

## Notable Bairds of the 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY series

### John Logie Baird, television inventor

Submitted by: Dr. Malcolm Baird, son of John Logie Baird

On November 2 1936, a group of formally dressed dignitaries sat under bright floodlights in the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) television studio, perched on the top of a hill in north London. They faced cameras designed by the rival companies which were in competition for the BBC contract. This contest was between the mechanical system of Baird Television Ltd. and the electronic system of Marconi-EMI Ltd., based on RCA patents. After a few weeks the BBC decided to adopt the electronic system, mainly because the mechanical cameras were large and awkward compared to the electronic cameras.

This event was not the first TV broadcast. As early as 1929, the BBC had begun experimental transmissions using an early version of John Logie Baird's mechanical system. The birth of television as a medium goes back even further, to October 1925 when Baird first produced a recognizable television picture of a live subject; this was followed a few weeks later by an

historic demonstration to the scientific community, as reported in The Times of London.

Although modern television uses the electronic system developed by the American independent inventor Philo Farnsworth and by his rival, RCA, Baird remains a key figure, perhaps the key figure, in television history. It can be argued that Baird "invented" television even though his mechanical system is no longer used today, just as Marconi "invented" radio even though his spark gap transmitter is no longer used today.

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John Logie Baird was born in the small Scottish town of Helensburgh on August 13 1888. His father was minister of the West Parish Church (Presbyterian) and John was the youngest of 4 children. He narrowly survived a serious illness in 1890 and he tended to miss his school classes due to colds and fevers, but he did a lot of reading - above all, the works of H.G.Wells

whose scientific stories inspired him. He was also inspired by famous inventors such as Thomas Edison, the Wright brothers and Alexander Graham Bell.

The idea of television came to him in about 1902 after he had read the H.G.Wells story The Sleeper Awakes and a technical book by the German



physicist Ernst Ruhmer on the transmission of speech by a fluctuating light ray. But he soon discovered that the selenium photoelectric cells gave a very weak signal and he moved on to another teenage project, his attempt to fly using a sort of box kite glider launched from the roof of the family home.

*Notable Bairds, continued on page 4*





## Ceud Mìle Fàilte!

(100,000 Welcomes)

*We welcome to our  
Clan the following:*

New Members Since  
Winter 2019

- Georgia L Combs, Pennsylvania
- Anne Beard Andres, Virginia
- Brian Baird, Texas
- Donald A Baird, Florida
- Douglas Baird, Scotland
- Richard W. Baird, Florida
- Wesley Baird, Alberta, Canada
- Kathryn Beard, Washington DC
- Nathan P. Beard, Florida
- Phil Mills-Bishop, Scotland
- Paige Borncamp, Virginia
- Patricia Baird Dillon, Pennsylvania
- Astra Gaedicke, Victoria, Australia
- Kevin Beard Harryman, Virginia
- Rebecca Howell, Alabama
- Diane Lehr, Alabama
- Sandra Baird Monfiletto, Maine
- Sheila Most, Michigan
- Kirsty Woodhead Ngala, Scotland
- Meredith Myers Null, Maryland
- Kelly Eugene Rainwater, Georgia
- Krissy Simpkin, Pennsylvania
- Steven W. Simpkin, Jr., Pennsylvania
- Lynnea Stadelmann, South Carolina
- Sissy Morris Thompson, Alabama
- Albert V Valletta, Jr. Colorado
- Lianne Baird Whang, Georgia
- Iain Logie Baird, England
- John Robert Baird, Washington
- Karen Elizabeth Baird, Nevada
- Robert C. Baird, Nevada



# ANNOUNCEMENT



*Clan Baird Society will be having  
the 2019 Scotland General Meeting*



Monday, 5 August 2019 2 o'clock in the afternoon

University of Edinburgh

St. Leonard's Hall, St. Trinnean's Room

Pollock Halls of Residence

18 Holyrood Park Road, Edinburgh, Scotland EH16 5AY

The Lord Lyon is sending a representative  
to discuss the State of the Bairds  
All Bairds are invited to the meeting

~ You do not have to be a member of Clan Baird Society to attend ~





# Message from the President

## Greetings

It has been a long winter already, and we look forward to spring this year especially. Clan Baird Society became a part of a twinning/sister city partnership with Stonehaven and the North East of Scotland in October. Mr. Phil Mills-Bishop, Chairman of the Scotland group, and Chieftain Richard Holman-Baird, Co-Chair, will be coming to Athens, Alabama at the end of May, as well as Mr. Neil McLennan, University of Aberdeen, to sign the agreements, spending time with the people of the area. In August, Mr. Ronnie Marks, Athens mayor, Dr. Trey Holladay, Athens City Schools, Mrs. Teresa Todd, Director of Tourism, Ms. Holly Hollman, Director of Communications for Athens City, Mrs. Diane Lehr, Vice President of the Athens Art League, will be traveling to Stonehaven for the signing over there. Clan Baird Society has its

Scotland tour in late July and early August, so many of us will be there for the sister city festivities.

