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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for October 3rd, 2014

To see what we've added to the Electric Scotland site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm>

To see what we've added to the Electric Canadian site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

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

<http://www.electricscotland.com/>

Electric Scotland News

The Ryder Cup was the big event last week in Scotland and VisitScotland seemed to think it was worth some £40 million in free advertising for them.

I've now been living in Canada for the past 10 years having first come here in 2004. This week I was reminding myself what I'd seen and done on that first trip which made me want to come here to live. Actually I can hardly credit it's been 10 years as time seems to have zoomed by in that time.

In particular I read about my trip to Elliot Lake where I was invited by James and Joyce MacKenzie and then put up by John Muir. I took the opportunity to add some YouTube videos to my account. Elliot Lake is certainly a place for outside pursuits throughout the year and is a great place to retire to. You can read my account and watch the videos at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/canada/elliottndx.htm>

As part of my 10 year review I was also reflecting on what has been happening in the Scots Diaspora community over that time. Reading Beth Gay's Newfangled Family Tree she was also reflecting on the state of the Scots Americans and showed her concern for the decline in Clan memberships and falling attendances at Highland Games.

I remembered when I first visited the USA I was astonished at the sheer numbers of Scottish flags flying at the Jacksonville Highland Games in Florida where I actually attended my very first Highland Games. I was moved to write at the time that "The Scots are alive and well and living in America". I well remember at the time that the then wife of the Governor of West Virginia asked me to see if I couldn't make enquiries about how schools in West Virginia might link and work with schools in Scotland. I was also asked by the Chairman of the Jacksonville Highland Games if I could not profile Scottish businesses as he thought there might be scope to buy from them either personally or through his business.

Filled with enthusiasm I went back to Scotland to see what I could do to fill these requests. I must have made at least 100 phone calls to Scottish educational establishments but absolutely nothing came from that. I also contacted at least 200 Scottish business organisations and companies again to no avail. I actually think it was after these failed efforts that I first seriously considered leaving Scotland. There was this whole new online world and the Scots really had no idea how to use it... it was quite depressing.

Since those 10 years have gone by I've seen all kinds of attempts to bring the Scots Diaspora together through all kinds of organisations such as the Scottish American Foundation, Global Scots, Council of Scottish Clans and Associations (COSCA), the Friends of Scotland Caucus, etc. From what I've seen they have all mainly failed simply because they all want to do their own thing and do not work together. The problems that existed when I first came to North America still exist. Local Scots simply don't understand the overseas Scots Diaspora and to be frank they fail to appreciate what they can do for Scotland. The organisations for Scots around the world are not the least bit interested in communicating with other groups that also try to do the same thing. In short their communication is terrible. When was the last time you heard of the Global Scots doing anything? How can COSCA attend meetings in Scotland and yet fail to communicate what was discussed and what came out of the meetings? Even if you are really determined

to try and find out there is really nothing to be discovered and that perhaps says it all.

Way back in 1997 I said at the time that Scotland could make billions from the Internet and the Web but to do that we needed to work as a group and with each other. That simply didn't happen and everyone was encouraged to go their own way and so a fantastic opportunity was squandered and is still being squandered.

Clan membership is an issue and most clan societies are discussing what they can do to halt the decline in membership and hopefully how to expand membership. They were talking about these very issues 10 years ago and still talking about it today. Does that not say something about them? Put simply what they are doing isn't working so isn't it time to try something totally new?

Global Scots are a secret organisation that should be disbanded. If they can't be open about their achievements then we must conclude they don't have any to report so why support them?

I've called for the Scottish Chamber of Commerce to be shut down as they do nothing to support their members. You have to be a member to actually find out who their members are. That is a huge barrier to people trying to find out if there is a Scottish business they could do business with. It seems to me that they only exist to provide grant information where most of that information is freely available to the web. Promote our members? Oh we don't do that is the answer. Why not? They have no answers to that.

