

Minutes of the business meeting of the EuCheMS Working Party of History of Chemistry, Trondheim Norway, Friday, September 1st 2017

Chair: Brigitte Van Tiggelen
Vice-Chair: Annette Lykknes
Secretary: Ignacio Suay-Matallana

Delegates attending for the national chemical societies:

Belgium - B. Van Tiggelen
Denmark - A. Petersen
Estonia - P. Mürsepp, by proxy: E. Lohkivi
France - D. Fauque
Germany - G. Boeck, Chr. Meinel
Lithuania - B. Railiené
The Netherlands - E. Homburg
Norway - A. Lykknes, B. Pedersen by proxy: R. Bye
Portugal - I. Malaquias
Russia - E. Zaitseva
Serbia - V. Milanovic
Spain (Spanish Royal Society of Chemistry)- J.R. Bertomeu, I. Suay-Matallana
Spain (Catalan Chemical Society) - P. Grapi
Sweden - J. Trofast, H. Forst by proxy: A. Lundgren
United Kingdom - P. Morris

Observers attending:

Division for the Chemical Education - D. Trivic, by proxy: V. Milanovic
Chemical Heritage Foundation - C. Berkowitz
Japanese Society of the History of Chemistry - Y. Kikuchi
Catalan Society for the History of Science - A. Nieto-Galan
Commission for the History of Chemistry and the Molecular Sciences - J. Johnson
International Society for the Philosophy of Chemistry - Kl. Ruthenberg
American Chemical Society, Historical Division - R. Brashear

Also attending: C. Reinhardt, H. Fisher, T. van Helvoort, T. Hagendijk, M. Rentetzi, C. Mody, H. Chang, R. Anderson, P. Teissier, D. Liu, G. Pallo, L. Jiang.

Apologies for absence: R. Anderson, E. Callapez, A. Garcia-Belmar, K. Kawashima, B. Mahieu, G. Restrepo, L. Sabbatini, A. Simmons, S. Strobánová, A. Weber

1. Opening, and apologies for absence

2. Minutes of last general meeting, Aveiro, September 11th , 2015

The minutes were approved.

3. News and reports

3.1. News from the WPHC

3.1.1. Survey on the History of chemistry: publication

Ignacio Suay-Matallana thanked all those who contributed to this survey and made a brief summary on the report and the resulting article in the *Journal of Chemical Education*: "Mapping the teaching of history of chemistry in Europe". The article shows some problems affecting history of chemistry (and

humanities as a whole) like the retirement of leading scholars, the endeavour to find younger researchers, the difficulties of funding “non-productive” disciplines, the persistence of traditional narratives, and historiographical tensions, and the need of creating more bridges with other humanistic fields and the general public. On the other hand, the article points out that new resources are needed in order to address the interests of these audiences, and the great interest on the material culture of chemistry. Finally, it also points out that the difficulties of maintaining a large audience of students, is being balanced by the interest shown by other audiences like prospective teachers, professional chemists, senior citizens, and the general public. The article can be accessed through the ACS website: <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/acs.jchemed.6b00401>

The original survey can be accessed through the WPHC website under “Teaching the History of Chemistry”: <http://www.euchems.eu/divisions/history-of-chemistry-2/references/>

3.1.2. ECC6 Seville, 2016 - John Dalton Symposium

The “John Dalton 250th Anniversary Symposium: Chemistry meets History”, co-organized by Mats Tilset, Sylviane Sabo-Etienne and Brigitte Van Tiggelen during the 6th EuCheMS congress in Seville, Spain, in September 2016 was a one-day symposium combining historical lectures, scientific papers, and a Dalton slam. The session co-organized by the Division for Inorganic Chemistry, Division of Chemical Education and the WPHC, was very well attended, and audience greatly enjoyed the variety of topics, the type of contributions and the diversity of speakers. Among the historians of chemistry were Rachel Dunn (keynote), Pere Grapi and Brigitte Van Tiggelen. For more information, see: <http://www.euchems.eu/divisions/history-of-chemistry-2/conferences/>

