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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for July 8th, 2016

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

Our congratulations to Barrie Leslie who was awarded the Duine Usal (Honoured Person) for his service to the Celts, by the Celtic Council of Australia.

Barrie always did an excellent newsletter for the Clan Leslie and you can see copies of his work at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/leslie/index.htm>

The National Tartan Centre Project

Our plans for a National Tartan Centre continue to make significant progress. Following discussions with a number of local authority areas in Scotland to find the perfect location for the new centre, the STA Board have confirmed that the preferred location is the historic city of Stirling.

With its stunning location nestled below the historic Stirling Castle, the city has a proud heritage that includes key historic sites, amongst them; Stirling Bridge, site of the famous battle and the Wallace Monument. However, Stirling is not just about the past as the city has ambitious regeneration plans and the National Tartan Centre is seen as one of the key project's within the masterplan for the city. The surrounding area also has important historic links with tartan and was the home of the famous weaving firm Wilsons of Bannockburn, who played such an important role in informing our current perception of tartan and its associations with clans.

Stirling's ambitions, central location in the heart of Scotland and the important historic links were felt by the Scottish Tartan Authority's board to be a winning combination and we will now be seeking funding to realise this important project. We have had very encouraging and enthusiastic support from Stirling Council and this has included a detailed Options Appraisal on potential site locations for the building. We will unveil more of the details for the project in upcoming months

We will now continue to work with our project partners to move forward with the development phase of the National Tartan Centre. There is still a long way to go but we have made significant progress to realising our ambition to create a home for tartan. We will keep you updated on progress but if you are interested in supporting us with the National Tartan Centre project please get in touch at grant@tartansauthority.com. You can visit their web site at: <http://www.tartansauthority.com/>

William Comyns Beaumont

"In a series of books published between 1946 and 1949, British journalist William Comyns Beaumont astonished the world with the following extraordinary revelations: Jesus of Nazareth had been crucified just outside Edinburgh, Scotland — the site of the ancient city of Jerusalem. Satan was a comet that collided with the earth and caused Noah's Flood. The ancient Egyptians were in fact Irishmen. Hell is to be found in western Scotland. The Greek hero Achilles spent his childhood on the Isle of Skye. Galilee, birthplace of Jesus, was Wales. Ancient Athens was in reality Bath, England... Comyns Beaumont started his radical revision of history with the belief, innocuous enough, that the lost island of Atlantis might be Britain."

The reason I quote this is that I was sent a digital copy of a new book, "The Great Deception". As I was told "It took me six months to edit, but I did it, and it is startling, to say the least!". You can get a copy of this book at:

<http://www.twelvearound1.com/cbarchthegreatdeception.html>

I've asked Jan Mendez to send me an article about William Beaumont and the Edinburgh Jerusalem theory which hopefully I'll bring you next week.

Brexit

More of my time has been taken up on the Brexit decision to leave the EU and I'm trying to point out the weakness of Nicola Sturgeon's wish to remain in the EU and also how we might move forward. I will say that when quoting article 50 in the EU rules I was not aware of article 49 which provides a possible way out for Scotland having a veto from Spain and having a majority might help Scotland to join the EU. However we would still be subject to the rules of the EU which I believe are counter to Scotland's interest.

Article 49 states: Any European State which respects the values referred to in Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union. The European Parliament and national Parliaments shall be notified of this application. The applicant State shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after consulting the Commission and after receiving the assent of the European Parliament, which shall act by an absolute majority of its component members. The conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the Union is founded, which such admission entails, shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant State. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements. The conditions of eligibility agreed upon by the European Council shall be taken into account.

This apparently gives some wiggle room.

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. I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on Google and other search engines.

Scotland remembers the Battle of the Somme

Ceremonies have taken place to mark the centenary of the start of the bloodiest battle in British history.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-36676347>

Police continuing to use inappropriate stop and search methods

Police are continuing to use stop and search methods on children and young people.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/police-continuing-to-use-inappropriate-stop-and-search-methods-1-4167325>

Brexit

Alastair McIntyre of Electric Scotland does a YouTube video to discuss Brexit and Scottish Independence.

