



Blair of Blair

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



Blair of Balthayock

BLAIR BRUIDHINN

“Blair Talk” for Clan Blair Society

www.clanblair.org

First Quarter – February 2009



Scotland Celebrates Robert Burns with a Royal Homecoming

In Scotland, we are celebrating *The Year of Homecoming* with a whole series of events in 2009 for all interested in Scotland and their roots here. This coincides with the 250th Anniversary of the birth of our

national Bard, Robert Burns. Perhaps not all of the Clan are aware that, in 1787, Burns wrote an “Elegy On The Death of Sir James Hunter Blair” It concludes:

“My patriot falls, but shall he lie unsung,
While empty greatness saves a worthless name?
No, every muse shall join her tuneful tongue,
And future ages hear his growing fame.”

“And I will join a mother's tender cares,
Thro' future times to make his virtues last;
That distant years may boast of other Blairs!
She said, and vanish'd with the sweeping blast.”

To hear it recited in full by Siobhan Redmond visit:
www.bbc.co.uk/robertburns/works/elegy_on_the_death_of_sir_james_hunter_blair/

There are many other works of Burns to be seen and heard there. John Gordon Sinclair gives an excellent rendering of “Address to a Haggis” that will guide others in the pronunciation of the Scots words.

Kind regards, Jack Blair, Perthshire

“Blair” A Book of Family History by Wanda Parrish Blair

This is a true story that I lovingly researched and wrote about the odyssey my husband's Blairs that traveled from England to Australia to New Zealand to America. They ended up settling in Texas! It has been very rewarding researching these ancestors and since 1997, we have added several great-great grandchildren to the family. One being the first son with the Blair surname as a given name.

Dunedin, New Zealand will always be a loving memory of the family that gave me my cherished husband and dearest friend, Robert (Bob), for whom this book is written. My husband is now 88 and still quite active. He is also known as retired Lt. Col. Robert M. Blair of the USAF.

The inter-continental migrations of the Blairs brings to mind a quote by Hodding Carter,

*We give our children – Two lasting things;
One is roots – The other is wings!*

All the Blairs and Theomins are real people. Other names come from my “Holy Imagination” for those who have been discussed but not identified during Bob's youth.

The dates are from official documents and are joined with known stories into a fictional account of the family history in a place that made me feel I had been there before.

Here are some of the Blair ancestors you will meet:

- Hannah Blair, England, born 3-20-1813
- William Blair, England, born 11-7-1830
- Robert Henry Blair, Australia, born 11-1-1865
- William Irvine Blair, New Zealand, born 11-18-1889
- Adina Malmsten, U.S.A., born 1-31-1880
- David Theomin, England, born 1850
- Stewart Stevenson Blair, New Zealand, b. 7-13-1893
- Dulcie Victoria Blair, New Zealand, born 6-18-1891
- Robert (Clive) Ewen Blair, New Zealand, b 5-8-1900
- Mavis Isabelle Blair Erridge, New Zealand, b. 4-1904
- Edward Theomin, Australia, born 1885
- Dorothy Theomin, New Zealand, born 1889
- Peter Clarke, New Zealand, born 1890
- Jessie Kelman Reid Blair, New Zealand, born 1869

Our American ancestor, William Irvine Blair became a Presbyterian Minister and served for over 25 years in Charleston, Illinois before his retirement. William and Adina Malmsten Blair are buried in Charleston.

I hope you can visit Dunedin, New Zealand and see the things of which I have written. I sent a copy of my book to the Blair lending library at the Ellen Payne Odom Genealogy Library in Moultrie, Georgia back in 1997. If you see an ancestor name or if you would like a copy, please contact the library or me.

Wanda Parrish Blair #519, Blair4188413@sbcglobal.net

Questions from the new CBS Forum Website from Daithi Kerr of Kersland

I have seen many discussions of Blair of Blair in various Blair websites and I have located the family tree down to the last heiress. Does anyone have the family trees of any other Blairs who have descended down through second sons of Blair of Blair?

I took a DNA test, my results (on 37 markers) match the Blair of Blair line, and I would like to check if this line is documented or whether it is unsubstantiated.

Until now, it was believed that my family, who have been Kerrs in Ireland for over 300 years, were Kerrs of Kersland neighboring Baron to Blair of Blair in Dalry. I would like to confirm if we are really Blairs... or in the case of lack of documentation are the people who are testing for Blair of Blair really Kerrs. I am am curios to know, but unfortunately at the moment there too few actual Kerrs being tested and the sample size is small plus without the documentation of the Blair of Blair line to modern times we cannot really be certain. I hope that we can clear up the puzzle. Daithi Kerr of Kersland

Read about this and other Clan Blair issues and interests on Clan Blair Society Forums <http://forums.clanblair.org>.

