



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

First Quarter- February 2018



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

February 2018

Fellow Scots:

Robert Burns’ birthday has been celebrated and St. Patrick’s Day is near. Spring time is on the horizon and CBS members across the country have been enjoying Scottish events and our heritage. Our Clan Commissioners have prepared reports and pictures that are included in this newsletter. It appears that the New Year 2018 has been great for you and your Scottish network.

I would like to express my gratitude to Russell McCrary, new Membership Chair, for stepping into the large shoes of Charlie Diman. Russ has launched the annual membership renewal process which invites all members to send their dues via paper check or credit card at clanblair.org. Those of you that have not completed renewal will be receiving a gentle nudge. Please renew NOW!

Also, Elena McCrary, CBS Librarian, has been busy connecting with the head librarian at the Odom Genealogy Library in Moultrie, GA. She writes a great story for this newsletter. Please let her know your questions. Thank you to Elena.

Many thanks go out to Shawn Blair and Nick Shryack for their continued efforts to upgrade and

redevelop the Clan Blair Society website. New membership and store pages are expected, and you will receive notices via the web-mail application.

In this newsletter you will see a new LOGO for Clan Blair Society. It has been designed by the Board, with assistance from graphic artist Doug Blair in Portland, OR. You will see refinement in the stag shape and dove characteristics. It is now the standard for all CBS publications. If you plan to produce printed material, please contact Shawn or Nick for the official JPG or Vector Graphics files.

Please consider your personal involvement in your State Clan and/or the CBS leadership team. I encourage your sharing ideas with High Commissioner Bill Blair at CBSclantent1@clanblair.org or me.

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

Jim Blair

president@clanblair.org

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Spring Webinar

March 10, 2018

The Board will host our Spring Webinar on Saturday March 10 at 10 am MST. The subjects to be presented via the ZOOM webinar service are:

- Discussion on DNA use to explore your genealogy – Russ McCrary and Whit Young
- Introduction to the Victoria BC Highland Games – May 18-21 – Bill Blair

The webinar is 1 hour in length. Shawn has sent the ZOOM web invitation via email. The presentation will be recorded and available for viewing on the Clanblair.org website – <http://members.clanblair.org>.

NEW CBS LOGO



The CBS Board has been developing a new logo for use by members across the country. We found that each of us were getting creative in design of Clan Blair clothing, banners, flags and other materials. It is time to standardize around one logo which we present in this newsletter. The artistic design was provided by Doug Blair from Portland, OR and you will notice changes in the face of the stag and the character of the dove.

Going forward this logo is the only “official” image for Clan Blair Society. Please feel free to use existing materials, banners, flags, etc. until all are retired. New materials should use this logo. Shawn Blair can provide jpg and vector graphic files for digital use. The Board requests that any deviation from the design be preapproved. Please forward such requests to president@clanblair.org.

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HIGH COMMISSIONER’S REPORT **William Blair, Oregon and FSA High** **Commissioner**

Re: 155th Victoria Highland Games & Celtic Festival

Greetings,

We are about to embark on a new season of Highland Games, Celtic Festivals, and other events celebrating our Scottish heritage. This year we look forward to celebrating a very special event with you, if you can possibly work it into your schedule.

This year marks the 155th Victoria Highland Games & Celtic Festival in Victoria, BC, Canada. Not only is this event the third oldest Highland Games in North America, this year it will host the World Championships in the heavy events (or, as I like to describe it, “large persons in skirts throwing heavy objects”).



The event this year will commence with a welcoming ceremony for the attending clans, to be held Friday afternoon, May 18, 2018 on the steps of the iconic B.C. Parliament Building. I anticipate that there will be, as in years past, a formal VIP reception for clan officers in the Armory of the Canadian Scottish Regiment on Bay Street.

The official events of the games begin on Saturday, May 19, and continue through Monday, May 22. The Victoria Games & Festival is held at the same time as the three-day weekend celebration of Victoria Days, so there will be much to see and do in this amazing city: Visit the renowned Butchart Gardens. Have tea at the Empress Hotel. Stroll the quaint shops of Bastion Square. Tour Craigdarroch Castle, Victoria’s version of a 19th Century Scottish manor house... The list just goes on and on. Suffice to say that Victoria is one of my favorite cities in North America.

Venue for the Games is Topaz Park, a short drive north of downtown on Rte. 17. Downtown and near-downtown hotels are within easy access.

Please get word out to CBS members and family in your state. If there is enough interest, I will try to arrange a block of rooms for us. Lowest advertised prices for above average (but not lavish) hotels run around \$130 to \$140/night, US\$, and most include a continental breakfast.

