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WHAT'S NEW

## Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for June 6th, 2025

### Electric Scotland News

Drones are the new weapon of war and I've added some news items below where some interesting material can be read. For example we look at the Ukraine drone attack on Russia but we also explore Canada and America's lack of them and where this might lead in any future war. I've added asterisks \*\*\* to each of the three articles.

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#### Struggling Carpenter Fixes Girl's Flute

Her Famous Flutist Mom Arrives by Helicopter with a Surprise. An audio story that you might enjoy which I've added to our Lifestyle page. I'm not one for audio books but I found this one on YouTube and confess I enjoyed listening to it. If you enjoy it then there are many others you can listen to. I've added a link to it in our Electric Scotland section below.

#### 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...

#### Full Fiscal Arithmetic

Imagine the Scottish Government gets what it's asking for: full fiscal autonomy. What happens then? And what is the significance of the so-called fiscal transfer? This short piece answers these key questions.

Read more at:

[https://www.these-islands.co.uk/publications/i402/full\\_fiscal\\_arithmetic.aspx](https://www.these-islands.co.uk/publications/i402/full_fiscal_arithmetic.aspx)

#### What if Canada Joined the CANZUK Union?

CANZUK Explained: can Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK form the next global superpower? Originally conceived in Britain, the 'Anglosphere Union' has recently gained attention as an option for Canada as it struggles with an unpredictable Second Trump Administration. Is this reuniting of four Commonwealth countries a viable federation? Would it be powerful? And what problems might it face?

Watch this at:

<https://youtu.be/zB2MEgzmA0M?si=sbkqJM69vCiVpXA8>

#### The decoding of ancient Roman scrolls is speeding up

More data, and a more powerful particle accelerator, should pay dividends

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/hK7Di#selection-1129.0-1129.73>

Hamilton by-election campaign heats up as Farage visits Scotland

Scotland's main political parties have rounded on Nigel Farage as the Reform UK leader came north to campaign in a crucial by-election. Farage visited Scotland for the first time in the campaign where he said his party is a "fresh positive voice" between the Labour and SNP "seesaw" in Scotland.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/hamilton-larkhall-stonehouse-by-election/>

I might add that voting is going on today so we should get the results on Friday. It's expected that the SNP will win with Reform taking second place but we'll see how things work out.

Canada to expedite nation building projects to counter Trump

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said his government will start pushing legislation that would fast-track ambitious national projects to boost Canada's economy, now faced with Donald Trump's tariffs.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/clyrd24zg3eo>

Conrad Black: Carney continues on a path of mindless globalism

Despite all the nationalistic noises of the new federal government, very little appears to have changed

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/7GApZ>

Research finds Scotland is only place in developed world where early male deaths are on the rise

A crisis of premature male deaths is robbing the country of a generation of family men, shocking new statistics reveal. Scotland is now the only country in the developed world where male mortality between the ages of 25 and 49 is on the rise, researchers say.

Read more at:

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/shock-increase-in-younger-male-deaths-through-suicide-cancer-and-drugs-use/>

The tyranny of the non-smoking majority

Moral busybodies should leave smokers alone

Read more at:

<https://thecritic.co.uk/the-tyranny-of-the-non-smoking-majority/>

MyHeritage and ScanCafe Partner to Digitize and Preserve Family Memories

We're excited to announce a new partnership with ScanCafe, the leading photo and video digitization service in the U.S., to provide an easy and safe way to digitize family memories. Through this collaboration, MyHeritage users in the United States can digitize their media with ScanCafe, and have it automatically transferred for safekeeping on MyHeritage through a seamless and secure account integration.

Read more at:

<https://blog.myheritage.com/2025/06/myheritage-and-scancafe-partner-to-digitize-and-preserve-family-memories/>

The salt batteries powering China's scooter industry

China's scooter industry is racing towards clean energy technology and it is doing so with batteries made from sea salt.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20250530-how-electric-scooters-are-driving-chinas-salt-battery-push>

Ukraine's drone attack sends a message to Russia \*\*\*

The operation that took 18 months of planning is the most elaborate achievement so far for Ukrainian forces.

Read more at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0r1jv0rn0ko>

How Chinese drones could defeat America \*\*\*  
A Ukrainian drone attack shows our extreme vulnerability.

