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The Chemistry Division Archives

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The Chemistry Division Archives – What, where, why?

In 1966 the Chemistry Division was formed from the Chemistry Section of the Science-Technology Division; how many members were in the original Chemistry Section in 1933/34? Who was the Chair of the SLA Chemistry Division 35 years ago (January, 1971)?

These questions and more about the Chemistry Division can be answered by looking in the archives of the Division. These archives are presently housed at the Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia, PA. Thanks to the great effort put forth by Sylvia O'Brien, my immediate predecessor as Division Archivist, in weeding and organizing the archives, it is now fairly easy to find the answers to these questions. But first, some background...

"It is the practice of the Special Libraries Association that each division shall maintain archives." This first sentence from the *Practices for Division Archives* (<http://www.sla.org/content/SLA/governance/Policies/43-79.cfm>) provides the impetus for the existence of the Chemistry Division Archives.

The *Practices* document cited above also outlines the type of documents that are normally housed in the archives, stating that "the archives should contain only materials of genuine historical importance." The retention schedule guidelines state that records considered permanent should go to the archives.

Some of the more common materials kept in the archives include:

- Rosters of the Division Officers and other Division committee/functionary members
- Minutes of Executive Board and other Business meetings
- Annual Reports (from the Division President and other committees)
- Procedural Manuals
- Bylaws (including all revisions and amendments)
- Publications, such as the *Chemistry Division Newsletter*
- Information on Awards (e.g., Sparks Award 2002-)

Other, perhaps less obvious, materials kept in the Archives include:

- Information on the Logo (1989)

- Surveys sent by the Division (1989, 1996, 2003)
- Certificate acknowledging contribution to SLA Building Fund (1985)
- Information on the quadrennial TriSociety Symposia (from the 3rd held in New York, NY, in 1986 to the 7th held in Los Angeles, CA, in 2002).

Most of the information in the Division Archives is in print format, with the exception of some audiocassettes of Annual Conference programs from the late 1990s. It is generally not recommended that archival documents be kept on electronic disks with the possible exception of CD-ROMs (that should be recopied every 5-10 years); microfilm is acceptable. Any scanning for complete digitization should be accomplished within the guidelines set forth by the Association.

Now to the answers to the questions we posed at the beginning:

Q: In 1966 the Chemistry Division formed from the Chemistry Section of the Science-Technology Division; how many members were in the original Chemistry Section in 1933/34?

A: The document entitled *Chemistry Section – History* compiled by Mrs. Marie S. Goff, Chairman (circa 1952) states that there were 150 members of the Section in 1933 and membership had reached 570 by 1951/52.

Q: Who was the Chair of the SLA Chemistry Division 35 years ago (January, 1971)?

A: I purposely selected a date that was prior to 1972 since all Chairs of the Chemistry Division from 1972 to present are now listed on the Chemistry Division web site (<http://www.sla.org/division/dche/pastofficers.htm>). The archives have names of all the Chairs from 1933 to present. Marian E. Wickline of Dow Chemical Co. was Chair in 1970-71. Later, she was also the Division Archivist for a few years.

According to Sylvia, most of the questions that require looking through the archives involve questions about the members – when were they active, what did they do, any positions they held, etc. I recently did receive such a request that necessitated going through the archives.

If you have any materials for possible inclusion in the Division Archives please send me an email describing the items and, in conjunction with

the Division Officers, I will determine if the materials warrant archival status. Since I am new to this responsibility, I find that support from the Association is also just an email or phone call away!

Again, I gratefully acknowledge my predecessor, Sylvia O'Brien, who has made my job as Archivist so much easier with her work in organizing the

archives so efficiently and making the arrangements for their present location in Philadelphia.❖

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Beyond the Chemistry Web ...

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In taking over this column from Ben Wagner, chair-elect of the SLA Chemistry Division, I plan to keep up the tradition of covering more than chemistry. However, as an industrial chemist turned academic librarian, I find chemistry really is central. If you have any recommendations, please send them to buchana@auburn.edu

GENERAL

Peter Sandman's Risk Communication Website is aimed at industry and governments, but libraries can also benefit. His **Laundry List of 50 Outrage Reducers** suggests what to do when bad news needs to be delivered, such as a journal cancellation project.
<http://www.psandman.com/>
<http://www.psandman.com/col/laundry.htm>

32 Tips to Inspire Innovation for You and Your Library presents lively and practical advice from Stephen Abram.
http://www.imakenews.com/sirsi/e_article000458643.cfm?x=b11,0,w

GENERAL SCIENCE

The online version of Robert Todd Carroll's book **The Skeptic's Dictionary** provides a skeptic's view of supernatural and pseudoscientific phenomena and ideas. Most entries are documented with references or further reading in this growing database along with links to reader comments pro and con.
<http://skepdic.com/>

FUN STUFF

60 Optical Illusions and Visual Phenomena offers interactive demonstrations and explanations.
<http://www.michaelbach.de/ot/>

MEDICAL & HEALTH

Merck makes the full text of several **Merck Manuals** freely available including *The Merck Manual of Medical Information - Second Home Edition*, *The Merck Manual of Geriatrics*, *The Merck Manual of Health and Aging*, and *The Merck Manual of Veterinary Medicine* (1998 edition).
<http://www.merck.com/pubs/>

The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy is a classic deserving its own entry.
<http://www.merck.com/mrkshared/mmanual/home.jsp>

CHEMISTRY

The American Chemical Society (ACS) keeps adding new links, features, and resources. Some of the following are new, others are not, but all are worth keeping in mind.

DGRWeb 2005 is the online version of the *ACS Directory of Graduate Research*. Faculty can be searched by name, discipline, research interests, institution, state, gender, keyword, and more. Kudos to the ACS for making this classic resource available free online. Also includes the 2003, 2001 and 1999 databases.
<http://dgr.rints.com/>

LiveWire, which is part of the Librarian Resource Center for ACS publications, began adding Librarian's Corner and Chemist's Corner in July 2005. Since there is no easy way to find these articles (besides opening each issue of LiveWire), here are links to two recent articles.
<http://pubs.acs.org/4librarians/livewire/>

"Using RSS to stay ahead" by Erja Kajosalo
<http://pubs.acs.org/4librarians/livewire/2005/6.8/librarians.html>