

Why Membership of the New Swiss Chemical Society Is Interesting to You

EDITORIAL

The present issue of CHIMIA contains the program and abstracts of all communications and posters of the Fall Meeting of the New Swiss Chemical Society, to be held on the 20th of October 1995 in Bern. In addition, it contains the Columna Analytica, the Computational Chemistry Column, the announcement of a competition for students and gymnasium (college) classes, information and reports about other meetings of interest to chemists, statistical data about chemistry in Switzerland, the CHIMIA report, as well as job announcements. CHIMIA is published monthly and its primary aim is that of a journal for chemistry in the broadest sense, informing members of the Society and the larger public about important events in the field of chemistry, relating in one way or another to Switzerland. But it is also a scientific journal reviewed for Chemical Abstracts. All members of the New Swiss Chemical Society automatically receive CHIMIA and we believe that this alone is a very good reason to be a member. However, I want to explain to those who are not yet members, that there are several other reasons why you should join the Society.

A Changing Society in a Changing World

The New Swiss Chemical Society is a relatively young organization. It emerged from several precursor societies, among them the Swiss Chemical Society and the Association of Swiss Chemists. Four 'sections' and two 'ressorts' are responsible for the organization of all activities of the Society. During the first three years of its existence the Society built its foundations under the leadership of my predecessor *Karl Heusler*. It is now ready to tackle new problems for the chemical community. The following aims will have high priorities in the development of the Society in the near future:

Information for the Members of the Society

The Information Superhighway has been built at a breathtaking rate during the last few months and years. A professional society has to participate in this development if it wants to serve its members in a useful way. By the end of this year (1995), the Society will have its own home-page on the World Wide Web, providing information about the Society itself and about various kinds of events taking place in chemistry with particular emphasis on Switzerland. Although the Information Superhighway will gain a lot of importance in both the near and distant future, it will not replace more traditional methods of information transmission. We therefore go on in our efforts to produce high quality journals. CHIMIA was already mentioned above. HELVETICA CHIMICA ACTA, produced by 'Verlag Helvetica Chimica Acta AG', of which the Society is a majority shareholder, is recognized to be one of the leading chemical journals on an international level. It is known, particularly for its high level contributions in organic chemistry, but it also publishes articles in other fields of chemistry, if they are of sufficiently general interest. HELVETICA CHIMICA ACTA is available to members of the Society for an extremely advantageous price.

Information for Society at Large and for Politics

The New Swiss Chemical Society wants to go beyond its role as a learned institution. Chemistry is extremely important for the society in this country, through its role as one of the leading industrial groups and through its highly developed scientific activities. Yet, until now, the chemical community (with the exception of the industrial part represented by the Swiss Society of Chemical Industries, SGCI/SSIC) had very limited possibilities to raise its voice in political decisions either on subjects effecting industrial progress or in matters concerning public support of research and development. The New Swiss Chemical Society wants to provide a forum for discussion on a high and objective level for developments that are important to us all.

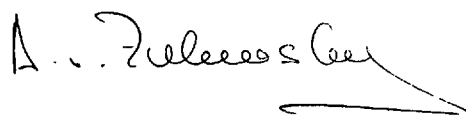
Why a National Society?

Is it still timely to pursue the activities mentioned above on a national level in a small European country? Wouldn't it be more appropriate to build a European chemical society that would co-ordinate the activities of the whole continent? While we think that it is highly important that we cooperate on an international level with our sister societies in Europe and beyond, we believe that for the decades to come a strong regional organization will still be of utmost importance for the well-being of a professional community, especially in chemistry. Switzerland has contributed to chemistry on an industrial and academic level in a highly significant way despite its small size and its limited resources. As with any heritage of positive value, we should treat this in a responsible way and try to develop it further. This can be done only by people who know the basis of this heritage. In addition, through our own membership in IUPAC and FECS, each individual member of the Society is granted access to important international organizations.

The New Swiss Chemical Society is ready to provide a basis for information among professional chemists and other persons interested in chemistry for Switzerland. It is ready to organize and support professional meetings that give young chemists a possibility to communicate results that they have achieved in their research and to facilitate exchange of ideas among professionals on all levels. It is ready to try to make the opinions of the professional chemists known to the society at large and to politicians. It is ready to try to help the young chemists find their way into the profession. It is ready to try to convince Swiss Chemical Industry that Switzerland is still a country where high potential for innovation in chemistry is present. ***What we need for the achievement of these goals is your support.*** Presently, too small a part of the Swiss chemical community (where we include not only chemical professionals but everybody who is connected with this profession), are members of the Society. That's why we ask those who are not yet members to join our Society now. We believe that you will find this a worthwhile investment.

We thank those who are already members for continuing their support and for joining us in our effort to make the New Swiss Chemical Society larger and stronger.

Your president:



Alexander von Zelewsky

P.S. I would appreciate comments from members and non-members concerning matters of general policy of the Society and questions about membership. Please write to the following address: e-mail: <Alexander.Vonzewelsky@unifr.ch>; FAX: (41)(37) 29 97 38; mail: Institute of Inorganic Chemistry, University of Fribourg, Pérolles, CH-1700 Fribourg.