



ELECTRICCANADIAN.COM
AGRICULTURE & WILDLIFE
ARTICLES
BETH'S FAMILY TREE
BOOKS
BUSINESS
CHILDREN'S STORIES
CLANS & FAMILIES

CULTURE & LANGUAGE
DONNA'S PAGE
ELECTRICSCOTLAND.NET
FAMOUS SCOTS
FAMILY TREE
FORUMS
FOOD & DRINK
GAMES

GAZETTEER
GENEALOGY
HISTORIC PLACES
HISTORY
HUMOR
JOHN'S PAGE
KIDS
LIFESTYLE
MUSIC

NEWSLETTER
PICTURES
POETRY
POSTCARDS
RELIGION
ROBERT BURNS
SCOTS IRISH
SCOTS REGIMENTS
SERVICES

SHOPPING
SONGS
SPORT
SCOTS DIASPORA
TARTANS
TRAVEL
TRIVIA
VIDEOS
WHAT'S NEW

HELP TERMS OF USE CONTACT US

Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for April 26th 2024

Electric Scotland News

The Future of Regulation

A major report from the Centre for Policy Studies, 'The Future of Regulation', has shown that the cost of regulation increased significantly during the 2010s – despite repeated promises from Government to shrink the regulatory burden.

The report by Tom Clougherty & Robert Colville is the first to go line by line through the official impact assessments produced to accompany 3,528 pieces of legislation. It shows that between 2010 and 2019, gross annual costs to business increased by £35 billion, along with £39.6 billion in one-off costs. If pension reforms are added in, these figures rise to £57.1 billion a year, with £148 billion in one-off costs.

On a net basis, costs to business increased by £6.0 billion a year in today's money – almost the equivalent of a 2p increase in corporation tax.

However, the report – which has been welcomed by senior Conservative figures – shows that these findings are almost certainly a colossal underestimate. Our regulatory system, it argues, is simply not fit for purpose.

Both the data and anecdotal evidence show that regulatory impact assessments are generally produced by junior staff to justify decisions already taken. The figures they contain are often alarmingly woolly, or riddled with errors.

In one example, the MiFID II financial regulations were claimed to deliver a net annual benefit to business of £105.20, rather than a net annual cost of £105.2 million. In another, the Government claimed that introducing a tax on plastic bags at supermarkets was a 'deregulatory' measure, in order to claim £1 billion in regulatory savings across the parliament.

More broadly, only one department – Defra – has a full audit of the regulations it has imposed. Thousands of EU rules were introduced into law without any costings. And the promise to reduce the burden of regulation was fatally undermined by the Treasury's decision to exempt itself from scrutiny.

The report welcomes the publication of the new Better Regulation Framework – but laments the fact that any attempt to restrict the overall growth of the regulatory burden appears to have been abandoned.

It therefore urges all political parties to commit to a system that takes the impact of regulation as seriously as the impact of tax and spending.

In particular, it argues that:

A new Regulatory Audit Office should be created, to provide independent scrutiny of policy proposals – rather than departments and regulators being allowed to mark their own homework.

Regulatory reform and monitoring should be centralised under a senior government minister, with the same oversight of regulation that the Chancellor has of fiscal policy.

The Government should establish a new regulatory budget to replace the one in, one/two/three out rules and the Business Impact Target.

It should also carry out a comprehensive audit of the whole body of UK regulation. All regulation and associated analysis should be brought together in a sophisticated, machine-readable open platform.

Any decision to regulate should be properly scrutinised and externally audited as part of the policymaking process, not as an afterthought.

All regulations should be evaluated against clear success criteria after implementation, with their impact being re-examined five and 10 years after being passed.

Loch Norman Highland Games

Beth Gay got in touch with me saying she had been approached by the Loch Norman Highland Games to take photographs during their meeting and she asked me if I'd host them for her so folk at the games could enjoy them.

I was happy to agree to this and then to my astonishment I got a phone call from Beth saying she was unable to take any as despite Tom being in a wheel chair they could only let them park over a mile from the event. This meant it was not practical for them to go to the games.

Just strikes me as very odd that having asked Beth to do this for them they didn't bother to arrange an easy way for them to actually get into the games. Given that it is some hours drive for them to get there it just seems very rude to not have someone look after them when they arrived.

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 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.

Here is what caught my eye this week...

