Inside AOCS

AOCS to Begin 75th Year

The American Oil Chemists' Society will begin its 75th year of existence in 1983 and so it is appropriate that the Society's diamond anniversary observance begins during the annual meeting in Chicago this month.

During the coming year, AOCS will mark the 1909 founding of its predecessor organization, The Society of Cotton Product Analysts, with a variety of activities, including a membership campaign, and a bi-monthly series of historical articles in *JAOCS*.

JAOCS will look at the early years, the founders and charter members, the selected few who have been awarded honorary memberships, committee achievements, and generally how AOCS has grown into an international society with members in more than 70 nations.

But this month we'll give you a preview. *JAOCS* assistant news editor Barbara Haumann has been preparing our historical series. This month's preview consists of selected excerpts from AOCS files.

1884

I first saw cottonseed oil in the laboratory of the N.K. Fairbank Company in Chicago, where I was employed as a cub chemist to analyze soaps for the new factory which had just started. One day, W.B. Allbright brought in a quart can and poured dark-colored oil into a beaker, stuck his finger into the oil, passed it through his mouth, smacked his lips and said: "That is very good oil for the season—this is cottonseed oil—Wesson, see what you can do to get the color out of it." I had hardly heard of cottonseed oil before this time. Nothing had been said about it at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, from which I had just escaped, so I tried pretty nearly every bottle on the side shelf except the one containing caustic soda, with very little result. After a while, Allbright came back, looked at my puny efforts, filled a metal cup with the oil, poured in some caustic soda, stirred and heated it, and lo and behold, I saw a golden-colored oil soon floating above a dark-colored mess in the bottom of the cup. Some of the oil was poured into a beaker and stirred with a little strong sulphuric acid and then neutralized with caustic soda, leaving light-colored oil. Allbright explained to me that was the kind of oil they wanted to put in some of their compounds.

—David Wesson published in Oil & Fat Industries, January 1930

1909

It will never be known what accident, or what guiding star, caused nine comparatively young men, four of them under 30 years of age, to gather together on the steps of an old fair-ground building in Memphis, Tennessee, in May 1909. They were attending the 13th annual meeting of the old Interstate Cotton Seed Crusher's Association.

History teaches us that many of the

creative movements that have influenced the lives of men for worthwhile things were activated by loneliness and a desire for the companionship of kindred souls. The organization of our society was no exception. Professionally, these nine men were lonely. Chemistry, especially oil and fat chemistry, was in its infancy. So, when the suggestion was made that they form an organization to meet each year, it was like finding new friends and a new interest in life.

Note the first and second of the aims and purposes of the early constitution and bylaws, in which fraternal and friendly relations are strongly emphasized.

First: to unite fraternally and professionally all chemists and technologists in good standing interested in the promotion of the chemistry and technology of fats, oils, waxes and allied products.

Second: to cultivate and promote friendly relations and interchange of constructive suggestions among the members of the society and to bring about a reasonable standardization of equipment, materials and methods in chemical and technological practice.

Five of these founders were doubtless in need of a broader knowledge of chemistry and a better understanding of its practical application. The other four were older and more experienced. To their everlasting credit may it be said that each of them gave graciously of his time and talents to establish foundation stones for the younger men to build upon.

It is with a sense of pardonable pride that the surviving member of the founders can point to the record of the nine in helping to establish firmly one of the most useful scientific groups on earth. Seven of

the nine later became president of the society. Six served on the Chemists' Committee of the N.C.P.A. (National Cottonseed Products Association), two for more than 40 years. The history of the working committees again indicates that these nine men measured up to their responsibility and truly kept the faith.

Thomas C. Law
(founding member), published in JAOCS, November 1958

1910

May 26, 1910

Mr. A.D. Allen
President, Inter-State Cottonseed Crushers' Association
Little Rock, Ark.

Dear Sir–

We wish to advise you that the chemists attending this convention have organized the Society of Cotton Products Analysts with sixteen (16) charter members.

The objects of this society are to foster co-operative work among the chemists who are engaged in the analysis of cotton products to the end that methods of analysis may be standardized and more uniform results secured by its members.

It is the intention of this society to hold annual meetings at the same time and place as your Association, provided there is no objection to the plan.

Respectfully yours,
Felix Paquin, President

Upon motion, the communication was received and it was the sense of the convention that the Association is a desirable one and that there is no objection to their holding meetings at the same time and place.

