

HIST 2007 State-of-the-Union A Report from the Immediate Past Chair

With the completion of my two-year term as Chair of HIST, it is both my pleasure and my responsibility to inform you as to the health and well-being of our division. By a fine coincidence, my brief report of the present and recent past HIST's activities is in a special issue of the *Bulletin* celebrating HIST's 85th birthday. Elsewhere in this issue, four members of HIST's Executive Committee (EC) provide greater detail about the division's longer term past and speculations about HIST's future.

HIST was the recipient of the ACS Divisions Activity Committee's ChemLuminary award for 2003. And HIST received a second ChemLuminary award for technical division achievement in 2005, further demonstrating the vigor of the Division of the History of Chemistry and the respect HIST is receiving from its peers. In the summary that follows, I shall list many of HIST's achievements during the past two years along with many of the individuals who are responsible for these achievements.

The years 2005 and 2006 have witnessed numerous accomplishments by HIST, including

- The development of a sound financial base and budget. We have carefully evaluated our financial position, made some hard decisions including raising dues for the first time in many years, and redirected funds with the principle of leveraging our resources to their maximum value for our membership (Vera Mainz, Jeff Seeman, and the entire HIST Executive Committee, EC).
- A completely redesigned website (Vera Mainz), up-to-date and containing many new features including historical information and important HIST archival information. For example, biographies of all Dexter and Edelstein awardees and many HIST officers are available (Jim Bohning, Tom Perfetti, Tony Travis). Updated present and recent past programming information is also included (Joe Jeffers) as well as minutes from recent EC meetings and numerous financial reports (Mainz).
- A facilitated means of communication with our members through our website regarding current division business, in particular, programming, meeting abstracts, and financial information (Mainz, Jeffers, Bohning).
- HIST's new Mission Statement (Carmen Giunta and the EC).
- HIST's new logo (Mainz) which is found on our website and HIST's official communications.
- Outstanding meeting programming (Jeffers), both in terms of a number of novel Presidential symposia (Mary Virginia Orna, Seeman) and also many other remarkable national meeting and regional meeting symposia (Books and CFC's and Priestley and the Edelstein 50th celebration, to name a few; Bohning, Roger Egolf, Giunta David Lewis, Orna).
- Obtaining external funding for many proposals (Bohning, Giunta, Orna and Seeman).
- The *Bulletin for the History of Chemistry* is stronger than ever and continues its appearance on schedule, issue after issue, with high quality publications, essays and reviews (Paul Jones and his three associate editors, Giunta, Mary Ellen Bowden, and Leo Slater). The editors and the EC made and implemented a major decision regarding copyright ownership and author submission requirements.
- HIST's awards programs are vibrant and healthy. HIST's new award, the Citations for Chemical Breakthrough award, has resulted in immediate meaning and impact to our extended community (Seeman).
- The EC determined that HIST's archives required a permanent, safe, scholarly and accessible location. Consequently, following detailed discussions with CHF and ACS (no ACS facilities were available, per discussions with Madeleine Jacobs, Executive Director of the ACS) the EC gifted HIST's Archives to CHF. The archives are now being catalogued (Bohning).

We have developed very strong working relationships with senior leadership at ACS: staff and ACS presidents. We have also nurtured important synergies with the Chemical Heritage Foundation. Two HIST-CHF music concerts at the ACS fall national meetings have spread our wings and added value to the entire ACS and given HIST special visibility (thanks to chemist-pianist Vicki Bragin; Seeman).

We are pleased to note the frequent coverage of HIST activities by *Chemical & Engineering News*.

HIST's greatest strength is its members and our diversity of interests, experiences, and talents. Perhaps this can be best exemplified by the remarkable differences of our past few Chairs, the current Chair, and our newly elected Chair-Elect. But the greatest similarities, which we all share, are our commitment to HIST, our passion to support HIST's mission, and our promises to our members and to the ACS.

It has been a pleasure for me to have helped lead HIST forward these past few years. It has been an honor to work with and share many experiences with so many of you.

Jeff Seeman