

## The Knockaloe Website and Visitors Centre

100 years ago, on 17 November 1914, over 23,000 internees, such as Josef Pilates, together with their guards, including Archibald Knox, started moving into Knockaloe Farm, Patrick Village.

100 years later, a registered charity company limited by guarantee has been set up by the community of Patrick Village to utilise the 150 year old Patrick Village School building to develop an on-site Visitors Centre, with a web based Archive, to bring this very human aspect of Patrick Village and Isle of Man history to life.

### Phase 1 : The Website and Archive – now launched

As few records of Knockaloe Camp and its residents remain, the Charity is using the latest technology to collate the lost stories of the internees, guards and village members, by reaching out to their descendants around the globe, via the internet, 100 years later. As the fragments of information provided both from descendants and various other sources gradually overlap more and more, this will allow the Charity to rebuild the records which were sadly destroyed, but more importantly to try to understand the impact upon the real lives of those people and their families, and to tell their story 100 years later. Anyone with any information about any aspect of Knockaloe and Patrick village life will be encouraged to contribute to an ever growing archive of this time, the people and the families involved. Bringing this information together will allow descendants to find out more about what happened to family members, as well as allowing us to tell the story about this little known aspect of the First World War.

[www.knockaloe.im](http://www.knockaloe.im) was launched on 17 November 2014, 100 years to the day after the first internees moved into Knockaloe. The Charity commemorated this centenary by moving its first internee onto the website on that day. Since launching, the Charity has received many more stories as well as various other information which is being collated into our Archive on a daily basis.

### Phase 2 : The Visitors Centre – under development

Situated in 150 year old Patrick Village School, a historic village building located opposite the entrance to the site of Knockaloe Camp, with views over the entire Camp area, the Visitors Centre will seek to tell the story of what happened in our village 100 years ago to today's visitors of all ages, from both on and off the Island, in a visual and imaginative way.

It will seek to help visitors understand what it would have been like at that time, through a virtual tour with digital reconstructions, imagery, letters and artefacts and ultimately through physical hut reconstructions. But it will also focus on helping visitors find out more about any specific former residents, internees and guards or share their stories with us.

A few features and remains of the Camp and its inhabitants can be seen in the village and on Knockaloe Farm, and from the Visitors Centre a self-guided walk will aim to help visitors visualise how the camp would have looked (using technology via an "app" to provide visual reconstructions), identify points of interest, including the remaining internee graves, and to pinpoint hut locations.

As the internees were largely German and Austrian but also included many other nationalities, the website, exhibition and walk information will be multilingual.

**To find out more, to tell us your family's story or help us in any way please visit [www.knockaloe.im](http://www.knockaloe.im)  
Or contact us by e mail: [info@knockaloe.im](mailto:info@knockaloe.im)**

### Funding the Project

Part of the project involves renovating the 150 year old Patrick Village Schoolrooms, a historic building situated at the entrance to the camp and itself in desperate need of repair.

The Charity has already raised a substantial sum from the community for the website and part of the renovation, but it has much more yet to raise over coming months and all support would be gratefully received.

The registered charity is seeking donations from Trusts and individuals and is looking to develop internee descendant "friends" to help support the renovation and development costs of this project.

### The Charity

The Charity is run by members of the community, including professionals and those already running visitor attractions on the Island, who are donating their experience to ensure its professionalism, integrity and success of this venture. The Visitors Centre provides a future for the Schoolrooms which is vital for this central building to Patrick community life. It also brings to life the story of a unique village history and the people it involved.