Please note that you will need a current passport book or passport card to travel between the U.S. and Canada by land or sea, but *only* a passport book will allow you to travel by air between the U.S. and Canada. Children 16 and under need a passport book to travel back and forth by air, but only need proof of citizenship (such as a government-issued birth certificate) to travel by land or sea. Passports must be valid for at least six months after entering Canada.

If you are interested in attending the Victoria Games, please let me know – especially if you are interested in group hotel rates – and I will provide you more detailed information on other regulations and travel tips.

Looking forward to seeing you in Victoria!

Slàinte,



CBSciantent1@clanblair.org

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OREGON REPORT

Bill Blair, Oregon Commissioner

We enjoyed the Burns Night Supper in Eugene on the 27th of January, and we are now firming up our busy schedule of games and festivals for the spring and summer. By the time you read this, we should have attended the first annual Burns Celebration hosted by the Celtic Heritage Alliance in McMinnville, Oregon. The CHA almost folded its tent last year but has been re-invigorated with new leadership and a move from the Oregon Coast to McMinnville in the Willamette Valley. Unfortunately, the move came a bit late for a more traditional date to celebrate the Immortal Bard, but – well, better late than never.

Our first Highland Games will be in **Victoria, B.C., May 18-21**. More on that elsewhere in the newsletter. If we survive Victoria intact and with sufficient energy reserves, we will be at the **Eugene Highland Games on May 26**.

Clan Blair will be back in McMinnville for the first annual **McMinnville Scottish Festival, June 9 and 10** at Linfield College. Anyone who can make the trip to McMinnville in June should allow an extra day or two

for wine touring. McMinnville is located in the heart of Oregon’s wine country, with an abundance of tasting rooms and wineries to visit. If you plan to attend, let me know and we can put together a tour to some of my favorite tasting rooms and vineyards – including Anam Cara. Nick and Sheila (nee MacRae) Nicholas own the vineyard and bottle exquisite pinots. They are good friends of ours. Sheila was born and raised in Scotland. The name “Anam Cara” is Scots-Gaelic for “soul friend.”

July 20 and 21 will see the Clan Blair tent pitched at the **Portland Highland Games**, to be held, as it has been for many years, at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, just east of Portland.

We will be at the **Douglas County Highland Games and Celtic Festival August 1719** in Winston, Oregon. We’re still waiting to hear whether the McKenzie Highland Games & Celtic Gathering will take place this year. Sadly, they went seriously in the red last year because of the smoke and fallout from the monster wildfires east of Springfield, compounded by a downpour the first evening of the event.

Hope to see you at the Games! *Slàinte!*

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COMMISSIONERS REPORT

February 17, 2018

reclanblair@gmail.com

A hearty welcome to all as a New Year is upon us. As we think about what is to come we are also looking back and thinking of those who have taken the High Road before us. Family and friends who touched so many lives will always be remembered with love. How fortunate we are to have been given, with Gods good graces, the opportunity to be a part of the lives of those we have loved and lost.

With the Highland Games getting ready to kick into high gear here in Northern California, we are cleaning tents and all our gear for the first festival of the year. April 7th will be the first festival on the calendar. As a matter of fact, it was our first festival as commissioners last year. Clan Blair was awarded Best Clan Tent, and Dr. Bill Blair was so proud for the clan. His spirit will be with us always.

FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

Joan B. Martin

Tom E. Martin, son of Joan B. Martin (member #549) passed away on May 9, 2017. He sent the following obituary:



“Joan B. Martin passed away peacefully on Sunday, May 7, 2017. She was 97. Born in Brooklyn, NY, she grew up in Ramsey, NJ and was a longtime resident of Waldwick. Joan was an executive secretary at Permutt in Paramus, NJ, and other fortune 500 companies before retiring. She was in the Women’s Army Corps, during WWII, and was a longtime member of the Twins Mothers’ Club of Bergen County and held various positions within that organization. Joan is predeceased by her husband Eugene B. Martin; daughter Mary Martin and son Peter Martin. Joan is survived by her three sons: Thomas E. Martin, Daniel E. Martin, Christopher B. Martin, his wife Kathleen; six grandchildren, Laura, Geoffrey, Andrew, Colin, Carolyn and Theresa; six great-grandchildren...”

Have a safe and fantastic year at the Highland Games and Gatherings this year and remember to give a helping hand to all Commissioners throughout the land. As we started this newsletter we are looking forward and are including a look back:.

Highland Games that are confirmed on the calendar are shown below. Come out and join us if you can. Clan tents will be there to welcome all.

