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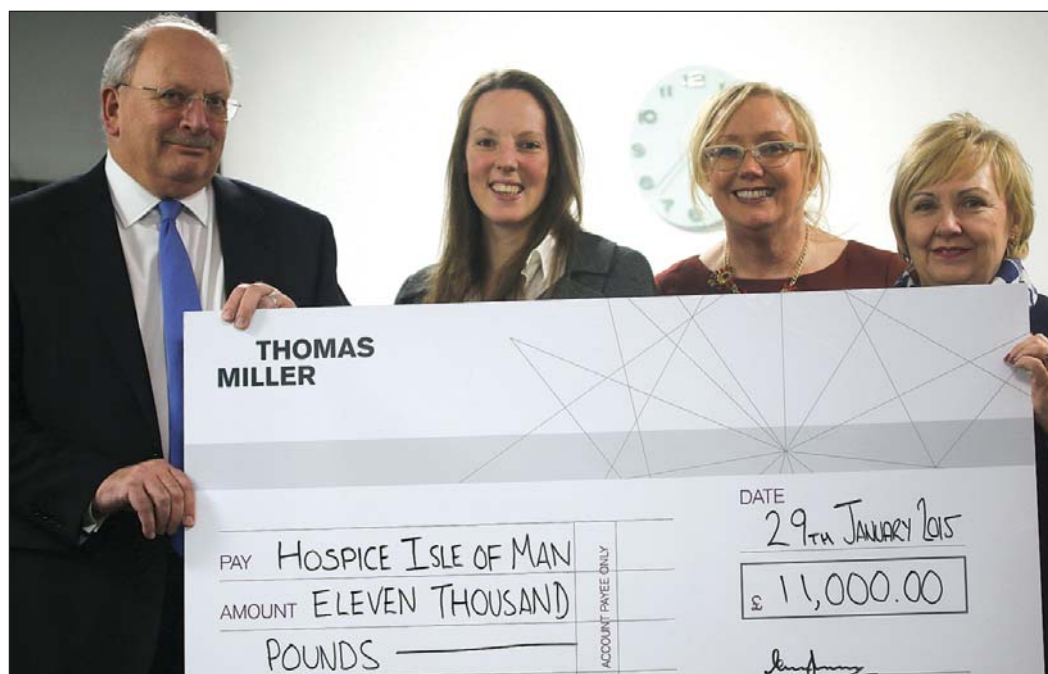
**THOMAS
MILLER**



COVER
STORY

Burns Supper raises £11,000 for Hospice Isle of Man

On the 22nd January, Thomas Miller hosted a Burns Supper and Charity Auction in the Royal Hall at the Villa Marina in aid of Hospice Isle of Man.



With The Ellan Vannin Pipes & Drums band out in full force welcoming guests as they arrived and the tables in the main hall decorated with 18 different tartans the scene was set for one of the largest Burns Suppers to be held on the Isle of Man in recent years.

Over 180 guests celebrated the life and work of 'Rabbie Burns' in an evening full of tradition and spectacular entertainment but there were also some not-so-traditional twists. Notably the chefs "Haggis Bon Bon" – a delicious nouvelle cuisine version of haggis, neaps & tatties which delighted some of the diners but not all...!).

Tim Glover, Manx Radio, acted as Master of Ceremonies and presided over the evening with his usual charm and persuasiveness. Thanks

to Tim's auctioneering skills, and the generosity of the guests on the evening the grand sum of £11,000 was raised for the charity. Some of the Directors of Thomas Miller and Thomas Miller Investment participated in the proceedings by giving the traditional Welcome, the Selkirk Grace and The Immortal Memory of Robert Burns but the highlight of the evening was undoubtedly Thomas Miller Investment's CEO, Mike Balfour, who took to the stage and with great panache gave 'The Address to the Haggis'. Mike's theatrical and fluent eight verse presentation was a sight to behold and provided a great intro to the festivities, especially for those attending a Burns Supper for the first time.

The 'Toast to the Lassies', the 'humorous' speech of the evening was

superbly delivered by Guest Speaker Ian Robertson, the BBC rugby commentator and former Scottish International. Ian's wit and wicked sense of humour along with his wealth of sporting anecdotes and one liners provided for an after dinner speech that was both enthralling and at times stomach-achingly funny.

In reply local lass, Kristene Sutcliffe, delivered a robust response with her thoughts about the modern male – this was much enjoyed by the lassies but far closer to home than most of the laddies in the audience would care to admit!! Kristene, accompanied by David Kilgallon, also provided the evening's musical entertainment with beautiful renditions of Robert Burns' 'A Red, Red Rose' and 'A Highland Lad My Love Was Born'.

To conclude the formal



proceedings The Speaker of the House of Keys, The Hon Stephen Rodan delivered a speech entitled ‘The Twa Lands’ which highlighted the unity between the Isle of Man and Scotland, before handing over to Sir Miles Walker, Chairman of Hospice Isle of Man who closed the evening with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks.

As a finale, led by Ellan Vannin Pipes & Drums, the evening came to an end with rousing renditions of Auld Lang Syne and the Manx

National Anthem.

Ian Jarrett, Chairman of Thomas Miller Isle of Man was delighted with the success of the evening,

“The idea of holding a Burns Supper for clients and guests came from Mike Balfour, a Scot and CEO of Thomas Miller Investment which has its Private Investment Management onshore headquarters in Edinburgh. It had been four years since we last hosted a large corporate event on the island and we were very keen to put

on a function that would be slightly different from the norm. I am truly grateful to those who supported the event and I never cease to be amazed by the generosity of the Manx business community who helped us to raise £11,000 for such a worthy cause.”

Speaking of the Event, Margaret Simpson (CEO of Hospice Isle of Man) said, “We have worked with Thomas Miller on a number of occasions and were thrilled when they approached



Burns Supper raises £11,000 for Hospice Isle of Man (Continued)

us last year to say they were looking to do a fabulous Burns night in order to raise funds for our charity. The event was absolutely stunning; the attention to detail was second to none. To raise £11,000 from this event was a true testament to all the hard work put in by the team at Thomas Miller. I cannot thank them enough for a wonderful evening and for their huge donation – this will cover over a month's nursing and medical care that our patients receive in the In-patient Unit day and night."

Thomas Miller, an independent and international provider of insurance, professional and investment services, have been present on the island for over 30

years. From its headquarters in Douglas its 45+ staff offer Captive and Investment Management services as well as being the home of Hellenic War Risks, a leading provider of mutual war risks to the Hellenic shipping community. The last 6 months has seen the business grow, with Thomas Miller Investment taking on 3 new members of staff as it looks to strengthen and expand its international business from the Island. As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility, Thomas Miller will be looking to continue their support of the island's charities, during 2015 and beyond, through its regular donations and participation in a number of community based projects.

Special thanks must go to all those who supported the event through table purchases, as well as all those who donated prizes for the raffle and items for the auction: Anna Clucas, Baker Tilly Isle of Man, Claire Christian Couture, Greyney Mooar Fine Arts, John Morphet & Pure Leisure Group, Nails by India, Samphire Restaurant & Bistro, The Tartan Group & Wilkins.

Last but by no means least a thank you to Taylor Made Events for coordinating the room décor, David Mason of The Empress Hotel for serving a sumptuous Bill o' Fare and to Mannin Media Group for donating the menu and auction cards.

**All photography courtesy of Pete Williamson.*