Then if you look at the various online forums or social networking you'll find that mostly it's the same people that post there. Social networking in my view is a waste of time if you are trying to gain members or promote your brand. Web sites are a much better route to take as you can organise your content much better and provide huge resources of information. However most web sites do a poor job of disseminating information. Beth Gay alluded to that in her Family Tree publication. Hard to find an email address and when you do rarely do you get a response. Information way out of date on the site. The clans decide they should create another web site but do nothing to communicate that to anyone that has links to their old web site. This information can be easily found through Google. Like a couple of years back I took a few days out to audit the links I had to clan societies and to my astonishment some 283 links were dead links. I obviously removed these and took some time to see if I could find new links to replace them with but this just shows why I am reluctant to provide external links on my web site.

And so my message is share! Share what you have with anyone interesting in telling your story whoever they are or wherever they are. Share and keep sharing. Then make sure you have a web site that actually works and is updated at least weekly and ensure anyone that emails you through the web site actually gets a response. Seriously question whether you need a Members Only section on your web site. In my view that should only be needed if there are privacy concerns. And remember that if you don't have clan information to add weekly that's no reason why you can't add some general Scottish information instead.

And look at how you share! Like I have a ScotNews RSS feed on my site. So if you have a story to tell you just need to provide me with a Title, one sentence as a description and the url to the story. Send me a story through a newsletter then I can't use it unless I decide to publish it on my site. Think about who you want to communicate with and email to ask what the best format would be to send them the story. Like shall I send you the story as a text email, pdf, or a web link to the story online? Remember also that if I was to add your story to my RSS feed then people will need to visit your web site to read the story... a win win for everyone.

And finally for clan societies please talk to your members to ask them what they'd like to see in your newsletter and how often they'd like to receive one. I mean really talk to them, even phone them up to have a chat. Discuss the issues of membership and ask them what they'd like to see that would make them interested in reading it and how often they'd then like to receive it. In this day and age most newsletters really should be in pdf format for easy distribution. I might add that this newsletter is prepared online on my web site. When complete I just fire up my adobe program and tell it to create a new pdf from this web page and so it just goes to my site web page and its created. As it is read online I take the view that it shouldn't be in column format as that just makes it harder to read as you need to keep scrolling up and down to read it.

At the end of the day the blame needs to be placed with the head of the clan society as that person should be directing the effort and it's obviously not happening. And don't ask questions that you perceive are the important ones as so often they are not important to your members as if they were important then you wouldn't be having the problems in keeping them.

End of Sermon.

Today Newsnet Scotland is proud to join up with Bateman Broadcasting in a new joint venture. There are exciting plans in the pipeline and we hope to bring you more news as soon as we can. We will publish an update during the next few days. Until then, please spread the word, exchange ideas and of course ... if you appreciate and would like to support our endeavours ... then make a small donation through their web site.

That's the press release from them and I have to say that they did make a real attempt at addressing Scottish news but in my opinion

they simply became a mouthpiece for the SNP so ended up challenging anything that was counter to SNP policy. In my opinion that doesn't make them a news source so hopefully they will be prepared to address that issue in the months ahead.

Electric Canadian

Identifying the Highland Scots

Nineteenth century immigrants in Nova Scotia by A. M. Austin

Scottish immigration to Nova Scotia in the nineteenth century is an aspect of this province's history which has been shrouded in myth, symbolism, mistaken identities and pride. Many present day Nova Scotians with Scottish surnames, or some Scottish connection, can often be found expressing their pride with having some association with things Scottish. The chance to wear a tartan and be identified with an ancient Highland clan, or to participate in one of the province's many Scottish festivals, is considered more than just a good time to many - it is, for some, a rite. Although the Scotch element is only one of several ethnic groups that has contributed to the growth and development of Nova Scotian society, it is often the most visible: kilted Highland pipers can be found at many tourist bureaus on a summer's day and pipe bands are an essential part of every Nova Scotian parade, an unrealistically large proportion of Pictou County claims to be descended from that famous first load of Highlanders who came over on the Hector and, finally, Cape Breton is often perceived as the real 'Highland Heart' of all that relates to the Old Country here in the new. For the historian looking back at the settlement of Scottish immigrants in nineteenth century Nova Scotia, the real obstacle is to move beyond all the ethnic stereotypes and to find the real people who came to make a new life and new living on the shores of this province.

