



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

Third Quarter – Aug.-September, 2024



CBS President Message 8.20.24

Fellow Scots – Happy Summer 2024. It seems that hot and dry weather has fallen on most of us across the states. Those who have been touch by wildfires have my sympathy. Colorado, California and Oregon have been seriously impacted this year with more than 2 million acres burned – sad. Our east coast members have been soaked by torrential rains and heat. Here’s wishing you some sort of wonderful summer and now fall!

Our amazing editor Adoree has produced another extraordinary Blair Bruidhinn. This newsletter includes historic articles, family history research, announcements about games and festivals, information about the clanblair.org website redesign, and a personal family story about my 8th great grandfather Brice Blair in the 1500s. Adoree and I joined our daughters Dyani and Erynn, and families, on an Irish adventure in late June touring southern Ireland and then the northern part. The story will amaze you. Please enjoy and let us know your thoughts for upcoming items of interest.

Most of all please send us your stories and pictures of activities, parades, festivals, games, and your

URGENT! – Russ McCrary. Who has served as CBS Membership Chair for the past 8 years, is retiring in October. The Society needs a volunteer to carry on Russ'es great work and step into the role. Shawn is developing a digital approach to managing membership, which should simplify the job considerably. Please consider this important role and contact me as soon as possible so that we can begin the transition with Russ.

tents sporting Clan Blair. We receive many questions and messages from fellow Scots via the Clan Blair Society Facebook page and all input is welcome. As the new clanblair.org website is designed we will offer users the opportunity to learn more about CBS and invite their membership to the Society.

Please enjoy this newsletter and share your ideas with me at president@clanblair.org or with adoree1@outlook.com.

It is a Great Day to be a Scot!

Slaint'e!Jim

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### WEBSITE REDESIGN AND UPDATE:

A small team of members is re-imagining the [clanblair.org](http://clanblair.org) website. We have engaged the experience of a corporate web-designer and members skilled in managing effective web-use and artistic presentation. This includes Maggie Blair from South Carolina, Nick Shryack from Colorado, Dyani Blair Galligan from Colorado and Jim Blair. The goal is to develop a commercial and user-friendly website that delivers exciting information,

easy application for membership, seamless access to CBS purchasing, delicious pictures, messages about tours and exciting adventures of our members, access to genealogy research, and more. We would like to hear from you about needs and good ideas for offering a fresh look at [clanblair.org](http://clanblair.org). Please send your ideas to [margareteblair@gmail.com](mailto:margareteblair@gmail.com).

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## LIBRARIAN REPORT –

### ELENA MCCRARY

(Book jacket used with grateful permission of the Owaka Museum – The Catlins, NZ.)

As genealogy research is in high gear, there are some changes regarding the Blair Collection at the Odom Genealogy Library.

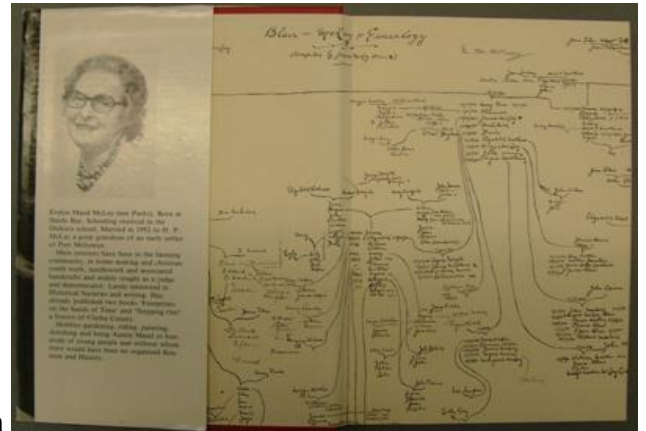
The new Library Director has asked that checks (to cover the cost of shipping books) should be made out to **MCCLS** (Moultrie Colquitt County Library System).

“The \$6.00 fee is for a *Clan Blair Member* to order one of the Clan Blair books that you have listed. If there is anything copied from a book, or other source it is \$0.25 per page plus postage. Irene must abide by copyright laws when making copies. If it is something I can scan and email *this service is free*. As in a few pages that are specifically requested. No copying of whole books. My time is limited but I am always happy to help a fellow researcher when possible.”

