



BLAIR BRUIDHINN



Blair of Blair

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

Blair of Balthayock

“Blair Talk” for Clan Blair Members

www.clanblair.org

Third Quarter, August, 2019

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE AUGUST, 2019



President’s Message

Fellow Scots

We are in the middle of celebrating our Scottish Heritage with attendance at festivals all over the country. The Blairs have much to be proud of including our family history which spreads over much of Scotland. I’m always impressed to look at a Scotland map and see the 6 territories with the Blair name and reflect that we have two Clans that form the Clan Blair Society. The Blairs of Blair from Ayrshire and the Blairs of Balthayock from Perthshire are the roots of Blairs all over the world and I hope you will do some digging to find connections to your forefathers.

And I hope you are taking advantage of Celtic festivals in your area this summer. Simply Google Scottish or Irish or Celtic festivals and you will find a plethora of activity in your state and community. It is a great time to be a Scot!



In this Blair Bruidhinn, you will find articles about Clan member activities and plans for the future. A highlight this summer was the Utah Scottish Festival & Highland Games in Salt Lake City where Commissioner Whit Young displayed his model of Stirling Castle and the diorama of the Battle of Bannockburn. Whit’s model was highlighted in the February 2019 Bruidhinn and it is currently on display in the middle of the Great Hall at the Utah State Fair. Congratulations to Whit and his Clan Blair team.

You will see in this newsletter the announcement of the winner of the William Campbell Blair Youth Award. Congratulations to Conor Blair Stephens of Charlotte, NC.

Please be aware of several upcoming activities for CBS including election of officers to serve the 2020-2023 term, and the Annual General Meeting scheduled for Saturday October 26, 2019 via webinar.

Thank you for enjoying the Blair
Bruidhinn. We look forward to your

thoughts and feedback.

It is a Great Day to be a Scot - Sláinte!

Jim Blair

president@clanblair.org

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**CONOR BLAIR STEPHENS 2019
RECIPIENT
the
William Campbell Blair Youth Award**

The 2019 recipient of the William Campbell Blair Youth Award is Conor Blair Stephens of Charlotte, NC. This is recognition of an outstanding youth member of the Society who is nominated by their family or friends for extraordinary contributions to Scottish heritage in the forms of music, dance, art, athletics, scholastics, theatre/performance or support of CBS activities. Conor is the recipient of recognition at the AGM, a personal news story in the fall Blair Bruidhinn and a \$500 award.

Connor excels in Scottish Youth athletics and is an outstanding scholar. He is the grandson of long-time CBS leader Charlie Diman. Congratulations, Conor!

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**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
(AGM)
October 26, 2019**

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for Saturday October 26 at 10 am MDT. The meeting will be held via webinar and all members are invited to attend. It will last about 90 minutes. This is the 8th AGM held digitally, and attendance grows each year. Members seem

to enjoy the comfort of their homes. Please plan to join. Webinar access details will be sent from the Webmaster closer to the date.

The AGM agenda will include:

Historical presentation of Blairs of Blair

Announcement of new Officers

Annual Business Meeting

Please plan to join us on Oct. 26 at 10 am MDT.

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ELECTIONS

In the fall 2019 the Society will select a new slate of officers. Nominations will be considered by a nominating committee chaired by Curtis Blair of Colorado Springs. Their recommendations will be presented to the CBS board for placement onto a ballot in late summer. The elected officers will be announced at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Positions to be filled are:

President

Vice-President

Treasurer

Secretary

Each officer is elected for a 3-year term.

Recommendations/nominations can be sent to Curtis at cublair145@gmail.com.

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CLAN STORE

Orders from the Clan Store have increased significantly since the introduction of the new www.clanblair.org website. A number of Blair House DVDs, shirts, note pads and pieces jewelry have been ordered and fulfilled using the site. The process seems to

be working quite well. Many thanks to Nick Shryack and Shawn Blair for the website Process. CBS members please go to <https://clanblair.net/cbsmembers/shoporder>. Questions can be forwarded to president@clanblair.org.

