



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

Third Quarter: August/Sept. 2021

## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE:



Shawn Blair

This has been quite a summer, at least here in the U.S. From my neck of the woods: record setting rains, heat, and a real challenge getting out and about.

I hope you've been able to take advantage of summer and enjoy it. Many Scottish events have re-opened this year and it sounds like they've been successful. I hope you've had a chance to visit some. If not, please put that on your bucket list for later this year or next year.

Unfortunately, some events couldn't happen this year and some may not be back. Special events like these are challenging to organize and fund. Not only do they need a good location to accommodate all the different elements, such as the funds to front the costs before the ticket sales. The volunteers are a most critical part. A festival that I worked with years ago as clan

chair recently ended a multi-decade run. Some years were challenging because of weather and attendance, but in the end, they ran out of volunteers. The same people stepping up to run it were just getting older and couldn't do it all themselves.

I'm not saying this to mean this is the reason for the most recent event cancellations. Other factors have affected many this year, and last. But I'd like those that aren't familiar with these events or how they run to know how critical each of us in this community can be to the existence of the educational and sharing of our heritage.

So, when you have the opportunity or inclination, please offer some volunteer time to the community. Participate locally, get to know folks involved, and at the very least try to attend and support their efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank those Clan Blair members that are participants in Scottish organizations, communities, and this society as commissioners, board members, volunteers or active supporters. Without the people that are even a little passionate about our shared heritage, all this wouldn't be possible.

This newsletter is on its way out to members now, but if you have stories from events this

summer or your heritage experience, please send a note to Adoree for the next newsletter.

This is also the time of year we approach our Annual General Meeting. The board will soon meet to review the year and prepare reports on the status of the society to share with our membership. On Saturday, October 30th from 12pm to 1pm Eastern time we will hold the Clan Blair Society's Virtual Annual General Meeting for all members. Please reserve the time and plan to join us. We'll be emailing the details of how to join the call the week before.

I hope you all have a wonderful remaining summer and get a chance to celebrate your heritage with family, friends, and many others.

Aye,

Shawn Blair, President

Clan Blair Society

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**Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

**Saturday October 30, 2021**

The CBS Board will host the Society’s Annual General Meeting on Saturday October 30 at 10 am MDT (12 pm Eastern Time). The meeting will be conducted via Zoom and will include the annual business meeting results, reports from the High Commissioner on Clan activities, and special presentations on Scottish Heritage and activities. The AGM is scheduled for one hour in length. Please watch for Zoom instructions from the Webmaster.

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**Message From VP Jim Blair**

William Campbell Blair Youth Award

2021

We have not received any nominations for the WC Blair Youth Award this year. Members are reminded that the qualifications have been expanded to open recognition of an outstanding youth member of the Society for their extraordinary achievement in the forms of music, dance, art, athletics, scholastics, theatre/performance, or service to the community or CBS. The recipient receives recognition at the Annual General Meeting and a \$500 cash award.

Nominations will open again for 2022 in April/May.

William Campbell Blair was a founding member of CBS and served as President and a State Commissioner in California for many years. He was a pediatrician and his love for children is represented by this award in his honor. Please watch for an opportunity to nominate a young member of the CBS family.

Questions can be forwarded to Jim Blair at [vicepresident@clanblair.org](mailto:vicepresident@clanblair.org)

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# CONGRATULATIONS!



