



Blair of Blair

# BLAIR BRUIDHINN

• Honorary Member Rt. Hon. Robin Blair — Lord Lyon King of Arms of Scotland •



Blair of Balthayock

“Blair Talk” for Clan Blair Society

[www.clanblair.org](http://www.clanblair.org)

Third Quarter – August 2009

## Clan Blair Society 2009 AGM Highlands Ranch, Colorado

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Colorado Scottish Festival and Rocky Mountain Highland Games on August 7-9. Thirty-three members and six visitors attended from across the country, from Virginia to California. The AGM and games were a great success thanks to Co-Commissioners Jim Blair and Leslie Blair Gallagher who served as hosts.

The Clan Blair Society Board met on Friday August 7 to update clan issues and discuss our focus for the future. Then we began celebrating with a barbeque at Chez Blair on Jack Ass Hill in Littleton. There was great company, food and conversation, whilst enjoying a lovely Colorado evening on the deck of the Blair House. Members were introduced to Jim and Adoree's ten grandchildren and their parents. Their daughters, Quaintance, Erynn and Dyani brought some great desserts. Many thanks to Jim and Adoree for their hospitality.

At the Games, Clan Blair marched as the Honored Clan and then back to the tent to greet visitors, stamp passports for the children and share 50 pounds of Clan literature graciously lugged from Arizona by Helen. After lunch, 12 members attended the annual meeting where Helen presented the President's report, Bob the Membership report, Jim a report on the Blair DNA project including a

proposal for development of a DNA scholarship fund to assist CBS members in exploring their genealogy.

During the Games we were also visited by Bill and Babe Blair from Gloucester, VA, Mary and Chris Blair from Woodland Park, CO, Kurt Blair from Parker, CO, Alan Blair Braboy from Colorado Springs, CO, and Caia Blair Hoskins from Colorado Springs. A special guest member was Allen Blair, Leslie's father from Flagstaff, AZ.

The highlight was Saturday evening with a lovely banquet at The Celtic Tavern in Littleton. The event included a proper Robert Burns' *Address to the Haggis* presented by Jim and Adoree's younger son Torin Blair. He certainly does a bang up job with the broad Scots and the ode to the master o' the pudding race.

Steve Hawthorne from the Isle of Mull Pipe and Drum Band graciously piped the haggis in for us, while Mike Galligan (Jim and Adoree's son-in-law) bore in the Whisky and Rob Blair (Jim and Adoree's older son) bore in the haggis. The haggis connoisseurs pronounced that it was the best they ever had.

Front Row: Newton Blair, Kristen Fredline, Cian Blair, Quinnlin Blair, Saoirse Blair Galligan, Arabella Blair, Andee Blair, Marilyn Blair, Jim Blair, Dyani Blair Galligan, Tiernan Blair (in mother's arms)

Second Row: Noah (Blair) Tichy, Rob Blair, Erynn Blair Shryack (with next Clan member due in December), Ann Fredline, Allen Blair, Helen Blair, Suzi Clarke, Mike Galligan, Bob Blair

Third Row: Quaintance Blair, Atia Blair (held), Torin Blair, Erin Gallagher, Adoree Blair, Nick Shryack, Leslie Blair Gallagher, Scott Roberts, Bill Blair



## Thank You to the Saint Andrew's Society of the Colorado Games Committee



Thank you so much for your great care of the Clan Blair Society during our AGM. Your graciousness and abundant hospitality certainly went a long way towards making our annual meeting a memorable and enjoyable event for all our attendees. The way you treat your

AGM clans and all clans in general, should be a model for all other games.

We shall cherish our AGM plaque and display it proudly. I am also very sure that the Nessie first-aid kit will come in handy at some point and it is a welcome addition to our Buckets O'Blair (clan tent supplies). Thanks also for the gift of the 12-year-old Glenlivet. Please, do come by and share a wee dram at anytime.

I know how very hard you all worked to craft this fine weekend. Clan Blair looks forward to being a part of the Festival in 2010. Slainte, Leslie Blair Gallagher, Co-Commissioner, Colorado

## The 2009 Greenville Scottish Games in South Carolina, Wyomia Blair



Wyomia with impressive display of Clan Blair documents

June 5 we had the Great Scots Parade in downtown Greenville with lots of floats, bands and clans marching. Our *Honored Guest* was The Rt. Hon. Patrick Robin Archibald Boyle, the 10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Glasgow and the current Chief of Clan Boyle who was our Honored Clan. Our *Distinguished Guests* were Mark J. Harden, Baron of Cowdenknowes; Romilly Squire, Baron of Rubislaw; Hon. William Paret Boswell of Toberchurn, the Society of Scottish Armigers Chairman.

