

NEWS IN BRIEF

ON THE JUBILEE OF EMILY LYLE

On 19 December 2022, **Dr Emily Lyle**, the founder and the Honorary Chair of the SIEF Ritual Year Working Group (RY WG), Honorary Fellow of the University of Edinburgh, will be celebrating her jubilee.

Since the inaugural meeting of the RY WG on 11 July 2003, at the Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh, and its official establishment at the 8th SIEF Congress in Marseille, which followed on 29 April 2004, Emily has been the key source of ideas, the engine, and the heart of the group. Due to her academic knowledge and talent, her communicative skills, humour, and humanism, the group has become a prominent international scientific network, resulting in dozens of collaborative projects, conferences, seminars, and publications. *The Yearbook of the RY WG* was also Emily's idea and brainchild, and she has gone on to become the general editor and a contributor to all the volumes.

In 1984, Emily also founded the Traditional Cosmology Society with its innovative journal *Cosmos*.

Emily has been and always is ready for investigation. Her research comprises an incredible variety of data and examples from all the eras and spaces, reorganized in an innovative and unique way that leads to unexpected and ground-breaking conclusions. An internationally acclaimed scholar of ballad studies, she has also worked with the topics related to gods, colours, gender, celebrations, rituals, mythology, and calendar festivals, bringing all these data and all of her thoughts about them together in her wide range of books, research articles and papers. Among her own and co-authored books are: *The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection* (co-edited, 8 volumes; Aberdeen University Press, 1981–2002); *Scottish Ballads* (editor, Canongate, 1994; Barnes & Noble, 1995); *Fairies and Folk: Approaches to the Scottish Ballad Tradition* (Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2007); *Ten Gods: A New Approach to Defining the Mythological Structures of the Indo-Europeans* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012); and *Robert Burns and the Discovery and Re-Creation of Scottish Song* (with Katherine Campbell as a co-author; Musica Scotica Trust, 2020). Emily has also published numerous articles over the course of her career, one of her most recent being “Structures for the Transfer of Power in Ibn Fadlān’s Account of the Rus” (*Religionsvidenskabeligt Tidsskrift*, 2022, No. 74).

This year, Emily participated in the 14th RY WG Conference “Commerce and Traditions” in Riga, with her paper “The Festival Year in Relation to the Spatiotemporal Perception of the Cosmos”, and in the 15th Conference of the International Association

for Comparative Mythology, “Sacred Ground: Place and Space in Mythology and Religion”, in Belgrade, with her paper “The Indo-European Deities of the Directions as Represented in Ritual”.

A persistent scholar, as Emily was characterized in the title of the festschrift dedicated to her (2007), keywords such as *cosmos*, *power*, and *myth* have been central notions that run throughout her work; arguably they are also central to her nature and her soul.

We all wish you many more years of good health, dear Emily.

The SIEF Ritual Year Working Group



Emily Lyle giving her paper at the 10th Conference of the SIEF RY WG “Magic in Rituals and Rituals in Magic”, September 2014, Innsbruck, Austria. Photograph by Nina Vlaskina. Personal archive.