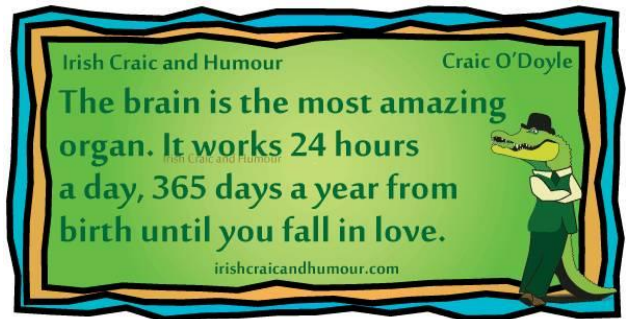
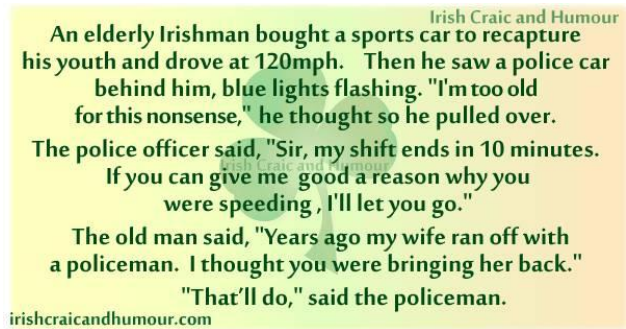
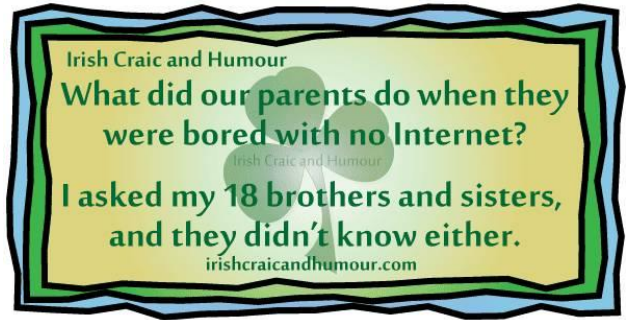
Jacob Martin Blair

This a a photo of my cousin Jacob Martin Blair at his recent graduation from Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine in New York City. A graduate of Brandeis University in neuroscience and biology, he served as a research technician at the Goode Biology Laboratory at the university. He was also a research coordinator at the Mt. Sinai Icahn School of Medicine and head teaching assistant at the Ashton Graybiel Orientation Laboratory. A ski and snowboard instructor, he is also a self-taught musician and plays and builds and a variety of musical instruments. His father Dr. Lea Blair was my uncle. He and his brother, Dr. Ted Blair, were dentists. Their father, my grandfather. Dr. Fred Blair was also a dentist. Jacob is now in residency in Florida with a specialty in ophthalmology. We are so proud of Jacob and happy to have a new Dr. Blair in the family.

Submitted by Barbara Pixley

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# A Little Celtic Humor



## COLORADO REPORT

Submitted by Editor

As with much of the rest of our country in 2020 and now in 2021, many of our group activities in Colorado were cancelled. However, we are planning to attend the upcoming Estes Park Highland Festival the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend of September. The Delta variant will require that we continue safety measures even outdoors. It will be good to be back at our booth with friends and family, and march in the parade. We hope other states are finding their events are re-occurring soon. Stay safe!

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# WOMEN IN MEDIEVAL SCOTLAND

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From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Queen Margaret of Denmark (1456–86), wife of James III

**Women in Medieval Scotland** includes all aspects of the lives and status of women

between the departure of the Romans from North Britain in the fifth century to the introduction of the Renaissance and Reformation in the early sixteenth century. Medieval Scotland was patriarchal society, but how exactly patriarchy worked in practice is difficult to discern. A large proportion of the women for whom biographical details survive were members of the royal houses of Scotland. Some of these became important figures. There was only one reigning Scottish Queen in this period, the uncrowned and short-lived Margaret, Maid of Norway (r. 1286–90).

Girls of noble families were taught in nunneries. By the end of the fifteenth century, Edinburgh also had schools for girls, sometimes described as "sewing schools". Private tuition in the families of lords and wealthy burghers may have extended to women, but for most women educational opportunities remained extremely limited. Despite this there is evidence of female Gaelic poets. By the Late Middle Ages, Lowland society was probably part of the north-west European marriage model, of life-cycle service, with many young people, both male and female, leaving home to become domestic and agricultural servants, followed by relatively late marriage. Women retained their original surname at marriage and, while many girls from the social elite married in their teens, by the end of the period most in the Lowlands only married after a period of life-cycle service, in their twenties. There was no divorce, but separation from bed and board was allowed in exceptional circumstances.

In the burghs there were probably high proportions of poor households headed by widows, who survived on casual earnings and the profits from selling foodstuffs or ale. Spinning was an expected part of the daily work

of Medieval townswomen of all social classes. In crafts, women could sometimes be apprentices, but they could not join guilds in their own right. Scotland was relatively poorly supplied with nunneries, but prioresses were figures with considerable authority. There may have been small numbers of anchorites. Mary, mother of Jesus, as the epitome of a wife and mother, was probably an important model for women. Some, usually wives, acting through relatives and husbands as benefactors or property owners, connected with local altars and cults of devotion. New cults of devotion connected with Jesus and Mary, mother of Jesus began to reach Scotland in the fifteenth century.