Read more at:

<https://www.noahpinion.blog/p/how-chinese-drones-could-defeat-america>

Prince William Makes First Visit to Army Air Corps as Colonel-in-Chief

Prince William meets the 4 Regiment Army Air Corps who are based at Wattisham. The Prince of Wales became Colonel-in-Chief in May 2024, when the King officially handed over the role at the Army Aviation Centre in Middle Wallop.

Watch this at:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/XyqiBjtgRGE?si=Zk7W4nhXh4ztZ05l>

The truth about young men

After 'Adolescence' the hit Netflix drama series about a young girl's murder questions about young men and masculinity reached a much wider audience than ever before. But much of the debate is shaped by bad-faith actors and fuelled by speculation. A new poll gives us fresh evidence about how boys fit into society.

Read more at:

<https://capx.co/do-young-men-know-what-women-want>

Ukraine showed that drones are the new bullets. Why doesn't Canada get this? \*\*\*

Canada has no equivalent program for the modern equivalent of ammo: cheap, armed drones. Their power was evident on Sunday, when a cheaply made Ukrainian fleet destroyed or damaged nearly a third of Moscow's strategic bombers. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called the operation one for the history books.

Read more at:

<https://archive.is/vUTCw#selection-2597.18-2603.28>

## Electric Canadian

Snow Man - John Hornby in the Barren Lands

By Malcolm Thomas Waldron (1931) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/Snow-Man.pdf>

The Montreal Highland Cadets

By Ernest J (John) Chambers (1901)

You can read about them at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/forces/MontrealHighlandCadets.pdf>

Jesse Ketchum and his Times

By Ernest Jackson Hathaway (1929)

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/Jesse-Ketchum.htm>

Klee Wyck

By Emily Carr (1941) (pdf)

Klee Wyck is made up of sketches written at various times and brought together and published now for the first time. Long ago when it was her habit in summers to go into wild, lonely places seeking Indian subjects, Miss Carr's

artist mind received impressions which have remained sharp and real for her across the years. By fish boat, gas boat, sometimes by Indian canoe, taking with her a few books, at least one dog and her sketching kit, she penetrated forest and village on the British Columbia coast, even going on occasion over to the Queen Charlottes. The vivid images stored then in her mind have been brooded over since by her rich imaginative faculty and the result is an unusual collection of sketches, this time in words, not paint.

You can read this book at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/makers/Klee-Wyck.pdf>

Thoughts on a Sunday Morning - the 1st day of June 2025 - One More Day  
By The Rev. Nola Crewe

You can watch this at:

<http://www.electricscotland.org/forum/communities/rev-nola-crewe/26622-thoughts-on-a-sunday-morning-the-1st-day-of-june-2025-one-more-day>

My Canadian Experience

Report for May 2025. Completed this report with a couple of videos on Retro Fest Car Show in Chatham Ontario and also the biggest energy project in our history of Canada.

You can read this at:

[http://www.electriccanadian.com/canada\\_add21.htm](http://www.electriccanadian.com/canada_add21.htm)

The Beaver Magazine  
Added Volume 6 No. 4 (pdf)

You can read this issue at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/transport/hudsonbay/TheBeaverSeptember1926.pdf>

## Electric Scotland

Innovation Nation

Good Jobs for Scotland's Future by Daniel Turner, June 2025 (pdf)

You can read this report at:

<https://electricscotland.com/independence/sip/Innovation-Nation.pdf>

Struggling Carpenter Fixes Girl's Flute

Her Famous Flutist Mom Arrives by Helicopter with a Surprise. An audio story that you might enjoy which I've added to our Lifestyle page.

You can listen to this at:

<https://youtu.be/Hf1eQLPJEWI?si=wJ1LIUF9EWEmlZa4>

Tell Me Another

By John Campbell Hamilton-Gordon, The Most Hon. The Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair, K.T. (1925) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/Tell-Me-Another.pdf>

The Scottish Journal of Agriculture  
Volume II (1919)

You can read this volume at:

[https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/The%20Scottish%20Journal%20Of%20Agriculture%20Vol-ii\(1919\).pdf](https://electricscotland.com/agriculture/The%20Scottish%20Journal%20Of%20Agriculture%20Vol-ii(1919).pdf)

Ness of Brodgar: Saving the Best till Last | ARP 2025

A video talk which I've added to our Orkney page

You can watch this at:

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

Scots Entrepreneur gains world's most prestigious design & advertising award

D&AD charity provides near 200,000 vocational learning opportunities to emerging creatives annually. An article by Bill Magee.

