

60th Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting 2010 (Physics, Chemistry and Medicine/Physiology)

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Every year for the past 60 years, a host of recipients of the Nobel Prize have met on the isle of Lindau, situated on Lake Constance in south Germany. With this year marking the 60th anniversary of the first such event, a special interdisciplinary meeting was held bringing together 59 Nobel Laureates and over 650 students from diverse scientific backgrounds and every corner of the globe.



The opening ceremony of the 2010 Lindau Conference

This year, the School of Chemistry was fortunate enough to have two representatives at the meeting. In order to attend, prospective young researchers must first be nominated by a research or professional organisation. We each applied through two different nominating bodies; namely the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), and the Irish Research Council for Science Engineering and Technology (IRCSET). This allowed us both to be considered (and finally accepted) by the Lindau Committee as attendees.

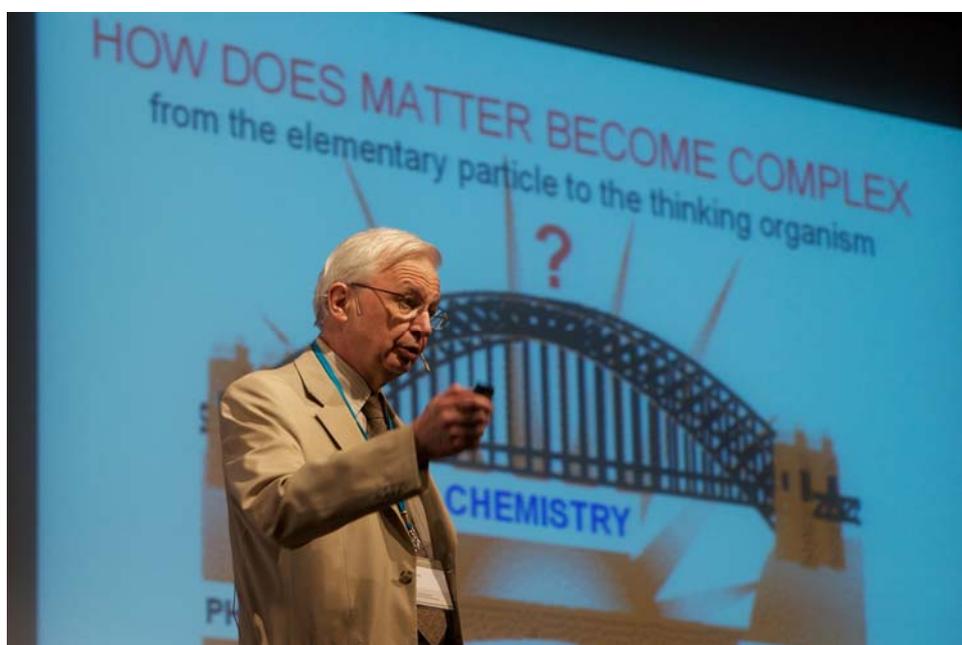
Having made it through the selection process, all that remained was to travel to Lindau and to enjoy the science. The meeting did not disappoint. The lectures proceeded at breakneck pace with six plenary lectures each morning, followed by an afternoon of smaller discussion groups. Because of the large number of Nobel Laureates in attendance, several discussion panels would take place simultaneously, leaving us with the difficult decision of which panel to attend. Highlights among these panel sessions included a historical tour of the lab notebooks of Oliver Smithies (the inventor of gel electrophoresis and one of the fathers of modern genetic engineering), and an open-forum discussion with Nobel Prize winning chemists Jean-Marie Lehn and Ryoji Noyori.

The lecture venues were situated throughout the island of Lindau, allowing us to explore the town as we walked from one venue to another. These locations varied in form from a medieval town hall to the local cinema. The rest of the meeting took place in the form of social get-togethers including a

Bavarian themed night; a casual lunch with Nobel Laureate Sir Harold Kroto, and a recital of the music of Tchaikovsky and Mendelssohn in the old opera house.

The week was rounded off on Friday with a cruise aboard the spectacular vessel the *Sonnen Königin* across Lake Constance en route to the Isle of Mainau. Travelling as guests of the German state of Baden-Württemberg, we mingled with the Nobel Laureates prior to our arrival. On the Isle of Mainau, we were treated to a panel discussion in the palace gardens of Countess Bettina Bernadotte. The topic of global warming and sustainability; a theme which had resonated throughout the meeting, was tackled by a selection of Laureates, politicians and journalists. This was followed by the closing ceremony and the final boat ride back to Lindau.

As the Nobel Laureates disembarked, we waved our final goodbyes. The time we had shared left us inspired, and opened our eyes to the global and interdisciplinary nature of scientific research.



Jean-Marie Lehn tells it like it is!