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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for May 31st, 2024

Electric Scotland News

I have got myself hooked on viewing a YouTube channel from Vietnam where a family of husband, wife, daughter and mother-in-law work together to run a small holding. The husband is an engineer in an electricity plant so is away a fair bit of time. However it's how they gradually improve their small holding, collect fruits and vegetables and add value to them by using them to prepare meals and then sell them at the local market.

They introduce their channel by telling us...

My name is Huong. I was born and raised in a very peaceful and beautiful village of Vi Xuyen district, Ha Giang province. Every day, I harvest fruits, vegetables and tubers grown on my small farm, or buy them from local farmers and bring them to the market to sell to make money for daily living. Because I love the countryside where I was born and raised, I make HuongTran Daily Life channel to save moments of the countryside where I live and daily life.

You can watch this at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@tranthihuong-vx>

Should you be interested in Scottish life you might also like to watch...

The Scottish Isle - Life in the Hebrides

<https://www.youtube.com/@TheScottishIsle>

Welcome to The Scottish Isle YouTube channel, where we share the captivating world of our life on this island in the Hebrides. Our channel is your window to the rich history and cultural treasures of this unique island, showcasing its natural beauty, local traditions, and the enchanting, old-fashioned lifestyle we embrace. Join us on this exciting journey as we explore the stories and wonders that shape our island life, from breath-taking landscapes to cherished traditions; the renovation of a 300-year-old cottage, and the restoration of antiques.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

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 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.

Here is what caught my eye this week...

80 years on, the Battle of Monte Cassino sets a stark example for today's West
As Wednesday's announcement fired the gun for a six-week battle for the General Election, last weekend was a sobering reminder of politics by other, more deadly, means. A landmark of the Second World War was remembered: the battle of Monte Cassino.

Read more at:

<https://conservativehome.com/2024/05/24/sarah-ingham-80-years-on-the-battle-of-monte-cassino-sets-a-stark-example-for-todays-west>

Conrad Black: The demonization of John A. Macdonald is tiresome
What a disgrace

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/4i1W4#selection-2073.0-2073.15>

NHS waiting lists reach record high in Scotland

Public Health Scotland released figures which showed the number of people waiting for treatment increased to 840,300.

Read more at:

<https://news.stv.tv/scotland/nhs-waiting-lists-reach-record-high-in-scotland-public-health-scotland-figures-show>

The SNP ditches Greta Thunberg

Less than three years ago, then SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon posed for photos with Greta Thunberg at COP26 in Glasgow. How the political climate has changed. In the face of huge job losses in Scotland's energy sector, the party has finally ditched the moral posturing and alarmism that has historically characterised its approach.

Read more at:

<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-snp-has-finally-given-up-on-greta-thunberg/>

The Covid Inquiry has exposed the Civil Service

The appearance of Cabinet Secretary Simon Case at the Covid Inquiry was overshadowed by the election announcement. It shouldn't have been. The evidence given by Case paints a picture of chaos, toxicity and incompetence in Whitehall. Whoever wins the next election, fixing our broken Civil Service must be a priority.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/the-covid-inquiry-has-exposed-whitehalls-lack-of-grip/>

Edinburgh Airport unveils world first shortbread vending machine

Just in time for the summer rush, Edinburgh Airport and Walker's Shortbread have unveiled a vending machine that dispenses free shortbread fingers, which is described as the first of its kind.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/edinburgh-airport-unveils-world-first-32922669>

Scottish takeaway with big portions & huge flavour crowned Takeaway of the Year

The winners of the Scottish Entertainment Awards 2024 have been revealed, with restaurants and pubs across the country taking home prizes including the country's Best Takeaway.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/scottish-takeaway-big-portions-huge-32848368>

Canada-based ferry boss has costs paid to travel to Clyde yard, MSPs told

John Petticrew took over as interim chief executive in March after his predecessor David Tydeman was

sacked.

Read more at:

<https://news.stv.tv/scotland/canada-based-ferguson-marine-boss-having-travel-costs-paid-msps-told>

Electric Canadian

Forty Years in Canada

Reminiscences of the Great North-West, with some account of his service in South Africa by Colonel S. B. Steele, C.B., M.V.O., Late of the N.W.M. Police and the S. African Constabulary. Edited by Mollie Glenn Niblett, with an Introduction by J. G. Colmer, C.M.G. (1918) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/fortyyearsincana00steeuoft.pdf>

Royal Military College of Canada

Added the Diamond Jubilee, 1936 Review which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/royalmilitarycollege.htm>

English America

Or Pictures of Canadian Places and People by Samuel Phillips Day in two volumes (1864)

You can read these at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/englishamerica.htm>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 26th day of May 2024 - Sacrifice

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26495-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-26th-day-of-may-2024-sacrifice>

The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs

Added the 1925-26 edition which you can read at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/annual/index.htm>

Electric Scotland

A History of Congregational Independency In Scotland

By James Ross (1900) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/bible/historyofcongreg00ross.pdf>

The Eriskay Pony

Got in an email providing some further information on another charity that works on preserving this breed.