Reply to Kerr of Kersland Connection by William Campbell Blair

I am aware of only one connection between the Ker or Kerr Family and the Blairs of Blair, but your 37 DNA matches with Blair of Blair looks like a solid connection to the Blair of Blair family.

John Blair of Blair, Chief of the Blair of Blair family who lived at Blair House, Dalry, Ayrshire, born c1547 and died 11 Nov 1609, married Grisel Sempill, daughter of Robert Lord Semple III. They had six sons and three daughters. Their second daughter, Margaret Blair born after 1566 married Mr. Ker of Kersland and received a charter under the great seal to her and their son Robert Ker of the lands of Frearn (Tearne) in Ayrshire, dated 2 January 1594. I regret I do not have more information on the Ker or Kerr Family descendants of this line, but more may be found in the James Paterson reference below.

Source of the above is *The Blair Surname, Its Ancient Scottish Origins and the Genealogies of Three Blair Families* by Jack Richard Blair 1999. This book is available through the Clan Blair Store www.Clanblair.org. Identical information is in *History of the County of Ayr with a genealogical account of the Families of Ayrshire* by James Paterson, Vol. 1, 1847 in the section Families in the Parish of Dalry; entitled Blair of that Ilk.

Regarding the Blair DNA Project (www.blairdna.com), the connection with the Blair of Blair identity is documented by the DNA obtained by the only proven direct male lineal descendant of the Blair of Blair or Blair of that Ilk line, the current Lord Dundonald, the 15th Earl of Dundonald, Chief of Clan Cochrane, of Lochnell Castle, Argyll, Scotland. His name is Iain Alexander Douglas Blair Cochrane.

I believe his e-mail address is douglas@angioscientific.com. The largest group in the Blair DNA study is descendants of the Blair of Blair line, but the connection through the Cochrane's is to my knowledge the only *documented* connection to the Blair of Blair line.

Douglas as he is known, has the surname Cochrane, because in 1603 the fourth son of John Blair of Blair, and Grisel Sempill (and brother of Margaret Blair who married Mr. Kerr above) married the heiress of the Chief of Clan Cochrane, Elizabeth Cochrane (only daughter, no sons) and upon marriage Alexander Blair assumed the surname and arms of Cochrane, but is biologically a Blair of Blair.

In each generation, this line has placed Blair just before Cochrane in recognition of their Blair of Blair ancestry. The most famous of this Cochrane line was the gallant British Admiral Lord Thomas John Blair Cochrane, the 10th Earl of Dundonald. More information on Adm. Lord Thomas Cochrane, a Blair of Blair descendant can be found in an article I wrote for the Clan Blair Newsletter, the *Blair Bruidhinn*, Third-Quarter August 2004.

Sources for the Cochrane information can be found in the book *The Fighting Cochranes: a Scottish Clan over six hundred years of naval and military history* by Alexander Cochrane, 1983, Quilter Press London. Also, *The Blair Surname* by Jack Richard Blair of Sydney Australia, (above) and in an article I wrote on the BSGR web page, www.blairgenealogy.com. Yours aye, Bill

William Campbell Blair Northern California Commissioner

The first major Northern California Scottish Games and Festival will be the Sacramento Valley Games, to be held the last weekend of April, Sat. and Sun. April 25-26, at the Yolo County Fairgrounds in Woodland.

This is one of the best-attended and most enjoyable games of the season, and I hope as many of you as possible will plan to attend. For more go to www.saccallie.org or contact me. If you plan to attend, please contact me to see if I can host our CBS tent there. Bbblair@comcast.net

New Phone for CBS Member:
#998 Richard M & Yun BLAIR 615-714-5900

Blair Appointed to Presidential Post



Our new President Barack Obama has appointed Admiral Dennis C. Blair as National Intelligence Director. Confirmed by the Senate on 28 January 2009, Dennis Cutler Blair is a retired United States Navy four-star admiral, born 1947 in Maine.

Admiral Blair is carrying on a fine tradition of naval service and leadership going back to Admiral Lord Thomas Cochrane and John Paul Jones, both born in Scotland. An interesting story about our new director serendipitously connects him to the great British Admiral Cochrane. “Admiral Dennis Blair is somewhat renowned in US Naval circles for attempting to water ski behind his destroyer the USS Cochrane when he was the Skipper.”