You can read this article at:

<https://electricscotland.com/magee/article0031.htm>

Whale Hunting with Gun and Camera

A Naturalist's account of the modern shore-whaling industry, of Whales and their habits, and of hunting experiences in various parts of the world by Roy Chapman Andrews (1916) (pdf)

You can read this book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/nature/whalehuntingwith00andrrich.pdf>

Critical Introduction to The Evergreen: A Northern Seasonal

In 4 volumes which I've added to our page on this publication.

You can read these at:

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

In Conversation with The Royal Butler

Balmoral Castle - The Queen's Scottish Home. Balmoral Castle has been the home of the British Royal family since 1852. During his time with The Royal Household, Grant visited this castle and estate on many occasions as well as visiting the castle as a child with his parents and brother. Grant shares his memories and experiences at Balmoral.

You can watch this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/history/leaves/chapter80.htm>

Coull Kirk in The Howe of Cromar, Aberdeenshire

A video about the kirk which you can watch at:

<https://electricscotland.com/bible/Coull-Kirk.htm>

Achindoun Castle

Some information and a video about this castle which you can get to at:

<https://electricscotland.com/historic/castles/AchindounCastle.htm>

We have catch'd Scotland

By Bill Laing (pdf)

You can red this interesting book at:

<https://electricscotland.com/independence/sip/We-have-catchd-Scotland.pdf>

First Report of The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts

Published in 1874 (pdf)

You can read this at:

[https://electricscotland.com/history/records/First\\_Report\\_of\\_the\\_Royal\\_Commission\\_on.pdf](https://electricscotland.com/history/records/First_Report_of_the_Royal_Commission_on.pdf)

Scottish Pilgrimage in the Land of Lost Content

By Thomas Ratcliffe Barnett (1942) (pdf)

You can read this at:

<https://electricscotland.com/lifestyle/Scottish-Pilgrimage-in-the-Land-of-Lost-Content.pdf>

Report on American Manuscripts in the Royal Institution of Great Britain

Volume 1 (1904) (pdf)

You can read this at:

[https://electricscotland.com/history/america/reportonamerica01\\_text.pdf](https://electricscotland.com/history/america/reportonamerica01_text.pdf)

## Story

### The Bagpipe in War

By Lieut. Ian Mackay Scobie, Upper Burma.

Oh that I had three arms, two for the Pipe And one for the sword.—Gaelic Song.

There is no doubt that the antiquity of the bagpipe as a war instrument is very great. Dr. Fraser, a well-known authority on the instrument, says "It is more than likely that the Celts of Pannonia used the bagpipe in war, before the Christian era," and further mentions that "Prudentius, however (b. a.d. 348)—the greatest of the Roman Christian poets, is the first writer, so far as I am aware, to mention the bagpipe as a recognised instrument of war." He says:—"Signum Symphonice belli Aegyptiis diderat"—which, when translated, reads:—"The bagpipe gave the signal for the battle to begin, to the Egyptians," the bagpipe sounded the charge. Thus early do we find the piper in the forefront of the battle!"

According to a Roman writer, Procopius by name, we learn that the bagpipe became "the recognised marching instrument of the Roman Infantry."

On the downfall of the Roman Empire, however, the pipes fell into disuse as a war instrument, and we hear no more of them as such until the early part of the 15th century, when they began to supersede the war song of the bards in the Highlands of Scotland.

How and when they first came into

## CELTIC SCOTLAND IS

still an unsolved mystery and a bone of contention amongst historians. It is sufficient, however, to say that, although other nations certainly had pipes of various kinds, at one time or another in their history, the Highlanders of Scotland were the only ones to really develop and improve the instrument on proper lines, composing a class of music specially suited for it, and thus making it, both in peace and war, their national instrument.

As a musical instrument of war the Great Highland Bagpipe, or "Piob Mhor," stands without equal, its shrill and penetrating notes being well suited to the roar and din of the battle, either when calling to the charge, encouraging the pursuit, or checking the retreat, in enlivening the weary march, or in rousing the "crith gaisge" or "tremblings of valour," to be followed later by the "mire chath," or frenzy of battle, which hurled the Gael like a veritable avalanche on the foe.

