

EuCheMS



European Chemical Sciences

Working Party on History of Chemistry

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BELGIUM

KONINKLIJKE VLAAMSE CHEMISCHE VERENIGING (KVCV)

Section History of Chemistry - Activities of 2015

The section History of Chemistry of the KVCV celebrated her 25th anniversary on November 13th with a symposium commemorating the 150th anniversary of the ringstructure of benzene, elucidated by August Kekulé.

Prof. em. H. Deelstra surveyed the activities of the 25 years and the realizations of the members of the different boards. Thereupon prof. em. P. De Clercq followed in A. Kekulé's wake through the university and city of Ghent when he was a professor of organic chemistry (1858 – 1867), searching for his class-rooms, labs and residences. Prof. em. A. Lepoivre outlined the evolution of the formula of benzene “from dashes to little balloons”. The discovery of this formula was the beginning of the unveiling of the aromatic chemistry and the flourishing of many industrial applications (2nd half of 19th century). Prof. E. Homburg took upon him the development of the colour industry, prof. T. Pieters of the pharmaceutical industry and prof. L. Hens of the pesticides and their effects on health.

This celebration was made possible thanks to the collaboration with the University of Ghent and our colleagues of the Chemie Historische Groep (CHG), a section of the Koninklijke Nederlandse Chemische Vereniging (KNCV). We also gratefully received many support from the Flemish chemical industry (Essenscia), Janssen Pharmaceutica, Zeolyst Aromatics and other sections of KVCV.

All these festivities took place in the beautiful Museum for the History of Sciences of the University of Ghent, who lodges many relicts of A. Kekulé himself: his blackboard, his chair, his lab-table and glassware.

90 professors, students, chemists from industry and education and many interested people attended. A nice book includes all the lectures and pictures shown.

A very successful happening that permits us to foresee another 25 flourishing years of our section.

Paul Balduck

Chairman of the section History of Chemistry of the KVCV

DENMARK

Report on activities in The Danish Society for the History of Chemistry, 2014

The charter of the society was discussed during the year and a revised version was approved at the general assembly 2014. It is the first revision since the start of the Society in 1989.

The 21st publication by the society: "Oxygen" (a translation into danish of the play by Hoffmann & Djerassi) was finished. It was sent to the members of the society and to all upper secondary schools in Denmark and to relevant newspapers and magazines.

At the annual meeting in The Danish Chemical Society the Historical Society hosted three well-attended lectures:

Rene Larsen (School of conservation): decay of historical materials - from leather and pergament to glue and gelatine.

Ib Dybkjær (Haldor Topsøe): The historical perspective of the ammonia technology of Haldor Topsøe.

Børge Riis Larsen (Slagelse Gymnasium): The Danish Society for the History of Chemistry 1989-2014.

At the same annual meeting the Historical Society was involved in arranging two plenary lessons by Roald Hoffmann and by Carl Djerassi. Hoffmann told about high pressure chemistry. Djerassi told about the work with making plays with a content of science.

The annual field trip went to Dansk acrylpladefabrik close to Roskilde. The owner, Kim Heining, told the history of the factory including the reason that a number of small plastic factories emerged in this area after the second world war. We were shown the production: handwork in very small series.

The General Assemby was conected with a field trip to "Center for Is og Klima" (Center for Ice and Climate). Jørgen Peder Steffensen told and showed.

During the year there was a low-intensity work with two manuscripts handed to the Historical Society by Lars HofmannBarfod - the last manufacturer of fireworks in Denmark.

Report on activities in The Danish Society for the History of Chemistry, 2015

The Historical Society hosted a "main-meeting" for the Danish Chemical Society. Jens Jørgen Led lectured on the history of NMR spectroscopy.

At the annual meeting in The Danish Chemical Society the Historical Society hosted three lectures:

Erik Lyngsø-Petersen (Ingeniøren A/S): Chemistry in the weekly engineer-paper "Ingeniøren" before second world war - on a searchable digitalization of the paper.

