



Late Autumn 2017 / Newsletter of the Clan Baird Society Worldwide, Inc.

CLAN BAIRD SOCIETY WORLDWIDE  
**SCOTLAND TRIP**  
 SPRING 2017  part two

nal Kirk site. It is believed that many churches on this site predated the current building, including St. Drostan's first chapel, circa 580 CE. We thank Bob and Isobel Watson for all the valuable history and information about the Kirk and burial site, as well as the tour they so graciously gave.

**Old Auchmedden Estate**

By Debra Baird and Heather Snyder

During our trip to Scotland, Clan Baird members were able to spend time at Aberdour Beach and St. Drostan's Kirk, as well as Pennan and other sites of the old Auchmedden Estate.

At St. Drostan's Kirk, there are many Bairds interred. Sir George Baird (a mathematician), the 2nd Laird of Auchmedden, 1517-1593 has a large, rectangular stone in the Baird burial

aisle/chapel, and there is a very large semicircle red sandstone memorial inset in the wall of the aisle nearest the sea, which was to Sir James Baird, 5th Laird of Auchmedden, 1619-1691, but his arms and memorial inscription, which was to the left, is no longer legible. We were told that Dale Baird, during this presidency, wished to restore the roof of this part of the Kirk, and it is agreed there is great need for such action. If the Bairds do not act, none of the stones will be legible in a short time. His wife, Christian Ogilvie's arms, which are to the right, are still visible on this stone, but are wearing away very quickly. Other stones are not legible at all, but are most probably earlier Bairds, or they would not be in the particular aisle/chapel. There is a large font at the entrance of the aisle, said to have been moved to the Kirkyard and predating the present building. Local people tell stories of St. Drostan's bones having been interred in this font/urn and brought to this, his origi-



Entrance to the Baird Aisle at St. Drostan's Kirkyard



The Nethermill, once called the Auchmedden Mill

Pennan is the fishing village that was part of the Auchmedden estate and under the protection of the Bairds, for many centuries. It remains a small fishing village, and was the site of the movie "Local Hero" starring Burt Lancaster, back in the 1980's. The famous red phone box remains on the Quay, just as it was in the movie, and we all had our picture taken with it, of course. The Pennan Inn is also open and would be an excellent place to stay, should anyone decide to visit.

*Continued on page 2*



**Ceud Mìle Fàilte!**  
(100,000 Welcomes)

**We welcome to our  
Clan the following:**

Alexander Baird  
New Zealand

Carol C Cason  
North Carolina

Donna Baird Groom  
Arizona

Larry E. Lathrop, Jr.  
Idaho

Deborah Baird Paget  
Georgia

Jerry Alan Van Hofwegen  
Washington

Shellie Van Hofwegen  
Washington

Lianne Baird Whang  
Georgia

Robert Baird  
Australia

**Scotland Trip continued from page 1**

Moving down along the coast, we were introduced to the Nethermill, which was called the Auchmedden Mill until just after the Rising of '45, when



The Nethermill on the old Auchmedden Estate

Alexander Garden (who was an avid Hanoverian and also later changed the name of Gamrie to Gardenstown) made it his particular objective to remove anything about the Bairds and the name Auchmedden from the face of the earth. We have historic information that he personally saw to the destruction and pulling down of the large manor house/castle at the Mains of Auchmedden, the house of the Baird Clan chief, William the 7th, and anything else he could manage to change the names on, about the estate. He, of course, had the blessing of the Duke of Cumberland in all his work. The Nethermill, sitting on the beach, is made

up of several buildings, most from the 18th century or earlier, so they were a part of the estate of Clan Baird when William the 7th was in residence. There is a stone bridge that is particularly interesting, built half by the Bairds and the other half by the Frasers. Bill and Lynn Pitt now own the Nethermill and have turned it into a very fine Self-Catering inn for all to enjoy the area. They have a one bedroom, two bedroom, and three bedroom cottage, but if you wish to stay with them, you must book early, they are full most of the year. Lynn is also a potter, and offers beautifully artistic pieces from her potting shop.

Walking about the mill and knowing that William the 7th would have walked there, worked there, and spent time with the milling family who ran

**Scotland Trip continued on page 3**



Pennan, the fishing village that was part of the Auchmedden estate



# Message from the President

## Greetings Members!

Dear Members,  
As we approach winter and the holidays, I bring you greetings and hopes for special happiness as you spend time with family and friends. May this be the best holiday season yet, and may 2018 bring you peace, joy, and love.

