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Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for May 5th, 2023

Electric Scotland News

Gave you the incorrect url for the pdf version of our last newsletter but hope you were able to work out the correct one but if you didn't it is at:

<https://electricscotland.com/newsletter/230428.pdf>

This coming weekend sees the Coronation of King Charles III which I am sure will be of interest to many of you.

I will cover this on the site after the event by featuring an appropriate YouTube video.

Scottish News from this weeks newspapers

I am partly doing this to build an archive of modern news from and about Scotland and world news stories that can affect Scotland and as all the newsletters are archived and also indexed on 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.

The old age conundrum

What's the secret to old age? Kindness, diet, sobriety, smoking, not smoking...all manner of different 'hacks' have been suggested, but the blunt answer is we still don't know. And calculating the limits of human longevity is less about some kind of lifestyle survey than a fascinating statistical puzzle to be cracked.

Read more at:

<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/human-age-limit>

What is Scotland's not proven verdict?

It is one of three verdicts that can be returned in a criminal case in Scotland, alongside guilty and not guilty.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-65394103>

Picts' exotic origins a myth, say researchers

Researchers have provided new insights into Scotland's mysterious Picts.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-65423713>

Thousands brave the rain for Glasgow Kiltwalk

Thousands of people braved the rain in tartan to take part in the Glasgow Kiltwalk, raising money for 856 charities.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-65443234>

Scotland's last pearl fisherman

Bill Abernethy was one of the Scotland's last professional pearl fishers, and was responsible for finding Scotland's largest freshwater pearl in living memory the Abernethy pearl, which was revealed to the world in the 1960s.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-scotland-65414302>

The puzzle of Neanderthal aesthetics

Surprising new insights into the minds of this extinct human species suggest they may have been far more cultured than their outdated brutish reputation once suggested. But getting into the minds of a long-dead species is no easy task.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20230428-the-puzzle-of-neanderthal-culture-and-aesthetics>

Duchess of Buccleuch dies, aged 68, after short illness

The Duchess of Buccleuch and Queensberry has died at the age of 68 after a short illness, her family has announced.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-65449818>

Over the sea to Skye on the world's last turntable ferry

The MV Glenachulish is the world's last manually-operated turntable ferry.

Read more and watch the video at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-scotland-65429882>

King Charles III's coronation: The surprising power of pomp and ceremony

The lavish spectacle of a state ritual is far more than gilded carriages and foreign dignitaries. It brings broader benefits to society that shouldn't be overlooked.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20230428-the-surprising-power-of-pomp-and-ceremony>

Princess Anne's take on the monarchy under King Charles

In the lead-up to the coronation of King Charles, CBC chief correspondent Adrienne Arseneault has an intimate conversation with his sister, Princess Anne, about the changing monarchy and the challenges ahead.

Read more and watch the video at:

<https://youtu.be/rgb3sxJoZhM>

The democratic case for the monarchy

The reason no one has suggested a referendum to ratify King Charles' reign is because it is so obvious what the outcome would be. Republicans should acknowledge that the monarchy is democratically legitimate until they can convince a far greater proportion of the public of their argument.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/why-i-changed-my-mind-about-the-monarchy/>

The Cheviot, The Stag and The Black, Black Oil: An inside story

By Bill Paterson in the Scottish Review

Read more at:

<https://www.scottishreview.net/BillPaterson656a.html>

Country File

EU laws? How the usual suspects have the usual fake arguments

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2023/05/eu-laws-how-the-usual-suspects-have-the-usual-fake-arguments/>

Electric Canadian

Ayr, Ontario

Video of the history of Ayr and other information

You can see this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/Ayrr.htm>

The Talbot Regime

Or the first half century of the Talbot Settlement by C.O. Ermatinger, K. C., Junior Judge, County of Elgin (Special Edition) (1904) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/ontario/TheTalbotregime.pdf>

The Wetaskiwin Times

Alberta, Thursday, December 10, 1925 (pdf)

You can read this newspaper at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/alberta/newspaper.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 30th day of April 2023 - Communications

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can view this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26339-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-30th-day-of-april-2023-communications>

The Moravians in Labrador

Second Edition (1833) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/newfoundland/moraviansinlabradour.pdf>

Ojibwah Indians of Lake Huron

Sketch of the History of the Moravian Church by James Montgomery, Esq. (pdf)

You can read this sketch at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/first/ojibwahindians.pdf>

Electric Scotland

3 Articles from The Quarterly Journal of Agriculture, Vol. IX. June 1838 - March 1839

Manufacture of Cheese from Potatoes

<https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/cheesefrompotatoes.htm>

Domestic Rabbit Warren

<https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/domesticrabbitwarren.htm>

Coffee

<https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/coffee.htm>

The Antiquarian rediscovery of the Antonine Wall

By Lawrence Keppie (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/falkirk/falkirk/antonine-wall.pdf>

Observations made in a Journey through the Western Counties of Scotland

In the Autumn of 1792, Relating to the scenery, antiquities, customs, manners, population, agriculture, manufacturers, commerce, political condition, and literature of these parts by Robert Heron in two volumes.

When these volumes were published it was usual to write the letter S as an F so you may have some difficulty in reading this but after a few pages you'll likely make better progress.