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### Status

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St Margaret of Scotland, the first king's wife to be recorded as "queen", from a later genealogy

Medieval Scotland was a patriarchal society, where authority was invested in men and in which women had a very limited legal status. Daughters were meant to be subservient to their fathers and wives to their husbands, with only widows able to own property and to represent themselves in law. How exactly patriarchy worked in practice is difficult to discern.

Literary sources, particularly romantic poems, indicate that women were seen as passive subjects for love and inspiration for the great deeds of knights. They take a more active role in the historical epics like John Barbour's *Bruce* (c. 1375) and Blind Harry's *Wallace* (late 1470s). They were also seen as weaker creatures, morally and physically. Considerable emphasis was placed on their chastity, with "whore" being the most common form of abuse, and their conduct was constrained by the informal sanctions of community gossip, should they step outside of the accepted roles of wife or mother.

### Royal women

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A large proportion of the women for whom biographical details survive for the Middle Ages, were members of the royal houses of Scotland, either as princesses or queen consorts. Some of these became important figures in the history of Scotland or gained a significant posthumous reputation. There was only one reigning Scottish Queen in this period, the uncrowned and short-lived Margaret, Maid of Norway (r. 1286–90). The first wife called "queen" in Scottish sources is the Anglo-Saxon and German princess Margaret, the wife of Malcolm III, which may have been a title and status negotiated by her relatives. She was a major political and religious figure within the kingdom, but her status was not automatically passed on to her successors, most of whom did not have the same prominence. Ermengarde de Beaumont, the wife of William I, acted as a mediator and judge in her husband's absence and is the first Scottish queen known to have had her own seal.

## Education

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Ruins of the Iona Nunnery

Girls of noble families were taught in nunneries such as Elcho, Aberdour and Haddington. By the end of the fifteenth century Edinburgh also had schools for girls, sometimes described as "sewing schools", whose name probably indicates one of their major functions, although reading may also have been taught in these schools. The students were probably taught by lay women or nuns. There was also the development of private tuition in the families of lords and wealthy burghers, which may have extended to women, but for most women educational opportunities remained extremely limited.<sup>[9]</sup> The major corpus of Medieval Scottish Gaelic poetry, *The Book of the Dean of Lismore* is notable for containing poetry by at least four women. These include Aithbhreac Nighean Coirceadail (f. 1460), who wrote a lament for her husband, the constable of Castle Sween.

## Marriage

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By the late Medieval era, Lowland society was probably part of the north-west European

marriage model, of life-cycle service and late marriage, usually in the mid-20s, delayed by the need to acquire the resources needed to be able to form a household. Unlike in England, where kinship was predominately cognatic (derived through both males and females), women retained their original surname at marriage and marriages were intended to create friendship between kin groups, rather than a new bond of kinship. Women could marry from the age of 12 (while for boys it was from 14) and, while many girls from the social elite married in their teens, by the end of the period most in the Lowlands only married after a period of life-cycle service, in their twenties. The extensive marriage bars for kinship meant that most noble marriages necessitated a papal dispensation, which could later be used as grounds for annulment if the marriage proved politically or personally inconvenient, although there was no divorce as such. Separation from bed and board was allowed in exceptional circumstances, usually adultery.



Margaret Tudor, praying before a vision of the Virgin and infant Christ, from Hours of James IV of Scotland, c. 1503

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**Patrick Blair, MD, FRS (ca.1670–1728)**

### **The first person to ever dissect an elephant!**

He was a Scottish surgeon, anatomist and botanist, and a Fellow of the Royal Society.

It is uncertain when he was born. The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography suggests he was born in Lethendy, near Perth in 1675. Others suggest that he was born in Dundee in 1666. In a letter dated 1719, Blair mentioned that he had been in practice for 28 years; this would suggest a birth-date of at least 48 years earlier, therefore prior to 1672.

