

# Centennial!

**George Willhite**

It's time for a party. The American Oil Chemists' Society will open its centennial celebration on May 3, 2009, in Orlando, Florida, about 760 miles (1200 kilometers)—and not quite 100 years—from Memphis, Tennessee, where it all began.

If the nine founders of the American Oil Chemists' Society could attend the Orlando meeting, what would they think?

They would be dazzled by modern analytical techniques and the data they provide.

They would be astounded that their band of nine analysts from the southern United States has grown to 4,000+ members in 90+ nations.

And they would be delighted to socialize with colleagues—food and beverages have been important at AOCS meetings for a hundred years.

There's a direct link from 1909 to 2009.

Founding President Felix Paquin and 1961 President A. Richard Baldwin, both sons of farmers, met during the 1950 annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. Baldwin, who turned 91 earlier this year, says he doesn't recall what words were exchanged, but there's a photo of Paquin and Baldwin—along with two other AOCS members of the Education Committee—on page 24 of the July 1950 issue of *JAOCS*. Paquin was visiting various AOCS committee meetings in Atlanta for what modern publicists would call a series of “photo ops.”

The infant society Paquin fostered has flourished. Although the group failed to muster a quorum of 10 members for its second meeting in 1910 in St. Louis, Missouri, since then approximately 110,000 persons have attended 140+ annual (spring) and fall meetings in the United States, approximately 11,000 additional registrants have signed up for approximately 150 AOCS Short Courses, and 25,000+ have attended AOCS world conferences or other AOCS-sponsored events around the world.

AOCS has published 85 volumes of the *Journal of the American Oil Chemists' Society* (including its predecessor journals), 43 volumes of *Lipids*, 19 volumes of *inform*, and 13 volumes of the quarterly



Felix Paquin (far left) makes a point about short course plans with (left to right) K.F. Mattil, A.R. Baldwin, and J.P. Harris. They are pictured at the 1950 AOCS Annual Meeting, held in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

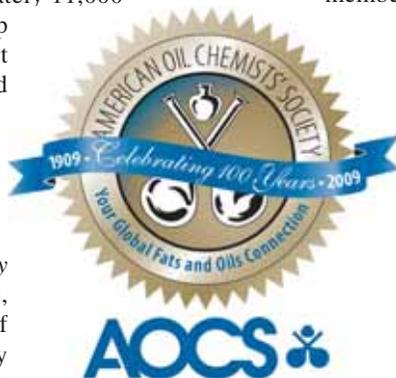
*Journal of Surfactants and Detergents*. It has published 319 monographs, books, and proceedings, plus approximately two dozen CD/DVD titles. A sidebar to this article in this issue of *inform* (see p. 206) provides historical information on the *Official Methods and Recommended Practices of the AOCS*.

## PAST CELEBRATIONS

Past anniversaries have been observed in a variety of ways. At the 25th anniversary meeting during 1934 in New Orleans, founding member E.R. Barrow read brief biographies of the four founders who had died.

The 50th anniversary meeting (1959, also in New Orleans) featured two symposia, one on five decades of research in the chemistry and technology of fats and oils, the other on 50 years of research in six countries. During the meeting banquet, one president from each decade reported on highlights from his era.

At Dallas in 1984, the 75th anniversary was marked with a multimedia presentation on the history of fats and oils. A membership campaign to enroll 750 new members during the 75th year appeared to have succeeded as the annual meeting began.



## THE 100TH CELEBRATION

In Orlando, history will abound in the exposition hall.

- An opening ceremony will be held at 5:15 p.m. Sunday, May 3, in the hall.
- There will be a “Hall of Presidents” featuring photographs of past and current leaders, plus memorabilia from AOCS’ history.
- The oilseed and oil processing industry and the soap industry will have mini-museums set up.

History also will be on parade in the lecture rooms as well.