Tartan Day Scottish Fair/ Fremont, CA
April 7, 2018
<http://www.eastbayscots.org/>

Woodland Celtic Games & Festival/ Woodland, CA
April 28-29, 2018
<http://woodlandcelticgames.org/>

The Mother Lode Highland Games & Celtic Festival
Plymouth, CA
June 9-10, 2018
<http://www.motherlodgames.com/>

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Ardblair Castle, Blairgowrie, Scotland

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NEWS FROM THE CLAN BLAIR LIBRARY – Changes have arrived!

Elena Mc Crary, Clan Blair Librarian

In my most recent check-in with Irene Godwin I learned that the Ellen Payne Odom Genealogical Library and

The Clan Blair collection has been boxed up, and placed in storage. Why you ask? Because for the next eight months the Moultrie-Colquitt County Library is undergoing expansion and renovation, and our library holdings will not be available until after it re-opens sometime in the fall of 2018. God willing, I will be able to attend the re-opening.

If you have an item that you borrowed, please do not return it to the Georgia library, but forward it to: Elena McCrary 29 Haven Pl., San Ramon, CA 94583. All returns will be accounted for, and I will happily respond with a phone call, and email.

What does this mean for Clan Blair, our new Commissioners, or those hosting Clan Blair tents at gatherings? We collaborate. As the society has grown, so have the collections of individuals. Again, this is my opportunity to ask anyone if they have multiple copies of a resource to let me know. Or, if you know of someone who wishes to donate an item to our collection feel free to contact me, Elena McCrary at CBSLibrary@clanblair.org Phone: (925) 833-9695.

Of interest to you, all items donated to The Clan Blair Society collection must be tagged, "For Circulation" otherwise the item will be non-circulating. Thank you all for your dedication to the collection. Also, requests for photocopies are suspended until our collection is in its expanded new home. Thank you.

Gràdh do na h-uile,

(Love for all)

Elena

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COLORADO REPORT

Leslie Blair Gallagher, Colorado Commissioner

The Colorado contingent celebrated the Bard of Scotland with our annual Burn's Supper on February 3. We had 48 people in attendance. Our newest Colorado Blair, Elisa (Torin Blair) received her modern Blair tartan kilted skirt, much to her delight. As always, Torin did a fine rendition of the Ode to the Master of the Pudding Race. Great food, Haggis balls, Blair Athol single malt and wonderful company. See our picture and attendees below:.



Front Row, L to R: Sara Buys, Leslie Blair-Gallagher, Beth Simmons, Brenna Simmons, Leigh Ramsey, Jack Ramsey, Reid Simmons, Shawn Simmons, Tiernan Blair-Galligan, Erynn Blair-Shryack, Cordylia Blair-Shryack, Lochlann Blair-Shryack, Nick Shryack.

2nd Row, L to R: Mary (Mc Laughlin Clanahan, Bill Clanahan, Jean Stewart, Russ Rainey, Marianne Blair, Ineke Cordova, Cassidy Caulkins, Arabella Blair, Quinlinn Blair, Atia Blair, Kim Blair, Bonnie Blair-Mustoe, Beth Shryack, Anne Blair.

3rd Row, L to R: Liz Blair, Bob Blair, Medeline Blair-Leman, Caitlin Bauer, Steve Shryack, Austin Simmons, Janet McLaughlin, Jim Blair, Curtis Blair.

4th Row, L to R: Saoirse Blair-Galligan, Dyani Blair-Galligan, Matt Plamp, Elisa Blair, Torin Blair, Kay Wetterman, Scott Mc Laughlin, Brian Sides, Brian and Ethan Sides.

Not pictured but present: Adoree Blair, Shayla Tanner, Tony Gallagher.

Genealogy

Arise Ye Sons and Daughters of Blair!!! TRACING YOUR BLAIR ANCESTRY

**Whit Young, Clan Blair Family History
Consultant**

So you want to trace your Blair ancestry? It's possible. There are things you need to know – much about yourself. Many people want to start with someone way back in history. That is much more of a problem that you may not be prepared for. There's a better way.

Begin with yourself and gradually work back. You will need: 1. Patience with slow progress, 2. Endurance appropriate, divorce date. Repeat the process with each parent, adding death dates and places when appropriate. Repeat with each grandparent and go back as far as you can. Repeat with your own siblings, aunts, uncles, etc. and keep going back.

Sound simple? It gets tougher. Be accurate and record sources of information. If you are missing information, then be prepared to do detective work. Family Bibles and discussions with relatives or their friends may be helpful. Train yourself to be skeptical. Many families have legends, myths, and family stories that are not true, but these stories may give you clues. Best are primary sources such as government vital records and church records of births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths. Also good are wills, military service records, and census records. Books from local libraries on family genealogies and information from historical societies are helpful. The L.D.S. Church has Family History Centers located throughout the U.S. and other countries. These centers are manned by volunteers, dedicated well-trained but usually amateur genealogists. Help is given without charge to anyone who comes in, and they will not try to convert you to Mormonism

This advice will give you a good start on your own Family History and get you a long way down the road. Beware – this work can become very rewarding and addicting!