He trained as a surgeon and spent some time in the Netherlands learning his trade, possibly with the British Army. He returned to Dundee shortly before 1702 and set up as a surgeon-apothecary. In 1702, he married Elizabeth Whyte, from which marriage four children were born – John, Henry, Elizabeth and Isabell.

In 1706 Blair dissected an elephant which had died on the road between Broughty Ferry and Dundee. The elephant (which was a female Indian one, around 26 years old ) was being toured around Scotland and England by a Dutch showman named Abraham Sever; it died on Saturday 27th April 1706 (this was the date in the Gregorian calendar, which was at that time 11 days behind the Julian calendar.) Over a period of weeks, Blair dissected the elephant, taking careful note of all the bones, muscles and organs, and then had the resultant skeleton mounted for public display. He then wrote a full description, under the title of *Osteographia Elephantina*, which he sent to Hans Sloane of

the Royal Society of London in April 1709; this was published in the Society's Journal (Philosophical Transactions) in two parts in 1710.

In 1707 he dissected and prepared the skeleton of a porter who had hanged himself in the stairway of St Andrews University and this was placed in the Anatomy lecture room from 1722. Blair received 100 merks for this work. In 1708, he founded a Natural History Society in Dundee, and several botanical collections were displayed in a 'Physic Garden' - later to expand to a 'Hall of Rarities'. This was situated somewhere near the Nethergate in Dundee.

In 1712 the family moved to the small town of Coupar Angus.

In 1715 Blair joined the rebellion led by the Earl of Mar and travelled with the Jacobite army when it marched into England. He was captured at the Battle of Preston in November 1715 and imprisoned at Newgate Prison in London. Despite claiming that he had been forced to join the rebel army, he was sentenced to death, but was given a last-minute reprieve in April 1716 after appeals by Hans Sloane and other members of the Royal Society. He stayed in London until April 1720 and continued to publish scientific works, including an account of pyloric stenosis in the *Philosophical Transactions* in 1717, probably the earliest account of that condition. He and his family settled in Boston, Lincolnshire, where he devoted himself to botanical research, publishing several books and delivering papers before the Royal Society. His Botanic Essays of 1720 were well received and arguably the book by which he is best known. In 1723, he published the first volume of a work which described all the plants in the British Isles –

his *Pharmaco-Botanologia*. He had reached the letter H when he died in February 1728.

*Patrick Blair Place* within the Ninewells Hospital site in west Dundee is named in his honour. You can find a video of a student at this hospital telling the elephant story about Dr. Blair if you go to You Tube and [The Dundee Elephant - Dundee Local History Stories - YouTube](#)

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## HIGH COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

### Bill Blair, Oregon

Alas, no update. Between pandemic life, CERT service, walking my neighbor's dog, and family obligations I've kind of dropped the Clan Blair thread. Now that the pandemic seems to be in the rear-view mirror, I'll be taking up that thread once again. I will, however, still be heavily involved with CERT as the GEOTeam Leader for south Beaverton, a trainer for the Beaverton Emergency Communications Group, and a member of the Beaverton CERT training unit.

By the way, while helping out with Beaverton CERT at a number of mass vaccination clinics at the Nike World HQ campus, we worked in partnership with Tigard CERT (as well as several other organizations). One day I looked up to see a gentleman in a Tigard CERT vest, a Panama hat, and a tartan kilt walking my way. Sadly I couldn't wear my kilt. Beaverton requires that our CERTs wear long pants. Sigh...

Slainte  
Bill Blair

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## A NEW WEE BLAIR!

### Colorado’s Newest Blair

#### Conor Joss Blair

Grandson of Jim and Adoree Blair, son of Torin and Elisa Blair. Little brother to brother Quinlinn, and to sisters Arabella, Atia and Miren Blair. Born August 19, 2021, in Littleton, Colorado.

He weighed 7 lbs, 10 oz.



Conor Joss Blair in Grandfather Jim Blair’s arms

SEND NEW BABY PHOTOS AND NEWS  
AND THEY WILL BE PUBLISHED!