Contact Irene Godwin [igodwin@mccls.org](mailto:igodwin@mccls.org)

Ellen Payne Odom Genealogy Library  
 204 5<sup>th</sup> St. S.E.  
 PO Box 2828  
 Moultrie, Georgia, 31768  
 Phone: 229-985-6540

I recently borrowed the book *Scattered Feathers A McLay History* by Evelyn Maud McLay. If you are wondering why this is in our collection, it is because it is another example of a Blair connection through marriage. Not only did the author clearly explain the title in her stories, but she outlined the families. “Margaret married James Blair and stayed



in

Scotland (page 187).” However, Margaret’s story really begins on page 84 when she references *Blairquhosh, Strathblane (sic)* In looking at the area history I saw Blairquhan Castle was sold in 1798 to David Hunter Blair

<https://www.blairquhan.co.uk/the-history-t-19> which is another story mostly because of the most beautiful Jean Blair, Lady Hunter Blair (1746-1817).

I do not want to give more of the story away. The author compiled her family history in a most interesting manner. It is not available to read online unless you have a library card from New Zealand, or if you are a member of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Family History Society.

“*Gun toir an rannsachadh agad mòran toraidh*”.  
 May your search yield many results.

*Scattered Feathers.*; McLay, Evelyn; 1981; 2015.84, Owaka Museum, The Catlins, New Zealand.

<https://ehive.com/collections/3021/objects/1243767/>

[book-scattered-feathers](https://ehive.com/collections/3021/owaka-museum-book-scattered-feathers), accessed 7/23/24.  
[https://ehive.com/collections/3021/owaka-museum-](https://ehive.com/collections/3021/owaka-museum-and-catlins-information-centre-wahi-kahuika-the-meeting-place-a-rest-on-your-journey)

[and-catlins-information-centre-wahi-kahuika-the-meeting-place-a-rest-on-your-journey](https://ehive.com/collections/3021/owaka-museum-and-catlins-information-centre-wahi-kahuika-the-meeting-place-a-rest-on-your-journey)

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## FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

### Remembering Norma Jean Blair Gilmore

Elena McCrary & Greg Gilmore

One thing I can tell you about Norma is her love of communication. Our writing started when she sent her Blair dues in and wrote a note on this lovely mint green stationery. I have kept the letters she sent me, which now sit on my remembrance altar as a reminder of my distant friendship with Norma.

Glenn sent me these pictures from Norma's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. The family who could not be there were on Skype with her too.



### Cherished Memories of Grandma

by Greg Gilmore

Grandma Gilmore was a major part of my life from a very young age to adulthood. She provided me with things and opportunities my parents could not. I remember her buying me a chemistry set and a microscope to get me interested in science. She paid for my trumpet so I could participate in band, which I did from middle school to high school which helped shape my life. She helped fund my first semester in college which I could not afford.

Growing up, she always let us stay with her at her lake house in Clare, MI. She purchased a rowboat, sailboat, and canoe so the cousins and I could have fun at the lake. She would let us take the boats all over the lake. She made us her homemade macaroni and cheese, goulash, and Jello. She paid for my brother and one of my cousins to go to basketball camp and then art camp for me. All things, I would have never had access to.

Every night she would watch *The Lawrence Welk Show*. When she visited, she would tell us all about her travels down to the finest details. She had an amazing memory! For Christmas, she always made fruitcake, peanut brittle, and toffee and sent it to friends and family.

Grandma was kind, and caring, and made the world a better place. She made an impression on everyone



Norma Jean with son Glenn

she met, and she will be missed! We all loved her very much and I would not have turned out to be the person I am today without her love, guidance, and caring.



left to right, Glenn Gilmore, Russel Gilmore, Douglas Gilmore, Gregory (Greg) Gilmore, James (Jim) Gilmore, Eric Gilmore, and seated Katherine (Katie) McMurrin and Norma



I am glad Grandma made it to one hundred (100) years old and is still recognized in this group (CB Facebook). The Clan Blair Society was something she loved!

<https://www.dalyleachchapel.com/obituary/Norma-Gilmore>

If you are a new member and have not gone through the back issues of the Bruidhinn on The Member Site, I encourage you to take time to read the First Quarter – February 2021 issue.

<https://members.clanblair.net/newsletters/BlairBruidhinnFeb21.pdf>

Our Editor, Adoree Blair spent considerable time and energy documenting Norma's story. If you need a printed copy, drop me a line at [cbslibrary@clanblair.org](mailto:cbslibrary@clanblair.org) and I will mail you one. It is a grand story of a life fulfilled!