- One “hot topic” session will feature talks on historical perspectives of fats and oils chemistry. Several divisions will hear historical perspectives.
- “Now and Then” is the theme for the Analytical Division’s opening session on Monday, May 4, with historical talks blended with others looking forward.
- Marcel Lie Ken Jie of Hong Kong will open the Industrial Oil Products session on Tuesday afternoon, May 5, with “One Hundred Years of Oleochemistry: 45 Years Done, 55 More To Go.”
- “Lecithin (Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow)” will be presented by the Phospholipid Division on Tuesday afternoon, May 5.
- The Processing Division’s opening session on Monday morning, May 4, will have six reports on the history of oilseed

and oil processing.

- The Surfactant and Detergent Division plans to update its history of industry changes during its Monday evening reception.

Although this is being written several months before the meeting, it appears AOCS will have enrolled 1,000 new members since the 2008 Annual Meeting & Expo by the time the Orlando meeting ends on May 6.

## CENTENNIAL GALA

The big party will be an outdoor gala on Tuesday evening, May 5, preceded by a reception in the exposition hall.

Persons who have bought gala tickets will exit the reception for the party via a “red carpet” entry area with lots of hoopla.

There will be a VIP receiving line, including AOCS past presidents, to open the gala. Food and beverage will be available, with a karaoke band providing music. If karaoke singing ensues, it might raise echoes of long-ago annual meetings when there reportedly were competitions with participants striving for volume, not harmony, in booming out college fight songs and patriotic tunes, as well as sentimental favorites.

Provisions have been made in case of rain.

Meeting participants will collect various mementos, including a miniature glass Erlenmeyer flask bearing the AOCS centen-

## AOCS Methods mark 100 years

For 100 years, AOCS’ mission has been to provide its members and clients with tested, validated analytical methods. The latest example of that will be the publication, in AOCS’ centennial year, of the sixth edition of AOCS’ book of methods.

AOCS methods are referenced in trading rules that underlie the international trade in oilseeds, oilseed products, and other products in AOCS-related disciplines. Global value of such products easily reaches into the hundreds of billions of dollars annually.

It all began in 1909 when some experienced cottonseed product analysts were asked by the Interstate Cottonseed Crushers Association to put on paper guidelines for determining cottonseed oil quality.

The 2009 edition, a nearly 4-inch-thick three-ring binder, will provide approximately 450 analytical techniques for vegetable oil source materials, oilseed by-products, commercial fats and oils, soaps and detergents, glycerin, sulfonated and sulfated oils, and soapstocks, as well as specifications for reagents, solvents, and necessary apparatus. There also will be recommendations for testing industrial oils and derivatives, and test methods for those materials. (For information about ordering, see page 247.)

The book wasn’t always so large. In fact, the first guidelines compiled by those early analysts were not published by AOCS. Those initial suggestions were incorporated into the cottonseed crusher organization’s rule book. In 1928 AOCS published its first independent book of methods. By 1944, the book consisted of about 90 pages in a 5- by 7-inch three-ring binder, which was

kept updated by inserting revisions or new methods as approved. AOCS decided in the 1940s it was time to publish an entirely new edition, which was done in 1946. Subsequent editions were printed in 1964, 1989, and 1998.

Electronic versions are now available. Large organizations with many laboratories can pay for web access to the book, which allows their chemists to retrieve methods electronically. Individuals also can pay to access the methods online. Single methods also can be purchased for downloading in PDF format by those who do not need access to the full book.

AOCS methods are used in hundreds of laboratories on six continents—from Norway to South Africa, from Beijing to Istanbul.

AOCS methods are developed through a rigorous procedure involving collaborative testing in diverse laboratories before being approved for inclusion in AOCS’ *Official Methods and Recommended Practices*. As new methods are approved, they are issued in annual sets of additions and revisions. After several years of this process, it becomes less expensive to laboratories for AOCS to publish a new book of methods, rather than require a lab wishing an up-to-date set to purchase the basic book and many annual sets of additions and revisions.

