



Blair of Blair

BLAIR BRUIDHINN

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



Blair of Balthayock

“Blair Talk” for Clan Blair Society

www.clanblair.org

Second Quarter – May 2009

Baby Blair Caught Speeding by Cops! Jack R. Blair, Sydney, Australia

My wife, Nanette, and I are the proud grandparents of our third grandchild, *Talulah Esther Blair*, whose manner of birth was a special event we will never forget.

Our daughter, Elissa (Scottish for Elizabeth) and husband, Charles Fairman, currently live with us. When the birth was imminent and the hospital did not have a vacant bed, unbelievably they said do not come until the last moment. Not to worry, Elissa has had long labours of 24 and 16-hours previously with Jules 4 and Lola nearly 2. However, Talulah had different ideas.

On Good Friday, the race to the hospital began about 4:30 am, but two cops pulled Charles over going 93 kph (60 mph)! The cops started their lecture on speeding, but Elissa screamed, “The baby’s coming now *#!&#!”

The shocked police radioed an ambulance that surprisingly arrived in a few minutes, but the equally stunned paramedics had no idea it was a live birth and surprisingly, did not know how to deliver a child. They put down a stretcher and Talulah made her appearance. Charles himself had to cut and tie the umbilical cord! By this time, more cops arrived and Charles found himself being clapped and congratulated by all eight cops – what a typical male thing, while the wife lay on the ground.

The ambulance rushed mother and child to the nearest hospital emergency where post-natal procedures were completed and then taken to Hornsby hospital to register the birth.

TV stations wanted to cover the event but Elissa and Charles refused. Instead, The Sydney Daily Telegraph covered the event with a report, photo and even an editorial. Over Easter, it was in newspapers all around Australia and on the internet.

However, Elissa and Charles were very conscious of the dangers of a roadside birth. As she put it, “It was just as well the police stopped us for speeding because if it had been 5 minutes longer, we would have been without medical aid.” Another couple on the south coast of New South Wales were similarly unable to reach a hospital and, without medical aid, their baby, sadly, died.

Talulah performed her first charitable deed on her arrival; in all the excitement, the police forgot to issue the \$425 speeding fine. *Clever little girl!*

Our daughter’s children use our Blair surname. This matrilineal practice is unusual, but not unheard of. Elissa and Charles are married, but use their own surnames. When the grandchildren are older, they will be able to appreciate their long Blair heritage.

Jack is author of “The Blair Surname, its ancient Scottish origins and the genealogies of three Blair families” available at the CBS Store at www.clanblair.org.



The Genealogy Corner – Blairs in Scotland

I hope to confirm or correct what I have on John or James Blair the 8th or 9th Laird of Ardblair in Perthshire, but am not sure which one. John/James married Isabel Stewart daughter of James Stewart 1st of Ladywell. Isabel and John/James had a daughter Helen Blair born c1660/70. Helen married George Freer 26 Dec 1699. George was ordained minister at Lethendy. Can you help with John or James and dates of birth, as I have looked in many places and stuck. The Freer family line comes forward and into Australia, my grandmother Rita Irene Freer was born here in 1903. Yours aye, S. Blair, Australia.

This query is on the new Clan Blair Society Forums website at www.clanblair.net/forums/. See page two for research notes from Jack Blair, Bridge of Earn, Scotland.

Clues to finding Helen Blair by Jack Blair Clan Blair Genealogist, Scotland

Helen was daughter to James Blair of Ardblair (1656–1724). James inherited the estate on the death of his father John Blair (1630c-1683c). I would say he was the twelfth laird of Ardblair if starting from Thomas Blair of Muirton of Ardblair (1345c-1415c). It was his father who married Isabel Stewart so she was grandmother to Helen. The Old Parish Records show that Johne Blaire married Issobell Stewart 14 Jan 1655 in Blairgowrie, Perth.

