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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for March 25th, 2022

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

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

Electric Scotland News

I'm getting more convinced that MyHeritage is the best resource for people of European heritage. While it is second to Ancestry on a global basis it does have larger resources of European content. I hope some of you took the opportunity to upload your DNA results to MyHeritage for free and were able to compare the results. They also have a very good YouTube channel.

I continue to be concerned about the Russian/Ukraine war and the possibility of a chemical or nuclear attack. In Scotland the SNP Government continue to exclude nuclear power as an energy alternative as they also refuse to encourage more oil and gas production in the North Sea. I also continue to be critical of Canada for not building up more refinery production as not only do we need the money but we also could be a big help to other countries. At the end of the day we will still need oil and gas as we transition to clean energy.

I note that Covid continues to increase but for those triple vaccinated you're now likely to just expect flu like symptoms. Those not vaccinated continue to die and have very serious symptoms meaning they need hospital care which in turn means more delayed surgeries and cancer treatments.

Read an interesting article by Conrad Black...

Once again we are indebted to the Frontier Centre for Public Policy and retired judge Brian Giesbrecht for their diligent research that has unearthed the proportions of some of the embellished claims about Canada's past treatment of its Indigenous population and particularly some of the claims made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) about "missing children."

You can read the article by him below in the News section "Conrad Black: No exaggeration needed"

Quite a number of articles across the media on how Scotland's ferries are no longer fit for purpose in supporting our island communities. The SNP are certainly to blame for this and now looks like they are giving a contract to Turkey to build two ferries to help fix the issue. Seems the SNP operated ship building company is not fit to build these.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

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

comments which can be just as interesting as the news story itself and of course you can also add your own comments if you wish which I do myself from time to time.

Kate in stitches at heartwarming father-daughter moment on latest visit
KATE, the Duchess of Cambridge was beaming as she looked at her host at Mons Barracks sharing a special moment with her 20-month-old daughter Gaia during St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/royal/1582193/Kate-Middleton-Duchess-of-Cambridge-St-Patrick-s-Day-photo-Gaia-Money-vn>

Entrepreneur sells literacy business he created at school
More than 120,000 pupils and 40,000 teachers already use its literacy platform. Giglets is currently used by schools in Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, Switzerland, the Middle East and Australia. Giglets, which turns over about £1m a year, has recently expanded internationally, with a team in Canada serving North America.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-60780953>

Conrad Black: No exaggeration needed
Justice must be done, at last

Read more at:

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/conrad-black-no-exaggeration-needed>

Call for rethink of block on nuclear plants in Scotland
The Scottish government has been urged to rethink its opposition to nuclear power in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-60821657>

Scottish Schools' Young Writer of the Year 2021/22
Holly Helbert, Douglas Academy and the two runners up, Tristan Bleak and Eve Campbell.

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/HollyHelbert609a.html>

Brexit Britain strikes £7.2bn nuclear deal to create 70K energy jobs and slash Russia ties
AN exciting £7.2billion deal will see new large-scale nuclear projects receive crucial supplies as the UK looks to ramp up its energy security.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1584504/brexit-news-nuclear-deal-sizewell-c-sheffield-forgemasters-boris-johnson>

UK to launch first power station in SPACE limitless green energy to slash foreign ties
THE UK is poised to launch an exciting new project which could harness masses of clean energy.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1583031/uk-power-station-space-energy-initiative-green-solar>

Pioneering Scots gardener William Backhouse celebrated as daffodils herald arrival of spring
Spring has sprung and daffodils are bringing bright, yellow life to gardens and parks all over Scotland.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/the-daffs-that-changed-the-world-gardening-pioneer-celebrated>

Scotland isn't a sinking ship
By Brian Stuart in the Scottish Review

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/BryanStuart609a.html>

Sturgeon blasted for £240m ferry debacle as relentless incompetence exposes failings
NICOLA STURGEON has been blasted after a report by auditors accused the SNP of relentless incompetence in the delivery of two ferries on Scottish island routes

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1585411/Nicola-Sturgeon-SNP-ferries-auditors-Clyde-Hebrides-Stephen-Boyle-ont>