Stonehaven is about twenty minutes from Aberdeen, and is very much an historical area for the Bairds. It is about an hour's drive from Pennan and the old estate of Auchmedden. The last remaining estate belonging to a Baird family is there. The major historic site of Stonehaven is Dunnotar Castle, where the signing of the twinning/sister city documents will take place.

As part of the time we are in Scotland, we will have our 2019 Scotland General Meeting in Edinburgh. The Lord Lyon will be sending a representative for us to begin the discussion about whether it is possible to name a chief for Clan Baird. We hope all Bairds will feel free to attend the meeting. This first meeting will be a discussion of the state of Clan Baird, and how to move forward, if possible.

There will also be a 2019 General Meeting in the U.S. at the Glasgow, Kentucky Highland Games, May 31st-June 2nd. We hope many Bairds



Chieftain Richard Holman-Baird has been asked to be "Chief of the Games" for Glasgow, Kentucky Festival

will come and meet with us there. Chieftain Richard Holman-Baird and company will be a part of that celebration and I hope we can welcome him to the United States with a large Baird gathering.

Alba gu bràth,  
Debra



[clanbairdsociety.com](http://clanbairdsociety.com)





*Notable Bairds... from page 1*

In 1906 he entered the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College (which has since evolved into the University of Strathclyde) as a student of electrical engineering. His studies were interrupted by illness and he did not graduate until 1914. He volunteered for army service but was rejected on health grounds. After spending a couple of years as an ill-paid junior engineer in a power station, he set out in business, making and selling a water-repellent sock which was advertised as "The Baird Undersock". The business succeeded, but his health was still a problem in the damp and cold Scottish climate. In 1919 he moved to Trinidad where he set up a primitive jam factory using local fruit; this was not successful and he returned to the UK with a large shipment of jams and juices which he tried to sell on the London wholesale market. He received some help from his family and in particular from his older sister Annie who was a qualified nurse working at one of the big London hospitals.

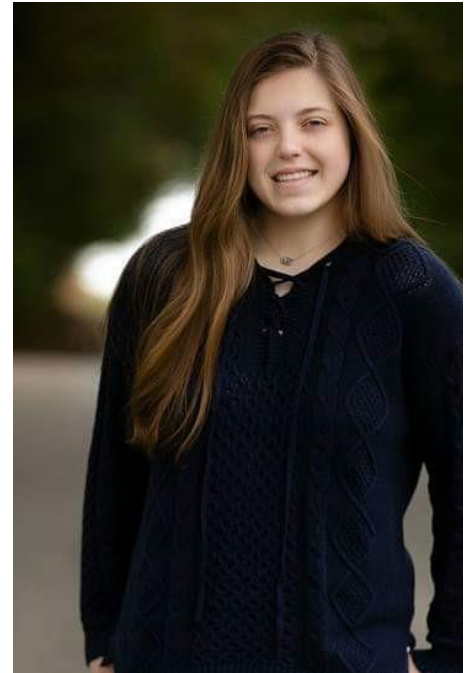
Early in 1923, John moved to the town of Hastings on the south coast of England. His health gradually recovered in the milder and fresher air and his thoughts returned to his early idea of television. The recent development of electronic tube amplifiers (by Lee de Forest and others) enabled him to make use of the very weak electrical signals from the photocells. With primitive equipment and help from local radio enthusiasts, he set up a system of rapid mechanical scanning with a perforated disc (the Nipkow disc). Despite the crude nature of the equipment, he was soon able to trans-

mit moving silhouettes from one room to another and potentially over much longer distances.

