

16. Working Party on History of Chemistry

The Ninth International Conference for the History of Chemistry (9ICHC) of the Working Party on the History of Chemistry (EuCheMS) was held on 22-25 August 2013 at the Museum Gustavianum, Uppsala. The conference theme was 'Chemistry in Material Culture', and the meeting investigated all aspects of chemistry in its engagement with material culture, from the earliest times to the present. The conference was a highly successful event, and gathered about 80 researchers and students. Most participants came from European countries, but there were also participants from USA, Japan, China, to name a few.

The program combined keynote lectures and thematic sessions with shorter papers.

In the first plenary lectures 'Uncovering and trading secret materials in the 17th century, or, How to make the Bologna stone', Lawrence Principe (Johns Hopkins University, USA), related his attempts to reproduce the well-known experiment of the 17th century, including the difficulties when using reconstructed equipment and searching for sources of raw materials used in the original experiment. The second was given by Marta Lourenço (University of Lisbon) on 'The invisible heritage: increasing relevance and use of material sources in the history of science', and reviewed how material sources can be used effectively to study the history of science though it is often neglected. A third plenary lecture was given as the Morris Award Lecture by Mary Jo Nye (Oregon State University, USA), the 2012 recipient of the John and Martha Morris Award for Outstanding Achievement in the History of Modern Chemistry and the Chemical Industry. In her lecture, 'Mine, thine, and ours: Collaboration and

the material culture of the 20th century chemical laboratory', Professor Nye investigated the publications records of three famous chemists, Dorothy Hodgkin, Michael Polanyi and Linus Pauling, and how the hierarchical use of their name amongst the other authors associated with a particular book or article varied, whether alphabetical, or with Hodgkin, Polanyi and Pauling's name first or with the order reflecting the relative contributions.

The remaining part of the three days was split into two parallel sessions that concentrated on a wide range of themes, including Objects and Philosophy of Chemistry, 20th Century Physical Chemistry, Technologies of visualisation, Environmental Chemistry, Sites of Innovation and Production, Discipline Building and Discipline Busting, and Materials in the 20th and 21st Century.

In accordance with the theme of the conference, the conference organisers had made special preparations to enable participants to interact with, and visit local museums and collections of scientific objects. The main venue of the conference was Museum Gustavianum, the oldest building of Uppsala University, and now a museum with large history of science collections.

A special exhibition on crystallography had also been prepared in the University Library, Carolina Rediviva in cooperation with the conference organizers. As part of the programme there was also a visit to the ultracentrifuge of Nobel Prize winner The Svedberg, professor of physical chemistry at the university 1912-49. The ultracentrifuge is now a standard laboratory technology, and Svedberg's centrifuge –

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| Chair: | Dr Brigitte Van Tiggelen (Royal Chemical Society, Belgium), 2013 |
| Vice Chair: | Professor Annette Lykknes (Norwegian Chemical Society), 2009 |
| Members: | 26 active delegates, 150 members |
| Countries: | 18 (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, UK) |

the first ever built and used for several seminal experiments- is a unique object of great interest to the history of chemistry. There was also a conference excursion to Stockholm, with a visit to the Observatory Museum, and its special exhibition on Jöns Jacob Berzelius (1779-1848) one of the best chemists of all time. The Berzelius exhibition had been kept on for a month longer than originally planned by the museum to make a visit from the conference possible. The excursion continued with a visit to the Vasa Museum, where the conference participants were given a tour and a lecture by Mari-ka Hedin, director of the museum, on the chemistry involved in the preservation of archaeological objects, especially the wood of a ship which had been kept underwater for so long.

The 2015 edition will take place in Aveiro, Portugal, hosted by the Portuguese Chemical Society and the University of Aveiro.

The Working Party will also organize a session during the European Symposium in the History of Science, held in Lisbon, 4-6 September 2014, devoted to the translation and appropriation of Pauling's ground breaking textbook « The Nature of Chemical Bond » in post WWII European chemical curricula. The session will be co-sponsored by the Commission for the History of Modern Chemistry.