



Blair of Blair

BLAIR BRUIDHINN

• 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

Second Quarter June 2013

President’s Message



Fellow Scots – It has been a busy spring with completion of the annual election of officers, State Clan member’s participation in Scottish Clan activities across the country and preparation for our first Cyber-AGM in September. I hope this message finds you and your family well and enjoying all things Scottish.

I welcome our new slate of Clan Blair Society officers and Board members:

- Shawn Blair – VP and Webmaster
- Ann Fredline – Treasurer
- Frances Holt – Secretary
- Jennifer Blair – Librarian
- Coy Blair – Genealogy Advisor
- Charlie Diman – Membership Chair
- Adoree Blair – Newsletter Chair
- Vacant – High Commissioner
- Pat Risdon, Kurt Blair & Leslie Blair
Gallagher – Nominating Committee

It is a privilege to work with this dedicated leadership team to move Clan Blair Society forward.

The Board of Directors is laying the stage for a web hosted Cyber – Annual General Meeting on Saturday September 21. The agenda is being formulated but will include Clan Blair history, stories of Blair ancestors, guidance on Genealogy, Scottish Attire and the report of our annual Board meeting. The Cyber-AGM is scheduled for 2 hours and I hope all of you will place this event as a high priority on your September calendar.

In this issue of the quarterly newsletter, you will see reports on activities in many of our state Clans. You will see the results of the election of 2013 officers, an update on membership renewal and recruitment, the Cyber-AGM, memorials of Clan members and other family activities. I hope that you agree - it is a Great time to be a Scot!

Please let me hear from you - Jim Blair at president@clanblair.org.

Cyber – AGM Sept. 21, 2013

The Clan Blair Society announces the first-ever Annual General Meeting (AGM) held via web-based technology. The Board is selecting the web-platform, considering Web-Ex, Google +, Skype, and Go To Meeting. We will select the system that provides members easy access via their computers and/or telephone. You will be able to join the AGM with any telephone or computer device.

The agenda is being finalized with an array of speakers and presentations. Final details will be published on the website mid-summer and in the early September Newsletter.

Please calendar this event on your September 21 schedule. It is a 2-hour event and we hope you will join us. Forward your questions to Jim Blair at president@clanblair.org.

Site: www.clanblair.org
 Gallery: gallery.clanblair.org
 Twitter: www.twitter.com/#clanblairsoc

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/ClanBlairSociety
 Forums: forums.clanblair.org

Arizona Commissioners

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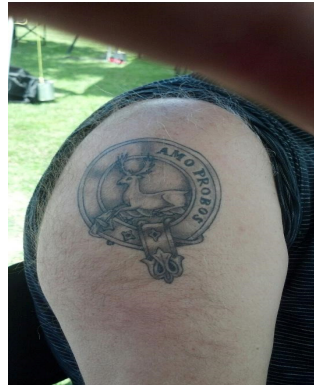
March 23rd 2013 was the 49th Annual Arizona Highland Games & gathering held in Phoenix @ Steele Indian School Park. Andy & I set up our two tents by the lake & next to a tree so the site was great. The weather was wonderful. We had a great group of visitors who kept our tents full. The Scotch eggs & corned beef roll-ups were a hit. Member Mary Toliver brought along homemade banana nut bread to share that was yummy.

Bob came for Saturday's events & enjoyed seeing everyone. He even walked around a bit to visit other Clan tents. Several CBS members stopped by to visit; Mary Toliver of Peoria and Lee & Kathy Knapp drove up from Yuma. Eeven though Kathy had been very ill she looked good. Sheri & Ron Savage from Queen Creek & our daughter Teri Blair from Chandler came to visit. Jessica Heydenreich from Tolleson came both days & helped me with both set up and take down.

Our tent was visited by Jane Blair Shepherd-Hall, Chuck, Charlene & Paula Dishon and Charles Sloan of Phoenix; Kia Simmons, Randy & Cyndi Lorenc, Erika, Nathan & Randi Irwin of Mesa; Thomas, Amanda & Jaiden Bausano, Eldon & Judi Heydenreich, PJ Holden, Wendy, Brianna, Brock & Brent of Glendale; Carolyn Humphrey, Don Cupp of Tempe; Stephanie Morton & Andrew Schneider of Seattle, WA; Kraig, Jamie, Navi & Lex of Peoria; Damien & Jaden Crumley of Athem and Reg & Jill Nelson of Payson along with everyone who just browsed through but didn't want to sign in. We had a great time.