This paper is concerned with the scraping away of myths and stereotypes surrounding the Nova Scotian Scots. In particular, this paper will not simply recount the arrival of the Scottish immigrants, rather it will hopefully acknowledge a few of the key elements of the folk-culture of these people. Looking beyond traditional generalizations should help to illuminate some of the basic traits of the actual Scottish character, from which the identity of these nineteenth century immigrants may be revealed.

You can read this article at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/canada/highland_scotsns.htm

Sheep Farming in Canada

Taken from the Colonial Advocate, Thursday, June 3, 1824. Published by W. L. Mackenzie, Bookseller, Queenston, Upper Canada.

We were called on some business connected with our private affairs, to York, in the early part of May last, and wishing to take the head of lake Ontario in our way, on our journey home, we returned in that direction, and meeting with indifferent weather on Flamboro' mountain, we sent the innkeeper's boy back with the horses, and made up our mind to rest for the night, and enjoy the pleasure of a chat about local improvements, with our esteemed acquaintance, Mr Alexander Brown, of East Flamboro'. Disappointment is the lot of man, and so it fared with us, for Mr. Brown whose plain, sound, Scotch judgement, (as Mr. Wilberforce would call it) is held in much respect by his neighbours, was absent acting as umpire upon some dispute which had occurred between two of them in regard to a property. Mrs. B. however, prepared a comfortable cup of tea, and when her husband returned, we informed him that, next day we would desire his opinion on a subject, to which he was well qualified to give correct information, viz. The rearing of sheep. Accordingly, next morning we proposed our queries, nearly in the order in which they are now arranged. Mr. Brown's answers we give entire adding nothing, and we conceive their publication in every paper in the Colonies, would be a benefit conferred on the country.

You can read this at http://www.electricscotland.com/history/canada/sheep_farming.htm

Handbook of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (1883)

The Editors make no apology for the publication of this little book. It was felt by them, and many others, that the Church, by its several unions, had grown to such dimensions that it was difficult for the best informed, and impossible for the most part of its members, by any means within their reach, to obtain any conception of the extent of its field of operations, of its great schemes of Missions and Benevolence, and of the Legislative, Judicial and Advisory actings of its General Assembly. It therefore occurred to them that no better way could be devised by which to represent the Church as a grand organization for the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, and the extension of Christ's Kingdom within the wide Dominion of Canada, than by preparing, with their best ability, the Hand-book now published.

This is a pdf book and can be downloaded at

http://www.electricscotland.com/bible/handbook_presbyterian_church_canada.pdf

The Flag in the Wind

this weeks issue was compiled by Alison Thewlisc.

You can read this issue at <http://www.scotsindependent.org> and no Synopsis this week.

Electric Scotland

Enigma Machine
Now have up puzzle 81.

An alternative to your crossword puzzle and created by a Scots Canadian, Doug Ross.

You can get to these at <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/enigma/>

Glimpses of Church and Social Life in the Highlands in Olden Times
By Alexander MacPherson, FSA Scot. (1893).

The last chapter I put up this week is about the Old Jacobite Highland Chiefs by way of a profile on Cluny MacPherson and here is how the account starts...

“But thou hast a shrine, Kingussie,
Dearer to my heart than all
Rocky strength and grassy beauty
In Glen Feshie’s mountain-hall;

E’en thy granite Castle Cluny,
Where the stout old Celtic man
Lived the father of his people,
Died the noblest of his clan.

Many eyes were red with weeping,
Many heads were bowed with grief,
When, to sleep beside his fathers,
Low they laid their honoured chief.”

—Blackie.

THE LAST OF THE OLD JACOBITE CHIEFS.
CLUNY MACPHERSON, C.B., Chief of Clan Chattan
BORN 24th APRIL 1804; DIED 11th JANUARY 1885.

AT Cluny Castle, in Badenoch, on the second Sunday of the year, there “fell asleep,” full of years and full of honours, the venerable Cluny Macpherson, “the living embodiment,” as he had been justly termed, “of all the virtues of the old patriarchal Highland chief.” His unexpected death has not only awakened feelings of the deepest sorrow among his clansmen and natives of Badenoch all over the world, but has left a blank in the public and social life of the Highlands which will probably never be filled up.

