



PLEASANTON-BLAIRGOWRIE-FERGUS  
SISTER CITY ORGANIZATION

October 2022

### From the President

Welcome to Fall and Halloween around the corner. The recent fall season temperatures are a welcome relief to the Labor Day Weekend heat wave! What is it about Pleasanton Games weekend and heat? Sunday's high was 106°, followed by five straight days of triple digit temperatures. Even the day of our Pub Night the temperature topped out at 104°.

Speaking of Pub Night, thanks to all who joined us at the Main Street Brewery and were treated to entertainment from Peter Daldrey, Michael Mullen, Piedmont Highlanders Pipes and Drums, and the quartet from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Pipe Band. Erskine Hospital representatives from Scotland spearheaded collections for the prize drawing made at the conclusion of the evening. We are pleased to report that the drawing collected \$806 which PBFSCO donated to American Friends of Erskine.

I hope you also had the opportunity to attend the Pleasanton Games despite the heat. The PBFSCO hospitality tent located behind the Pipe Band competition area was a welcoming stopping point for many old friends as well as newcomers. It felt much more like pre-pandemic times. So great to be celebrating all things Scottish in a big way.

The Blairgowrie Games also took place on Sunday of the same weekend. Due to the pandemic, it was the first time since 2019. Laurence Blair Oliphant reported that several sunny mornings preceding the games turned to a rainy start on the day. The dancing was subsequently moved indoors to the town hall due to the platforms becoming slippery. By the opening of the Games at noon, the weather brightened up for a pleasant afternoon. The Pleasanton Fire Truck was in attendance, receiving many visitors!

Laurence also had the unexpected news: "You will be interested to learn, if you haven't already, that the occasion was chosen for the signing up of another twin (triplet?) with Blairgowrie with the town of Brebières in northern France. I have had nothing to do with this and was only informed of this shortly before the Games." Interesting for sure but not likely to change Pleasanton twinning. Being curious, I looked up Brebières in Wikipedia: "It is a farming and light industrial town ... by the banks of the Scarpe river. A celebration of the potato takes place annually on the first Sunday in September." The first Sunday also being the annual Blairgowrie Highland Games.

On the Fergus front, I "caught up" with Deb Dalziel on Facebook. She is recently retired and living a nomad life with husband Graham. They are working their way through the American South. When I first contacted Deb, they were heading to Charleston, South Carolina from West Virginia and are now on their way to Georgia. I found a short news article about Deb's retirement on EloraFergusToday.com: [Deb Dalziel article](#).

Plaid Tidings to Deb and Graham!

VP Jean Purves has a new 10 question Scottish trivia quiz at the end of the newsletter plus answers to the trivia questions from the July 2022 newsletter.

Yours Aye,  
Steve Lind

## Mark Your Calendar

### Burns Supper 2023

Make plans to attend the 2023 PBFSCO Burns Supper on Saturday, January 28th, at the Pleasanton Marriott. It will be our 27th tribute to Robert Burns, featuring Golden Bough.



THE PBFSCO 27TH TRIBUTE TO ROBERT BURNS  
THE BARD OF SCOTLAND

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28TH

❖ Pleasanton Marriott ❖

FEATURING  
GOLDEN BOUGH



*Details regarding the evening and registration  
available soon*

LOOKING FORWARD TO A  
WONDERFUL EVENING!

[www.pbfSCO.org](http://www.pbfSCO.org)

### St. Andrew's Society of the East Bay Annual Ball

Saturday, November 12th marks the 144th Annual Ball for the St. Andrew's Society of the East Bay (formerly Oakland). The Ball will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Pleasanton at the Club. There will be a No-host Scots Bar open from 5:00pm, guests seated at 6:00pm followed by dinner, dancing, entertainment until 11:30pm

### St. Andrew's Society of San Francisco Annual Banquet & Ball

Saturday, December 3rd is the date for the Annual Banquet & Ball Party. St. Andrew's Society of San Francisco invites you to celebrate the most beautiful time of the year with them. Come enjoy good music, excellent food and ambiance plus live Scottish dancing at the Marines Memorial Hotel, San Francisco. Doors open at 6:30 pm.

## Queen Elizabeth II and Scotland - thoughts from Steve

I was among the many in the United Kingdom and around the world saddened by the loss of Her Majesty the Queen in September. Not only the longest reigning British monarch, Queen Elizabeth's 70 years on the throne made history as the world's second longest serving monarch. Being just four years old (slightly older than Charles) when Elizabeth ascended the throne, I've essentially only known Queen Elizabeth as the British monarch. Of course I learned much about her father King George VI over the years. And, of course, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. I also became ever more aware of the interrelatedness Queen Elizabeth had with Scotland. Herewith some musings in that regard with some connections in and around Blairgowrie and my visits to Scotland.

Queen Elizabeth was tied to Scotland by ancestry, having descended from the Royal House of Stewart. King George VI descended directly from James VI of Scotland, and Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother's family from the Bowes-Lyons, Earls of Strathmore. The Queen Mother was born in 1900 to Claude Bowes-Lyon, 14th Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne and Cecilia Cavendish-Bentinck. Glamis Castle, the Earl's ancestral home in Scotland, was the childhood home of The Queen Mother.

Glamis Castle is located 40 miles southeast of Blairgowrie in the village of Glamis, in Angus. Queen Elizabeth's sister HRH Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowden was born at Glamis Castle. Elizabeth and Margaret enjoyed childhood times at Glamis where their love of horses were nurtured. During our 2008 trip to Blairgowrie, we visited Glamis Castle, touring the house and grounds. At the corner of the Italian Garden is a memorial to Princess Margaret.



