



Media Advisory/Calendar Listing

Ellis Island Immigration Museum

“The Life and Legacy of John Muir“ April 6 – September 5, 2016

As part of the 2016 observance of National Tartan Day and in celebration of the National Park Service Centennial (1916-2016), an exhibition celebrating the life of Scots-born naturalist and Sierra Club founder, John Muir opens at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum on Wednesday, April 6. The exhibition tells the story of John Muir, the father of our national parks.

The exhibition, which marks the 15th anniversary of Tartan Day on Ellis Island, runs through Monday, September 5, 2016. To commemorate National Tartan Day, on April 9 and 10 Ellis Island will also play host to a company of pipers, drummers, Highland Dancers, storytellers and more. Admission to the exhibit is free. Visitors will need to purchase ferry tickets to the island from www.statuecruises.com.

An opening ceremony is being planned for Wednesday, April 6 which will also include a preview of area National Park Service centennial events planned for National Parks Week, April 16-24, 2016.

Tartan Day on Ellis Island is the largest Tartan Day event in the United States. For additional information, visit: www.tartandayonellisland.com or at www.facebook.com/TartanDayonEllisIsland.

Additional information and images available, contact: Jerry Willis (NPS/Ellis Island) – 646-356-2105, jerry_willis@nps.gov or Sarah Roberts (Tartan Day on Ellis Island) – 202-255-8332, sahrroberts@gmail.com or.

About John Muir

John Muir, the legendary wilderness explorer and writer who served as the first President of the Sierra Club, has achieved something of mythic proportions, over 150 years after his birth. His life, work, and vision have inspired countless Americans to appreciate and protect the natural world.

Born in Scotland, April 21, 1838, John Muir immigrated to the United States with his family when he was eleven years old. He traveled to California in the spring of 1868 and explored the high country of the Sierra Nevada, making California his life-long home. He also traveled widely in Alaska and throughout the American West, writing numerous books and articles describing natural wonders and arguing for the need to preserve wilderness.

When Muir traveled around the world in his later years, he inspired people all over the globe to protect places of special beauty and wildness. His life is celebrated by the existence of Yosemite National Park, which he was instrumental in establishing in 1890. In 1976, the California Historical Society voted Muir

the greatest Californian in the state's history. Geographic place names for Muir exist in Alaska, California, Florida, Washington State, Wisconsin, and in his birthplace, Dunbar, Scotland.

documentary film maker Ken Burns said of Muir, "As we got to know him... he ascended to the pantheon of the highest individuals in our country; I'm talking about the level of Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King, and Thomas Jefferson, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Jackie Robinson -- people who have had a transformational effect on who we are."

About the National Park Centennial and National Park Week

The National Park Service is celebrating 100 years of sharing America's special places and helping Americans make meaningful connections to nature, history and culture.

The Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island are playing a meaningful role in honoring the Centennial of the National Park Service by offering many new public programs and exhibits celebrating the first hundred years and connecting with the next generation of leaders so they may lead us well into our next century. The national parks are America's best idea and we want all Americans to help us celebrate these special places.

National Park Week, **April 16 to 24, 2016**, is America's largest celebration of national heritage. It's about making great connections, exploring amazing places, discovering open spaces, enjoying affordable vacations and enhancing America's best idea—the national parks! It's all happening in *your* national parks. The National Park Service is once again partnering with the National Park Foundation, the official charity of America's national parks, to present National Park Week, a presidentially proclaimed celebration of our national heritage

About Tartan Day

Tartan Day is a celebration of Scottish heritage held on **April 6**, the date on which the Declaration of Arbroath was signed in Scotland in 1320. The Declaration is in the form of letters submitted to Pope John XXII intended to ask his support in the preservation of Scotland as an independent state. Letters were written to the pope by King Robert the Bruce, the Scottish Clergy and the Scottish Nobles.

Americans of Scottish descent have played a vibrant and influential role in the development of the United States. From the framers of the Declaration of Independence to the first man on the moon, Scottish-Americans have contributed mightily to the fields of the arts, science, politics, law, and more. Today, over eleven million Americans claim Scottish and Scots-Irish roots — making them the eighth largest ethnic group in the United States. These are the people and accomplishments that are honored in the United States on National Tartan Day, April 6th. Thousands of Scots-Americans found ways to observe the first Tartan Day in churches, on village greens, at Scottish festivals, at social gatherings, and in the home.

The first National Tartan Day in the United States (inspired by Canadian National Tartan Day Celebrations) was observed on April 6, 1997. Previously, there had been observances by individual states, counties and other regional entities, but the year 1997 was the first time the observance swept across the nation. The United States Senate Resolution declaring April 6th as Tartan Day appeared in the Congressional Record on April 7, 1997.