Søren Jensen (Dept. of Environmental Chemistry, Univ. of Stockholm): How DDT helped my discovery of PCB pollution.

Gry Barfod (Dept. of Geoscience, Univ. of Aarhus): Within the walls. Stories from a childhood in an small firework factory.

The chair of the Society, Asbjørn Petersen, attended 10ICHC in Portugal and gave a paper on Contemporary Biographies on Danish Chemists.

The annual field trip was planned to go to "Ny Carlsberg Glyptoteket" for a lecture on the painting of ancient sculptures. It was cancelled due to lack of registered participants.

Before the annual general assembly, 4th of November, we will have a field trip to Museum of Natural Medicine.

During the year the low-intensity work with the Barfod manuscripts have continued.

We have made contact with Søren Jensen to write a personal history of his career and the discovery of the PCB pollution. This is planned to be the societys 22nd publication to be released in 2016.

NORWAY

2015 Activities:

At the annual meeting of the division for the history of chemistry in The Norwegian Chemical Society an annotated edition of some lecture notes in organic chemistry from 1830 was presented. The meeting was held in a house in the centre of Oslo where three professors in chemistry and their families lived from 1856 to 1925. The house is now renovated and the old family rooms and the university stable converted to meeting rooms. Also the book about the 100 year anniversary of the education of chemists at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology was presented.

The Norwegian board member has also published the following book:

Annette Lykknes, and Joakim Ziegler Gusland, “Akademi og industri: Kjemiutdanning og -forskning ved NTNU gjennom 100 år” (Fagbokforlaget, 2015) [Academy and industry: 100 years of chemistry education and research at NTNU]. <https://fagbokforlaget.no/?isbn=9788245018288>

POLAND

The following activities have been mainly done by Marcin Dolecki, Head of the History of Chemistry Department (the Polish Chemical Society, Sekcja Historii Chemii).

Lectures:

-history of chemistry at The Faculty of Chemistry of the University of Warsaw (winter sem., 15 h).

-lessons with chemical experiments at the Antonina Leśniewska Museum of Pharmacy in Warsaw (being a division of the Museum of Warsaw). They are organized mostly for middle and high school students. Themes of these lessons concern history of alchemy, chemistry, and history of pharmacy.

Conferences:

-support to be part of the 10th International Conference on the History of Chemistry 2015 in Portugal (9-12 September, The University of Aveiro), with a paper entitled *Ludwik Werstenstein (1887-1945) as Chemist and Physical Chemist in the Light of His Memoirs*.

-support to be part of the international conference: *Entangled Science? Relocating German-Polish Scientific Relations* (28-30 October, Herder-Institut, Marburg) organised by the Cooperation Initiative of the Leibniz Association and the Polish Academy of Sciences: „Cross-border Scientific Dialogue, Potentials and Challenges for the Human and the Social Sciences”, with a paper titled *Ludwik Bruner`s German Scientific Inspirations*.

Publications:

In the last days of December an important book has been released: *Polski wkład w przyrodznawstwo i technikę. Słownik polskich i związanych z Polską odkrywców, wynalazców oraz pionierów nauk matematyczno-przyrodniczych i techniki* (*Polish Contribution to Science and Technology. The Dictionary of Polish and Poland-related Discoverers, Inventors, and Pioneers in Science and Technology* – 4 volumes), edited by prof. Bolesław Orłowski.

This is the collaborative work of more than 100 authors, among others professors: Leszek Kuźnicki - one of the former presidents of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and Andrzej Kajetan Wróblewski - one of the former rectors of the University of Warsaw. Prof. Marcin Dolecki authored 80 biographies of Polish chemists (co-author of 4). Prof. Roman Mierzecki, as well as other member of the History of Chemistry Department, was also one of the authors. Hardcover edition. The dictionary was published by Instytut Historii Nauki PAN (Institute for the History of Science, Polish Academy of Sciences) and Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (The Institute of National Remembrance), Warszawa 2015.