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## CALIFORNIA COMMISSIONER REPORT

Russ and Elena McCrary

You know that feeling of anticipation—part excitement, part panic and part exhaustion? Well, it was this and so much more as we finally got to host a couple of clan tents at the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual San Diego Highland Games June 2024.



<https://sdhighlandgames.org/>

If you are not familiar with CA, think Pleasanton, CA as the starting point and ending in North San Diego County (Vista, CA) About a 10-hour drive (when one factors in SoCal traffic) or 450 miles one way.

Because we left our home at midnight we got to the park as they were still marking Clan Row. It gave us a chance to stretch our legs and check out the facilities. Then we went back to our truck and took a nap. Then got to work setting up our two tents. Under 86-degree weather with a slight breeze. Marvelous!

Our tents were across from Clan Campbell, and near the athletic competition. We could not stake down our tent, so we tried new bags full of sand. There was a local sand company, so we got to support that business too. All the clans were on the main grounds but were spread out. I mention this because this is how Travis Blair found us early Saturday morning. He hails from Glendora, CA which is 1-1/2 hours North from the event. It seems he has been coming yearly waiting for Clan Blair to show-up! We had the best get to know you conversation. And he finally got to march with his Clan in the noon parade. Yes, he signed up and is a new member. He is reading about Culloden and Scottish History (people and events).



One thing about these games, you had to have stamina. Saturday dawned bright and beautiful and

then the boa constrictor-like heat and humidity rolled in. Sunday was a bit worse, plus we were tired.

For us it was a perfect weekend because we met another link in the chain. *Diann Blair Kohn* came with her family and she also became a new member. She too joined us in the parade where she waved to her family. Here they are left to right husband Russell Kohn, Diann, Son Jordan and Hilda daughter-in-law. Jordan, you need to join too! I am thinking how we all need to meet-up for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next June - in 2026!



If you have *never* been to these games, I encourage you to mark your calendar and come enjoy it for yourself. Except for Clan MacLeod & the Plant Badge tent everyone was new to us. It was shared that southern and northern halves of states were divided up and represented by different people. Yet, this is a wonderful opportunity for us to spread the wealth of Clan Blair and recruit individuals who could host a tent in the Southern CA area. And just when you think the experience cannot get any better

enter just the right couple who love all things Scottish. Welcome new member *Carolyn and Mario Weiner* from Corona, CA (North 1-1/2hr.) from the venue. This couple was headed to Scotland shortly after the games ended, and as Carolyn put it, “I can proudly wear my Clan Blair tee on the journey.”

As always everyone was welcome because we are The Blairs that Care! These games are spread over quite a bit of terrain. The main grounds are Heavy Athletics, Clans, and Vendors. There was a beer garden that was up the hill and fenced in because of the law. The Highland and Country competitions were in the auditorium. However, we did not suffer from visitors. Information directed people our way for the great maps (nice compliment). Everyone attending seemed to be having the best time. We were glad to be a part of it all.



Ruua, Diann, Travis and Elena trying to be in the shade before we parade before the crowds!

A final note: The Plant Badge booth had a beautiful display of plants along with their association to the various clans. The modern clan uses pewter mottos that are pinned to bonnets. As I was going through the book of plants associated with clans, I saw that Clan Blair was still listed under Clan Graham. I indicated that we had a letter to the effect that we are a Clan in our own right. I had to email the

information that has been settled. I just find it amusing that some information is still out of date.

### Upcoming California Scottish Games and Gatherings

Mark your calendars and attend one of these events.

Our year hosting Blair tents ends in October at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Seaside Highland Games in Ventura, CA

158<sup>th</sup> Highland Games and Gathering – Labor Day Weekend August 31-September 1, 2024, at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton, CA

<https://thescottishgames.com/>

Fresno Highland Games and Gathering – Saturday, September 21, 2024, 8:00 AM-5:00 PM. Kearney Park 6725 W. Kearney Ave., Fresno, CA 93706

<https://www.fresnoscottishsociety.com/>

TBD

Central Valley Highland Games & Celtic Festival – October 2023, Stanislaus County Fairgrounds 900 N Broadway, Turlock, CA 95380

Seaside Highland Games – October 12-13, 2024, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM on the Ventura County Fairgrounds!

<https://www.seasidehighlandgames.org/>

We are trying a sponsorship role this year to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Seaside Games. Several Clans will be convening there once again.

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## FROM WHERE DID BRICE BLAIR DESCEND?

