

Unveiling of Makars' Court flagstone to commemorate Màiri Mhòr nan Òran

A commemorative flagstone celebrating the work of lauded Scottish Gaelic poet and song maker Màiri Nic a' Phearsain (Mary MacPherson; 1821-1898), most commonly known as Màiri Mhòr nan Òran, or 'Big Mary of the Songs' was unveiled earlier today (Mon 10th Oct.) in Makars' Court, where the nations most esteemed literary figures have been celebrated since its creation in 1998.





Councillor Val Walker, Culture and Communities Committee Convener and Dr Priscilla Scott

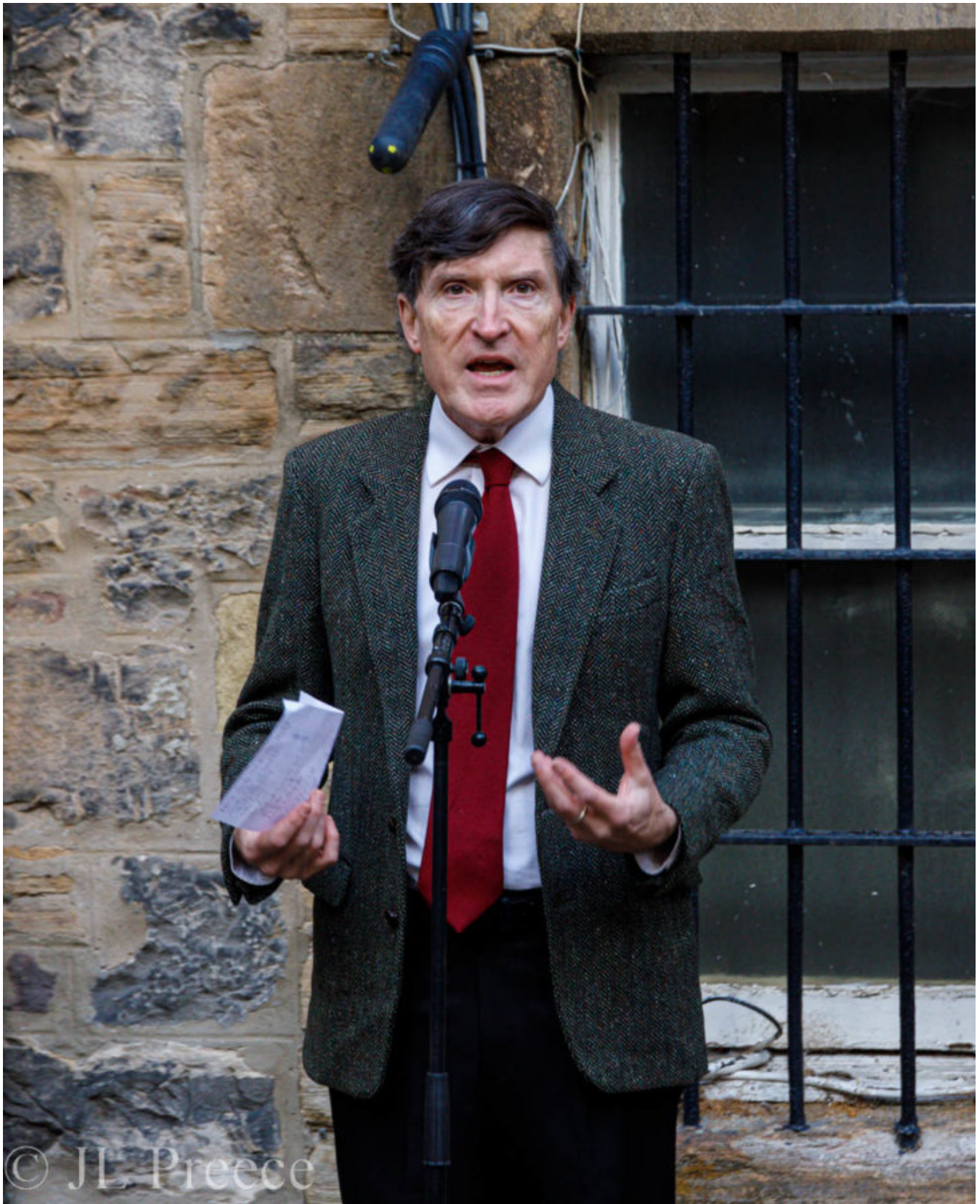
Described as ‘a towering presence in Gaelic culture’ (The National, 2021), Màiri Mhòr will take her rightful place at Makars’ Court where her memorial flagstone is set inscribed with her name and the lines:

**Màiri Mhòr nan Òran – 1821-1898
Cuimhnichibh gur sluagh sibh
Is cumaibh suas ur còir**

(Remember that you are a people / And stand up for your rights)

– from ‘The Highest Apple/An Ubhal as Àirde’).





Singer Mary Ann Kennedy and Professor Wilson McLeod

Despite not discovering her latent literary talents until after her 50th birthday, Màiri Mhòr is lauded as one of the most important song makers in Scottish history. Her work unflinchingly chronicled the Highland Clearances and land

struggles, one of the most profound eras of socio-economic and political unrest in the nation's history.

Councillor Val Walker, Culture and Communities Convener for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "Màiri Mhòr's addition to Makars' Court reflects her indelible impact as a song maker and she can now occupy her rightful place alongside the finest literary figures in our nation's rich history.



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“Makars’ Court is an important stop on the Old Town tourist trail and provides an opportunity for visitors and residents alike to explore the very best of Scotland’s writers.

“I would like to thank the sponsor of this flagstone, Wilson

McLeod; this will be a fitting testament to a true giant of Gaelic literature and society”.



Mary Ann Kennedy, Councillor Val Walker, Dr. Priscilla Scott and Professor Wilson McLeod. © 2022 J.L. Preece

The sponsor of this flagstone, Professor Wilson McLeod noted that: “There are currently only three Gaelic writers commemorated at Makars’ Court (George Campbell Hay, Somhairle MacGill-Eain and Lachlann MacMhuirich). All of them are male. It would be highly appropriate to honour one of Gaeldom’s best-known female poets.”