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AGRICULTURE & WILDLIFE
ARTICLES
BETH'S FAMILY TREE
BOOKS
BUSINESS
CHILDREN'S STORIES
CLANS & FAMILIES

CULTURE & LANGUAGE
DONNA'S PAGE
ELECTRICSCOTLAND.NET
FAMOUS SCOTS
FAMILYTREE
FORUMS
FOOD & DRINK
GAMES

GAZETTEER
GENEALOGY
HISTORIC PLACES
HISTORY
HUMOR
JOHN'S PAGE
KIDS
LIFESTYLE
MUSIC

NEWSLETTER
PICTURES
POETRY
POSTCARDS
RELIGION
ROBERT BURNS
SCOTS IRISH
SCOTS REGIMENTS
SERVICES

SHOPPING
SONGS
SPORT
SCOTS DIASPORA
TARTANS
TRAVEL
TRIVIA
VIDEOS
WHATS NEW

HELP TERMS OF USE CONTACT US

Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for July 15th, 2022

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<https://electricscotland.com/scotnews.htm>

Electric Scotland News

Trudeau defends decision to return Russia-owned turbine

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has defended Canada's decision to return a turbine used in a pipeline that carries natural gas from Russia to Germany. He said it was a "very difficult decision" to return the Russian-owned turbine despite sanctions. Ukraine has accused Canada of wavering to Russia, but Mr Trudeau reiterated his government's support for Kyiv.

It prompted an angry backlash from some Ukrainians, including from a group representing the Ukrainian diaspora that said it would seek a judicial review of the decision. Ukraine's government also accused Canada of adjusting sanctions "to the whims of Russia" and called for the decision to be reversed.

Germany has expressed fears of an energy shortage due to its over-reliance on Russian gas, especially with winter months approaching. On Tuesday, the Toronto-based Ukrainian World Congress filed an application for judicial review with a Canadian court seeking to quash the exemption so that the turbine could no longer be returned.

Wildfires rage as Europe battles heatwave

A heatwave spreading across Europe is fuelling wildfires in Portugal, France and Spain. Around 3,500 firefighters in Portugal are battling dozens of blazes, as temperatures break records in various parts of the country.

Inflation is a major issue for many people and I noted an explanation from the Bank of Canada on why things are as they are. You might want to have a read of the article at:

<https://financialpost.com/news/economy/exclusive-tiff-macklem-bank-of-canada-rate-hike-inflation-forecast-miss>

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

Note that this is a selection and more can be read in our ScotNews feed on our index page where we list news from the past 1-2 weeks. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland and world news stories that can affect Scotland and as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines it becomes a good resource. I might also add that in a number of newspapers you will find many comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish which I do myself from time to time.

Sunak FAILS to mop up Hunt and Zahawi votes taking just 13 of 43

RISHI SUNAK failed to pick up many of the votes that became available after Jeremy Hunt and Nadhim Zahawi were kicked out of the leadership race, securing just 13 out of 43 available votes in Thursday afternoon's ballot.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1640272/tory-leadership-live-liz-truss-rishi-sunak-penny-mordaunt-badenoch-braverman-tugendhat>

Why Scottish women and Icelanders are closely linked

Historian Dr Janina Ramirez tells the incredible story of 'Aud the Deepminded' - one of the first people to settle in Iceland in the 9th Century. Aud was a warrior, a leader, a freer of slaves... and a woman.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/reel/video/p0chhpnz/why-scottish-women-and-icelanders-are-closely-linked>

Water scarcity risk increases in eastern Scotland

The risk of water scarcity has increased in the east of Scotland, with more dry weather forecast for July. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Sepa) has issued a warning that conditions are unlikely to improve in the next week.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-62092733>

Undersea cable laid to link Shetland to UK energy grid

The Shetland High-Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) link began this week off the coast of Caithness. The £660m project will allow Shetland to export renewable electricity to the grid and give the islands security over their electricity supply.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-62093341>

Catch 22

A few days have now passed since Nicola Sturgeon's announcement of the supposed routemap to an independence referendum, and we've had time to analyse it properly.

Read more at:

<https://wingsoverscotland.com/catch-2022/>

It is time to set aside flattering delusions about the NHS

Qatar's rulers grasped the nettle and embarked on a multi-decade reform process. Now it's our turn to learn from them.

