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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for January 25th 2013

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Electric Scotland News

Well it's been an interesting week for sure. I discovered I'm a white racist when it comes to Canadian Aboriginal matters < sigh >.

That said I've continued my research on the Aboriginal peoples of Canada and have now added further information and quite a few videos.

I noted this week that the favourite Scots word in Scotland is "Dreich". Here is the article that went with it...

Ahead of Burns Night on 25th January, a new poll has revealed 'dreich' as Scotland's favourite word in the Scots language.

The You Gov survey asked adults across the country to select their number one Scots word from a list of options including some of Robert Burns' own favourites. With 23 per cent of the public vote, and perhaps proving Scotland's love for talking about the weather, the word 'dreich' meaning 'wet', 'cold' and 'gloomy' trumped other classics such as 'glaikit' (20%), 'blether' (12%) and 'crabbit' (11%).

'Sleekit' (6%), 'beastie' (5%) and 'braw' (6%) – just some of the words made famous by our national Bard's iconic songs and poetry - also featured.

Lassies across the country also proved their love for gossip with 17% of female Scots voting 'blether' as their number one word, while 'glaikit' came up trumps with 35 to 44 year old respondents at 26%.

This poll follows the launch of an online interactive game, ['Rhyme with Rabbie'](#), which allows Scots to follow in the steps of the great poet and pen their very own Scots masterpiece.

Speaking ahead of this year's Burns Night celebrations, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs Fiona Hyslop said:



“Scots is intrinsic to our nation's culture, heritage, and identity. It is also one of our living languages which are as relevant today as they were in Robert Burns' time - many of the words highlighted in this survey have no direct English translation, demonstrating their enduring appeal. My own personal favourite word is 'bùrach', which means 'a right mess', and is from the Gaelic. There's also a Scottish folk rock group called Bùrach, and I think it's a great name for a band.”

Burns Night is the culmination of Scotland's Winter Festivals and celebratory events will be taking place across the country. Scotland's friends the world over will also be joining in the fun with Burns Night celebrations happening across the globe from New York to Sydney and Toronto to Beijing.

I have made progress with my Scottish Independence section and it's pretty much complete from a layout point of view. I'm now starting to add reading material under each of the topics and trying to give a short introduction for each. I'm hoping I may be able to make this available next week.

Super-Symposium adds speakers, sessions for Scottish Heritage Weekend at St. Andrews University

Laurinburg, N.C. – St. Andrews University has supersized the 2013 Charles Bascombe Shaw Memorial Scottish Heritage Symposium by adding speakers and sessions to the event while keeping the prices the same.

Presented by the Scottish Heritage Center, the annual symposium will take place April 5 -7 on the University's campus.

“Our symposium has provided a forum for those interested in Scottish history, culture and genealogy to learn from top scholars in their respective fields,” said Bill Caudill, director of the Scottish Heritage Center. “Since beginning in 1989, our symposium has gained national recognition as a leader in the exploration of Scottish culture.”

Lord Rector of the University of St. Andrews Scotland and President of the Court Alistair Moffat will start the symposium April 5 with his presentation The Clans – How They Came Into Being and Why They No Longer Exist. He will present Scotland's DNA on Saturday morning.

“Since 1999, his work has focused on Scottish social history,” said Caudill of Moffat. “His most recent work involves DNA research and his mapping of DNA within Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom. His 20 books and seven documentary films – including the forthcoming The British – A Genetic Journey – have been said by some to have the potential to rewrite Scottish history entirely.”

June Skinner Sawyers will also be making two presentations over the weekend. The Last of the Clans – the Art and Iconography of the Highland Clearances will be presented Friday while Lay Down Your Weary Tune – Dylan, Scotland and the Ballad Tradition will close out the presentations on Saturday.

A native of Glasgow, Sawyers returns by popular demand after her appearance at the Symposium last year. She is the author or editor of more than 20 books and published essays dealing with Scottish and Celtic topics. Her latest work, Bearing the People Away: The Portable Highland Clearances Companion is expected shortly. Later this year, she will present a paper on the country songs of Bruce Springsteen at the International Country Music Conference in Nashville. She teaches at Newberry Library in Chicago.

“In addition to her presentations, June will receive the Flora MacDonald Award at Friday night's Scottish Heritage Awards banquet,” said Caudill. “She is being honored for her many years of writing, publishing, speaking and numerous educational efforts which have helped to bring awareness of Scottish and Celtic history and culture into the American mainstream.”

