



# The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA

PRESS RELEASE  
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## **The National Trust for Scotland USA to host 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala, Award-Winning Filmmaker Ken Burns to receive ‘Great Scot’ Award on March 29, 2017**

- *Evening will feature live auction by Alasdair Nichol, whisky tasting by The Macallan, and Scottish country dancing to a recently-restored 18<sup>th</sup>-century fiddle used at the famed Bachelor’s Club in Ayrshire*
- *2017 Great Scot Award will be presented to filmmaker Ken Burns, a kinsman of Scottish poet Robert Burns*
- *The only US event of its kind, proceeds support the work of Scotland’s largest conservation and preservation charity*



Tim Llewellyn Photography

*Documentary filmmaker Ken Burns to receive the Great Scot Award*

**New York City**— On March 29, The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA will present its 10<sup>th</sup> annual fundraising gala, *A Celebration of Scotland’s Treasures*, at New York’s Metropolitan Club. Over the past decade, the festive evening has become known for its celebration of all things Scottish, from whisky and haggis to poetry and dancing. The gala is co-chaired by Paula Kirby and Peter McWhinnie, Elizabeth Owens, Michael Scott-Morton, and Naoma Tate. Jill Joyce is the evening’s honorary chair.



*Previous honorees Alan Cumming and Billy Connolly*

A highlight of the evening will be the recognition of **award-winning documentary filmmaker Ken Burns** as the Foundation’s **2017 Great Scot**. The Great Scot Award is presented annually to a Scot or American who has contributed to the countries’ shared heritage. Past recipients include Phyllis Logan, who portrayed Mrs. Hughes on *Downton Abbey*; comedian Billy Connolly; actor Alan Cumming; and author Alexander McCall Smith. Mr. Burns learned recently that he is a kinsman of Robert Burns.

“We are simply thrilled to honor Ken Burns with the Great Scot Award,” said **Helen Sayles, chairman of the Foundation’s Board of Trustees**. “The ancestral and artistic connection between one of America’s most masterful historians and storytellers and Scotland’s national bard is deeply meaningful to him and to the thousands of Americans who partner with us to preserve Scotland’s cultural heritage for future generations.” “I cannot think of a higher honor than this,” said Mr. Burns. “The poetry of Robbie Burns and the fiercely independent spirit of the Scottish people have been with me since boyhood, and this honor affirms my own body of work influenced by that poetry and that spirit.”

## FELLOWSHIP & FUN-DRAISING

The celebratory event also will feature tastings by The Macallan and Snow Leopard Vodka. Alasdair Nichol, Vice Chair of Freeman's, America's oldest auction house and frequent appraiser on PBS' *Antiques Roadshow*, will recite Burns' *Ode To A Haggis* before dinner and later will preside over a live auction with lots including a voyage on the *Hebridian Princess*, a trip to Edinburgh's famed International Festival, and sea kayaking at Kintail.

Matt Gillis Photography



Guests in Highland dress enjoying the cèilidh.

**The evening ends with a full-blown cèilidh.** Scottish country dancing takes place to traditional Celtic music performed by Scottish vocalist Maureen McMullan & Friends. New this year, the National Trust for Scotland has arranged for the recently restored 18<sup>th</sup>-century violin belonging to Robert Burns' tutor William Gregg, which was used to accompany Burns' dance lessons at the Bachelors' Club in Ayrshire in around 1779, to travel to New York for the event. Guests will be able to dance to the fiddle that Burns himself danced to centuries ago.

Proceeds from the gala support the conservation of the irreplaceable natural, built, and cultural treasures cared for by the National Trust for Scotland, that country's largest conservation charity. These include the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, the remote island of St Kilda, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh's domestic masterpiece The Hill House. Last year, the event raised more than \$400,000. *A Celebration of Scotland's Treasures* founding chairs are Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hubbard and Donna Schinderman.

## SIX LIVE AUCTION ITEMS

- **Seven-night voyage for two on the *HEBRIDEAN PRINCESS*** Take an unforgettable seven-night cruise on board the *Hebridean Princess*. This five- star luxury cruise ship is renowned for its exceptional service, fine food, and wine.
- **Luxury Scottish Hotel Package** Enjoy an eight-night vacation with two nights each at four of Scotland's most luxurious, stylish, and romantic hotels: One Devonshire Gardens, Cameron House, Crossbasket Castle, and Kinloch House.
- **Edinburgh Festival in The Pavilion at Lamb's House** Experience the best of Edinburgh during the International Festival, the Fringe, and the International Book Festival while staying in the beautiful Pavilion at Lamb's House, Leith.
- **Kayaking at Kintail** Adventure for four on the hills and the sea awaits, with a week in the highlands at Ferry Cottage on the Balmacara Estate, only a short journey from Skye. Daily ranger led adventures in kayaking and hiking as well as a private tour and tea at Inverewe Garden.
- **A Week With Burns** Follow in the poetical footsteps of the past and present, with a week in Ayrshire, the birthplace of Robert Burns, and receive a bespoke poem dedicated in your name, written by the Heritage Poet in Residence for NTS, Martin Cathcart Froden, winner of the 2015 Dundee International Book Prize.
- **Edinburgh Nirvana** A day of golf for four at the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers (Muirfield), including lunch in the world-famous club house, will be yours. Accommodation for two nights will be provided by Prestonfield House, the city's most historic and sumptuous country house.

## TICKETS ON SALE NOW

*A Celebration of Scotland's Treasures* takes place at The Metropolitan Club with the marble stair hall as the backdrop for cocktails, whisky tastings, silent auction and the *cèilidh*. The awards ceremony and live auction are in the magnificent dining room.

Ticket Price: \$500 individual; \$10,000 table: [www.ntsusa.org/2017/01/gala-2017/](http://www.ntsusa.org/2017/01/gala-2017/)

Event Contact: Maggie Fogel at [mfogel@ntsusa.org](mailto:mfogel@ntsusa.org) or [212.873.2955](tel:212.873.2955).

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## ABOUT KEN BURNS

Ken Burns has been making documentary films for almost forty years. Since the Academy Award nominated *Brooklyn Bridge* in 1981, Ken has gone on to direct and produce some of the most acclaimed historical documentaries ever made, including *The Civil War*; *Baseball*; *Jazz*; *The Statue of Liberty*; *Huey Long*; *Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery*; *Frank Lloyd Wright*; *Mark Twain*; *Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson*; *The War*; *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*; *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*; *Jackie Robinson*; and, most recently, *Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War*.

Future projects include films on the Vietnam War, the history of country music, Ernest Hemingway, and the history of stand-up comedy.

Ken's films have been honored with dozens of major awards, including fifteen Emmy Awards, two Grammy Awards and two Oscar nominations; and in September of 2008, at the News & Documentary Emmy Awards, Ken was honored by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences with a Lifetime Achievement Award.



*Interior of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Hill House.*

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND FOUNDATION USA

The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA encourages Americans to participate in caring for the 129 irreplaceable natural and cultural heritage properties protected by the National Trust for Scotland, that country's largest conservation charity. Since 2000, the Foundation has made \$8 million in grants to support the trust's most urgent priorities. Donations to The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA, a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

To learn more about The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA or to become a member, please visit [www.ntsusa.org](http://www.ntsusa.org). To learn more about the *A Celebration of Scotland's Treasures* gala, or to purchase tickets, [www.ntsusa.org/2017/01/gala-2017/](http://www.ntsusa.org/2017/01/gala-2017/).

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