



# 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)

Fourth Quarter – November-December 2024



**CBS President Jim Blair**

## CBS President Message 11.11.24

Fellow Scots – Happy Fall 2024. Many of us have seen our first snowfall and the leaves are now gone. Our eastern and southwestern members are still in the heat and with dry conditions. Wildfires still are making the news. Good Scots are prepared – stay safe.

As we look forward to the holidays the joy of Hogmanay, Thanks Giving and Christmas emerge. May the season be well for you as the New Year approaches. I encourage each of you to seek out Burns Suppers or other Celtic celebrations in your area. We have found a Burns celebration, pot luck style, works well and draws many friends together.

Clan Blair Society leaders conducted our annual business meeting on October 19 and received reports from all members of the board. The Society is operating well, but attention is needed in the world of recruitment and retention of members. Many drop off the rolls after the first year and the board voted to



adjust the fee structure to encourage longer engagement. Fees for 2025 will be:

One year subscription - \$20

Two-year subscription - \$35

Three-year subscription - \$50

You should receive your renewal notice within the next week or two. Please renew.

The Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Saturday November 23 at 10 am Mountain time. Announcements will be sent this week. Our amazing editor Adoree, has produced another extraordinary Blair Bruidhinn, will present her journey through genealogy and DNA research to find remarkable stories about Blair heritage. The McCrary's will present their approach to sharing the locations Blairs have occupied in Scotland. We will present the results of CBS business affairs and be open for questions. Please watch for the announcement.

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

and your 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](http://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](mailto:president@clanblair.org) or with [adoree1@outlook.com](mailto:adoree1@outlook.com).

It is a Great Day to be a Scot!

Slaint'e!

Jim

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**SCOTS-IRISH IN AMERICA:  
Summary of the Scots-Irish:  
WIKIPEDIA and Charles Knowles  
Bolton,(book)Scotch Irish Pioneers in  
Ulster and America**

Scots-Irish first came to America in the years 1717 and 1718. They arrived in Boston. Even though they hoped the Calvinists would make good neighbors, they soon found that they did not tolerate the way the Scots-Irish worshipped, so the Scots-Irish began to move. They eventually found themselves in Pennsylvania, where there was good religious tolerance. From there, they spread out to Virginia and into the hills. Scots-Irish saw Indians as an irritant to be eliminated; they didn't recognize the Indian claim to the land. By the 1740's, the Scots-Irish had reached the Roanoke and for all practical purposes, the valley in Virginia. Next, they headed south into the wide open land of the Carolinas.

The early immigrants came from the Ulster Province in Ireland, and originally had lived in the lowlands of Scotland.

The first Scots-Irish eventually called themselves "Irish", giving up the "Scots" portion. However, in the years of the Great Potato Famine in Ireland in the mid-1800's, when very poor Irish immigrated to America, the Scots-Irish worked to distinguish themselves from the new, poor and 'dirty' Irish, and went back to calling themselves "Scotsch-Irish."

The moniker used by Scots-Irish has been interchangeable with "Scots-Irish" and others, but means the people with a background from both countries.

Interestingly, in Scots-Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America, author Charles K Bolton notes that "The Scots-Irish...are criticized for their personal Habits as much as they are praised for their good qualities..." Bolton describes English traveler John Gamble in 1810, who wrote about stopping for dinner, and how Gamble asked for eggs, thinking the eggs would be a safe thing to eat. He said that the woman roasted the eggs in ashes before her fire, and then took a long pin she'd been picking her teeth with to poke into the egg to test whether it was done. With these eggs, he had some bread with butter spread by the woman's thumb. Gamble continued, "A few years ago the Presbyterians in the County parts of this kingdom were not much cleaner than their Scots ancestors. The inside of a vessel was seldom washed and the outside still seldomer. [sic]" Arthur Lee, in Pittsburg in 1784, described the town as full of Irish and Scots, living in "paltry log-houses, and as dirty as in the north

of Ireland, or even Scotland.” However, Gamble admired the penny-pinching of the Presbyterians and how they lived without flourish or fancy-ness.

Scots-Irish were restless and pushed the edge of the frontier. Scots-Irish saw Indians as an irritant to be eliminated; they didn't recognize the Indian claim to the land. By the 1740's, the Scots-Irish had reached the Roanoke and for all practical purposes, the valley in Virginia. Next, they headed south into the wide open land of the Carolinas and what is now known as the Appalachians.

