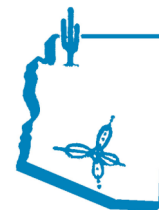




The Newsletter of the
Central Arizona Section of the
American Chemical Society

Web Page:
<http://membership.acs.org/C/CentralArizona/>



Chemistry in the Sherlock Holmes Stories

Dr. James O'Brien
ACS Tour Speaker
Southwest Missouri State University

Abstract

"Madam, you must stop painting your child's crib." These were the first words spoken by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to a woman who had brought her listless infant daughter to the Edinburgh Medical School in 1912. Doyle, like his creation Sherlock Holmes, had acute deductive powers. His diagnosis of lead poisoning proved to be correct. Conan Doyle's first published medical article, in the British Medical Journal in 1879, dealt with poisons. His interest in chemistry is apparent in his fictional writings as well. Poisons, for example, are mentioned in 22 of the 60 Holmes tales. Numerous other chemicals are mentioned as well. Sherlock Holmes had a chemical "table" in his Baker Street quarters. Here he would relax by doing chemical analyses or syntheses. There is, in fact, so much chemistry in the Sherlock Holmes stories that practically every story has some, whether it be poisons, gems, brandy, acids, or even the famous 7% solution of cocaine. This lecture will discuss the scientific Holmes with quotes from the master himself as well as a few cartoons to illustrate that Asimov's assessment of Holmes as a "blundering chemist" is incorrect.

Speaker Biography

Jim O'Brien was born on July 4, in Philadelphia, PA. He received a BS in Chemistry with honors from Villanova University and a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Minnesota. Following postdoctoral work at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in New Mexico, he joined the faculty at Southwest Missouri State University. Dr. O'Brien has received Southwest Missouri State University awards for Excellence in Research in 1989, 1994, and 1998. He has received Southwest Missouri State University awards for Excellence in Teaching in 1992 and 2001. In 2001 he also received the Governor of Missouri's Award for Teaching Excellence. In 2002 the university named him Distinguished Professor. He is now retired and devoting himself to the History of Chemistry, Golf, Bridge, Sherlock Holmes, Civil War History, and Walking (formerly running).

When: Wednesday, November 15, 2006
6:00 p.m. Social hour with appetizers and cash bar
6:45 p.m. Dinner
8:00 p.m. Lecture

Where: Fiesta Inn Resort
2100 South Priest Dr
Tempe, AZ 85282
(480) 967-1441
www.fiestainnresort.com

Menu: The menu for the catered, hot meal will include chicken or vegetarian plated entrees, beverage, and a dessert!

Price: \$15.00/person payable at the event.

Reservations:

Needed by *Wednesday, Nov 1st* if you will be there for dinner. Reservations are **not** needed if you are coming only for the lecture. RSVP to Christine Pruis at (480) 965-1589 or Christine.Pruis@asu.edu (include "ACS Nov 15" in the title of all emails). Please include the names of each attendee and if a vegetarian entrée is required. Feel free to invite non-ACS members (family, co-workers, friends, etc) as this seminar will interest a diverse audience.

Once you make a dinner reservation, we are committed to paying for your meal, whether or not you pay us. Please don't be a no-show! You may be invoiced for the meal if you make a reservation and then don't show up without canceling by Monday, November 13th!

Chemistry Olympiad

The Central Arizona Section will be participating in the US National Chemistry Olympiad next spring. Encourage your local high school students and teachers to begin preparing for this event. Teachers can contact Rich Bauer (602-496-0620) with any questions.

2005/06 50-Year Awards Luncheon

The Central Arizona Section will honor the 2005 and 2006 recipients of 50 year membership awards in the ACS at a luncheon in their honor on Saturday, November 4, 2006 from

11:30 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.

Carver's Steakhouse
8172 W. Bell Road
Glendale, AZ
Just east of Loop 101
623-412-0787

Please join us to honor the following awardees:

2005	2006
Allan Bieber	Starling Alley
Bertrand Chamberland	Marvin Bagby
John Clements	Donald Loomer
Joanne Collins	Jerome Ludwig
William Cunningham	Francis Nakayama
Robert Fiel	David Piatak
Louis Gachic	Robert Simon
Don Gilbert	Gerald Weiss
Robert Russell	Gene Zerlaut

The cost for the luncheon is \$12 per person payable at the door. Reservations are required. You will have your choice of several menu items. After lunch, our 50-year awardees will reflect on their careers in chemistry. This is always one of the year's most enjoyable events. Reservations should be made **NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 27** by calling Doug Sawyer at 480-423-6196. Please leave your name, phone number, and the number of people in your party.

Eyring Lecture

The Central Arizona Local Section will cosponsor with the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at ASU an Eyring lecture during the spring semester. On February 1 Dr. A. Paul Alivisatos, from the University of California at Berkeley, will present a general lecture at 7:30 pm. The following day he will give a technical talk at 3:40 pm. A detailed announcement will be sent separately and will posted on the ASU Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry web site at a later date (<http://chemistry.asu.edu>).

Local Section Contacts

Officers

- Chair: Christine Pruis, 480-965-1589, Christine.Pruis@asu.edu
- Chair Elect: Ron Briggs, 480-965-1905, ronbriggs@cox.net
- Immediate Past Chair: Richard Bauer, 602-496-0620, rbauer@asu.edu
- Treasurer: Bert Chamberland, 480-839-3634, chemist@wbhsi.net
- Secretary: Richard Bauer, 602-496-0620, rbauer@asu.edu
- Counselor: Ted Brown, 480-965-3650, tbrown@asu.edu
- Counselor: Doug Sawyer, 480-423-6196, doug.sawyer@sccmail.maricopa.edu
- Webmaster: Ron Briggs, 480-965-1905, ronbriggs@cox.net

Fall 2006 Local Section Calendar of Events

Event	Date	Location	Description
Rocky Mountain Regional Meeting	Oct. 14-18	Tuscon, AZ	
National Chemistry Week	Oct. 22-28		
50 Year Award Luncheon	Nov. 4	Carver's Steakhouse Glendale, AZ	
Local Section Dinner Meeting ACS Tour Speaker Dr. James O'Brien Southwest Missouri State University	Wednesday, Nov. 15 6:00 PM	Fiesta Inn Resort Tempe, AZ	Chemistry in the Sherlock Holmes Stories