Read more at:

<https://thecritic.co.uk/we-can-do-better-than-the-nhs/>

Photographer David Yarrow on remaking golfing history at St Andrews

It is not only one of the most famous locations in sport but, according to acclaimed photographer David Yarrow, the 18th green at St Andrews is also the most famous location in Scotland.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/a-shot-at-glory-photographer-on-remaking-golfing-history-at-st-andrews/>

Pierre Poilievre has commanding lead over Conservative leadership rivals

Poilievre was selected as the best to be the next Conservative leader by 48 per cent of respondents, compared to 14 per cent for Jean Charest

Read more at:

<https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/pierre-poilievre-draws-commanding-lead-over-conservative-leadership-rivals-new-poll-suggests>

Scotland's rare seaweed-eating sheep

Orkney's northernmost island, North Ronaldsay, is home to a rare and ancient breed of hardy sheep that have adapted to thrive on a seaweed diet.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20220712-the-orkney-sheep-reared-on-seaweed>

Electric Canadian

The Valley of Gold

A Tale of the Saskatchewan by David Howarth. (1921) (pdf). A novel.

You can read this at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/valleyofgold.pdf>

North Buxton

The village of North Buxton was settled in 1849 by a white Presbyterian minister and a small group of formerly enslaved people. Once a thriving Black community, its population has gradually shrunk to less than 200, but its history is more relevant than ever as a new generation leads the way.

You can watch this video at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/north-buxton.htm>

Dufferin Farm Tour

A video on this area of Ontario showing the different crops and livestock raised in this area of Ontario where 98% of farms are family run.

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/agriculture/dufferinfarmtour.htm>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 10th day of July 2022

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26229-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-10th-day-of-july-2022>

Building the North

By J. B. MacDougall, B.A. (1919)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/buildingthenorth.htm>

Electric Scotland

Beth's Video Talks

July 6th 2022 - Tea delicious tea

You can view this talk at: <https://electricscotland.com/bnft>

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

Got in the August 2022 section 2 issue which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/bnft/index.htm>

Aberdeenshire in the 18th Century

Conditions of agriculture and the social and domestic arrangements that prevailed in Aberdeenshire, From the Aberdeen Journal

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/aberdeen/aberdeenshire18th.htm>

A New Setting of an Auld Sang, Robin Tamson

From the Aberdeen Journal

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/articles/robintamson.htm>

The Kirk above Dee Water

By the Rev. H. M. B. Reid (1895) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/lifestyle/kirkabovedeewate00reid.pdf>

The Book of Buchan

By Twenty-Nine contributors edited and arranged by J. F. Tocher, B,Sc (1910) (pdf)

You can read this book at

https://electricscotland.com/history/gazetteer/The_Book_of_Buchan.pdf

The History and Scenery of Fife and Kinross

By Jean L. Watson (1875) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

https://electricscotland.com/council/The_history_and_scenery_of_Fife_and_Kinr.pdf

Sketch of a Quiet Buchan Parish

By the Rev. Thomas M'William, M.A., Minister of New Byth (1899) (pdf)

You can read this article at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/statistical/Sketch_of_a_Quiet_Buchan_Parish.pdf

Round The Grange Farm

Or, Good Old Times by Jean L. Watson (1872) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/lifestyle/roundgrangefarm.pdf>

A Country Parish

Studies in Pastoral Theology and Church Law by the Rev. H. M. B. Reid, D.D., Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow (1908) (pdf)

I found this to be a very interesting account where a Parish is a real community and you can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/bible/countryparishstu00reiduoft.pdf>

Story

THE HIGHLAND PIPER

By Jeffery Farnol from his book "The Broad Highway"

"Who are you?" said I, in no very gentle tone.

"Donal's my name, sir, an' if ye had an e'e for the tartan, ye'd ken I was a Stuart."

"And what do you want here, Donald Stuart?"

"The verra question she'd be askin' ye'sel' — wha' gars ye tae come gowkin' an' spierin' aboot here at sic an hour?"

"It is my intention to live here, for the future," said I.

"Hoot toot! ye'll be no meanin' it?"

"But I do mean it," said I.

"Eh, man! but ye maun ken the place is no canny, what wi' pixies, an' warlocks, an' kelpies, forbye — "

"Indeed, they told me it was haunted, but I determined to see for myself."

"Weel?"

"Well, I am glad to find it haunted by nothing worse than a wandering Scots piper."