The awards banquet Friday evening will also include the presentation of the Scottish Heritage Center Service Award to Dr. John Sprague.

“Dr. Sprague recently retired after 40 years of service as the Director of the North Carolina State University Pipes and Drums,” said Caudill. “He co-founded the organization as a student and has consistently provided quality musical education and leadership for dozens of students, alumni and community members over the years. Under his leadership, the NC State University Pipes and Drums have continued to thrive and provide quality Scottish music to the Greater Triangle as well as the NC State campus.”

Dr. David Caldwell, who retired last year after 38 years with the National Museums of Scotland, will present The Post-Reformation Church in Argyll on Friday. He will return to the podium on Saturday with Sir James MacDonald, Last Chief of Clan Iain Mhoir: Savage or Renaissance Man?

Caldwell has written over 100 articles on Scottish historical and archeological topics relating to the West of Scotland.

"In particular, he specializes in the history and archaeology of Argyll and the Western Isles," said Caudill. "From 1990 to 1997 he directed the archaeological excavations of Finlaggan, Islay – the home of the MacDonald Lords of the Isles, and still serves as a trustee of the Finlaggan Trust. We welcome Dr. Caldwell back for this, his third speaking engagement in our event's history."

Rounding out the presenters is Dr. Gerard Carruthers making his first appearance at the Symposium. He will present Robert Burns in North America on Saturday afternoon.

Carruthers holds a personal Chair in Scottish Literature at the University of Glasgow. He is the General Editor of the Oxford University Press edition of the works of Robert Burns and Principal Investigator of the project "Editing Robert Burns for the 21st Century," which received a large grant by the Advanced Humanities Research Council.

Saturday's festivities also include a free concert by the St. Andrews University Pipe Band and Concert Choir. "A Musical Celebration of National Tartan Day" will take place in Avinger Auditorium and include the music of Scotland.

The final event of the weekend is the annual Kirkin' of the Tartans Worship Service at Laurinburg Presbyterian Church on Sunday morning.

For a full schedule of events and registration information, please go to <http://www.sapc.edu/shc/scottishheritagesymposium.php> or call the Scottish Heritage Center at 910-277-5236. Email reservations are also taken at rsvp@sapc.edu. Please remember to include Scottish Heritage in the subject line and include names of all participants. The deadline to register is March 29.

Electric Canadian

Canada and its Provinces

In 22 volumes and Index

I have now started to add these volumes and the idea is to make one volume available each week until complete. Should you be interested in this series then you'll be able to dip into each volume during the week and thus be ready for the next volume appearing.

Now added Volume 2.

You can get to this collection towards the foot of our Canadian History page at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/canada/index.htm>

Then and Now – The Heritage of Inverness County by Jim St. Clair

The MacKinnon Brook Experience

Got this article in from Jim who is the local historian in Inverness County in Cape Breton. You can read this article at: http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/articles/mkackinnon_brook.htm

The Métis Nation of Ontario

Information about the Métis Nation

I discovered a two part video on YouTube which provides some information on them. Not certain how accurate all that is but it at least provides some background information. I am still try to get more information.

You can find the videos at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/metis/index.htm>

Micmac

Information on the Micmac mostly in the Atlantic Provinces of Canada.

I was given permission to copy some information from a web site which I've now got up. Also an extensive list of pdf books about them.

I also found several videos on this nation which you can watch at:

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

I might add that due to discovering these videos on YouTube I want back to my previous work on other nations and have added videos to them as well.

The Flag in the Wind

This weeks edition was Compiled by Margaret Hamilton. In her article she mentions a book that can be purchased from the Scots Independent Newspaper, "The Case For Independence" by Ian Goldie. I can't help but feel that this is a book that should be published on the web and free for all to read. However it is available as the first book on the list at:

http://www.scotsindependent.org/shopping_mall.htm

You can read this weeks issue at <http://www.scotsindependent.org>

Electric Scotland

The Scottish Historical Review

We have now added the January 1905 issue at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/volume02.htm>

You can read the previous issues at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/review/>

Songs from John Henderson

John sent us in a couple of new songs this week and here is one to read here...

Dyow Oan The Girse

[Dew On The Grass]

Lyrics composed by John Henderson on the 14th of January, 2013,
to the lovely waltz tune, '[Sunset On The St Lawrence](#)'.

