

April Historical Events In Chemistry

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April 4, 1867

A pioneer in clinical chemistry, Otto Folin, was born on this day. He engaged in the systematic development of “micromethods”; the use of colorimetry in biochemistry using the Duboscq colorimeter; and the use of an enzyme for analytical purposes: urease to measure urea. With Vintila Ciocalteu, he developed the “Phenol Reagent” for use in protein analysis. That is the basis of the Lowry method for protein determination.

April 6, 1928

James D. Watson, born on this date, conducted research on the double helix structure of DNA. Fifty years ago, in 1962, he shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine with F.H.C. Crick and M.H.F. Wilkins for their discoveries concerning the molecular structure of nucleic acids and their significance for information transfer in living material.

April 10, 1790

The U. S. Patent Office was established on this date according to Article 8, Section 1 of the Constitution. The first patent was granted to Samuel Hopkins on potash and pearl ash.

April 10, 1887

One hundred and twenty-five years ago, Bernardo A. Houssay was born. He received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1947 with Gerty T. Cori and Carl F. Cori for their research on the hormone of the anterior pituitary lobe and its role in the metabolism of sugar.

April 16, 1850

Sidney G. Thomas, who solved the problem of separating phosphorus from iron in the Bessemer Converter, was born on this date.

April 17, 1869

Robert Robertson did research in explosives, including amato and tetry (trinitrophenylmethyl-nitramine). He was born on this date.

April 19, 1912

Glenn T. Seaborg was born on this date. He co-discovered americium (Am, 95) in 1944, berkelium (Bk, 97) in 1950, californium (Cf, 98) in 1950, curium (Cm, 96) in 1944, einsteinium (Es, 99) in 1952, fermium (Fm, 100) in 1953, mendelevium (Md, 101) in 1955, nobelium (No, 102) in 1958, plutonium (Pu, 94) in 1940, and seaborgium (Sg, 106) in 1974. In 1951, he and Edwin M. McMillan received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for their discoveries in the chemistry of the transuranium elements.

April 20, 1912

Gertrude E. Perlmann was born on this date. She did research in protein chemistry and received the Gar- van Medal in 1965.

April 20, 1927

Born on this date, K. Alexander Müller shared the Nobel Prize in Physics with J. Georg Bednorz in 1987 for their important break-through in the discovery of super-conductivity in ceramic materials.

April 21, 1889

Eighty-five years ago in 1927, Paul Karrer shared the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his investigations on carotenoids, flavins and vitamins A and B2 with Walter N. Haworth for Haworth's investigations on carbohydrates and vitamin C. He synthesized vitamins A in 1931, B2 (riboflavin), in 1935, and E (toco-pherol) in 1938. He was born on this date.

April 22, 1919

Twenty-five years ago in 1987, Donald J. Cram, born on this date, shared the Nobel Prize in Chemistry with C. J. Pedersen and J-M. P. Lehn for their development and use of molecules with structure-specific interactions of high selectivity. He did research in the application of stereochemical techniques to organic reaction mechanisms; invented carceplexes or guest molecules completely encapsulated by the host, and synthesized a variety of host-guest complexes including crown ether complexes.

April 28, 1937

Seventy-five years ago, Champion International was incorporated on this date.

Additional historical events can be found at Dr. May's website,

<http://faculty.cua.edu/may/Chemistrycalendar.htm>