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UTAH REPORT **Whit Young, Commissioner**

It was a banner year for us here in Utah. For Salt Lake City we put up the largest number of tents (5) with places to eat, a theater where we showed our 20-minute film of the Scottish fight for independence, and of course our display of the castle. It may not have been a best seller downtown, but we had a great turnout here at the Festival. We had a lot of help from members setting up and taking down. particularly Tom, Dave, and Sarah Blair and Pat Gilmore and Doug and Steve Young.

Adoree, you and Jim made it a special treat for us here in Salt Lake. Jim's appearance at the opening program of the Festival was well received and well done. I particularly was impressed as he did so well in his talk.

We had many who stopped to look at the castle which gave me an opportunity to explain the roll of Stirling Castle in the struggle for Scottish independence; also the period following Bannockburn, the writing of the Declaration of Arbroath, and its influence on our own Declaration of Independence.

A month later it was on to Payson Games which were even better attended than Salt Lake. We were awarded the honor of "Clan of the Day" and were widely cheered when I went to accept the award.

Next week the Stirling Castle model will be set up at the Utah State Fair in a huge building which displays all kinds of arts and crafts. The castle will be right in the middle with a sign announcing Clan Blair sponsorship. The attendance there will be in the thousands. Pictures and stories will follow sometime in the future.

Thank you so much for your attendance here and the "spark" you brought with you.



Jim Blair, President, and Whit Young, Commissioner, Utah, at the Salt Lake City games in June, 2019

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Salt Lake City Scottish Festival and Games, June, 2019

(From the Editor): June 7-9, Jim and I took the opportunity to travel to Salt Lake City. We met many friendly people including Whit Young and other Blairs at the Blair tent, which Whit had set up beautifully. Besides his usual educational materials and maps, he had the unique Stirling Castle set up for people to view with its miniature display of the first day of the Battle of Bannockburn. There was a lot of interest in that castle and a lot of questions. Whit had all the answers! The Festival was held at the Salt Lake City fairgrounds, which was a nice venue with 'real' bathrooms, which was most impressive to me.

Jim was the Honored Chieftain and did a nice job of welcoming the clans, exclaiming, "It's a great day to be a Scot!" He sneaked into both welcomes "Everything is better in a kilt," which always gets some good feedback from the crowd! The retiring Cheiftan, as he does yearly, presented Jim with a stave he had carved by hand for the Honored Chieftain to take home.



Jim Blair declaring the games open

Whit had a separate space where he set up the film about the causes of the Scottish War of Independence, which was well attended. It was fascinating to watch Whit answer questions and educate the crowds who came to view the tent and film. He really knows how to spread the word.



Whit Young educating tent visitors

It was also nice to meet Whit's siblings as well as grandchildren. One of the handsome drummers who played on the field was Whit's grandson Adam, who has 3 small sons of his own. (See Wee Blair Corner)

After we returned from this enjoyable trip, Jim wrote the following thank you to Whit:

"Whit - We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you this weekend. The festival was excellent and everyone we met was enjoying a great time. Thank you for the invitation. Serving as Chieftain was a great honor and fun as well. I hope you had a good a time as we did. BTW - the trip home was uneventful and safe.

The visitors to the Blair tent all seemed engaged in quite interested in your stories and the diorama and castle. You deserve to be very proud of your research, construction and lively presentation of the history of the battles, locations, participants and the connection to US history.

Thank you again for the wonderful invitation and hospitality. Adoree and I had a great time and are proud to represent the Blairs and Whit Young.

Best and Sláinte!"



The very large tent



Tom Blair, Jim Blair, Whit Blair Young, Pat Gilmore, David Blair

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Opening Ceremony

Oregon Report #1

Bill Blair, Oregon Commissioner

Eugene Highland Games went well. Headline performers were “Men of Worth” (who, 30 years or so after forming that duo now refer to themselves as “Men of Girth”). You may have heard their song, “Clan Tent Cavaliers,” which they performed in their show by special request.

Although I met only one Blair, he was a find! He is already a CBS member. His surname is not Blair (his mother was a Blair). His ancestry traces to Ulster in the 18th Century.