(Sir Robert Douglas designed James of Moulin, but I think this was a misreading of Muirton as thereafter the family were barons of Muirton – no such thing as baron of Ardblair, although I have seen some genealogist confusing this with Blair of Balthayock who was baron of Ardler.)

James married Margaret, the only daughter and heiress of Patrick Blair of Little Blair. (See Blair of Pittendreich in our book “The Blair’s of Balthayock and Their Cadets”)

They signed their contract of marriage on 15 September 1674. In terms of the precept James was infeft in the lands and barony of Ardblair and Margaret in a liferent out of the Mains of Gormack. (Scots Law: *Liferent*, the right to receive for life the benefits of a property or asset, without the right to dispose of the property or asset.)

I have not found a record of Helen’s birth, but would place it about 1677-1680. On 26 December 1699, Helen married George Freer, who had been ordained minister of Lethendy the previous year. He served the parish there for the next half century and in the Dunkeld Presbytery, he served sometime as Presbytery Clerk. George was the proprietor of Easter Essendy, the neighbouring property to the Ardblair Blair’s Wester Essendy. They had issue Adam; Thomas; Francis of Invernethy; John of Essendy; George in London and Jean. George died on 14 December 1750 and Helen died a year later 11 December 1751.

Jack Blair, Bridge of Earn, Perthshire

Editor’s Note: The current laird of Ardblair Castle and estate is Laurence Philip Kington Blair Oliphant of Ardblair and Gask. Laurence and his wife Jenny have given Clan Blair members many tours of Ardblair Castle, a favorite stop on the CBS Scotland trips. Ardblair is also the site of a memorial to the founder of Clan Blair Society, Norman D. Blair. Under the traditional rowan tree, stands a handsome brass plaque set in a large granite stone that honors Norman and the founding of the society.

“The Blairs of Balthayock and Their Cadets, 1150-1850”
Compiled by Anne Groome (USA) and Jack Blair (Scotland) and published by the Clan Blair Society is available through the CBS Store at www.clanblair.org.

A Hello from Texas, Burton Dworsky

A note to let you know all is well; life has been moving ahead at light speed lately. After recovering from Hurricane Ike, I was able to have the Clan Blair tent at the Salado Games. I wanted to have the tent at the San Antonio Games, but I lost my job at the end of February. I was able to find another job the next week, so I will be having the tent at the Houston Games and Celtic Festival May 16-17. See y’all there.

In February, my girlfriend and I were in Tucson for the Gem and Mineral shows, she sells “rocks” on the side in her family’s business. The week before Christmas, we went to Colonial Williamsburg and visited William & Mary and took in all the references to Rev. Dr. James Blair and his burial place on Jamestown Island. Here I am at the Salado Games.



Southern California Commissioners Frances Holt, Bud and Vicky Bartlett

Come join us at our Southern California Highland Games.

Costa Mesa – May 23-24

www.unitedscottishsociety.com/games.htm

Ventura – October 10-11, www.seaside-games.com

Dick Holt, CBS Scotland Trip Coordinator

I am working on our 2010 trip to Scotland. Bill Smith in Scotland has retired, but he has a colleague that is preparing a proposal. Tentatively the dates are Friday 27 August to Wednesday 8 September 2010. Aloha, Dick

No. California Commissioner Bill Blair

We had marvelous weather, with clear blue skies and mild temperatures for the Games at the Yolo County Fairgrounds in Woodland, CA April 25-26. Always a wonderful fun event, I am deeply grateful for the assistance of friends from Clan Cameron and Clan MacNaughten in setting up our tent as well as the assistance of John MacFarlane and his friend Robin in packing up at the end.

Visitors to our CBS tent included members Julia Carapanos of Walnut Creek, who was actively taking part in the Scottish Dancing, Roger Settlemire of Quincy, John MacFarlane and friend Robin, and my cousin Bob Griffith of Woodland. Non-member visitors included Daniel and Debora Blair of Fair Oaks, Sara Wachter of Woodland (whose grandfather is a Blair), and Cord Akin of Chico – all indicated interest in membership.