May 11th, 2013 was the 9th Annual Prescott Games held at Watson Lake Park. As always the weather was fantastic with a nice breeze that didn't get too wild this year. Andy & I set up one tent. We had a great view of the events. CBS members Alvin & Cathy Blair of Prescott & Allan Blair of Flagstaff spent time visiting with us at the tent. Visitor Steve Blair, K. Michael Blair, Christy Davis of Prescott, Steve Blair of Peoria & his sister Carol of Sequim, WA, spent time visiting. Steve Blair of Peoria

showed off his arm tattoo (see photo).



I enjoyed our genealogy & Blair history discussions. Carol was recovering from bilateral lung transplant & staying with her brother during the immediate recovery. I was so surprised to see how well she was doing so soon after surgery. Alvin Blair's family is going to be having a big family reunion in July so we discussed ways to include ancient Blair history. I had a hard time leaving since the weather was so nice but time came we had to head back to the valley heat.



Helen Blair

July 19th-20th, 2013 is the 16th Annual Arizona Highland Celtic Festival that will be held in Flagstaff, Az at Foxglenn Park. The actual games are Sat. & Sun. but they have events going on in town both Fri. & Sat. night. This is a big event with lots to see and do. It looks like it will be just Bob & I manning the booth this year, but the Blair's will be there. This is a nice reprieve from the valley heat. It usually rains every afternoon for about an hour so I like to remind everyone to bring rain gear and sweater since it can get nippy at night. For more info check out www.nachs.info

Sept 21, 2013 is the Celtic Harvest Festival in Sedona, AZ. This is a small event but it will be held again at the Poco Diablo Resort on their golf course. It's an absolutely beautiful location surrounded by the red rocks of Sedona. We usually make this a day trip but I think we'll make a mini vacation of it since the location is so beautiful.

www.Celticharvestfestival.org

We hope to see our "cousins" at the events where we set up Clan Blair Society tents but we also enjoy visiting with them at our house. This year we have been very blessed with CBS members coming to our house to visit. Shawn Blair of ME made extra time in between business meetings in Sedona, Kurt Blair of CO came by after business meetings in Phoenix and Alvin & Cathy Blair of Prescott stopped by while on their way south to Tucson. All were very patient since our house has been under major renovations. Kurt's family of Blairs are from Adair County, KY like Bobs family. He enjoyed looking through a book with old pictures of people from the area. He found many names that sounded familiar to him. Bob's dad had said there were a couple Blair families in the area but said they weren't kin.

We always enjoy visitors, so if you're going to be around Mesa, AZ we'd love having you stop by and visit a spell. We always have room and enjoy visiting with our "cousins".

Aye, Helen

Member updates

Our thoughts and prayers go out to CBS member #827 Kathy Knapp of Yuma, AZ as she is battling brain cancer. She and her husband Lee have been through the wringer this last year. She has made great strides. We offer prayers for continued strength to beat this terrible disease.

Bitterroot Festival Announcement

The sponsors of the Montana Bitterroot Festival have contacted CBS. If you know of members in the area who would like to represent Clan Blair Society at the Bitterroot Scottish Irish Festival, the Board encourages them to attend.

Below is the link to the Clan Application. The Festival is August 24th & 25th in the beautiful Bitterroot Valley of Montana.

http://www.bitterrootscottishirishfestival.org/uploads/2013_Clan_Application.pdf

Election Results – 2013

Electronic Ballot

- 34 Submitted - Unanimous on ballot
- 2 Write-ins for Nominating committee
 - o Leslie Blair Gallagher
 - o Kurt M. Blair

Paper Ballot

- 12 Received - Unanimous on ballot
- No Write-ins

New CBS Board:

President: Jim Blair

VP: Shawn Blair

Treasurer: Ann Fredline

Secretary: Frances Holt

Nominating Committee:

Pat Risdon

To be confirmed:

Leslie Blair Gallagher

Kurt M. Blair

Colorado Report

Kurt M. Blair Co-Commissioner

Since becoming the Co-Commissioner for the Colorado Clan Blair Society, some exciting things have started to come together. I am certainly looking forward to the coming festivals and meeting as many of you as I possibly can. If you have any ideas for activities or get-togethers, please let me know.

