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Four awards at Carlsberg's "Science to business" forum

Carlsberg Foundation and the Carlsberg Research Laboratory hosted its annual awards celebration today. A record number of four awards were handed out this year to commemorate the Laboratory's 140th anniversary.

The Carlsberg Forum series reflects the strong link between science and business. Each year, the Kaj Linderstrøm-Lang awards are given to prominent scientists for their achievements within biochemistry or physiology, the fields of science in which Kaj Linderstrøm-Lang, a professor at Carlsberg Research Laboratory in the period 1939-1959, distinguished himself as a pioneer.

This year, Professor Henrik V. Scheller, Joint BioEnergy Institute, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, USA and Professor Geoff Fincher, School of Agriculture, Food & Wine, The University of Adelaide, Australia received this year's Kaj Linderstrøm-Lang Prize as an acknowledgement of their outstanding achievements on identifying and characterizing enzymes involved in synthesis and modification of the plant cell wall. The third Kaj Linderstrøm-Lang Prize was awarded to Professor Richard Henderson, MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge, UK for his pioneering work towards obtaining high resolution atomic structures of membrane proteins and membrane protein complexes by electron cryomicroscopy. The prize is a plated gold medal and a financial personal award of DKK 40.000.

Finally, the Emil Chr. Hansen Golden Medal was awarded to Jef Boeke, Director, Institute for Systems Genetics at New York University, for his seminal contributions to yeast genome scrambling and the design of synthetic yeast. The Emil Chr. Hansen Foundation sponsors the Emil Chr. Hansen Golden Medal. Professor Emil Chr. Hansen worked at the Carlsberg Laboratory from 1877-1909, and was the first to isolate a pure yeast that revolutionized the brewing industry.

Birgitte Skadhauge, Head of Carlsberg Research Laboratory, says: "*The distinguished work of Carlsberg Research Laboratory scientists Kaj Linderstrøm-Lang and Emil Chr. Hansen made it possible to have the high quality beers we have today. This year marks the 140th anniversary of the Carlsberg Research Laboratory, and we found it particularly important to celebrate the connection between beer and science this year by honouring not only Professors Richard Henderson, Geoff Fincher and Henrik Scheller but also Jef Boeke with the Emil Christian Hansen Golden Medal for their notable scientific contributions to business and society.*"

The program for this year's Carlsberg Forum consisted of eight lectures by outstanding international scientists and businesspersons spanning trend-setting research in e.g. yeast, cereal-crops, food for health & well-being and new technologies. The business part of the program included lectures on business and health challenges in a globalized and rapidly changing world.

In a special endnote address, Birgitte Skadhauge reviewed the Laboratory's anniversary and the famed re-brew project. Scientists at the Laboratory made an extraordinary discovery in the old cellars of Carlsberg in Copenhagen, Denmark, some years ago. They discovered a very old Carlsberg bottle that surprisingly still contained living yeast cells. They grew and analyzed the cells, and, as it turns out, the bottle was one of the very first beers brewed with the original pure yeast from 1883 when Carlsberg democratized modern lager beers. Earlier this year, specially invited guests celebrated the Laboratory's 140th anniversary by tasting, for the first time in more than a hundred years, the original Carlsberg quality lager, re-brewed by the Laboratory.

Birgitte Skadhauge says: *"What better way to take science to business than by re-brewing the father of quality lager. The Laboratory has pioneered beer quality since it was founded 140 years ago. On the eve of our anniversary, we are proud to have demonstrated scientifically why Carlsberg is probably the best beer in the world."*

The movie premiere of Warner Bros' documentary about the re-brew project premiered in Copenhagen and Fredericia, Denmark, on 24 and 25 November. A movie trailer is available on rebrewproject.com

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