Dyow oan the Girse ilk morn, spirklin' wi' aa o' its micht,
Seen shaws maist fowks thit Spring's comin' wi' guid waarmth an' licht;
The Sin wins hicht aince mair an' bids Jack Freest,"Ging, tak flicht;
Nae langer shud ye be a scunner ... git oot ma sicht!"

The Nor Wind Sin gows tae rist, tee flans fae East an' Wast;
Syne ilk birdie sangs a teen, fur they'll seen hiv bairns tae wean.
Blithe pirr-winnies fae the Sooth, dicht ilka Snaadrap's mooth;
Airth's mair jeely noo, wi' less tae gar it grue.

Bit leuk oot Jack's sleekit fan the Sin's awa';
He snecks ilk nicht wauknin' Ice an' Snaa.
Caas, "Pint, aa fite, ilka gairden sheet ...
Syne hap roads, brak pipes aa tap ma leet."
AY! leuk oot Jack is sleekit fan the Sin's awa'
He snecks ilk nicht wauknin' Ice an' Snaa
Caas, "Pint, aa fite, ilka gairden sheet ...
Syne hap roads, brak pipes aa tap ma leet."

Snaa cree'd he'd hud eneugh, fur saut shair makt dreeftin' teugh;
Ice tee he meen'd, "Nae! Nae! I wint tae caa it a day."
Jack Freest fan lea'd his lane fun oot he cud dae nane,
An' sae 'ski-'d' fest aff tae the Antarctic... his knap aa gaen!

Glossary for less obvious words:

dyow=dew; bids=orders; scunner=nuisance; gows=persuades;
flans=gusts; pirr-winnies=breezes; dicht=wipe; jeely=happy;
gar it grue=make it annoyed; sleekit=devious; snecks=snoops;
wauknin'=awakening; pint=paint; fite=white ; sheet=shoot; hap=cover;

Mind that John mainly write in the Doric language of the North East of Scotland. We already have up loads of his songs and poems and the latest are always at the foot of his main index page.

You can read more of John's songs mostly in the Doric language at <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

Sir David Brewster

We continue to add chapters and this week have added...

Chapter XVIII - Religious History

Chapter XIX - Notes of Life from 1860 to 1864

You can read these chapters at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/brewster.htm>

Some Reminiscences and the Bagpipe

By Alexander Duncan Fraser

Have added the following chapters this week...

Chapter XV — The Scottish Bagpipe

Chapter XVI — Bagpipe Influences at Work

Chapter XVII — Gaelic Song and the Bagpipe

Chapter XVIII — The Glamour of the Highlands

Chapter XIX — No Prehistoric Bagpipe in existence

Chapter XX — Ancient Myth and the Bagpipe

In the chapter "The Scottish Bagpipe" we read...

I have tried to prove in the preceding chapter —not unsuccessfully, we hope—that the Bagpipe is the only distinctive musical instrument which Scotland possesses.

Do other nations recognise the Piob Mhor as distinctively Scottish, and not as merely Highland?

This is the second test, and is also a very important one.

At a time when England and Scotland were still separate nationalities, although under one crown, Otway, the English poet, who wrote his first play in 1674, said on one occasion, "A Scotch song! I hate it worse than a Scotch Bagpipe."

The Bagpipe was at the zenith of its fame in the Highlands, and—with the exception of the bellows pipe—had largely died out in the Lowlands, when Otway made this spiteful remark. It was the golden age of the Piper in Skye. Many of our best Piobaireachd first saw the light there, while everywhere in the Highlands at this time similar music was being written. We can compose no such fine music for the Bagpipe to-day as the old pipers composed in those days, without any seeming effort. The name of MacCrimmon was familiar as a household word wherever the soft Gaelic tongue was spoken, when of Lowland Pipers of fame there were none, and yet Otway writes of the Bagpipe in his day as Scotch.

