



# THE RETORT

SEP 2011

## Goings On - About Town

### *Events of potential interest to the Compleat*

#### *Chymist*

The lecture circuit docket in the City is quite busy this autumn. Professor Jean-Marie Lehn, 1987 Chemistry Nobel Laureate from Alsace will lecture at Hunter College (19<sup>th</sup>), Columbia University (18<sup>th</sup>) and New York University (21<sup>st</sup>) and possibly other venues yet uncovered. He appears even busier as each institution has different schools for him: College de France, University of Strasbourg, and Institut de Science et Ingénierie Supramoléculaire (ISIS), University Louis Pasteur. In fact, all are simply different aspects of the same institution. All dates are in October:

Columbia:

18 October, 16:30 Chandler Medal Award

Lecture "Perspectives in Chemistry: From Supramolecular Chemistry towards Adaptive Chemistry" Jean-Marie Lehn, College de France NYU Chemistry

21 October, 11:15 Colloquium Series Jean-Marie Lehn, University of Strasbourg "Dynamic Materials toward Functional Adaptive Materials" Hunter College

19 October, "Perspectives in Chemistry From Supermolecular towards Adaptive Chemistry - Bioorganic Aspects" Saugrain/Gene Center Lecture. *quel choix !*

And, indeed, we've made a good choice as we will host the Reception to Professor Lehn at Hunter College; details within.

Société de Chimie Industrielle, American Section, has a luncheon talk scheduled on 19<sup>th</sup> at their usual Yale Club haunts. Shane Fleming, head of Cytec Industries will discuss Accelerating Growth, 11:30 for 12:15.

The Long Island Section of ACS are looking forward to a meeting at Hofstra University on 20<sup>th</sup>

with Frank Douglas of Austen Bioinnovation in Akron on Value-Driven Engineering and US Global Competitiveness; 18:00 for 18:30.

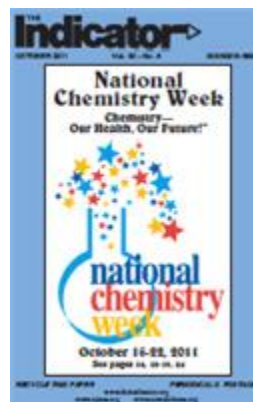
City College has a Hallowe'en Prelude 31 October, Ned Seeman, NYU, "DNA, not Merely the Secret of Life" noon.

### *Activities of sundry Compleat Chymists*

William J. Mead (Bill Mead) is now in the final throes of authorship with his latest book, slated for release in November: Dietary Supplement Good Manufacturing Practices: Preparing for Compliance. Bill was at the birth of the concept "Good Manufacturing Practice" (GMP) and tutored this into maturity. Published by Informa Healthcare (Marcel Dekker) and listed for \$200. We assume autographs for fellow members will be complementary.

Warner King Babcock judged at the New Energy Symposium sponsored by the NY Academy of Sciences downtown and helped select the top three finalists. Participants included College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE), who, despite their name, really DO think big.

Edward Werner Cook will be in Philadelphia for the Heritage Council assembly of the Chemical Heritage Foundation on the 13<sup>th</sup> and coincidentally enjoy the Bohemian spirit of Chestnut Street in that venerable city.





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## *Academic Outreach Program*

As you may have read in previous issues of the Retort, the Club made major changes in its dues structure by separating membership fees from the cost of access to a clubhouse. As a result, regular membership dues were reduced to \$100/yr. while students and others under 30 years old will pay \$50/yr. Given the newly affordable dues levels, the trustees initiated an outreach program designed to encourage interest and membership in the club among university faculty members and students, and the first event was held at NYU in late August in cooperation with the NYU faculty. Our club sponsored a "pizza" luncheon for incoming graduate students who were spending their first day at NYU in an orientation program. Lew Boxenbaum, a trustee, gave a brief introduction to the club, its history with NYU, the breadth of its membership and the activities it sponsors. The students were interested to learn that Dr. Morris Loeb, one of our club's founders, was the first chairman of NYU's chemistry department in the early 1900s at which time he formulated the first departmental chemistry curriculum.