The big challenge was picture quality. For television to compete seriously with the movies, it was necessary for the picture to show half-tones as opposed to simple black-and-white silhouettes. John's efforts began to attract public attention; more importantly he began to receive help in the form of equipment (donated by companies) and a limited amount of some financial backing. In late 1924 he moved from Hastings to a small attic laboratory in the Soho area of London and the work went on until, finally, in October 1925, a half-tone television picture was achieved. The first human subject to be "televised" was an office boy from a nearby business, who had to be bribed with a large coin (about 50c) to stay still under the intense floodlighting.

Because of the mechanical scanning, the first television pictures contained only 30 lines of definition at a frame rate of 12½ per second. Nevertheless the human face was recognisable and movements could clearly be seen. On January 26 1926, television was demonstrated for the first time, to an invited audience of distinguished scientists from the Royal Institution. This was reported fully in the London Times and a company was formed under the simple name of Television Limited, which was later changed to Baird Television Ltd.

There was no mass market for television and for the next few years John focussed on developing his system and



***Anna Ryan Ferguson has been appointed our Clan Baird Society Photographer*** and will be taking pictures at events throughout each year. Please welcome her as our newest helper with the Society. She is graduating high school in May and will attend Troy University in fall 2019, majoring in criminal justice. She hopes to someday be a detective with law enforcement in a major city, or with the FBI.





### Welcome Bruce D. Beard as 3rd Vice President and Congratulations to Sandy Baird on becoming 1st Vice President

Clan Baird Society welcomes Bruce D. Beard as our new 3rd Vice President. Bruce agreed to accept this position on the Board of Directors when Sandy Baird took over as 1st Vice President, as is outlined in the By-Laws of the Society. We appreciate Bruce's and Sandy's willingness to serve.

Bruce is from Texas, but has spent his life working in and around Washington, D.C. with several governmental offices. He lately worked as Associate



Bruce Beard

Bruce and his wife Beth visited Scotland and spent some time in Stonehaven, meeting Richard Holman-Baird and Phil Mills-Bishop. Bruce is descended from "old John Baird" as so many of us are. We look forward to working with Bruce and building Clan Baird Society even more.

Sandy continues his architecture business in Wyoming and is in charge of sending the New Member Packets to each person who joins us. He is planning to work with Bruce to transfer

his coordinator of highland games over, so that he can concentrate on other interests with Clan Baird Society.



Sandy Baird

We appreciate both of these men and all they do for the Society and our Baird family.



### Glasgow, Kentucky Highland Game

### U.S. Clan Baird Society General Meeting

Saturday, 1st of June 2019  
2 o'clock in the afternoon



Clan Baird Society Tent  
Glasgow, Kentucky  
Highland Games

Chieftain Richard Holman-Baird has been asked to be "Chief of the Games" let's give him a warm welcome!

For more information please go to their Facebook page or website:  
[www.facebook.com/Glasgow-Highland-Games-KY-USA](http://www.facebook.com/Glasgow-Highland-Games-KY-USA)  
[www.glasgowhighlandgames.com](http://www.glasgowhighlandgames.com)



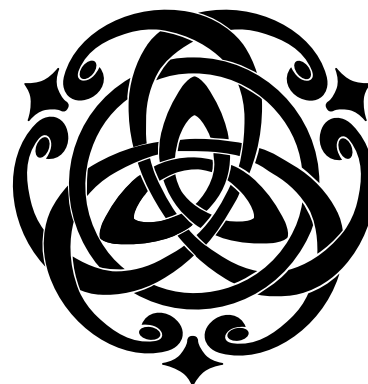
### Jim Baird Retires

Jim Baird has retired from his post as 1st VP of the Society. He served Clan Baird in many capacities over the years, from President to state leader, to his final position as 1st Vice President.



Jim's family migrated to the United States from Scotland before he was born, and made a home in New York. He and his wife Carol worked tirelessly

for us and we will very much miss his wisdom and guidance on the Board of Directors. He remains a member of the Honorary Council of Chieftains and has agreed to be available to give some good advice from time to time. Jim's mother, Maggie Baird, made the best shortbread ever found on Earth, and we continue to enjoy making it from her recipe for all the highland games and festivals we attend in the South East. The Society thanks Jim for his many years of service, and we hope to see him soon at a gathering.





## Flowers of the Forest

### Tom M. Ivey Baird, Texas 1933-2018

Thomas Malcolm Ivey, age 84, passed from this life on Saturday, January 6, 2018. He was born on August 12, 1933 into the ranching family of William Lee Ivey and Katie Lea (Norwood) Ivey, who



were living on the banks of Hubbard Creek in Shackelford County. He was a long-time member of Clan Baird Society, and was always happy to help

with anything we did around his home in Baird. His Baird ancestors settled the area.

