10th October 2017

Celebratory Symposium for Professor Lesley Yellowlees

As Head of School of Chemistry, I should like to extend a particularly warm welcome to you to join colleagues, alumni, and friends of the University of Edinburgh at a Celebratory Symposium to be held here in Edinburgh on Saturday 25th November. This event will celebrate the major contributions of Professor Lesley Yellowlees to science, to the School of Chemistry, to the University of Edinburgh, and to the wider community.

Lesley completed both her BSc in Chemical Physics and her PhD in Inorganic Electrochemistry at the University of Edinburgh. After holding research fellowships in Brisbane and Glasgow she returned to an academic position in the School of Chemistry at Edinburgh in 1986 and gained a personal chair in Inorganic Electrochemistry in 2005. Her research interests are wide-ranging and include the synthesis and characterisation of dyes for use in solar cells, and the development of techniques that convert CO₂ into useful chemical compounds.

Lesley served five years as the first female Head of the School of Chemistry at Edinburgh and Director of EaStCHEM (the joint chemistry research school of the universities of Edinburgh and St Andrews) in 2010. She also served as Vice-Principal and Head of the College of Science and Engineering from 2012-2017, and deployed her exceptional leadership skills to represent and support the College and the University. She became the first female President of the Royal Society of Chemistry in July 2012, and was awarded an MBE in 2005 for services to science and a CBE in 2014 for services to chemistry. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry, and a Fellow of the Institute of Physics.

Most importantly, I know that she will have influenced the lives and careers of many past students and colleagues during their time here in the School of Chemistry.

The Celebratory Symposium in honour of Lesley’s recent retirement will be held here in the Joseph Black Chemistry Building on Saturday 25th November, starting with registration and tea & coffee at 1.30 pm. From 2-5 pm there will be presentations that will highlight current research, reflections and reminiscences from some colleagues and alumni about their interactions with Lesley, plus a forward look at the future of solar energy both at Edinburgh and on the global stage. Time will be set aside
during the day to catch up with old friends and meet some of the current generation of Chemistry students. At the end of the afternoon, there will be a drinks reception here in the School. There will also be a dinner in the evening at a subsidised cost of £35 per person.

Whether or not you can attend the celebration event, we would very much like to hear from you. Please contact us using the following link to EventBrite: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/professor-lesley-yellowlees-celebratory-symposium-tickets-38719628451, or send an email to my colleague, Dr Anna-Maria Maciejuk, who is organising the event. Her email address is: a.maciejuk@ed.ac.uk

We would particularly like to hear any reminiscences that you may have about Lesley – photos would be particularly welcome. These will be used to create a display at the event and subsequently an album for Lesley.

We are extremely grateful to the many Alumni who are enhancing the School’s activities. I should very much like to continue to strengthen links with School of Chemistry Alumni – you provide another key strand for delivery of the School’s Vision and I very much look forward to sharing the School’s future successes with you. I look forward to meeting you on the 25th of November.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Colin R. Pulham
Head of the School of Chemistry