

Inga Fischer-Hjalmars 1918-2008



Inga Fischer-Hjalmars was born January 16 1918. She became 90 years old. After a bachelor in Pharmacia 1939, she obtained a master in physic, chemistry and mathematics in 1944. In 1949 she graduated for "licentiat" in mechanics and the year after also in chemistry. The chemistry studies were carried out under the supervision of docent Nils Löfgren and she became the first to synthesize the new local anaesthetic xylocain, which he had found. She started studies in theoretical physics in order to learn to study these molecules and their properties under the supervision of Professor Oscar Klein. The studies were successful and in 1952 she obtained her PhD at Stockholm University. In 1963 she replaced Professor Klein as professor of theoretical physics. During here studies she spent some time with Professor Coulson in Oxford. They published in 1947 a paper about how one can describe the dissociation of a chemical bond, which was of great significance for the continued development of the theory in this area.

Professor Fischer-Hjalmars was one of the two poineers that formed the theoretical chemistry in Sweden. While the Uppsala school under Professor Per-Olof Löwdin was more directed towards mathematics and phyics, her attidutes were formed by her background in chemistry and pharmacy. Inga and her students developed methods that could be used in organic chemistry and also in biochemistry, an area she was very interested in.

Professor Fischer-Hjalmars was elected member of IAQMS in 1983. She was then already a member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Scienses since 1978. She was also a member of the Danish Academy of Scienses and was a "fellow of the World Academy of Art and Sciences" She was the chairman of the "The International Council of Scientific Unions Standing Committee on the Free Circulation of Scientists", where she did much work to help scientists from the other side of the iron curtain to be able to participate in international conferences.

When Inga Fischer-Hjalmars accepted the chair in Stockholm in 1963, theoretical chemistry did not exist in Sweden, only quantum chemistry in Stockholm and Uppsala, at physics departments. Today is theoretical chamistry represented in all larger universities in the country. Much of this development has happended thanks to the work of Professor Fischer-Hjalmars.

Lund in June 2009
Björn Roos