The Camden Murder	Hollow	Mike
MM1725	The Canning Town Murder	Hollow	Mike
FI9120	The Chimney Sweep's Sister	Hornby	Emma
MM1914	The Curfew	Logan	T.M.
MM2068	The Devil's Playgrpound	Russell	Craig
MM2070	The Elephants of Norwich	Marston	Edward
FI9119	The English Air	Stevenson	D.E.
FI9117	The Fall and Rise of Ronni Fairweather	Hollands	Gina

MM2072	The Fallen	Sutherland	John
FI9110	The Fascination	Fox	Essie
MM2073	The Fine Art of Invisible Detection	Goddard	Robert
FI9103	The Fortune Tellers	Mason	Maggie
FI9114	The Garment	Cookson	Catherine
MM1730	The House of the Hanged Woman	Ellis	Kate
FI9097	The House On the Cliff	Stevenson	D.E.
MM2061	The Last Passenger	Dean	Will
FI9096	The Letter Reader	Casey	Jan
FI8387	The Mallen Streak	Cookson	Catherine
MM2069	The Midnight News	Baker	Jo
MM2082	The Only One Left	Sager	Riley
FI9113	The Runaway Daughter	Ashworth	Libby

MM2060	The Scarlet Papers	Richardson	Matthew
MM2076	The Second Murderer	Mina	Denise
MM1813	The Stratford Murder	Hollow	Mike
FI9111	The Summer Skies	Colgan	Jenny
FI9069	The Thunder and the Flame	Fullerton	Alexander
MM2074	The Trial	Rinder	Rob
FI9118	The Venetian Candidate	Gwynne Jones	Philip
FI9121	The Watchman's Widow	Clague	Joanne
BM413	Twenty-Eight Pounds Ten Shillings	Fairweather	Tony
MM2083	Twice Round The Clock	Houston	Billie
FI9101	Valley Affairs	Thompson	Grace
FI9123	Wish You Were Here	Monaghan	Nicola

BM304	Yes Sister Sister	No	Craig	Jennifer
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Recipe

Air Fryer Cheese & Ham toastie

Prep:10 mins

Cook:10 mins

Make a classic ham & cheese toastie in your air-fryer – try gruyère instead of cheddar, if you like, or sourdough in place of your usual bread

Ingredients

20g [butter](#), softened

2 slices [sourdough](#) or other bread

½ tsp [English mustard](#)

50g grated [mature cheddar](#) or gruyère

1 tbsp chopped chives (optional)

1 thick slice of ham

Method

STEP 1

Heat the [air-fryer](#) to 190C. Butter the slices of bread on one side each, then combine the remaining butter with the mustard, cheese and chives, if using. Season with black pepper.

STEP 2

Spread the cheese mixture over the plain sides of the bread, then sandwich the ham between the two slices so the buttered sides are facing out. Air-fry for 10 mins, turning once until golden and crunchy on the outside, and the cheese has melted in the middle.

Bbcgoodfood.com

Special dates for your diary

6 week You Matter course starts on **Wednesday 11 October at 3.30pm @ Corrin Court**

Dying to talk about Death conference - **Friday 03 November 9am- 4pm @ Corrin Court**

Author's Breakfast **Monday 27th November at 9.30am @ Comis Hotel**

Last date for applications for Blind Date – **Thursday 30 November**

Christmas Coffee Morning - **Thursday 7th December at 10.30am @ Corrin Court**

Donations

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

Sickness

Please do not attend the Centre if you are ill. 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.