The big deal, however, is that when the furnishings of Blair House were auctioned, he and his wife acquired several pieces, all of which they still have. He agreed to photograph all of the pieces and send the pics to me.

Meanwhile, I am putting the finishing touches on a video focused on finding, furnishing and staffing a clan tent. Should be done by the end of June. I just want to add some of the pics and info that I got from Maggie Blair.

Still working to follow up with store customers.
Slàinte!

William Blair, FSA Scot
High Commissioner
Clan Blair Society
(503) 449-0129

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HIGH COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Bill Blair, High Commissioner

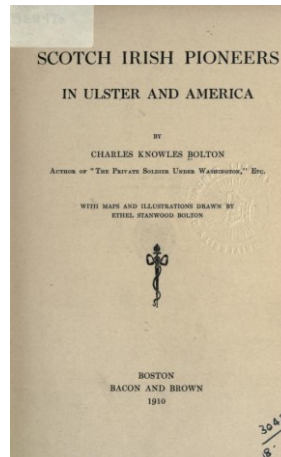
FWIW, Maggie Blair and I are putting the finishing touches on three PPT presentations for commissioners: "The Clan Commissioner 1.0" covers the basics of being a tent host, finding and provisioning a tent the easy way, and basic resources. "The Clan Commissioner 2.0" takes 1.0 to the next level, and 3.0 covers what to wear, not only while hosting a tent but also at semi-formal and formal events such as Burns Night Suppers, Tartan balls, etc.

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BLAIR LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Elena Mc Crary

One of the wonderful tools we have to research our ancestors is through a variety of books available to us. You are thinking, this seems obvious enough, but in today's digital age, who is working to save the, "written record" (aka books) or other archival documents that may be of use to us in our searches?



About a month ago I inquired if a title were available at the Ellen Payne Odom Genealogical library that houses Blair (and many other Scottish and Irish ancestor history) and yes indeed, it was there! One reason I borrow books is because I want to research them for their particular "value" to genealogy. The title I

borrowed was *Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America*. I wanted to understand the Blair connection as I was recalling stories Dr. [William Campbell] Blair (our mentor) had shared with us. While most solid reference books have a good index, what sets this book apart is the well-developed Appendices. So, I decided to see if I could find it online. And, there it was in whole for anyone to use free of charge. One need only sign-up (kind of like of virtual library card) through the Internet Archive: Digital Library <https://archive.org/>. This collection also has textbooks; videos; movies, etc. So, if you like searching for items that might otherwise cost you, this might be a place to start. Finally, it is a nonprofit, and if you care to donate you can. Using this source was of particular pride as it is San Francisco-based. However, I was truly hooked as I delved into their sobering statistics that books from the 1800's were in definite distress and why they looked to create a community that was interested in saving the information. Check it out for yourself! I have changed my email, so if you want information or have a question please send it to soteloelena421@gmail.com
See you in the stacks! Elena McCrary

Follow Up Report:

Addendum – after having written this piece I received from Ann Fredline a donation of five Gaelic language books that she would like placed into the Blair Collection in Georgia. I have confirmed the library is happy to take them, however, before I ship

them off, I wanted to give any of our members the opportunity to borrow them should they be studying. They are: *Gaelic Made Easy: a guide to Gaelic for beginners, part 1* (part 2 is in the Digital Library) by John N. Paterson; *Everyday Gaelic* by Morag Macneill; *The Modern Gaelic-English Dictionary* by Robert C. Owen; *The Gaelic-English Dictionary* by Colin Mark; *The Essential English-Gaelic Dictionary* compiled by Angus Watson.

