



Press Release



Thursday 1st October, 2015 ----- Speakers from Japan, Cambridge and Oxford meet in Christ Church on Friday, 2nd October, to mark the 350th anniversary of the publication of the first ever scientific best-seller, Hooke's *Micrographia*.

The event will be held at Christ Church, Oxford, where Robert Hooke was an undergraduate from 1653 to 1658. Robert Hooke's *Micrographia*, published in September 1665, is thought to be the first handbook of microscopy, the study of minute objects by means of a microscope, as well as the first major publication of the Royal Society. It inspired wide public interest in microscopy and coined the biological term "cell" to describe the basic unit of life.

The afternoon will include lectures on both the history and science of microscopy given by distinguished speakers, including TV science historian and expert on Robert Hooke Professor Allan Chapman, and Professor Eiichi Nakamura, 2014 RSC Centenary Prize winner, who is a pioneer of single molecule dynamic microscopy. The historical context of *Micrographia* will be described by resident academics of Christ Church, while other invited scientists such as Dr Steven Lee from the University of Cambridge will give perspectives on modern microscopy, including super-resolution microscopy (nanoscopy), of which Hooke could have had no conception.

Following the lectures there will be a wine reception in the world famous Christ Church Picture Gallery, which houses many Old Masters. A selection of Hooke memorabilia will be available for delegates to view, including copies of the first edition of *Micrographia* held by the College Library.

The book, *Micrographia*, contains beautiful illustrations of some of the specimens Hooke viewed under the microscopes that he designed. Among its drawings and observations is a famous and extraordinarily detailed large-scale illustration of a flea.

David Dunmur from the Christ Church Chemists' Affinity Group commented, "After a long period of relative obscurity Hooke is now recognized as one of the most important scientists of his age. *Micrographia* 350: new ages of microscopy 1665 to 2015 will mark the anniversary of the publication of his *Micrographia* and applaud recent new developments in molecular-scale microscopy. These developments are so important that last year's Nobel Prize in chemistry was awarded to three

scientists for figuring out a way to see the action of individual molecules, something unimaginable in Hooke's day."

The event is organised by the Christ Church Chemists' Affinity Group and supported by the Faraday Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry. It has been so popular that the event sold out a few weeks ago and there is a waiting list.

The (Ch)₃ Affinity Group is a voluntary body to promote the interests of alumni of Christ Church who read Chemistry there, or who carried out research in Chemistry under the umbrella of Christ Church as their graduate college.

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Further Information

<http://www.chchem.org.uk/micrographia.html>

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