Tom Ivey was a man of great wisdom and jack-of-all trades. He graduated from Baird High School with the Class of 1950, and then worked for the Texas & Pacific Railroad Company. He proudly served our country in the United States Army, entering active duty on May of 1953 and served during the Korean War. Following his Army service, Tom graduated from McMurray College in Abilene. While attending McMurray he met Carol Ann Allen, and they were married December 29, 1957. He spent his working life in the oil and gas industry, as a manager and director of many projects.

In 1983 Tom returned to the Ivey family home in Baird to raise cattle and honey bees, continuing the traditions learned as a boy and young man.

### Philip Whittlesey Baird 1919-2019

Philip Whittlesey Baird of St. Petersburg, Florida passed away July 22, 2018 in Florida at the age of 99. Phil was born in Columbus, GA, son of a



regional sales manager for Kelvinator Corporation. He grew up in Atlanta, New Orleans, Tampa, and Birmingham. He attended

Plant High in Tampa, graduated from Tech High in Atlanta, and attended Birmingham Southern College and Auburn University. In 1941, he married Martha Jacobs, started a family and went to work for a DuPont Company munitions plant in Birmingham. When World War II broke out, he was transferred to Minneapolis, then to the Oak Ridge, TN plant where the atomic bomb was being developed. In 1944, he enlisted in the Air Force and was then stationed in Ft. Myers. Upon discharge, Phil and his father founded Mote W. Baird & Son, Inc., a wholesale refrigeration and air conditioning supply business in St. Petersburg, which he managed until retiring in 1968.

Phil was an active member of Clan Baird Society for many years and he will be missed.



## Clan Baird Society is Preparing a Clan Baird Cook Book



*Please send your favorite family recipes to:  
Debra Baird  
or Heather Snyder*

**Addresses are on  
the back of the Gryphon**

Many members have asked if there is a cookbook of Baird family recipes, and to our knowledge there is not, so we are taking on the task of publishing one. We hope that all of you will send your favorite Baird recipes to us. Please send as many as you would like to share with Clan Baird as a whole.

Please also add a paragraph about the person(s) in your family whose recipe(s) you submit. We want to know who gave them to you and yours originally, giving their birth and death dates, if possible, where they lived, and a short biography about their lives.

We hope to print and sell the final product for the beginning funds of a Clan Baird Foundation. All who contribute recipes will be given a copy of the published book as a token of our appreciation for your participation.



*Notable Bairds... from page 4*

demonstrating it to the public. In May 1927 television was sent from London to Glasgow and in February 1928 it was sent from London to New York,. In this, John was assisted by Ben Clapp, a British radio amateur who had a short wave transmitter (40 meters wavelength) with the necessary range.

John's small company depended very much on public interest and he was joined by publicity people such as the journalist Sydney Moseley. Money was short until in 1932 the company was taken over by the UK's major movie company, Gaumont British Pictures. By this time electronic television was becoming a viable alternative to mechanical television, thanks to the work of two US pioneers: Philo Farnsworth and his rival

the Russian-born Dr.Vladimir Zworykin. The latter had the financial and technical support of the Radio Corporation of America (RCA). From 1932 onwards, Baird Television started to move into electronic television and it hired some talented electronic physicists. For \$50,000 it bought one of Farnsworth's camera tubes for further development. By 1936 the company had about a dozen research groups but it still concentrated on the mechanical system that had been developed to produce a 240 line picture. This proved to be the practical limit of the system and it was abandoned in Febru-

ary 1937, although Baird Television remained viable as a manufacturer of television receivers, under licence. In September 1939 BBC television was shut down due to the outbreak



**In this posed photograph from 1944, he is holding the Telechrome.**

of World War II, but John Logie Baird continued to do television research at his own expense. In his small laboratory with one technical assistant, he developed high-definition color and 3D television. Among his inventions was the world's first color cathode ray tube which was known as The Telechrome. But sadly, he died in on June 14 1946, just a week after the BBC had resumed its television service.

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For about 30 years after his death, John Logie Baird was stereotyped as being a romantic failure because of his early involvement with mechanical TV. When I was a teenager this helped me to decide against electronics as a career and instead I moved into chemistry.

