

Editorial

As the School of Scottish Studies approaches the sixtieth anniversary of its founding, it is timely for those active in the field, from young scholars who are beginning their productive careers to the seasoned ethnologists, to look back over projects recently completed, and to consider current and future initiatives. Among the welcome major changes, and one that has already provided a significant increase in Scottish Ethnology research and publications produced, is the presence of the European Ethnological Research Centre (EERC) within the School since August 2006. Current research activity by staff ranges widely within the discipline and has been supported by two major awards of external funding: the Carmichael Watson Project, newly launched, and the Calum Maclean Project, completed in September 2009 and now accessible online (www.celtscot.ed.ac.uk/calum-maclean). Both resources will play a pioneering role in future ethnological research in bringing the benefits of digitisation to two of Scotland's most important and extensive Gaelic folklore collections. Further projects include compiling an electronic catalogue for the Maclagan Manuscripts (1893-1902 c.9000 pp.); continuing work on the Scottish Place-Name Database; making publications of traditional ballad airs accessible in electronic format; and a study of calendar customs and community rituals. Also located at the School is a major working section of *Tobar an Dualchais/Kist O Riches*, a national digitisation project making available online to communities, institutions and researchers the primary sound archives of Scottish folklore.

Work on historical and cross-cultural aspects of ethnology has progressed under the aegis of the Traditional Cosmology Society (TCS) with its journal *Cosmos*, which has carried *inter alia* papers from its 2007 Deep History of Stories conference, held at Edinburgh and featuring a distinguished international set of speakers. Other TCS sponsored conferences have featured recent research on myths, tales and legends, and have explored the extensive legacy of the comparative mythologist Georges Dumézil in its contemporary contexts.

The EERC's primary publishing initiative is the detailed and authoritative *Compendium of Scottish Ethnology* series; of the 14 projected volumes 11, have appeared to date and have been welcomed by researchers and students in our field and beyond. Further recent books by members of staff have appeared on such topics as the fiddle in Scotland; the Greig-Duncan collection of ballads from the North-East; ritual dialogue in marriage traditions; an ethnography of rural Perthshire; and a collection of traditional Gaelic tales recorded in the field. Collections of articles have appeared on the life and work of the Highland folklore collector Alexander Carmichael; international views on tourism, festivals and local identity; and a festschrift in honour of Dr Emily Lyle, along with a collection of articles by her on fairy ballads and active promoters of ballad traditions. The Scottish Traditions Series has continued to make available CDs of selected audio field recordings on specific themes from Gaelic and Scots traditions, and *Tocher*, the in-house journal, has been given a new and expanded format.