



# CLAN BLAIR SOCIETY

Blair of Blair

Blair of Balthayock

**First Quarter 2022**



Shawn Blair, Clan Blair Society President

## President's Message

2022. A new year and new hopes for sharing our passions for family history and heritage. I hope all our members are well and keeping warm. For Maine, we've been having a vey cold winter. I know warmer parts of the U.S. have been experiencing a little bit of that. But, we always look to warmer weather with anticipation. By mid to late February, we can see it on the horizon.

For those that may have missed it, Robert Burns' birthday was a few weeks ago. I hope some of you had an opportunity to celebrate in traditional or some sort of way (even a wee dram). The last few months offered a few Scottish heritage celebration opportunities... St. Andrew's Day (Nov), Hogmanay (Dec 31 night), and Robert Burns Birthday (Jan). Sometimes we forget about them but they are ways we can celebrate our heritage 'off season'. Mark your calendars for Tartan Day for April 6<sup>th</sup>. Many places will have Ceilidhs and some

will have a parade. Try to take the opportunity to celebrate it in some way.

The Clan Blair Society Board met in January to discuss plans for the coming months. We've already begin plans for a clan virtual presentation on Saturday, March 5th. We'll send details for attendance via email in the week before. On the tentative agenda at this time will be a genealogy presentation and an introduction to hosting the clan tent at Scottish festivals. Even if you don't plan to host a tent it is good information on what it takes to have the Blair clan represented at Scottish events.

Our goal this year will be to have virtual presentation events several times throughout the year. We would like to do them quarterly, but that depends a lot on the other activities that take place during the festival season. If you have an idea for a presentation or something you'd like to see, send me a note. We're also open to any member who feels they have a presentation topic they'd like to present at an event.

In the meantime, if you have news of family or events in your area, please send them to Adoree for the newsletter. There's never too much news.

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## **Genealogy Research Beyond Ancestry.com by Shawn Blair**

With the growth of services like Ancestry.com that provides so many source records at our fingertips, there is the tendency to forget about other research available. I cut my genealogy teeth the “old fashioned” way. I made regular research trips to genealogy libraries, town halls, cemeteries, etc... It’s a slow process, but at times it was a lot of fun. Professionally, I’ve been involved in computer systems, software and internet my whole career. So, Ancestry.com was an exciting prospect. In its early years, the resources were a bit slim. Recently there’s an immense amount of original sources available on it as well as other digital research services.

These digital resources (original) are very exciting because we can sit in front of our computer and achieve what would take months of pouring through books and microfilm in libraries and visits to towns, etc... Without leaving my desk, I’ve been able to trace the lines of several people back to the 1700s and before. That is very exciting!

I want to caution newbies at genealogy research though, that these services still don’t have everything. That means there are still nuggets of valuable information that require trips out into the daylight. Even with vital statistics, cemetery photos, and town records there are still many that haven’t been digitized and indexed by these services. Courthouse records is one that comes to mind. Many cemetery records as well. And, I’ve never seen a dark, dusty genealogy library that wasn’t coveting some secret that could break open a brick wall.

Some of my favorite time beating the pavement was spent in a county courthouse. Until I started visiting them, I had no idea how much the information

stored there revealed the ancestor stories. Wills, deeds, transfers of ownership, or even divorce decrees. There are often clues in these documents that reveal connections and details that couldn’t be found in other places.

Cemeteries also hide information and clues that you may not find online. It also seems so much more personal to visit your ancestor’s stones. Often you can find something that just isn’t revealed in the documents when family is buried together, or relationships are revealed on the stones. It’s also a great way to get out into the outdoors and most often in peaceful settings. One of my most exciting visits was to a second-generation Mayflower descendant’s stone that was 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

There is a lot of information online that can carry us far back in a documented heritage. But don’t forget to be looking outside and visit those places that can make it more personal.

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### **CLAN STORE –**

**Extended Clothing Sale – 50% off!**

**Summer and Festival Season is coming.**

The Clan Store has a nice array of jewelry, genealogy books, stationary, CDs of Blair House, hats, official tartan and clothing for member purchase. We see purchases by members from other sources, but please keep in mind that the items are the official CBS originals offered at deep discounts.

The Store still has a nice array of clothing items that we would like to sell at further discounts. Adult larger sizes have been popular so that inventory is shrinking. Adult sizes medium and

small are abundant so we have plenty of supply for kids and smaller adults. As reported in the last newsletter, we plan to liquidate all shirts and find a different provider to fulfill clothing requests.

Now is a good time to stock up on tee-shirts and sweatshirts for summer.

So, the 50% reduction in all prices continues – see the Store website at

<https://clanblair.net/cbsmembers/shop>. Shipping fees do apply and you can stock-up for this next year’s festivals.

