



Department of Chemistry

CANTERBURY
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

Chemistry Newsletter

Number 309

Friday, 16 May 2008

As Bryce is away I am acting HoD until next Thursday. As I've only been in the HoD seat from the middle of yesterday, so there is not much to report, other than I conducted a group of academics for Thailand around the department.

Richard

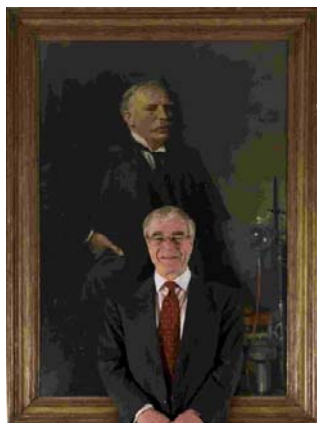
Congratulations

PhD Completion

Congratulations to **Sam Yu**. Sam completed a PhD thesis with **Alison Downard** on: *Surface Modification of Carbon Surfaces by the Attachment of Molecular Thin Films*. The examiners of his thesis have reported favourably and Sam has now qualified for the award of the degree.

People

A Baker's Double



On Friday 7 February, the 2008 Bakerian Prize Lecture (the Royal Society's premier physical sciences address) was delivered in London by Professor Robin J. H. Clark (FRS and Hon FRSNZ). Robin is an alumnus of Canterbury, having graduated with a 1st-class MSc in Chemistry in 1957. Amongst numerous honours, Robin, was bestowed with an Honorary DSc from Canterbury in 2001, was appointed Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2004 and held the position Sir William Ramsay Professor of Chemistry at the Christopher Ingold Laboratories of University College London. Just after his Lecture on "Raman microscopy, pigments and the arts/science interface", the Royal Society photographer took the accompanying photo of Robin, at the Welcome Theatre, standing in front of a painting of Ernest Rutherford. Rutherford, the only other New Zealander to have given this lecture, is (as you surely know) also a graduate of Canterbury. Fittingly, 2008 is the centenary anniversary of Rutherford's 1908 Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

Comings and Goings

Bryce is away until next Thursday. **Owen** is back on Monday. **Sally** is away from next Thursday and **Murray McEwan** is away all next week. **Rachael** is away on Monday.

Seminars

Chemistry Department Seminar (Monday 19 May, 2008, 11.00 a.m., Room 531)

David Bones (Final Ph.D. Seminar)

"The photochemistry of sodium nitrate aerosol"

Aerosols of nitrate solutions were irradiated in the presence of radical scavengers in an attempt to measure the yield of hydroxyl radical in both the aqueous phase and the gas phase. Carbon monoxide, benzoic acid, benzene and cyclohexane were used as scavengers to trap hydroxyl radical. The products from the reaction of these scavengers with hydroxyl radical were analysed with High Performance Liquid Chromatography and mass spectrometry. The radiant flux in the chamber was measured via ferrioxalate actinometry, both with bulk liquid and aerosol droplets. Many quantitative results were obtained but several anomalies were found. This suggests that Mie theory is not capable of predicting rates of photochemical reactions within droplets.

Learning Skills Centre Programme for Postgraduate Students

Lectures this term:

Writing a literature review

Writing and delivering an oral presentation

Making supervision work

Workshops offered this term:

Perfect punctuation for postgraduates

Good grammar for postgraduates

Polish your written style for postgraduates

Paraphrasing and summarising for postgraduates

Word Salad Sorted: workshops for thesis writers

The Writer's Oil: weekly workshops

Term Two programme starts **9 May 2008**. Enrol online: www.learningskills.canterbury.ac.nz Click on Postgraduate students then either click Postgrad Lectures or Practical Workshops

Conferences and society news

Association for Women in the Sciences (AWIS) Conference (Christchurch, 2-4 July, 2008)

The Association for Women in the Sciences invites women working with, or interested in, all fields of science to attend '**Striking a Balance**' in Christchurch, July 2 - 4, 2008. The conference will consider how to balance the roles we occupy from researchers to partners/mothers to entrepreneurs to teachers/science communicators. The programme includes mini symposia, plenary speakers and numerous workshops aimed at skill development for attendees. Speakers will represent the spectrum of work in the sciences from media people to social scientists to science managers. There will also be a number of sessions where researchers from diverse backgrounds present overviews of their research plus tell of how they have balanced their careers with other aspects of their lives.

Keynote speakers include:

- **Professor Margaret Brimble**, University of Auckland, L'Oreal UNESCO winner of Women in Science Award
- **Dr Jilly Evans**, Vice-President of Amira Pharmaceuticals, San Diego
- **Dr Cordelia Fine**, Academic Psychologist and freelance author, University of Melbourne

Workshop themes include:

- Presentation skills for scientists
- The Art of Mentoring - how to be a mentor and how to get the most from your mentor
- Running your own scientific business
- Writing scientific articles for mainstream media
- Juggling work and preschool children's needs

For more information visit the conference website: <http://www.awis.org.nz/conferencespage.html>

Recent publications

Subashani Maniam, Marta M. Cieslinski, Stephen F. Lincoln, Hideki Onagi, Peter J. Steel, Anthony C. Willis and Christopher J. Easton. Molecular Fibers and Wires in Solid-State and Solution Self-Assemblies of Cyclodextrin [2]Rotaxanes. *Organic Letters*, 2008, 10, 1885-1888.