ANOTHER FOLLOW UP TO THIS STORY:

After reading Elena’s article, this editor was excited to try the web site out, and went to see if that site might contain a book that the Denver Library keeps on its very protected top floor I had looked at the book years ago. (One can only go into that Denver Library book section without backpack, etc., so that rare books are not taken out of the building. When I went, I was terribly excited to find a photo of my great-great-grandfather in one of the books.) So, I found the book on the web site, and the name of the submitter was the person I’d just reported on in this paper. It was quite a coincidence, so I wrote Whit Young an email about it:

*“Hi, Whit - I was just writing the newsletter and found a great article from librarian Elena McCrary about an internet site that allows one to find old books - and went looking for *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah*, in which I found a photo of my great-great grandfather years ago (Thomas Winward). And the site says the book was uploaded to the internet site in 2011 by Whitney Young! I thought that an interesting coincidence!*

Let us know how the state fair goes - thanks!

Adoree Blair”

Whit’s return email said that he did not recall that venture but hailed our common Utah ancestors. Whit is entering the Stirling Castle and display in the Utah State Fair. We will have results in the next newsletter.



Model of Stirling Castle

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**OREGON REPORT #2
Bill Blair, Commissioner**

We’re a bit beyond the halfway point of the 2019 summer Scottish events season, and things are certainly percolating nicely.

We are still looking for state commissioners. I’m sure that many CBS members find the idea daunting, but it need not be! Maggie Blair from South Carolina (our newest state commissioner) and I have been working on a program for providing information and resources to new and existing commissioners – sharing ideas and experiences that should help new commissioners from stepping into the same piles of unpleasantness that we have. Look for it this fall.

Our last event was the Portland Highland Games at which a Blair signed our guestbook with this encouraging message: “Please reach out if there are opportunities for us to be of service.” Of course we did!

At the Eugene (Oregon) Highland Games we had a visit from Gene Bicksler, a CBS member who bought a few items from the Blair House furnishings

auction several years ago. There's a separate article in this issue of Blair Bruidhinn about that find. At the McMinnville (Oregon) Highland Games (only in its second year) we met Larry Blair and his son, Sean. Sorry, I was too busy for pics at the time. Larry is a retired USMC Sgt. Major (and looks like it!). He is also a cousin of Laurence Philip Kington Blair Oliphant, our Blair of Ardblair in Scotland. Sean is a first-year competitor in the heavy events. A month or so after the McMinnville Games Larry suffered a coronary and is currently recovering. Our prayers and best wishes for a speedy recovery!

You may have noticed the "FSA Scot." Designation after my name. This stands for "Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland." The Society has been going strong since 1740. Sir Walter Scott was its first Vice-Chair. Among my interests is the pre-history of Scotland. Perhaps I will share a presentation on that subject at a future CBS webinar. I did, however, stumble on a most interesting paper on one of the earliest inhabitants of pre-historic Scotland. Researchers have nicknamed her "Ava" since her remains were discovered in a burial cavern near the town of present-day Achavanich in the far northeast corner of Scotland. She will soon be added to our poster gallery for our clan tent. From DNA analysis and the latest digital technology, here is what she looked like:



For a 4,250 year-old teenager she looks pretty good! I'm now getting ready to go on the road for our last summer event of the

season – the Douglas County Highland Games and Celtic Festival at the Henry Estate Winery outside of Sutherlin, Oregon, August 24 and 25. Although somewhat remote from us Blairs in the Portland Metro Area, it is worth the trip. The DC Games are

host to the Oregon Championships in the heavy events, and to the Oregon championships in edged weapon competition.

I'll let you know how it all went in the next newsletter.

Until then, Slàinte mhath!

William Blair, FSA Scot., High Commissioner

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GENE BICKSLER'S BLAIR HOUSE ITEMS

Bill Blair, High Commissioner and Oregon Commissioner, reported above about recently meeting Gene Bicksler, whose mother was a Blair and who is a current member of Clan Blair. Many of you may recall that when Blair House was sold a few years ago, there was a catalog of Blair items that were auctioned. Clan Blair attempted to bid on some of the items but was not able to afford most of those items. Gene Bicksler, however, did bid and win some of the precious items from Blair House. Gene mailed photos and descriptions of the items to Bill Blair. It is with excitement that we share photos of the items with other Blairs. Thank you, Gene Bicksler, for being willing to share with us! The following photos are the items obtained by Gene:



