

# **Scottish Poetry Library celebrates its 40th anniversary this year**

**The Scottish Poetry Library (SPL)  
is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
this year.**

An event took place at Edinburgh Castle in September to honour the many partners the library has worked with over the years and celebrate the 40th year.

Those attending included representatives of Scotland's medical and education bodies, The Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland and the Royal College of Midwives, who sponsored the pocketbook anthologies which is gifted to graduating doctors, nurses, midwives and teachers. The compilation began during the pandemic and is intended to offer newly qualified nurses and midwives a companion to give them support and inspiration.

There was poetry performed by Hugh McMillan and Irish writer, Liz Houchin, along with Siannie Moodie and Nick Jenkins on clarsach and violin, and Shereen Cutkelvin singing a medley of songs accompanied on piano by the BBC Young Jazz Musician of the year Ben Shankland.

On National Poetry Day in October the library held a gathering of poets and former board members and staff at St Cecilia's Hall in Edinburgh.

This is where the founders of the poetry library gathered in January 1984 to launch the SPL initiative. The Scottish Poetry Library was founded by poet, Tessa Ransford, who believed

there should be a place to promote poetry. In 1999 the library moved to its custom-built premises just off the Royal Mile designed by Malcolm Fraser Architects. The Scottish Poetry Library has been funded in the past by The City of Edinburgh Council and Creative Scotland. Other income is raised by Friends and from the shop and events which are held. To join the Friends of Scottish Poetry Library [sign up here.](#)

Listen to Marjorie Lotfi reading 'The Hebridean Crab Apple'. And you will find 40 poems by 40 poets on [The Scottish Poetry Library Facebook page](#) waiting for you to listen to and enjoy.



Asif Khan Director of The Poetry Library. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)

Asif Khan, the SPL's director said: "Since its inception, the poetry library has sought to keep poetry vibrant through elevating the art form and keeping it relevant to people from all walks of life across Scotland.

“As well as housing the nation’s bookshelf of poetry, we support literacy, wellbeing, community cohesion and cultural diplomacy. Our work includes helping to plan and promote the national Makar’s programme, mentoring the next generation of young poets and supporting teachers with lesson plans in Scots and Scottish Gaelic and also innovative dyslexia-friendly resources for schools.”

Photos below courtesy of The Poetry Library show the celebrations at Edinburgh Castle.