–Proceedings of 1910 meeting of the Inter-State Cotton Seed Crushers Association

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1918

We have our rules which require that meal sold under Interstate contract shall be analyzed by the official method, and of course we all should use that method. Personally, I don't. I use the Gunning-Cooper Sulphate method. I don't see any objection to having our rule as it is now, even if I don't follow it, except in settlement cases."

– F.N. Smalley,
from the Proceedings of the May, 1918 meeting in New Orleans

1920

"What's an Edible Oil?"

My small daughter cries if daddy won't fish out all the lumps of salt pork from the Saturday night's baked beans and let her eat them, but if he had to eat them himself there would probably be a more disastrous spilling than of mere tears. To her, salt pork is an edible fat; to me it most certainly is not. The Eskimo dotes on his tallow candles and blubber they say, but I don't care any more for them as regular articles of my diet than I do for the Russian linseed oil or the East Indian ghee. And yet probably I have already eaten whale oil, plus a little hydrogen, in my favorite margarine, and certainly the nasty, smoky Ceylon oil, which makes the back of your throat feel like it were greased with a mixture of rancid butter and red pepper, is no more like the delicious edible nut margarine than fish oil is like shad.

Perhaps there are some inedible oils–castor, tung and croton–but about 95% of the world's production of fats and oils is or could easily be made edible, so why not take in the chemist of the paint manu-

facturer who uses linseed as well as his more enlightened brother who has adopted soya bean oil, and the analyst for the whale oil dealer, whether his boss sells "au naturel" to the insecticide maker or "au hydrogenation" to the margarine producer?

—Herbert S. Bailey
in Chemists' Section,
Cotton Oil Press, April 1920

1923

A convention is a great place to get the association habit. There one meets the biggest men in his profession and rubs elbows with and swaps stories with the finest fellows in his line of business. Be a gregarian, put yourself where you will get, not trade secrets, confidential information and all that bunk, but ideas.

—Herbert S. Bailey, editor
Chemists' Section, Cotton Oil
Press, April 1923

1925

Oil-Together

Those interested in fats and oils, whether as investigators, technologists or producers have a common meeting ground. The paint man may learn from the soap man, the edible products man from him who makes only technical products, the emulsion manufacturer from the fellow who is lying awake nights trying to break emulsions. This common ground is our Society and its Journal.

Oneness, collaboration, unity or the homely expression, pull together, whatever we call it, must prevail if we the oil chemists and technologists are to put our industries where they belong. New Year's Resolutions are the style this month. Shall we make ours All-together of Oils and Fats, or the brevity, just, "Oil-together." That should make things run smoothly.

—H.S. Bailey, in Journal of Oil
and Fat Industries,
January 1925

1928

Editorial: "Progress and Poverty"

We who have advocated the installation of modern oil-handling machinery by the mills for the production of choice product, feel that we have had our position vindicated even in a season when all the oil produced has been of excellent quality. Reports which reach us from the crushing territory all show that those millers who have dared to pioneer in the improvement of their product by filtration have each and every one of them completed a successful season, many of them for the first time in years.

. . . We feel entirely safe in predicting that within a very short space of time, unfiltered crude cottonseed will be an unsalable commodity in the United States.

—Oil & Fat Industries,
July 1928

1929

One of the difficult tasks of a man living in this fast age is to keep track of the big developments going on around him. Busy as we all are with the little, pressing matters that have to be attended to, we are liable to overlook fundamental changes that are going on under our very eyes. One of the young giants in our commercial life that is beginning to stretch mighty and powerful limbs is the domestic soya bean industry.

The birth of this newcomer is not an event that was heralded to a curious world in flaming newspaper headlines; nor is it an industry that will ever be as popular as the radio and moving pictures; but in its own inconspicuous way it is destined to play a role that will in time perhaps overshadow the other ones in importance. In fact, I cannot see why it should not eventually rival the cotton growing industry of the South . . . ."

—Otto Eisenschiml, in a speech "Domestic Soya Bean Oil: A Comprehensive Study of the History and Prospects of Developments in the U.S.A." presented before the Northwestern Paint Superintendents' Club, published in Oil & Fat Industries, April 1929

1930

"What is a Chemist?"