The Royal Family has stayed at Balmoral in the highlands since 1848 when Prince Albert acquired a remaining lease previously held by Sir Robert Lyon who died the previous year. The house was found to be too small. New house construction was begun in 1853 and completed in 1856. The old castle was subsequently demolished. With the new house, royal life in the Scottish highlands was established. After Victoria's death, royal family visits continued in the autumn.

Queen Elizabeth spent annual summer holidays at Balmoral and in residence when the annual Braemar Games were held. The royal family traditionally attends the Braemar Games which are held on the first Saturday in September — that day is known as **Braemar Day** in Blairgowrie. The city celebrates with a program of events including a massed pipe bands parade, performances by local dancers, singers, and bands, market stalls for local crafters, producers, community groups/organizations and food vendors. It culminates in a fireworks display over the River Erich and a Family Ceilidh in the Angus Hotel. I, along with several members of PBFSCO, had the honor to represent Pleasanton as participants in the 2008 Braemar Day opening ceremony. On Sunday, we were again honored to represent Pleasanton at the Blairgowrie Highland Games.

## Queen Elizabeth II and Scotland - thoughts from Steve

On our most recent trip to Scotland in August, we made a return visit to Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh where Queen Elizabeth typically spent one week each summer carrying out official engagements and ceremonies. As she was not in residence in August, we toured several interior rooms. Little did we know that a few short weeks later Elizabeth's coffin would travel up the Royal Mile in a procession from Holyroodhouse to St. Giles Cathedral. A journey we made on our first visit to Edinburgh in 2000, on a second visit in 2008 and once again last summer. Recalling those walks made viewing of the live televised procession up the Royal Mile all the more moving.



I asked Laurence how Queen Elizabeth's death affected him and Blairgowrie. "The loss of the Queen, although not entirely unexpected at her advanced age, was an occasion of national mourning here as you will have inferred from the broadcasts, with great emphasis on her devotion to duty and steadfast service. The fact that this happened in Scotland rather than in London provided an opportunity to experience the journey of the coffin on its way to Edinburgh at close quarters and daughter-in-law Gill was part of the crowd in Dundee as it passed by." And he said that Blairgowrie like other parts of Britain "...marked the occasion with shop and facility closures, flags at half mast, church openings and so forth."

I anticipate that the Royal Family's bond and connection with Scotland carries on through the reign of King Charles III. I think about the numerous times over the past that I observed King Charles wearing his kilt in public. I like to think that won't change in the future. And I would also expect that Balmoral continues to be a coveted Scottish residence for the Royal Family. It does belong to the family as ownership has passed to succeeding royals and now rests with Charles. Probably the most indelible image regarding Balmoral that will stick with me is the last public photo of Queen Elizabeth with Liz Truss only two days before her death.

A final thought. It will seem a bit strange at first to hear the toast to the King at upcoming Balls and Burns Suppers, but something that ought not last very long. So, trusting that etiquette allows, I offer a last toast "To the late Queen Elizabeth". May she rest in peace.

## Scottish Trivia

A new set of 10 trivia questions below.

On the following page, answers to trivia #2 questions from the previous newsletter.

## Scottish Trivia #3

1. How many offshore islands does Scotland have?
2. Between what 2 Scottish islands is the shortest commercial passenger flight in the world?
3. Red-haired people make up 2% of the population worldwide but in Scotland and Northern Europe it's between 6-13% why?
4. Scotland is the home of golf and the modern game was developed there. Golf has been played in Scotland from the Middle Ages and the Old Course at St. Andrews dates back to at least the mid 1500s. How many golf courses does Scotland have?
5. Following the death of Queen Elizabeth 1 which Scottish monarch ascended to the throne of England?
6. Who led the Jacobite Rebellion in 1745?
7. In the infamous Massacre of Glencoe, which two clans were involved?
8. In area, what is the largest loch in Scotland?
9. Visitors hoping to glimpse Nessie may find it difficult as the loch is very deep. How deep is Loch Ness?
10. Where in Scotland would you find the ship 'The Discovery'?



## Scottish Trivia #2

How did you do on the questions from the previous newsletter? Answers in **bold**

1. What is the National Animal of Scotland?

**Unicorn**

2. What is the most popular soft drink in Scotland?

**Irn Bru**

3. In 'How I met your mother', Ted and Marshall always listen to the same song in the car. Which one is it?

**500 miles by the Proclaimers**

4. How long is the Royal Mile in Edinburgh?

**1.11 miles**

5. What is the oldest university in Scotland?

**St Andrew's University, founded in 1411**

6. Visitors to Urquhart Castle may well be looking out for what?

**The Loch Ness Monster**

7. Abbotsford House was once the home of the author of the series of books called the Waverley Novels. What is the name of the author?

**Sir Walter Scott**

8. This city is located on the River Tay and is known as the 'Fair City'.

**Perth**

**It is the administrative centre of Perth and Kinross council area which includes Blairgowrie.**

9. Out in the Firth of Clyde is a small volcanic island called...?

**Ailsa Craig**

10. A unique lift system was opened in 2002 to reconnect the Union Canal with the Forth & Clyde Canal, what is it called?

**The Falkirk Wheel**

**The height difference between canals is 115 feet and the lift allows barges to travel between the two.**

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The Blairgowrie & Rattray website: <https://www.discoverblairgowrie.co.uk>  
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