His removal is indeed that of an ancient landmark. In days when so much is said and done tending to set class against class, and leading certain sections of the public to regard the interests of landlord and tenant as hostile, a state of society in which their interests were recognised as identical deserves to be studied. In their best form the mutual relations existing between a chief and his clansmen produced this unity in a manner to which, in the present day, we shall vainly seek a parallel. “I would rather,” said MacLeod of MacLeod of the time to Johnson, on the occasion of the great lexicographer’s tour in the Hebrides in 1781, —“I would rather drink punch in the houses of my people than be enabled by their hardships to have claret in my own.” A more striking example of this patriarchal feeling could not be found than in the affection which bound Cluny Macpherson to his clan and his clan to him. In their relations with their people, the old race of Highland chiefs, of whom Cluny Macpherson was such a noteworthy representative, really held in effect the words of the well-known and patriotic Highlander, Sheriff Nicolson, as part, so to speak, of their creed:—

“See that thou kindly use them, O man!
To whom God giveth
Stewardship over them, in thy short span,
Not for thy pleasure.
Woe be to them who choose for a clan
Four-footed people.”

You can read this book at <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/glimpses/index.htm>

The Great Floods of August 1829
Have now completed this book

It is well worth reading the concluding remarks as we read...

MIRACULOUS as many of the circumstances of the foregoing narration may appear, I have stated nothing that cannot be vouched by unquestionable authority. On the contrary, I feel conscious that all my endeavours must fail to convey any just idea of the wonders of the flood, or of the fearful nature of its devastations.

It would be improper to dismiss the subject without shortly noticing the general effects which these have produced on the ancient province of Moray, the chief theatre of their operation. To form a just estimate of that blow which its rising prosperity has lately experienced, it is necessary to know something of its previous state, and this knowledge will be best acquired from a brief sketch of the rapid progress of its improvement since the beginning of the present century, which we may consider as the era of its commencement

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/moray/floodsndx.htm>

Songs of Scotland

Added pages 161 to 201 to the 4th Volume which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/music/cunningham/>

Henry Dryerre

Added two more Worthies, James MacFarlane and William Davie which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/dryerre/>

I still say these make a great read and here is how the article on James MacFarlane starts...

Something like a break in the continuity of things postal seemed to take place in the retiral of Mr Macfarlane a few years ago. He was succeeded, there is no doubt, by thoroughly competent men, but they belong to another generation, have been trained in another school, and will turn out individuals of a very different type from our friend. "Jamie the Post" was an institution, and one which the public grudged to give up—a feeling with which there is good reason for believing our friend himself thoroughly sympathised. But fate, in the form of the Postmaster-General, was too much for him, and he had to submit to enforced idleness after 32 years' faithful service. His retiral may be said to have closed the record of the old school, even though it is recognised that he saw the telegraph and other improvements introduced in his time.

Calendar Of Documents Relating to Scotland

Added the addendum, appendix and index to complete this volume which now means we have the complete 4 volume set available.

You can read these at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/history/records/bain/>

Highland Rambles

And Long Legends to Shorten the Way by Thomas Dick Lauder (1837).

Have now posted up two more articles from this book and the one on "Legend of John MacKay of Ross-Shire, called Ian More Arrach or Big John the Renter of the Milk of the Cows" made an especially good read and I commend it to you.

You can read these articles at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/tlauder/index.htm>

John's Songs and Poems

As you likely know by now John produces many songs in the Dorric language of the North East of Scotland and this week he's sent us in a song and a poem...

A Post-WW1 Foreglen Orphan's Lament

Bens And Glens of Scotland

These can be read at the foot of the page at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

The Life of John Wilson

For Fifty Year Philanthropist and Scholar in the East by George Smith (1879). A new book we're starting.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The continued demand for the book, even after the rapid sale of the First Edition, has led to its re-publication in a cheaper form. The use of smaller type has made this possible without seriously abridging the text, and with the omission of only a few extracts. On the

other hand, a fortunate discovery in the records of the Foreign Office of the Free Church of Scotland has enabled the author to enrich this Edition with the characteristic letter at page 329 to Dr. Wilson from Dr. Livingstone, which Mr. H. Stanley posted from Aden to Bombay. In its present form the Life of Dr. Wilson is placed within the reach of the people, and more especially of both Asiatic and British youth in colleges and schools.