### Submitted by the Editor

In the last Bruidhinn, I [the editor] explained that I was stonewalled in my exploration for the roots of Brice Blair who married Esther Peden in Old Cumnock, Ayrshire, Scotland, in 1624.



Old Church in Old Cumnock

So many other genealogists who have searched for Brice have mistaken him for the same Blair as the Bryce Blair, the son (and heir) of Sir John Blair and Grizel Semple. However, even though this is understandable, as they were both named similarly (Brice and Bryce) and born about the same time (1574 and 1600 and both died in 1639,) Sir Bryce was the heir to Blair under his father John Blair and Brice was not. I heard from various other genealogists about theories and followed up but remained stonewalled. After hearing from a fellow genealogist about a possibility, I researched and realized that our Brice was actually the grandson of Sir John Blair (1547-1608) and nephew of (not the same person as) Sir Bryce Blair of Blair (1574-1639)!. 1574-1621

John Blair and Grisel Semphill Blair had 3 daughters and six sons, including the youngest son John, who became a Knight and married Isabel Boyd. The couple became parents of 3 children, 2 daughters and one son, Brice. This is 'our' Brice, who married Esther Peden and escaped Scotland to Ireland in 1625.

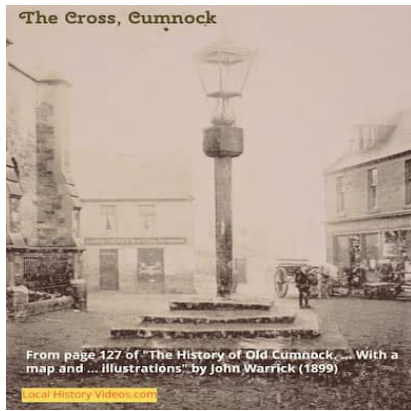
Sir Knight John Blair (left) and his daughter in law Lady Esther Semphill Hamilton Peden \*\*



Sir John Blair 1547-1609 and Lady Grisel Semphill Blair

Brice of Old Cumnock was born in Ayrshire, the home of the Blair House. His father was a knight named John (the younger son of Sir John Blair and Grizel Semple Blair). As an adult, he became Sir John Blair. Some sources relay that Brice's father John became Laird of Cumnock in 1590, and built a new castle in the town of Old Cumnock, but most sources I have checked do not validate this. [Jack Richard Blair, in his book, The Blair Surname, Its Ancient Scottish Origins and the Genealogies of Three Blair Families, mentions Dame Isobel Boyd under Sir Bryce Blair's paragraph, (p 59), (and cites Paterson (1847) as the expert), as wife of her husband Bryce's uncle John Blair, the younger. ] Geni.com verifies Brice and two sisters as the children of John Blair, 12 Lord of Cumnock, and Isabel Boyd. I have yet to verify that even

\*\*These are commonly-used images on the web for these individuals but are not verified.



Old  
Cumnock  
  
Town  
Square

farther, but will continue to research to verify my conclusion farther. Sir Knight John Blair married Isabel Boyd on 7 July, 1589, and had three children, one of whom was 'our' Brice grandfather of Jim Blair, current Clan Blair President!

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## GENEALOGY MISSION: IRELAND

By the Editor Adoree Blair

In the last week of June, Jim and I [the editor] travelled to Ireland to enjoy a family vacation. We landed in Dublin and then spent a week visiting highlights in a large circle around the South part of Ireland. Two daughters, one son-in-law and four grandchildren were wonderful to travel with! Ireland is so very green! It rained at least a bit every day we were there. When we closed the circle of travel and were back in Dublin, we dropped the children and grandchildren off to fly back to Denver, and took one of the rental cars to Northern Ireland. There, we would fulfill a genealogy mission from 400 years ago!

I wrote in the May Bruidhinn about the Brice Blair-Esther Peden Blair story of Jim's DNA, and subsequently, was able to uncover the ancestors of Brice Blair, which I will share in a different story.

Checking into our motel in Larne, (close to Raloo, which has become a town of farms and only a few small businesses) North Ireland, we asked about

ruins around the town, and were informed there were ruins. Excited that we might find both the land of the home of Brice and Esther Blair, and possibly the mill that Brice built, we headed out early the next day to investigate.