At the battle of Quatre Bras, when the Seventy-Ninth Highlanders had formed up to receive a charge of French cavalry, Piper McKay stepped proudly out of the newly-formed square, and, planting himself on a hillock, where he could be seen and heard of all, played that well-known pibroch— grandest of war pieces—"Cogcidh Na Shie" as unconcernedly as if on parade, with shot and shell flying all around him. A similar example of piper's bravery was given at Waterloo, under the eye of Napoleon himself, who might in all truth have said, "Ah! brave Highlanders!" instead of "Ah! brave Scots!" when he heard the war-pipe sound, and saw the tartan wave, and witnessed with amazement his best troops dash themselves in vain against those thin walls of Highland steel ; but there was none of that hair-splitting, pettifogging spirit about this greatest of great soldiers, which some modern critics display ; those critics who would divide us^ into Highland Scot and Lowland Scot, and who unblushingly assert—or at least insinuate—that the Lowlander is unwilling to accept any gift which comes to him with the Highland taint upon it.

To the French Emperor the Bagpipe and the kilt —characteristically Highland both—represented Scotland and Scotland alone.

You can the rest of this chapter at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/bagpipe/chapter15.htm>

You can read the other chapters at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/bagpipe>

Songs Of Scotland, Prior To Burns

This book is by Robert Chambers who is famous for collecting old Scottish Songs. His publishing house produced numerous very important works many of which he authored himself. On the page for this book is a biography of him along with another song book he published.

We are adding individual songs in pdf format so you can print them out. As each song provides the sheet music, words and notes about the song it should be of great help to anyone wanting to play these. Added this week are...

Battle of Sheriffmuir
Up And Waur Them A Wullie
The Campbells Are Coming

You can get to this book at the foot of the page at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/chambers_robert.htm

History of the St Andrew's Society of the State of New York 1756 - 1906

By George Austin Morrison, General Secretary of the Society

I have already published the [History of the St Andrews Society of Toronto](#) so thought this would be a great addition to our understanding of what the Scots got up to in New York.

There is a good sketch of the history of the society and after we are publishing small bios of the first 40 presidents of the society and these also make interesting reading. We already have up bios on...

Philip Livingston
Adam Thomson M.D.
John Morin Scott
Andrew Barclay
William Alexander (Earl of Stirling)

On the 19th November, 1756, a number of gentlemen, natives of Scotland or of direct Scottish descent, assembled in the City of New York, and agreed to form themselves into a Scotch Society.

There was at that time only four like societies in America, viz.:— The Scots' Charitable Society of Boston, Massachusetts, organized in 1657; the St. Andrew's Club of Charleston, South Carolina, organized in 1729; the St. Andrew's Society of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, organized in 1749; and the St. Andrew's Society of Savannah, Georgia, organized in 1750. The existence of these national societies was based upon the collection and distribution of charitable funds among poor and needy Scotsfolk, and the promotion of social intercourse among the members by holding an annual banquet on the name-day of their patron saint.

You can read this book at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/newyork>

The Genius in Robert Burns

Extracted from Professor John Stuart Blackie's 'The Life Of Robert Burns' (1888)

In respect of genius, I think it is now universally admitted that Robert Burns, our Ayrshire bard, has gained for himself, by the number, the variety, and the brilliancy of his productions, a place in the first rank of the great singers of the intellectual world,—Pindar, Chaucer, Horace, Hafiz, Goethe, Beranger, Moore, and if there be any others who enjoy an equally wide recognition. Whatever qualities are necessary to make a lyric poet,—and in the term lyrical we include not only songs in the proper sense composed to be sung, but, for want of a better word, idylls, sketches of character, and, it may be, satirical sideshots, and other short poems meant to be read,—these qualities Burns possessed with a complete equipment; and in addition to these, he was distinguished by certain great human qualities, not always present in great singers, which add the stamp of a vigorous and manly intellect to the charm of a nice emotional sensibility. The fire and fervour without which lyrical poetry is scarce worthy of the name, Burns possessed in a high degree; but it was not merely fire from within, consuming itself in the glow of some special pet enthusiasm, but it was a fire that went out contagiously and seized on whatever fuel it might find in the motley fair of the largest human life.

You can read this article at <http://www.electricscotland.com/burns/genius.htm>

Highland Education

Extracted an account of the 6th annual meeting of the Gaelic Society of Inverness in which Professor Blackie gave a talk about education in the Highlands.

Now Professor Blackie was a famous Scot of his time and everyone in Scotland knew about him. We already have a page about him where we provide his biography and also a link to some of the books he wrote which as it happens also includes a book about the life of Robert Burns. So I thought I'd just add this address he gave to the foot of his page. While I've given a wee intro to the article I have also made it available as a pdf file as a good chunk of the article is in the Gaelic Language as after all this was the annual meeting of the Gaelic Society of Inverness.