Ukraine must win

The Ukrainians have demonstrated powerfully that theirs' is more than a regional fight it's a battle for democracy, civic nationalism, respect for the rule of law, a peaceful Europe, and resistance to dictatorship. It is precisely because the stakes are so high that the next few weeks will be so dangerous

Read more at:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/03/how-democracy-can-win-ukraine/627125/>

Electric Canadian

Annals of the Nova Scotian Currency
By Robert Wallace McLachlan (1892) (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/banking/novascotiancurreency.pdf>

Canadian Copyright

By Sir Daniel Wilson, LL.D., F.R.S.E., President of the University of Toronto (1892) (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/canadian-copyright.pdf>

The "Fram" Expedition

Nansen in the Frozen World preceded by a biography of the great explorer and copious extracts from Nansen;s first crossing of Greenland. also an accounp off life among people near the pole and his Journey Across Northern Greenland with Lieut. R. E. Peary, U.S.N. arranged and edited by S. L. Berens, Cand. Phil. followed by a brief history of the Principle Earlier Artic Explorations from the ninth century to the Peary expedition including those of Cabot, Frobisher, Bering, Sir John Schwates, DeLong, Greenly and others by John E. Read. (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/framepedition.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 20th day of March 2022 - Lent III
By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26175-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-20th-day-of-march-2022-lent-iii>

An Account of the Situation, Climate and Trade, of the Countries adjoining to Hudson's Bay,

&c.

By Arthur Dobbs (1744) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/hudsonbay/dobbs-hudsonbay.pdf>

A Plea for a Canadian Camden Society

By George Bryce, LL.D., Professor of Literature, Manitoba College, Winnipeg (1884) (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/articles/camdensociety.pdf>

Electric Scotland

Beth's Video Talks

March 23rd 2022 - Using PERSI in your Genealogical research

You can watch this at:

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

A Tribute to John Minto

Address delivered at Robert Burns memorial exercises held at Salem, January 25, 1916 by William Galloway (pdf)

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/burns/minto.pdf>

Journal of a Tour in the Netherlands in the Autumn of 1815

By Robert Southey (pdf)

You can read this book at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/netherlands/Journal_of_a_Tour_in_the_Netherlands.pdf

The Old Castle Vennal of Stirling and its Occupants

With the Old Brig of Stirling by J. S. Fleming, FSA Scot (1906) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/stirlingshire/Castle-Vennal-of-Stirling.pdf>

Robert Currie

Commander of the Name and Arms of Currie. 2022 National Tartan Day Recipient.

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/america/robert-currie.htm>

Good Words for 1878

Edited by Donald MacLeod, D.D., one of her Majesty's Chaplains for Scotland.

You can read this book at:

https://electricscotland.com/history/goodwords/Good_Words1878.pdf

The life and times of George Lawson, D.D., Selkirk

Professor of Theology to the Associate Synod; with glimpses of Scottish character from 1720 to 1820 by the Rev. John Macfarlane LL.D. (1862) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

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

Smuggling Days And Smuggling Ways
by Henry N. Shore (1892) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/books/Smuggling-Days-And-Smuggling-Ways.pdf>

Story

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

MACKINNON BROOK – A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

In the words of John Gillis, “the wind whispered fiercely” in the early 1900s as it had when Hugh and Mary(MacNeil)MacLean first came from the Isle of Barra in 1817 to the shelf of land between the summit of Cape Mabou and the “wind worn coast” (John Gillis’ words).

The six households knew the cold wind of winter and the down draft of the blasts that came from the East and the summer warmth of the breezes coming from the southwesterly quadrant. As the Beatons went across the brook itself to the neighbouring families of MacArthurs, MacKinnons and MacDonalds, they inhaled the salt of the spray from the Northumberland waves. Those families were nearer the Beinn Bhiorach and the Sight Point community. The two Beaton families on the Mabou Mines side of the settlement shared the small harbour with the four other families. There, the brook met the sea with a continuous melody and a little rattling of pebbles. Their fishing boats were pulled high up on the rocks.

