

**PRESS RELEASE**

**JUNE 2009**

## **Discover your Ancestors at Blair Castle**

To mark the 2009 year of Homecoming, Blair Castle is hosting two special family history days on Friday 12 June and Wednesday 8 July. Visitors are warmly invited to find out more about the historic associations of Clan Murray, Clan Stewart, Clan Robertson and Clan Ferguson with the castle in a Clans talk led by Castle Archivist Jane Anderson. There will also be an opportunity to visit The Clans display in the castle's Banvie Hall and sign in the Homecoming visitor's book. To complete the family history theme, visitors will be treated to live costumed performances of *The Stewarts* by Historic Scotland throughout the day.

The Clans Talk takes place at 11.30am in the Castle library and will be led by Castle Archivist, Jane Anderson. Her talk will explore different themes around the four clans including where they lived in the local area, the marriages and alliances they made and information about notable individuals. There will also be a special opportunity to view original maps and documents relating to the clans that are not normally on public display. As an extra bonus, adults attending The Clans talk will receive a free miniature of Bell's whisky courtesy of the Blair Athol Distillery in Pitlochry and discounted entry tickets to the distillery.

Visitors are also encouraged to view the Clans display in the castle's Banvie Hall. Items on display include Clan tartans, maps and the wild man of Atholl from the Murray coat of arms. The display houses a special visitor's book to record your visit to Blair Castle in the year of Homecoming.

There will be three performances of *The Stewarts* during the day (10.30am, 2pm & 3.30pm). *The Stewarts* is a performance from the Family Footsteps trails series specially created by Historic Scotland for Homecoming year. The performance will begin by introducing the Stewart family as a whole, those that ruled Scotland and the many positions of power that family members, both near and disparate held across the country. It will then look at Blair Castle specifically focusing on the family there and the association with the Murrays. In particular it will look at the story of the siege of the Castle by Lord George Murray and as a Jacobite his association with the end of the

Royal Stewart line making mention of the many Jacobite items that the Castle contains. There are 15 special trails in total, all taking place at historic sites linked to famous Scottish clan and family names. Other historic properties participating in the series include Edinburgh Castle, Scone Palace and Glamis Castle.

**Notes to Editors:**

Tickets for the Clans Talk are priced at £11 and are available in advance or on the gate (if tickets remain). Tickets include access to the full castle tour. Performances of *The Stewarts* are free to visitors as part of standard castle or grounds entry. Tel 01796 481 207, email [bookings@blair-castle.co.uk](mailto:bookings@blair-castle.co.uk). Numbers are limited to 25 people per tour. For further information please visit [www.blair-castle.co.uk/events](http://www.blair-castle.co.uk/events)

**-Ends-**

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