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/lifestyle/journeythroughwesternscotland.htm>

Scottish Society of Indianapolis

Got in their April/May 2023 newsletter which you can read at:

<https://electricscotland.com/familytree/newsletters/indianapolis/index.htm>

A Military History of Perthshire, 1660-1902

In two volumes edited by the Marchioness of Tullibardine (1908)

You can read these volumes at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/Military-History-of-Perthshire.htm>

Perth Walk, Scotland Walking Tour in 4K

Added this video to our Perth page which you can view at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/perth/index.htm>

The Harp of Perthshire

A Collection of Songs, Ballads, and other Poetical Pieces chiefly by Local Authors with notes Explanatory, Critical, and Biographical by Robert Ford (1893)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/perth/harpofperthshire.htm>

Royal Regiment of Scotland parade at Edinburgh Castle 2023

Excellent video that I've added to the foot of our Pipes of War index page at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/pipesofwarndx.htm>

Story

Europe's focus is on Ukraine and the east – but relations with Africa are as important

By Jeremy Cliffe in the New Statesman

By 2050 two in every five children in the world are projected to be born in Africa. It is the continent of the future.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine last year, Europe has been looking east. Attention has turned not only to the support of Kyiv but to other previously neglected neighbours in the region.

Instability in the western Balkans, the geopolitical trajectory of the Caucasus, and the future of Turkey: these have all risen up the agenda in London, Paris, Berlin and Warsaw. One manifestation is the European Political Community (EPC), a forum for strategic dialogue championed by Emmanuel Macron and launched at a summit in Prague in October 2022. The EPC is made up of every state on the continent (including Britain) apart from the twin pariahs of Russia and Belarus, and stretches as far east as Azerbaijan. It gathers for its second meeting on 1 June in Moldova, another eastern country increasingly accorded European prominence.

And rightly so. For too long, the non-EU states to the east and south-east have been overlooked despite their vital importance to the continent's wider interests. Meanwhile China, and in some cases Russia, has been able to build influence in these nations. As I argued in March on these pages, the Union urgently needs to summon the self-confidence and ambition required to accelerate its next enlargement.

Yet it is not enough to look east. What the shock of Russia's invasion on 24 February 2022 exposed was not just a failure to look in that eastward direction, but a fundamental complacency about Europe's vulnerability to turmoil from all directions. Britain is far from guiltless, with buccaneering fantasies about a new role as a de facto Indo-Pacific power that are often eclipsed by the hard-nosed reality that it is affected more by events closer to home.

The conflict in Sudan is a reminder of this vulnerability. International headlines have concentrated on the evacuation of foreign nationals, but others have turned to the more disturbing longer-term outlook. "God forbid if Sudan is to reach a point of civil war proper," the country's former prime minister Abdalla Hamdok told an audience in Nairobi at the end of April. "Syria, Yemen, Libya will be a small play [in comparison]." Such a prospect means not only humanitarian catastrophe but ripples that will surely break on European shores – whether as a surge in migration, an overspill of the violence, or trade disruption (Port Sudan is a transit point on routes between Asia and Europe).

For years Europe has treated relations with its south as, if anything, an even lower priority than its relations to the east. Its re-engagement with North Africa after the Arab Spring petered out in the grim aftermath of the 2011 military intervention in Libya, and the more gradual failure of pro-democracy movements in states such as Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia. Franco-German military efforts to stabilise Mali are being wound down. The only new European interest in the region has been primarily concerned with securing alternative sources of gas to Russian ones.

In a paper for the European Council on Foreign Relations, Alberto Rizzi and

Arturo Varvelli argue that “drawn-out instability and security challenges have led the EU to progressively distance itself from deeper engagement with the challenge of democratisation in the region and it has remained muted on promoting intra-regional cooperation and engagement”. They note that the Union’s Global Gateway investment programme – an attempt to match China’s network of “Belt and Road” infrastructure projects across Asia, Africa and Latin America – envisages North Africa merely “as the endpoint of corridors for manufacturing and critical raw materials in Africa rather than as a nearshoring destination to be directly integrated within EU supply chains”. The EPC is another example: it is focused on the continent’s east and beyond, with little to offer neighbours to the south.

The European establishment appears to see the Mediterranean less as a common space with a shared future, than a mere membrane across which can flow migrants and security threats (bad) or energy (good). The southern strategy, such as one exists, is largely confined to the management of those flows.

The states on Europe’s southern littoral are savvier than most. Spain’s government has recently normalised and deepened relations with Morocco. Madrid is also expected to make Africa a focus both of its presidency of the EU Council in the second half of this year, and of the third summit of the EPC in October, which it is hosting in Granada – a city symbolic of the continent’s ties with the Arab Muslim world.

That is a welcome start. But it must be just that: the start of something bigger, of a long-term expansion of the energies devoted to Europe’s south and beyond. The next steps might involve opening up the EPC to them (if Azerbaijan can be included, why not Tunisia or Morocco?), upgrading the relationship between the EU and the African Union, and reorienting the Global Gateway investments towards the south.

This matters for the short term – for the management, mitigation and ideally prevention of crises like the one breaking out in Sudan. But it makes even more sense in the long term. Where China’s population has already peaked, Africa’s demographic boom is just beginning. By 2050 two in every five children in the world are projected to be born there. It is the continent of the future.

Considering this, Europe’s position on Africa is significant. The focus on the east is right. But Europeans must look south too.

END.

Weekend is almost here and hope it's a good one for you and that you enjoy the Coronation events. The BBC has devoted a section of its site to this major event which you can get to at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/c9wl4m5rqmlt>

Alastair