3.2. News from EuCheMS

3.2.1. Atlantic Basin Conference (ABC) meeting (announcement has been circulated by email)

This meeting to be held in Cancun, Mexico, January 2018 is a new type of conference designed to allow chemists to discuss and build lasting collaborations between chemists from Africa, Europe and North and South America. This is the first attempt for such a meeting. Foreseen regularity might be 5 years. Deadline for proposals is September, 18th. No WPHC session is planned this time, but there is potential for future collaboration with ACS-HIST on next occasions. For more information, see: <http://abcchem.org/>

3.2.2. ECC 7 Liverpool: proposal for activities

The European Chemistry Conferences gather the whole of the chemistry community along topics, and not divisional thematic. There is this no session for the history of chemistry. The next edition will take place in Liverpool, from the 26th to the 30th of August 2018. Deadline for submitting special events is September 11th. Peter Morris suggested a presentation on the Muspratt family, by Peter Reed. Brigitte Van Tiggelen will make contact with the Historical Group of the RSC.

3.2.3. EuCheMS Historical Landmarks

Brigitte Van Tiggelen described a new EuCheMS award that will focus on Historical Landmarks. Chemistry is an integrant part of the Cultural Heritage of Europe. The EuCheMS Historical Landmarks Programme will reinforce the sense of belonging of European chemists and bring to the general public some sense of how chemistry is part of the general cultural heritage, especially as the plaques will be accompanied with communication material providing information on the discoveries and breakthroughs celebrated, and the impact they had.

For more information see: <https://www.euchems.eu/awards/euchems-historical-landmarks/>

It is worth noting that in order to be selected, the historical role of the site has to be documented, and the impact of the event on the development of chemistry has to be of European dimension. Also, the Selection Committee of 5 members will include one representative from the WPHC *ex officio*, with a four-year mandate.

Brigitte Van Tiggelen called for assistance from volunteers in this task, as the Selection Committee will have to draw on local expertise.

During the discussion, Peter Morris, raised the point of overlapping with other such programs, like the RSC blue plaques in the UK. Carsten Reinhardt asked whether similar programs exist elsewhere than Germany and the UK. Ernst Homburg reported that the Netherlands intended to set up a similar program but hasn't proceeded yet.

Brigitte Van Tiggelen emphasized that this program is happening and, under the present circumstances, the WPHC should seize any opportunity to participate at the various levels, nationally and internationally.

3.2.4. Planning divisional meetings four years ahead

Brigitte Van Tiggelen summarized the “New rules for Professional Network Conferences” that will be discussed at the EuCheMS General Assembly in Rome on September 27th. The decision will be made on the following proposals (note: PN means “professional network”, i.e. a division or a WP):

- (i) a PN should plan their key conferences four years in advance;
- (ii) a PN is obliged to first approach a Member Society in a country in which a conference is foreseen to take place, for its organization; if the Member Society is not interested in organizing it, then PN can approach other organizations.
- (iii) To recommend that arrangements for a conference are done preferably four years in advance

On this proposal, Brigitte Van Tiggelen intends to underline that the WPHC will not be able to always plan key conferences four years in advance, and insist on keeping the “preferably” in the (iii). However, planning four years ahead is an interesting approach that the present WPHC board wants to investigate (see point 3.2.3).

Especially for Division (not for WP!), EuCheMS is considering introducing a requirement for divisional conferences that,

- (i) before anybody bids for a conference it shall have the support of a Member Society.
- (ii) Support would at minimum mean that a Member Society handles the conference budget and signs a contract
- (iii) If the conference has a surplus, 80% remains with a Member Society; if the conference has a loss, EuCheMS covers 10% and EuCheMS Division may cover additional 10%.