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### A BIT ABOUT ROBERT BURNS

In time for our Burns Suppers!

Robert Burns, the famous Scottish poet, had a colorful personal life. He married Jean Armour in 1788 and had nine children with her. The last child was born on the day of Burns' funeral.

He had affairs and lovers, including Mary Campbell.

- He was famous for his romantic escapades, which often inspired his poems.
- He fathered 12-14 children (different sources say differently), with four women.

- Yet, he is considered one of the most important writers of the last 400 years.

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### A Burns Poem for Children

(to be recited before partaking of the Burns Supper)

#### The Selkirk Grace

*"Some hae meat and canna eat,  
And some wad eat that want it,*

*"But we hae meat and we can eat,  
And sae the Lord be thankit."*

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### SCOTTISH TRIVIA FROM FUNFACTS

“History credits the Rev. Elijah Craig, a Scotsman and a Baptist minister, with being the first in 1789 to make bourbon. Kentucky is the place for bourbon because of the limestone which makes the water almost iron-free. The first bourbon recognized by brand outside of Kentucky probably was produced by Dr. James Crow, a Scotsman who settled near the Rev. Craig's place.” He was known by the locals as Jim Crow.

The Scotstish-American Hall of Fame contains more plaques for the military than any other category. Twenty-one men are installed including Daniel Boone who is listed as an “Indian Fighter.” The list is as follows: George Rogers Clark, Frontier hero of the Revolutionary War; Stonewall Jackson; Joseph E. Johnston; Henry Knox; Arthur MacArthur, army general, father of Douglas MacArthur; George B. McClellan; Alexander Macomb, general and hero of the War of 1812; William (Billy) Mitchell, controversial air power advocate; William Multrie; George S. Patton, WWII exponent of mobile warfare; Winfred

Scott, Mexican War and Chief of staff; J.E.B. Stuart, Confederate cavalry general; Christopher "Kit" Carson, frontiersman and explorer; William Clark, explorer with Merriwether Lewis; Davy Crockett, frontiersman who died at the Alamo. Two individuals are listed under the category of "Naval." They are David Glasgow Farragut, Civil War naval hero, and John Paul Jones, Revolutionary War naval hero.

SCOTS emigres to the US are five times more likely to become dollar millionaires than those from any other country, according to a study of wealth. Thomas Stanley and William Danko, in their book *The Millionaire Next Door*, analysed the ethnic backgrounds of the wealthiest members of US society and discovered that while people of Scottish origin make up 1.7% of the population, they comprise 9.3% of its millionaires.

Although the Scots comprise less than one-half of 1 percent of the world's population, 11 percent of all Nobel prizes have been awarded to Scotsmen. Quote from "The Mark of the Scots" by Duncan A Bruce.

The world's first university faculty of engineering and technical science was in Glasgow.

Others from Scotland or of Scots descent in American history:

- 35 U.S. Supreme Court Justices, 25 of them are in the Great Americans Hall of Fame.
- Almost 1/2 of the Secretaries of U.S. Treasury and 1/3 of the Secretaries of State were Scots.
- 9 of the signatures on the Declaration of Independence were from Scots descent.

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**CLAN BLAIR SOCIETY ON FACEBOOK**

**Elena Sotelo-McCrary**

**Have Irish ancestors? Check this out.**

**American Ancestors**

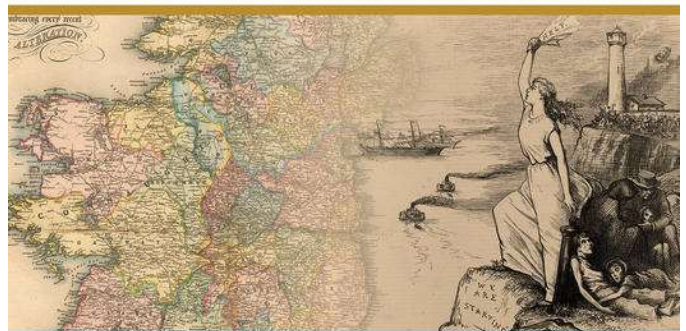
**October 9** ·

**More than 30 million Americans have Irish Ancestry, and many of us have ancestors who were affected by the Great Famine of 1845-1852. During this time, many relied on Ireland's Poor Law Unions, which centered around a workhouse where people could labor to receive temporary relief from their poverty.**