I attended the Tartan Day in Arvada along with Leslie Blair-Gallagher and had a great time networking with the other Clans. They were very excited about getting us involved in many Colorado activities and I encourage each of you to participate. We could certainly use your assistance and I would like to ensure that we remain the most active Clan and the Clan to watch.

We also had a great showing at the Kirk'n O' The Tartan with myself and the Jim Blair Family where our Blair Tartan was blessed with a great lesson from the pastor in regards to the "Running of the Haggis" or "The Haggis Stampede". The pipe band was amazing and the cathedral was spectacular. It was followed by fellowship among the Clans and an exhibition of dance by our very own Arabella Blair.

Last month, I had the pleasure of visiting with Helen and Bob Blair in Mesa, AZ. They are a wealth of information and I am surely looking forward to having them, as well as Jim Blair as mentors to build our membership in the State of Colorado.

We recently had a very enthusiastic order of Blair Athol Highlands Single Malt Scotch straight from Scotland. Our Clan members who participated successfully imported 20 bottles that I'm sure we will all enjoy (and likely share at upcoming events.).

I am working on an endeavor that may soon allow our group to order Scottish apparel through a supplier for the Scottish Rite at great prices. I will keep you posted as this progress.

We have several events coming up soon. We will participate in the Colorado Scottish Festival in Highlands Ranch on August 10-11 and the Longs Peak Highlands Festival in Estes Park on Sept. 5-8. Other festivals are scheduled throughout the summer and I encourage you to attend them anyway and fly your Blair Tartan.

Our Celtic dancers continue to perform and increase their skills.



Cordylia Blair Shryack (3) – The Beginning Steps



Arabella Blair



Saoirse Blair Galligan

The Clan gathering at Stranahann's Distillery in Denver is still on the drawing board with more information to develop. I encourage everyone to help out where they can and to get involved. Our Clan will only be as successful as the members that participate and we could sure use your help. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at (720) 320-0400.

Utah Report Whit Young – Commissioner

The annual Utah Scottish Festival and Highland Games was held Jun 7 and 8 at Thanksgiving Point, Lehi, Utah. It is a beautiful bustling area and last Friday and Saturday was filled with Scots and wannabees in one of the biggest crowds I've seen.

Clan Blair Society's tent was well situated across from the overcrowded root beer stand and the entrance to the lawn covered exhibition ground. Since we were on the main drag, our Clan Blair banner attracted many eyes as did our "Great Blairs" poster and miniature castle with miniature Scotsmen on parade. "Oh, cool," said one little boy.

We were twice "on parade" ourselves in the evening clan ceremonies and Saturday's opening festivities which were very impressive with a half- dozen pipe bands participating.

Nicholas Blair Lawyer, my grandson, garnered first place honors in the drumming competition. Needless to say the Blair Banner was the most beautiful there of the numerous clan banners on parade. We had one of our best days for people stopping by to chat and ask questions.

Pictures from the display can be accessed at: <http://www.lionshield.us/mailbox/>



Left to right: Tom Blair, Nick Lawyer, Steve Young, Doug Young, Jeanne Blair, Whit Young.



"Great Blair" poster on easel.

North Carolina Report
Charlie Diman – Commissioner

We were one of eight Clans that participated in the inaugural Celtic Festival at Latta Plantation. **Historic Latta Plantation** is a circa 1800 cotton plantation and living history farm, located within

Latta Plantation Nature Preserve. All who attended enjoyed greatly themselves



20th Rural Hill Scottish Festival and Loch Norman Highland Games were a booming success. We had many visitors and garnered several new members. Harry "the" Blair was there with his Grandson, Hudson Blair Brennan, as was my wife Betty, sporting her new Kilt skirt.



Two new members; Kurt Blair and sister Kimberly Blair

Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in July. We now have 14 North Carolina member families and expect at least 11 of them to join us at Grandfather Mountain. In 2010, I marched alone, this year, we expect to have 15 plus marching. Things are looking up!