Pair of Majolica Chickens, late 19th century
Modeled as a hen and cockerel, in polychrome
glazes



Woman Sewing Picture; Mezzotint engraved by H.R.
Cook



Old Man Smoking a Pipe; Mezzotint engraved by
H.R. Cook



Two Ceramic Hound Head Stirrup Cups, 19th
Century; One a Staffordshire treacle glazed model;
the other Continental porcelain



Two desk seals, one baluster form in orange agate with silver intaglio of a shield with motto in bloodstone; together with a silver and turned mahogany desk seal, with intaglio of "Blair" in a scroll; and a gold swivel seal, with intaglio in white with Blair armorists and 'Blair of Blair' in reverse (pictured below)



COLORADO REPORT - 3RD QUARTER

Leslie Blair-Gallagher, Commissioner

I attended the Scottsbluff Celtic Gathering in Gering, NE the weekend of 28 - 30 June 2019. This is a lovely 3-year-old event. I really would love to see the Clan Blair Society represented at this event.

I also attended the Elizabeth Celtic Festival the weekend of 20-21 July, 2019. This is a lovely festival east of Denver Metro in a beautiful park with lots of trees. It is very well attended by many other clans.

Colorado Scottish Festival and Highland Games were 2-4 August 2019. It is so nice to have this festival back in Denver Metro. It is a well-attended festival, with quite a few visitors of Blair descent. We had a great time and gained new members, Brian Blair, Isaac Blair and Al "Blair" Schwartz. Many Welcomes!



L to R: Front, Tiernan Blair Galligan, Cordylia Blair Shryack, Lochlann Shryack. Back, L to R: Dyani Blair Galligan, Leslie Blair Gallagher, Linda Kalyris, Erynn Blair Shryack, Jim Blair, Saoirse Blair Galligan, Nick Shryack

Next festival up for the Blairs will be Long's Peak Scottish Irish Festival in Estes Park 5-8 September 2019. We will have a clan presence at these games.

As well, our plans are getting started for our Annual Burns Supper in January 2020.

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Picture of Duke of Wellington crossing the Pyrenees, 1813



An old map owned by Blairs at Blair House, from the catalog of items for sale

SAMUEL, 'THE RENEGADE' BLAIR
Gene Bicksler's 6-X Great-Grandfather
Submitted by Gene Bicksler

Samuel Blair was born in Ballyvallyough (near Raloo) County Antrim, North Ireland in 1738. His neickname, 'The Renegade,' was given to him years after his death by Blair family historians. It was used as a means of distinguishing him from the many other Sam Blairs who were in America in the 1700's. The name was chosen because of his daring escape from the hangman's noose in norther Ireland. Following is the poem, written by Sam while sailing to America, and the story behind his escape that was published in the November 1927 issue of the 'Blair Magazine.'

Farewell to Erin by Samuel Blair, a "Hearts of Steel Man"

FAREWELL TO ERIN
by Samuel Blair, "A Hearts of Steel Man"

<p>"While I live I'll never forget The sorrow of that day When, bound unto a foreign land, Our good ship sailed away.</p>	<p>They tell me I'm for Freedom's Land, Where all my Masters be; But were I in my winding sheet, There's none to succor me.</p>
<p>So I left my friends in Belfast town, My love on Carrick shore; And I gave to our dear Old Ireland My blessings o'er and o'er</p>	<p>For I must eat the stranger's bread And bear the stranger's scorn, That haunts me with a deal o'care Sweet Isle, where I was born!</p>
<p>Right well I knew when I set sail What my hard fate would be; When gazing on my native hills They seemed to fly from me.</p>	<p>And where in now the tender heart I once could call my own? Who gave to me a long farewell The day I left my home!</p>
<p>I watched them as they wore away, Until my eyes grew sore; Well knowing I was doomed to tread On Shamrock soil no more.</p>	<p>Not all the gold that I could earn Beyond yon Western Main, The pleasures of my own dear girl Could bring to me again!"</p>



These lines were written by Samuel Blair, of Ballyvallyough, a leader in the Hearts O'Steel Rebellion, in Ireland, 1770. He was captured and condemned to death, but escaped through the cleverness of his twin sister, Mary. The Hearts O'Steel Rebellion was an uprising of the Irish tenantry to protest against the unjust taxation

imposed upon them in the time of George III, and its spirit was largely the inspiration of the American Revolution, a few years later. These Irish patriots were unsuccessful/ many were put to death, and some escaped to the New World. Many of them also service, Scotch-Irish Patriots, in the land of their adoption.