The clan reception was at the Westin-Poinsett Hotel with plenty of food and drink with the Earl of Glasgow as the main speaker. Our ceilidh was at the Peace Center for the

Performing Arts Amphitheater with Albannach, Coyote Run, Barley Juice and Ratkellair playing.

We had 49 clans and societies at Furman University and the Earl of Glasgow opened the Games then walked to all the tents, talking to everyone – quite the *Grand Gentleman* in everyone's eyes.

This was the second year of the Border Collie Invitational Trials with 21 Border Collie team handlers and their dogs. The Eastern United States Pipe Band Association selected The Greenville Games as the permanent host for the Southern Branch Championships for pipe bands grades 3, 4 and 5. With 17 bands in competition, the mass bands skirled and whirled onto the field about 300 strong.

We had Great Scot young-writers contest from kindergarten to high school and the First Annual Swamp MacRabbit Trail 5K Run. Named after the Swamp Rabbit Railroad that use to run from Greenville to the mountains.

This year we had the First Bonnie and Lassie Pageant, a Scottish Heritage Pageant for ages 3 to 16, believed to be the only one in the country and partners with the Official Miss South Carolina Pageant. These girls are strongly committed to a yearlong program of community service, athleticism and mentoring young folks in their hometowns. Many of them will qualify for the Duke of Edinburgh Award, a very big deal that will bring HRH Prince Edward to Greenville in early fall to present the awards to these girls.

My nephew Dale Granger and I were pleased to have many visitors to our tent, including Roger and Donna Blair, who moved to Greenville about a month before the Games and said they were joining CBS. Wyomia Blair

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## The 2009 Blairsville Games in Georgia

At the beautiful Meeks Park on June 12-14, we had a shady spot not far from the creek. There were 38 clans and societies with Clan Lamont the Honored Clan. Roy S. Howe was the Master of Ceremonies and the Special Guest was Mark J. Harden, the 16<sup>th</sup> Baron of Cowdenknowes.

Nephew Dale Granger and Frank Blair were in the Parade of Tartans at the opening ceremonies. At the entertainment tent, the music performers were Tres De Solei, Colin Grant-Adams and the Ric Blair Band from Nashville, Tennessee. We enjoyed a bagpipe workshop, Scottish fiddle workshop plus several Gordon Setter and Border Collie demonstrations. On Saturday night, we saw a Celtic concert by the Ric Blair Band. We talked to Ric between gigs on stage and found out that he is a descendant of Colbert Blair as we are, who was born in Penn. in 1730.



Dot Blair Linderman, Wyomia, Jacque Baker and Dale Granger

On Sunday morning we had a worship service and Krikin'o' the Tartans conducted in English and Old Braid Scots by the Games Chaplain Travis K. (Blair) Adams, wearing the Blair tartan. Dale carried the Blair tartan flag.

Dale and I hosted the tent with more material on the Clan this year, plus material on our branch of the family. Our Blair ancestor came from Franklin County and after it split in 1818 to form Habersham County, where my father was born in 1883. We had lots of interest in our family and especially in Col. James (Jimmy) Blair, who Blairsville is named after and who surveyed the Blair Line boundary.

More Blairs came by this year than ever, including Jacque Baker, Debi McDonald and Yvonne Little from West Fork, AR. They are descendants of Mahala Blair, Col. James Blair's daughter, who married Larkin Holt. It was good to meet some more cousins, including CBS member Jim Lovelace, Alpharetta GA, Felix Gravino, Mt. Rest, SC, Henrietta and Kevin Blair, Westminster SC, Rene Myers, Jan Rogers, Frank Blair, Rome, GA (a member who spent the day with us), Cynthia Jones (Clan Cochrane), Chip Bryan and many who did not sign in. Wyomia Blair – Below Dale Granger & Frank Blair marching.



## Northern California Commissioner Report William C. Blair

I hope many of you will visit our CBS tent while enjoying the huge Scottish Gathering, on Labor Day weekend, September 5-6 at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, in Pleasanton. There will be pipe bands, dancing, athletics and birds of prey. Please come march with us in the clan parade at noon. The closing ceremonies are very impressive with massed bands featuring 1st Battalion, The Scot Guards, and the U.S. Marine Corps Band.