Larne, near the Irish Sea (North Atlantic Ocean)

First we traveled to Raloo, where the Blair homestead in the townland of Ballyvallaugh in Raloo, had been built. We brought a lot of paperwork with us, many with maps of the general area of the homestead. Some maps had been fashioned from Google Earth and only suggested the smaller area where we'd find the homestead ruins. I calculated these areas by reading historic records about how many miles Ballyvallaugh, Raloo, was from the town of Larne. With a file full of these kinds of hints, we set out to find what we could find.

What we noticed about North Ireland as opposed to South, was the hilliness of the land. Because it was green (and rained, even for a few hours to a full day, every day) it was gorgeous. Because the land was rocky, it had been thousands of years that rocks from the lands (sometimes cleared for farming) were piled into fences breaking up the green fields. The gray colors of the rock and the luscious greens were a delightful part of our Ireland trip.

Raloo is west of Larne (which was on the ocean on the Irish Sea, very near the famous Giant's

Causeway) had been a bustling village in 1625 when Brice, Esther and baby Nancy had arrived after their escape from Scotland in a coal sloop. Through the years, however, due to the battles between the ‘invading’ Scots escaping religious strife in Scotland and the Irish Catholics who resented the invasion, today it is no longer a bustling village. Instead, only a few families reside on farms and few buildings are a ‘town’ any longer. In fact, maps do not point out the townland of Ballyvallaugh any longer. An article in the Blair Society for Genealogical Research (Tales of a Family) pointed out that the ruins of the home and mill of Brice and Esther Peden were visible still in 1900. Although this was hopeful, it was 120 years later, so we did not think it guaranteed we’d find those ruins!!

First, we set out using our GPS to investigate “The Old Mill” site on the map. We knew that it was located in Larne from an old advertisement seeking employees for the mill in an English newspaper. In fits and starts around the streets of Larne, we found a shop (store) with this name. Red brick, looking perfectly updated, the shop sold house goods and gifts. We took photos but were very unsure if this was the site of Blair’s old mill. From that ‘find’, we drove out of town, west toward Raloo. The one thing I was certain of was that there was an Old Cemetery in Raloo that remained. We also knew this cemetery would be a difficult find, due to an almost-humorous description of how to find it, such as “then walk by the cow path to your left...” After trying various paths around the area our GPS told us might hold the cemetery, (two of which we entered by untying shredded ropes enclosing metal gates, feeling like thieves! - or used our muscles to push a stubborn, rusted gate open), and then walked some paths that ended in no cemetery. We finally entered a fairly new neighborhood, still watching our hints for approximate old cemetery sites. In this neighborhood we took advantage of a lovely Irish

woman standing in her front yard cleaning. I said, “We are on a mission from America...” She smiled (Irish people are so friendly!) and said, “You’re looking for the old cemetery then?” Surprised, I affirmed. She said she could hand out flyers to the many Americans always looking, and she pointed to the end of her street. There, one could see a green path full of growth between two pieces of private land.



The “path” to Raloo Old Cemetery

She explained how to find the cemetery, ending with “and you’ll keep watching through the overgrown undergrowth and wonder if you are really getting anywhere, but just keep going!” Thanking her profusely, we parked in what looked like the opening of a path at the end of the street, unmarked in any way. Getting our walking sticks out, we set out on the path. It was rocky and yes, very full of undergrowth, quite tall. However, the path was still discernable. When we reached the end of the first path, the path turned right, as had been described. For some time, we continued our careful rugged hike. And then, off to our left, stone pillars and a metal gate apparently having hung open for some years, appeared. In a few more

steps, headstones leaning every which way became



visible.



If the path to get there was overgrown, it was not near as overgrown as the actual cemetery. It did not take me long to see that this was going to be a physically tough investigation for this lady in her 70's! In fact, it was not long before I fell, not seeing the uneven ground through all the overgrown grass! However, I took my time and found as many tombstones as possible to read, endeavoring to photograph them. Some needed to be photographed in three photos to get the entire tombstone message in because of the lack of footholds for the photographer. It was disappointing, given how much I wanted to bring back information for other genealogists. However, determined to do what I could, as safely as I could, I kept carefully moving and looking. Some of the tombstones were perfectly unreadable from the weather and time. That was sad. Some were fallen over frontward to

such an extent, they were also unreadable. I found some headstones with the names "Crawford" on them, which I knew was the last name of Nancy Blair's (baby of Brice Blair and Esther Peden Blair) eventual husband. I also found other names that have traveled down in Blair descendants, such as Knox. But one headstone, difficult also to read, boasted "Here lyeth the body of Brise Blair..."