The story of the escape of Samuel Blair is one of the most charming of all those we have found. Samuel and Mary, again, were twins. Mary had just borne her first child when the news was brought to her of the capture and condemnation of her brother. She rose from her bed, dressed and mounted her horse, riding for her farewell visit with her best-loved brother. She was permitted but a short stay with him, but when she left the prison she was weeping so heart-brokenly that it was with difficulty she could mount her horse and ride away.

The execution was set for two or three days later. When the victim was led onto the scaffold, and before the noose could be adjusted, he stepped forward and threw open his coat, and says the fascinating record, 'there were fair white breasts dripping with suck.' One soldier, whose quick perception must always thrill us, cried instantly aloud; "We've been fooled! We've been fooled! It's a woman!"

The brief visit of farewell had, of course, been spent in the exchange of clothing, and Samuel had ridden away – with full speed. When he was out of sight of the prison, he took passage on a ship bound for the New Word. Mary, runs the tale, was taken before he King, and there she told her story. The monarch 'bowed his head and the tears ran heavy over his cheeks as he bade her go her way, back to her babe. And, said he as he watched her going, "Would to God that someone loved me so!"

Samuel, of necessity, left without farewells – other than to Mary. No chance was there even for a farewell to the sweetheart who, we feel, should have joined him later. He arrived in Philadelphia; later

settled in Central Pennsylvania on the shores of the Susquehanna. About 1796 he moved to Crawford County, Pennsylvania (in the northwestern part of the state), where he died in 1820. He married a young widow, Mrs. Ann Young, and left a number of children. His grave is in Mt. Blair cemetery, near Meadville, Pennsylvania. His nephew, Patrick Blair, who came over in 1835, is buried near him.

Sam's thirst for adventure might have been quenched after the above experience but either out of natural taste for it or out of necessity his adventures continued in the New World. We believe he landed in Philadelphia in the years just prior to the start of the American Revolution. He was probably in the company of other banished rebels all with a deep grudge against the British. According to the Crawford County Veterans Office and a Revolutionary War marker on his grave he served as a Captain in Pennsylvania's 1st Regiment, Continental Line from November 1775 to November 1776, but no confirming records have ever been located to substantiate this. Knowing his love of a good fight, however, it would be hard to imagine he didn't take the opportunity to do in a few British Soldiers.

After his skirmishes with the British, Sam seems to have disappeared into the frontier of Pennsylvania for a few years. Records were few in the backwoods, but it is known that he settled somewhere on the banks of the Susquehanna River, which was at the edge of settled territory. The Scotch-Irish often led the way into the frontier as they were more accustomed to the hardships it brought. There were hearty souls on the order of Davy Crockett who could "leap into the Ohio ride upon a streak of lightning, and slip without a scratch down a honey locust; could whip his weight in wild cats, and if any gentleman please. For a ten-dollar bill, he may throw in a panther, hug a bear too close for comfort, and eat any man opposed to Jackson!"

The Scots-Irish women were just as hearty as described here by historian H.C. McCook: "Stalwart

of frame no doubt they were, with muscles hardened under the strain of toil; hate and hearty, vigorous and strong, able to wield the axe against the trunk of a forest monarch or the head of an intruding animal. They could wield scutching knife or hackling comb upon flaxen stocks of fivers, as well as the rod of rebuke upon the back of a refractory child. They could work the treadle of a little spinning wheel, or swing the circumference of the great one. They could brew and bake, make and mend, sweep and scrub, rock the cradle and rule the household."