Shadow Lake Lodge
Canada's remote bike-in mountain stay

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20240415-shadow-lake-lodge-canadas-remote-bike-in-mountain-stay>

The ancient Scottish city you have tiny window to see before it is buried
The Ness of Brodgar archaeological site on the Orkney Islands has been uncovered for the past 20 years, but will be buried shortly after work concludes this year.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/ancient-scottish-city-you-tiny-32623697>

Rare and fragile Mary Queen of Scots letter saved

A rare Mary, Queen of Scots letter written almost 500 years ago has been saved by conservation treatment.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cedx4kq72l3o>

US House approves critical \$61bn Ukraine aid package

The long-awaited vote comes as Ukrainian troops face a weapons shortage in the war against Russia.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-us-canada-68861011>

Conrad Black: The nadir of our once great nation

We are, for the first time, in danger of losing our status as a prosperous and successful country

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/FNMqt>

Boris Johnson: We've killed our free-trade deal with Canada out of fear of the EU

I was in Canada the other day, and it struck me the Canadians are an enviably healthy bunch. They live about a year longer, on average, than we do a whole year.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-13328655/BORIS-JOHNSON-hormone-treated-beef-killed-free-trade-deal-Canada-fear-Brexit.html>

Britain's most lethal tank rolls off the production line

With advanced armour and devastating firepower, the Challenger 3 boasts an impressive range of state-of-the-art technology, making it the most lethal and survivable tank ever operated by the British Army.

Read more at:

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/britains-most-lethal-tank-rolls-off-the-production-line>

Rishi Sunak hails Rwanda victory as fundamental change in fight against illegal migrants

Peers finally caved in on the Bill after midnight, after hours of tedious back-and-forth voting.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1891240/Rishi-Sunak-reaction-Lords-victory>

Brexit gives UK a new lease of life thanks to £1.1trillion trade bonanza

Britain has shot up to the fourth largest exporter in the world, proving the doomsters, gloomsters and the ever-dwindling band of Remoaners were wrong.

Read more at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/1891131/Brexit-britain-Esther-McVey-exports-trade>

How to safeguard seniors against home improvement scams in Canada

With home improvement scams on the rise in Canada, renovations can come with risks. Learn how to spot the red flags and prevent home improvement scams

Read more at:

<https://www.scotiabank.com/ca/en/personal/advice-plus/features/posts/how-to-safeguard-seniors-against-home-improvement-scams-in-canada.html>

Britain needs a regulation revolution

While decisions on tax and spend are the subject of huge media attention, there's one aspect of the state that

doesn't get nearly enough coverage regulation. From housing to pension funds, burdensome red tape is perhaps our greatest barrier to economic growth. An important new report outlines why this must change.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/why-britain-needs-a-regulation-revolution>

Train cars catch fire while moving through Ontario

Local officials reported no injuries after five train cars were spotted ablaze heading towards a downtown area.

Watch this at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-68878299>

Nearly 10,000 council houses in Scotland lie empty

The Scottish Government has been urged to fund councils properly to help them address the housing crisis.

Read more at:

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/nearly-10000-council-houses-empty-32654358>

Humza Yousaf kicks Greens out of Government and ends Bute House Agreement

The First Minister acted amid growing criticism of the deal with the Greens

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-68895400>

Scotland is worst in world for teenage boys smoking cannabis

Almost a quarter of 15-year-old boys in Scotland involved in the study said that they had tried the drug.

Read more at:

<https://news.stv.tv/scotland/scotland-is-worst-in-world-for-teenage-boys-smoking-cannabis-who-data-reveals>

When a rejoiner's heid's full o' mince

By Catherine McBride in Think Scotland

Read more at:

<https://thinkscotland.org/2024/04/when-a-rejoiners-heids-full-o-mince/>

Electric Canadian

Annual Report of the Mineral Production of Canada

During the Calendar Year 1923 (pdf)

You can read this report at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/mines/mineralstaticsofcanada.pdf>

Growing Up in Canada

National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth by Statistics Canada (1996) (pdf)

You can read this survey at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/growingupincanada.pdf>

Canada's Craftsmen at 50!

The Story of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering in the Canadian Armed Forces up to and including The 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Corps of Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers by

Colonel Murray C. Johnston (1995)

You can read this at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/canadascraftsmen.htm>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 21st day of April 2024

By the Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26483-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-21st-day-of-april-2024>

The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs

Added the 1903 edition

You can read this at:

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

Electric Scotland

Clan Henderson Newsletters

Added their Fall 2003 edition which you can read at:

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

Memoir of General Lord Lynedoch G. C. B.

By John Murray Graham (1877) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/scotreg/memoirgenerallo00grahgoog.pdf>

Blue Bells of Scotland

By Anne McVicar Grant

You can read this poem at:

<https://electricscotland.com/poetry/bluebellsofscotl00gra.pdf>

Cathedrals and Abbeys of Presbyterian Scotland

By M. E. Leicester Addis (1901) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/bible/cathedralsabbey0000addi.pdf>

Britannic Confederation

A Series of papers by Admiral Sir John Colomb, Professor Edward A. Freeman, George G. Chisholm, Professor Shield Nicholson, Maurice H. Hervey and the Right Honble Lord Thring, edited with an Introduction by Arthur Silva White, Secretary and Editor, Royal Geographical Society (1892) (pdf).