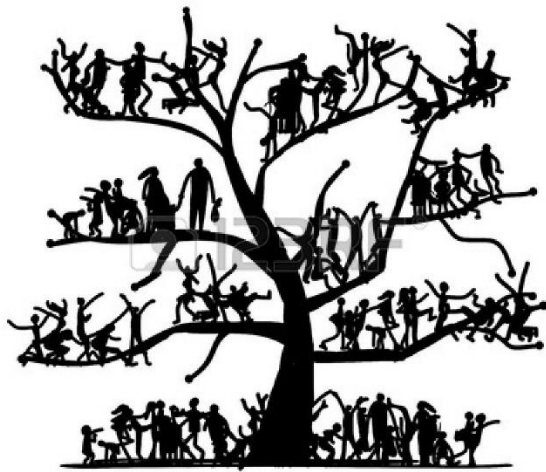
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## FROM WHERE DID YOU COME?

### Genealogy: It's Fascinating!

(By the Editor)

For those who have not tried Genealogy, you would be surprised how addictive it is! I had a relative tell me that she stayed up all night, but couldn't pull herself away from it. I find myself unable to leave this fascinating work also.

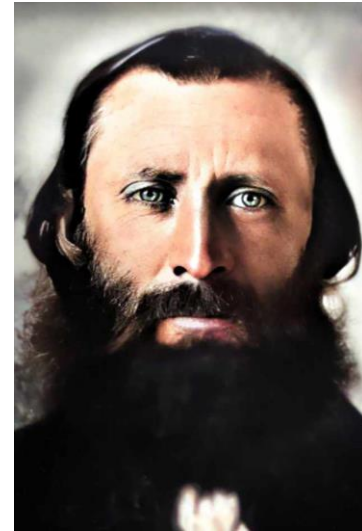


I had worked on Genealogy years ago and finally got back to it this year. It has been a wonderful, fulfilling journey! If you are a male in the Blair line, there are some other Blairs who wish you'd get tested so we can unravel old mysteries about who really IS descended from the first Baron of Blair in Scotland!

There are plenty of resources. Family Search, run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, is free and very, very helpful. I also use Ancestry.com, and a few of other services.

The simplicity of getting started is that you begin with your biological parents and grandparents, and then you find help from your

chosen websites to discover ancestors way back in time. As you work, wonderful stories and pictures can be found so you can see some of those faces who preceded you! Here is an intriguing ancestor's face I found through my father's line:



Andrew Jackson Stewart

Some resources:

[FamilySearch • Free Family Trees and Genealogy Archives](#)

[The Blair Society for Genealogical Research, \(BSGR\)](#) which lists some amazingly compiled research sites on its website.

[Home - Clan Blair Society](#), which has the following resources listed:

## CLAN BLAIR GENEALOGY

**Blair Genealogy Books** (Some available in Clan Store)

- The Blairs of Balthayock and Their Cadets
  - Published by members Jack Blair (Scotland), Anne & Preston

- Groome (New Jersey), and the Clan Blair Society
  - This resource digs deep into the genealogical roots of the Blairs of Balthayock originating in the Perthshire region.
- The Blair Surname
  - Published by Jack Blair (Australia)
  - Focused on the Blairs of Blair (Dalry, Ayrshire, Scotland), there is years of research done by the author on Scotland Blairs
- Blairlin & BlairTrees Lineage Matching Database III – 1993
  - Originally published in 1993, this is not a full proven genealogical database
  - This is a collection of lists created from male Blair lineages submitted by Clan Blair Society and Blair Society for Genealogical Research. It is useful for checking for cross connecting to other Blair lines and researchers.
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## BLAIR GENEALOGY PROJECTS

### [The BLAIR DNA Project](#)

Visit the Blair DNA project pages and discover the amazing secrets uncovered by Blair researchers. This is a must for participation if you are a direct descendant of a Blair line. Don't miss it if you are doing any Blair lineage research.

### [Blair Old Parish Records](#)

John A Blair has collected Old Parish Records into two searchable databases that is available for your search. One is Blair births and christenings and the other is Blair marriages.

## OTHER BLAIR GENEALOGY SITES

### [BLAIRs OF THE WORLD](#), by Shawn Blair

- BLAIRs of the WORLD is a personal genealogy web site on Blair Genealogy with particular

interest in Blairs of Maine, other Blair related sites, and New England genealogy research.

### [Pioneers & Princes](#), by Barbara Blair Pixley

- This is Barbara's personal genealogy web site on a variety of ancestors, including BLAIR.