The Clan Cameron dinner that we have attended for several years is not scheduled this year. However, anyone wishing to join us for dinner Saturday evening please contact me for details.

I hosted our CBS tent at the Highland Games held at the beautiful Dunsmuir House and Gardens, in Oakland July 11-12. I greatly enjoyed visiting friends from other Clans, but disappointed that none of our members attended. Bill Blair – [bbblair@comcast.net](mailto:bbblair@comcast.net)

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## Great AGM at Highlands Ranch, Colorado

Our AGM in Colorado was extremely successful and well planned by our Colorado Commissioners Jim Blair and Leslie Gallagher. Attending were Idaho Commissioner Ann I. Fredline from Boise Idaho; Arizona and New Mexico Commissioner Helen Blair of Mesa AZ; Southern California Commissioner Francis Holt, Hacienda Heights, CA; and Bill Blair, Northern California Commissioner and Past CBS president from Menlo Park, CA.

Officers included Society Secretary Frances Holt, President Helen Blair of Mesa AZ, who wears many CBS hats in addition to her Commissioner role, including Society Treasurer, and Clan Store Manager and Helen's husband Bob Blair, our Membership Chairman, who assists Helen with her various CBS responsibilities.

Also present were Allan Blair from Texas; Margaret Bush, cousin of Francis Holt; and Ann Fredline's daughter.

We had a great time visiting and attending the activities of the Festival. Friday afternoon we had a detailed Board Meeting chaired by Helen who was highly organized with detailed written committee reports followed by a delicious barbeque at Jim and Adoree's lovely home.

On Saturday, we had our AGM in the Clan tent, followed by our Clan banquet at the lively Celtic Tavern in Littleton, where we had a piper and Jim's son Torin impressively performed the *Address to the Haggis*. Congratulations to the Colorado Clan for arranging this superb AGM. Bill Blair



### **Special Honors for Robin Blair**

Our Honorary Member Robin Orr Blair of Edinburgh, who was Scotland's Lord Lyon King of Arms from 2001 to 2007, was honored by The Queen in her birthday honors list by raising Robin to CVO, Commander in the Royal Victorian Order from LVO, Lieutenant in the Royal Victorian Order. He has also been appointed to the Lyon Court as an Officer of Arms with the title of Angus Herald Extraordinary. We extend our congratulations to Robin Blair WS CVO for these well-deserved honors.

Prior to being named Lord Lyon, Robin held the post of Purse Bearer to the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and he continues to be a member of the Royal Company of Archers. Bill Blair of Menlo Park

### **Arizona Commissioner Helen Blair**

Andrew Blair Cupp and his friends ran the Clan Blair Tent at the 12th Annual Northern Arizona Highland Festival July 18-19. Andrew reported great weather and a great time with visits from Stacey Blair and Allan Blair of Flagstaff and Susan Parder from Cornville.

September 19 is the First Annual Celtic Harvest Festival in Sedona. The daylong festival will be at the Hilton/Tequa with a ceilidh at the Hilton's Tequa Ballroom starting at 7 pm. We will not be attending, but info is at [www.celticharvestfestival.com](http://www.celticharvestfestival.com)

November 6-8 will be the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Tucson Celtic Festival and Scottish Highland Games at the Rillito Park Raceway. They have a Torchlight Ceremony and a Ceilidh scheduled. We always look forward to going, visit [www.tucsoncelticfestival.org](http://www.tucsoncelticfestival.org).

### **Clan Blair Store**

For those who missed going to the AGM, the store gave FANTASTIC AGM price reductions that many took advantage of and they will still be able to get those great prices until October 31, 2009. Sorry only AGM attendees.

For the many that were not able to attend the AGM, you haven't been forgotten. Members always get a good deal at our Clan Blair Society store. Non-members have to pay retail prices. Example: Clan Blair Crested Cap Badge is \$15 for members \$25 for non-members, Clan Blair Crested Kilt Pin is \$15 for members \$25 for non-members, Clan Blair Crested Necklace is \$15 for members \$25 for non-members.

Clan Blair Crested key fob is \$15 for members \$25 for non-members. Clan Blair Crested Belt Buckle is \$40 for members \$60 for non-members. Our Ancient Blair Tartan in cotton twill is \$15 a yard for members \$28 a yd for non-members. Stationary with either a Scotty dog, Dancer, Piper, Heather, Thistle, Clan Blair Society with CBS tartan draped around the picture is \$8 members, \$15 non-members.