"Here lyeth the body of Brise Blair..."

Tears sprang to my eyes. The year of death was way too late to be the first Brice Blair in Raloo, but surely this was descendant. After photographing as many headstones as I could get to, I reluctantly left the place and passed back through the gates.



Searching back through the history paperwork, I had previously noted that one of the authors of a Find a Grave report writing about Blair graves in Ireland pointed out one grave, that of Daniel Blair

of Raloo, buried on the farm where he had farmed and had sold before his death. The farmer who bought the farm was named Penny. The address was 29 Ballyvallagh Road. Armed with this address, Jim and I headed to this address with our GPS. (Back home, getting ready for this trip I had conferred about this address with the Facebook group ‘Memories of Raloo and Glenoe (a town close to Raloo))’ One of the experts and residents of this area reassured our group that the Blair family homestead was now owned by a person named Penny. Putting these two facts together, we were hopeful to be able to ensure we found the original homestead through these hints. As we drove the Ballyvallagh Road, we found even-numbered addresses to our right and uneven, to the left. On our right was a nice, new home at 28 Ballyvallagh Road, but on our left, at what would have been 29 Ballyvallagh Road, was only empty pastureland. It sat in between rock fences, which could have been built with stones from the home we’d hoped to find. Down the pasture and through the rock fences, were green hills and trees of other farms and lovely houses and barns. It was a beautiful view. It was touching how close we were to where Brice and Esther Peden built their family home. It was delightful to see the beautiful view their family got to see every day from that home.

We turned to go past the house on the corner and farther on the road. The numbers were 35 and above. Therefore, we drove a few times past the house on the corner, which faced another road around the corner from 29 Ballyvallagh Rd. It was almost what one could call “across the street” from the newer 28 Ballyvallagh house. Behind the house, a stone lane led to three or so old stone buildings. They looked like farm buildings.



It occurred to me that if this, then, could have been part of the old 29 Ballyvallagh Road, and the Penny farm family built their own home to face the intersecting road. It was possible that this also WAS part of the old farmland of Brice and Esther Blair, with a few old farm buildings still intact. It was especially easy to think of when one remembers that Lord Edmonstone gave them 400 acres; a lot of property! What an amazing find, then!!! To look out on that view down the hill and imagine that was the view for Brice and Esther’s children, was incredibly touching and a reason for tears again.



Views south of 29 Ballyvallagh Road (Brice and Esther’s View?)

With what was left of the day, (although in this northern country it stays light in the summer until about 10 pm.), we headed south toward the town of Carrickfergus, where many linen mills still work, and where a castle from Norman times is remarkably preserved. Before we reached that town, we found Red Hall, where Brice, Esther and baby Nancy went on their arrival in Ireland. They went to visit the owner of this very large home, Lord Archibald Edmonstone, who was related to Brice, and received 400 acres of land as well as enough money to build the linen mill in Larne, which, at that time, may have been part of the Blair's 400 acres.



Stone Pillars at the entrance to Red Hall

However, we rang the bell at the white, large and beautiful home, and a kind man answered. Hearing our story, he said no tours happened without plans in advance, and cautioned us with some humor that there was a meeting of fancy sports cars there this afternoon, and we'd be swamped with those cars if we hung around. It's such a feeling to travel so far and hope for a simple glance and photo of a room where an ancestor died, to be disappointed that I'd gotten wrong directions about tours and would have to forfeit the privilege. Ouch. However, we humbly thanked him and left as a fancy old convertible arrived with two well-dressed occupants!

From the article "Tales of a Family" that we'd found on the Clan Blair Society's website as well as that of the Blair Society for Genealogical Research, we had known that one of the sons of Brice and Esther, Samuel and his wife, Esther Crawford Blair, had owned a home pictured on the website. These homeowners' wills directed that the home only be sold to another Blair. Hoping to find this home, we learned from the Facebook "Memories of Raloo and Glenoe" that this home's gate was still standing but the stucco-like home itself had been razed. We headed back to Raloo to look for the gate. Without the home's actual address, it was difficult and eventually, unable to be found, although we enjoyed the beautiful drive and the blessing of being so close.



Red Hall, where Brice and family went to get help in Ireland, and where Brice Blair died at age 39.