The following are examples of shirts available with a best estimate of sizes, which are mostly XL, adult small/medium and children’s sizes. The logos are out of date, but all reflect the Clan Blair Society heritage and Scottish history.

White Polo – Sale price \$9 plus shipping - Regular Member Price - \$18.

Size - Adult Medium

White & Blue Short Sleeved T-shirt - Sale \$6.50 plus shipping. Regular \$13.

Size – Adult Small and Medium

Children’s Size – Small, Medium, and Large

White Long-Sleeved Sweatshirts – Sale \$8.50 plus shipping - Regular \$19

Size – XL to 3XL

Multiple items can be ordered at once. I’ll do my best to accommodate in a single shipment boxes/envelopes. If shipping costs exceed payment I will contact members directly to discuss.

CBS members please go to <https://clanblair.net/cbsmembers/shop> to shop and order. Questions can be forwarded to [vicepresident@clanblair.org](mailto:vicepresident@clanblair.org).

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## **DNA TESTING**

### **Continues to Draw Interest**

The Clan Blair Society (CBS) Board has established a fund to support members of the Society in their pursuit of DNA testing. This fund will be used to help pay a portion, between 30-50%, of the cost of 67 marker DNA tests performed by Family Tree DNA.

The fund is administered by the CBS DNA Committee, consisting of the President, the Webmaster, and the DNA Project Coordinator. Members in good standing are eligible to participate in this sponsorship program.

Interested members may contact Jim Blair at [vicepresident@clanblair.org](mailto:vicepresident@clanblair.org) or Shawn Blair at [president@clanblair.org](mailto:president@clanblair.org).

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## **WILLIAM CAMPBELL BLAIR YOUTH AWARD**

2022

Clan Blair Society is offering the 6th year of the WC Blair Youth Award. This is a recognition of an outstanding youth member of the Society who is nominated by their family or friends for their 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 Annual General Meeting and a \$500 cash award.

William Campbell Blair was a founding member of CBS and served as President and a State Commissioner in California for many years. He was a pediatrician and his love for children is represented by this award in his honor. Please nominate a young member of the CBS family.

The nomination materials are found later in this newsletter. Nominations must be received by June 30. Questions can be forwarded to Jim Blair at [vicepresident@clanblair.org](mailto:vicepresident@clanblair.org).

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## THE FIRST SCOTTISH MONARCHS

From The Blair Surname by Jack Richard Blair and various other sources

Jack Blair began by explaining that wars, civil turbulence and, most importantly, the lack of record-keeping, make it difficult to understand early Scotland's history. However, it appears that the first ruler of Scotland came from the House of Alpin. The House of Alpin is the name given to the kinship group which ruled in Pictland and then the kingdom of Alba from the advent of Cinaed Mac Alpin in the 840s to the death of Mael Coluim mack Cinaeda in 1034. It is unclear where the family originated. They were first described as kings of the Picts. Constantin meic Cinaeda was regarded as the last of the Pictish kings after he died. His descendants were forced to leave in 878 when he was killed by Giric mac Dungail. But they returned in 889 when Giric died. This is when the title of 'king' was used. During the 10<sup>th</sup> century, succession alternated between descendants of Constantin ma Cinaeda and Aid mac Cineada. When Colum ma Cineada left no male heirs, Colum's daughter Bethoc then became the mother of the future kings.

## KENNETH I : 841-859



Kenneth I was known as MacAlpin. He died from cancer leaving his kingdom to his brother Donald. Descended from the Pictish Royal family, he has been regarded as the first king of Scotland. His two sons were Constantine and Aed, and he had three daughters. He became king of the Gaelic Scots in Galloway about 834 when his father, Alpin, (832-834). From 841-846, he conquered the Pictish Kingdom and united it with his own. He named his domains Scotland, and his capital was Scone. In order to rid himself of the Picts, it is rumored that Kenneth I invited Pict rulers to feasts and killed them there as they ate. Some historians feel that the Picts, instead, were gradually melded into the Gaelic kingdom, as the Scots became dominant and the Gaelic language did also.



**DONALD I (859-863):**



If a king did not name a successor, horrendous battles might decide who became the next king. Donald I therefore named his son Giric as his successor. Donald had helped his brother Kenneth establish law and secure rule. Despite this work, 10 of the Alba kings were murdered between 943 and 1097. Donald's death was also suspicious. But by 863 when he died, the birth right of rule was accepted in Scotland.



**CONSTANTINE I – DIED 877,** leaving one son,



Constantine spent most of his rule fighting off Vikings so he could expand his kingdom south. In 872, he killed both the King of Strathclyde and expanded his Alban kingdom south. Both Olaf the White from Dublin and Thorsten the Red tried to defeat Constantine, but they were both defeated in 864. Constantine was a brave warrior, but also bribed and paid off rivals to keep the peace. The revenge came when 'The Black Strangers' defeated Constantine.