The Highlander smiled his wry smile, and taking out a snuff-box, inhaled a pinch, regarding me the while.

"Ye're the first as ever stayed — after they'd heard the first bit squeakie, tae find out if 't were a real bogle or no."

"But how in the world did you make such awful sounds?"

"I'm thinkin' it's the bit squeakie ye'll be meanin'?" he inquired.

"Yes; how did you do it?"

"Oh, it's juist the pipes!" he answered, patting them affectionately, "will I show ye the' noo?"

"Pray do," said I.

Hereupon he set the mouthpiece to his lips, inflated the bag, stopped the vents with his fingers, and immediately the air vibrated with the bubbling scream I have already attempted to describe.

"Oh, man!" he exclaimed, laying the still groaning instrument gently aside, "oh, man! is it no juist wonderful?"

"But what has been your object in terrifying people out of their wits in this manner?"

"Sir, it on account of the snuff."

"Snuff!" I repeated.

"Juist that!" he nodded.

"Snuff," said I again; "what do you mean?"

The Piper smiled again — a slow smile, that seemingly dawned only to vanish again; it was, indeed, if I may so express it, a grave and solemn smile, and his nearest approach to mirth, for not once in the days which followed

did I ever see him give vent to a laugh. I here also take the opportunity to say that I have greatly modified his speech in the writing, for it was so broad that I had much ado to grasp his meaning at times.

The Piper smiled, then, and, unwinding the plaid from his shoulder, spread it upon the floor, and sat down.

"Ye maun ken," he began, "that I hae muckle love for the snuff, an' snuff is unco expenseeve in these parts."

"Well?" said I.

"Ye maun ken, in the second place, that ma brither Alan canna abide the snuff."

"Your brother Alan" said I wondering.

"Ma brither Alan," he nodded gravely.

"But what of him, what has he to do with"

"Man, bide a wee. I'm comin' tae that."

"Go on, then," said I, "I'm listening."

"Weel, I'd hae ye tae ken I'm a braw, bonnie piper, an' ma brither Alan, he's a bonnie piper too — no sic a fair grund piper as me, bein' somewhat uncertain wi' his 'warblers,' ye ken, but a bonnie piper, whateffer. Aweel, mebbe a year syne, I felt in love wi' a lassie, which wad ha' been a' richt if ma brither Alan hadna' fallen in love wi' her too, so that she, puir lassie, didna' ken which tae tak'. "Donal," says Alan, "can ye no love anither lassie; she can no marry the twa o' us, that's sure!"

"Then, Alan," says I, "we'll juist play for her." Which I think ye'll own was a grund idee, only the lassie couldna' juist mak' up her mind which o' us piped the best. So the end of it was we agreed, ma brither Alan an' I, to pipe oor way through England for a year, an' the man wha came back wi' the maist siller should wed the lassie."

"And a very fair proposal," said I, "but —"

"Wheest, man! juist here's where we come to the snuff, for, look ye, every time I bought a paper o' snuff I minded me that ma brither Alan, not takkin' it himself, was so much siller tae the gude — an' — oh, man! it used tae grieve me sair — till, one day, I lighted on this bit hoosie."

"Well?" said I.

"What, d' ye no see it? "

"No, indeed," I answered.

"Eh, man! ma brither Alan doesna' buy the snuff, but he must hae a roof tae shelter him an' a bed tae lie in o' nights, an' pay for it too, ye ken, fourpence, or a bawbee, or a shillin', as the case may be, whiles here I hae baith for the takkin'. An', oh, man! many's the nicht I've slept the sweeter for thinkin' o' that saxpence or shillin' that Alan's a-partin' wi' for a bed little better than mine. So, wishfu' tae keep this bit hoosie tae mysel' — seein' 't was haunted as they ca' it — I juist kep' up the illusion on account o' trampers, wanderin' gypsies, an' sic-like dirty, tykes. Eh! but 't was fair grund tae see 'em rinnin' awa' as if the de'il were after them, spierin' back o'er their shoulders, an' a' by reason of a bit squeakie o' the pipes, here. An' so, sir, ye hae it."

I now proceeded to build and relight the fire, during which the Scot drew a packet of bread and cheese from his sporran, together with a flask which, having uncorked, he held out to me with the one word, "Whuskey!"

"Thank you, Donald, but I rarely drink anything stronger than ale," said I.