3.2.5. Discussion about becoming a division

Brigitte Van Tiggelen has received the following mail from David Cole-Hamilton, president of EuCheMS: « From the Yearbook, I notice that you have representation for 23 countries and hold a meeting every 2 years. These exceed the criteria for becoming a Division, although you would also need a Treasurer if you do not already have one. Is the WPHC interested in changing the status to that of Division? »

EuCheMS distinguishes between a WP and a division, some key differences are:

- A Division shall have a budget line within the EuCheMS account. This enables a Division to have its own financial resources (obtained mostly through surplus from its conference, see point 3.2.4., but they may have other sources too). EuCheMS Secretariat provides entire administrative support for handling finances, including the official annual financial report.
- Soon to come, Divisional conferences will have to abide specific rules (see 3.2.4. on conferences) and sign an agreement with EuCheMS secretariat
- A Division gets 2 votes instead of 1 in the General Assembly of EuCheMS. The General Assembly is composed by the representatives of the member societies (ca. 40 members), of the professional networks (13 Divisions and 5 WP so far). The members of the Executive Board also have voting rights.

After discussing the administrative and financial complication for a small group of volunteers (despite a large European representation), it was voted unanimously to remain a Working Party for the time being.

3.4. Call for reports from the Member Societies

Ignacio Suay-Matallana will request information from the Member Societies about publications, conferences, delegates, problems and challenges faced by all the member societies (not more than a 1-2 page report). An email will be sent to the delegates with instructions to submit such information by Oct.-Nov. 2017. Observers who want to report on their own groups and activities are welcome to do so.

4. Website: a reminder

Annette Lykknes reminded the audience of the existence of the (not so new anymore) website: <http://www.euchems.eu/divisions/history-of-chemistry-2>
The structure of the website is set by EuCheMS, so no categories can be added, nor changes to the menu made, and we need to make the best use of the framework as it is devised.

Annette Lykknes asked all delegates to provide links for the historical pages from the websites of the Member Societies, preferably to the pages in English if they exist.

5. Election of officers

Ignacio Suay-Matallana, explained the present situation. The WPHC board is presently composed of three officers: chair, vice-chair, secretary.

Brigitte Van Tiggelen, chair, 1st term, 2013-2017 (4 years)

Annette Lykknes, vice-chair 1st term 2011-2014 (3 years), 2nd term 2014-2017 (3 years);

Ignacio Suay-Matallana, Secretary, 1st term, 2015-2019.

The WPHC thus needs to elect a chair and a vice-chair. Brigitte Van Tiggelen can be elected for a second term. Indeed, the only EuCheMS rule about successive mandates applies to the chair: no more than 2 terms (4 years each). A third extra term can be contemplated under special circumstances, and requires the EuCheMS Executive Board approval.

While this rule does not apply to vice-chair and secretary, the present board stated that she believes it is good practice to do so for all offices. Ignacio Suay-Matallana, and Brigitte Van Tiggelen proposed however to extend Annette Lykknes' office for two more years so that she can fill two 4-year terms like other officers.

Carsten Reinhardt expressed his worries that the change or prolongation of the vice-chair term might look dubious. Brigitte Van Tiggelen explained that she asked the EuCheMS Board to be allowed to change from 3 to 4 years; the argument that it was not suitable for the WPHC to have 3-year terms when the community meets every 2 years was deemed reasonable, and the 4-year term was accepted. It was immediately applied to the chair and the secretary. The vice chair was re-elected in Uppsala in 2013, anticipating the end of the first term in 2014, hence two times three years. One could have prolonged the vice-chair term for one year (make it 4 like other officers) but then the end of the term would fall again during a year when no business meeting is held. For this reason, Brigitte Van Tiggelen suggested to elect Annette Lykknes to remain vice-chair for two more years.

Election of chair: Brigitte 2nd term, Approved by acclamation, and 1 abstention, 0 against.

Election of vice-chair: Annette, extension of terms elected by acclamation, 0 against, 0 abstention.

Annette Lykknes and Brigitte Van Tiggelen thanked the delegates for their trust.