Sam married Mrs. Ann Young sometime before 1777 as that was the year their first child, Margaret, was born. Little is known about Ann Young, not even her maiden name. It is known that she was a widow with a daughter by marriage and this married a man Thomas Gilmore.



her first daughter later known as

Sam and his nearly moved on in search frontier in 1794. to land on French northwestern

grown children of yet another They took title Creek in Pennsylvania,

later to become Woodcock Township, Crawford County. This land had just recently been opened to settlers and Sam and his family were among the first of this daring breed of trailblazers to enter the land in that region. There is evidence that other Scotch-Irish friends, family and neighbors came about the same time or soon thereafter.

Sam carved out a home in this new wilderness and lived out the remainder of his days. He and Ann are buried in Mt. Blair cemetery near Woodcock, Pennsylvania. This was originally a family cemetery on Sam's farm which later became a public burial ground. Most of those buried there are members of Sam's family or close friends and neighbors. The cemetery sits aside a steep hill with Sam and Ann resting at its highest point.



Pictured on the left is the gravestone of Samuel Blair and on the right his wife, Ann. Although difficult to read in this photograph, they are actually in remarkable condition today, especially Ann's. Part of the cemetery is pictured in the middle. Sam and Ann rest at the top of this hill with a remarkable view of the valley below. Both of these stones are large slabs that rest flat on the ground. Their stones read:

*In memory of Samuel Blair
A native of Ireland
aged 82 years*

*He died Aug. 7th A.D. 1820
"Cease all from sorrowing and tears
Here I must lie till Christ appears
Then burst the tomb in sweet surprise
And in my Savior's image rise."*

** Veteran of the Revolutionary War Marker at upper
right of stone*

*In memory of Ann Blair
Consort of Samuel Blair
She departed this life April 16th A. D. 1823
Aged 73 years*

*"Her soul with sacred ardour fir'd
The glorius prize pursued
To meet with joy the high command
She bade this earth adieu."*

NEW WORLD RECORD!!!

Submitted by **Charlie Blair Oliphant**

[Donna Moore](#) from North Yorkshire, England, has become "Queen of Stones" having loaded seven of The Ardblair Stones in a new World Record time of 42.44 seconds at Donald Dinnie Day on Sunday 4th August 2019. The seventh stone weighs 118kg/260lbs and the barrels are a height of 132cm/52inches. Congratulations Donna!

Donna is a British Strongwoman and winner of the 2016 & 2017 World's Strongest Woman competition.

The former World Record Holder for The Ardblair Stones is [Leigh Holland-Keen Strongwoman](#) who had previously loaded five of The Ardblair Stones in a time of 13.11 seconds at the 2017 Alyth & District Agricultural Show.

The Ardblair Stones are sponsored by [Castle Water](#) - The UK's leading independent water retailer.



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**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
COMMISSIONERS REPORT
RUSS AND ELENA MCCRARY**

Our story begins as we travel the California highway on Friday from sunny San Ramon moving through the snow covered heights of Truckee and arriving in beautiful Reno, NV. This was our first trip attending the Northern Nevada Celtic Celebration on May 18, 2019, and what a trip it turned out to be. Do check out the link to feel like you attended <https://www.renoceltic.org/>

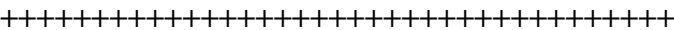
Arriving at Bartley Park, where the games were being held, we were amazed. It was as if someone had gone back in history and saved Main Street from the 1850s. I read that a group saved these original buildings complete with a marmot. We had a two tent spot where everyone could not only see us, but we could easily greet them. While we fully expected it to rain, and came prepared, we were treated to a lovely spring day! Elena joined the Nevada Scottish Society and for \$30 was given a membership list; a high quality t-shirt; and a year's membership.