## **AED: 877-878**



He was king a very short time and was killed by his cousin Giric. He left two sons, Constantine and Donald.

## **EOCHAID AND GIRIC: 878-899** (Depictions not available)

Whatever their relationship, it is clear that they conspired together to bring about King Aedh's downfall, and it is most likely that Giric killed Aedh at Strathallan in Perthshire in 878. Having used Giric to clear his path to the Crown of the Picts and Scots, Eochaid found he had to share it with Giric, and the two embarked on an uneasy 11 year joint reign.

In 889 Eochaid tried to gain sole possession of the crown by commissioning his cousin Donald (the son of King Constantine I) to kill Giric. It is arguable that Donald should have succeeded King Aedh; and he certainly seems to have thought so. For having killed Giric, at Dundurn near St

Fillans at the eastern end of Loch Earn, Donald exiled Eochaid and much of the surviving Strathclyde nobility to Gwynedd in Wales: and so became King Donald II.

Giric was buried in the graveyard at Saint Oran's Chapel on the Isle of Iona. It is not known when or where Eochaid died, or where he was buried. Giric went on to achieve posthumous fame of sorts as *Gregory the Great* when in the 1100s he became the subject of myths that he had single handedly freed the Scots from the Picts and conquered Ireland and much of England. He did none of these things.

## **DONALD II 889-900**



Donald II was the son of Constantine I. There was a lot of unrest during his reign, because the Danish, led by :”Sigurd the Mighty” killed “Melibrigda Tonn and cut off his head, hanging it on his saddle. Unfortunately for Sigurd, legends say that a tooth in the head punctured his leg as the head bounced around and he died of blood poisoning. Donald died in 900.

## CONSTANTINE II 900-943



It was Constantine II who dealt with the Danish invaders. In so doing, he broke through the southern borders and clashed with the English/Anglo-Saxon. Many centuries of rivalry between them then began. In 904, the Norsemen ceased their marauding of Scotland after defeat by Constantine II, and retreated to the north of Scotland. Peace reigned between England and Scotland, where there were now established borders, until King Athelstan I of England kidnapped Constantine's son. He sought revenge, but was defeated by the English. Meanwhile, the Danes were back and taking north portions of Scotland. Defeated and weary, Constantine resigned and entered a monastery from 943 until his death.



## MALCOLM I -943-954



Named by King Constantine II as his successor, Malcolm followed expectations of a king at that time and, allied with the English king, Malcolm rid Scotland of the Irish invaders. However, when he returned, he found that the north had been invaded and he was killed by the invaders in 954 during a skirmish with them.



**INDULF 954-962:**



The son of Constantine II, he captured Dun Edin, the fortress at Edinburgh, and left 3 sons upon his death: Culen, Olaf and Eochaid.

**DUBH 962-967**



Indulf's son, Culen, fought his cousin Dubh for the throne (Dubh was the son of Malcolm I). He failed at the first battle in Blair Atholl, but succeeded in Forres in 967.

**CULEN 967-971 – NO DEPICTION**

King Culen was not around for long enough to make any really lasting impression on his country. Much of his time was spent in trying to regain control over Strathclyde, whose sub-king Riderch was taking an increasingly independent stance. During his campaigning, Culen killed Riderich's brother and raped his daughter.

Riderich vowed to take his revenge, and did so when he killed Culen in Lothian in 971. Culen was succeeded by King Duff's brother, Kenneth II.

**KENNETH II – 971-995**



Son of Malcolm I, he tried to regain Strathscllyde but was not successful. Then, when he returned home, he found a revolt. After he killed the son of the regions comptroller, the comptroller's wife had a beautiful, tapestried room set up for Kenneth with bows and arrows hidden behind the tapestries and a golden apple in the hand of a statue in the middle of the room. When he picked up the apple, he was killed, cut up gruesomely, by all the arrows.

**KING CONSTANTINE III** 995-997:



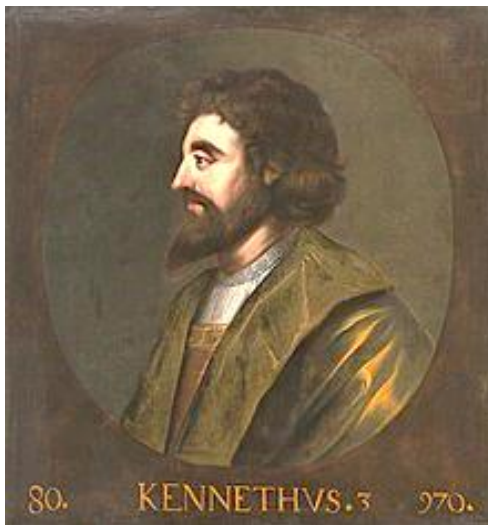
The son of Culen, he ruled for a short enough time that not much is known about his rule.