You can read these papers at:

<https://electricscotland.com/independence/sip/britannicconfede00whit.pdf>

Birds of Scotland

With other poems by James Grahame (1807) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricScotland.com/nature/birdsofscotlandw00grah.pdf>

Annals and Correspondence of the Viscount and the first and second Earls of Stair
By John Murray Graham in two volumes (1875)

You can read these volumes at:

<https://electricScotland.com/webclans/earldoms/stair.htm>

National Food Strategy

UK Independent Review - The Plan (2021) (pdf)

You can read this review at:

https://electricScotland.com/agriculture/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf

Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland

With appendix 1902-1903. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of his Majesty (1903) (pdf)

You can read this detailed report at:

<https://electricScotland.com/education/educationinScot01deptgoog.pdf>

Ecclesiological Notes of some of the Islands of Scotland

By T. S. Muir (1885)

You can read this at:

<https://electricScotland.com/bible/Ecclesiological-Notes.htm>

Story

The Strathspay and Reel

By Cubliana Dingwall

What need there be sae great a fraise,

Wi' dringing dull Italian lays,

I wadna gie oor ain Strathspeys,

For half a hundred score o' them.

- Tullochgorum.

There may be other lands as stern and wild as Caledonia — other regions in which mists may roll on mountain, and wave break on rocky shore, where heather may bloom and pine tree flourish and whose inhabitants may even speak in dialects of a Gaelic tongue. All these may be common attributes of other lands. But there is at least one thing, I am about to mention, which we can claim as the

EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY

of the Scottish Highlands. There was a time when Highland music consisted mainly of weird minor melodies of Ossanic origin, and the sombre life of that age found a suitable echo in the plaintive notes of the harp. But there came a time when the appearance of the great Highland bagpipe—an improvement of an older and more primitive instrument, marked an epoch in the history of the people. Their habitual gloom began to be varied by brighter gleams and their music enlivened by more stirring strains. One effect of the changes was the

development, if not the birth, of that sparkling, rollicking rant which we know as the Strathspey and Reel, and which, as I have indicated, is like the Piobmhor itself, the heritage alone of the land beyond the Grampians. Elementary in its construction, invariable in its time, it is the product of a people deficient it may be in contemporary culture, untutored in the higher regions of musical art, yet withal intellectual and with much music in their souls. Eminently suitable to the conditions of life where the refinements of wealth and luxurious ease were as rare as the sand grouse on the heather hills, it caught the fancy of the Highland people, and fell on them as dew upon the tender herb. It has been so thoroughly assimilated by the Scottish Celt for so many generations that he requires no training in music to enable him to appreciate it. He can never hear its strains without a speeding of the blood in his veins, that often forces him to shout for joy. Its stirring major notes reflect him in his happy summer mood, as the old minor melodies represent him in the "winter of his discontent." It speaks to the Highlander in unmistakable tones of that rough and hoary land he loves so well, and wherever his lot is cast it calls forth bright visions of youth and home, and all that he loves best on earth.

I remember dining one autumn evening more than thirty years ago with the genial and courtly Dr. Kennedy in his little manse at Dingwall. Among the guests was a quiet old Highlander, whose name has passed out of my recollection, but of whose kindly face and sparkling eye my memory cherishes a vivid impression. He had emigrated to the Canadian West in early youth, and was then for the first time revisiting the scenes of his boyhood. In the drawing room there was

MUSIC AND SONG,

and throughout a course of "Italian trills," the old emigrant maintained his usual quiet unobtrusive demeanour. The classics passed over him as the idle wind. But, by and bye, there came the old familiar songs and music of his native land.

"And the Scotch blood leapt in a' his veins."

The sparkle of the old eye became brighter, and a smile of infinite pleasure lit up his wrinkled face. The climax came with "Tullochgorum." Springing to his feet he seized the doctor—the old friend of his youth—by the arm, forced him to the floor, cracked his thumbs and kicked his heels, and used all manner of blandishments to induce him to dance, but needless to say in vain. Yet, although he could not be persuaded to engage in a function which he had all his life denounced, he took no pains to conceal how thoroughly he relished and how deeply he sympathised with the enthusiasm of his old Celtic friend. I never witnessed a more convincing proof of the influence and power of the Highland reel on the true old Highland heart.