Because no legal requirements have been established, any person at all may call himself a chemist and engage in the practice of 'chemistry.' There are probably many fakers posing as chemists today, men who are holding down their jobs through the ignorance of their employers. More plain unadulterated bunkum is dished up under the guise of chemistry than can be easily measured. Pseudo-chemists run rampant, with no curb upon their activities, except when they are given enough rope to hang themselves. This, however, is apt to prove an expensive means of obtaining their elimination, especially in a busy factory.

Many an employer has been deceived by fine-sounding polysyllabic chemical verbiage, only to discover later, to his sorrow, that he has hired a faker instead of a chemist. Employers who themselves are without chemical knowledge naturally fall easy prey to these so-called chemists. The results are frequently disastrous, particularly from the standpoint of public safety.

Recommendations for procedure emanating from chemists possessing inadequate training or only superficial knowledge may, and frequently do, endanger the lives of employees and the safety of plant investments.

This condition has proven so detrimental to the progress of the earnest competent men who comprise the chemical profession that there have been frequent suggestions from leaders in the profession looking toward the sponsorship of legislation which would require the licensing of chemists by the various states after the manner in which doctors, dentists, lawyers, pharmacists and others are now authorized to practice. The situation may be too complex to permit of such solution, but a step of the sort may eventually become necessary for the protection of employers and of sincere and qualified chemists.

Meanwhile, every employer has available a fitting test which he may apply when employing a chemist. If he desires to engage a beginner, let him require that the applicant be the holder of one or more degrees from a reputable college or university, one which has a satisfactory rating for chemical instruction. The ratings of colleges are readily obtainable from educational associations and foundations. If, on the other hand, the chemist to be employed is to be one with experience, the employer should inquire into the applicant's affiliations with Societies or Associations devoted to the study of his specialty. The faker always encounters exceeding difficulty in maintaining a position within the ranks of such groups of representative members of the profession.

—Editorial, Journal of Oil & Fat Industries, February 1930

1934

"Soapless" Soap

A new "soapless" soap which is now being introduced will make suds instantly in any water, ice cold as well as warm, hard as well as soft, according to its makers. It will not harm the most sensitive fabrics nor the most delicate colors. It completely eliminates the 'ring' that invariably forms around the edge of the wash bowl or tub after a washing operation in which soap is used.

—Oil & Soap, August 1934

1936

"The Congress Hotel has made rates as follows: $2.50 single with bath, $4.50 double with bath."

—Oil & Soap, 1936

1944

A letter from Thomas C. Law to Lamar Kishlar, written in 1944 concerning the choice facing young chemists of remaining in their labs or joining the armed forces:

Of the many fine expressions of the beloved William Allen White, this one stands out:

> "I am not afraid of tomorrow,
> for I have seen yesterday and I
> love today."

How well that fits the American Oil Chemists' Society from my point of view. Having spent 35 years as a member of this Society, the temptation to reminisce a little is almost irresistable. Happening to be one of the World War I presidents, my mind goes back to the problems and impressions of that day. Then as now the vast majority of a comparatively small membership was under 38 years of age. Then as now the young man was faced with the decision of where his duty lay. Did his services mean more to his country in uniform or at the laboratory table? The new Chemical Warfare Service of that day appealed as a thing

of adventure and romance, but for those in cottonseed products work the War Department made the decision. They assumed charge of the oil mills to assure a supply of cellulose and glycerine. The chemist was practically ordered to stay at his desk.

To some of you today who through a misconception of patriotic pride feel embarassed that you are not on the firing line may I say, with the profoundest admiration, appreciation and respect for our boys at the front, that it sometimes takes more courage to stay out than to go in.

Thus history repeats itself.

Sincerely,
Thos. C. Law
—AOCS files

1948

Translate Methods into Portuguese

Acceding to a request from Dr. Joaquin Bertino de Moraes Carvalho of the Instituto de Oleos in Rio de Janeiro, the Governing Board has given him permission to translate the 1946 edition of the Methods into Portuguese. This is the first time that a request has been made to translate the Methods into a foreign language for the manual has received wide acceptance in its English language form, being sent all over the world.

JAOCS, March 1948

1951

October 8, 1951, marks the 25th time members of the American Oil Chemists' Society will have met at an annual fall meeting. From a small beginning steady growth has brought the fall meeting to a place of prominence in the technical life of the oil chemist.

