

HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF LEATHER TECHNOLOGISTS AND CHEMISTS SOCIETIES

- I.U.L.T.C.S. -

THE IULTCS

The International Union of Leather Technologists and Chemists Societies, a world-wide organization of professional societies, was originally organized in London in 1897. In 2010 there are currently 17 Member Societies and 4 Associate Members representing some 3000 individual members.

According to the IULTCS statutes the aims of the Union are to foster cooperation between member societies, to hold congresses to further the advancement of leather science and technology, to form commissions for special studies and to establish international methods of samples and testing leather and materials associated with leather manufacture.

As of 2010 the IULTCS organization has held thirty Congresses in seventeen different countries on five continents. In 2009 the IULTCS added another new country when the Congress was held in China.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNION

In September 1897 on the initiative of Professor H. R. Procter (Yorkshire College, Leeds), Dr. J. Gordon Parker (Leather Laboratories, Herold's Institute, London), Mr. A. Seymour Jones (Leather Manufacturer, Wrexham) and Mr. C. E. Parker (Penketh Tanner, Warrington), a three day conference of leather trades chemists was arranged and held in London. At least 200 people took part in the conference and present were chemists from Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Great Britain and Sweden.

On September 29th, 1897 the originators of the conference constituted themselves into the first International Association of Leather Trades Chemists and specified the conditions for joining. They then invited applications for membership. Mr. Seymour Jones (Great Britain) and Mr. Franz Kathreiner (Germany) were elected President and Vice-President respectively.

The business of the conference largely centred around vegetable tanning materials and their analysis, but reference was made to use of lime in unhairing and its removal from skins. It is interesting to note that special mention was made of the necessity to deal with the polluting effects of tannery effluents.

By 1911, ten countries were represented in the Association and the membership had grown to 414. The Association's journal, *Collegium*, under the editorship of F. Kathreiner, appeared in 1897 and became a multi-lingual independent publication in 1902.

It is not possible to reference all the early pioneers who supported the Association before 1914 but the following, in addition to those mentioned above are worthy of special mention by virtue of their outstanding work in the field of leather chemistry and technology. M.C. Lamb, E. Stiasny, F.H. Haenlein, H. Becker, W. Fahrion, K. Schorlemmer, L. Meunier, A. de la Buere, G. Abt, U.J. Thuau, P. Chambard, W. Eitner, B. Kohnstein, G. Grasser, J. Jedlicka, L. Pollack, E. Andreis, R. Lepetit, G. Baldracco, E. Schiaparelli, A. Gansser, E. Nihoul, D. Wauters, A.W. Hoppstedt, H.C. Reed, H.C. Small and W. R. Alsop.

In 1917, due to hostilities, the members were divided into two groups. One group under the name "Internationaler Verein der Lederindustrie Chemiker (IVLIC); covered Germany, Austria, Hungary, Holland and Scandinavia. The other group, from 1925 under the name International Society of Leather Trades Chemists (ISLTC) covered Great Britain (and the Commonwealth), France Italy and Belgium. Switzerland (VESLIC) and the USSR formed their own societies, but the American Leather Chemists Association (ALCA) had already been in existence since 1906.

From 1926 joint discussions took place between members of the IVLIC and the ISLTC. Later the following joint conferences were held - Basle (1931), Amsterdam (1933), Brussels (1935) and Copenhagen (1937). In 1946 the British Section of the ISLTC put forward a proposal that there should be a federation of separate autonomous national societies. The Executive Committee of the ISLTC agreed to this and on January 1st 1948 the International Union of Leather Chemists' Societies (IULCS) was instituted simultaneously with the dissolution of the ISLTC.

A draft constitution was prepared and this was first published as "The International Union of Leather Chemists' Societies (IULTCS) Provisional Statutes 1948". This was approved with minor amendments by the first meeting of the Council of Delegates in Paris on September 26th 1949. (Further amendments to the Statutes have been approved since then.).

The first meeting of the provisional Executive Committee of the newly constituted IULCS was held in Leeds on September 16th 1948 when Belgian, British and French societies formally declared founder members and applications for admission were considered (and approved) from the leather chemists societies of Holland, Italy and Switzerland. The first provisional Executive Committee of the IULCS under the presidency of Professor Dr. P. Chambard, was confirmed in office by the Council of Delegates in September 1949.

The first Congress of the Union was held in Paris during the period September 25th-30th, 1949 by which time the American Leather Chemists Association had accepted an invitation to join. Soon the Czechoslovak and Nordik Societies had expressed a desire to join the Union and approaches had been made by various individuals from the leather chemists societies of Argentina, Germany and Spain.

