

**Minutes of meeting of FECS' Working Party of History of Chemistry  
Estoril, September 9, 2005**

**Chairman:** Ernst Homburg

**Participants:** Ernst Homburg; Anita Kildebæk Nielsen; Eva Vamos; Antonio Amorim Costa ; Duncan T. Burns; Colin Russell; Peter Morris; Marco Beretta; Jan Trofast; Anders Lundgren; Bjørn Pedersen; Annette Lykknes; Evangelia Varella; Halina Lichocka; Roman Mierzecki; Laurence Lestel; Marika Blondel-Mégrelis; Ana Carneiro; Jose Claro Gomes; Anna Simmons; Viviane Quirke; Hans-Werner Schütt; Pedro Cintas; Carsten Reinhardt; Brigitte Van Tiggelen; Elvira Callapez; Masanori Kajji; Gerhard Pohl; Sona Strbanova.

Referee: Anita Kildebæk Nielsen

**Agenda (distributed by E-mail prior to the meeting)**

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes of last General Meeting, Saturday 6 September 2003, Budapest**
3. **First European Chemistry Congress**
4. **6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the History of Chemistry**
5. **Other future activities**
6. **Membership of the Working Party**
7. **Composition of the Steering Committee, or Council, of the Working Party**
8. **Date of the Next General Meeting**
9. **Any Other Business**

**Ad. 1)**

The chairman read apologies for absence from Hendrik Deelstra, Borislav Toshev, Jack Betteridge, and Pascual Róman.

**Ad. 2)**

No comments.

**Ad. 3)**

The First European Chemistry Congress (Budapest 2006) will only have one historical session (in two parts), which will be organised in collaboration between this working party and the division of chemical education. The topic of the session will be on the teaching of chemistry. There will be four invited speakers (Bill Brock, Bernadette Bensaude-Vincent, Tony Smith, and Ilka Parchmann. This leaves room for four more speakers plus a number of posters.

Some of the participants of the meeting voiced criticism of the website of the congress, but Ernst Homburg stated that to his knowledge, the website would soon be made more detailed.

Varella suggested to distribute information via the website of the European Chemistry Thematic Network (ECTN) (Tony Smith being coordinator of that network).

Eva Vamos' suggestion to organise a satellite conferences in adjunction to the chemistry congress on "The History of Green Chemistry: Analysing the Food Chain, from Agriculture to Consumption and Waste" was debated. Eva Vamos distributed a detailed suggestion of a programme for the conference, showing that with at least 60 participants the cost would be 195 euro for each participant (including fee, all meals, and accommodation. The suggestion will involve collaboration with the divisions of analytical and modern chemistry, and possible the division of food chemistry.

There was some criticism that the title 'Green Chemistry' misleading and unclear. The chairman noted that the title was chosen because the IUPHCS Commission for History of Modern Chemistry was planning a similar conference with that title, and cooperation with that Commission would be very welcome. It was agreed that a better title is needed – proposals should be sent to Ernst Homburg by E-mail.

Some of the participants of the meetings were afraid that not enough historians of chemistry are working in the area of the conference's topic and that the relation to the chemistry congress would imply that other historians would not participate. It was pointed out that there are (at least) two other conferences in 2006 with overlapping themes, namely the conference of economic history in Helsinki and the conference of social history in Amsterdam. The chairman concluded that he would soon contact the other involved divisions in order to rethink the concept, but he remained carefully optimistic. He would also investigate how to get the satellite conference announced on the congress' website. Duncan Burns emphasised the interest of the division of analytical chemistry in the project.

#### **Ad. 4)**

It was agreed to hold the next conference on the history of chemistry in Belgium in 2007. A preliminary draft of a budget and theme was presented by Brigitte Van Tiggelen (drafted by Geert Vanpaemel). The title "Neighbours and territories: The evolving identity of chemistry" was seen by some participants as too broad and too general, while other participants believed it could work well and generate inspiration. There was general agreement that a theme is needed in order to facilitate the selection of papers by the programme committee. The chairman therefore concluded that the programme committee should elaborate on the title / theme – while at the same time paying attention to the fact that a catchy title might make the funding of the conference easier. It was emphasised that the theme and the selection criteria should be fixed soon.

It was agreed to hold the conference in the end of August.

#### **Ad. 5)**

All relevant information concerning activities on history of chemistry in the all involved countries and societies must be send to the chairman who will distribute it immediately to all members of the working party. News can also be sent in the vernaculars. The next newsletter will be available on the website soon. Annette Lykknes is the web editor.

The project on chemical heritage should be revitalized (Maria Rentetzi will be contacted by the chairman).

José Ramon Bertomeu Sanchez urged the participants to become involved in the making of an inventory of why history of chemistry is important to keep on the curriculum for chemistry students, especially in the light of the transfer to a bachelor-master system in Europe. The ECTN is involved in the 'Eurobachelor' in chemistry. Two members of the WP – Evangelia Varela and Bjorn Pedersen – are also involved in the ECTN. They might play a role in putting the history of chemistry on the agenda; or emphasise that historical elements could be woven into the ordinary chemistry courses. The chairman will approach to WP members to report on the teaching of the history of chemistry in their countries.

Duncan Burns would like the website to include a list of classical key experiments that could be included in chemistry lectures. Evangelia Varela will take the initiative and make sure that the result will be put on the website.

**Ad. 6)**

The chairman noted that he would try to intensify the links to the chemical societies. It was debated whether it would be possible to get the chemical societies to pay the travel expenses of the members of the working party, so that more members would be able to participate in the general meetings. Some societies, however, are not economically capable of doing so.

**Ad. 7)**

Unfortunately, there was no time to discuss this issue.

**Ad. 8)**

The next meeting of the working party will take place in Hungary (Budapest or Gödöllő) in relation to the chemistry congress next summer.

**Ad. 9)**

Unfortunately, there was no time to discuss this issue.