



Chemformation

The Newsletter of the MIT Department of Chemistry
Volume 26, Number 1, Wednesday, January 9, 2009

Happy New Year!

HISTORY MADE AT MIT - ROBERTS RETURNS FOR BENZYNE CELEBRATION

On Wednesday, December 10, 2008, Professor John D. Roberts, Institute Professor of Chemistry, Emeritus, California Institute of Technology, and his wife Edith visited the Department for a celebration of A Chemical



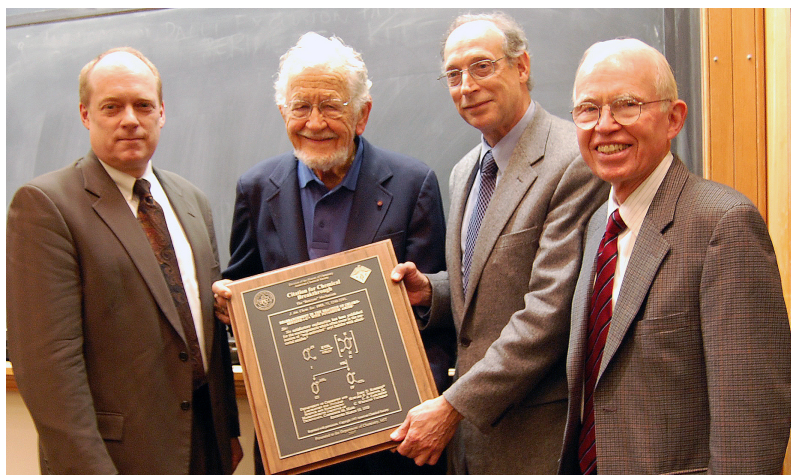
L-R: Charles Wilcox, '52 and former student of John D. Roberts, Edith Roberts, Barbara Whitesides

Breakthrough Award from the American Chemical Society. The prestigious award marks his historic discovery, while a Professor at MIT, of The "Benzyne" Mechanism in Aromatic Amination Reactions. To a packed audience in Room 6-120 the afternoon's symposium commenced with "Welcome Remarks" by the Department Head, Professor Timothy M. Swager. Then followed an entertaining talk with accompanying amusing anecdotes by Professor Jeffrey Seeman, University of Richmond, who spoke of Roberts' significant role in chemical history. Professor Emeritus, Frederick Greene then delivered his interesting and informative talk which focused on MIT in the post-Roberts years and Benzyne in Physical Organic Chemistry. "How did the benzyne idea come



Jack D. Roberts

about and what was the supporting evidence?" was the topic of Professor Roberts' fascinating lecture which thrilled the attendees and concluded what was an afternoon of entertaining, educational and historic tributes to The "Benzyne" Mechanism.



L-R: Timothy M. Swager, Jack D. Roberts, Jeffrey Seeman, Frederick D. Greene