By the tie of the London congress in September 1951 under the presidency of Mr. M. R. Blockey, ten national societies had officially joined the Union, though in fact representatives from 15 countries were present. In 1983 there were 28 member societies and the Union covered the whole world from Japan to Argentina and Poland to India.

The present title of the Union, The International Union of Leather Technologist and Chemists Societies (IULTCS) was approved by the council of Delegates of the IULCS at the Congress in Vienna in 1973.

There has been only one break in the two-year cycle for Congresses since 1949. There was a four year span between Venice in 1983 and Melbourne in 1987 and the IULTCS recognized that this was too long and the two-year spread was re-instituted.

In 1997 the IULTCS reached the end of its first century. The IULTCS celebrated its 100 years with an outstanding Congress held in London, the site of the very first meeting. Over the last two decades there have been some large shifts in the locations of leather manufacturing facilities and in the shoe manufacturing. Regions that have a long tradition of research in leather processing are seeing large reductions in the leather industry. While many of those areas that are rapidly increasing in leather production do not have appropriate leather chemists and technologists societies. If the IULTCS is to continue to prosper into its second century, changes will be needed in the organization. The first steps have been taken with the formation of a permanent secretariat. The next will be to encourage the new leather manufacturing regions to join the IULTCS and reap the benefits of our Union.

Last updated: Feb. 2010

Past Presidents

Prof Dr. P. Chambard (France), 1949 Paris
Mr. J. R. Blockey (United Kingdom), 1951 London
Mr. V. M. J. Mallebay (France), 1953 Barcelona
Dr. K. H. Gustavson (Sweden), 1955 Stockholm
Dr. G. Bravo (Italy), 1957 Rome
Prof Dr. W. Grassmann (Germany), 1959 Munich
Prof. Dr. H. Turley (U.S.A.), 1961 Washington
Ing. P. J. van Vlimmeren (Holland), 1963 The Hague
Prof Dr. A. Tapernoux (France), 1965 Lyon
Dr. E. Baumann (Switzerland), 1967 Lucerne
Dr. R. G. Mitton (United Kingdom), 1969 London
Prof Dr. A. Blazej (Czechoslovakia), 1971 Prague
Prof Dr. H. Herfeld (Germany), 1973 Vienna,
Mrs. M. Paniker de Pelach (Spain), 1975 Barcelona
Mr. A. Lesuisse (Belgium), 1977 Hamburg
Prof G. Vallet (France), 1979 Versailles
Dr. A. Sofia (Argentina), 1981 Buenos Aires
Dr. S. Cuccodoro (Italy), 1983 Venice
Dr. Robert Sykes (United Kingdom), 1987 Melbourne
Dr. Hubert Wachsmann (Switzerland), 1989 Philadelphia
Mr. R. Gómez-Anguila (Spain), 1991 Barcelona
Dr. David Bailey (U.S.A.), 1993 Porto Allegre
Mr. Luis Leuck (Brasil), 1995 Friedrichshafen
Prof Dr. Anthony Covington (United Kingdom), 1997 London
Mr. Sanjoy Sen (India), 1999 Chennai
Mr. Juan Manuel Salazar (Colombia), 2001 Cape Town, 2003 Cancun, Mexico
Prof. Dr. Jaume Cot (Spain), 2003 - 2005 (Florence)
Mr. Marc Folachier (France), 2006 – 2007 (Washington)
Mr. Elton Hurlow (USA), 2008 – 2009 (Beijing)
Prof Dr. Bi Shi (China) 2010 -

Past Congresses

International Congresses of the IULTCS

1949 Paris - France
1951 London - United Kingdom
1953 Barcelona - Spain
1955 Stockholm - Sweden
1957 Rome - Italy
1959 Munich - Germany
1961 Washington - United States of America
1963 The Hague - Holland
1965 Lyon - France
1967 Lucerne - Switzerland
1969 London - United Kingdom
1971 Prague - Czechoslovakia
1973 Vienna - Austria
1975 Barcelona - Spain
1977 Hamburg - Germany
1979 Versailles - France
1981 Buenos Aires - Argentina
1983 Venice - Italy
1987 Melbourne - Australia
1989 Philadelphia - United States of America
1991 Barcelona - Spain
1993 Porto Allegre - Brazil
1995 Friedrichafen - Germany
1997 London - United Kingdom
1999 Chennai (Madras) - India
2001 Cape Town - South Africa
2003 Cancun - Mexico
2005 Florence - Italy
2007 Washington – United States of America
2009 Beijing - China