



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, Feb/March 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:



Shawn Blair

Welcome to the February 2020 Blair Bruidhinn. This is what we've called the Clan Blair Society newsletter since the early 1990s. Adoree, our editor, is our longest standing editor to date. We're very grateful for her efforts as she's been publishing fine issues for so long. Please be sure to drop her a note and let her know if you enjoy the newsletter.

The new CBS board is carrying on the monthly meetings to stay on top of clan business and planning. Along with a few veterans, our newest members are enthusiastic and looking forward to leading an exciting year in the society. There are several projects in the works to continue to add value to society membership and help our volunteers in their work. We'll announce these efforts as we roll them out in future newsletters.

Scottish activities are heating up again as spring approaches with summer close in our

daydreams. Tartan Day is April 6th. You can get involved by attending Tartan Day events, parades and spreading the word. Check your area for a parade and check with your state commissioner if they'll be marching. Join them if you can! Festivals are happening even in the early months, so watch for those events near you. If your state commissioner is hosting a tent, please join them and lend a hand. More importantly, support them by attending, passing the word, and stop by to say hello.

One of the projects we're working on is a list of events our commissioners will be attending. We hope to have it on the website by summer, so be sure to watch for it. If you know of an event in your area that you're thinking of attending, please send it to Leslie, our clan secretary. Remember, you can contact any clan officer, committee chair, or commissioner through our contact forms on the clanblair.org.

One last item I'd like to talk about for this issue is news of changes in the Blair DNA Project. Terry Blair, co-chair of Blair DNA Project has advised that the process for obtaining the DNA test has changed. Please see the article later in this issue.

If you're on Facebook, join us on the Clan Blair Society group. This group welcome members and non-members of CBS. Ask questions about Blair heritage, Scotland, or Scottish activities. We have some good conversations happening.

Have a great spring!

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**William Campbell Blair Youth Award
By Jim Blair**

Clan Blair Society launches the 4th year of the WC Blair Youth Award in 2020. This is a recognition of an outstanding youth member of the Society who is nominated by their family or friends for extraordinary contributions to Scottish heritage in the forms of music, dance, art, athletics, scholastics, theatre/performance or support of CBS activities. The recipient receives recognition at the AGM and a \$500 award.

The nomination materials are found later in this newsletter. Nominations must be received by June 30. Please consider nominating an outstanding youth member this year. Questions can be forwarded to Jim Blair at vicepres@clanblair.org

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CLAN STORE

By Jim Blair

Orders from the Clan Store have increased significantly since the introduction of the new www.clanblair.org website. A number of Blair House DVDs, shirts, note pads and pieces of jewelry have been ordered and fulfilled using the site. The process seems to be working quite well. Many thanks to Nick Shryack and Shawn Blair for the website design and ordering/fulfillment process. CBS members please go to <https://clanblair.net/cbsmembers/shop> to shop and order. Questions can be forwarded to vicepres@clanblair.org

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Robert Burns

**A RED, RED ROSE
BY ROBERT BURNS**

O my Luve is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luve is like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

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Clan Blair Society
Colorado Burns Supper
By Jim Blair



Torin Blair leading the Parade of Presentation of the Haggis

In 2020 the Colorado CBS Co-Commissioners Leslie Blair Gallagher and Jim Blair initiated an annual Burns Supper to honor the memory of the famous Scottish Poet Robert Burns. The event is hosted on the Saturday in January closest to Burns birthday January 25.

Celebrate
Robert
Burns!



Nick Shryack pouring toasts with Blair Atholl Scotch



The 2020 event was hosted on January 25 at the home of Elisa and Torin Blair. Guests were invited from the email lists of visitors to the CBS tents at four festivals. We invite Blairs and family members and a wide assortment of friends. The invite list is now about 100 and this year we hosted 74. All bring pot-luck contributions of food, Scottish fare, wine/beer and yes, single malt whiskey.