**MALCOLM II: 1005-1034 (no depiction)**

This king was the killer of Kenneth III and his son Giric so he could gain the throne. His first attempts to regain Scottish territory, from the northern Scandinavians and territory in the south were unsuccessful, but he tried again for the southern territory, and was able to continue to hold Lothian and the land north of Clyde, which remains Scotland today. He had only 3 daughters and no sons, so named his daughter Bethoc's son Duncan and the king succeeding him. In the meantime, he lived an astonishing 80 years old, very unusual for a king then. He was the last of the Albin kings. Duncan went on to rule as King of Alba, with lands from Tweed in the south to Moray in the north.

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**KENNETH III**



Kenneth III and his son Giric fought the English and lost for the territory of Lothian, and the English then ruled over the lands south of Clyde.



# SAVE THE DATE! -

(FROM THE CLAN BLAIR SOCIETY FACEBOOK PAGE)



Presented by the  
Greenville Scottish Games  
at Furman University



**SEE YOU SATURDAY, MAY 28<sup>TH</sup>,  
2022! RAIN OR SHINE!**

We are marching forward to the 2022 Greenville Scottish Games and hope that our efforts will usher in a new era of friendship and fun for years to come. The Board of Directors looks forward to seeing you at Furman University on Saturday, May 28, 2022.

**Adult Ticket (ages 13 and above) \$20 in advance, \$25 day of Games. Child Ticket (ages 5 to 12) \$10.**

**Free general parking. Gates open at 8:30am.**

**Tickets include Happy Hour/Celtic Jam Party after Games.**

**No pets allowed.**

- ✓ Please bring your own chairs.
- ✓ No alcohol may be brought into the Games.

- ✓ Active Duty Military get in free with their Military ID.
- ✓ Children 4 years old and younger get in free.

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SAT, MAR 12 AT 9 AM MST

**Lakewood Ranch Irish Celtic Festival**

Bradenton, FL

Shared to Clan Blair Society

[\*\*\(20+\) Lakewood Ranch Irish Celtic Festival | Facebook\*\*](#)

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## CLAN MEMBERSHIP NEWS

With this first newsletter in 2022 we would like to acknowledge all those who became new members in 2021, with a special thanks to those who have become Lifetime Members. With all the changes of the last two years our membership has remained strong, and we have helped those in need which is what a clan does.

As we move into 2022, we can look forward to rejoining our clan members at all Highland Games that will be held this year. If able please offer to assist our state commissioners at games where a clan tent may be erected. Our clan membership website has a list of our state commissioners.

### **NEW MEMBERS**

Richard Veaks from Missouri

Dwayne Blair from North Carolina

Charles and Becky Blair Jr. from Texas

David and Susan Johnston from California

Richard and DeeAnn Blair from Texas

James and Laurel Smith from New York

Kenneth and Harriet Pflug from Kentucky

Thomas and Laura West from Georgia

Paul and Eleanor Hazucha from Florida

Lilly Morrighan from New York

Kenneth and Rachel Bartlett from California

Christian and Angela Stevens from Georgia

Evan Durden from Georgia

Benjamin and Alison Porterfield from Georgia

Robert and Ariel Blair from Texas

Brenton and Karen Kemmer from Michigan

Kathy Bird from Indiana

We thank all our members for their continued support and wish to remind our clan members that membership renewals for 2022 are due. If your contact information needs to be updated, please send your new information to:

Russell McCray, Membership Chair

[clanmembership@clanblair.org](mailto:clanmembership@clanblair.org)

Have a safe 2022 and a Gaelic Proverb to ponder.

“Na toir brieth air a reir coltais,

Faodaidh cridh beartach a bhi fo chota bochd.”

(Judge not by appearances,

A rich heart may be under a poor coat.)

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“OUT OF KILTER”

## LIBRARY NEWS:

### A Talk with Roger D. Grider on Medicine and Genealogy by- Elena McCrary

Ever since we met Dr. William Campbell Blair, (Blair Scholarship) a fair number of Blair's are doctors in one specialty or another. In my communications with Roger D. Grider, M.D. the author of *The Family of James Blair and Nancy Day*, I asked him about that connection.