We use the flat rate boxes / envelopes for postage to keep costs down. Contact Helen Blair at [az\\_blair@cox.net](mailto:az_blair@cox.net) or call 480-807-4024 for any items you want.

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### **President's Report – Helen Blair**

Congratulations to Isabelle Blair, daughter of New York Commissioner Sampson and Marilou Blair. She graduated from high school in May and is on her way to college.

Positive thinking. Instead of paying his dues yearly, 87-year-old E. Bill Blair of Pasadena, California has paid his membership through 2010.

Bob and I were fortunate to attend our AGM near Denver Colorado and had a wonderful time. The hotel was first rate and Jim and Adoree Blair invited everyone for a barbeque at their home on Jackass Hill Friday night. Beautiful home, beautiful location, wonderful meal and good company.

The guys partook in a few nips of Blair Athol Scotch. It was hard to leave that night because it was so nice outside. You have to understand, in Mesa, Arizona you cannot be outside anytime in the summer months without sweating like crazy.

Dr. Bill Blair of California had made the unfortunate choice of riding with us, I tend to take unexpected scenic trips and did a doozy that night heading back to our hotel but we made it back. We enjoyed his company.

Co-commissioner Leslie Blair Gallagher had the Clan Blair tents beautifully decorated. Saturday's Games were a hit. Big turn out for the parade. Banquet Saturday night at the Celtic Tavern. Best Haggis ever along with a fine meal of our choosing. Sunday's Games were slower paced, not as many came by, but those who did were very welcome.

## Our Board Meeting at the AGM covered a lot of ground

**The Treasury** is comfortable; we have really cut our expenses by emailing our newsletter. We still need our Scotland trip account information.

**The Store** is doing well. I put together a catalog for our Commissioners' tents and our website. Our Webmaster Shawn Blair is looking into PayPal for our store sales; big problem is the price to members vs. non-members.

**Membership** is falling, a steady decline and 39 non-renewals this year. We discussed possible ways to increase membership and our younger population.

**High Commissioner:** No report received, but we have around 21 Games covered in about 10 states. Many of our Commissioners are not active due to various circumstances. We need more states represented and helpers for many of our present Commissioners.

**Webmaster Report:** We get about 1000 visits to our website a month. We have a Discussion Forum and a Photo Gallery where Clan Activities or local Scottish activities are posted. Shawn will change the password to the *Members Only* site on a yearly basis. He would like new software and he sent a proposal to the board. He will also be working on expanding our PayPal abilities.

**Blairlin:** Our Webmaster has it on hold at this time due to his move.

**Librarian:** Jennifer Blair has been working hard to verify what books we have in the Odom Library. Big difference from what we have listed. Many books have been lost over the years, so discussed ways to check out books with better accounting than relying on The Odom Library.

**Newsletter:** Allen Rountree would like to hear from the general membership what they want in the newsletter. The newsletter is the glue that holds the Clan together.

**DNA Fund:** Jim Blair is working on a fund to help defray the costs of DNA testing; he has written guidelines of who can qualify and the selection process. A real need is to get someone to volunteer as the CBS Genealogist who would also serve as the Blairlin Administrator.

**AGM Workbook:** Report not done.

**Tax ID:** the certificate we have does not qualify for postage rate reduction. Jim Blair suggested that we send for a replacement certificate from the IRS.

**Job Descriptions:** I will work with Board members to get updated job descriptions, as many jobs are different because of the use of computers. Past President Shawn Blair started this project and it was last updated in 1998.

**Blair Society for Genealogy Research:** I take responsibility for not following up on working with BSGR due to my health, but will start again.

**2010 Scotland Trip:** Frances Holt made nice flyers that she will send to all the Commissioners to post in their tents. We will need at least 20 people to sign up for the trip to be a go.

**Elections 2010:** The Nominating Committee (Jim Blair (CO), John Blair (VA) and Pat Risdon (MI) will need to start looking for volunteers for some positions, especially for president, treasurer and membership chair. The job descriptions will help.

**2010 AGM:** We need a venue for 2010. Ontario, Canada was suggested, but it has problems with airport, passports and no members on site. I will call our Commissioners; we need to find a location east of the Mississippi.

**2011 AGM:** Ann Fredline said she would be happy to host the 2011 in Boise, Idaho.

We will follow-up with the CBS Board every two months on these projects. For a little volunteer group, we cover a lot of territory. We need volunteers to survive and the more volunteers the less workload per person. Please consider helping with a little of your time; contact any Board member. Aye, Helen L. Blair

## Membership Updates – Bob Blair, Arizona

**Congratulations!** #913 Barbara & William Kirker celebrated their 49<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary June 12, 2009.