RUSSIA

Some information about the activity of Russian historians of chemistry.

Alas, we are very small group of our scientific society. Therefore we co-operate with other members of scientific community. And thus we can organize some actions, in particular, conferences.

So, within the limits of annual conference IIET (Institute of History of Science and Technology Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow)) the section of history of chemical and biological sciences works.

At annual student's conference of the Moscow university ("Lomonosov conference") works always section of history of chemistry. Young Russian researchers and students present their papers.

From 2012 in Russia there are annual International conferences on the History of Alchemy ("Phenomenon of alchemy in the history of science, philosophy and culture", organized by the Association for the Study of Esotericism and Mysticism (ASEM) and supported by some universities).

SERBIA



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Serbian Chemical Society (SCS) Annual Report to the EuCheMS Working Party on History of Chemistry for 2014-2015

Abstract:

The activities of the SCS Working Party on History of Chemistry during the period from July 2014 to June 2015 are associated with: (i) organization of the scientific meetings; (ii) publication of the *Chemical Review* and the launch of a new section in the SCS scientific journal (the *Journal of the Serbian Chemical Society*)

1. Organization of the scientific meetings which contain section for the history of chemistry

The 52nd Meeting of the Serbian Chemical Society (the University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, May 29-30, 2015).

2. Publications

In 2014 the Serbian Chemical Society published six issues of the journal *Chemical Review*. Every year, the cover page of this journal is dedicated to one person from the national or international history of chemistry. Also, the first article in the first issue is about the person from the cover page. The novelty in 2014 is that the *Journal of the Serbian Chemical Society* launched a new section dedicated to the history of chemistry and chemistry education. The Impact Factor of this journal in 2014 was 0.871.

Belgrade, October 30, 2015

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Faculty of Chemistry
Delegate from the Serbian Chemical Society

SPAIN

Spanish working party on history of science of the Royal Society of Chemistry Grupo especializado en Historia de la Ciencia (HCI)

<http://rseq.org/grupos-especializados/52-historia-de-la-ciencia-hci>

Nowadays, the Spanish working party on history of science of the Royal Society of Chemistry (HCI) has 101 members. Its steering committee has been recently renovated, and the new president is Dr. Inés Pellón-González (professor of the University of the Basque Country, UPV).

The HCI has been involved –either participating or funding- in the following recent activities:

-8th European Spring School on History of Science and Popularization, Maó (Menorca), 14-16 May 2015, organised by José Ramón Bertomeu-Sánchez and Ximo Guillem-Llobat (professors of the Univ. of Valencia).

<http://blogs.iec.cat/schct/activitats-2/escola-de-primavera/8th-european-spring-school/>

-Edition of a book collection titled “Clásicos de la química” (chemical classics) organised by Dr. Antonio García-Belmar (prof. Univ. of Alicante). The main aim of this collection is to prepare critical editions and Spanish translations of relevant works by well-known historic chemists.

http://publicaciones.ua.es/filespublici/pdf/85275209788497172103_Fragmento.pdf

-Participation in the last editions of the “Bienal de la Real Sociedad Española de Química” (Biennial of the Spanish Royal Society of Chemistry), the most important conference of chemistry in Spanish.

-Course: “Escuela de Verano sobre Historia de la Química (V EVHQ)” (5th Summer School on History of Chemistry), organised by the Univ. of La Rioja in July 2014. The conference topic was “Materia y radiación. Rayos X y Cristalografía” (matter and radiation. X Rays and crystallography). The V EVHQ involved the participation of 23 students and 11 speakers.

http://fundacion.unirioja.es/formacion_cursos/view/231/v-escuela-de-verano-sobre-historia-de-la-quimica-materia-y-radiacion-rayos-x-y-cristalografia

-Meeting: “Jornadas sobre el Año Internacional de Cristalografía” (Seminar for the International Year of Crystallography) organised in November 2015.

-Conference: “La tabla periódica de los elementos” (the periodic table of elements).