### [Blair Society for Genealogical Research](#)

- BSGR is dedicated solely to the Blair Family genealogical research and publishing of Blair research. Many Clan Blair Society members are also members of BSGR.

### [John A. Blair's Genealogy Site](#)

- John has provided a great service to any Scotland Blair researcher by providing many Parish records of Blairs online.

## GENEALOGY RESEARCH RESOURCES

### [New England Genealogical Historical Society](#) – Boston, MA

- The website of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, the nation's oldest and largest genealogical society. One of the country's richest sources for family history, with particular emphasis on local family history.
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## [GET STARTED TO FIND YOUR OWN ROOTS!](#)

**LET ME KNOW IF YOU WANT TO SHARE YOUR GENEALOGY JOURNEY IN THIS NEWSLETTER!**

## Ladymuir, Scotland – Blair beginnings and Blair mysteries



Ladymuir Reservoir, Renfrewshire



Present-day Blair House, where the Blair of Blair ancestors lived from c 1105. Visitors to the area can stay in the carriage house and walk the grounds!

The Lands of Ladymuir comprised an estate of rough farmlands approximately 10 kilometers north west of Castle Sempill and Sempill Loch in Renfrewshire west of Glasgow and about 10 kilometers south of the town of Kilmacolm. "Ladymuir" still exists in Renfrewshire and can be found on a detailed map of Scotland. It was these lands which were said to have come into

possession of two brothers, James and William Blair of Dalry, Ayrshire, about **1620**.

(The farm of **Ladymuir** belonged, in 1546, to Gabriel Semple, son of Lord Semple, who bought it from the Barony of Cathcart. **Gabriel Semple's** sister, Grizel, married John **Blair of Blair**, who died in 1609. Ten years later the farm belonged to James **Blair of Ladymuir**, who was evidently a great grandson of the Lord.)

The earliest known members of the Blair family lived on Ladymuir Farm) and from there the family spread out through surrounding parishes (Kilmacolm, Erskine, Houston) and then throughout southern Scotland and overseas.

There are two major mysteries surrounding the Blairs of Ladymuir. One is the ancestry of James and William Blair (It is believed that they were the grandsons of John and Grisel Blair, the 15<sup>th</sup> generation of the Blair of Blair.) The other is the line of descent from James to Hugh Blair (b circa 1660) who married Margaret Rodger.



A present-day home on the farmland of Ladymuir, for sale for 895.000 pounds.

## CLAN STORE

Extended Clothing Sale – 50% off!



In response to the November 2020 announcement a number of orders have been received for clothing – thank you!

The Clan Store still has a nice array of clothing items that we would like to sell. Adult sizes medium and small are abundant so we have

plenty of supply for kids and smaller adults. As reported in the last newsletter, we plan to

liquidate all shirts and find a different provider to fulfill clothing requests.

The following are examples of shirts available with a best estimate of sizes, which are mostly adult small/medium and children's sizes. The logos are out of date, but all reflect the Clan Blair Society heritage and Scottish history.

So, the 50% reduction in all prices continues – see the Store website at <https://clanblair.net/cbsmembers/shop>. Shipping fees do apply and you can stock-up for this next year's festivals.

- White Polo – Regular Member Price - \$18 – Sale \$9 plus shipping.

Size - Adult Medium

- White & Blue Short Sleeved T-shirt - Regular \$13 – Sale \$6.50 plus shipping

Size – Adult Small and Medium

Children's Size – Small, Medium, Large

Multiple items can be ordered at once. I'll do my best to accommodate in single shipment boxes/envelopes. If shipping costs exceed payment I will contact members directly to discuss.

CBS members please go to <https://clanblair.net/cbsmembers/shop> to shop and order. Questions can be forwarded to [vicepresident@clanblair.org](mailto:vicepresident@clanblair.org).



CLAN BLAIR EXECUTIVE BOARD AND CHAIRS OF STANDING COMMITTEES,  
8-9, 2021

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Nominating Committee:  
Curtis Blair, Chair - CO  
Helen Blair - AZ  
Charles Diman - NC  
[Nominations@clanblair.org](mailto:Nominations@clanblair.org)

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Address Service Requested

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