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LAIRD & COMPANY CELEBRATES 225TH ANNIVERSARY
Nation's Oldest Licensed Distiller Remains Family Owned & Operated

Scobeyville, NJ, February 10, 2005 - Laird & Company, America's oldest licensed distiller and famous for AppleJack, is celebrating its official 225th anniversary this year, although the company can trace its origins back more than 300 years, to 1698.

It was during that year that William Laird, a county Fyfe Scotsman and rumored producer of Scotch in his native Scotland, moved to Monmouth County New Jersey, where his descendants continue to produce and import a variety of exceptional spirits and fine wines. Upon his arrival in the New World, William Laird employed his expertise to create AppleJack by using the most abundant natural resource in the area, apples.

"While we continue to make Applejack and aged apple brandies, we have grown well beyond our ancestor's expectations to become a leading purveyor of spirits and fine wines throughout the United States," commends Lisa Laird Dunn, vice president, advertising and public relations, Laird & Company.

The company's long and storied history will be celebrated with a special VIP dinner to be hosted at the historic Molly Pitcher Inn in Red Bank, New Jersey on February 10th. The dinner will feature authentic colonial fare along with recipes handed down throughout the family's history, complemented by a variety of beverages made with Laird products. A wandering minstrel featuring 18th century music will set the colonial tone.

Following the dinner, Lisa Laird Dunn will begin a year-long tour of key U.S. markets where she will host special events, visit with key distributors and retailers and share the fascinating history of one of the nation's oldest companies.

That history features her ancestor Robert Laird who was proprietor of the Colts Neck Inn as early as 1777, which was a stopping place for stagecoaches and dispatch riders traveling from Freehold to Amboy, NJ and still stands today.

Robert Laird was a Revolutionary War soldier under the command of George Washington, and when in the Monmouth County area, the troops were supplied with AppleJack. Historical records indicate that George Washington was so impressed that he wrote to the Laird family asking for their Applejack production recipe, which was

subsequently given and entries appear in George Washington's diary in the 1760s regarding the production of "cyder." To this day, Washington is the only outsider to receive a copy of the recipe.

Laird & Company continued to operate until Prohibition was declared. During Prohibition, the company survived through the production and sale of various apple products, such as sweet cider and applesauce.

However, in September 1933, Laird & Company was granted federal license #1 under the Prohibition Act to distill Apple Brandy for medicinal purposes. This made it possible to produce legal inventories of AppleJack so it became available to the public immediately after the repeal of Prohibition.

During the Second World War, the Scobeyville plant was converted to the drying and dehydration of apple pomace for pectin and other products to aid in the war effort.

The year 1951 marked the millionth case of Laird's AppleJack to be packed since repeal of the eighteenth amendment. It was an occasion of celebration and each employee received one silver dollar for each year of service.

Today, the Laird family in Scobeyville, NJ is recognized as the oldest family of distillers in the country, and they now produce close to 1.5 million cases of distilled spirits annually. Larrie W. Laird, eighth generation Laird, is the president of the distillery. Lisa Laird Dunn and John E. Laird III, both ninth generation, hold the positions of vice president and executive vice president respectively. The company was named NJ Family Business of the Year by New Jersey Monthly magazine in 2001.

About Laird & Company

Laird & Company, Scobeyville, NJ, America's oldest distiller. Laird & Company established its import division in 1995 and currently imports an impressive range of wines and spirits from around the world.

Among the many quality products represented in its portfolio are Moletto Pinot Grigio, Santa Sofia Amarone, Castello Vicchiomaggio Chiantis, Pietrafitta Vernaccia, Valdivieso Chilean wines, Artic Vodka, Villa Massa Limoncello and Mazzetti Grappa.

For more information about the wines and spirits of Laird & Company's Import Division or the company's other fine products, contact 1-877-GET-LAIRD or visit their web site at www.lairdandcompany.com.

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