**The records produced by the Poor Law Unions can provide valuable information about your ancestors' lives and rich historical context about the famine. Join Senior Genealogist Rhonda R. McClure as she covers how to use these records in your Irish family history research!**



**FREE VIRTUAL LECTURE**



**Researching Famine Irish Ancestors in Ireland's Poor Law**  
**February 13, 2025 at 3 p.m. (ET)**

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**Kelli Blair**

**September 14** ·

Just got home from an amazing trip to Scotland! Clan Blair was fully represented at the **Stirling Highland Games**, as myself, my partner and daughter were decked out in Blair tartans! Had lots of fun and picked up tons of Scotstish loot, including some fresh Scotstish tablet from **#valsScotstishtablet**. Oh, and the Scotsch. Lots of good Scotsch. 🍷



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**Maggie Blair**

Top contributor

Hello All! Do you know about the Clan Blair Zazzle Store? Check it out and let us know if there is anything you would like to see added! **[www.zazzle.com/Clan\\_blair\\_store](http://www.zazzle.com/Clan_blair_store)**.



**[zazzle.com](http://zazzle.com)**

**Clan Blair Society Store: Designs & Collections on Zazzle**

Check out all of the amazing designs that Clan Blair Society Store has created for your Zazzle products. Make one-of-a-kind gifts with these designs!

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Derek Blair

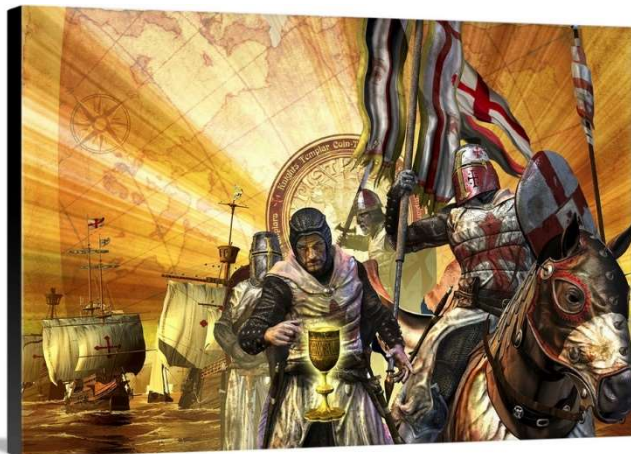
September 14 ·

Been in Scotland now for a week and have been all over the place so far, but today my wife and I made a stop at the Blair Castle and Estate in Dalry to pay our respects and reflect on the history there. Got to tell her all the stories I heard from my Grandfather as a kid about Clan Blair and the Ayrshire Knights. Beautiful Place & very peaceful!

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### AYRSHIRE KNIGHTS: WHO ARE/WERE THEY?

From AI and Wikipedia; Knights Templar



The **Knights Templar** had a significant presence in Scotland from the early 12th century until their dissolution in 1312. Here are some key points about their history in Scotland:

**Establishment:** The Knights Templar were first established in Scotland around **1128**, with their main preceptory at **Balantrodoch**, now known as the village of **Temple** in Midlothian. King David I of Scotland granted them land in this area<sup>3</sup>.

**Expansion:** With the support of Scottish monarchs, particularly David I and his successors, the Templars acquired substantial property and wealth. They established other preceptories, including one at **Maryculter** in Aberdeenshire.

**Economic Activities:** The Templars were not just warriors; they were also landlords, moneylenders, and businessmen. They owned over **500 sites** in Scotland and played a significant role in the country's economy.

**Dissolution:** Following the dissolution of the Knights Templar in 1307 by King Philip IV of France, their properties in Scotland were transferred to the **Knights Hospitaller**. Despite the dissolution, the Templars' influence persisted in Scotland<sup>2</sup>.

**Legends and Mysteries:** There are many legends and myths surrounding the Knights Templar in Scotland, including tales of hidden treasures and their involvement in Freemasonry.

**Modern Connections:** Sites like **Rosslyn Chapel** and the village of **Temple** are often associated with the Templars, and they continue to be points of interest for historians and tourists alike.

