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## Tynwald Hill, Isle of Man



[Tynwald Hill, Isle of Man Zoom](#)



- [Tynwald Hill, St John's Isle of Man. 1882 Poulton Photograph Series Zoom](#)



- [‘Tynwald in the Isle of Man’ 1787, Hand drawn and coloured map on paper backed with linen by J Newton Zoom](#)



- [‘Tynwald in the Isle of Man’ 1787, Hand drawn and coloured map on paper back with linen by J Newton Zoom](#)



- [The earliest known image of Tynwald Day, showing crowds of spectators at the base of the hill. Taken 1860, photographer unknown Zoom](#)



- [The First Deemster promulgating the laws in at the ceremony in 2006 Zoom](#)



- [Tynwald Hill and Royal Chapel of St John the Baptist Zoom](#)



- [British Railways poster depicting Tynwald Day Zoom](#)



- [Tynwald Hill Zoom](#)



- [Royal procession on Tynwald Day 1945 Zoom](#)

**Tynwald Hill at St John's is the traditional ancient meeting place of the Manx parliamentary assembly, dating back at least to the late first millennium AD.**

The hill itself is an artificial mound, stepped in profile, approximately 25m in diameter at the base, and 3.6m high. Its earliest phase dates to later prehistory, when the first indications of communal assemblies can be glimpsed. Later the development of a royal centre focused in the nearby upper Neb valley allowed the site to increase in importance, and by the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium AD Tynwald Hill was in use as a national meeting place.

The site continues to be active today and in 1979 it celebrated its millennium as a continuous parliament. The Tynwald Court now meets in the Island's modern capital, Douglas, on the third Tuesday of each month, but once a year on July 5th an open air ceremony is still held at Tynwald Hill. This day is a national holiday for the island, and the laws passed during the year are proclaimed in both Manx Gaelic and English.

The site of Tynwald Hill is thus one of the most important ancient monuments in the Island, representing not just a symbol of the rich heritage of the Manx people, but also a contemporary focus where the future life and culture of the community is forged.

### **Tynwald Day**



[Tynwald Day ceremony, 2005 Zoom](#) Tynwald Day occurs annually on 5th July before an audience of thousands. A representative of the British monarchy, usually the Lieutenant Governor, presides over the ceremony, whilst parliament, officials and honoured guests are gathered on, or close to, Tynwald Hill. The main business is to proclaim the new laws created during the preceding year and to offer the opportunity for personal grievances to be presented. The modern ceremony is a continuation of the public assembly thought to have been in existence for over 1000 years.

### **Procession**

The open-air ceremony begins with a procession of the Guard of Honour, Military Band and Standard Bearers along with representatives from local schools and other organisations. The Lieutenant Governor's arrival is marked with an RAF flypast then he inspects the military and lays a wreath at the War Memorial before observing a minute's silence and joining Members of Tynwald, other dignitaries and invited guests for a Church service in the Royal Chapel.

### Proclaiming the Laws



[King George VI and Elizabeth on Tynwald Hill, 1945 Zoom](#) After the service, the Members of Tynwald and participants proceed along the Processional Way to Tynwald Hill where they are seated in a tiered system, with the Lieutenant Governor, his officers and the Legislative Council (upper branch of Tynwald) on the top; followed by Members of the House of Keys (the lower, directly elected branch of Tynwald); then public officials, civic dignitaries, and religious representatives; down to the fourth tier reserved for members of the Church of England clergy and two lecterns for the Deemsters (judges).

The Lieutenant Governor instructs the First Deemster to direct the 'Fencing of the Court' (calling the assembly to order) before the Laws are proclaimed, first in English (by the First Deemster) and then in Manx (by the Second Deemster). The Lieutenant Governor then invites anyone with a Petition for Redress to present it. This simple but ancient procedure enables grievances to be remedied and can lead directly to the enactment of legislation. Following the ceremony, a formal sitting of Tynwald meets in the Chapel to sign the certificates of proclamation for the Acts and deal with other business.