And the road, a horse and buggy trail, provided the exits to the outer world of coal mines and churches and stores and railways. It ran straight across the edge of the clearings with only a slight crook where it crossed the brook that raced down from the hills above. Alexander Beaton, a widower, kept the post office with help from his five daughters. Now and then, letters arrived from the members of the MacPhee family, former residents who had gone off to Mabou Mines and to the western states.

Other communications found their way from the other descendants of Hugh and Mary MacKinnon who had sought more convenient farms in Broad Cove and places beyond. The lure of other locations was carried in the wind as “it whispered fiercely, ‘move on, move on!’” And move on all of the young in the houses in 1911 did. Thus, fifty years later no sound of children at play, no noise of wood being split, no feet stomping on the wooden floors of a kitchen as the fiddle enticed all to participate could be heard across fields as houses were empty.

In the evenings of summer as the breeze became more gentle and the sparkle of the lighthouses on Prince Edward Island identified the land across the gulf, a hundred years ago, stories were told of the arrival of the Barra and South Uist settlers to this fertile plateau. Over and over, the horror of the death of immigrant Hugh was renewed – a man merely trying to bring home the piece of paper which certified that his application for a land grant had been approved. The ice of Sydney Harbour gave way beneath his feet just four years after he and other Barra people had arrived in Sydney,

The courage and direction of Mary the widow was reported with much respect to her descendants and all others who would listen. The coming “over the mountain” of the Beatons was remembered as well since with them came music and literacy and very soon a school house just below Squire Beaton’s huge log dwelling.

But change and departure were in the wind. After a time of being closed, the walking trails again welcomed people from many places. Both high on the side of the ridge and lower down as well, the well-groomed walk ways encouraged people to breathe deeply, to look for violets and strawberry blooms in the spring and daisies and pearly everlasting in the summer and wild asters and roses in the autumn.

Change, gradual but constant greeted those of us who have been lovers of MacKinnon's Brook for years. The cleared fields which showed the industry of the early families were disappearing. The cellar holes once so evident were being lost to young trees. The hillsides where once so many hundred sheep grazed were slowly being covered with new growth.

But the wind still blew. The roar of the sea could still be heard as waves strove to uncover some of the fossils and ancient tree stumps turned to stone embedded in the cliffs. And wild raspberries could still be found particularly where trees had been cut after the recent infestation by a pernicious bug.

As the northerly winds blow the snow away from the shore and strive to open the windows and the doors of the two remaining structures, Scott MacMillan's "MacKinnon Brook Suite" brings back to our memories the stories of the place and encourages us to feel again the joy of the wind along the shore, to smell the salted air, to watch the young eagles in flight and to recall early picnics where the fields were open and swimming in the sea where the brook joined its waters to the great ocean beyond.

Listen again to the MacKinnon Brook Suite – love its joining of traditional tunes and new composition, its blending of symphony sounds with bagpipe and whistle played by a MacKinnon descendant!

There is comfort in the renewal of acquaintance with a cherished piece of music.

How odd it seems that this suite with all its blending of past and present, its reminder of the great story of immigration and emigration, of love and death, of children and ceilidhs, of haymaking and berry picking is not yearly performed in Inverness County, is not part of the curriculum of the Strait Regional School Board! How very strange we let our story slip away...a w a y.

In the sound of the strings, one can recall a teacher of art and design bringing young college age students to "the brook" and the life-long love affair of one of those students with the former home of the MacKinnons and the MacPhees, the Beatons and the MacArthurs, the MacDonalds and the MacInnises.

He and the Rosners and other generous people have made it possible for us all to partake of the site – free as the wind to explore its corners and heights. Many others, particularly a local sculptor and artist, have designed and constructed extraordinary walking experiences, created to seem as though they had always been there.

While some people may "in their dreams behold the Hebrides" or other ancestral homes, others of us may even in the darkness of January revel in the awareness of the dazzle of the sun setting on the waters, in the refreshment found in the fresh water of the brook itself and the feeling of unity of earth and sky and sea with our inner selves. Such is the MacKinnon Brook experience! In the words of John Gillis, "some did their best to leave us something of themselves."

END

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

Alastair