The Lands of Templehouse formed a small estate lying between Aiket Castle and the town of Dunlop, East Ayrshire, Parish of Dunlop, Scotland. The laird's house at Templeland of Dunlop Hill, to give it its formal name, stood

near to the ancient road leading from Dunlop to Kirkwood and on to Kennox. The lands were held by the Knights Templar until a date prior to 1570 when the Gemmells of Templehouse were granted the property and remained there until 1962, a period of around 500 years.

Sometime in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the lands of Darvel belonged to the Knights Templar, and rents were diverted from the Crown to the Templars. These lands apparently remained independent for many centuries after the fall of the Templars. Several lands here formerly belonged to the Knights Templars, as many of them still bear the name of Temple. There remains on these lands many farms.

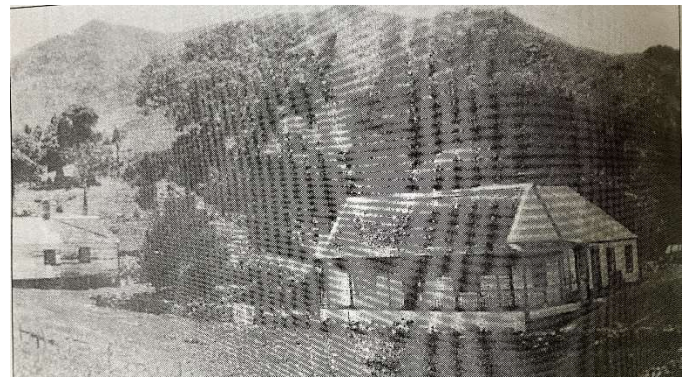
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### FROM LADYMUIR TO NEW ZEALAND

John Blair and Jean Clark (1819-1892 and 1817-1900)

John and Jean Blair owned a grocery and bakery business in Dumbarton, Scotland from 1856, where they prospered. However, they eventually emigrated to New Zealand. John and his son, also John, went to New Zealand first. It is not certain why they emigrated, although the land lairds in Scotland were evicting poorer inhabitants at that time, and New Zealand was offering large tracts of land to settlers. After John and his son spent time in Auckland and on the Great Barrier Reef Island, they sent for Jean and the other children. The family settled on 440 acres of land on the Great Barrier Island at Tryphena Bay. Times were difficult for the family at first in this historical Māori territory. John Blair was appointed postmaster, and a newspaper reported that “finest honey available in Auckland is to be found on John Blair’s farm at

Tryphena...” Their grandson Allan was elected the first chairman of the county council. Today, many farm products travel to the mainland from The Great Barrier Reef, by air, while vehicles transport people, and the town has stores and banks. Jack Richard Blair, author of the most important (in this editor’s estimation) Blair history book, The Blair Surname – Its Ancient Scottish Origins and the Genealogies of Three Blair Families, lives in, and is in contact with the Clan Blair Society from, New Zealand. This book is from where this information was gathered. Thank you, Jack Richard Blair!



Residence of John and Jean Blair and John and Agnes McKay Blair, early pioneers and settlers, Great Barrier Island, Auckland, New Zealand. (Photo late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Courtesy of Phyllis Boyd (nee Eyre) Auckland,

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### NEWS FROM THE LIBRARIAN

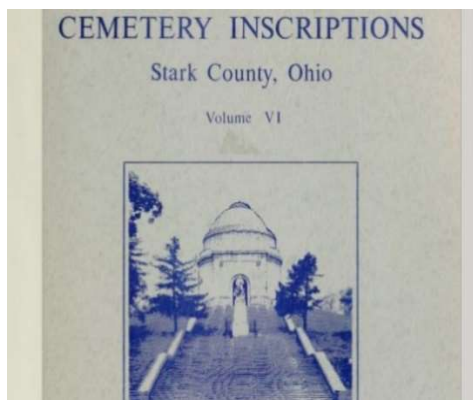
By Elena McCrary

I wanted to share this in the newsletter because this organization does incredible work. *A Starter Guide to Genealogy at the Archive*. Yes, I do donate because they are a Nonprofit. They are based out of San Francisco, but they are just one of the many genealogy tools available across the country. I bet you could have one in your neighborhood.

Sometimes you may head to your local library that hosts a genealogy section. Sometimes you are perusing the web. Do not forget to ask an organization (especially if you do not live nearby) if you may have electronic access to their digital files via an electronic library card. If you explain your purpose, they are more likely to support you. Other times it may be necessary to write or chat with an in-house librarian to get help in finding an answer to your question(s).