### What's nearby

#### Royal Chapel and the Fairfield



[Royal Chapel of St John the Baptist © Frank Bradford Zoom](#) Tynwald Hill is linked by a pathway to the Royal Chapel of St John the Baptist, 115 m to the east. Both the Hill and the Chapel are set

within a dumb-bell shaped walled enclosure. Around the enclosure is open ground – the Fairfield.

Tynwald Hill, the Chapel and the Fairfield all lie together near the western end of a flat-topped natural gravel plateau rising between two branches of the River Neb about 3 km southeast of the ancient city of Peel. This plateau is, in addition to the features already noted, known to be rich in archaeological sites. The earliest of these is a stone cist or burial chamber known as Follagh y Vannin, which lies immediately west of the minor road leading from St John's round the rear of Tynwald Hill to Glenmoor. This cist dates to the early Bronze Age, approximately 2000 BC, and would originally have been set within a mound of turf, soil and stone.

The Tynwald exhibition, in the hall next to the Chapel of St John, explores the history and ceremony of Tynwald Hill. Visits to the Legislative Buildings, Tynwald High Court, the House of Keys and Council Chambers can be arranged by telephoning 00 44 624 685520 or e-mail [library@tynwald.org.im](mailto:library@tynwald.org.im)

## Castles

The impressive [Peel Castle](#) and Island fortress on St Patrick's Isle, Peel dates from 9<sup>th</sup> century – 19<sup>th</sup> century.



[Tynwald in the 1950s Zoom Castle Rushen](#), Castletown is an exceptionally well-preserved castle which dominates the Island's former capital. Founded in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it was occupied until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Museums and exhibitions

The [Manx Museum](#), Douglas explores the landscape, archaeology, social history, natural history and art of the Isle of Man and includes the National Library and Archive.

The [House of Manannan](#), Peel tells the story of the Celtic, Viking and maritime traditions of the Isle of Man, guided by the Island's mythical protector Manannan.

## Archaeology

The Isle of Man is rich in archaeology. Interesting sites include an Iron Age and Norse settlement site at [The Braaid](#), between Douglas and Foxdale, (<http://www.iomguide.com/braaid.php>) and an Iron Age hill fort with chapel, burials and Viking ship burial at [Balladoole](#), between Castletown and Port St Mary. ([www.iomguide.com/balladoole.php](http://www.iomguide.com/balladoole.php))

## Parks and gardens

Enjoy a walk through [Tynwald National Park and Arboretum](#), St John's planted to commemorate the millennium of Tynwald, located to the east and north of Tynwald Hill. Immediately west of Tynwald Hill are the gardens at [Cool y Ree](#), St John's.

## Food and drink

The Tynwald Hill Inn, St John's is a real ale pub with food and live music. Why not eat out at Tynwald Hill Tearooms, St John's, a licensed restaurant with fresh local foods providing light lunches, home baked cakes, scones and puddings. [Tynwald Mills](#), St John's provides catering and retail outlets in a converted mill to the north of Tynwald Hill

## Visitor information

### Visit the Isle of Man

The Isle of Man is a beautiful island with breathtaking scenery, unspoilt beaches and a relaxed pace of life, set in the Irish Sea between Britain and Ireland. It harks back to a Celtic and Viking past and looks forward with modern communications and businesses. A dependency of the British Crown, the Isle of Man is governed by its own parliamentary assembly –

Tynwald Court – and is neither part of the United Kingdom nor the European Union. You may have heard of the three legs of Man (the national symbol), Manx cats, the TT races, or Manx kippers: but come and see Tynwald Hill, our Viking, Celtic and medieval sites, wander the hills, coast and beaches, then enjoy our local seafood, loaghtan lamb, cheeses and beers.

## Location

## Contact Info

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## Origin / Explanation of Name

Old Norse ***Þingvöllr***: field of the parliament

## Links

### Tourism Websites

- [www.gov.im/tourism](http://www.gov.im/tourism)

### Additional Information

- [www.tynwald.org.im](http://www.tynwald.org.im)
- [www.iomguide.com/tynwaldhill.php](http://www.iomguide.com/tynwaldhill.php)

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