

Thames Valley Section Newsletter

Autumn 2011

I hope by the time you read this (or file it in the recycling bin!) you have had a good summer and if we haven't seen you at an event yet this year, something in the autumn will tempt you along. As ever Dave Knox has been keeping our website up to date with details on past events and competitions. You can also find out what is coming up on the website and see if John Oversby has added any more Chemistry jokes (if you can bear it) too.

(<http://www.rsc.org/Membership/Networking/LocalSections/ThamesValley/ForthcomingEvents.asp>)

At the time of writing we have just had a very well attended retired member's event - a visit to Highclere castle. We think this event sold out faster than any we have had before and reports back are that the day was enjoyed by those who attended - so many thanks to Mike Jenkins for organising it!

We also held a joint lecture with the Society of Biology kindly given by Dr Lisa Methven, Lecturer in Food and Sensory Science, University of Reading. This enjoyable and enlightening talk was titled 'Do we eat what we sense? Can our perception of food affect our health?', and was held at the University of Reading.

Our annual guest evening was held at Johnson Matthey Technology Centre, with amusing Inspector Morse anecdotes from guest speaker Colin Dexter OBE (the award winning crime novelist).

We also sponsored a seminar by Prof. Adrian Mulholland (University of Bristol) on 'Computational Enzymology: Modelling Biological Catalysts'. The seminar was organised by the Oxford University Biochemical Society.

Congratulations to this year winners of The Phil Smith Trophy - Joanne McCabe and Helen Wiggins (science teacher: Dr. Esther Garcia-Rodriguez, Fitzharrys School, Abingdon). As well as winning the trophy, they won some great molecular models from Cochranes of Oxford Ltd, thanks to their brilliant molecular model designs - which can be seen on the website along with all the other entries.

So what's coming up ?

As it is the **International Year of Chemistry** we have teamed up with Oxford University to bring you an exhibition in the Education Room at the Botanic Garden, from early October 2011 until the end of December. The exhibition will be open (and the trails available) during normal Garden opening hours (7 days a week, 9am to 5pm October and 9am to 4.30pm November, December).

We have our **Annual dinner** planned at St John's College, Oxford, on the 23rd of September, when our guest speaker will be Professor Malcolm Green, Professor of Inorganic Chemistry, ICL.

And coming up very soon is our Joint event with our neighbours in the Chiltern and Middlesex section on September 9th, where we have a **Boat trip** up the Thames from Maidenhead, ticket price includes a buffet meal and a drink!

We also have two lectures around **Christmas** time for families, one in Oxford on chocolate (oooh!) and another in Reading on fireworks (aaah!) details are still be finalised as I write. We are also hoping to run a **CPD** networking event in the autumn and another lecture on the IYC theme. As soon as they are confirmed they will be on the events website link above so do have a look.

Our visit to CCFE (Culham Centre for Fusion Energy) in October is already sold out - but if you are interested in joining another trip please register your interest with Dave Knox (<http://my.rsc.org/profile/262>).

Pub Lunches for retired members: We have had limited success with attendance at these, some seem popular others receive little respondents. Those living nearest to the venues selected will be sent invitations but others who would like to attend please contact me via MyRSC (details below). If you are interested in hosting lunch near you, please let us know.

We need Industry Reps! If you are (or would like to be) a representative for your company in the area we would love to hear from you - we can help you with events and employee engagement. So my usual plea: we are, as ever, looking for ideas on new events. If you have any thoughts or want to get in touch, please send me a message through MyRSC on the link: <http://my.rsc.org/profile/63>. I hope to hear from some of you soon.....

Ellen Norman - RSC Thames Valley Section, Chairman