

Declaration of Arbroath to go on display later this month

This year will be the 700th anniversary of the Declaration of Arbroath.

This is the letter written in Latin, dated 6 April 1320, signed by 51 Scottish noblemen and sent to Pope John XXII asking him to recognise Scotland as independent and sovereign. The document claims that the independence of Scotland is in the hands of the people rather than the King. Of course the point about rights of the people, the nobility and the king have long been debated.

It led to the Pope formally asking Edward II to make peace with the Scots, before changing his mind only the following year.

A highlight of the anniversary year will be the opportunity to see the iconic document at the National Museum of Scotland from Friday 27 March–Sunday 26 April 2020, the first time it has been on public display for 15 years.



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It is often said that the declaration is a model for the American Declaration of Independence, but this too is in dispute. As part of the celebrations in Bryant Park before the Tartan Day Parade in April, the Grand Marshal is asked to read the Declaration of Arbroath in full.

Enjoy related events throughout the display. Learn about the history and significance of the declaration at [a panel discussion](#) on Friday 27 March 2020 and find out how ancient parchments are repaired and cared for at [Preserving Parchment and Seals](#) on Saturday 28 March 2020.

The display will be run in partnership with National Records of Scotland. Read more on the NRS website [here](#).

One passage from the Declaration of Arbroath is this one, widely quoted:

... for, as long as but a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be brought under English rule. It is in

truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom – for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself.



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