Friday evening after setting up, I had a wonderful dinner with my Woodland cousins Harriet and Bob Griffith. Saturday evening, following attending my wife's granddaughter Jennifer's wedding in Sacramento, I had dinner with my good friends from Clan Cameron, and after the Games on Sunday dinner with friends from Clan MacNaughten and Clan Monroe. I hope to see CBS members at the following Highland Games:

Modesto at the Tuolumne River Regional Park, June 6

Oakland at the Dunsmuir House and Gardens, July 11-12

Pleasanton at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, Sept. 5-6

Sampson & Marilou Blair New York Commissioners

Greetings from Buffalo! After a *long* winter, spring has arrived in the northeast. For the first time we were able to participate in a Tartan Day celebration in Rochester, New York On April 5, we joined a full-blown indoor Scottish festival! The interior of the Rochester Armory is large enough to accommodate the bands, dancing and athletics; although it is hard to believe they can toss the caber indoors. The volume and power of massed bands is altogether different indoors, impressive!

Our table was located next to that of McBlare. No, McBlare is not a clan; it is a robotic bagpipe! On loan from Carnegie Melon, McBlare entertained the crowd throughout the day and we had a front row seat. View the McBlare website at www.cs.cmu.edu/~music/mcblare.

It plays a regular set of bagpipes using an air compressor to provide air and electro-magnetic devices to power the “fingers” that open and close tone holes that determine the

musical pitch. McBlare's computer has many traditional bagpipe tunes in memory including *Highland Laddie*. Happily, we met several Blairs from Rochester and we are definitely going back next spring.

We are preparing for another year of Scottish festivals at Amherst, Olcott, Jamestown and possibly one more. So, if you are in New York this summer, please drop by our tent.

Clair Blair News from Colorado Jim and Adoree Blair

The Colorado CBS marched in mass in Denver's St. Patrick's Day Parade. Joining about 200,000 Coloradans, 25 members presented the new Clan Blair flag and our Clan Blair banner. We welcomed Trudi Blair and her family, including son Benjamin and daughter Blair, her husband Chris and three grandchildren. We also welcomed guests, Dan and Amy Kelly and Sarah Byes.



Noah Blair Tichey, Atia Blair (stroller), Quaintance Blair, Arabella Blair, Jim Blair, Anthony Ballard (holding banner), Tim Fernandez, Adoree Blair, Leslie Blair Gallagher (hat), Saoirse Blair Galligan (banner), Amy Kelly, Erynn Blair Shryack, Dan Kelly, Gregory Ballard (banner), Sarah Byes, Blair Hurt, Nick Shryack, , Jacob Hurt (banner), Trudi Blair, Quinnlin Blair, Torin Blair, Mike Galligan, Dyani Blair Galligan, Tiernan Blair Galligan



Sarah Byes, Gregory Ballard, Trudi Blair, Jacob Hurt Blair Hurt, Chris Hurt, Anthony Ballard

Clan Blair AGM
Colorado Highlands Games, August 7-9
Jim Blair and Leslie Blair Gallagher

Welcome to the Colorado Highlands Games and Clan Blair Annual General Meeting. Join the Colorado CBS in Highlands Ranch, Colorado for our gala annual gathering.

