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We welcome contributions from our alumni. If you are interested in writing for the newsletter, please contact the Editor at chmcws@nus.edu.sg.

Editorial Notes

The 2019 is a special year both for Singapore and NUS Chemistry. It marks 200 years since Raffles’ arrival, and also 90 years of Chemistry in Singapore. Chemistry has made considerable impact, to have influence in, and contributions to, our nation building and development. We continue to upgrade Department’s infrastructure and facilities and to groom our students to be competent and future-ready graduates. By doing so, we count on our alumni to continue supporting this endeavour!

New S9 Building is up!

The picture above was taken from the ChemConnections Sep 2017 issue when construction was underway at the former sites of S9, S9A and LT22. Now two years later, the new building, still called, S9, is up! (pictures below). It is currently at the final stage of completion to be ready for the expected opening in 2020!
NUS Chemistry Week 2019

NUS Chemistry Week was held from 1 to 7 June 2019. The week-long biennial event organised by NUS Chemistry comprised five fun-filled activities, including the 25th Chem•Comm Challenge, Chemistry Game Show, Chemistry Workshop for Teachers, Chem Day Camp, and Esterification Workshop. Chem•Comm, which began in 1970 as the Chemistry Speech Context, is meant to challenge students to articulate advanced concepts in chemistry through oral presentation and new forms of media. About 200 students from various schools in Singapore participated in the 2019 event.

Visit by the City University of Hong Kong

A total of 33 undergraduate students and two lecturers from the City University of Hong Kong participated on a one-day learning journey at NUS Chemistry on 23 May 2019. Associate Professor Ang Wee Han (Deputy Head, Administration and Student Life) welcomed and introduced them to the Department. Associate Professor John Yip then shared information about research at NUS Chemistry. The delegation visited some chemistry research laboratories in the afternoon and were also taken on a campus tour to visit University Town (Utown).

The 51st International Chemistry Olympiad

Congratulations to Team Singapore for flying the Singapore flag high at the 51st International Chemistry Olympiad in Paris from 21 to 30 July 2019! The team braved the heatwave to emerge 5th out of 80 countries, bagging 2 Gold and 2 Silver medals. Hu Yongao from Raffles Institution was placed 14th amongst 308 individual participants. The Singapore team was led by Dr Tan Wee Boon and Dr Hoang Truong Giang from NUS Chemistry.
For several Science alumni, this year’s Bukit Timah Homecoming had an added dimension. Some of our Science and Chemistry graduates were aware that 2019 marks the 90th Anniversary of both the Faculty of Science and Department of Chemistry. Taking advantage of a free time-slot between 5-6 pm in the now traditional first Saturday of the July Bukit Timah Homecoming, a special reunion tea and programme were organised by the Department with support from both the Office of Alumni Relations (OAR) and the Science Dean’s Office. As both Science and Chemistry have progressed very well making considerable impact, influence and contributions in nation building and development, it was felt that it was also timely to share and showcase the considerable talent our alumni also have in things cultural.

Our University’s long term Registrar, Joanna Wong of Cantonese Opera fame had been a top Chemistry student graduating with a University Gold Medal. Although she was present to enrich and entertain her fellow alumni, time allowed us to only have her performance on video. Another alumnus is Dr Tan It Koon, who left his mark in both government and quasi-government areas in high level administration, top scientific work and research. He is also highly talented in music and art with his paintings having been exhibited and used in prestigious scientific journals for their cover and other pages. A third area of cultural impact came in the world of ballet. The late Goh Choo San, who was an outstanding chemistry and bio-chemistry student who had graduated with honours, put Singapore on the world map not only as a great dancer himself but also as a renowned choreographer. We were able not only to show a video of one of his works but also show our appreciation to his family through the presence of his brother-in-law Mr Daniel Teo for the family’s generous gift of the Goh Choo San Science Merit Scholarship.

Our Science Alumni present included our former Chemistry staff and cabinet minister Dr Tan Eng Liang, who was also a Rhodes Scholar and Olympian, long serving Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Emeritus Professor HH Huang, first lady Science Dean (and also first lady Public Service Commissioner) Professor Gloria Lim, former Head of Department of Chemistry, Professor Sim Keng Yeow, and other former staff of the Department. We were also honoured by the presence of our present Deputy Dean, Professor Peter Ho, Head of Department of Chemistry, Professor Richard Wong and Deputy Director, OAR Ms Florence Neo. All these and of course all our alumni present made this a fitting 90th Anniversary Celebration.

Visit by Zhejiang University students

The Department hosted 22 students and 2 staff from the Zhejiang University on 22 August 2019. Associate Professor Ang Wee Han (Deputy Head, Administration and Student Life) welcomed and introduced them to the Department. This was followed by Professor Jiang Donglin’s research talk and Dr Foo Maw Lin’s sample class on Energy Resources. In the afternoon, the students visited some materials chemistry research laboratories and the visit culminated with a bus tour around the Kent Ridge campus and UTown.
Freshman Orientation Camp

Chemistry freshman orientation camp 2019 was held from 28 to 30 June 2019. The camp was organised by the NUS Chemical Sciences Society and attended by over 50 participants. Through the camp talks and games, the freshmen were introduced to facilities and venues within the Department and within the Faculty of Science. The seniors also shared their study experiences with the juniors and they got to know each other at the same time.

Chemistry Graduate Symposium 2019

A total of 38 postgraduate students participated in the poster symposium held on 6 Aug 2019 by the NUS Chemistry Graduate Society. To inspire participants to strive for excellence, a conference travel allowance of S$1,200 was awarded to the 4 best posters determined by judges from the staff graduate committee, and five people’s choice awards of S$80 vouchers were given to the students whose poster gained the most votes from the audience.

30th Summer Universiade in Napoli 2019

Our chemistry student, Ms Quek Siying, was part of Singapore shooting team representing NUS and Singapore in the 30th Summer Universiade (World University Games 2019) held in Napoli Italy from 3 to 14 July 2019. Siying is currently a USP scholar, pursuing a Minor in Computer Science and was enrolled in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROPS) in Science.

ACS National Meeting & Expo

US ACS Student Chapter had the honor of winning a travel grant to attend the ACS National Meeting & Expo – Chemistry & Water held from 25 to 29 August 2019 in San Diego, USA. Our students, Teo Rui Yang and Tan Wei Lin, attended the event and also presented their research work during the poster presentation. They also had the opportunity to attend the ACS National meeting as well as network with other students from other ACS International Student Chapters.