Isle of Arran,
25th August 1879.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

When I was asked by his son to go over the voluminous papers and write the life of Dr. Wilson of Bombay, I at once sacrificed other engagements to the duty. As Editor of the Calcutta Review for some time before the Mutiny of 1857, and as Editor of The Friend of India, and Correspondent of The Times for many years after it, I was called to observe and occasionally to discuss the career of the Philanthropist and Scholar of Western India. For forty-seven years as a public man and a missionary he worked, he wrote, he spoke, and in countless ways he joyfully toiled for the people of India. While viceroys and governors, officials and merchants, scholars and travellers, succeeded each other and passed away all too rapidly, he remained a permanent living force, a mediator between the natives and the governing class, an interpreter; of the varied Asiatic races, creeds, and longings, to their 'alien but benevolent rulers. Nor was his work for his own countrymen less remarkable, in its degree, than his life of self-sacrifice for Hindoos and Muhammadans, Parsees and Jews, out-castes and aborigines, and his building up of the indigenous Church of India. His influence maintained an English standard of morality and manners,

in society, while he was the centre of a select group of administrators, not confined to Bombay, like Sir Donald M'Leod, to mention only the dead. As an Orientalist and scholar, the power of his memory was only less remarkable than the ardour of his industry; his linguistic instinct was regulated by the philosophy with which his native country is identified, and all were directed by the loftiest motive and the purest passion that can inflame the breast. Wealth and honours he put from him, save when he could make them also ministers in the work of humanity. From Central India to Central Africa, and from Cabul to Comorin, there are thousands who call John Wilson blessed. His hundreds of educated converts and catechumens are the seed of the Church of Western India. Every missionary and student of India Missions must sit at his feet.

From 1864, when I first visited Bombay, to his death at the close of 1875, I learned to know the man as well as his work. But he cannot be so well reproduced on the cold page, for his own writings do not reflect the charm of his talk, which delighted generations of friends, from Sir John Malcolm to Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook, Sir Bartle Frere and Mr. Grant Duff. My aim is that this volume may supply the materials, at least, from which his Country and the Church Catholic, oriental scholars, and the princes and educated natives of India, shall not only see what manner of man he was, but be stimulated by his rare example. I hope also that the sketches of the other good and great men who worked for a time by his side may not be without interest; and that, still more, it may be seen how the British Government is rising to the height of our national responsibility for the good of the millions of Southern Asia, and of the neighbouring Malay, Chinese, Tatar, Persian, Arab, Abyssinian, and Negro peoples.

This is an English book, and therefore, though it occasionally treats purely scholarly questions, the English vowels are used to transliterate oriental names and terms. Save in extracts which demand the preservation of the original spelling, and in the name which I would fain have printed "Boodhist," hardly an Asiatic word or phrase will be found which is not so rendered as to be capable of correct pronunciation, and of being easily understood. Scholars who write for scholars only, do well to follow the Indian and European vowel sounds. Scholars, officials, and all who desire the English reader to be attracted to, instead of being repelled from, the study of India and the East, will use English as uniformly as ineradicable custom permits.

Besides the acknowledgments made in the course of the narrative, I have to thank for their assistance his Excellency Sir Richard Temple, Bart., who, as the present Governor of Bombay, instructed the departments to supply copies of some of Dr. Wilson's official correspondence; Sir Alexander Grant, Bart., Principal of the University of Edinburgh, who, as Director of Public Instruction for some years, was closely associated with Dr. Wilson; the third Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, Bart.; The Pte vs. Dhunjeebhoy Nowrojee and E. Stothert, M.A.; Dr. Birdwood, C.S.I., and Dr. E. Fost, of the India Office; Hugh Miller, M.D., Esq. of Broomfield, Helensburgh; W. P. Jervis, Esq., Turin; Professors Charteris and Eggeling; and Professor Weber of Berlin, who has communicated to me, through Mr. John Muir, D.C.L., C.I.E., his very high estimate of the scientific pursuits of Dr. Wilson as an Orientalist who subordinated scholarly reputation to missionary ends. Only the long frontier war, and the other cares of his office as Governor of Cape Colony, have prevented his Excellency Sir Bartle Frere from contributing reminiscences of his lifelong friend.