Our Society continues to grow and prosper, our membership numbers are up, thanks to so many of you signing up your relatives, and in 2018, my personal objective is to increase the number of member Baird's in Scotland, Australia, and New Zealand.

The letters with the proposed slate of officers for the next two years, and for membership renewal have gone out and it is hoped you have returned both. Please do renew your membership as soon as possible, sending to Bob Beard or through the website, and return the officer voting

ballots to Jane Baird Elliott at the address on your ballot.

Please send me any ideas you have for activities we could be supporting that would help you with family searches or with becoming more active in the Society. My email address is [djbaird4@gmail.com](mailto:djbaird4@gmail.com) and my telephone is 205-454-6852 in the U.S.



## Scotland Trip continued from page 2

it, gave us a deep appreciation of all that was lost. It also gave me a much better understanding of why it was so important to him to write the family history as he knew it; to try to keep the family together, although he had lost everything due to his Jacobite beliefs and support of Bonnie Prince Charlie. This particular William is buried in Aberdeen, at St. Nicholas Kirkyard. He and his wife, Ann Duff, spent the remainder of their lives in Aberdeen after the Rising, forever in exile from the life they knew at Auchmedden, and the world they loved. The memorial plaque placed at St. Drostan's Kirk, in memory of William and Ann, is even more important, when one considers the pain they suffered for their cause.



Stone bridge that was built half by the Bairds and the other half by the Frasers at the Nethermill.



## Grandfather Mountain Highland Games Report

Alton Wilson, Debra Baird, and Jane and Larry Elliott traveled to Linville, North Carolina for the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games July 6th-9th. Our tent was ready to go on Thursday afternoon, but Friday morning the weather was so wet, we only manned it until about noon. Then, on Saturday, the day was much brighter and cool. We met many new Bairds and were visited by many who have been a part of the Society for many years.

We appreciate Andy and Adriana Phillips, their daughter and her husband, Dana Baird and her son Cameron, and Mr. and Mrs. George Baird from Florida, for coming out to support us. George and his wife clearly won the “most miles traveled award”! We welcomed many new members, who joined us on Saturday, and made for a good time indeed. We had our General Meeting as the day progressed, talking with small groups as they arrived. As was agreed at the General Meeting in Scotland, the membership at Grandfather Mountain decided we should continue to look into the formation of a Foundation for preserving and promoting all things Baird, as well as Scottish culture and history.



Debra Baird and Anyd Phillips of North Carolina at the Grandfather Mountain Baird tent.

## William Baird, known as “Wandering Willie” and Joan’s fight against devastating Mesothelioma

By Joan Baird, with Debra Baird

“In March 1996 the dreaded news we all fear from a consultant, [I’m sorry your husband’s illness is terminal, he has mesothelioma]. That was the first time I heard the word. On asking what it was, I was told this was a cancer caused by the inhalation of an asbestos fibre which lodged itself in the pleura of the lung and started building silently its wall. In Willie’s case it took forty years before it reared its ugly head, Willie had thought he had given his back a wrench and that’s what he thought was the stabbing pain in his back. Within two weeks an x-ray which showed a whiteout on the left lung, immediately admitted to hospital, lung biopsy, result terminal; time limit six months.”

“Willie was a welder to trade and started his apprenticeship with Archibald Lowe & Company. He was with them for 11 years and like many a Clydesider moved on around the yards. Somewhere in that period he was exposed. He then moved around the country on various welding employ. The latter third of his working life he became a Welding Inspector for assignments abroad, Australia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran, The United Arab Emirates, Kuwait; and some of these countries two and three times around.”

To the Clan Baird Society members Willie was known by friends and family as

*Wandering Willie continued on page 5*



*Wandering Willie continued from page 4*

“Wandering Willie,” proud of the Baird name being an ancient Scottish Clan and of course a Partick man. “Past President Dale Baird, and Jack Baird from England, came to stay with us on a visit to Scotland one year, and we had such fun!” Joan told Debra Baird in a letter this summer.

Joan nursed Willie at home, with help from excellent doctors, and the assigned MacMillan nurse and Marie Curie nurses in the latter stages. This was extremely hellish to witness such agony, but finally Willie was freed from his pain on the 12th September 1996.

“Since his death, I have worked to help others who find themselves in this situation and to find ways to stop the heartache of having this disease.” In an interview given by Joan to BBC News in 2004, she outlined that she had become a campaigner for the Clydebank Asbestos Group following the death of her husband. The town has the highest death rate from asbestos poisoning in the UK, mostly due to its shipbuilding past. The Clydeside area also had two asbestos factories. Joan told BBC Radio Scotland: “It is a horrific disease, I’d describe it as the silent dust death sentence.”