Passing the stone pillars and driving along the path of Red Hall's lane to the big house,. I anticipated a tour of Red Hall. A few weeks before, at home still, I'd found assurance that one could reach Red Hall, buy tickets for a tour, and enjoy the same. I'd discovered earlier that Brice Blair had died at Red Hal at age 39. Given how little written records were gathered or kept in the 1600's, I'd not discovered why Brice Blair died so very young, but the fact he died away from his family remains puzzling and sad. I, therefore, had hoped to tour Red Hall to find the room in which Brice died and where he and Esther and Nancy surely stayed until their home was built.



Photo of home of Samuel and Esther Peden; Samuel as grandchild of Brice and Esther Blair Peden, in Raloo, North Ireland

The last stop on our agenda was to visit the museum of Larne to learn its 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century history, including that of linen mills in the area. It was good to know the history of the area in which Brice and Esther’s family grew. But even nicer was to meet Marian Kelso, the museum director, who had helped us find some hints over the phone when we were back home. She was as friendly and kind as we’d found the Irish people in general. She asked how we felt about our search, and we exclaimed about the joy of being where Brice and Esther lived. And how exciting to be so close to where their family grew! But mostly, it was the beauty of that place that helped us feel we’d touched those ancestors in all the ways we could.

I know now that I have even more work to do around Brice and Esther to tie up some lingering loose ends, such as trying to reach out to Raloo farmer Penny and touch base with the town of Larne’s newspaper as well as the genealogical experts there – to find out anything we may have missed. Maybe we can find a few descendants despite how many of Brice and Esther’s grandchildren ended up going to America! Just think, a Blair still in Raloo! I need to share the headstones with fellow Blairs on Ancestry, and

share this story. We both agree that we will work toward making a contribution to Raloo in order to ensure that the cemetery is easier to find with a sign marking the beginning of that funny ‘cow path’ we stumbled over on the way to exploring the tombstones.

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## COLORADO REPORT

### Leslie Blair, Colorado Commissioner

I attended the Colorado Renaissance Festival in Larkspur, CO in June wearing my Blair tartan to represent us.

I also attended the Elizabeth Celtic Festival in Elizabeth, CO this past July. Beautiful site and a lovely day out as always. As most of the clan is out of the state for this festival we did not have a clan presence.

Currently gearing up for the Long's Peak Scottish Festival in September. Should be a good turn out for that event..



Photo taken at ECF with Don and Barbara McKee. Don is a competitive Highland Dancer and I got to watch him compete at the festival.

Respectfully submitted by Leslie Blair  
Gallagher Colorado CBS Commissioner, CBS Vice  
President

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### CLAN BLAIR ON FACEBOOK

#### Elena Sotelo-McCrary

Top contributor

Who doesn't like free stuff. Are you looking into your genealogy, but need some help? Ask

#### American Ancestors

· Were your ancestors part of the 17th-century Great Migration to New England? Download our

#### By Western Hands

Wyoming and Saddle Bits and Spurs, and was awarded Best Artist Historical Craftsmanship in 2013 and 2016, Best Leather Artist in 2017, and Exhibitors Choice in 2018 at the Western Design Conference in Jackson, Wyoming. John participated in the 2020 Made in America Product Showcase at the White House.

A native of Wyoming, John L. Blair is a second-generation saddle maker who studied under his father, Neal L. Blair and Tony J. Holmes. With over forty years of saddle making experience, John has shown in Reno, Dallas, Jackson, Wyoming, at the Wyoming Pioneer Museum, Wyoming State Museum, the American Heritage Center and received a special invitation to show in Osaka, Japan. John has been featured in Saddle Making of

freefree guide guide to researching the Great Migration and learn more about you... See more

#### Helen Blair

Top contributor

A very talented & creative Blair.



Our featured artisan this week is John L. Blair!

people throughout the United States, among countless custom leather goods built to high standards. He resides in the lower Shell Valley in Greybull, Wyoming.

To see all of John's amazing pieces, please visit us at the gallery Monday - Saturday 10-6pm or visit the link in bio/shop.

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### EXTENSION – September 30

William Campbell Blair Youth Award

2024

Clan Blair Society announced the invitation to member nominations for the 2024 WC Blair Youth Award. The Award recognizes youth who demonstrate excellence in their lives and activities.

This opens recognition of an outstanding youth member of the Society who is nominated by their family or friends for their extraordinary achievement in the forms of music, dance, art, athletics, scholastics, theatre/performance, or social impact to the community or CBS. The recipient receives recognition at the Annual General Meeting and a \$500 cash award.

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 nominate a young member of the CBS family.