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/nature/eriskay.htm>

Flora MacDonald in North Carolina
From the Caledonian Magazine (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<https://electricScotland.com/history/women/floramacdonaldcarolina.pdf>

Working and Living, and other Essays
By James Cromb, (1880) (pdf)

You can read these, one of which is about the Rev. Norman MacLeod at:

https://electricScotland.com/lifestyle/Working_and_Living.pdf

The Highlanders and Other Poems

By Mrs. Anne Grant, Laggan (second edition) (1808) (pdf). Even if you are not into poetry this book is well worth reading as it includes many notes and wee stories which are most interesting.

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/poetry/highlandersother00gran.pdf>

Faithful Contendings Displayed

Being an historical relation of the State and Actings of the suffering Remnant in the church of Scotland, who subsisted in Select Societies, and were united in general correspondences during the hottest time of the late Persecution, viz. from the year 1681 to 1691 together with an account of the State of the land in general, and of the Society people in particular, in the intervals betwixt each of their general meetings, with some pertinent remarks upon these historical occurrences, and many letters to and from the general correspondent meetings, etc., collected and kept in records by Mr. Michael Shields, who was clerk unto these general Societies, and personally present at most of their meetings. Collected and transcribed by John Howie (1880) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/bible/faithfulcontend00howigoog.pdf>

Forestry in Scotland

Report of Deputation received at the Scottish Office, Edinburgh, by the Right Hon. W. H. Long, M.P., President of the Board of Agriculture, Etc., Etc. from the Royal Scottish Arboricultural Society, 23rd October 1895 (pdf)

You can read this report at:

<https://electricScotland.com/agriculture/forestryinscotl00socigoog.pdf>

From the Hebrides to the Himalayas

A Sketch of Eighteen Months Wanderings in the Western Isles and Eastern Highlands by Constance Gordon-Cumming in two volumes (1876)

You can read these volumes at:

<https://electricScotland.com/books/pdf/himalayas.htm>

Alexander Henderson

Churchman and Statesman by Sheriff Robert Low Orr, KC., M.A., LL.B. (1919). I added this book to a page we have about him which you can read at:

https://electricScotland.com/history/other/henderson_alexander.htm

Story

NEIL MCNEILL OF ARDNAORO8S, J.P.

The M'Neils of Kintyre.

From early times the M'Neills have been numerous and influential in Kintyre. In the clan conflicts which kept this romantic land in a turmoil for so many generations, the M'Neills are understood not to have allowed much of the excitement to pass their own doors. When claymores were bared to decide a quarrel, depend upon it there was a Gigha, Carskey, or Tirfer-gus right in the centre of the trouble. They were, as Neil Munro aptly puts it, "bonnie fighters." It is a pity that the history and traditions connected with these old martial families of the clan have never been written, for they should certainly occupy a prominent place in the annals of the district. But their fame and deeds are not entirely forgotten in their homeland. The story is still told how, when the Campbells and Macdonalds were disputing for the possession of the ancient castle of Dalaruan (now the site of the Castlehill Church, the pulpit of which was, in recent times, filled by an Ardnacross M'Neill), Hector M'Neill of Uarskey settled the matter by throwing a sword of Clan Diarmid over the walls, which they must follow to find. And when Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll, attempted to introduce English sermons into the Highland church in Campbeltown, and came in great state with a numerous retinue to enforce her views, MacNeal of Ugadale met her at the door with a drawn sword, and informed her that, while her sex entitled her to admission into the church, he would take good care that none of her "tail" (followers) would cross the doorstep. So the English Duchess built the Lowland church, and curiously enough, the present popular head of the ancient house of Ugadale and Amide, Captain Hector MacNeal, took an active part in the recent restoration of this interesting old edifice. Thus the centuries meet.

In the Covenanting days everyone in Kintyre had to take sides, the M'Neills mostly supporting the Marquis of Argyll, and in 1618 Carskey held Kilkerran Castle for the government. But in earlier times they followed the banner of the great Macdonalds, Lords of the Isles. I have handled a small fragile manuscript, a Bond of Manrent and Friendship, signed at Killeonane, 18th July, 1594, between Hector M'Neill of Carskey, on behalf of his "whole kin and surname," and Sir James Macdonald of Smerby, son of Angus, Lord of the Isles, which was endorsed by no fewer than eleven gentlemen of the Clan M'Neill of Kintyre. But in later days, when the targe and dirk had to be put aside for the plough and the scythe, Kintyre was considered by many no suitable place for a man of spirit and energy to live in, so, dazzled by the glamour of the Americas, many of the M'Neills, led by a Hector M'Neill, sailed in 1739 for North Carolina, where they expected to find routh of gold and jewels, and such adventure and glory as kept a Highland gentleman in congenial and active occupation. The M'Neills soon made their neighbours and enemies respect them; but what was their amazement on reaching this remote country, to find a clansman, "Bluff Hector M'Neill," from Kintyre, settled there before them, and a man of considerable importance. Without doubt the two Hectors must have had a late ceilidh that night, and Kintyre would not have been out of their thoughts!