**QUARTERLY REPORT ON TO THE NEW
WEE-SCOTSMAN IN COLORADO!**

Lochlann Vincent Blair Shryack, born 2-12-2013,
now sporting his new flat cap – age 4 mos.



NEW LITTLE SCOTSMAN

“Just a note to say I became a grandfather for the first time at age 82. Arno Blair Baxi, 8:50 a.m. 2-19-2013. He weighed 7 lbs, 4 oz. My only child Jean and her husband Tejas and the baby all doing well.

My brother Joe was the Maine Commissioner and my brother Bob in Florida and his wife Anna were active on the Scotland trips.

Sincerely, John Blair # 95

Congratulations!



Part 1 of a 2 part Series

**Final Reminder About Dues:
From Charles Diman**

2013 Dues are due by January 1st 2013. Please take a minute to either write out a check or better yet, get on-line to renew, using PayPal. It's very quick and easy. Just go to www.clanblair.org and select, either CBS Join, or the Members Only site. The information needed to access the Members only site of our webpage is:

Username clanblair (all lowercase)
Password cbs1988

Then go to membership renewal and click on which option you want.

Make the checks out to: Clan Blair Society and mail to:

Membership Chair, 3413 Sunnybrook Drive,
Charlotte, NC 28210-4715



**BRITAIN'S GREATEST TRAITOR
LORD WILLIAM SEMPILL [1893 –1965]
AND
THE BLAIR LINK TO TREASON AND
MURDER**

By Jack R. Blair, Sydney, Australia

Sir Winston Churchill was one of my heroes during World War II but on the night of 13 December 2012, he fell off his pedestal into the dust.

While watching a TV documentary program entitled “*Churchill's Traitor*”, on the night in question, I recalled the Blair link to the infamous Sempill family lineage descendancy in the 16th century.

The British Official Secrets Act had suppressed sensitive information involving WW II for 60 years until it became publicly accessible in 2002. The traitor in the documentary was Lord William Sempill, 19th Baronet of the Sempill lineage. The narrator of the documentary called him the “Greatest traitor in the whole of British history”, a startling

claim if true and even more disturbing if information had been suppressed from the public for six decades. The Blair of Blair lineage is linked to the Sempill lineage through Lord Robert Sempill 3rd, Baron and notorious ancestor of the infamous Lord William Sempill.

Lord Sempill was Eton educated and a hereditary member of the House of Lords. His father had been an Aide to King George V. During World War I, he was a pilot with the Royal Flying Corps and then the Royal Navy Air Service. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service.

In 1921, Sempill headed an official British mission to Japan to organise the Imperial Japanese Naval Air Service, after which he became a confirmed Japaniophile with extensive military contacts and was subsequently awarded 3rd Order of the Rising Sun; 2nd Order of the Sacred Treasure and the Special Medal of the Imperial Aero-Society of Japan in the inter war years.

At the conclusion of a British Mission to Japan when the United States warned Britain over Japan's growing naval strength, Sempill was secretly forwarding classified military and technical information to the Japanese Naval Attache in London. Despite coming under suspicion and being interrogated by MI5 in 1925 over his handling of sensitive military information, the authorities were unable to obtain sufficient evidence to charge him under the Official Services Act of the time.

The years of espionage by Lord Sempill enabled Japan to upgrade its air and naval military fleet to a standard equal to Britain and America with the strength to launch its surprise attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941. Prior to this, Japan's military strength was inadequate to engage in a full scale war until its military machine was modernized, largely as a result of top secret air and naval information given to Japan by Lord Sempill.

By the 1930's Sempill was deeply involved in fascist and anti-Jewish organisations in the UK.. Some members of the British Establishment also shared his fascist views.

During the 1930's and 1940's, Sempill's track record of 'mishandling' sensitive military information and

his pro-fascist activities located with the National Archives, mysteriously disappeared. It was known that he continued to receive regular payments from the Japanese Mitsubishi Corporation and also entertained high-ranking Nazis during the 1930's.

At the outbreak of World War II in 1939, Sempill was assigned to the British Admiralty where he had access to highly sensitive information about the latest British military hardware and official secrets. In 1940, MI5 again suspected Sempill of disloyalty as he was still receiving payments from Mitsubishi. However, since the Attorney-General, Lord Somervell, advised against prosecution, Sempill kept his position in the Admiralty.