View this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/brexit2.htm>

Fresh fears over Named Person roll-out

There are growing concerns over the roll-out of the controversial Named Person scheme across Scotland

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/fresh-fears-over-named-person-roll-out-1-4168813>

Hugh Grant slams plans to shut down Highland military base

Fort George, which has been the home of the Black Watch battalion for nearly a decade.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/hugh-grant-slams-plans-to-shut-down-highland-military-base-1-4168678>

Scotland's pro-Brexit fishing federation warns ministers over EU stance

Scottish Fishermen's Federation suggests that it could block Holyrood's efforts to keep Scotland in EU following referendum

Read more at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jul/04/scotland-fishing-federation-ministers-brexit-eu-referendum>

Angela Merkel to oust Jean-Claude Juncker as Europe splits deepen over Brexit response

Angela Merkel could move to oust Europe's federalist chief Jean-Claude Juncker within the next year, a Germany government minister has said, in a sign of deepening European divisions over how to respond to Britain's Brexit vote.

Read more at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/07/03/angela-merkel-to-oust-jean-claude-juncker-as-europe-splits-deepe/>

Health boards could go in radical shake-up of NHS in Scotland

A radical shake-up of the NHS could mean the end of health boards in Tayside and Fife.

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/scotland/218431/exclusive-health-boards-go-radical-shake-nhs-scotland/>

Declaration of Arbroath

The most famous document in Scotland's history has been awarded special status by the United Nations.

Read more at:

<http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Declaration-of-Arbroath-25ee.aspx>

Audit Scotland report outlines university access challenges

A new report has found it has become more difficult for Scots students to get a place at a university in Scotland.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-36727294>

Scots sunglasses brand Tens gets backing from Branson

Three friends who founded a sunglasses brand after a Highlands holiday have received a cash injection from Sir Richard Branson.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/business/companies/retail/scots-sunglasses-brand-tens-gets-backing-from-branson-1-4171622>

Continental television audience for Kenmore Highland Games

A Dutch television crew visiting Perthshire enjoyed all the traditional elements of a highland games

Read more at:

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/perth-kinross/220221/continental-television-audience-for-kenmore-highland-games/>

Remarkable Life Story of South Uist Crofter, Sailor and Soldier

Kildonan Museum will this weekend host a very special book launch, as the self-penned memoirs of a South Uist crofter, sailor and soldier are finally published.

Read more at:

<http://www.ampaipear.org.uk/remarkable-life-story-south-uist-crofter-sailor-soldier-launched/>

Electric Canadian

Mountaineering and Exploration in the Selkirks

A Record of Pioneer Work among the Canadian Alps, 1908-1912 By Howard Palmer (1914)

You can download this book at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/mountaineering.pdf>

Harjit Sajjan going back to drawing board on fighter jets, launching consultations

Canada struggling to keep NATO and North American defence commitments

Read more at:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/sajjan-procurement-fighter-jets-1.3666625>

Questioning the Knights Templar of OSMTH

I am somewhat upset about the operation of this order and in this video I explain why.

View it at: <https://youtu.be/bpkABrMjnOM>

Electric Scotland

Dictionary of National Biography

I have worked on bringing you some more biographies from Volume 6 of this publication. In most cases I have added a link to these at the foot of the page for the name in our "Scottish Nation".

Brown <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/brown.htm>

Bruce <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/bruce.htm>

Bryce <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/bryce.htm>

Brydon / Brydone <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/brydone.htm>

Buchan <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/nation/buchan.htm>

Round About Falkirk

Second Edition By Robert Gillespie (1879)

You can read this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/falkirk/aboutfalkirk.pdf>

A wee video clip from Yes Minister

I was sent this clip about Britain and the EU from the comedy show "Yes Minister" which I thought I'd make available for a little light hearted fun.

You can download this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/brexit.mov>

Some Experiences of a Barrister's Life

By Mr Serjeant Ballantine (1882). I added a link to this book to the foot of our Law page which you can get to at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/law/>

World Trade Organisation (WTO)

Did a page to provide an overview of it the application process to join.