Brigitte Van Tiggelen then emphasized that this is her last term, and that forming the role as chair takes time. In her experience, it was only after two years that she started to understand the nuts and bolts of EuCheMS and became more efficient.

Therefore, it is suggested to have a new officer, the president-elect, to be chosen in two years, at the next ICHC, and would be on board two years before the end of the term of the chair, allowing thus for an overlap between the two officers and transfer of expertise.

This proposal triggers a discussion. Among the questions raised: should the "president-elect" be identical to the vice-president or not? Should the board have a president-elect when the chair is ready to serve a second term?

It was unanimously decided to elect a president elect at next ICHC as a proof of concept, and to further examine the composition of the board. All board members feel there could easily be one or two more people on board.

As a general remark, Ernst Homburg suggested an email reminder some months before the elections, so considerations and discussion could start before the business meeting and informed decisions could be made during the meeting itself. Brigitte Van Tiggelen assured that WPHC board will definitely proceed this way next time.

6. Venue, date and organization of the 12th international conference on the history of chemistry, 2019

One proposal to host the 12th ICHC was presented by Ernst Homburg, in the name of the Chemie Historische Groep (CHG), the History Division of the Dutch Chemical Society (KNCV) to host the conference in Maastricht, in the Netherlands. The detailed proposal was pre-circulated to the delegates (please, see the document attached at the end). Suggestion was made to coordinate the time of the conference with the History of Science Society (HSS) conference to be held in Utrecht in August 2019, 8th-11th (the dates are tentative).

The proposal to connect with HSS was voted, and approved unanimously by the delegates.

Regarding the dates of the 12th ICHC the following was discussed:

- HSS conference would be 8-11th of August 2019 (tentative dates to be confirmed)
- 12th ICHC should be 2 or 3 days just before or after the HSS, August 4/5th-7th or August 12th -14/15th
- Preferably not more than two parallel sessions.
- HSS has a large and active historical group, FoCHS we need to get in touch with.

The vote for the dates indicated a slight preference for the 12th ICHC before (8 votes) rather than after (6 votes).

Ernst Homburg then made some additional comments, explaining that each set of dates requires specific arrangements from the local organizing team: for instance, first set of dates raises problems to find rooms for the conference during the weekend.

Brigitte Van Tiggelen will follow-up with Ernst Homburg and report to the delegates before the end of 2017.

7. Programme chair for 12th ICHC

Brigitte Van Tiggelen informed that the two programme chairs for the 11th ICHC are willing to serve as chairs of the 12th ICHC. By acclamation, Christoph Meinel and Ignacio Suay-Matallana were designated as co-chairs of the 12th ICHC. In the name of the whole WPHC community, Brigitte Van Tiggelen thanked them heartily.

8. Venue, date and organization of the 13th ICHC, 2021: preliminary proposals and discussion

Annette Lykknes has initiated a multi-step process:

- Interested groups/individuals contact her to express their interest (informally)

- Each interested group is invited to prepare a first (short) proposal to be presented at the business meeting, August 2017 in Trondheim
- During 2018/19 proposals will be circulated.
- Finalized proposal(s) will be presented during the 12ICHC – when the final decision will be made.

A few UK scholars showed interest, among them Hasok Chang and Frank James, but there is no specific plan at this stage. The Historical Group of the Royal Society of Chemistry declared to be unable to offer either financial or administrative support if the 13th ICHC is held in the UK in 2021. Hasok Chang mentioned Cambridge as a possible venue. A problem is that Cambridge houses few historians of chemistry. London is also a possible venue but hotels are expensive.

Danielle Fauque mentioned that France (Paris) could be interested in hosting the 13th ICHC (2021) or the 14th ICHC (2023), provided younger scholars would join the proposal. There was thus no commitment and any other location.

Annette Lykknes will continue her communication with the interested groups. More information will be circulated to the delegates in due time.