The celebration of Robert Burns includes great fun and lots of laughter. Torin Blair presents the Haggis (which is in the form of Haggis meatball appetizers, wrapped and broiled in bacon – recipe follows). We parade the Haggis around the house with everyone taking part. The march is finished with Torin’s Ode to the Haggis and drenching the appetizers with single malt. The final toast to the Haggis is with Blair Athol 12-year single malt from Pitlochry, Scotland. Following the Ode is the toast to the Lassies and then the Laddies, followed by a Scottish prayer. This year was quite special in that a friend who attend his first Burns Supper with us two years ago proposed to his fiancé while on bended knee.

Because of that Burns Supper this couple met and fell in love – we think it quite a story.



Colorado Burns Supper Group

Food is consumed throughout the evening and good fellowship is had by all. This is a special and extremely easy event to host – mostly because our Scottish friends are always ready for a party. The event is in the wintertime when other activities are dormant. Feedback we receive from participants is very positive and the word gets out that the Blair’s host a great gathering. Please send me your questions at vicepres@clanblair.org.

... “And so we toast the daughters of the Celts, and *All* the members of the fairer sex who are the inheritors of the *Spirit* of the Celts, as celebrated in the verse of Robert Burns, in all their beauty, dignity, strength, and, yes, in their ferocity.

“A woman can make an average man great, and a great man average...”

----- Robert Burns



Wedding proposal – Brian Sides, Erin Barette

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**Blair DNA Project Information:
By Shawn Blair**

There have been several questions on Clan Blair Society Facebook about getting feedback on the Blair DNA Project and test submission. I have heard from the co-chair, Terry Blair on changes that have occurred. Hopefully this post will answer your questions and help you get your tests submitted.

The Family Tree DNA, who processes the DNA tests, have changed a lot of things lately. The Blair DNA Project used to be able to accept applications on the website and process a discounted order for the DNA tests. This is no longer possible. So, the DNA tests must be purchased on FamilyTreeDNA.com. The Y-DNA 37 marker test is the minimum test provided, but this only confirms 'close' relatives.

**Haggis Balls – Appetizer
By
Jim Blair**

This appetizer is quite easy to prepare and includes:

Canned Haggis – Stahly Traditional Scottish ordered from Amazon 15 oz.

Serves 25

2- cans Haggis in a large bowl

2 – beaten eggs

1 – cup of breadcrumbs

Season to taste with salt, onion chips, garlic

Roll into golf ball size meatballs

Wrap each in ½ slice bacon – hold with a toothpick

Broil with medium heat (to minimize splatter) – about 15 minutes

Serve warm or at room temperature

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Terry suggests that the Y-DNA 111 marker test is the minimum test to purchase if there are any antecedents back to Scotland. Ultimately, he recommends the Big-Y (200) test.

Once you purchase your test on FTDNA, they'll send the kit to the purchaser. Have the direct Blair male descendant use the kit and return it. Whenever asked, please allow for sharing the results data or it won't be useful in doing any comparisons either in FTDNA or forums (Blair DNA Project is a forum you'll want to join.)

After purchasing your kit, you'll need to submit a Pedigree, an application, and a join request to the Blair DNA Project. I believe it will be through the blairdna.com site, but I have requested clarification. I have also asked about future updates to the results on the site.

The bottom line on the test is that the more markers (STR) that are determined from your test(s), the more detail can be developed for connections and DNA genealogy. DNA testing is a science with a lot of depth and technical terms. The Y-DNA test is specific to paternal dna information.

There are other tests that can provide other information. mtDNA develops maternal lineage DNA results. There is also a generic Family DNA test that is more like other tests (Ancestry, etc) that can connect cousins in general and a chart of your ancestry to regions. These don't, however, provide the information needed to compare for the Blair DNA Project (Y-dna).

Let me know if you have any questions. I will post any updates I receive on Blair DNA Project submissions or anything else related. The more people (direct line) that join the Blair DNA Project, the larger the database that will be available for analysis and developing individual lines. I hope this helps!