Serampore House, Merchiston,
Edinburgh, October 1878.

You can read this book as we get it up at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/johnwilson/>

And Finally...

Some more stories from The Book of Scottish Anecdote...

ESCAPE OF BRUCE AT DALRV

King Robert Bruce, with his handful of followers, not amounting probably to three hundred men, encountered Lorn with about a thousand Argyleshire men in Glen-Douchart, at the head of Breadalbane. The place of action is still called Dairy, or the King's Field. The field of battle was unfavourable to Bruce's adherents, who were chiefly men at arms. Many of the horses were slain by the long pole-axes, the use of which the Argyleshire Scottish had learned from the Norwegians. At length Bruce commanded a retreat up a narrow and difficult pass, he himself bringing up the rear, and repeatedly turning and driving back the more venturous assailants. Two brothers, the strongest among Lorn's followers, named Mackyn-Drosser, resolved to rid their chief of this formidable foe. A third person associated himself with them for this purpose. They watched their opportunity until Bruce's party had entered a pass between a lake and a precipice, where the king, who was the last of the party, had scarce room to manage his steed. Here his three foes sprung upon him at once. One seized his bridle, but received a wound which hewed off his arm; a second grasped Bruce by the stirrup and leg, and endeavoured to dismount him; but the king, putting spurs to his horse, threw him down, still holding by the stirrup. The third, taking advantage of an acclivity, sprung up behind him upon his horse. Bruce, however, whose personal strength exceeded that of most men, extricated himself from his grasp, threw him to the ground, and cleft his skull with his sword. By similar exertion he drew the stirrup from the hold of the man who had caught him, and killed him also with his sword, as he lay among the horse's feet. Barbour adds the following circumstance, highly characteristic of the sentiments of chivalry. Mac-Naughton, a baron of Cowal, pointed out to the Lord of Lorn the deeds of valour which Bruce performed in this memorable retreat, with the highest expressions of admiration. "It seems to give thee pleasure," said Lorn, "that he makes such havoc among our friends." "Not so, by my faith," replied Mac-Naughton; "but be he friend or foe who achieves high deeds of chivalry, men should bear faithful witness to his valour; and never have I heard of one, who, by his knightly feats, has extricated himself from such dangers as have this day surrounded Bruce."

THE FAMILY OF KEITH

In the reign of Malcolm II. (1004-34), Scotland was still harassed by her foes, and the valour of the people of Moray, and of the neighbouring counties, was severely but gloriously tried. The decisive battle of Mortlach compelled the invaders to abandon the possessions they had occupied; and they afterwards invaded Angus, and were cut to pieces. In these battles a young warrior is said to have distinguished himself, and to have laid the foundation of the greatness of the family of Keith, which, under the title of Earl Marischal, long bore sway in Buchan. The story is, that his valour contributed to put the Danes to the rout, when he pursued them, and slew their king, named Camus. Another officer coming up, disputed the glory of the action, until Malcolm arrived. The king ruled that the matter should be decided by single combat, and Keith proved victorious, his opponent confessing, before his death, the injustice of his own conduct. Malcolm, dipping his fingers in the blood, marked the shield of the conqueror with three bloody strokes, which became the armorial bearing of the family. The motto given to them was *Veritas vincit*, "Truth overcomes."

A VETERAN M'LEOD

November 1787. Lately died, near Stornoway in the Lewis, Lewis M'Leod, aged 116 years. He was born in the year 1671; fought at Killiecrankie, Sheriff-Muir, and Culloden, under the banners of the Stuarts. He sent, in the year 1755, six sons to fight for King George, in the regiment then raised by Colonel Montgomery (now Lord Eglintoun), only one of whom is now alive, a Chelsea pensioner. He was the oldest spectator of Prince William Henry at Stornoway. He retained his senses and memory to the last. — Scots Mag.

And that's it for this week and hope you all enjoy your weekend.

Alastair