As the years have passed, the technical evolution of television has continued. Television tubes with their heated filaments have been replaced by smaller and more reliable solid-state devices. The change from analog to digital has led to an enormous increases in the picture quality and in the number of available broadcast channels. On the negative side, television manufacturing has moved to far eastern countries. The great electronic manufacturers of the Western hemisphere, such as Marconi and RCA, no longer exist; nor do the jobs that they provided. On the other hand, the making of television programmes still employs many people.

As television's hundredth birthday (in 2025) approaches, John Logie Baird is still remembered. In the UK there are historic plaques at most of the places where he lived and worked, including his birthplace in Helensburgh. His contributions have also been recognized by American technical organizations such as the SMPTE and the IEEE, while in January 2016 the 90th anniversary of his first demonstration was marked by a "Google Doodle". About a dozen books have been written and currently there are discussions about a possible movie on his life. Last but not least there is the website [www.bairdtelevision.com](http://www.bairdtelevision.com) which is run by my son Iain Logie Baird and myself.





# A Fifty Year Anniversary

On Thursday 20th September 2018, Jack & Margaret Baird celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary!

For this day they decided to have a relaxed time with their daughter Joanne and have a rather splendid "Afternoon Tea" in a large hotel near Lincoln. Still nothing like "a Scottish Afternoon Tea".



However, the main celebration was on Saturday 22nd when Jack & Margaret greeted FIFTY GUESTS in the two acre garden of "Stephenson's Hill House" that is owned by their daughter Joanne and her husband Chris Ash. Due to Margaret's health, a few years ago Jack and Margaret had to sell their house and now they live in the Annexe to Stephenson's Hill House. For this celebration a large and heated Marquee was erected near to the main house. Also, an open-sided

{8}

building was decorated by Joanne and converted into "The Bar for Arrivals" with Chris officiating. Joanne was the "Master of Ceremonies" for the day. Inside the Marquee there were six circular tables, each "led" by one member of the family whose job was to see that no guest was short of food or drink.

One display made by Joanne that was even a surprise to Margaret and Jack was a 2 foot by 3 foot collage of photographs that had been taken at the Wedding of Jack & Margaret in 1958.

The photographer and his assistant [family friends] arrived early to start work on family photographs, then stayed and worked for the whole day. "The Entertainer" - a Mind Reader also arrived early.

As requested all the guests arrived before 12.30am. They included a few relatives from further South, plus friends from near Kent where Jack

and Margaret used to live until nearly fifty years ago, and many friends from Lincolnshire or nearby. After everybody had arrived and been given a drink, with Margaret beside him, Jack used a Village School Bell to give him three minutes of silence to make the official welcome. He also explained the rather emotional reason why everybody present had been invited today i.e. to thank this "captive audience" for the happiness that each one of them had given to Margaret and himself for many years - or recently for

only a few years. Then he invited everybody to follow Joanne and himself to walk the ten yards into the Marquee.

For the next few hours a grand meal was served from a long table. Joanne organised for only one table to be served at a same time, although "seconds" were allowed - or more times to the table for puddings.

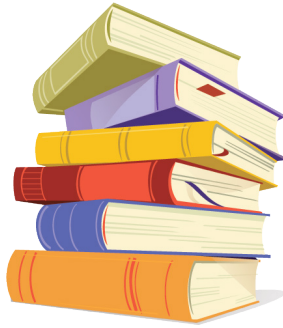
Then Joanne stood to give a prepared speech in which she began by explaining how and why her Mum and Dad met at a dance and how their relationship blossomed until marriage in 1958 [attended at this talk by a few who were present at the Wedding]. She spoke of many of the highlights such as buying their first house in Kent - Grahame's birth; then hers - Dad's award of a Swedish Honorary Knighthood - Mum's award of the British M.B.E. - of the birth of three Grandchildren, her Harriett and Grahame's Oliver and Lucas. Then Joanne invited her daughter Harriett to quote a chosen Love-Song "The Time is Now"; to be followed by a life-long lady friend of her Mum and Dad who spoke of her feelings for Margaret and Jack.

Then Joanne called on everybody to stand and honour a toast to Jack and Margaret, following which they "Cut The Cake".

This happy event continued for a good many hours to take advantage of the large space in and outside the Marquee; although "long-distant guests" such as Margaret's sister had to leave early. After "a champagne day" I am amused to recall that quite late, for those who were to sleep in the house or Annexe or locally, Chris ordered "Fish and Chips" to be delivered to the Marquee.