It may be interesting to mention here that the Highland bagpipe is louder and shriller than any other, as it was always intended to be used as an instrument of war. According to the author of "The Highland Bagpipe," pipe music has been known to have been heard at a distance of six miles, and, under specially favourable conditions, of ten miles. A bagpipe in the possession of the Duke of Sutherland, which was used in the Rising of 1745, has been 'heard at a distance of eight miles. Up till about 1800 the war-pipe had two drones, the third one only being added at the commencement of

the 19th century.

It was only natural amongst an essentially war-like people like the Highlanders that their favourite instrument should have qualities fitting it to be useful in war, and we have only to look at its repertoire of music, particularly the more ancient

“CEOL MOR,” OR PIOBAIREACHD,

to see that war indeed formed the theme of a large number of its tunes. That the pipes are eminently adapted for conveying the highest feelings of human passion and emotion, especially in regard to war, nobody can deny who has heard a Piobaireachd such as “ The Desperate Battle ” properly played. To a Highlander such a tune brings vividly before him the whole battle scene—the changing fortunes of the fight, the clash of arms, the shouts of the combatants, the shrieks and groans of the wounded and dying, and the terrible scene of carnage as night descends on the battlefield, covering friend and foe, the living and dead, under her mantle.

Neil Munro, that most Highland of all our writers, thoroughly understands this feeling when he says, writing of the Piobaireachd “ Cogadh na sith ” in

“THE LOST PIBROCH”;

“Peace or war, peace or war; come which will, we care not,” sang the pipe reeds, and there was the muster and the march, hot-foot rush over the rotting rain-wet moor, the jingle of iron, the dunt of pike and targe, the choked roar of hate and hunger, batter and slash and fall, and behind, the old, old feud with Appin!”

In the preface to Ross’ Pipe Collection, written by the Rev. Norman MacLeod, we read that “the bagpipe is the instrument best adapted for summoning the clans from the far-off glens to rally round the standard of their chiefs, or for leading a Highland regiment to the attack amidst the roar of battle. . . In the Lament we expect a sadness, but even in “the summons to battle,” with all its fire and energy, it cannot conceal what it seems already to anticipate—sorrow for the slain.”

The strange effect of the pipes on Highlanders and Scotsmen generally is too well known to be entered into largely here. Whether in peace or in war, it is all the same, that indescribable thrill, that war-like feeling aroused even in the most peaceable of us, which is always a source of wonder to the stranger.

Men who, although

HIGHLAND ONLY IN NAME

or descent, or in some cases not even knowing the land of their origin, have been greatly affected on hearing the pipes for the first time, thus showing to what an extent this peculiar instrument has engraved itself in the past on the Highland character.

As a fine example of the powerful influence exercised by the pipes on the Scottish Highlander, we cull the following passage from Neil Munro’s “John Splendid”—“On a sudden there rose away before us towards the mouth of the glen the sound of a bagpipe. It came on the tranquil air with no break in its uproar, and after a preparatory tuning it broke into an air called “Cogadh na Sith” — an ancient braggart pibroch made by one Macruimen of the Isle of Skye—a tune that was commonly used by the Campbells as a night-retreat or Tattoo.

“My heart filled with the strain. It gave me not only the simple illusion that I saw again the regimentals of my native country—many a friend and comrade among them in the shelter of the Castle of Inverlochy—but it roused in me a spirit very antique, very religious and moving too, as the music of his own land must in every honest Gael.

“Cruachan for ever!” I said lightly to M’Iver, though my heart was full.

“He was as much touched by that homely lilt as myself. ‘The old days, the old styles!’ said he. ‘God! how that pibroch stings me to the core!’ And as the tune came more clearly in the second part, or Crunluadh, as we call it, and the player



maybe came round a bend of the road, my comrade stopped in his pace, and added, with what in another I might have thought a sob—‘ I’ve trudged the world; I have learned many bravadoes, so that my heart never stirred much to the mere trick of an instrument but one, and the Pìob Mhor conquers me. What is it, Colin, that’s in us, rich and poor, yon rude cane-reeds speak so human and friendly to!’

“‘Tis the Gaelic,” I said, cheered myself by the air. “Never a roar of the drone or a sob of the chanter but’s in the Gaelic tongue.”

