



### An improvement on last year?

After last year's bumpy ride, a very good friend suggested that we needed a new writer for this year's script. She is quite right! We haven't found one yet, but if there are any offers...?

#### Bridging the Gap

We hear a lot nowadays of the demise of the independent bookseller, but that's not the case on the Isle of Man. Bridge Bookshop is bucking the trend. Established for many years in Port Erin in the south of the island, Bridge has just opened a second branch in Ramsey in the north. Congratulations to them on becoming a chain!

#### Heard on a bus...

'If I go and work for that new bookshop, do you think they'd give me a discount for the off licence next door...?'

#### 'Even sane authors are nuts'

Or so says Dan Brown (sorry Jon!). Neil Gaiman adds: 'I suspect that most authors don't want criticism, not even constructive criticism. They want straight-out, fulsome, informed, naked praise, arriving by the shipload every fifteen minutes or so.'...

Writing is easy, but **good** writing is hard, and authors are not necessarily very polite to colleagues either. Take for example Adelaide Lubbock's comment on page 14 of *A Cog in the Wheel*: 'A grizzled kind-faced major with a wooden leg has arrived as Finance Officer. He has a childlike and naïf manner and seems disposed to be friendly, but also seems not very bright. Imagine my surprise when I was told he was Bruce Marshall, a brilliant and successful author, who has written many bestsellers, and is apparently quite a star in the literary world. He has been in Special Operations Executive (SOE) all the war.' On page 110 she adds: 'I have taken on the camps' administration, as well as welfare and a small slice of the repatriation side, to try to help Bruce Marshall who, being a most kind-hearted fellow, gets in tremendous stews of worry over his work.'

Marshall himself was self-effacing about his career. He once said: 'I am an accountant who writes books. In accounting circles I am hailed as a great writer. Among novelists I am assumed to be a competent accountant.'



*Jon Wornham signing his book Mann with Altitude in Lexicon Bookshop, Strand Street, Douglas, just before Christmas. He was also handing out copies of The Drone Code, published by the Civil Aviation Authority. Note Jon's drone on the platform behind him. All the magnificent aerial photographs in Jon's book were taken with that drone. It's much smaller than I imagined it would be...*

Best wishes  
Sara

#### Quote of the day

'The line of six semi-circular constructions date from World War Two, when an RAF gunnery school was located at Ronaldsway. An aircraft would tow a banner behind it and the trainee gunners would attempt to hit it. Each gunner had bullets dipped in a different colour paint so their accuracy could be judged after the banner was dropped on the airfield.'