This is what he shared. "Concerning physicians in our branch of the Blair family, likely that interest came from Dr. John Wolford, one of the first physicians to settle in Adair County, Kentucky during the early 1800's. His daughter Emily married John 'Little John' Blair (s/o = son of) John Richardson Blair. The only child of that union was Dr. James Monroe Blair, my maternal great-grandfather. Also, James Monroe Blair's cousin Dr. William Blair (s/o Burton Blair) studied medicine under Dr. John Milton Wolford.

My interest in the medical profession became reality in the last year of college. And subsequently, I trained in Lexington, Kentucky and St. Louis, Missouri before returning to Louisville for the duration of my medical practice."

Using my local libraries digital resources, I was able to trace back Roger's family history using <https://www.ancestryheritagequest.com/>. If you have a library card, you should check your local library too. It was quite fun to piece the story together.

Because Roger's book is so informative, I was curious to know how he began his journey in genealogy. This is what he shared. "The personal recollections and stories of older members of my childhood *community* fostered my initial interest in

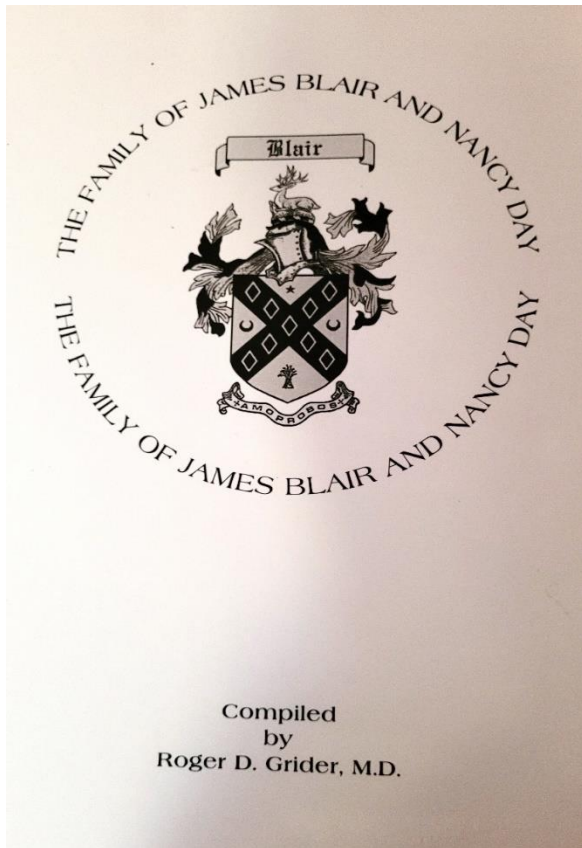
family history and years later this transitioned to the current compiled document which compliments the wonderful narratives of oral tradition."

Do you know the meaning of *oral tradition*?

According to the dictionary, it is a community's cultural and historical traditions passed down by word of mouth or example from one generation to another without written instruction. "Concerning records of oral tradition, unfortunately I did not become interested in family history until most of the older members of the family were no longer with us. For the most part, my sources for distant events were courthouse and cemetery records supplemented by brief documents or notes scribbled by prior family members who recounted the stories of our ancestors. That said, those events and stories are now recorded in the Blair book."

"Like most aspiring genealogists, I recorded the civil documents and personal stories of our ancestors in *historical context* so past and future generations could remain forever connected. However, I quickly learned this was no *simple project*. Collecting family records for the book required ten (10) years of exhaustive research including the tedious review of dusty courthouse records and time-consuming excursions to overgrown and long-forgotten family cemeteries. **Even so, my time was well spent since I visited many interesting communities and met many new friends along the way.**

*Would you like your own copy of the James Blair and Nancy Day book by Roger D. Grider, M.D.? From the author: "I have about 12 books available for sale. After they are gone, I have no plans for a third printing." The cost is \$40 (\$36 plus \$4 shipping) Please send a check or money order to: Roger Grider, 6209 Orion Rd., Louisville, KY 40222*



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Family of Julius and Olive McBeath Grider (1977)  
 (L to R): Roger, Charles, Logan, Nancy and Ronald Grider

Left to right: Roger, Charles, Logan, Nancy and Ronald Grider

provoking, moving, and inspiring.”

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

He is all over the news, since he has a large place in Virginia which he encouraged all to come and visit, and help get the place ready for a July opening

<https://rodneysraptors.webs.com/>

Then, I received a call from a younger brother about some photos he had which I must have given to my father on Falconry in action at the Woodland Games pre-COVID. For those who are new, Dr. William Campbell Blair loved those games, but sadly they will not be held again this year. However, for your viewing pleasure are pictures we took of another falconer in action. Enjoy.

