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Benedetti joins research trip to find Monte Cassino links

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IT was the scene of a major battle in the Second World War and later saw mass emigration due to the tough economic climate.

Now the Italian town of Cassino, hit by huge damage during the war, will be the focus of a research project by Edinburgh University which will examine its links with Scotland.

Violin virtuoso **Nicola Benedetti** will perform at the spectacular Abbey of Monte Cassino, south of Rome, as part of the series of cultural events celebrating the area's links to Scotland.

Ms Benedetti is a patron of the University's **Nicola Benedetti** Scholarship Fund, which supports students who otherwise may not have the chance to take part in Italian Studies at Edinburgh.

Also taking part in the trip will be 25 children from three Edinburgh schools – Tynecastle High School, The Mary Erskine School and Fettes College – who have been studying the history of the region.

The trip will allow researchers to add to a University archive that details the stories of thousands of Italians who came to Scotland during the wave of Italian immigration in the late 19th and early 20th centuries – many of them from the Cassino region.

Professor Federica Pedriali, director of the University's Italo-Scottish Research Cluster, who is leading the trip, said: "Many Italians from the Cassino region migrated to Scotland both before and after the Second World War, so there are lots of useful links for us to examine."

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