Electronic delivery of the sixth edition will be improved because all components of the book will be stored in a database. This also will facilitate future revisions.

C.B. Cluff was chairman of the Uniform Methods subcommittee that produced the first book of methods in 1928. W.H.

nial logo.

Socializing and talking informally are an important tradition at AOCS meetings. David Wesson once wrote in the society's journal that when members, who would be very circumspect about their operations during formal sessions, gathered in a cocktail lounge at the end of the day, they tended to speak frankly.

The candid evening discussions would reveal that most had been pursuing similar paths to solving the same problems. The informal sharing helped move the industry along, Wesson said.

In Orlando, when the final technical paper has ended and the final committee meeting is over, it's very likely that somewhere in a bar at Rosen Shingle Creek, you'll find AOCS members discussing what lies ahead.

Such discussions have been an AOCS tradition since May 20, 1909, when nine cottonseed product analysts gathered at the Jockey Club in Memphis, Tennessee, and decided to form a new organization.

Some things never change.  
Happy Birthday, AOCS!

*George Willhite, who prepared this series of articles as AOCS' centennial historian, retired from AOCS in 2002 after 27 years as a member of its publications staff. He is an honorary member of AOCS. He can be contacted via e-mail at: willhite@aoacs.org.*

Irwin succeeded Cluff and headed the Committee on Revisions of Methods until his death in 1937, when J.T.R. Andrews took over. In the early 1940s AOCS decided to completely revise the methods book.

V.C. Mehlenbacher undertook this task and became the official editor for the methods book in 1945. There have been six others editors: T.H. Hopper (1950–58), E.M. Sallee (1958–71), W.E. Link (1971–78), R.O. Walker (1978–83), R.C. Walker (1983–87), and David Firestone (1987–present).

The 1946 edition was printed on 6- by 9-inch paper, which remained that size until the fifth edition in 1989, when the methods were printed on letter-size paper.

Frank Smalley was appointed chairman of the Uniform Methods Committee when the Society of Cotton Products Analysts set up a formal organization in 1910. Records indicate G. Worthen Agee served as chairman in 1913–14, with Smalley resuming the chairmanship until his death in 1921. F.B. Porter succeeded Smalley, serving until 1926, when founding president Felix Paquin became chairman, serving until 1929. J.J. Vollertsen then became chairman, retiring in 1946. AOCS records list 10 chairpersons during the past 60 years: J.T.R. Andrews, R.R. King, D.L. Henry, E.M. Sallee, W.E. Link, D. Firestones, T.H. Smouse, J. Snyder, C. Dayton, and M. Kennedy. Janet Snyder has been the only female chairperson.

The first three committees that AOCS established were for administration, membership, and methods. Methods have remained at the center of AOCS activities for one hundred years.

## amafiltergroup

### total filtration

**amafiltergroup** offers a complete range of products, services and support for filtration and separation technologies on a global basis. Situated throughout the world with production facilities and regional sales offices in Europe, USA and Asia.

**amafiltergroup** supports direct sales and a large network of distributors. The group's capabilities are backed by decades of innovative experience in providing filtration solutions to a broad range of industries.

**amafiltergroup** continues to develop products, enabling its customers to comply with strictest environmental regulations, industry demands and increasing complexity. In short, amafiltergroup has a solution for your filtration application.

We offer a complete design, testing, commissioning and service together with full support.



#### Consumables

- Housings for bag and cartridge filters
- Disposable bags and cartridges

#### Services

- Spare parts
- Filter elements
- Laboratory services and pilot filters

#### Systems

- Pressure leaf filter with dry cake discharge. Our most successful type for crude oil, bleached oil, winterised oil, Ni-Cat filtration and biodiesel, available in vertical as well as horizontal versions.
- Cricketfilter® and PTS for polishing filtration or hydrogenation.



See you at the AOCS 2009  
May 3-6, Booth no. 607

## amafiltergroup

www.amafiltergroup.com  
edibleoil@amafiltergroup.com