Admiral Blair is a sixth-generation naval officer and great-great-great Grandson of Confederate Chief Engineer William Price Williamson of North Carolina, credited with first suggesting that the hull of the USS Merrimack be used to build the Confederate ironclad CSS Virginia. *Thanks to William Campbell Blair*

James Gault Blair – London, Ontario

I am not a Scottish Blair, but proudly Scotch-Irish from County Antrim, Ireland “Distilled in Scotland, Bottled in Ireland, Un-corked in Canada” – Jim Blair, CBS #867

Below: My American granddaughter, Heather Campbell Blair with hockey great Gordie Howe.



Below: My daughter-in-law Linda Hamilton Blair (Heather's mom) at an inauguration event in Washington with Michigan Governor, Jennifer Granholm.



Clan Blair Society Anniversaries

20 Year Anniversary

Member #107 Janet & Dave BROWN *see page 4*
Member #114 Ansel E. & Helen D. BLAIR

10 Year Anniversary

Member #760 E. Neil & Donna Jean SCOTT
Member #762 Holly M. GLENN
Member #769 Mary Louise TOLIVER

5 Year Anniversary

Member #906 Maxine Archibald LARSON
Member #907 Ann & Jonathan SILVERS
Member #909 John & Margaret REDDING
Member #911 Earl S. & Marie W. BLAIR

Hospital and Baby Clinic in Africa

I am pleased to send an update concerning our work in Maine-Soroa in Niger and the transfer of duties we are now caring for to the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Maine. My brother who is a pastor in their church made this possible. They will take on the job of continuing what we have started, including the hospital and school and want to start a nursing school here too. They hope to send medical professors to help in the Medical School in Niamey. They will have the entire cooperation of the government here in Niger.

Our best to the Clan and Lang may yer Lum Reek!
Barbara Kirker – a Blair by my full-blooded Scots paternal grandmother, Minnie Blair. Wkirkker@yahoo.com

Janet Wallace Brown Vancouver, Washington CBS #107

Hello, I would like you to see a photo of a needlepoint sampler made by Mary Helen Blair, age 12, April 1840 in Dundee, Scotland. My cousin Noel Blair McCullough CBS #58 gave the photo to me years ago. The sampler is the possession of one of her relatives.



I would like to make contact with the current owner of this sampler and hopefully get a better photographic copy, as it has given me many excellent clues to finding our common ancestors William Blair (1765-1821), his wife Janet Wallace (abt 1770-1825) and their ancestry.

There are several family members who descend from this Blair line, but no one actually descended from Mary Helen, who never married and died at age 69. If you can make out initials above the WS on the right side, that is one of my current focuses.

WS is the father of DS (David Scott) who with JH (Janet Hepburn) were parents of ES (Elizabeth Scott) who married PB (Patrick/Peter Blair). Another mystery I would like to solve is the initials AH at the end of the list of initials on the lower line.

Janet Wallace Brown, Vancouver, Washington.
Nerfect55@hotmail.com

This is the Clan Blair Society Store

April 7 is National Tartan Day in the USA. We have plenty of Blair kilt pins, necklaces, cap badges and key fobs at just \$15 for members. We have yards of Tartan, wool is \$45-yard and the cotton twill is \$15-yard for members. Let me know your interest. Helen L. Blair at az_blair@cox.net or call 480-807-4024.

Our Colorado Clan Report

The Colorado Clan Blair First Annual Burns Supper was Jan 31 at the home of Jim and Adoree Blair with fifteen CBS members attending. Torin Blair gave the *Address to the Haggis* and did a terrific job on his first time, Huzzah! Scotch tasting was a central point of the evening, with seven brands to choose from including *Blair Athol*.

The photo shows our 15 members attending this event as the kick-off for planning of the CBS 2009 AGM scheduled for August 7-9 in Highlands Ranch Colorado.

We are hosting the AGM during the Rocky Mountain Highlands Games held in Highlands Ranch on August 8-9. Hotel accommodations for fellow members, friends and family are in progress. We will hold our annual meeting for all members during the games on Saturday with a banquet that evening at a new local Celtic Tavern. This is a two-day event, so visitors can enjoy Colorado in the summer and the games activity. We will arrange an informal gathering Friday evening the 7th. Please plan on joining us for the Colorado hosted AGM this summer.

Slainté, Jim Blair and Leslie Blair Gallagher



Arabella Blair, Noah Tichey, Atia Blair (in Torin's arms), Torin Blair, Quaintance Hawthorne Blair, Quinnlin Blair, Jim Blair, Adoree Blair, Nick Shryack, Erynn Blair Shryack, Leslie Blair Gallagher, Mike Galligan, Dyani Blair Galligan, Tiernan James Blair Galligan (in Dyani's arms), Saoirse Blair Galligan.