The name of the person who composed the first reel is lost in antiquity. Perhaps no single individual ever could lay claim to such an honour. Both reel and strathspey are probably gradual evolutions from

THE OLD CELTIC AIRS

that floated for ages through the Highland glens, assuming their present form when the developed bagpipe and violin made the people rise and dance like my old friend in the manse at Dingwall. The first players of whom we have any record were a family of Browns in the Mearns, and after them the Cummings of Castle Grant. It is generally assumed that the Strathspey originated in the district of that name, and probably the Cummings were the first to bring it into public notice. This was about the middle of the seventeenth century, when the harp was disappearing by the passing away of Rory Dall, one of the last of the famous harpers. But we have really no reliable history on the subject until the middle of the eighteenth century when

NEIL GOW

arose as a brilliant musical star on the Highland horizon. Genial old John Skinner of "Tullochgorum" fame was born just six years before Neil, and one can infer from his protest against Italian lays in that immortal song that

the strathspey was then fighting its way into popularity. Scott, than whom there never was a more accurate authority in ancient customs, describes the daughter of Donald Bain in "Waverley," a tale of the '45, as "the best dancer of a strathspey in the whole strath." Yet Dr. Johnson, who perambulated the Highlands as late as 1773 evidently saw none of it, for Boswell who records the singing of Gaelic songs, the playing of the bagpipe and even the spinnet, is silent about the strathspey. Had he witnessed this dance, assuredly he would have noted it as a phenomenon never seen at that time outwith the Highland border. So to Neil Gow, who died in 1807, is due the credit of having popularised both the dance and music. He was recognised as the most proficient exponent of Scottish music in his day. His genius displayed itself in the composition of many tunes which are still familiar favourites among Highland musicians, but still more in a particular style of bowing which seemed to breathe new life into the strathspey. His fame was undoubtedly enhanced by a remarkable individuality of character, a pawky humour, and a freedom of speech always untarnished by malice. Petted by the aristocracy, he never exhibited that fawning servility which was a characteristic of the age, and his manly independence might have suggested the theme of

"A man's a man for a' that."

Next year, on the 1st of March, there comes the centenary of his death. Surely Scotland will not allow it to pass without some fitting celebration to commemorate so eminent a Scot!

After the Gows, father and son, there was a succession of eminent composers and performers, among whom were Marshall, the butler at Gordon Castle, Fraser of Knockie, and Peter Baillie, all of whom have left their mark upon the music of the Scottish Highlands.

In our day the mantle of the Gows has fallen upon

JAMES SCOTT SKINNER

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/scottskinner/>

who by a musical education of a high order, and the patient study and practice of a life now growing old, devoted chiefly to the music of his native land, has well earned the title of "the Strathspey King" by which he is universally known. No living violinist can approach him in the playing of the Strathspey and Reel. It is doubtful if any man since the days of the Gows understood better the spirit of the music, and the message it speaks to the Highland heart. Like so many of his predecessors who have left their mark on Highland music, he was born in the East Country, within the Highland border, and not far from the slopes of the Grampian Hills, where he grew up under the subtle mystic influences of that mountain land. Active in mind and body, sparkling with wit and humour, pouring out his whole soul in music, he and his fiddle seem in a perennial condition of concert pitch.

THE SECRET OF HIS SUCCESS

lies partly in those constitutional qualities, and partly in his marvellous power of expression and skilful manipulation of the bow. He has developed a style which is all his own, and as far as can be judged from the description of contemporary writers, nearer to that of Neil Gow than any other of whom we have a record. He inherited his enthusiasm from his father, who, when he lost his left hand by accident, acquired by patient practice the power of fingering with his right, and bowing with the stump of his left. He is not only the most distinguished performer of Highland music in his day, but the composer also of a multitude of pastoral airs, laments, strathspeys and reels, many of which are destined to live, and to carry his name and fame into future generations. His life and work constitute a legacy of which the North of Scotland may well be proud, and so long as

HIGHLAND HEARTS RESPOND

to Highland airs the "Laird o' Drumblair" and "The Bonnie Lass o' Bon-Accord" will rank with the best similar

productions of the masters of the past. No Highland home possessing the luxury of a pianoforte or violin should be without a copy of his last great publication "The Harp ana Claymore," one of the best collections of Highland music given to the world. Long may he live in his picturesque cottage home at Monikie, and long may he be able to charm and warm the heart of Scot and clansman at home and abroad.

And now, my brother Gael, where'er yc be— lingering in the silent glen, labouring in the throbbing city, sweltering on the burning plain, or freezing on arctic snow—

FORGET NOT THE MUSIC

of your native land, love it as you love the Highland hills, and cherish it like the language lisped at your mother's knee.

END

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

Alastair