Since becoming a volunteer, Joan has tirelessly pursued the companies and factories that were responsible, finding ways to force them to pay for the damages they have caused, organizing rallies to help others, counseling and listening to the stories of those who have been hurt, and has even spoken to Parliament about the plight of the victims, helping get legislation passed for compensation to those who need it

*Wandering Willie continued on page 6*

This song was written by one of our members, Stephen Baird, after reading the article in our spring Gryphon about young William Baird from Aberdeen, who fought with the Jacobites when he was only sixteen-years-of-age. He has set it to music, and I would really appreciate any member or anyone a member might know who plays the pipes and who might volunteer to record it for us. If you know of anyone, please email Debra at [djbaird4@gmail.com](mailto:djbaird4@gmail.com).

## William Baird

Written by Stephen Baird, May 2017

The rising of the forty-five and William Baird joined in.  
It ended at Culloden, bloodied, slaughtered Highland men.  
But William Baird survived it, to be thrown in Tolbooth Jail.  
And then it was a prison ship, across the sea to sail.

Arriving in America and sold off as a slave,  
Surviving battle, prison, William Baird was strong and brave.  
He worked and earned his freedom, moved to Carolina lands,  
A path for many remnants of the wiped-out Scottish clans.

Chorus:

The rising of the forty-five was noble for a while.  
Then Cumberland put them to flight, sent William to exile.  
Culloden’s bloody battlefield, just one test he survived.  
Through prison, transport, slavery, young William grew and thrived.

Verse:

On lands in Carolina, William Baird began to farm,  
With nothing but his spirit and the strength in his right arm.  
Then came a new rebellion ‘gainst the King, another fight.  
The Scots joined the militias. King George crumbled to their might.

Chorus 1:

The rising of the forty-five was noble for a while.  
Then Cumberland put them to flight, sent William to exile.  
Culloden’s bloody battlefield, just one test he survived.  
Through prison, transport, slavery, young William grew and thrived.

Instrumental on chorus melody:

Chorus 2:

The rising of the forty-five was noble for a while.  
Then Dirty Billie slaughtered them, sent William to exile.  
But William got another chance to right the wrongs he’d borne.  
The Scottish clans rose up again. America was born.



First Appeared in  
The Aberdeen Press and Journal,  
November 3, 2017

## Stonehaven, Scotland signs sister-city (twinning) agreements with Acheres, France

Stonehaven is edging towards its first twinning agreement after a chance encounter and some heavy rain paved the way two years ago, and one of our own, Richard Holman-Baird is part of the work



Veronique Forensi, Deputy Mayor of Acheres, takes a picture of (from left) Phil Mills Bishop, Sue Ajouman, President of Acheres Twinning Committee and Richard Holman-Baird, owner of Rickarton Estate. Picture by Colin Rennie.

to develop the exchanges. When the deputy mayoress of Acheres, a small French community on the outskirts of Paris, visited the town with her husband while holidaying in Aberdeenshire, she had planned to play a round of golf, but the rain caused

her to visit Stonehaven's tourist centre instead, and the idea of twinning was born.

Stonehaven community council chairman Phil Mills-Bishop said "significant progress" had been made during the two-day trip while welcoming the guests. Sporting links have already been forged between the rugby and tennis clubs and letters of commitment were exchanged yesterday. Whatever the political backdrop may be; with our hard or

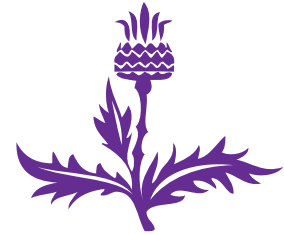
soft Brexit, we will have this relationship with you. And we say 'Merci'. We look forward to sharing ideas for community and commerce and hope that we will sustain this in the long term."

The final twinning documents will be signed in Acheres next year after which plans will be devel-

oped for rugby and golf tours, tennis tournaments and school exchange trips.



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### *Wandering Willie continued from page 5*

so very much. Joan feels "The small amount these huge companies give in compensation to families is a mere drop in the ocean and trying to break down that wall is like trying to climb Mount Everest." (Daily Record interview, 2012)

According to Joan, "we were told that numbers were going to peak in 2005, now they are saying 2020". This continues to be a major disaster. The Clydebank volunteers were presented the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service at a civic reception in Clydebank for their efforts. This special award is the equivalent of an individual being awarded an MBE.