Several trustees with combined industry and academic experience along with a graduate student have been appointed to a committee charged with driving the program. The committee includes Dr. Ernest Gilmont, Barry Zimmerman, Lew Boxenbaum, Ed Cook, John Woo and Roland Stefandl (ex officio). The committee is currently working with NYU and other universities to determine what topics or joint commercial/academic programs would be of value to them and their students. Customizing the events for each school is consistent with the different institutional cultures as well as the varied interests of students in the diverse chemistry-related programs such as engineering, synthetic organic chemistry, biotechnology, materials science, etc.

## *Hunter College Reception for Professor Jean-Marie Lehn*

The Chemists' Club is pleased to host a reception for Nobel Laureate Jean-Marie Lehn following his address at Hunter College on the 19<sup>th</sup>:

### *Foundation Antoine Saugrain Lecture*

*Co-sponsored by the Gene Center  
Professor*

*Jean-Marie Lehn*

*ISIS*

*Perspectives in Chemistry:*

*"From Supramolecular towards Adaptive  
Chemistry - Bioorganic Aspects"*

*Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

*At 1:15 O'clock*

*Hunter College*

*City University of New York  
714 West Building*

*(SW corner of 68<sup>th</sup> Street and Lexington Ave)*

*Jean-Marie Lehn* was born in the medieval town of Rosheim, Alsace, France. Though passionate about music, during his first year at the University of Strasbourg Prof. Lehn was undecided on a course of study. Upon taking courses in the physical sciences he bought a few compounds and glassware and began performing laboratory practice experiments in his parents' home. "The seed was sown, so that when, the next year, I followed the stimulating lectures of a newly appointed young professor, Guy Ourisson, it became clear to me that I wanted to do research in organic chemistry." He received his Ph.D. in 1963, and then spent a year in the laboratory of Robert B. Woodward at Harvard University, where he was part of the team



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working on the total synthesis of Vitamin B12, and witnessed the initial development of the Woodward-Hoffmann rules. Upon returning to the University of Strasbourg in 1965, his research focused on physical organic chemistry, and eventually led to the design and synthesis of cation binding compounds - cryptands - that could affect the transport of ions across membranes. Prof. Lehn later extended this work to "Supramolecular" chemistry, or chemistry beyond the covalent bond and based on designed intermolecular interactions. With over 900 publications and numerous collaborations, he has transformed chemistry in numerous ways. In 1979, he was elected to the prestigious Collège de France, and in 1987 was awarded the Nobel Prize, alongside Donald Cram and Charles Pedersen for his works on molecular *recognition*. In addition to numerous national and international awards, he has over 30 honorary degrees.

## *Dr. Antoine Saugrain (de Vigni)*

was born in Paris in 1763 into the prominent family of publishers. After his education in Paris he worked for the viceroy of Mexico as a mineralogist, and after the death of the viceroy he moved to Philadelphia at the invitation of Benjamin Franklin in 1787. The following Spring he and two French companions were captured by Indians as they traveled down the Ohio river - he only escaped and survived. He returned to Paris at the beginning of the French Revolution, where he and Antoine Laurent Lavoisier discussed science, natural philosophy, and medicine. But, as a royalist, Saugrain sailed again for America in 1790 to join other royalist refugees in Gallipolis on the Ohio River, where he married Genevieve Michau and started a family.

With the decline of Gallipolis, he moved to St. Louis in late 1797 where he became surgeon to the Spanish garrison. His house in St. Louis had a garden of plants from around the world, a substantial library, and a small laboratory where he made flasks, thermometers, barometers, phosphoric matches that ignited spontaneously when the glass tube was broken, and a variety of

other chemicals. He relied almost entirely on herbal remedies. He supplied a variety of these and some herbal medicines to the Corps of Discovery lead by Cpts. Lewis and Clark. He independently discovered a method to preserve cow pox in a bees wax sealed goose quill. In 1807 he was the first person to inoculate American Indians and one of the first to inoculate slaves and free African Americans with the new smallpox vaccine. His medical practice was open to all - without regards to their ability to pay. Throughout his life he corresponded with leading French and American scientists such as his brother-in-law Joseph Antoine Gillotin, Franklin, and Lavoisier. He died in St. Louis in 1820.