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Tale of the Marauders of Kilmarnock

From Tales of Ayrshire by Anna Blair

In the years when the Jacobite cause was simmering in other parts of Scotland, the south-west was largely uninterested in James, the King-over-the-water and his son, the darling Charlie. There was little intrusion into Ayrshire on their behalf and so a mild wave of excitement rippled over the town of Kilmarnock when a rumour spread that a party of Jacobites had raided Stewarton for supplies and was coming on to plunder Kilmarnock itself.



Kilmarnock in Scotland

The town of Drummer was sent out to patrol the streets and to give notice of a public meeting to devise ways for the citizens to protect themselves and their families, from what the town's leading men thought of as a wild and savage highlandman swarming over the civilized south.

The meeting took place and plans were made. A strong body of peaceable weaver and bonnet-makers was soon bravely playing soldiers armed with ancient swords, muskets, home-made spears and cudgels. A few rabble-rousers were rounded up to exhort the town army with slanderous shouts and speeches about sinful past on-goings by the mothers of Jacobites and the knavery and murderous wickedness of their sons. Fortified by the righteousness of their cause, the townsfolk boldly set off to march in a body towards Stewarton. Back at home, the womenfolk saw themselves as probably being under siege before nightfall and scurried about collecting everything they had of value, pewter, clothing, boots, plaids, money and food, and hiding it down their kailyard wells, under hedges or among the dangling thatch of their roofs.

Meanwhile, the menfolk, with their carefully unearthed colours flying, their drums beating and their bonnets bobbing as they straggled in a brave unmilitary procession, passed through the town-

centre, up by Soulis Street and Townheid. Half in dread, half in exultation, over the thought of coming conflict, they reached Craigsport where a snotty small boy thumbed a cheeky nose at them and told them it was 'a' lies. A more reliable herd on an outfield pasture told them that the boy was right and the story but a hoax.

And so the brave citizens of Kilmarnock, with their drums and their colours, turned back. They mustered at The Cross, fired their muskets in the air and called for three cheers for King George. In spite of not having had to face real blade thrust or shot fired in anger, for their willingness they were welcomed back with honour, and feted as heroes at Lucky Pinstoup's Houss.



Modern day Kilmarnock, Scotland

Kilmarnock is a large burgh in East Ayrshire, Scotland, with a population of 46,350, making it the 15th most populated place in Scotland and the second largest town in Ayrshire. The River Irvine runs through its eastern section, and the Kilmarnock Water passes through it, giving rise to the name 'Bank Street'.

Bit there was another. Sadder story of the Stuart Rising and its link with Kilmarnock, the tale of The Turncoat Earl. (to be continued)

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THE BLAIR STORE STORY



It all started with a simple black raincoat.

The year was 1910. Young John Blair, a law student at the University of Pennsylvania, was approached by a fellow student who had recently inherited a raincoat factory. Would he be interested in being a sales manager? Easter vacation and a train ride home to Warren was all the time John needed to make his decision.

With a suitcase of black raincoats in hand, he approached clothing store owners along his way. In one nearby town, he sold a lone coat to a customer - an undertaker. But the shop owner was reluctant to carry any more raincoats for just a few local undertakers.

John Blair was not about to give up. He decided the best way to reach the new market he had just created in his own mind - the market of undertakers who would certainly wear black raincoats - was by mail. So with just \$500 borrowed capital, he printed and mailed flyers across the country. And he sold 1200 raincoats in no

