

welcome to issue 16



So you got your UCAS form sent off in time? How much of a struggle was it? How fantastic did your personal statement make you sound? Hope you remembered to mention *ChemNet* membership on your form.

This month we have enclosed a "CD" with details of video clips showing chemistry experiments and techniques, which you can download to your PC at home or school. Just type in the URL on the CD and you'll go straight to the *Practical Chemistry* website, full of video clips for you. If you've got exams in January, I hope they go well!

This month we've gone green. Yeah yeah, consume less, save the planet, you've heard it all before, well, this month I thought I'd introduce you to another side of the environmental debate where chemists innovate us out of environmental trouble using Green Chemistry.

R. Bowles

Robert Bowles – Editor



When is a chemist not a chemist?

CAREERS SPOT

Q: When is a chemist not a chemist?

A: When they are a lawyer, accountant, sales executive, civil servant, journalist, city banker, patent attorney, marketing manager, or a project manager.... Except, of course, they can still be a chemist!

That's a list of just some of the jobs which chemists with chemistry degrees take up once they leave university and it hasn't been written to put you off doing chemistry. Quite the opposite in fact. It is designed to show how the skills and technical knowledge you acquire during your chemistry degree can open up doors to a wider range of careers than you might initially have thought!

Website of the month



<http://www.catalysis-ed.org/>
First glance isn't that exciting but skip the introduction and get into the contents page and the whole world of catalysts opens up.

If you're looking for commercial examples of catalysis this is a fantastic page. There are articles on applications of catalysts in a whole range of industries (food additives, controlling pollution, pain killers, polymers... the list is long but does come up a little short of endless) and the chemical theories which underpin their use – such as their effects on activation energies and a comparison of heterogeneous and homogeneous catalysts.

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ON 07825
186 304

chemnet events

The *ChemNet* event at *HFL* on 30th January still has a few spaces. *HFL – The Horseracing Forensic Laboratories* in Newmarket are world leaders in the testing of horse and human samples for illegal performance enhancing substances. Thirty *ChemNet* members will be visiting their world class laboratories and learning more about what goes on there.

February 13th also sees an event at Bristol University. Fifty *ChemNet* members will have the chance to get hands on in Bristol University labs.

June 24th will see an exciting event being run at Imperial College in London. More details to be published soon.

We are planning *Meet the Universities 2008*. This will be bigger and better than last year and is confirmed for Saturday July 5th in central London – more details soon but get it in your diaries now! If you are considering a place at university to study any of the Chemical Sciences this is *THE* event to go to, with many universities brought together in one place for you to question on any aspect of their courses or life at their university. There will also be some smaller local industry visits in 2008. If these are in your area you'll be getting an invite so keep an eye out!

chemistry on the web



Images from the *ChemNet* quiz and Pizza night in Bradford can be viewed on the *ChemNet* Facebook and MySpace pages. Use whichever you prefer! I'll try and find more time in the New Year to update them on a regular basis. If any *ChemNet* members want the job.... seriously – email me!

A new service has been launched for *ChemNet* members.

Ask Lucy....

Lucy Miller was a *ChemNet* member last school year and started her chemistry degree in Manchester in October. She has very gallantly offered to answer ANY question you may have about applying through UCAS, student life, how is life at University different from when you're doing your A levels, choosing universities or any other aspect of the whole process you may have.

Just post any questions you have for Lucy on the discussion board, I'll start a new thread, and you can obviously stay anonymous if you'd prefer.

Let me know if you haven't signed up for a username yet - just email chemnet@rsc.org and we'll send you one.

Chemistry in the news

Water, water everywhere but no-one stops to think!

News direct from the RSC this time, following the publishing of a policy report on sustainable water supplies which was widely reported throughout the media including here in the Daily Telegraph.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/main.jhtml?xml=/earth/2007/12/10/eawater110.xml>

At first glance this may all seem a little depressing. We have been here a million times before with nasty chemicals leaching into our water supply; pesticides and hormones from farming; detergents from washing powders – the list is almost endless as anything that gets poured down the sink enters the waste water system and has to be cleaned up, whilst other chemicals just run off the land into rivers and streams. Except for the odd dry summer or winter we are pretty well off for water here in the UK, but what about the rest of the world? In many places, a clean and sustainable water supply is under threat from population growth, pollution and climate change. The universal solvent isn't always universally available, and even if it is, it may be in a form which is too dirty or unsafe to use.

The future is not orange... IT'S GREEN!

But don't despair – chemistry can help. *The Green Chemistry Network* is based at

the University of York and its main focus is to help chemists “to develop products, processes and services in a sustainable manner to improve quality of life, the natural environment and industry competitiveness.”

Chemicals are currently used which persist in the environment and are hard to eradicate from either the environment or water treatment plants. Over time these may be replaced with less persistent alternatives. A vast amount of effort is going into making this a reality. Many other companies are hiring chemists to improve their processes and reduce their environmental liabilities by using the principles of green chemistry to find a safer alternative.

You can download a summary of the RSC water policy report here:

http://www.rsc.org/images/waterreport_tcm18-108403.pdf

More information about *The Green Chemistry Network*

<http://www.chemsoc.org/networks/gcn/about.htm>

The website has a host of educational resources about the use of Green Chemistry as well as links to other organisations with an interest in Green Chemistry.



If you want to register to use the discussion board email chemnet@rsc.org

“To book a place on a *ChemNet* event email: chemnet@rsc.org or call 01223 432340”

free stuff!



Last month we offered the book *Crime Scene to Court* as our prize. This was won by *Eleonora Traina, London* who correctly identified that Ninhydrin is used to develop latent fingerprints on porous surfaces. *Well done Eleonora* – the book is on its way. Well done to everyone who entered and got the answer correct.

This month we have one **£20 HMV voucher** for the correct answer to this question.

Which city is Hafnium named after? Email the answer to chemnet@rsc.org by 15th Jan to be entered into the prize draw.

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Would you like to see your article in the next issue? If it's good enough we'll print it! Submit your article to chemnet@rsc.org

CHEMISTRY FACTS

Helium was first identified by French astronomer Pierre-Jules-César Janssen when he detected a new yellow line, at 587.49 nanometers in the solar spectrum whilst observing the solar eclipse of 1868 in India.



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