May 2024

Browsing the Archive



### A Genealogy Starter Pack

Did you know the Archive hosts a vast collection of resources related to Genealogy and cultural preservation for the use and enjoyment of patrons like you? For those interested in genealogical materials scanned from books, periodicals, and microfilm we have a starter guide to some of our richest resources!

#### 1. Genealogy Collection:

Resources include books, surname origins, vital statistics, parish records, census records, passenger lists of vessels, and other historical and biographical documents from various libraries, cultural centers, and archives.

#### 2. Family Genealogy Collection:

A collection of almost 4000 books on the genealogy of various families, background in surnames and generational history— dating all the way back to the 1700's.

#### 3. Yearbooks:

Peruse the various preserved yearbooks, featuring the student bodies of high schools, universities, academic institutions, and academies—giving us a modern glimpse into history and cultural connection to the past.

Internet Archive, *A Starter Guide to Genealogy at the Archive: Browsing the Archives*, May 2024 (accessed Nov 23, 2024).

300 Funston Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94118

[archive.org](https://archive.org)

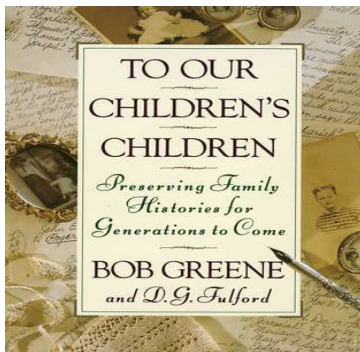
Want to read more about this organization and see all the files, check out the Wikipedia page [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet\\_Archive](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_Archive)

When we are searching history we need to constantly look for what links us. This is why I just requested a book from the Moultrie library. I had seen something at the Seaside Games, and I remembered a Blair Connection. I wanted to know more, so I am hoping this book provides insight into some questions I have been wondering about.

Recently I went to my local library and the Friends of the library were hosting a book sale. I found, *To Our Children's Children: Preserving Family Histories for Generations to Come* by Bob Greene and D.G. Fulford.

I picked up the book because it was full of questions you might not think to ask, especially if you are from a different generation. To me, if you were to use the format as you try to fill-in the family or extended family history, you could have quite a story because as the author says, "If you ask just one question and get the details, which is showing history." For me, the best part comes at the end when he asks, "If you had to write a note – one note-and leave it propped against a sugar bowl on your kitchen table...what would it say?"

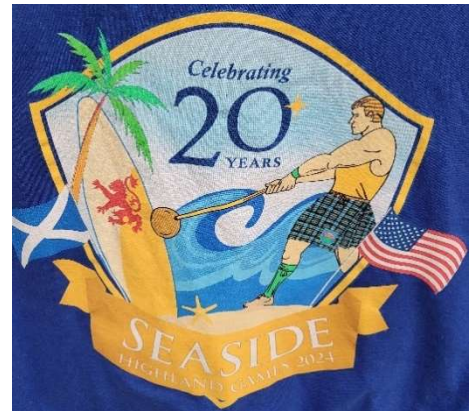
Think about it and write your own note as we give thanks to our friends and family. As well as the time that we have given this year to the Clan Blair organization.



Fairy Pools in Skye, Scotland

## CALIFORNIA COMMISSIONER REPORT

Russ and Elena McCrary



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Say Hello to returning members Bryan and Jaime Blair. These two live in both CA (work) and OR (home). First, I want to point out that Jaime made the kilt her husband is wearing. It was grueling work, and her hands took a beating, but what a beautiful product, showcased here in the Blair Modern Tartan.

They let us in on the McMinnville Scottish Games held in the first weekend in October at Yamhill County Fairgrounds, McMinnville, Oregon. Keep in touch by following <https://celticheritage.org/mac-Scotstish-festival/> Looking to head to Oregon next year? Do put it on your calendar.

We always get a nice spot for the Seaside Games in Ventura which were held the second weekend in October as they have been for the past 20 years. This year we decided to sponsor the games to see what it was like. Sponsorship has kept the games alive as we also learned from a Kimberlee *Blair* Bradford who works with The St. Andrew's Society of Los Angeles.



While there were not as many vendors, I was able to pick up some unique gifts, as well as delicious local honey; yum!