Physical Sciences Library News

Survey about Library Fines

UC students are invited to complete a survey about Library fines and go into the prize draw for a \$100 voucher. The survey closes on 18 May.

[Start the Online Survey Now](#)

Crossfire Databases: Beilstein, Patent Chemistry & Gmelin

Doreen Tan, Sales Manager from Elsevier, will demonstrate the Crossfire Collection of Chemistry databases on Tuesday, 20 May at 2pm in the Computer Room, 2nd floor, Physical Sciences Library. Everyone welcome.

Article of Note

Svetla Baykoucheva. [A New Era in Chemical Information: PubChem, DiscoveryGate, and Chemistry Central. *ONLINE*. 2007, 31\(5\), 16-20.](#)

This article discusses how PubChem, DiscoveryGate and Chemistry Central are changing the field of chemical information. DiscoveryGate provides access to the **CrossFire Databases**, which we don't subscribe to (demo available next week - see above). PubChem and Chemistry Central are free resources.

Open Access

In April The University of Southampton and Stirling University became the first in the UK to announce a University-wide Open Access mandate, requiring all academic staff to make all their published research available online. The European University Association (EUA) has unanimously recommended OA self-archiving mandates for its 791 universities in 46 countries. More on open access at: <http://openaccess.eprints.org/>

Podcasting

The ACS offers a new weekly podcast, Science Elements (www.chemistry.org/science_elements.html) that makes cutting-edge discoveries from ACS journals available to a public audience at no charge.

Podcaster for Science Elements is Steve Showalter, Ph.D., a chemist at the U. S. Department of Energy's Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Subscribe by visiting the [Science Elements](#) site or [iTunes](#).

New Titles

Abd-El-Aziz, Alaa S.

Frontiers in transition metal-containing polymers

[QD 411.8 .T73 .F935 2007](#)

Bolton, James R., 1937-

Electron paramagnetic resonance : elementary theory and practical applications. 2nd ed.

[QC 763 .W422 2007](#)

Career and job opportunities

Lecturer/senior lecturer in physical chemistry at VUW

Victoria University currently has a position advertised for a physical chemist, a permanent position up to the top of senior lecturer. Applications close the end of May. More information is available at

<http://vacancies.vuw.ac.nz/positiondetail.asp?p=4323>. Enquiries can be made to Assoc Prof *Kathryn McGrath*, email: kathryn.mcgrath@vuw.ac.nz.

Degenerate states

Women and Wine

Sally was driving home from one of her business trips in Northern Arizona when she saw an elderly Navajo woman walking on the side of the road. As the trip was a long and quiet one, she stopped the car and asked

the Navajo woman if she would like a ride. With a silent nod of thanks, the woman got into the car. Resuming the journey, Sally tried in vain to make a bit of small talk with the Navajo woman. The old woman just sat silently, looking intently at EVERYTHING she saw, studying every little detail, until she noticed a brown bag on the seat next to Sally. 'What in bag?' asked the old woman. Sally looked down at the brown bag and said, 'It's a bottle of wine. I got it for my husband.' The Navajo woman was silent for another moment or two. Then speaking with the quiet wisdom of an elder, she said: 'Good trade.....'

A woman and a man are involved in a car accident on a snowy, cold Monday morning; it's a bad one. Both of their cars are totally demolished but amazingly neither of them are hurt. After they crawl out of their cars, the man is yelling.... about women drivers; the woman says, 'So you're a man. That's interesting. I'm a woman. Wow, just look at our cars! There's nothing left, but we're unhurt. This must be a sign from God that we should meet and be friends and live together in peace for the rest of our days'. Flattered, the man replies, 'Oh yes, I agree with you completely; this must be a sign from God! But you're still at fault...women shouldn't be allowed to drive. The woman continues, 'And look at this, here's another miracle. My car is completely demolished but this bottle of wine didn't break. Surely God wants us to drink this wine and celebrate our good fortune.' Then she hands the bottle to the man. The man nods his head in agreement, opens it and drinks half the bottle and then hands it back to the woman. The woman takes the bottle and immediately puts the cap back on, and hands it back to the man. The man asks, 'Aren't you having any?' The woman replies, 'No, I think I'll just wait for the police....'

Contact details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in the Department of Chemistry newsletter, then contact Rachael Hocking before noon on Thursday at; rachael.hocking@canterbury.ac.nz or phone 364-2100 / extension 6100.