

# TARTAN DAY COMMEMORATION



THE BRICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
1140 Park Avenue at 91st Street, New York City

APRIL 7, 2013

Presented by

AMERICAN-SCOTTISH FOUNDATION®



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Featuring

*The Kist*

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## **Tartan Day**

Tartan Day is April 6.

The date was initially chosen by Canadian Scots located in Toronto, Canada, as a day on which to celebrate their Scottish heritage. This particular date was chosen because it was the date in 1320 that the Scots authored a document, now known as *The Declaration of Arbroath*, that petitioned the then English Pope to recognize Scotland's right to be free and independent of English overlordship.

The Declaration's stirring language over the centuries has become a template for other countries seeking their independence. This country's Declaration of Independence is no exception.

## **Tartan Day History**

As noted previously, Tartan Day, conceived in Canada, was introduced into America as a result of The Scottish Coalition's President's invitation to one of the founding members of the Canadian initiative to address The Scottish Coalition meeting in Sarasota, Florida, to explain the objectives they saw for the Day.

As in America, the Scots there had played a significant role in the founding and the development of Canada and the objective of the Day was to provide a forum for Canadian Scots to tell their fellow Canadians about the role their forebears had played in bringing the country into being. As no similar program was being conducted in America and the involvement of the Scots in the birth of America was equally influential, the Coalition decided to embrace the Canadian initiative and adapt it for consumption in America, calling on its members to create events in recognition of the Day.

The first event took place in Washington DC, at which ASF had the privilege of reading from the Proclamation that created the Day. The day was recognized initially by Senate Resolution 155, sponsored by then Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. House Resolution 41 followed in 2005, designating April 6 of each year as "National Tartan Day". A Presidential Proclamation was signed into effect by President George W. Bush in 2008.

## **Tartan Day In New York City**

Scots have left an indelible footprint in this city with such names as Gracie, Lennox and Murray being affixed to areas in which they resided.

To honor this legacy ASF, along with The Saint Andrew's Society of the State of New York, instituted in 1999 the First Tartan Day Parade; one termed a "modest" affair. With no permit in place, participants marched along the sidewalk from the British Consulate down Third Avenue to Ralph Bunche Park at the United Nations. In the following two years the Parade took place in Central Park down Literary Walk to the Naumburg Bandshell. Participation and the program was growing.

In 2002, the Parade moved to Sixth Avenue where it remains today, having celebrated its fifteenth anniversary yesterday.

It is pleasing to note the organic nature of Tartan Day's growth. Over the next two weeks there are twenty seven events taking place of which the National Tartan Day New York Committee is aware. In addition to its original two founding members, the Committee comprises the New York Caledonian Club and Clan Campbell.

## **The National Tartan Day Resolution**

Whereas April 6 has a special significance for all Americans, and especially those Americans of Scottish descent, because the Declaration of Arbroath, the Scottish Declaration of Independence, was signed on April 6, 1320 and the American Declaration of Independence was modeled on that inspirational document; Whereas this resolution honors the major role that Scottish Americans played in the founding of this Nation, such as the fact that almost half of the signers of the Declaration of independence were of Scottish descent, the Governors in 9 of the original 13 States were of Scottish ancestry, Scottish Americans successfully helped shape this country in its formative years and guide this Nation through its most troubled times; Whereas this resolution recognizes the monumental achievements and invaluable contributions made by Scottish Americans that have led to America's preeminence in the fields of science, technology, medicine, government, politics, economics, architecture, literature, media, and visual and performing arts; Whereas this resolution commends the more than 200 organizations throughout the United States that honor Scottish heritage, tradition, and culture, representing the hundreds of thousands of Americans of Scottish descent, residing in every State, who already have made the observance of Tartan Day on April 6 a success; Whereas these numerous individuals, clans, societies, clubs, and fraternal organizations do not let the great contributions of the Scottish people go unnoticed: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Senate designates April 6 of each year as "National Tartan Day".

## **The Declaration of Arbroath**

On 6 April 1320 the Scottish Declaration of Independence was signed by the assembled Scottish nobility in Arbroath Abbey. The Declaration was addressed to the Pope who had given his support to Edward II and excommunicated Robert the Bruce. The nobles had to intervene in the dispute between the Bruce and the Pope. The Declaration explained how the Bruce had rescued the country from a dreadful situation and for this they would support him in all things.

*An opening extract from a translation by Agnes Mure Mackenzie*

"To our Lord and Very Holy Father in Christ, Lord John, the Supreme Pontiff, by God's Providence, of the Most Holy Roman and Catholic Church, his humble and devoted sons" - here follow the names of the Nobles and Commons in Parliament assembled and "other barons and freeholders, with the whole Commons of the Kingdom of Scotland. With all filial reverence devoutly do we kiss your blessed feet.

From the deeds alike and the books of our forefathers, we understand, most Holy Lord and Father, that among other noble nations our own, the Scottish, grows famous for many men of wide renown. The which Scottish nation, journeying from Greater Scythia by the Tyrrhene Sea and the Pillars of Hercules, could not in any place or time or manner be overcome by the barbarians, though long dwelling in Spain among the fiercest of them. Coming thence, twelve hundred years after the transit of Israel, with many victories and with many toils they won that habitation in the West, which, though the Britons have been driven out, the Picts effaced, and Norwegians, Danes and English have often assailed it, they hold now, in freedom from all vassalage: and as the old historians bear witness, have ever so held it. In this kingdom have reigned a hundred and thirteen kings of their own Blood Royal, and no man foreign has been among them. Of their merits and their noble qualities we need say no more, for they are bright enough by this alone, that through they were placed in the furthest ends of the earth, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the King of Kings, called them among the first to His most firm faith, after His Passion and His Resurrection. Nor did He choose to confirm them in the Lord's Faith by any one less than His own first Apostle (although he stands second or third in order of rank) the most gracious Andrew brother of Peter's self, whom ever since he has established their Patron."

*Read the full translation at [www.americanscottishfoundation.com/tartanDay/declaration.html](http://www.americanscottishfoundation.com/tartanDay/declaration.html)*

# The Kist

**Wherever the Scots travelled they took their kists. These sturdy wooden chests held all their worldly possessions, their clothes, their tools, their books and their memories of home and childhood.**

This specially adapted version is a joyous celebration in poetry, prose and song of all things Scots and of the precious knots that bind Scots to America. This musical celebration embraces all genres of music from traditional folk, bluegrass, gospel and rock to American country.

**The Kist** comes to us courtesy of **Fiona Kennedy**, principal of **Pixie Productions** and good friend of the ASF.

Fiona is ably supported by:

**John Bett**, actor, director and writer for radio, stage and television

**James Muldoon**, musician, singer and teacher, currently serving as Musical Director for Glasgow Schools Youth Theatre

**Sarah Collier**, a multi-faceted, award winning, theatrical talent whose credits include performing, reading and teaching

**Ruairidh McDonald**, who at the tender age of 13 is a seasoned performer having been involved with **The Kist** in performances in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and at other venues across Scotland

**Christopher Bensalem**: piano accompaniment

**[www.thekist.com](http://www.thekist.com)**