To date no nominations have been received and we are extending final the date for submission. The nomination materials are found on the [clanblair.org](http://clanblair.org) website and the nomination form is in this newsletter. Nominations must be received by September 30, so please begin thinking about prospective nominees. Questions can be forwarded to Jim Blair at [president@clanblair.org](mailto:president@clanblair.org).

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**Formal Blair Plaid**





**Two girls speaking in what sounded like a lovely Scottish accent.**

Bartender said: So, are you two girls from Scotland?

One of them said: "Wales Idiot!"

"Oh, I am terribly sorry about that", says the bartender

"So, are you two Whales from Scotland?"

**A Scottish soldier goes to the US for special military training...**

The next day morning he goes to the platoon and after looking at him the officer asks him:

\- Private, did you come here to die?

To which he responds:

- No sir, I came here yesterday.

**A Scottish guy phones in sick to work.**

Boss ask's what is wrong Jimmy?  
Jimmy replies I have a wee cough.

Boss says you have a wee cough?  
Jimmy says thank you, Boss! I was only going to take one day!

# CLAN BLAIR SOCIETY

## WILLIAM CAMPBELL BLAIR YOUTH AWARD NOMINATION FORM-8-2024

Clan Blair Society (CBS) has introduced the William Campbell Blair Youth Award to be granted annually to a deserving youth member who has achieved excellence in pursuits related to youth activities, including their Scottish/Irish heritage. The annual award is \$500 and will be granted annually at the fall Annual General Meeting (AGM). Nominations for youth members 18 years old and younger can be made by friends and/or family (members) utilizing this nomination form found on the [www.clanblair.org](http://www.clanblair.org) website.

Please complete the following information and submit your nomination no later than July 31.

Name of Youth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ (18 years old or younger)

Name of Nominating CBS Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee Contact Information: Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominating Member Contact: Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Category of Outstanding Performance/Success: \_\_\_\_\_

The Arts; Academics; Athletics; Clan Blair Society Support; Other

Provide a detailed description of the nominee's activities that achievements for which the nomination is being made:

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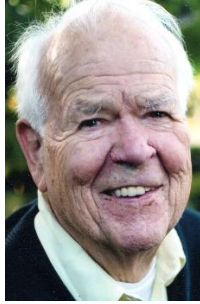
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Please provide additional pages of text, pictures, news articles, etc. that support the nomination. Materials should be scanned and submitted via [www.clanblair.org](http://www.clanblair.org) or emailed to [president@clanblair.org](mailto:president@clanblair.org).

## William Campbell Blair Youth Award – 5-2024



**William Campbell Blair**

The following outlines the expectations of award nominees:

1. Nominations may be generated by members/families/friends.
2. Nominees are age 18 and younger
3. Recognition is focused toward Scottish/Celtic activities
4. Award recognition may be for Outstanding Performance/Success in:
  - a. The Arts, including:
    - i. Artistic – painting, drawing, sculpting, characterization
    1. Music – piping, drumming, stringed instruments, piano, vocal
    - ii. Dance – Scottish/Irish
    - iii. Theater – performance – Scottish/Irish
  - b. Academics:
    - i. Excellence in the study of Scottish/Irish history
    - ii. Writing related to Scottish/Irish history, or stories
    - iii. Formal recognition of achievement by local educators or foundations
    - iv. Excellence in the study of Gaelic languages
  - c. Athletics - Scottish/Irish related:
    - i. Football (soccer)
    - ii. Rugby
    - iii. Wrestling (North Carolina, etc.)
    - iv. Scottish Games (where offered for youth)
  - d. Clan Blair Society support:
    - i. Active support of local CBS activities
    - ii. Tent/festival support
    - iii. Promotion of CBS – recruitment, fund raising, etc.
5. Nominations are invited in the February newsletter for submission by June
6. A selection committee will evaluate and recommend award recipient candidates to the BOD for final selection
7. Recognition includes the \$500 cash award, a certificate of excellence and news coverage in the Blair Bruidhinn (and other Celtic publications associated with CBS)

Questions may be sent to Jim Blair at [president@clanblair.org](mailto:president@clanblair.org), or 1-303-795-9754

**CLAN BLAIR EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS AND CHAIRS OF STANDING  
COMMITTEES, August & September, 2024**

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

**Clan Blair**

**Russell Mc Crary**

**29 Haven Place**

**San Ramon, CA 94583**

First Class Mail