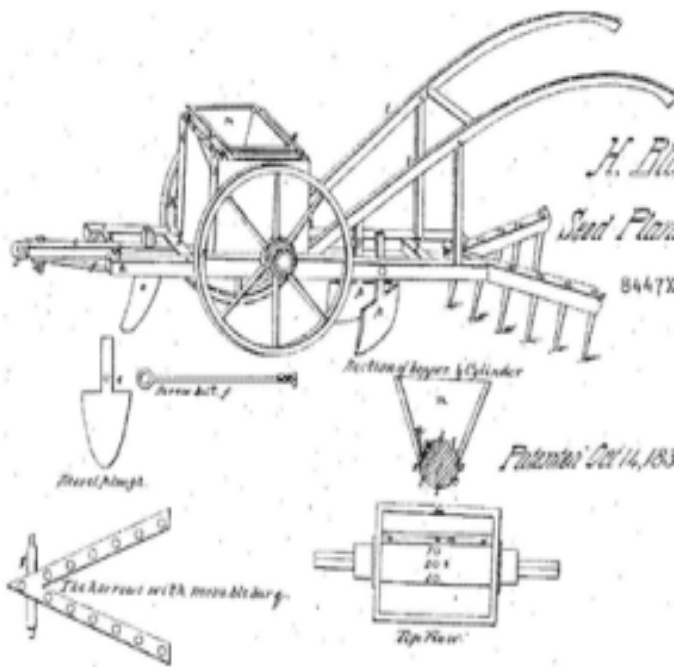
time! Thus, the New Process Company was created.

Over 100 years later, the store has changed its name to simply "Blair".

Blair is now part of a larger group of companies Blair company headquarters are still located in the small town of Warren, Pennsylvania. Plus, shoppers can visit Blair in person at the retail store in Warren, Pennsylvania

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**ANOTHER FAMOUS BLAIR,
HENRY BLAIR**



Henry Blair was an inventor and farmer best known as the second African American to hold a United States patent.

Henry Blair was born in Glen Ross, Maryland, in 1807. Blair was an African-American farmer who patented two devices designed to help boost agricultural productivity. In so doing, he

became the second African American to receive a United States patent. Little is known about Blair's personal life or family background. He died in 1860.

Although he came of age before the Emancipation Proclamation, Blair was apparently not enslaved and operated an independent business.

A successful farmer, Blair patented two inventions that helped him to boost his productivity. He received his first patent—for a corn planter—on October 14, 1834. The planter resembled a wheelbarrow, with a compartment to hold the seed and rakes dragging behind to cover them. This device enabled farmers to plant their crops more efficiently and enable a greater total yield. Blair signed the patent with an "X," indicating that he was illiterate.

Blair obtained his second patent, for a cotton planter, on August 31, 1836. This invention functioned by splitting the ground with two shovel-like blades that were pulled along by a horse or other draft animal. A wheel-driven cylinder behind the blades deposited seed into the freshly plowed ground. The design helped to promote weed control while distributing seeds quickly and evenly.

In claiming credit for his two inventions, Henry Blair became only the second African American to hold a United States patent. While Blair appears to have been a free man, the granting of his patents is not evidence of his legal status. At the time Blair's patents were granted, United States law allowed patents to be granted to both free and enslaved men. In 1857, a slave owner challenged the courts for the right to claim credit for a slave's inventions. Since an owner's slaves were his property, the plaintiff argued,

anything in the possession of these slaves was the owner's property as well.

The following year, patent law changed so as to exclude slaves from patent eligibility. In 1871, after the Civil War, the law was revised to grant all American men, regardless of race, the right to patent their inventions. Women were not included in this intellectual-property protection. Blair followed only Thomas Jennings as an African-American patent holder. Extant records indicate that Jennings received a patent in 1821 for the "dry scouring of clothes." Though the patent record contains no mention of Jennings's race, his background has been substantiated through other sources.

Henry Blair died in 1860

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**ANOTHER FAMOUS AMERICAN
BLAIR, JOHN BLAIR**



John Blair Jr. (April 17, 1732 – August 31, 1800) was an American politician, Founding Father and jurist.

Born in Williamsburg, Colony of Virginia Blair was a member of a prominent Virginia family. John Blair Sr., his father, served on the Virginia Council and was for a time acting Royal governor. His granduncle, James Blair, was founder and first president of the College of William & Mary. Blair attended William & Mary, receiving an A.B. in 1754. In 1755, he went to London to study law at the Middle Temple. Returning home to practice law, he was quickly thrust into public life, beginning his public career shortly after the close of the French and Indian War with his election to the seat reserved for the College of William and Mary in the House of Burgesses (1766–70). He went on to become clerk of the Royal Governor's Council, the upper house of the colonial legislature (1770–1775).