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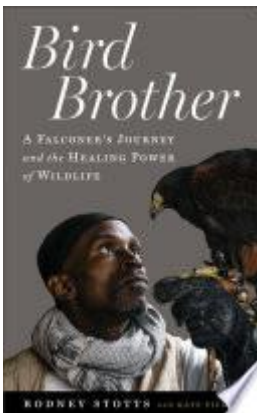
Falconer at Scottish food booth

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## CA COMMISSIONER REPORT –

### Russ and Elena McCrary

No sooner had the latest newsletter gone to press when I was notified of an upcoming book by Master Falconer and African American writer Rodney Stotts. Since I had just written about the subject, I consider this a Part II.



I have ordered two copies, one for my personal collection and one for our tent. Celebrating one's ethnic heritage is simply a hot topic right now. And, since February is African American Heritage Month what better way to celebrate than with this new memoir.

“Stotts’s gift for storytelling, as an educator and public speaker, is on full display in this remarkable memoir; it’s thought-



Harris Hawk on display



Harris Hawk ready for action!

## Birding Part II

We may not be hosting a tent yet, but that has not kept us from getting out and speaking to loads of people. We use birding as our introduction, ask about social media and general conversation about their interests.

People are hungry to get together, and recipe sharing is a way in. I miss the vendors like



<https://www.welshbaker.com/> and long to celebrate Russ' heritage. We finally convinced our son to take a chance and go birding with us, and he wore his favorite facemask at Cosumnes River Preserve.

Upcoming California events we hope to participate in or host a clan tent. Please share your events (singing; athletic; dancing; fiddling, etc.) too. Add these to your calendars.

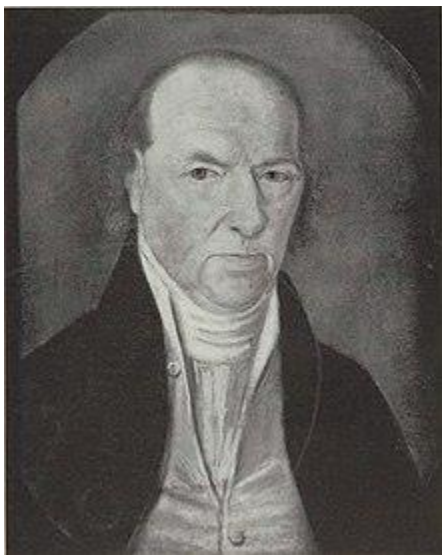
- Celtic Heritage Celebration, Calaveras County Fairgrounds – March 11-13, 2022
- Tartan Day, Ardenwood Historic Park, Fremont, CA – April 9, 2022
- 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Las Vegas Highland Games, Floyd Lamb Park – April 9-10, 2022, <https://www.lasvegascelticsociety.org/>
- 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Kern County Scottish Games and Gathering, Bakersfield – April 23 -24, 2022, <https://www.kernscot.org/>
- Woodland Celtic Games & Festival, Yolo County Fairgrounds —~~April 23-24, 2022~~  
**Cancelled**

- 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Northern Nevada Celtic Celebration, Reno, NV – May 21, 2022
- 46<sup>th</sup> Annual San Diego Scottish Highland Games, Vista, CA – June 25-26, 2022, <https://sdhighlandgames.org/>
- 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Monterey Scottish Games & Celtic Festival – July 16-17, 2022, <https://www.seemonterey.com/events/sporting/scottish-games/>
- 156<sup>th</sup> Scottish Highland Gathering and Games, Pleasanton, CA – Sept. 4-5, 2022, <https://thescottishgames.com/>
- Seaside Highland Games – October 7-9, 2022
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**ANOTHER FAMOUS BLAIR:**

**JOHN BLAIR JR.**

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



1732-1800

Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States 2-2-1790 through 10-25-1795, nominated by George Washington. He died on

August 31, 1800. Age 68, in Williamsburg, Virginia. He was a member of the Federalist Party. His father was John Blair, Sr. He got his BA at the College of William and Mary.



Jean Balfour Blair (1736-1792)

**John Blair Jr.** (April 17, 1732 – August 31, 1800)<sup>[2]</sup> was an American politician, Founding Father, and jurist, who signed the United States Constitution.

Blair was one of the best-trained jurists of his day. A famous legal scholar, he avoided the tumult of state politics, preferring to work behind the scenes. He was devoted to the idea of a permanent union of the newly independent states, and loyally supported fellow Virginians James Madison and George Washington at the Constitutional Convention. As a judge on the Virginia court of appeals and on the U.S. Supreme Court he influenced the interpretation of the Constitution in a number of important decisions. Contemporaries praised Blair for such personal strengths as gentleness and benevolence and for his ability to penetrate immediately to the heart of a legal question.

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 and Mary.

Blair attended William and Mary, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree 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 French and Indian War with his election to the seat reserved for the College of William and Mary in the House of Burgesses (1766-1770). 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 again in 1774 to draft nonimportation agreements which pledged their supporters to cease importing British goods until the taxes were repealed. In 1775, 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.