## Sgoil Ghàidhlig

**Sgoil Ghàidhlig**  
**Gaelic School – pronounced**  
**(skoal gallic)**

**Maiden of the Sea**

maighdeann-mhara (my-jown-va-ra)

**Grey – liath (lee-ah)**

**Skin – craiceann (cry-chen)**

**Seal – ron (rawn)**

**Island – eilean (ellen)**

**Beach – traigh (try)**

**Sailor – seoladair (shaw-la-dar)**

**Tears – deuran (deer-un)**

**Husband – ceile (cay-luh)**

**Wife – bean (ben)**

With 10,250 miles of coastline in Scotland including all the islands, it's little wonder why the Selkie is one of the most popular figures in Scottish folklore. Selkies are creatures who can transform from seal to human by shedding their grey skin. These tales have been passed down through the generations through word of mouth, and there is no definitive published work of these mythological creatures, resulting in many different tellings from different locations across Scotland. The selkies are most closely associated with mermaid legends, and are often referred to as 'maidens of the sea' in Scottish Gaelic.

One of the most famous tales involves a human woman living on Orkney (the first set of northern isles) named Ursilla, who was seduced by a handsome man as she gazed upon the sea awaiting the return of her sailor husband. Ursilla

became pregnant by this raven-haired man and gave birth to a child born with webbing between their fingers and toes. Historians believe that folktales such as this are a way to explain congenital conditions in babies, such as syndactyly, which is the presence of skin between the digits. When Ursilla's husband was away from home at sea, she would summon her selkie lover by shedding seven tears into the sea. The significance of the number 7 in Catholicism is in reference to the Seven Sacraments, and can help connect the ancient folktales to the present-day religion.

Selkies also took female human form. These women would come ashore and shed their seal skins and take human husbands. In these versions of the stories, the husbands usually realize their wives' secret and hide the seal skin in order to prevent her return to the sea.

David McRitchie, a Scottish folklorist, believes that ancient Scottish settlers must have encountered Finnish and Sami people, natives of what is now Scandinavia, and used the selkie tales to explain their grey seal skin clothing and kayaks. Weeping because of her imprisonment by the Queen of Winter. His father foretold that when Angus Og would take the throne as King of Summer, Bride would be his queen. When Angus Og wanted to set out immediately in the harshest

days of winter, his father cautioned against it, but he would not be swayed. He needed to rescue his queen from her captor.

Angus Og rode his steed hastily across the ocean to the snow-covered mainland of Scotland, to Ben Nevis, the mountain fortress of Beira, located on the western side of Scotland near the town of Fort William. When she learned of her rescuer, Bride cried tears of joy, which sprouted violets the color of her eyes every spot they fell. Once she was free, Bride stepped upon the ground outside of Ben Nevis, and the snow melted underneath each footfall. Flowers sprang from the earth wherever she walked, and the two made their way into the forest to be wed immediately by the Queen of the Fairies.



### Clan Baird Society Worldwide Financial Statement

Fourth Quarter - 2018  
Oct. 1 through Dec. 31, 2018

Income:	
Dues Received	1,055.00
Misc Income	
Donations - President	1,371.03
Donations - Other	520.00
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Total Income for Period	2,946.03
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Expense:	
Advertising	150.00
President-Membership	1,371.03
Annual Report Fee	20.00
Scholarship	
Genealogy	
Gryphon	423.98
Games	75.00
Awards, Trophies & Donations	
Miscellaneous - PayPal fees	15.56
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Total Expenses for Period:	2,055.57
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Net Income or (Loss) for Quarter:	890.46
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Cash in Bank - Last Report:	6,336.25
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Cash in Bank/Available Funds:	7,226.71
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Submitted by: Robert G. Beard, Treasurer for Clan Baird Society Worldwide	



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### Newsletter Deadlines

**Spring 2019 Issue**  
deadline March 31th

**Summer 2019 Issue**  
deadline June 30th

**Autumn 2019 Issue**  
deadline September 30th

**Please submit newsletter articles to:**

Heather Snyder at  
gryphon@clanbairdsociety.com  
hsnyder65@yahoo.com

**or mail to:**

Heather Snyder  
63 Northview Dr.  
Northfield, VT 05663

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

**Any questions about The Gryphon  
submissions please 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.

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



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