M'Neills of Ardnacross.

Pages might be occupied with old-time tales of this gallant race, but the special intention of this paper is to put on record a brief history of one of the only two ancient landed families of the clan which still hold their possessions in Kintyre. The MacNeals of Ugadale (who still possess the historic "Bruce Brooch") were dealt with in two early volumes of the Celtic', the other are the M'Neills of Ardnacross, who, if they do not now follow the profession of arms, do great credit to the old name in commercial and professional circles. Between them they keep the Clan Neill flag still flying in Ceann-tir. Ardnacross, or, as it is given in the vernacular, Ard-na-Chroish, which signifies the cross on the promontory, probably derived its name from a Celtic cross erected over the grave of a priest, who may have been a member of the great monastic institution at Saddell, founded by Reginald Macdonald of the Isles. It is recorded that in 1647 Ardnacross was in the possession of the Mackays, and an interesting story is told of how young Mackay, a nephew of the famous General Alistair Macdonald, followed his uncle in his campaign in the north in support of Montrose, and fell at the battle of

Auldearn in that year.

The exact date when the M'Neills came into possession of this romantic property seems to be unknown, but in 1752, a deed is signed by Neil M'Neill of Ardnacross. The Ardnacross family, like the Carskeys, are descended from the M'Neills of Gigba, chiefs of the clan in Kintyre, who themselves trace their origin to the M'Neills of Barra, chiefs of the whole clan and race of Neill.

Neil M'Neill, above referred to, was one of the large family of M'Neill of Tarbet, Gigha, another member of which, Hector M'Neill of Drumdrishaig, afterwards acquired the estate of Saddell. Neil was succeeded by his son Captain Gorrie M'Neill, a large silver bowl, dated 1785, which was presented to the Captain in token of the assistance which he rendered to a ship-wrecked crew on the coast, being still in possession of the family. This head of the house was of a roving disposition, and travelled a great deal abroad. His younger brother, Major Hector M'Neill, who in 1791 owned the estate, had a distinguished military career in the service of one of the Native Indian Princes. He married a daughter of Donald Campbell of Sunderland, Islay (whose grave may be seen in Kilkerran graveyard, Campbeltown,) and had one son, who predeceased him.

It is perhaps interesting to mention that Captain Gorrie M'Neill had a son Donald, who, moved by the spirit of adventure, went abroad, and was knighted by the Portuguese government, and died in Glasgow as Sir Donald M'Neill.

On the death of Major M'Neill, about 1824, the land passed to his nephew, Neil M'Neill, who was succeeded by his son John, who had been engaged in commercial pursuits, and was a partner in the well-known firm of Maclaine, Watson & Co., in Batavia. He married his cousin, Catherine Campbell of Melfort, (a prominent Argyllshire family) and bought the estate of Glenmore in the parish of Kilmelfort, where he died. His family by this marriage predeceased him. He secondly married Agnes Loudon, and had two daughters, the youngest of whom is the present Miss M'Neill of Glenmore. The estate, being entailed in the male line, passed to the Rev. Hector M'Neill, who was born in 1807, and educated at the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. He was minister of the Hope Street Gaelic Church, Glasgow, and eventually of the Castle Hill Church, Campbeltown. He "came out" at the Disruption in 1843, and was ordained to the Lowland Free Church, Campbeltown, which position he held till 1878, when declining years caused him to retire. He married, in 1847, Mary Jane, only daughter of George MacNeal of Ugadale, D.L., and dying in 1879, was succeeded in Ardnacross by his son George, who, on his decease in 1893, was followed in the ownership of the estate by his brother, Neil M'Neill, J.P., the present popular proprietor. He was born in 1856, and coming to Glasgow in the early seventies, entered the employment of the well known firm of Messrs James Watson & Co., Iron and Steel Merchants, of which he eventually became a partner, and is a prominent figure in all circles connected with the trade. In 1883 he went to Swansea to open and manage a branch office of the firm, and remained there till 1894, when he returned to Glasgow. He married in 1886 Marjorie Cameron, daughter of the late Mr. Neil Sinclair, a gentleman who for many years took a deep interest in all matters relating to his native Highlands, and was a leading office-bearer in the various Celtic Societies in this city. Mr. M'Neill has three sons, Hector Loring, Ian Douglas, and Nigel Lorne, who share their parents' love for the Highlands. Mr. M'Neill is a Justice of the Peace for the County of Argyll. He is a conservative in politics, and is a member of the New Club, and Conservative Club, Glasgow, and also a life-member of the Kintyre Club, and the Celtic Society. His recreations are cricket and golfing.

Editor

END

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

Alastair