## *Gene Center*

At the heart of the mission is an imperative to build unique collaborations among biologists, chemists, biopsychologists, biophysicists, and bio anthropologists; to facilitate translational research, to recruit and equip outstanding faculty; to develop and share core research facilities; to implement strategies for scientific networking; and to continue commitment to recruit, develop and prepare the next generation of American scientists at the graduate and undergraduate level. The Gene Center was established in 1985 through the Research Centers in Minority Institutions (RCMI) Program of the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The Gene Center is a key partner in the Clinical and Translational Science Center, an enterprise that also includes the Weill Cornell Medical College, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, the Hospital for Special Surgery and the Hunter College School of Nursing. The Clinical Translational Science Center was established in 2007 with the aim of accelerating translational research. The Gene Center also participates in a national consortium, the Research Centers in Minority Institutions Translational Research Network which facilitates collaboration, large scale projects and sharing of facilities among Research Centers in Minority institutions.

*Reception sponsored by The Chemists' Club*



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## *Legendary Members*

### *Marston Taylor Bogert*

*18 April 1868 - 21 March 1954*

Charter Member and President, Chemists' Club  
1908

For over a half century "Colonel" Marston Bogert was the congenial face and eloquent voice of The Chemists' Club. By any measure in any age, his academic history was unique. A student at Columbia, he was enrolled in Organic Chemistry when the instructor took ill and the class was told to "educate themselves". He did, and never went to Germany to complete his chemical training, and so, without formal education in organic chemistry, authored hundreds of papers and remained at Columbia until 1939 when he became Emeritus Professor of Organic Chemistry in Residence. He was "Doktorvater" to many distinguished researchers including M. Heidelberger and F. D. Snell. In the Great War, he was an officer in the Chemical Corps, whose insignia is a benzene ring and crossed retorts, retiring as Colonel, a title that remained throughout his professional life.

Clark University awarded him an LLD in 1909 and Columbia a ScD, *h.c.*, in 1929. He received numerous awards and medals, including the Nichols Medal in 1905. He was charter member of Columbia's Chapter of Sigma Xi, active in the American Section of the Society of Chemical Industry and President of the parent organization in London in 1912, and President of the IUPAC in 1938.

Colonel Bogert presided over so many banquets at The Chemists' Club that the dining room was renamed The Bogert Room in his honor.

Perhaps most memorable, he was Master of Ceremony presiding over the Perkin Medal Awards for generations. This Award had a unique tradition: at the Inaugural Award in 1906 all wore mauve bow ties. Subsequently, only

those who participated in the seminal event wore mauve ties. By 1952, only three men could wear these ties: Bogert, Wallace Cohoe (President The Chemists' Club, 1945-7, former SCI president) and Marz (former New York City Controller). In 1953, the torch was passed to Cohoe and all guests again wore traditional mauve ties.



Banquet 6 October 1906 celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Perkin's discovery of Mauve. Dinner at Delmonico's for 400. All guests are wearing mauve bow ties.

High Table: l. Remson, Nichols, Clergy, Perkin, Chandler, Schweitzer

Seated center William Henry Perkin on his left Charles Chandler, on his right a clergyman and on the clergy's right William Nichols (member, Chemists' Club and founder of Nichols Medal Award 1903), on the far right (Chandler's left) is Dr. Hugo Schweitzer who gave a keynote speech. Far left, possibly Ira Remson (member, Chemists' Club) who also spoke. During his stay in New York, Perkin was guest at Chandler's home.

Also, present: Walther Nernst, Wilhelm Ostwald, Dr. Wiley (founder of Pure Food laws), and lower center may be Professor Morris Loeb. Lady Perkin and two of their daughters were also to be present but, typical for that period no ladies are seen near the Head Table.



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## SIR W. PERKIN TELLS OF HIS GREAT DISCOVERY

Experiment to Find Quinine Re-  
vealed Mauve to Him.

## DOESN'T FEAR DYE IN FOOD

Says Quantity Needed to Color It  
Is Harmless—Plans for the Re-  
ception of the Chemist.

Preparations that have been made to do honor to Sir William Henry Perkin, who is the inventor of the dye mauve, and the "magician of coal tar," would indicate that it is the intention of enthusiastic chemists all over the country to make him the man of the week.