The first meeting in 1927 in New York was a get-together of members of the northern section of the society. The program consisted of seven addresses and it was decided to hold a fall meeting every year in the North. The fourth meeting, which was held in Chicago, was the first meeting to have over 100 registered and featured 15 technical papers, a bowling tournament, and exhibits by manufacturers. It was not until the 10th meeting that over 200 registered while the 22nd meeting, which was held in New York, had 713 registered. Over sixty technical papers concerned with fats and oils were presented at this session.

The 11th meeting featured a symposium on solvent extraction, and in subsequent meetings symposia on various subjects, such as rancidity and drying oils, have been held. In 1939 the 13th meeting was extended to three days and the papers presented according to a time schedule. However due to the increasing number of papers, the practice of concurrent sessions was started at the 22nd meeting.

Although the previous 24 meetings have differed in size and program, the nature of the technical papers has not changed. The emphasis has been on problems concerning the oil chemist, and although many problems have been solved, more appear. This fact is a constant and invigorating challenge to the leadership of the society.

—Robert R. Allen, JAOCS, September 1951 article on upcoming fall meeting

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1962

Members and visitors alike truly showed their colors when the band at the annual dinner led off with a lively rendition of "Dixieland," which only goes to prove that the most dignified of oil chemists are not above a good, old-time rebel yell. Naturally, the band followed quickly with "Yankee Doodle" only to be further drowned out by an answer from the North. What seemed to be an inexhaustable series of college

songs followed, and not one failed to bring an old alum to his feet.

Report on the 1962 spring meeting, JAOCS, June 1962

1968

Quick & Quackenbush form Qlub!

Noting that the new AOCS Membership Directory lists but eight members whose last name begins with "Q", F.W. Quackenbush, professor of biochemistry at Purdue University, and W.J. Quick, president of Chemtex Products Inc., recently announced the formation of the "Que Qubed Qlub," with the symbol "Q^3" in order to "promote, propagate and propagandize" names beginning with the letter "Q".

In order not to be charged with discrimination, they have also invited all members and guests at the next AOCS convention whose first names begin with Q and all those (they must be legion) who would like to have their names changed to a Q.

–JAOCS, October 1968

1971

Our Society has entered into a new era with international prominence. The three major accomplishments of our Society this year, namely, the purchase of a building of our own in Champaign, Illinois, the formation of the AOCS Foundation, and the hosting of the meeting of the International Society for Fat Research in Chicago, have undoubtedly improved our image and prestige to a very large extent and will, of course, greatly strengthen the service of our Society to our members.

S.S. Chang
President's Report published in JAOCS, July 1971

1975

My experience as President of the American Oil Chemists' Society began with a thought provoking announcement. A routine factual news release from our [Hormel] Institute to the local news media was prepared to announce that I was to go to Mexico to become [AOCS] President. True to its tradition for accuracy and its desire for all the truth, the press printed a story which had crucial lines missing and which stated that Holman was to become president of AOCS which is a society consisting of three members. The next morning I received a note from a colleague which inquired:

I know about you,
I know about me.
But who in ----
Is number three?

Ralph Holman
The President's Report published in JAOCS, June 1975

That's about as far toward the present that we'll take this preview.

We do hope you will plan to attend the 75th anniversary meeting to be held April 29-May 3, 1984, in Dallas. At that meeting will be a display of AOCS historical memorabilia. We invite AOCS members to submit photographs from past meetings, correspondence from early members, programs from early short courses, or other historical items, to be included in the display. Mail them to James Lyon, Executive Director, AOCS, 508 S. Sixth St., Champaign, IL 61820. Sorry, we can't mail them back, but if you attend the Dallas meeting, you can pick them up at the meeting's conclusion. If your item is somewhat bulky, please write explaining what it is and asking if it can be included. If you have items you don't want to trust to the mails, bring them with you to Dallas and then take them back home.

You'll hear more in Chicago about the 75th anniversary observance.

JAOCS paper cited

The organization of the Oil and Fat Industry in Japan has selected a paper published in the January 1982 *JAOCS* as the best scientific paper in the field of fats and oils during 1982.

The paper,"Qualitative and Quantitative Comparison of Minor Constituents in Different Commercial Oleic Acids," was authored by Sherman S. Lin, Yukinobu Murase, David B.S. Min, Oliver A.L. Hsieh and Stephen S. Chang. Lin is with Anderson Clayton; Murase is with Asahi Denka Kogyo Co Ltd., Min is at Ohio State University, and Hsieh and Change are both at Rutgers University in New Jersey. The paper involved research work done while all the authors were at Rutgers.