

HIST Award Biography for David E. Lewis



David Lewis is a product of the borderline bush area around Adelaide, South Australia. He moved into the suburbs in fourth grade, and stayed there throughout his education. He matriculated from Salisbury High School, and moved on to the University of Adelaide, where he graduated with Honors in Organic Chemistry in 1973. He continued with graduate research in natural products until he was beckoned to the United States and the state of Arkansas in 1977. And he lived happily ever after.

Professor Lewis earned tenure and the rank of Associate at Baylor University in 1988, but moved on to South Dakota State University, where he became a Full Professor in 1993. He was called to The University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire in 1997 as Chair of the Chemistry Department, where he continues a very active program in synthetic organic chemistry.

Chemists like Lewis, with his interests well outside the realm of chemistry (narrowly defined) don't always stick to the main road, and David gained an interest in the history of organic chemistry. He also joined the Division of the History of Chemistry and started publishing in the *Bulletin for the History of Chemistry* (now 15 papers, including two Best Paper Awards in 1997 and 2010). He served as the Chair of the Division from 2003-2005.

The area of interest for Professor Lewis has been organic chemistry in Russia, especially at Kazan Chemistry School. Not only has he become the leading scholar in this area, he is recognized by the Russians as the author of "a wonderful series of works devoted to the history of Russian chemistry." His collected works were translated and published in Russian in 2016. He has been invited several times to give major lectures at Kazan and other cities in Russia. This September, he will, for the first time, deliver his talks in Russian. His 2012 book, *Early Russian Organic Chemists and their Legacy* has been hailed as the most important contribution to this previously understudied area.

David Lewis has been one of the most frequent speakers at American Chemical Society meetings in the Division of the History of Chemistry over the last 25 years, and has contributed to many notable symposia (especially *Characters in Chemistry*). His work was recognized in 2012 with a DSc. Degree from the

University of Adelaide, and he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry in 2015.