Imagine, the Clan Blair banner is held by 5-year old Arabella, and two three-year-olds Quinnlin and Saoirse (with Grammy Adoree's help).

New Email Addresses

68 Bart L BLAIR bartblair@sbcglobal.net
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#409 Stephen A & Ann Reich BLAIR sablair@post.com
#526 Whit Blair & Rosemary Young whit@lionsshield.net
#823 Colonel William J BLAIR varanger@cox.net
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#967 Margaret E. BUSH mebush2005@tx.rr.com

Arizona Commissioner, Helen Blair

Feb 21-22 is the 45th Annual Arizona Scottish Gathering and Highland Games in downtown Phoenix at the Margaret T. Hance Park on Central Ave. This will be the second year at this location and it should go smoother. There is a light rail stop two blocks from the park, free parking with shuttles and valet parking.

Bands, dancers, competitions galore along with a big kids area, music, a beer garden and scotch tasting, oh my. Game information and advance-discounted tickets are available on their website www.arizonascots.com. We will have two tents with Bob, Andrew, Yanni and I.

March 28 will be the 6th Annual Verde Valley Games. The new location is Sunnyside Park, 30 E. Hwy 260, Camp Verde, AZ 86322. 10am to 5pm, perfect to take a little drive to spend the afternoon. There will be a kid's area, pipes and drums, Highland Dancers, Scottish entertainment, beer garden, sheep dogs and a tug-o-war. We are looking forward to check out the new site.

April 7 is National Tartan Day in the US Wear your Blair Tartan with pride.

May 16 is the 15th Annual Prescott Highland Games at Watson Park, a beautiful location and growing; always such a nice getaway from the Valley heat. See the information at www.prescottareacelticsociety.com.

Membership Dues are payable in January. Please send your check for \$20 to Membership 7516 E. Hermosa Vista Dr. Mesa AZ 85207 or go to the Membership page at Clanblair.org to pay by credit or PayPal.

The Clan Blair Treasury

I received a nice email from Erin Blair of Canada that there was some unclaimed money in the name of Clan Blair Society in Canada. While investigating, I found that the account had not been used since January 1994. The bank wanted to know the name of who opened the account. In talking with early members of CBS, I was at a standstill on who opened the account.

After many letters, I finally inundated the bank with CBS information and old membership lists. It had to be a member who opened the account. Last week we received a check for \$520.83. Thank you Erin for your eagle eye.

Financially, we are healthy. We have \$6,966 in our checking, \$10,564 in our CD and \$2,388 in our store account. Its time for Commissioners to email or send in their receipts for reimbursement of approved expenses. Helen Blair az_blair@cox.net or treasurer@clanblair.org

Clan Blair President Helen

I cannot believe it is 2009. Storms have hit most of our nation hard with snow, ice and rain. We are lucky, expecting only a cold spell with some rain. I have been negligent in my duties the last few months while everyone else has been working hard.

Allen is working on our newsletter to get it print and email-ready. Bob and Shawn Blair have been collecting messages from 96 members who want their newsletter sent by email. This will really help lower our printing and mailing expenses.

With the weak economy, our CBS CD is not making much money, but it is safe. We have sufficient resources for our Commissioners' reimbursement for attending Games and for our 2009 AGM in Colorado, August 8-9. We hope that Blairs will save their quarters to come visit. Colorado is beautiful in the summertime with a lot to see and do and an opportunity to connect with your clan.

We still need state commissioners and the ones we have could really use some help. If everyone could volunteer just one weekend a year, we could host more Games with less strain on key individuals. Think about it and lend a hand. Anyone interested in becoming a helper or commissioner, contact me or Stuart Blair our High Commissioner at Thistleman@verison.net, 410-665-6440.

Computers: Shawn Blair has set up a CBS forum. Sign in and check it out. <http://forums.clanblair.org>. Another easy way to keep in touch with each other and important issues!

On the Mend: Colorado Commissioner Jim Blair is recuperating from knee surgery. Phil Blair of Prescott Arizona is recuperating from Valley Fever in his ankle.

Daughter of Donna and Phil Blair Hill: Julie Lynn (Hill) Oring is doing great 14 months after her 12 hours of oral cancer surgery at The University of Michigan Hospital. Her "baseline MRI" indicated she was free of cancer at that time. We pray that her progress continues.

Southern California Commissioners Frances Holt, Bud and Vicky Bartlett

Costa Mesa Games, May 2008:

It was special to be back in Costa Mesa after three years of Memorial Day games in Pomona. We enjoyed good attendance in spite of the rain. Both days, Bud was recognized along with other war veterans during the clan parade. Sunday, we had our own VIP – Clan member E. Bill Blair of Pasadena in his 1943 Army Air Corps uniform. Many people stopped by to shake his hand. Bill was a pilot in B-24 bombers in WWII.