Thursday August 6

Early arrival for eager Clan Blair members. Check-in at the Residence Inn Marriott Denver South Park Meadows

Friday August 7

Arrival and hotel check-in

2 pm – Clan Board Meeting, Residence Inn Marriott

4 pm – High Tea at Tres Jollie in Littleton, CO

Saturday August 8

Scottish Festival and Rocky Mountain Highland Games ticket purchases at www.scottishgames.org

10 am – Games open – Clan Blair tent open

Noon – Grand Entry parade

2 pm – CBS Annual Meeting – Clan Blair tent

5 pm – Games close

6 pm – Annual Banquet, Celtic Tavern –
River Downs Place in Littleton

Sunday August 9

Scottish Festival and Rocky Mountain Highland Games

10 am- Games open – Clan Blair tent open

Noon – Grand Entry parade

5 pm – Games close

The group rate for Clan Blair Society members is \$79 per night at Residence Inn Marriott 8322 South Valley Highway Road, Englewood, Colorado 80112, (720) 895-0200 Phone, (720) 895-0201 Fax

Make reservations with *Marriott National Reservations*: 1-888-236-2427 or 720-895-0200. **Mention Clan Blair Society to get the special rate.** You have until July 16 to make reservations at the special rate. Cancellation policy is two weeks prior to arrival, which is on or after July 23. After that guests will be charged one night room and tax.

The Residence Inn Marriott is located at I-25 and County Line Road. Park Meadows Mall is right across the highway with complimentary shuttle service to the mall for dining and shopping. The hotel is also a designated stop on Denver's new Light Rail system for a hassle free ride into Denver Downtown.

The Residence Inn Marriott facilities include:
Complimentary full hot-breakfast daily
Indoor heated swimming pool, whirlpool & fitness center
For questions: contact Sales Manager Polly Letofsky:
www.marriott.com/deniv or call 720-895-0149

“Blackmail” Has a Scottish Origin

The term blackmail originally denoted a payment made by English citizens residing along the border of Scotland to influential Scottish chieftains in exchange for protection from thieves and marauders.

The word is derived from the word for tribute (protection money) paid by English and Scottish border dwellers to Border Reivers known also as Free-booters, in return for immunity from raids and other harassment. This tribute was paid in goods or labor – *reditus nigri*, or “blackmail.” The opposite is *blanche firmes* or *reditus albi*, or “white rent” – denoting payment by silver.

Dictionary of the Scot Language

Dinnae let the Scots tongue scunner you. If you're in a dither about whether it should be *cannae* or *cannie*, there's nae need to sit around lookin' *glakit*. The mither tongue is at last in the computer age. The Scottish National Dictionary Association has launched its first ever spellchecker for the Scots language for home computers. Dinnae be a bampot, go to www.scotsdictionaries.org.uk/.

“Ode” or “Address” to a Haggis Which is it? An Ode is a rhythmical poem usually set to music. An Address is a formal communication either written or spoken. The Cambridge Edition, of “Burns Complete Poetical Works” 1897 states the name of the poem to be “Address to a Haggis.”

Arizona Commissioner Helen L. Blair

February 21-22, the 45th Annual Arizona Scottish Gathering and Highland Games were in Phoenix. We had over 24 visitors, many of them members. Andrew Blair Cupp came from Scottsdale, Yanni Lee from Chandler, Teri Blair and friend Jay of Tempe, Phil Blair from Prescott, James, TJ and Vicky Blair from Peoria, Kathy and Lee Knapp from Yuma and Rachel Blair and friend Brian from Phoenix.

Visitors included Jeffrey Blair, Chuck and Judy, Carolyn Cupp, Don Cupp, Meghan Lowrey, Lori and Oda McNair and Jeremy and Janet with their kids. We were close to the athletics so we enjoyed the show. Thanks also to James, TJ and Vicky Blair for breaking down the tent.

July 17-19 the 12th Annual Northern Arizona Highland Celtic Festival held at Foxglenn Park in Flagstaff. These are big Games; if you plan to spend the night, you need to make your reservations early because most of Southern Arizona heads up to Flagstaff. Check out www.nachs.info. Hope to see you there, Helen and Bob Blair

Peggy Baker, Clan Blair Rep in Kansas Glencoe Wordsmithing, Scottish-themed books

We are a small book reviewing company, primarily senior publications and small-town Midwest newspapers. We sometimes review Scottish/Celtic-themed books that appeal to fans of Celtic lore. A few current reviews:

An Irish Country Village by Patrick Taylor, Forge Pub. Recent medical-school graduate Barry Laverty has started his assistantship with crusty Dr. Fingal Flahertie in rural Ballybucklebo. He is nervously awaiting the autopsy report on the sudden death of a hypochondriac patient.