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*.<sup>[4]</sup>

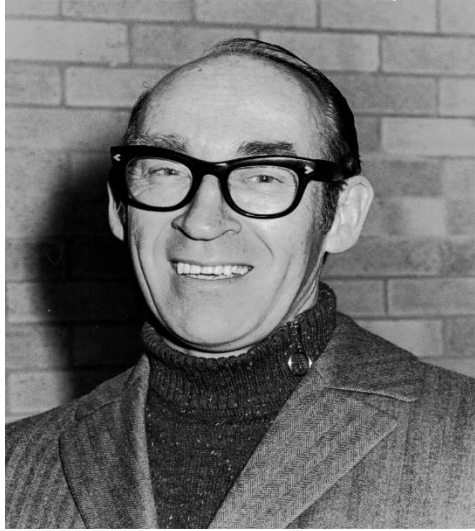
In 1786, the legislature, recognizing Blair's prestige as a jurist, appointed him Thomas Jefferson's successor on a committee revising the laws of Virginia. While crossing on foot an old bridge over a flooded river en route home from the Convention, Blair and Washington narrowly escaped accident when one of the carriage horses fell through the bridge.<sup>[5]</sup> 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.<sup>[6]</sup> He took the prescribed judicial oath on February 2, 1790.<sup>[1]</sup> 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.<sup>[4]</sup>

Blair resigned on October 25, 1795,<sup>[1]</sup> and died in Williamsburg in 1800, at 68. He was buried at the Bruton Parish Episcopal Church Cemetery in Williamsburg.<sup>[7]</sup> 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.<sup>[8]</sup>

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## FLOWERS OF THE FOREST



**JACK RICHARD BLAIR**

**1927-2021**

Jack Blair was born in New Zealand in 1927, the elder twin of twin boys and died in Sydney in 2021, aged 94. His grandfather, John Blair, descended from the Blairs of Ladymuir, was born near Paisley in Scotland and migrated to New Zealand in 1864. Jack's childhood years during the Great Depression were difficult, further exacerbated by the death of his father when he was only 9, leaving his mother with 3 young boys to rear. Although Jack achieved well at school and college and hoped to go on to University, this was not financially possible at that time, so he pursued various forms of employment.

When Jack was 23, he and a friend decided to travel overseas, but after arriving in Sydney, Australia in September, 1950 at the start of their travels, circumstances changed and Jack remained in Sydney.

He then took up employment in the NSW Department of Technical and Further Education, and at the same time was finally able to resume his studies, attending Sydney University, where he also

met his future wife, Nanette. He graduated with an Honours Degree in International Education. This qualification enabled him to become an Education Officer with TAFE responsible for the international education for overseas students and for assessing overseas qualifications of migrants from about 120 countries.

Following retirement from TAFE he founded a College of English for overseas students, then moved on to become Principal of a Business College for overseas students, finally retiring permanently in 1993.

In retirement, as a consequence of his research background and personal interest in social issues, Jack wrote many submissions to government and for family organisations.

Genealogy was another of his great interests. He traced the history of the Blair ancestors in Scotland to their origins in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century and researched and wrote a book entitled "The Blair Surname" which was published in 1999 and sold in USA, UK and Australia. He also traced his mother's Kemp ancestry in England back to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and wrote a booklet covering their history.

Jack was also a passionate gardener. Following his father's example, he started when about 8 years old and continued gardening throughout his life. He was particularly interested in growing unusual and exotic fruit trees from many different countries and wrote a series of articles about them, which were published in the "Gardening Australia" magazine.

Jack was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He lived a long and fruitful life, persevering to the end despite having to cope with many medical issues through the years and the restrictions these placed on his day-to-day living.

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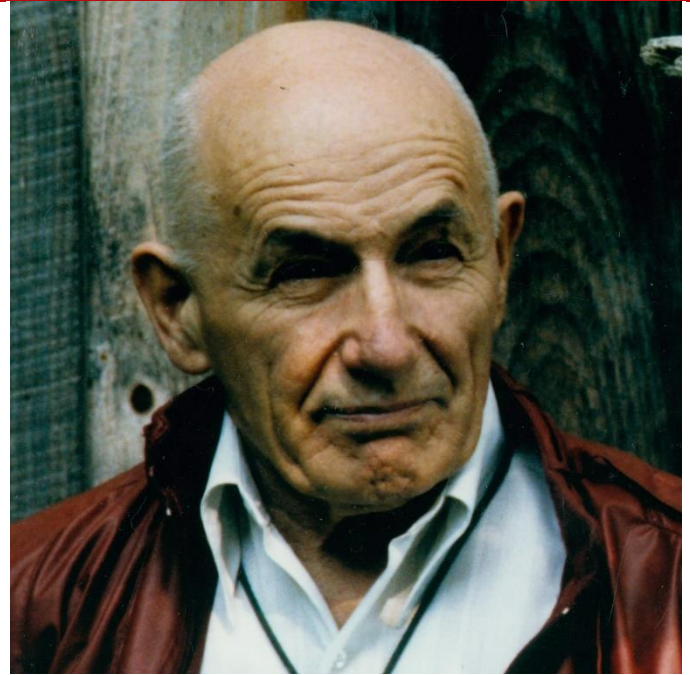
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"OK, lad - bring along the murder weapon."