### Upcoming Events in 2025

Fire & Grace at Celtic Music Series Inverness

January 18, 2025 @ 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Join Fire & Grace in the Chapel at St. Columba's Episcopal Church for some rousing ballads, folk tunes, and American classics at this concert.

CALAVERAS CELTIC FAIRE & CONCERT  
March 7, 8 & 9<sup>th</sup> 2025

<https://calaverascelticfaire.com/index.html>

The 39th Annual Calaveras Celtic Faire returns with the Largest and Biggest Celtic Event on the West Coast! Celebrating the cultures of Brittany, Cornwall, Wales, Scotland, Ireland.

NORCAL CELTIC FESTIVAL

Downtown Woodland, CA  
April 27, 2024 (not announced)  
8am-7pm

KVMR Celtic Festival

May 2-4, 2025

<https://kvmrcelticfestival.org/>

Location:

Nevada County Fairgrounds  
11228 McCourtney Road  
Grass Valley, CA 95949

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# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## Jim Blair - November 23, 2024

Nineteen members participated in the 2024 AGM held via Zoom. The program included a presentation by Adoree Blair (Colorado) titled Genealogy for Blairs – Thoughts and Tips, and on her experience in searching for the birthplace and living areas of Brice Blair and Esther Peden in Northern Ireland in the 1700's. Brice is the 8<sup>th</sup> great grandfather of President Jim Blair. She presented recommended tools for members to use in pursuing genealogy, along with a pictorial story of the trip into Larne and Raloo, Ireland in June 2024. A highlight of the trip was finding a cemetery with may Blair relatives from the 1600-1700's, along with the home where Brice died, and the physical location of the Flax mill he operated. The presentation and pictures are posted on the [clanblair.org/member](http://clanblair.org/member) website under the title 2024 AGM.

Russ McCrary presented the maps, locations, and pictures he and Elena display in their tents during festivals in California. The maps are colorful and display the major areas of Scotland and Ireland occupied by Blairs through the ages. He also displayed books and reference materials that members might find useful in pursuing their heritage. The presentation and pictures are posted on the [clanblair.org/member](http://clanblair.org/member) website under the title 2024 AGM.

Jim Blair presented the highlights of the Annual Business Meeting held on October 5. Highlights include:

- All committees are operating well.
- The Treasury is in excellent condition. The Store is continuing to operate -

most sales are tartan, jewelry, and books. Books are being digitized.

- The Odom Library in GA hosts 73 books plus photos and videos.
- Reports from 6 of 20 states, 9 different games attended. Games are still recovering from the pandemic.
- Currently we have 204 members, 32 new recruits and many losses.
- A new fee structure approved for 2025. \$20 for one year membership; \$35 for two years; and \$50 for 3 years.
- Clan Blair Website received approximately 3,000 views and is drawing people into Clan Blair.

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## COLORADO REPORT

### Leslie Blair Gallagher, Vice President, Colorado Commissioner

Prepping for the AGM : Please join us for the Clan Blair Society Annual General Meeting 19 November 2024, 10:00am MT

The Colorado Scottish Festival has moved dates and will now be 21-23 September 2025 in Salida, CO at the Polo Grounds.

Colorado CBS Burns Supper will be at the Blair Galligan home at 7402 S Crescent Court, Littleton, CO 80120 - on Saturday the 8th of February 2025. Time: 6-10 p.m.

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## NEW LEADERS OF THE CBS TEAM

We welcome 3 new leaders to the CBS team.  
Please welcome:

Scott Blair – NC – High Commissioner  
succeeding Bill Blair – OR

Elisa Blair – CO – Membership  
succeeding Russ McCrary – CA

Nick Shryack – CO – Website  
succeeding Shawn Blair – ME

Thank you all for your service to Clan Blair!

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**CLAN BLAIR EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS AND CHAIRS OF STANDING  
COMMITTEES, November and December, 2024**

Jim Blair - President  
8861 Eagles Nest Lane,  
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[President@clanblair.org](mailto:President@clanblair.org)

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Vacant - Blair Genealogy -  
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Nick Shryack – Website  
Administrator  
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Adoree Blair – Blair Bruidhinn  
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Jim Blair – Clan Store  
(see above)  
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Elena McCrary - Librarian  
29 Haven Place  
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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**

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First Class Mail