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Elisa Blair in new kilt, Dyani Blair Galligan and Erynn Blair Shryack. All are wearing Blair kilts made by Leslie Blair-Gallagher

The Rocky Mountain Scottish Games hosted by the Saint Andrew's Society of Colorado are returning to the Denver Metro area after a 4-year sojourn in the mountains. They will now be held in Edgewater (far northwest Denver) the 1st weekend of August. We are putting this event back on the schedule.

The next event will be the St. Patrick's Day parade in downtown Denver. We will march with the St. Andrew's Society and with 200,000 or our best friends. Next is Tartan Day held at the Boulder County Fairgrounds in Longmont, CO, the first weekend of April.

The next games after Tartan Day will be the Scotts Bluff, ND Celtic Festival (We are seeking a ND Commissioner. If you have any suggestions or are interested in the position, contact Jim Blair, President). Then after that will be Pikes Peak Celtic Festival, which are held in June at Memorial Park, Colorado Springs, CO.

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A LITTLE LIGHT READING



The "Meeting Point" statue in Buchanan Bus Station, Glasgow

True – well, at least partially true – stories from Scotland:

Scotrail are trying hard to keep customers informed about the reasons for the late running of trains. So when the train arrived at Edinburgh from Glasgow and the doors remained shut, the loud speaker announcement ran something like this - *"We would like to apologize to passengers for the late opening of the doors. This is due to the guard's incompetence. This incompetence was caused by an accident at birth and everything possible is being done to rectify the situation."*



Frankie Boyle, Scottish comedian and writer: "In Scotland, we have mixed feelings about global warming, because we will get to sit on the mountains and watch the English drown..."



A Scots boy came home from school and told his mother he had been given a part in the school play. *"Wonderful,"* says the mother, *"What part is it?"* The boy says *"I play the part of the Scottish husband!"* The mother scowls and says: *"Go back and tell your teacher you want a speaking part."*

In the middle of foggy night in the North-west Atlantic....two lights are heading directly for one another... and on the radio an American voice is heard saying *"We suggest you alter course by 10 degrees to*

port". Back comes the reply *"We suggest YOU alter course by 10 degrees to port!"* Then the American voice says *"This is the battleship USS Missouri leading the American Atlantic battle fleet. You had better alter course by 10 degrees to port."* Back comes the reply *"This is the Outer Hebrides lighthouse, but it's your call, Jimmy".*

NEWS FROM VIRGINIA

Submitted by John Blair, (Son of the Founder of Clan Blair Society) Virginia Commissioner

The Richmond Celtic Festival was a two-day event. It was well-attended on Saturday but the typical Scottish weather on Sunday lessened the crowds. These games always have a huge array of vendors, pipe bands, dancers and amateur and professional athletes. A new Celtic Music Heritage tent was sponsored by Clan Curry. Bog Curry, a friend of Norman Blair, the founder of Clan Blair Society, hosted the tent and gave as an opportunity to reminisce about Norman.



L to R: Lisa Noppenberger (niece), Chris Blair holding Connor Blair (grandson of John and Judy) granddaughter Ella Blair, Tonya Blair, Judy Blair, Sarah Blair Bishop and John Blair

We won the Celtic Spirit Award this year due to our engaging on the public regarding all things Scottish and the displays of the rich history of the Blairs in Virginia. Come join us next October in Richmond.

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**A BIT ABOUT BLAIRGOWRIE,
 SCOTLAND**

Blairgowrie and Rattray is a twin burgh in Perth and Kinross, Scotland. People who live in Blairgowrie call it, simply, "Blair." Blairgowrie is the larger of the two former burghs. The Burghs were united by Parliament in 1928. Blairgowrie is on the Southwest side of the River Ericht, and Rattray is on the northeast side. Blairgowrie and Rattray developed over the centuries at the crossroads of several historic routes from other cities, such as Perth, Coupar Angus, Alyth and Braemar. The town's centrepiece is the Wellmeadow, a grassy triangle in the middle of town which hosts regular markets and outdoor entertainment.



Town Center of Blairgowrie, and Wellmeadow



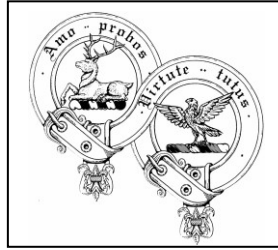
Ardblair Castle is 0.75 miles west of Blairgowrie in Perth and Kinross, Scotland.

Clan Blair Society Executive Board & Chairs of Standing Committees 02-2018

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CLAN BLAIR SOCIETY

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