## ANOTHER FAMOUS BLAIR: ROBERT N. BLAIR



Probably one of the most influential artists to use watercolor in the mid-twentieth century was Western New York painter Robert Blair. Born in 1912 in Buffalo, Blair studied art at the Albright Art School in Buffalo and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, during the early 1930s. It was during this time that he met and befriended fellow watercolorist Charles Burchfield.

Although he is best known for his watercolor paintings, Blair also worked in sculpture, oils, pen and ink, acrylic, and printmaking. His style varies from expressionistic to almost pure abstraction. Through the use of movement and color, Blair was able to capture the beauty and drama of nature.

In his thirties, Blair went overseas to serve in World War II. His subject matter subsequently changed and he produced works that reflected the destruction and devastation caused by war. One of his most famous wartime paintings is *THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE*. After he returned from the war, he settled down with his wife (also an artist) and three children in East Aurora, New York, and began to



teach art throughout Western New York and across the country.

During the 1940s Blair received many awards and major commissions. In 1947 he painted a large mural for the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. In 1946 and 1951 he was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship, which allowed him to travel on motorcycle across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The goal of these journeys, which continued well into his eighties, was to remove himself from the familiar and ultimately create something entirely different.

His works can be seen in the collections of the Burchfield Penney Art Center, Ford Motor Company, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Butler Institute of American Art, Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute of Utica, Colgate University, the Bryn Mawr Art Association, the Dubuque Art Association, and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Collection of Marine Paintings.



“Breakfast in the Snow” (in Belgium) by Robert N Blair



Painting by RN Blair: “The Battle of the Bulge”



“Southwestern Sunset” by RN Blair

# William Campbell Blair

## Youth Award Nomination Form

5/20/2022

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

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

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

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

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing

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

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

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominating Member Contact:

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Category of Outstanding Performance/Success:

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

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

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

## William Campbell Blair

Youth Award

5/20//2022

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

The following outlines the expectations of award nominees:

1. Nominations may be generated by members/families/friends
2. Nominees are age 18 and younger
3. Special consideration will be made if the area of achievement is focused toward Scottish/Celtic activities
4. Scholarship recognition may be for Outstanding Performance/Success in:
  - a. The Arts, including:
    - i. Artistic – painting, drawing, sculpting, characterization
    - ii. Music – piping, drumming, stringed instruments, piano, vocal, etc.
    - iii. Dance
    - iv. Theater – performance
    - v. Other
  - b. Academics:
    - i. Excellence in the study of Scottish/Irish history
    - ii. Writing related to Scottish/Irish history, or stories
    - iii. Excellence in the study of Gaelic languages
    - iv. Formal recognition of achievement by local educators or foundations
  - c. Athletics:
    - i. Football (soccer)
    - ii. Rugby
    - iii. Wrestling
    - iv. Scottish Games (where offered for youth)
    - v. Other
  - d. Social Impact
    - i. Youth organizations
    - ii. Outdoor adventuring groups
    - iii. Volunteerism
    - iv. Other
  - e. Clan Blair Society support:
    - i. Active support of local CBS activities
    - ii. Tent/festival support
    - iii. Promotion of CBS – recruitment, fund raising, etc. Nominations are invited in the February newsletter for submission in June (6/30)
5. A selection committee will evaluate and recommend award recipient candidates to the BOD for final selection.
6. Recognition includes the \$500 cash award, a certificate of excellence and news coverage in the Blair Bruidhinn (and other Celtic publications associated with CBS)

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

**CLAN BLAIR EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS AND CHAIRS OF STANDING  
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CBSlibrary@clanblair.org

Vacant - Blair Genealogy -  
CBSgenea@clanblair.org

Nominating Committee:  
Curtis Blair, Chair - CO  
Helen Blair – AZ  
Charles Diman - NC  
Nominations@clanblair.org

**Clan Blair Society**  
**Russell Mc Crary**  
**29 Haven Place**  
**San Ramon, CA 94583**

**First Class Mail**  
**Address Service Requested**

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