When we arrived Saturday morning, dew had settled on the tent, but was soon gone. Within half an hour we had our first new member, A Morris Minor collector who was with the British cars group. Please welcome to Clan Blair (from lineage of Blairs of Balthayock), Bruce Blair. He is a Reno, NV, native. I learned that the community of Reno has a very large Scottish presence. Bruce walked in the clan parade (his first), which he could share with his older brother who lives in So Cal. Checkout this profile on Bruce and the Morris Minor—I learned a lot! <https://www.hemmings.com/blog/article/major-league-minor-1961-morris-minor-million/>

Upcoming statewide games to place on the calendar. Please note: *We will not be hosting a tent at Pleasanton, but look forward to Escalon!*



Donna Moore at the Ardblair Stones



“These older homes are tricky. You never know what kind of pipes you’ll find.”

Pleasanton Scottish Highland Gathering and Games,
August 31-Sept. 1, 2019
<http://www.thescottishgames.com/>

Fresno Scottish Gathering and Games, Saturday,
September 21, 2019
<http://www.fresnoscottishsociety.org/games.html>

Dixon Scottish Highland Games & Gathering,
Saturday, September 28, 2019
http://www.scotsindixon.org/scottish_games.html

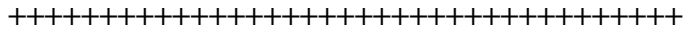
New Escalon Highland Games, October 12-13, 2019
<https://www.facebook.com/EscalonScots/>

Central Valley Highland Games & Celtic Festival
(Modesto), October 19, 2019
<http://www.standrewsmodesto.org/>

The Motherlode Highland Games, June 13 - June 14,
2020 - <http://www.themotherlodegames.com/>



Bruce Blair and Russ waiting to March into Reno
Celtic Games May 2019



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REPORT

Vicky Bartlett, Co-Commissioner



Bruce Blair with one of his 9 Morris Minor
vehicles—Sweet ride!



Clan Blair participated recently at the Scottish Fest in Costa Mesa in May. Attendance was quite good in spite of the prediction of rain. Our Clan Blair tent had a great location on the corner where we could watch the Athletic Events and other events at our intersection in the middle of Clan Row -- near the vendors and refreshment stands.



View of the games from the tent

During the second day, it rained for about an hour and by adding sides to our tent we kept dry. During both days we were entertained by Kilted Colin who played bagpipe AND juggled while riding a unicycle with its seat 10 feet off the ground. See below:



We welcomed three new members to Clan Blair: Christopher Blair of Temescal Valley, Jennifer Naccarato of Monterey Park, and Bart Bartholomew of Long Beach.



Our next games will be in Ventura: Seaside Highland Games in Ventura on October 12th & 13th. For more information, see www.seaside-games.com

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WEE BLAIR CORNER



(PLEASE SEND THE EDITOR PHOTOS OF YOUR WEE BLAIRS/DESCENDENTS OF BLAIRS!)



Big brothers of Malcolm: Graham and Ross Lawyer, Whit Young's great-grandsons



Malcolm Lawyer at the Payson, Utah games, 2019



McTavish is on his death bed. He calls over his friend Hamish and says, "I have a bottle of 25-year-old whisky under my pillow. When I'm dead would you do me a kindness and pour it over my grave?" "Of course I will," replies Hamish. "Though I might be passing it through my kidneys first."

A Scottish cop was asked how he'd break up a crowd. He answered, "I'd take up a collection!"

Couldn't Spit It Out

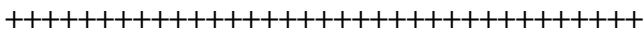


Jock walks into a bar one day and stammers, 'Does anyone here own that South Doberman Pinschers outside?' 'Yeah, I do,' a tattooed biker says, standing up. 'What about it?' 'Well, I think my little scotty terrier just killed him.' 'What are you talkin' about?' the biker says, disbelievingly. 'How could your little runt kill my Doberman?' 'Well,' mumbled Jock, 'it appears that he got stuck in your dog's throat.'



Whit

Whit Young in the Blair tent with his great-grandsons



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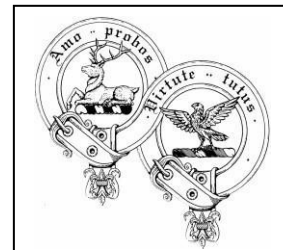
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