Blair originally joined the moderate wing of the Patriot cause. He opposed Patrick Henry's extremist resolutions in protest of the Stamp Act, but the dissolution of the House of Burgesses by Parliament profoundly altered his views. In response to a series of taxes on the colonies passed by Parliament, Blair joined George Washington and others in 1770 and agreements which pledged their supporters to cease importing British goods until the taxes were repealed. In the latter year he reacted to the British Parliament's passage of the Intolerable Acts by joining those calling for a Continental Congress and pledging support for the people of Boston who were suffering economic hardship because of Parliament's actions.



Jean Balfour Blair, John Blair Jr.'s wife, in a circa 1771 portrait by Cosmo John Alexander.

When the American Revolution began, Blair became deeply involved in the government of his state. He served as a member of the convention that drew up Virginia's constitution (1776) and held a number of important committee positions, including a seat on the Committee of 28 that framed the Virginia Declaration of Rights and plan of government. He served on the Privy Council, Governor Patrick Henry's major advisory group (1776–1778). The legislature elected him to a judgeship in the general court in 1778 and soon to the post of chief justice. He was also elected to Virginia's high court of chancery (1780), where his colleague was George Wythe, later a fellow delegate to the Constitutional Convention. The judicial appointments automatically made Blair a member of Virginia's first court of appeals.

On the Virginia Court of Appeals, Blair participated in *The Commonwealth of Virginia v. Caton et al.* (1782), which set the precedent that courts can deem legislative acts unconstitutional. The decision was a precursor to the US Supreme Court decision *Marbury v. Madison*.

In 1786, the legislature, recognizing Blair's prestige as a jurist, appointed him Thomas

Jefferson's successor on a committee revising the laws of Virginia. While crossing on foot an old bridge over a flooded river en route home from the Convention, Blair and Washington narrowly escaped an accident when one of the carriage horses fell through the bridge.

George Washington nominated Blair to the Supreme Court of the United States on September 24, 1789, and the United States Senate confirmed the nomination two days later. He took the prescribed judicial oath on February 2, 1790. The Court's caseload during Blair's tenure was light, with only 13 cases decided over six years. However, Blair participated in the Court's landmark case of *Chisholm v. Georgia*, which is considered the first United States Supreme Court case of significance and impact.

Blair resigned on October 25, 1795, and died in Williamsburg in 1800, at 68. He was buried at the Bruton Parish Episcopal Church Cemetery in Williamsburg.

Blair was a Freemason. He was named Grand Master of Freemasons in Virginia under the newly organized Grand Lodge of Virginia in 1778.

Blair Street in Madison, Wisconsin is named in his honor,

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One day Jock bought a bottle of fine whiskey and while walking home he fell. Getting up he felt something wet on his pants. He looked up at the sky and said, "Oh lord please I beg you let it be blood!"

Wullie was having his appendix out and was driving the doctor mad with questions. "Will Ah

be able to play the bagpipes after ma operation?" he asked. "Of course you will!" snapped the doctor. "That's amazing!" marvelled Wullie. "Ah couldna play them before!"

Notice in a shop in Fort William: We exchange anything - bicycles, washing machines etc. Why not bring your wife along and get a wonderful bargain?

A lady in Morningside who had been burgled was surprised when an insurance assessor told her that it was not just a question of writing a cheque for her losses. The company would undertake to replace items which had gone. *"In that case," said the lady, "I think I'll cancel the insurance policy I took out on my husband."*

McTavish was leaving the office late one evening when he saw his boss standing in front of the paper shredder, looking puzzled. *"D'you know how this thing works?"* asked the boss. *"Aye"* said McTavish, feeding the paper into the machine and pressing the start button. As the paper disappeared into the machine, he heard his boss say, *:Good. I need two copies, please!"*

SCOTTISH CRANACHAN

Hold back some of the crunchy oats and raspberries for a pretty topping, but don't hold back on the whisky! Takes very little time to prepare -



knob of [butter](#)

250g/9oz [mascarpone](#)

300ml/½ pint [double cream](#)