9. Other activities

2019 is the 150th anniversary of the Mendeleev's first published Periodic Table in a form similar to the one we still use. There are ongoing efforts to declare the year 2019 as the UNESCO International Year of the Periodic Table of Elements (IYPT).

In parallel, EuCheMS is contemplating the celebration of this anniversary by distributing Periodic Tables in primary schools around Europe, supported by information packs for teachers of 11-12 year olds, as well as a series of short videos about elements and about Mendeleev himself. The WPHC has been asked to contribute to this EuCheMS project, especially on the historical aspect. This also opens to potential cooperation with the Division of Chemical Education, the representative of which to our group is our colleague, Vesna Milanovic. The actual project will be decided upon at the coming EuCheMS General Assembly in Rome, at the end of September.

Elena Zaitseva-Baum has suggested that a part of the Mendeleev congress in Moscow in the Fall of 2019 be devoted to the History of the PT, with the collaboration of the WPHC. She is presently working with Gisela Boeck, and Brigitte Van Tiggelen to evaluate the feasibility of this project. Interested delegates or other persons from the historical societies can contact Brigitte Van Tiggelen.

10. Any other business

Birute Railiene presented the project of the History of Chemistry section of the Lithuanian Chemical Society, in cooperation with other heritage institutions in Lithuania, to celebrate the coming 250th anniversary of famous chemist and physician of Vilnius university, Andrew Sniadecki (Jędrzej (Andrzej) Śniadecki (1768–1838). Plans are to publish an English translation of one of the first works in biochemistry and organic chemistry, written by Sniadecki in Polish, then translated to French and German, the *Theory of Organic Beings* (1804). A monograph will also be published in 2020 and a call for contributions is addressed to the WPHC members who would address the scholarly, medical and social activities of Andrew Sniadecki in Lithuania, Poland, Austria, Great Britain. For more information on A. Sniadecki celebrations, see: www.andrewsniadecki.org

Danielle Fauque announced a symposium by the Groupe d'Histoire de la Chimie, Société Chimique de France, November 2018, devoted to the History of IUPAC.

Brigitte Van Tiggelen reminded everyone of the importance of answering emails with queries, and to think of submitting material for the webpage to circulate information.

The WPHC board acknowledged the help by Asbjørn Petersen, who facilitated the note-taking for this business meeting.

The business meeting was closed at 10:15 (Friday, September 1st, 2017).

Attached:



Proposal to host the 12th International Conference for the History of Chemistry (in August 2019)

Introduction

The History of Chemistry Group (CHG, Dutch abbreviation) of the Royal Netherlands Chemical Society (KNCV) will be pleased to host in 2019 the 12th International Conference for the History of Chemistry, in cooperation with Maastricht University and the KNCV.

The History of Chemistry Group was founded in January 1999, and in 2005 took also over the activities of the Historical Committee of the Royal Netherlands Chemical Society, already established in 1904. In 2007 the CHG co-organized, together with the Belgian colleagues, 6IHCH in Leuven, Belgium. At present the CHG has about 70 members. The CHG organizes ca. 4 to 5 small symposiums and excursions each year. See: <http://chg.kncv.nl/>.

From 8-11 August 2019, the History of Science Society (HSS) will have its Annual Meeting for the first time in Europe. The meeting will be hosted in Utrecht, the Netherlands. For a provisional announcement, see: <https://hsonline.org/meetings/2017-hss-annual-meeting/>

Further details will follow.

In order to exploit the possible synergy with the HSS Annual Meeting the CHG proposes to organize 12ICHC just before that meeting, on 6-9 August 2019, in Maastricht, the Netherlands. There is a good train connection between Utrecht and Maastricht. The travel takes two hours. This also offers the opportunity for attendants of both meetings so that they will see more, and quite different, aspects of the country.