You can read this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/independence/wto.htm>

The Story

Post Brexit

I did an article on this which you can read at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/showthread.php/5084-Post-Brexit?p=17972#post17972>

The EU

The only other referendum the UK had was to decide on whether the UK would join the Common Market where we voted yes and so we joined some 43 years ago.

The problem is that since that time the EU has greatly expanded the number of member countries, has created the Euro, and is trying to expand to having a political union.

It seems to me that most Scots are not aware of the real problems that the EU is experiencing as they are not reading the International news.

In this article I want to highlight a number of articles that I think Scots need to be aware of so they can better understand the EU position.

First I would point out the problem Scotland has with either remaining in the EU or joining it by providing an article about Spain and Portugal...

Germany blasts European Commission for delaying sanctions against Spain and Portugal over public debts

European Union President Jean-Claude Juncker has been heavily criticised by Germany for failing to implement austerity rules against Spain and Portugal.

Mr Juncker, an opponent of austerity, has personally intervened to delay the introduction of sanctions against the two Iberian

countries, which had been expected to happen on Tuesday 5 July, over the level of public debt.

Legally, the EU requires eurozone countries to keep public debt below 3 per cent of their GDP or 60 per cent of their total national wealth.

The penalty for non-compliance can be as high as 0.2 per cent of the GDP of the country in question.

Commission officials said they were unable to confirm whether the subject was "on or off the agenda", according to the Times.

And Germany's EU Commissioner, Günther Oettinger, told the German newspaper Bild: "If the commission wants to preserve its credibility on upholding budget rules, we have to approve sanctions against Spain and Portugal.

For full article see:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/germany-european-commission-austerity-sanctions-debts-spain-portugal-a7120926.html>

Spain's deficit was equivalent to 5.1 percent of its gross domestic product last year, compared with a target of 4.2 percent. Portugal's shortfall ended 2015 at 4.4 percent, higher than the 3 percent threshold for countries to fall under corrective oversight known as Excessive Deficit Procedure. The average budget shortfall for the 28-country bloc was 2.4 percent in 2015, according to the EU's statistics agency.

Note: Scotland's current debt to GDP is 9.4% which is considerably worse than Spain. I've not yet been able to find Scotland's per cent of their national wealth. The point I am making here is that Scotland would need to have a very good plan to reduce the current 9.4% to the target 3% so we'd need to see what they come up with.

And then we have the position in other EU countries and here I'll provide two articles to demonstrate why this is important to consider.

France, Italy and the Netherlands now want their referendum too

EU leaders fear a string of copycat polls could tear the organisation apart, as leaders come under pressure to emulate David Cameron and hold votes.

It came as German business leaders handed a considerable boost to the Leave campaign by saying it would be "very, very foolish" to deny the UK a free trade deal after Brexit.

Markus Kerber, the head of the BDI, which represents German industry, said that 1970s-style trade barriers would result in job losses in Germany.

"Imposing trade barriers, imposing protectionist measures between our two countries – or between the two political centres, the European Union on the one hand and the UK on the other – would be a very, very foolish thing in the 21st century."

In Italy, the anti-establishment Five Star movement on Tuesday declared it would demand a referendum on the euro. The party wants the euro to be split – one for the rich north and one for the south.

Beppe Grillo, the party's leader, has called for a full referendum on EU membership. He said: "The mere fact that a country like Great Britain is holding a referendum on whether to leave the EU signals the failure of the European Union."

Five Star won 19 out of 20 mayoral elections on Sunday, including in Rome and Turin, in a major blow to Matteo Renzi, the Prime Minister.

In France, Marine Le Pen, the Front National leader, last night called for France to have its own referendum on the "decaying" EU. "I would vote for Brexit, even if I think that France has a thousand more reasons to leave than the UK," she said.

In the Netherlands, polls show a majority of voters want a referendum on membership, and voters are evenly split over whether to stay or go.

And in another report...

Both Hungary and Austria are soon to be holding national votes on issues that could strike further hammer-blows against the future of the European Union, and have announced today they are both to share the same date.