75ml/2½fl oz [whisky](#)

450g/1lb [raspberries](#)

100g/3½oz jumbo [oats](#)

100g/3½oz light muscovado [sugar](#)

1. Put the butter, sugar and oats in a saucepan and stir over a high heat for 4–5 minutes, or until toasted and crunchy. Set aside to cool.
2. Measure the mascarpone and cream into a bowl and whisk until soft peaks form when the whisk is removed from the bowl.
3. Add the whisky, 300g/10½oz raspberries and two-thirds of the cooled oats. Mix until combined, but try to keep the raspberries fairly whole.
4. Spoon into glasses and top with the remaining raspberries and crunchy oats

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SCOTTISH ARCEAOLGY DISCOVERIES

The Lewis Chessmen



In 1831, chess pieces were discovered in a sand dune on the Isle of Lewis. They were carved from walrus ivory and whale teeth into small statues depicting royalty, bishops, mounted knights, warders, and pawns. Beautifully detailed and measuring 6–10 centimeters (2–4 in) in height, the four distinct chess sets were incomplete but had 93 game pieces in all.

Even today, nobody knows where they came from or who made them. While some people believe the origins of these sets are Irish, Scottish, or English, it's most likely that Scandinavian hands formed the iconic pieces.

The figures appear to have been heavily influenced by Norse mythology. The age of the artifacts dates from the late 12th and early 13th centuries, a time when Norway owned the beach where they were found.

Despite being over eight centuries old, the condition of these chess sets is pristine, almost like they were never used. Another theory is that the chessmen aren't chess pieces at all but rather belong to a *hnefatafl* set, a game similar to chess. Whatever their true history, the Lewis chessmen remain one of Scotland's most famous ancient finds and the largest known group of objects to survive from that era.

The Loch Village



Photo credit: Christine Westerback

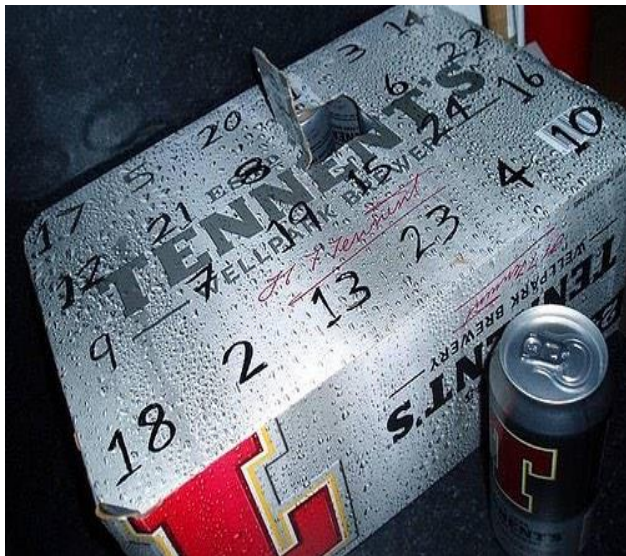
Originally, it was believed that Wigtownshire in southern Scotland was first inhabited by people who founded a church there in AD 397. However, in 2013, archaeologists were excavating a single crannog (an ancient loch home) when they discovered the only known loch village in Scotland.

This incredibly well-preserved Iron Age settlement has at least seven roundhouses dating

to the fifth century BC. So, by the time the church was built in AD 397, this village was already a sophisticated farming community thriving around a small loch.

The loch no longer exists, but the village remains in good condition, including some of the timber structures. In one of the most unexpected finds, the roundhouses were constructed directly over the fen peat without

Scottish “Advent Calendar”



artificial foundations. The site is the only one of its kind in Scotland, and it changes the traditional history of the southern part of the country.

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South Carolina Reminder from Maggie Blair

I would like to remind people that Gallabrae, the Greenville SC Scottish Games, will be Memorial Day weekend (May 23, 2020) at Furman University. <https://gallabrae.com/>

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Scottish Man in his Penny-Pinching “One-Man Spa” (both from ScotsUSA)



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2-2020**

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