

# Manx Notes 720 (2025)

## “THERE WERE ‘WHIRLS’ ON THE WIRRAL”

(1958) \*

There were “whirls” on the Wirral (Cheshire) last weekend when a quartet of Isle of Man school-teachers, all members of Mr Leighton Stowell’s Castle Rushen well-known Folk Dancers, gave a first-rate display of their rustic art at Wirral Manx Society’s Social Evening...

A couple of the Island dancers were the guests of the Society’s patron—Wirral Headmistress Miss Eva Kneen, of Conway Street Secondary Modern School, whose father (if memory serves me correctly) was a one-time well-known minister at the Bethel, Douglas.

Two additional members of the Folk-Dance team were a Chester College boy, who performed the popular Dirk Dance; and a member of the Conway teaching staff.

Among the Wirral Society’s guests who enjoyed the whirls and the rural abandon of the Dances were Miss Lillian Pickard’s Laureston Ladies Choir, who competed in Wallasey Music Festival at the weekend.

The four Southsiders who comprised the dancing team from the Island were Headmaster Stowell, and teachers Mrs Margy Stewart and Miss Ann Gawne of Ballasalla Primary School, and Miss Maureen Coole, of Ballabeg School and they spent their half-term week-end break entertaining the Wirral-Manx “exiles.”

“Whirls on Wirral.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 6 November 1958: 4b. (For the Laureston Ladies Choir at the Wallasey Music Festival, see “Ladies’ Choirs in Wallasey,” *Isle of Man Examiner* 6 November 1958: 5c.)

“[E]ntertaining the Wirral-Manx ‘exiles.’” Notice that the Castle Rushen Folk Dancers are performing at the Wirral Manx Society, a reminder of the times when a number of such Societies once existed over the North West of England, gathering together those who had either recently moved from the Island or who had roots there.

STEPHEN MILLER RBV

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\* Originally published as Stephen Miller, ““There were “whirls” on the Wirral’ (1958),” *Kiaull Manninagh Jiu* October (2025): [19].

4 The Isle of Man Daily Times, Tuesday, November 11, 1958



WIRRAL MANX SOCIETY gave Exhibition Dancing at Conway Secondary School, Birkenhead recently. Picture shows Mrs. Stewart, Mrs. Cole, Miss Gawne, Miss Anderson, Mr. Leighton Stowell, Mr. R. Archibald. Mr. Archibald did a solo Dirk Dance. He is a student at Chester College and will later teach Physical Education.

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