Did he dismiss the man's symptoms because of his incessant complaints? If so, will the community ever accept him? Enlivened with many smaller subplots involving the usual collection of small-town eccentrics, this well-written book is an amalgamation of James Herriott, Marcus Welby, M.D. (that dates me!) and Ballykissangel, currently on PBS.

The Critic by Peter May, Poisoned Pen Press. May, like his protagonist Enzo Macleod, is a Scot living in France. Gil Petty, celebrated wine critic, went missing during a tasting trip in the wine region of Gaillac. Three years later, his body appears in a vineyard, having been preserved in a tank of wine.

Petty's word could make or break a winemaker, but no one could decipher Petty's private code and the murder case went cold. Enzo's "hobby" is solving murders, but with the setting southwest France, what's the Scottish tie? Enzo's brilliant if unusual use of his kilt!

Death of a Lovable Geek by Maria Hudgins, Five Star. Dotsy Lamb, an ancient history teacher, is boarding at Castle Dunlaggan in the Scottish highlands, working at an archeological dig near the historical MacBeth lands. They find a gold coin from that period and then one of the excavators is found dead. Shortly thereafter, the brother of the Castle owner dies mysteriously. Is it the Curse of MacBeth or a curse of Shakespeare, who ruined MacBeth's name for posterity?

William Wallace by James MacKay, Braveheart. Meticulously researched biography of the landless younger son of a minor nobleman, who became the almost mythical leader of Scotland's drive for independence. The famous poem of Blind Harry, the most common cited source, was based on a manuscript by Wallace's chaplain and childhood friend, John Blair. MacKay has delved deeply into very old records to find new important facts.

It reads well and should be on every Scot's library shelf!

Peggy Baker at Glencoe Wordsmithing P.O. Box 556
Baldwin City, KS 66006 glencoe@knetconnect.net

Clan Blair Society President Helen L. Blair

Spring has sprung and in Southern Arizona, the Caledonian season is well underway. Clan Blair will have tents at many Games, but unfortunately have many areas without commissioners. Please consider taking on a volunteer position. CBS reimburses many expenses and it is fun meeting new friends and "cousins."

Jim and Adoree Blair with Leslie Blair Gallagher have a well-organized AGM set up for August, so make your reservations now. It will be interesting to find out what our Colorado Commissioners have in store for us. The Annual General Meeting is a chance to participate in Clan business and may be the only time to see Blairs from other parts of the world. I will bring Clan Blair Store merchandise with special AGM discount prices.

For those members who cannot attend our AGM and have concerns, requests or ideas to better our group, please feel free to email, call or write any of the CBS officers so we can discuss them during our business meeting.

I want to thank all those members who have renewed their membership. I know the economy is tough at this time, thank you for supporting Clan Blair Society.

Thanks to Phil Hill for taking over. I am recuperating from having spinal neck surgery and had limitations with my arms and voice. The hardest part of recuperating is giving it time to heal, but I am progressing well.

On the mend: Mary Toliver of Peoria, Arizona is recuperating from cataract surgery.

Congratulations to three special members:

Our Librarian, Jennifer Dean Blair's daughter Zia of Tucson, Arizona is graduating from high school this month. She took advanced college level classes and served as student body president. Way to go Zia!

Northern New York Commissioner- Sampson Lee Blair was part of the 5th Annual Celebration of Academic Excellence on April 7. He received the State University of New York's Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Bravo Sampson!

James Blair of Peoria Arizona, has been a Firefighter for the Gila Indian Reservation for many years and working with the Firefighter Explorer Club for at risk youths. He now has his Hazardous Materials Certification and is on the HazMat team. Good work James!