The Venue

The Conference will be held in the buildings of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science in downtown **Maastricht** (Grote Gracht 90-92), of which some parts date back to the 18th century. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS) is one of the six faculties at Maastricht University. It was founded in 1994. There are approximately 240 employees and around 1800 students. The format of the education is, similar to all the faculties of Maastricht University, based on the principle of Problem-Based Learning (PBL). The faculty is internationally oriented and most of the programs are offered in English. Students come from all over the world. There are five Departments: Philosophy, Arts and Literature, History, STS, and Political Science. See: <https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/about-um/faculties/faculty-arts-and-social-sciences>



Maastricht is one of the oldest cities in the Netherlands. Originally an ancient Roman city, today it is the home of some 120.000 inhabitants in the south of The Netherlands. It has a beautiful medieval inner-city and is widely known for its history, culture, art, good restaurants, luxury shopping and high-level interdisciplinary education. Generally known as the venue of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 and as “the balcony of Europe”, it has a distinctly international orientation. The center of Maastricht is very compact. Large parts of the center are for pedestrians only and most of the sights are within walking distance.

In the early 19th century Maastricht became one of the largest industrial towns of the country. Recently many old factory buildings are renovated and adapted to new purposes.

Dates Proposed

As stated above, the proposed dates are **6-9 August 2019 (Tuesday-Friday)**, with the option to have an excursion on Saturday – for instance to chemical-metallurgical historical sites in both Belgium (Liège) and Germany (Aachen).

Conference Fee

Although there are plenty of restaurants and lunch facilities close to the Faculty buildings, we propose for logistic reasons to have a fee that includes lunches, next to coffee breaks, registration, welcome party, and conference documents.

The fee proposed is ca. €250, with a 10% lower fee for early registration, and a 10% higher fee for late registration. We propose a substantially lower fee for students (incl. PhD students), of ca. €150.

Additional activities such as a conference dinner, and excursions will be charged separately.

Accommodation

Close to our faculty in the center of Maastricht you will find various hotels, guesthouses, and B&B addresses. The price range for the hotels is between €80-120. A cheaper option for hosting participants is hostel Stayokay Maastricht (5 minutes walking from the city center), the cheapest rate for a room is €31,25 (price level 2017).

Maastricht has plenty of hotels, in all price categories. Although Maastricht is a relatively small city with ca. 120.000 inhabitants, the hotel prices are in the range of those of larger cities in the Netherlands such as Utrecht and Amsterdam. See for instance:

<https://www.booking.com/city/nl/maastricht.html?aid=356989;label=gog235jc-city-XX-nl-maastricht>

At a later date a more precise advice will be given as regarding the most recommended hotels in different price categories.

How to get there?

There are five international airports at a distance from 1-1,5 hours car drive from Maastricht: Brussels Airport, Düsseldorf, Eindhoven Airport, Cologne-Bonn, Brussels South/Charleroi.

Brussels Airport and Eindhoven have train connections to Maastricht (in the case of Eindhoven, there is a bus line to the local railway station; in case of Brussels there is a railway station at the airport). In the other cases special group taxis can be booked (details will be put on the website), as travelling by public transport takes longer.

Amsterdam Schiphol airport is also a very good option for many international flights. There is a train connection to Maastricht, which takes ca. 2,5-3 hours.

There are direct train connections to Amsterdam, Utrecht, Eindhoven and Liège. Travelers from Germany can reach Maastricht by train via Heerlen and Venlo. One may also travel with the Thalys and/or Eurostar from London, Paris and Brussels to Maastricht via Liège.

Maastricht may also be reached by car. The city has good connections with several highways from Amsterdam, Brussels, Luxembourg, Paris, Aachen and Cologne.

Local Organizing Committee

Prof. Dr Ernst Homburg (CHG, Maastricht University, chair)

Dr Andreas Weber (CHG, Twente University)

Thijs Hagendijk, MSc (CHG, PhD-student Utrecht University)

Dr Geert Somsen (Maastricht University)

Prof. Dr Cyrus Mody (Maastricht University) (to be confirmed)

Prof. Dr Sven Dupré (Utrecht University) (to be confirmed)

Dr Marieke Hendriksen (Utrecht University) (to be confirmed)