DURHAM, N.H.—As the world reflects on the illustrious life of Queen Elizabeth II, England and the rest of the Commonwealth prepare to say a final farewell to their beloved “Lilibet”—Great Britain’s longest reigning head of state, a cherished mother, grandmother and a much-adored icon.

Nicoletta Gullace, associate professor of history at the University of New Hampshire and an expert on the Royal Family, is available to talk about the historical significance of the queen’s death, protocols and ceremonies leading up to her funeral, the transition of power to now King Charles III and what this all might mean for the future of the monarchy.
Gullace can be reached at nicoletta.gullace@unh.edu.

“The death of the 96-year-old monarch who has reigned for the entirety of most Britons’ lives, and for as long as nearly everyone can remember, is a moment of tremendous grief, unmooring many people from Britain’s past and from all they have ever known,” said Gullace. “The queen was a beloved and revered icon to many and while this is an incredibly sad time for many, it also signals a significant shift for the Royal Family and the monarchy.”

Gullace, who is an expert in 20th century and modern British history, offered live commentary on Fox News when the queen’s death was announced outlining a very specific sequence of ceremonial steps—codename “Operation London Bridge”—that were put in motion. They consist of meticulously choreographed steps for all the events leading up to the funeral. She explains that on the tenth day after her death, the queen’s body will be moved into Westminster Abbey for an elaborate state funeral, to be attended by dignitaries from around the world. Her final resting place will be beside Prince Philip, at George’s Chapel at Windsor Castle, where her father is buried. The day of the funeral is to be an official Day of Mourning in Britain.

“This is an overwhelming moment for many Britons, and I think we will continue to see a tremendous outpouring of sorrow from a traditionally stoic people,” said Gullace.

Queen Elizabeth II reigned for over 70 years, the longest of any British monarch. She was just 25 when she became queen on Feb. 6, 1952, after the death of her father, while she was on tour in Kenya with Prince Philip. She was married to Prince Philip for 74 years before his death in April 2021. She has four children—Charles, Anne, Andrew and Edward.

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