In Austria, the state Constitutional Court has just announced the re-run of their presidential election for October second, in which

Eurosceptic populist-right candidate Norbert Hofer stands to become the figurehead of the Central European state.

The vote was originally held in May but accusations of malpractice during the counting and sorting of postal votes led to a full investigation by the nation's highest political court. Over a month later, the court reported that it had found "particularly serious" evidence of votes being handled inappropriately and found the number of votes involved was potentially more than the margin of victory in the photo-finish second round vote.

Green-backed candidate Alexander Van der Bellen beat the populist Norbert Hofer by just 0.6-per-cent, raising the distinct possibility the new vote could see him returned as president.

The successful referendum vote in the United Kingdom on leaving the European Union seems to have emboldened Mr. Hofer, who has now said for the first time that if the Union is not capable of change, he would seek to call a referendum for Austria to leave the EU.

Speaking days after the results came in for Britain's referendum, Mr. Hofer said: "if it develops into a centralist Union, rather than to reclaim the real core values" then he would put it to a popular vote. He said the increasing centralism of the EU was against the founding principles of the power-bloc, reported the Austrian Kurier.

Following Britain's vote to leave the EU so closely, and given Mr. Hofer's new-found scepticism of the European Union, the vote could become a proxy for the nation's feelings on Brussels, just as much as an election for Austria's ceremonial head of state.

Hungarian president Janos Ader meanwhile has announced his nation's forthcoming referendum on the European Union's migration policies will take place on October the second.

Ader's office said Tuesday that the question to be asked in the referendum will be: "Do you want the European Union to prescribe the mandatory settlement of non-Hungarian citizens in Hungary even without the consent of Parliament?"

Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who staunchly opposes immigration, said earlier that a "no" vote would be "in favor of Hungary's independence and rejecting the mandatory settlement plan."

Mr. Orban originally announced the referendum in February. He believes a vote against EU policy of migration will give him a powerful bargaining chip in Brussels to cancel the forced redistribution of unwanted migrants across the continent.

Although he supports the continued existence of the European Union, Mr. Orban's comments on the direction of travel of the power bloc reflect those made by Mr. Hofer in Austria. Speaking earlier this month while visiting Brussels, Orban said: "You do not sit on a horse backwards. The EU is not in Brussels. It has 27 — presently 28 — capital cities... we must return to the idea that the European Union is based on members rather than EU institutions".

Mr. Orban said he was declaring "war" on Brussels to bring about change in the way the Union was run, although he has so far had little luck. His country is presently being taken to court by the EU for refusing to accept migrants and may be fined.

Note: The above two articles are designed to demonstrate that not all is well in the EU countries and thus the future of the EU in its present form is in some doubt. In France the National Front Leader in recent polling is showing she is twice as popular as the current French President so the elections in April 2017 could be a critical situation for French membership and should France vote to leave where would that leave the EU?

In the coming decades most growth in GDP, market size and investment returns will tend to occur outside continental Europe. Most EU countries will have a shrinking and ageing population. The EU in general is likely to decline economically, politically and culturally relative to the rest of the world, and in particular Asia, where the bulk of humanity lives.

SO ask yourself, given the above, why is Nicola Sturgeon so fixated on being in the EU?

A clue to this can be found in the following story...

UK lacks expertise for trade talks with Europe, says top civil servant (28th June, 2016)

An initial government review has revealed Whitehall has only 20 "active hands-on" trade negotiators, and will be up against 600 experienced trade specialists for the European commission, Sir Simon Fraser, the former permanent secretary at the Foreign Office disclosed.

And how many "trade negotiators" does Scotland have?

To me this is the problem that Nicola Sturgeon is not prepared to discuss as she is hoping that the EU will carry the weight of Scotland's relations with the rest of the world.

Let us not forget that EU countries do not sit on any of the top tables of the world organisations. Increasingly it is them that set our laws. The sub regional EU is only a part player in an increasingly global world.

And so I hope this article demonstrates that all is not well in the EU and we need to really look hard at whether Scotland should or could be a member of the EU.

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

Alastair