"Aweel!" said he, "if ye winna', ye winna', an' there's but a wee drappie left, tae be sure." Whereupon, after two or three generous gulps, he addressed himself to his bread and cheese, and I, following his example, took out the edibles Simon had provided.

"An' ye're minded tae bide here, ye tell me?" he inquired after a while.

"Yes," I nodded, "but that need not interfere with you — two can live here as easily as one, and, now that I have had a good look at you, I think we might get along very well together."

"Sir," said he solemnly, "if my race is royal — I am a Stuart — here's a Stuart's hand," and he reached out his hand to me across the hearth with a gesture that was full of a reposeful dignity. Indeed, I never remember to have seen Donald anything but dignified.

"How do you find life in these parts?" I inquired.

"Indefferent, sir—vera indefferent! Tae be sure, at fairs an' sic-like I've often had as much as ten shillin' in ma bonnet at a time; but it's juist the kilties that draw 'em; they hae no real love for the pipes, whateffer! A rantin' reel pleases 'em well eneugh, but eh! they hae no a hankerin' for the gude music."

"That is a question open to argument, Donald," said I; "can any one play real music on a bagpipe, think you? "

"Sir," returned the Scot, setting down the empty flask and frowning darkly at the fire, "the pipes is the king of a' instruments, 't is the sweetest, the truest, the oldest, whateffer!"

"True, it is very old," said I thoughtfully; "it was known, I believe, to the Greeks, and we find mention of it in the Latin as a tibia utricularia; Suetonius tells us that Nero promised to appear publicly as a bagpiper. Then, too, Chaucer's Miller played a bagpipe, and Shakespeare frequently mentions the a drone of a Lincolnshire Bagpipe? Yes, it is certainly a very old, and, I think, a very barbarous instrument."

"Hoot toot! the man talks like a muckle fule," said Donald, nodding to the fire.

"For instance," I continued, "there can be no comparison between a bagpipe and a fiddle, say."

"A fiddle!" exclaimed Donald in accents of withering scorn, and still addressing the fire.

"Ye can juist tell him tae gang tae the de'il wi' his fiddle."

"Music is, I take it, the expression of one's mood or thought, a dream translated into sound," said I thoughtfully, "therefore — "

"Hae ye ever heard the pipes?"

"Why, yes, but long ago."

"Then," said Donald, "ye shall juist hear 'em again." So saying, he wiped his mouth, took up his instrument, and began slowly inflating it.

Then, all at once, from drones and chanter there rushed forth such a flood of melody as seemed to sweep me away upon its tide.

First I seemed to hear a roar of wind through desolate glens, a moan of trees, and a rush of sounding waters; yet softly, softly there rises above the flood of sound a little rippling melody which comes, and goes, and comes again, growing ever sweeter with repetition. And now the roar of wind is changed to the swing of marching feet, the tread of a mighty host whose step is strong and free; and lo! they are singing, as they march, and the song

is bold and wild, wild, wild. Again and again, beneath the song, beneath the rhythm of marching feet, the melody rises, very sweet but infinitely sad, like a silver pipe or an angel's voice tremulous with tears. Once again the theme changes, and it is battle, and death, sudden, and sharp; there is the rush and shock of charging ranks, and the surge and tumult of conflict, above whose thunder, loud and clear and shrill, like some battle-cry, the melody swells, one moment triumphant, and the next lost again.

But the thunder rolls away, distant and more distant? — the day is lost, and won; but, sudden and clear, the melody rings out once more, fuller now, richer, and complete; the silver pipe has become a golden trumpet. And yet, what sorrow, what anguish unspeakable rings through it, the weeping and wailing of a nation! So the melody sinks slowly, to die away in one long-drawn, minor note, and Donald is looking across at me with his grave smile, and I will admit both his face and figure are sadly blurred.

"Donald," said I, after a little, "Donald, I will never speak against the pipes again; they are indeed the king of all instruments — played as you play them."

"Ou ay, I'm a bonnie piper, I'll no deny it!" he answered. "I'm glad ye like it, for, Sassenach though ye be, it proves ye hae the music. 't is a bit pibroch I made tae Wullie Wallace — him as the damned Sassenach murdered — black be their fa'. Aweel! 't was done afore your time or mine — so — gude-nict tae ye, Southeron!"

Saying which, he rose, saluted me stiffly, and stalked majestically to bed.

END

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you.

Alastair