**New Address** for #255 Phillip G & Martha Blair, 7540 E. Cocopah Drive, Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – philgblair@yahoo.com 928-776-1240

**New Member** for June #1031 Donna & Cheston Hammonds, 8005 Cavewood Court, Louisville, KY40291 – dahannonds@bellsouth.net 502-905-0515. Donna lists her occupation as “Grandmother”

**Welcome Back Member** #856 Travis Turner & Armand E. Breard 4110 Claire Lane, Monroe, LA 71201 – aebreard@bellsouth.net 318-322-5979



## Long Island NY Commissioner Lynne Dolan

The Clan MacDuff of Long Island Scottish Games is on Saturday, August 22, 2009 at Westbury Gardens. This is their 119<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Games and a great gatherin'.

I found an amazing video online that every Scot will enjoy. Shepherders in Scotland have entered the high-tech age by encasing their sheep in beautiful LED lights and night filming the intricate patterns created when the sheepdogs herd the sheep. You can see an ancient Scottish profession in a new light at (photo taken from video) <http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid1137883380?bctid=17075685001>



### Descendant of a Blair Saddle Maker

The information in your last newsletter regarding the photograph of a shop in Scotland with the sign “H. BLAIR Saddler and Harness Maker” caught my attention. I do not know about the photograph, but you may be interested in knowing that my father Neal L. Blair was a talented saddle maker in Wyoming. My brother is also a saddle maker. Sadly, my father passed away in 2004 and the art of making a saddle by hand is dying because people prefer the cheaper, manufactured saddles that can be found in stores nowadays. The beauty of a hand-tooled saddle is remarkable. Nancy Blair

### Great Scott! I Think I've Found it.

The expression “Great Scott” is of uncertain origin, but is believed to date back to the American Civil War, and may refer to U.S. Army General Winfield Scott. The general, known to his troops as “Old Fuss and Feathers” and the great Scott, weighed almost 300 pounds.

In a May 1861 edition of the New York Times: “These gatherings of loyal freemen, under the command of the great SCOTT.” In an 1871 issue of Galaxy magazine: “Great Scott! He gasped in his stupefaction, using the

name of the then commander-in-chief for an oath, as officers sometimes did in those days.”

The exclamation can also be found in C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*, such as by Digory Kirke in the book *The Magician's Nephew*, and by Peter in the book *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

The Dr. Watson character habitually used the expression in the Rathbone-Bruce Sherlock Holmes films made between 1939 and 1946. British movie *Blithe Spirit* starring Rex Harrison and Margaret Rutherford in 1945 gives another example, “Great Scott, I think I've got it!”

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### The Blair DNA Project, Shawn Blair

John A. Blair of New Hampshire administers the Blair DNA project. John volunteered to take on the administration of this project, including a detailed web site, several years ago. The DNA research lab, Family DNA, processes the results of DNA swab kits sent in by people. See [www.blairdna.com](http://www.blairdna.com).

As a Blair descendant and genealogical researcher, I submitted my DNA swab early in the project. I found some amazing results that added to the mystery of my ancestry. It also provided DNA evidence of connections I never would have imagined. At this stage, we cannot use this as definitive proof of ancestry, but it does help to discover our true roots.

For my own research, the DNA results have opened as many questions as it has answered, but has certainly made it more exciting. I recommend anybody that is doing research to either submit your own, if you are a Blair male descendant, or seek a close Blair relative in your line to do so. Only one submission is necessary for close family ties. It would make no sense for my brother to submit his DNA as well, or perhaps even a first or second cousin. For a family researching together, the expense of the test can be shared.

Submit your DNA, or find a Blair descendant in your line that will do theirs for you. The more submitters we can get the better DNA map we can build for all Blairs.

For more information on joining the Blair DNA Project, or just DNA research, visit John's project site at [www.blairdna.com](http://www.blairdna.com).

In case some of my “extended” family are looking, a distant cousin of mine and I are looking for a Blair descendant from the Londonderry, New Hampshire Blairs that settled circa 1720. We would love to compare the results of one of these descendants with my own DNA and those of the Worcester Blairs.

**Blair Bruidhinn**, the CBS newsletter is published four times a year and mailed on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, May, August and November. Please send your submissions for publication two weeks before the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month to the editor,

**Allen Rountree at Alpha-7@att.net**

Here are my grandchildren Serena and Jack Rountree, 21 months old and three and a half.



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