On 5 September, 1941, Sempill was confronted by the 5th Sea Lord of the British Admiralty and given a private warning over his indiscreet behaviour. A slap on the aristocratic wrist?

In 1941, detailed notes of the meeting between Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt being sent from the Japanese Embassy in London to Tokyo were intercepted and decoded at Bletchley Park, NW of London (code-breaking headquarters during WW II and birth-home of the computer). The transcript was passed to Churchill.

Churchill was shocked as he and Sempill were friends. However, the issue now came quickly to a head. On 9 October 1941, Churchill instructed the Admiralty that Sempill be removed while "there was still time left to keep the matter from becoming public". The Admiralty confronted Sempill with the ultimatum that he could either resign (the soft solution) or be fired (losing upper class rank, employment and ruination by attracting national disgrace to himself, his family and his aristocratic lineage). Churchill intervened and influenced the Admiralty to initiate the soft option.

Sempill was moved to a position in the north of Scotland. In December 1941 MI5 raided Sempill's Scottish re-location and discovered he was still assisting the Japanese. A week after the attack on Pearl Harbor and the invasion of British Malaysia he was caught making phone calls to the Japanese Embassy in London and MI5 finally got the irrefutable proof it needed to convict him.

Sempill was finally forced to resign, but was never charged nor prosecuted. He was never imprisoned for his persistently defiant treachery which did so much to help the Japanese develop their air and naval armaments and enabled them to kill thousands of men and women military personnel and civilians.

Sempill's activities were never made public during his lifetime and he continued to live the life of an establishment nobleman.

Why did Sempill commit such treasonable crimes resulting in so many war atrocities and get away with it for so long? The narrator of the documentary argued that Sempill had serious financial difficulties and needed considerable money to live the lifestyle of the Baronet of Craigevar as well as the cost of maintaining his large Castle, the seat of Clan Sempill in Scotland. Correspondence between Churchill and The Attorney-General revealed that Sempill had debts of 750,000 pounds (2012 estimate). Sempill was an aristocrat with important establishment connections and held considerable power so that he was virtually untouchable, even by MI5. Churchill also was an aristocrat and not above “keeping the old boy network intact” as reflected by his response to Sempill's treason.

Sempill kept his seat in the House of Lords inherited from his father and his chairmanships of the Institute of Advanced Motorists and the British Gliding Association. He died peacefully in 1965 aged 72, having never faced arrest, punishment or public criticism for his crimes. The scale of his treachery only came to light when released into the public domain in 2002.

What is remarkable about “Churchill's traitor” is the way that members of the British establishment repeatedly intervened to protect 'one of their own', despite Sempill's known fascist sympathies and decades of suspect behaviour. Thomas G. Clark (2012) raises the disturbing question: How could Churchill, a British upper class Prime Minister, turn a blind eye to Sempill's espionage, treason, fraternising with the enemy, fascism and anti-Semitism, if it were one of their own class doing it?. How far would the upper class establishment go to sacrifice public protection for their own self-preservation?

Sempill's treachery contributed to the carnage of 4 million deaths and 25 million civilian deaths in the Pacific phase of WW II. Hitler and Stalin were more realistic with traitors – they were commonly shot on the spot without trial. Since capital punishment was not abolished in Britain until 1964, Sempill could have suffered the death penalty as by 1941, MI5 had acquired sufficient evidence to hang him. Some countries would have given him a 'trial' by firing squad.

Sempill was never charged, never brought to trial, never convicted of treason, never found guilty of any offence and never spent time in jail. Instead, Churchill and the government of the time rewarded him with a job in the north of Scotland.

The treatment of Lord Sempill was in stark contrast to that of fellow conspirator Frederick Rutland, son of a labourer from “rank and file society”. Rutland became a distinguished hero and pilot in World War I; remained in the RAF and specialised in air warfare and aircraft carriers. In the 1920's he supplied technical aircraft intelligence to Japan which was discovered by MI6 in 1933. The evidence was not sufficient to convict him so he was 'monitored' and interned in Brixton Prison in 1941 at the outbreak of WWII with Japan. He was released at the conclusion of the war in 1944 and not long after, committed suicide by putting his head in a gas oven.