I hope to see many of you at the Annual General Meeting in Colorado where CBS merchandise will be at a BIG AGM DISCOUNT with no shipping and handling. Visit www.clanstore@clanblair.org, call 480-807-4024 or write me at 7516 E. Hermosa Vista Dr., Mesa, Arizona 85207. ~ Helen

The Tartan!

Here's to it! The fighting sheen of it, The yellow, the green of it, The white, the blue of it, The swing, the hue of it, The dark, the red of it, Every thread of it! The fair have sighed for it. The brave have died for it, Foemen sought for it, Heroes fought for it, Honour the name of it, Drink to the fame of it ~ THE TARTAN!

Membership Chair Report – Bob Blair

As of May 1, we have 263 members of Clan Blair Society. 50 are Life Members, six are Honorary Life Members; 146 have paid dues for 2009 and 61 still owe 2009 dues.

If the label on your newsletter says *Last Issue*, you should pay your dues right away, to insure your membership.

Remember you can pay your dues at the CBS website using PayPal. Log into the *Members Only* area and give the required information to pay by Credit Card.

Remember that the Newsletter is now available on line in pdf format. You can sign up for this service by letting me know at data_janitor@cox.net. If you do not have Adobe reader, you can get a copy free from the Internet.

We welcome six new members this quarter and #1024 Dale Granger is the nephew of Wyomia Blair of South Carolina one of the founding members of Clan Blair. In Colorado #1025, Trudi Blair is a computer engineer and #1026 David Blair works in IT. In Florida, #1027 Sharon Blair Albert is a Teacher, and her sister, #1028 Carolyn Slok is a rocket scientist. In California, #1029 Frank Hall is a fundraiser. Check out his website at www.frankhall.com/index.shtml

New CBS Members

#1024 Roger Dale GRANGER
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cjbslok@earthlink.net 321-432-6273

#1029 Frank R. & Patricia HALL
382 E. Montecito Ave Sierra Madre, CA 91024
fnphallnsm@aol.com 626-355-7795

20 Year Anniversaries in CBS

#120 Wesley Clyde & Shirley BLAIR
#121 Robert Alan & Janet L BLAIR
#136 Barbara BLAIR
#144 Ann C & Mark M JONES
#148 Martha Blair & Robert HARRISON
#149 Deane Arden & Barbara G STEELE
#150 Bruce Reynolds BLAIR

15 Year Anniversaries in CBS

#544 Elizabeth Blair NAIME
#545 Barbara A BLAIR
#547 Sharon & Roger C BROMAN
#549 Joan B MARTIN
#551 C Robert BLAIR

10 Year Anniversaries

#779 Louise W SEREBIN

Members Name Change"

#999 Rebecca C BLAIR
changed last name from Polliard to Blair

New Phone:

#998 Richard M & Yun BLAIR 327 615-354-9277

New Home/Mailing Address

#268 Robert Charles & Patricia BLAIR
1860 Ala Moana Boulevard #1400 Honolulu, HI 96815

#1004 Blair & Juliana BARROWS
214 Pleasant Bay Rd Harwich, MA 02645

#968 Catherine Blair & David ARMBRISTER
164 Garden Oaks Drive Princeton, WV 24740

#992 Ross Randall & Melissa (nee Estes) BLAIR
255 Boulevard Hts Athens, GA 30601

#520 J Chrys DOUGHERTY
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I have an old photo of a shop with the sign "H. BLAIR Saddler and Harness Maker." It is an ambrotype and probably dates from around 1855-65. The street looks Scottish to me, but I do not know where it is. I thought someone in Clan Blair might know who H. Blair is or where the photo was taken. Any feedback gladly received. Dr. Peter Blair, peter.blair@talktalk.net

If you know anything about this photo, please contact the Editor or Dr. Peter Blair.

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