



29 September 2021

NEWS RELEASE

EXHIBITION AND MEMORIAL SERVICE TO MARK 150 YEARS OF MILNER TOWER

Rushen Heritage Trust will mark the 150th anniversary of Milner Tower with a Memorial Service and an exhibition during October.

The tower was built in 1871 to honour the Sheffield-born world-renowned safe maker William Milner, who made Port Erin his home and is remembered as one of the village's greatest benefactors, often referred to as the 'Godfather of Port Erin'.

The Memorial Service is at 3pm on Saturday, October 9th in St Catherine's Church, which itself was funded by Milner's estate, and all are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served afterwards in St Catherine's Church Hall.

The exhibition – Milner: The Man & The Tower – will run across two venues from Thursday, October 21st until Sunday, October 31st. Most of the exhibition will be staged at St Catherine's Church Hall, with an element on display at Rushen Heritage & Visitor Centre in Bridson Street, Port Erin. Both venues will be open 10am-4pm each day.

And in what is the 140th anniversary of the Bay Hotel on Shore Road, Port Erin, proprietor and owner of Bushy's, Martin Brunnschweiler, is launching a special short-run Milner Tower Ale, which will be launched on Friday, October 1st.

Hugh Davidson, RHT Director, said: 'Milner Tower is one of the most iconic – and most photographed – landmarks in the Isle of Man. It has stood guard over the beautiful Port Erin Bay for 150 years and it is right that we mark this anniversary by paying tribute to the man whose philanthropy the tower was built to recognise.'

Martin said: 'We are honoured to have been asked to produce this unique beer and it's particularly special for us as my wife, Debbie, is a Port Erin girl and living here we look up towards the tower every day and remember the great man that it commemorates.'

William Milner suffered from poor health and visited Port Erin for many years, before finally retiring here in 1860. It followed a tragedy, when a young boy was killed during a competition between Milner's firm and a rival to test each other's safes.

Treisht Eiraght Rushen Y Jass Aalin

Registered Office: Baycliffe, Tower Road, Bradda West, Port Erin, Isle of Man, IM9 6PP
Tel: 00 44 7624 464634 Website: rushenheritage.org Registered Charity No. 1166



Hugh added: 'Milner's Port Erin home was called The Rest, situated on land opposite the Falcon's Nest Hotel, and he became a key figure in the village. He built the cottages on St Catherine's Terrace to house poor fishermen, he built the village's first major hotel – the Falcon's Nest – and he was instrumental in the building of the new breakwater, which was completed in 1864. It was badly damaged by storms in the years that followed and was finally destroyed in 1884.

'But Milner did so much more for the people of Port Erin and they in turn commissioned the tower to be built in his honour. He had a fascinating life, and we look forward to welcoming people from all around the Island – and further afield – to the exhibition to learn about the man behind the tower.'

As part of the overall celebrations of the 150th anniversary, the Trust is unveiling a plaque dedicated to Milner on the exterior wall of Milner Towers, the apartments that now stand on what was the location of his home, The Rest. We are delighted that Captain of the Parish of Rushen, Stanley Clucas, has kindly agreed to do the unveiling.

For more details about Milner: The Man & The Tower and the Milner Memorial Service, visit rushenheritage.org or follow Rushen Heritage on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Coordinator John Quirk can be contacted at rushenht@gmail.com or on 464634.