Rutland died from remorse, humiliation and disgrace; Sempill died in peace and prosperity. The circumstances imply 'justice' of two kinds: one for the powerful, wealthy and well-connected and one for mere mortals. It will be interesting to see how historians react to Churchill's protection of the infamous Lord William Sempill 19th. Now we come to the Blair-Sempill link.

Watch for Part 2 in the next Newsletter



In Memory of...

Flowers of the Forest:

Beverly Dianne Blair

CBS life member #620- Beverly Dianne Blair, 60, of Eatonton, Georgia passed away on Wednesday, March 13, 2013. Beverly was born on August 30, 1952 in Brookwood, Georgia.

She worked at Oconee Regional Medical Center where she was a registered nurse, and married Ben Leverette on May 10, 2006.

She was preceded in death by her father Donald Blair, sister Debbie Muella, and brother Donny Blair. Beverly is survived by her husband Ben Leverette, mother Othelle Blair brother Scott Blair & wife Gail, nieces and nephews: Danielle, Natalie, Jackie, Josh and Michael and also their 2 loving Springer Spaniels Maggie & Harry.

The Claddagh



The Claddagh is a symbol of love beginning in the early 16th century when an Irish fishing boat from

+++++



*Jock & Jimmy were walking along a street in London.
Jock looked in one of the shop windows and saw a sign that caught his eye.
The sign read, "Suits £5.00 each, Shirts £2.00 each, trousers £2.50 per pair".*

the village of Claddagh, near Galway City, was captured by Algerian pirates. The Irish crew, including Richard Joyce, was sold into slavery. Richard who was to be married the same week he was captured, was sold to a wealthy Moorish goldsmith who taught Richard the trade. Richard shaped a unique ring for the girl from home he could not forget.

The Hand signifies friendship,

The Crown signifies loyalty,

And the Heart Love.

Years passed and Richard escaped captivity and returned home to find the girl he loved had never married. So, they were married and settled in the village of Claddagh. These rings became very popular with the locals as a betrothal and wedding ring.

The Claddagh ring worn on the *right* hand with the heart pointing *outward* means the wearer's heart is unoccupied; when the heart is pointing *inward*, the wearer's heart is committed. When the Claddagh is worn on the *left* hand and the heart is pointing *inward*, it means "let Love and Friendship reign forever, never to be separated". The design of the Claddagh has never changed.

Provided by Bryce and Cherie Blair of Sylvania, OH on their wedding day – Congratulations!

*Jock said to his pal, "Look at the prices! We could buy a whole lot of these and when we get back to Scotland we could make a fortune. Now when we go in you stay quiet, okay? Let me do all the talking cause if they hear our accents, they might think we are cheap Scotsmen and try to screw us. I'll put on my best London accent".
"OK Jock, I'll keep me mouth shut" said Jimmy
They go in and Jock said in a posh voice, "Hello my good man. I'll take 50 suits at £5.00 each, 100 shirts*

at £2.00 each, and 50 pairs of trousers at £2.50 each. I'll back up me truck ready to load them on, old chap!

The owner of the shop said quietly, "You're from Scotland, aren't you?"

"Well yes," said a surprised Jock.

"What gave it away?"

The owner replied, "This is a dry-cleaners....."!



One afternoon a Scotsman was riding in his limousine when he saw two men along the roadside eating grass.

Disturbed, he ordered his driver to stop and he got out to investigate.

He asked one man, "Why are you eating grass?" "We don't have any money for food," the poor man replied. "We have to eat grass."

"Well, then, you can come with me to my house and I'll feed you," the Scotsman said.

"But sir, I have a wife and two children with me. They are over there, behind the garden sheds."

"Bring them along," the Scotsman replied.

Turning to the other poor man he stated, "You come with us,

also."

The second man, in a pitiful voice, then said, "But sir, I also have a wife and SIX children with me!"

"Bring them all, as well," the Scotsman answered.

They all entered the car, which was no easy task, even for a car as large as the limousine was.

Once under way, one of the poor fellows turned to the Scotsman and said, "Sir, you are too kind.. Thank you for taking all of us with you."

The Scotsman replied, "Glad to do it.

"You'll really love my place.

"The grass is almost a foot high"

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June 2013

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