Nearly all of these chemists have benefited by Sir William's great discovery of fifty years ago. Since the day when the eighteen-year-old youth saw a wondrous color shade come out of a dense black residue scores of perfumes and countless beautiful colors have been evolved from the original discovery. Nearly twenty chemical firms throughout the world have made an exclusive business of coal-tar products, and in this country alone it is estimated that \$100,000,000 is invested in Sir William's discoveries.

The distinguished chemist, who arrived on the Umbria on Saturday night, will be the guest of Prof. C. F. Chandler during his stay here. A TIMES reporter saw him at Prof. Chandler's residence, 51 East Fifty-fourth Street, yesterday. Sir William is a kindly, venerable man of about 70 years of age.

"I was in the laboratory of the German chemist Hofmann," he said, "when I discovered mauve. I was then eighteen. While in an experiment to find quinine I failed, and was about to throw a certain black residue away when I thought it might be interesting. The solution of it resulted in a strangely beautiful color. You know the rest." A

As it was Sunday afternoon, and Sir William was tired after his journey to this country, he did not care to discuss science or chemistry. He expressed his delight, however, with the progress which had been made in the field of science and chemistry since he was in this country twenty-two years ago.

"It is impossible, of course," he said, "for America to be ahead at the present moment in the matter of the chemistry in which I am especially interested. Germany has so many advantages, primarily cheaper labor. Besides that, German chemical manufacturers have established laboratories in which they place university graduates, whose business is nothing but to experiment and discover new things. This country, however, has greater opportunities for the future as it is building its genius upon the genius of European centuries."

Sir William was told that in the recent pure food discoveries the question of the possible injuriousness of aniline dyes in foods had been raised.

"I would not like to take sides in that matter," he said. "It is probable that there have been abuses of the uses of aniline dyes in foodstuffs; in fact, I know there have been. But this is certain. The amount of aniline dye necessary to color a food is so minute that if the same quantity of strychnine were used it would be equally harmless."



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Sir William Perkin, who was knighted this Summer by King Edward in honor of the scientist's discovery jubilee, is accompanied here by Lady Perkin and two daughters. The great celebration which has been arranged in Sir William's honor, to take place on Saturday night at Delmonico's, will be the climax of a number of other honors arranged for his benefit.

To-day he will be the guest of George F. Kunz, Tiffany's gem expert, who will escort him through various stores of interest to chemists. The Museum of Art, the New York Botanical Garden, and the Zoological Park will also be visited.

On Tuesday the host will be Controller Metz, who is interested in one of the great German coal-tar chemical firms. In the afternoon of the same day Sir William and his family will visit the country home at Floyd's Neck, L. I., of William J. Matheson, representative here of another great German firm.

On Thursday the party will be the guests of H. H. Rogers, on whose yacht they will take a trip up the Hudson, while on Friday Sir William Perkin will visit the Laurel Hill Chemical Works, on Long Island, as the guest of William H. Nichols, who was formerly President of the Society of Chemical Industry in England.

On Tuesday week there will be a smoker at the Chemists' Club, Fifty-fifth Street, off Sixth Avenue, and here Sir William will meet the members of the American Chemical Society, the American section of the Society of Chemical Industries, and the Verein Deutscher Chemiker. On Oct. 10 he will be dined by the New England Chemical Society, at Boston, after which he will visit Washington and the President.

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The Medal Celebration for Sir William Henry Perkin was held at Delmonico's on Saturday, 6 October 1906. Sir William died only nine months later on 14 July 1907.

The Celebration was arranged by The Chemists' Club at a meeting on Saturday, 7 April 1906 convened by Chandler and Schweitzer.

At the time of his discovery he was an 18 year old assistant to August Wilhelm von Hofmann then Director of the Royal College of Chemistry in London (later Morris Loeb's Doktorvater in Berlin).

William John Matheson was born in Wisconsin and educated in Scotland where he learned of coal-tar dyes. His import business eventually became Allied Chemical and Dye Company. He was, of course, a member of The Chemists' Club.



Late Professor Charles Rees wearing an original mauve bow tie

**The Chemists' Club**

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