Joan will tirelessly keep searching for answers and help for those who are suffering. When asked What Willie would think of her work she said "He would say, 'That's my girl'. That's what he always used to say. His sister often says he would be so proud, but I have only done what my heart dictates. I turned my adversity into something positive. In life, I think we should turn any negative experiences into something positive."

The Clan Baird Society says "bravo to a job very well done, indeed, Joan Baird, and we appreciate your brave efforts to unmask this horror, as well as getting help for those who suffer."





## Sgoil Ghàidhlig

Gaelic School

pronounced (skoal gallic)

- by Bethany Scott -

Happy New Year

Bliadhna mhath ur  
(blee-uh-nuh vah oor)

Merry Christmas

Nollaig chridheil  
(no-lik kree-el)

Fire

an teine (ahn chayna)

Fireplace

cagailt (kah-gilt)

A piece of peat

fàd mòna (faht moh-nah)

Whiskey

uisge beatha (ooshka bay-ah)

Music

ceól (cohl)

**Hogmanay** (*pronounced phonetically as spelled*) **is the traditional Scottish New Year's Eve celebration.**

In the mid-1500s Scotland experienced the Scottish Reformation, which broke with Rome to declare the Church of Scotland the national church. For various political and religious reasons, Christmas was seen as too Catholic, and so was celebrated quietly at home without

much fanfare. It wasn't until 1958 that Christmas was declared a public holiday in Scotland. During the 400 years that Christmas was effectively pushed underground, Hogmanay endured as the most important winter celebration nationwide. It continues as one of the world's most extravagant New Year's celebrations today.

***At the heart of Hogmanay is the tradition of the "first-foot," or the first person to cross a house's threshold after midnight of the New Year.***

Tradition dictates that the first-foot is best as a tall dark-haired man, as the bringer of good luck for the coming year. For maximum good tidings, the first-foot must be bearing gifts, customarily a piece of peat as fuel for the fire and a bottle to pour a drink for the hosts. He'll silently cross the room, place the peat in the fire, pour a dram of whiskey for the head of household and give a toast of, "A guid new year to ane an 'a" (translated from Scots: A good New Year to one and all). Once the host drinks the whiskey and pours another dram for the first-foot, the singing, dancing, and merrymaking commence.

All over the English-speaking world, we still sing Auld Lang Syne at the New Year. When the Scots emigrated, they brought their Hogmanay customs along with them to their new homes. Robert Burns first published Auld Lang Syne as a poem in 1788, but it was derived from an old folk ballad he surely heard growing up in Scotland. The singing of this song signifies the end of the party at the New Year. Celebrants join hands in a large circle to sing, and once the song is completed, the revelers begin to make their ways home to rest and begin the New Year afresh.



### Clan Baird Society Worldwide Financial Statement

Third Quarter - 2017  
July 1 to September 30, 2017

Income:	
Dues Received	255.00
Misc Income	
Donations	20.00
Quartermaster Sales	

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Total Quarterly Income:	275.00
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Expense:	
Advertising	
President-Membership	
Vice President	
Annual Report Fee	20.00
Secretary	
Genealogy	
Gryphon	
Games	314.00
Awards, Trophies & Donations	
Miscellaneous - PayPal fees	6.16

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Total Quarterly Expense:	340.16
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Net Income or (Loss) for Quarter:	(65.16)
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Cash in Bank - Last Quarter:	6,144.52
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Cash in Bank/ Available Funds:	6,079.36
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Submitted by:  
Robert G. Beard, Treasurer for Clan Baird Society Worldwide



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**Newsletter  
Deadlines**

**Winter 2018 Issue**  
deadline December 15th

**Spring 2018 Issue**  
deadline March 15th

**Summer 2018 Issue**  
deadline June 15th

**Please submit newsletter articles to:**

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hsnyder65@yahoo.com

or mail to:

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Electronic file formats accepted are  
Microsoft Word documents  
Adobe Acrobat. Any photo images,  
JPG, TIFF, GIF

**Any questions about *The Gryphon*  
submissions please feel  
free to call Heather  
at 802-485-5541**



**Where you  
can find us**

## Finding Your Family Roots

We have other of Clan Baird Society who are very knowledgeable in the history of Baird. Please email [info@clanbairdsociety.com](mailto:info@clanbairdsociety.com) for more information.

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**Check out our website!  
[clanbairdsociety.com](http://clanbairdsociety.com)**



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