



NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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IMAGES: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/L7V515> - National Trust for Scotland head of collections & interiors David Hopes & Trustee Murray Pittock are pictured with the violin at the charity's Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway.

Burns violin brings sound of Scotland to US

An historic violin with links to Robert Burns is being taken out on a tour of the US this January, as part of celebrations for the Bard's birthday.

The 18th century instrument is part of the National Trust for Scotland's unrivalled Burns collection of more than 5000 artefacts which are protected by the conservation charity at its Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway.

The violin is pictured here ahead of its departure with Murray Pittock, National Trust for Scotland Trustee and David Hopes, the National Trust for Scotland's head of collections and interiors at the Ayrshire museum which hosted the Centre for Robert Burns Studies Conference on Saturday 11 January.

The instrument will be touring the United States as part of a partnership between the Scottish Government, conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland and The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA. Featuring in a series of Burns celebrations across the States, it will be accompanied by acclaimed Scottish violinist Alistair McCulloch who will perform a programme of Burns and Burns-inspired compositions.

David Hopes, the National Trust for Scotland's head of collections and interiors said: "The violin is one of the jewels of our Burns collection and hearing it being played, as Burns did, is very special. For any Burns fan, and we know there are many in the States, this will make for a very memorable Burns night, and a moving celebration of Scotland's heritage."

Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said: "As Scotland's greatest cultural icon, Robert Burns encapsulates our creativity, pride and confidence. His legacy is of immense value to Scotland and is recognised the world over.

I am sure the Gregg violin will bring a certain magic to Burns Night celebrations across the US, and remind those coming together to celebrate our National Bard of the great contribution he made to our shared culture and heritage."

Owned by William Gregg of Tarbolton, Ayrshire, the violin was used to accompany dance lessons at town's Bachelors' Club. The sessions were attended by Robert Burns who wrote that he hoped dancing would "Give my manners a brush." More likely, he realised that dancing lessons were an excellent form of rebellion, as his father frowned upon such sinful behaviour.

The violin's American tour begins on 16 January in New York City. From there it will travel to Chicago for a collaboration with internationally-renowned violinist Rachel Barton Pine before moving on to Boston for a series of Burns Night events. It then visits the west coast for an event hosted by BAFTA LA. The final stops are Washington DC, and then back to Chicago where the violin will be performed in front of the residents of the Caledonian Home.

The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA's Boston-based Executive Director Kirstin Bridier said: "For more than two decades, NTSUSA has helped Americans from across the country to preserve Robert Burns' legacy in Scotland. We are delighted to bring this violin – once part of the poet's daily life – to the US as a tangible reminder of what has been accomplished and the strong connection between our two countries."

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Contact Sarah Cuthbert-Kerr – 07713 786277.

Editor's Notes:

Images: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/L7V515>

The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland's heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy. From coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wildernesses, the National Trust for Scotland exists to protect the national and natural treasures we all love. To plan your visit today, enter your postcode at www.nts.org.uk.



The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA (NTSUSA) encourages Americans to connect with the things that make Scotland unique – from cottages to castles, from art to architecture, from wildlife to wilderness – and to protect them for future generations.

Since 2000, NTSUSA has provided more than \$10 million to support the National Trust for Scotland's most urgent conservation priorities. Donations to NTSUSA, an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit, are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. To learn more about NTSUSA or to become a member, please visit www.ntsusa.org.