We welcomed a number of members, including Thomas Blair of Pahoia, Hawaii; Pamela and John Roeth of Placentia; and Larry Blair and Cindi Austen of Running Springs. Members Bryan Blair and Jamie Irey announced their engagement and plans to be married in October 2008.

We met many new visitors, Gary Blair of Mission Viejo, Thom Blair of Orange; Charles White of Newport; Dianne Woodcroft and John Arambula of Crestline; Grant Ross of San Clemente; Jan Blair Wensink and friend Sheila of Huntington Beach; Gary and Carol Fraser of Northridge; Clarissa Kenney of Orange; Josephine Morris of Rancho Cucamonga; and Rob Nichols of La Habra.

Seaside Games in October 2008: Our favorite location Ventura was a bit cool, but the ocean air was refreshing. We welcomed Seth Blair of Port Hueneme, Jesse and Shelly Blair of Point Mugu and James Vaughan of Fort William, Scotland. Members visiting included Maureen Blair, Richard Siebold of Encino, Steven Blair of Oxnard with family Brian, Jennifer, and Scott Blair of Oxnard.

Come join us at these Southern California Games:

- Costa Mesa – May 23 and 24, 2009
<http://www.unitedscottishsociety.com/games.htm>
- Ventura – October 10 and 11, 2009
<http://www.seaside-games.com/>



Bud Bartlett, Jamie Irey, Bryan Blair, Vicky, E. Bill Blair

Congratulations to Jamie and Bryan who were married October 4, 2008. The wedding party was splendid in their Scottish attire, as were many guests. Bryan is the son of Barbara Blair, CBS Member #7 and the late Lawrence D. Blair of Waukegan, Illinois.

Membership Report, Bob Blair

This Quarter will mark the first time we issue *Blair Buidhinn* in PDF format for delivery by email. So far, we have 96 members who have elected to receive the newsletter this way. We will continue to print copies for those who do not have access to email, but I encourage everyone to switch to this new way of receiving the newsletter. We have 108 members with email who have not chosen to receive it this way.

Here are some of the advantages of getting the newsletter in this format. **Get it quicker.** We will place the PDF version on internet the same day we send it to the printers. **Color Photos.** The PDF version will have color photos, when the originals are in color.

Cost savings to the Society. We continue to keep the dues at \$20 for the 22nd year. Savings on printing and mailing cost will allow us to do this well into the future. **Easier to read.** When you have a PDF file, you can enlarge the print as much as you like.

Connect to members. Did you ever want to contact someone who had their email in the newsletter? With a PDF version, there is an automatic hyperlink inserted in the document. Just press the Ctrl key and click on the email address, and you will go directly to a new mail message addressed to the email you clicked.

Read Out Loud. The Adobe reader has a function that will read the document for you. Just go to the view menu and activate the readout loud function. Then you can read either the whole document, or just the page you select. With a PDF file, you can always print out a hard copy, and if the dog eats it, you can just print out another.

Bob Blair, Membership Chair, Data_janitor@cox.net

Barbara Blair Pixley of California #294 Award Winning Family Website

If you want to see an excellent example of how to present your family history, ancestors and Scottish heritage go to Barbara's webpage. Barbara has created a wonderful collection of photos, stories and genealogy trees to showcase her proud heritage. Here is one of many stories about her Blairs and the Scottish influence in America. <http://pixleyblair.tribalpages.com/tribe/browse?userid=pixleyblair&view=78&rand=255522831&storyid=2308>

Some Memories of a Blair Ancestor: Traveling westward many Scots settled in western Pennsylvania. Family historian Effie Blair Wall said that our ancestor "Robert Blair and other colonists migrated over the mountains to the head-waters of the Allegheny and descended it in flat boats to the Ohio River and settled in Beaver County, Pa. He took up a farm at Tomlinson's Run near Florence Mills and Hookstown..."

A grandson, Rev. David Humphrey Blair noted that in Pennsylvania (in the late 1900s) he "had seen the cabin his grandfather Robert built when he settled there. I think it was in York County." Cousin Effie notes that it was Beaver County and built in 1800 when the family came from York County. *For more go to the webpage.*

See an ancestor? Contact Barbara at Btroypix@aol.com

Welcome to New Clan Members

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#1021 Anne & Thomas CANON
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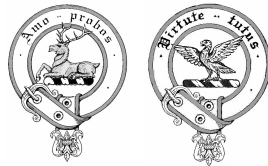
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