“‘Maybe,’ said he, ‘maybe: I’ve heard the scholars like yourself say the sheep-skin and the drones were Roman—that or Spanish, it’s all one to me. I heard them at Boitzenburg, when we gave the butt of the gun to Tilly’s soldadoes, they played us into Holstein, and when the ditch of Stralsund was choked with the

TARTAN OF MACKAY,

and our lads were falling like corn before the hook, a Reay piper stood valiantly in front and played a salute. Then and now it’s the pipes, my darling!”

Again, let us see what that well-known writer of Highland stories, James Grant, has to say in regard to the effect of the pipes on the Gael in battle. In his book, “The Romance of War,” speaking of the defence of the Rock of Maya in the Peninsular War, he says:— “As the battalion (the Gordon Highlanders) moved in open column of companies along the hill-top from the camp towards the pass, Colonel Cameron addressed a few words to them, exhorting them to fight to the last man, and maintain the ancient fame of the North. He reminded them that they were not only fighting merely for the defence of Spain, but of those homes where their kindred dwelt. His voice became drowned in the din of the conflict which rolled along the face of the hills, and Stuart heard only the concluding part of the address, and part of it was in Gaelic. ‘Highlanders! we shall have a bloody Sabbath here to-day; but we go forth to shed our blood that the Sabbath bells may ring in peace at home, in those green straths and wooded glens where many a Scottish heart is praying for us at this hour? The sound of the pipes, as the piper on the flank of each company struck up

“ON WI’ THE TARTAN,”

was the only reply. What a gush of indescribable feeling came through every breast, when the blast of the pipe was heard at such a moment! Every eye lighted up, and every cheek flushed: the effect of the sound of that strange instrument on the sons of Caledonia is well known.”

Returning to the early times when we first hear of the pipes as a war instrument, we see them used in conjunction with the bard. To quote from W. L. Manson’s interesting work on the pipes: “The bards who preceded the pipers as an inspiring military force seemed themselves not only susceptible to the influence of the “Mìre chath,” but capable of imparting it to others. Before the battle they passed from clan to clan giving exhortation and encouragement in wild and recitative strains, and rousing the feelings of the warriors to the highest pitch of frenzy. When the noise of the fight drowned their voices, the pipers, after they became general as military instruments, kept the enthusiasm alive. Both bard and piper helped when the battle was over to celebrate the deeds of those who had survived, and the honour of those who had fallen, the piper’s part of the work being more often the playing of Laments for the departed.”

As time went on, however, the piper gradually superseded both the harper and the bard, and reigned supreme at the feast or on the battlefield.

In 1314, at the Battle of Bannockburn, we hear that the Clan Menzies took their pipes with them, and that they were played by one of their hereditary pipers. In fact, remains of these pipes are still in existence. There is also mention made in a poem on the battle that both bards and pipers were employed to urge the clans to victory.

At the great clan fight on the North Inch of Perth in 1390 we are told that “the clans stalked into the barriers to the sound of their own great war-pipes,” and Sir Walter Scott in “The Fair Maid of Perth,” tells us in his account of the fight that each side had its own piper, and that “ when they saw that the conflict was well nigh terminated for want of men to support it, threw down their instruments, rushed desperately upon one another with their daggers, and each being more intent on despatching his opponent than in defending himself, the piper of Clan Quhele was almost instantly slain, and he of Clan Chattan mortally wounded. The last, nevertheless, again grasped his instrument, and the pibroch of the clan



yet poured its expiring notes over the Clan Chattan while the dying minstrel had breath to inspire it. The instrument which he used, or at least a part of it called the chanter, is preserved in the family of Macpherson of Cluny, chief of Clan Chattan, and is much honoured under the name of the “Feadan dubh,” or Black Chanter.” Another tradition, however, says that during the progress of the fight an aerial piper appeared, who, after playing some wild strains, let his pipes drop to the ground. Being made of glass, they were broken by the fall, except the chanter, which was of lignum vitae, and which was secured by the Clan Chattan piper, to be afterwards kept as a memento of the fight. On the retention of this “Feadan dubh” in the family is supposed to rest the prosperity of the house of Cluny.

It is said that at the Battle of Harlaw in 1411 the Highland army charged to the sound of piobaireachd “deafening to hear,” and that in 1431 at the Battle of Inverlochy the warpipes were largely in evidence. In fact, all through the 15th century we continually come across references to the pipes being used in war, and towards the end of that century they may be considered to have become inseparable from the Highlander on the field of battle.

END.

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

Alastair