You can find this at the foot of the page at:
<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/blackie>

A Song of Heroes

When adding the above article we also found another of Professor Blackie's books "A Song of Heroes" and so have added that to our list of pdf files of his books. You can read this on the same page as detailed above.

The Highland Regiments and their Tartans

An article from the Gaelic Society of Inverness

At the beginning of 1881, a rumour received currency that the War Office was about to abolish the distinctive tartans of the Highland regiments, and to substitute some new uniform tartan. The rumour naturally roused the feelings of all Highlanders, and an agitation took place in which the Gaelic Society of Inverness took an active part. A brief narrative of this agitation, and our part in it, may be here given.

In 1877 a Committee on Army Organisation proposed by Colonel Stanley, War Secretary in Lord Beaconsfield's administration, recommended that the connection should be more closely drawn between the line battalions of a brigade, and that "this could best be effected by their being treated as one regiment, such regiment bearing a territorial designation, the line battalions being the 1st and 2nd; the Militia battalions, the 3rd and 4th, &c., of such territorial regiment, the depot being common to all, and being the last battalion of the Series."

In 1880 it was found absolutely necessary to determine whether this proposal was to be adopted or not; and Mr H. E. C. Childers, who was then War Minister in the new administration, resolved to refer the matter to a small Committee. This Committee had instructions to consider such questions, as—

"1. The territorial designation which the regiment should bear, and whether it is desirable to re-adjust the combination of the present linked battalions, having due regard to the extreme inconvenience likely to be caused by such alteration.

"2. The record of victories on the colours.

"3. Arrangements for uniformity of clothing for the territorial regiments, including the Militia."

The Committee which the Duke of Cambridge appointed to consider these matters, consisted of Adjutant-General Ellice, Major-General Radcliffe, Major-General Buhner, Major-General

Elkington, Major-General Sir Archibald Alison, Colonel; Macpherson, younger of Cluny (Lieutenant-Colonel of the 42nd Highlanders); Lieutenant-Colonel Briggs, 96th Regiment; and Mr George D. Ramsay, Director of Clothing.

While this Committee was prosecuting its labours, the rumour above alluded to spread over the land \ and the agitation was begun.

On 9th February 1881, the Secretary, Mr William Mackenzie, drew the attention of our Society to this rumour; and on his motion the meeting was formed into a Special Committee, with power to add to their number, to watch over the question; and power was given them to convene, if necessary, a public meeting, to which leading and representative Highlanders should be invited, in order to protest against the rumoured proposed change. The same meeting authorised Lord Archibald Campbell to sign on behalf of the Society a petition to the Queen and Mr Childers, which his Lordship was promoting. The petition was as follows:—

"To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.—May it please your Majesty,—We, the undersigned, believing that we represent the national feeling of Scotland, humbly petition that the tartan dress hitherto worn by the various Highland regiments as distinctive of the districts in which they were raised, and in which dress they have fought with honour and glory in every part of the globe, be not changed, believing that such distinctive tartans add to the esprit de corps, and that such changes as are contemplated are contrary to the instincts of every true Highlander."

You can read the rest of this article at http://www.electricscotland.com/tartans/highland_regiments.htm

Beth's Newfangled Family Tree

As Beth is still working on her new software she is sending me in some snippets in word format. I've converted them to a pdf file and while not up to the usual presentation standards are very readable.

You can get the latest snippets at <http://www.electricscotland.com/bnft>

And finally...

A Poser!

"What makes a woman's mind work?"

"Giving her flowers for no reason."

Enterprise

A friend of mine overheard his daughter tell her pals that she and her sister had a kitten each.

"How did you persuade your dad to let you have one each?" asked a pal.

"Easy," replied his daughter.

"We started off asking for a pony and let him negotiate us down to a kitten each."

And finally...

I might add that if you are not going to a Burns Supper then you can listen to one at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/culture/features/burns/index.htm> which is in real audio format. Playing time is 1 hour and 8 minutes. You could head out and purchase some haggis and eat it while listening to this and so have your very own Burns Supper and perhaps a wee dram to go with it! On your own or with family and friends it will make a good evening. On this page you can download the whole supper or select each part individually. I might add that I have tried to convert the RealAudio file to mp3 format but so far every program I've tried has failed to convert it.

And that's it for now and hope you all have a great weekend and enjoy your Burns Supper if you are going to one.

Alastair