

‘The History of the Laboratory in Ten Objects’ campaign gathers momentum ahead of international science show

Organisers of the biennial International Scientific Laboratory Show & Conference to be held in Nottingham, England this May are delighted with the immediate response to their campaign to chronicle the ‘History of the Laboratory in Ten Objects’. Nottingham-based Scientific Laboratory Supplies (SLS) and The Science Council are asking anyone with a passion for science to nominate the object they feel has had the greatest impact on lab-based scientific research over the last 200 years.

Whether it’s the Bunsen burner or the microscope, scientists young and old are being asked to post their nominations along with a photo or picture if available, online www.scientificlaboratoryshow.com or via Twitter @SciLabShow #SciLabShow2016 #10LabObjects.

Catherine Johnson, Research Assistant at Nottingham Trent University’s John van Geest Cancer Research Centre, has nominated the Liquid Nitrogen Tank. She says: “Without the liquid nitrogen tank we would be unable to store cell lines and clinical samples for analysis at a future date. It is not always possible to carry out all the analysis required on the day the sample is taken, and the ability to store samples for extended periods allows greater flexibility in study design.”

Medicinal chemist Phil Thorne, from BioCity-based Charnwood Molecular, points to the mass-production of laboratory glassware as a major turning point in the history of the laboratory. He explains: “Originally all experimental glassware was individually crafted for the scientist by glassblowers. The move to standardisation, helped by mass-production, means that glassware now comes with regular joint sizes. This allows the skilled scientist to assemble different combinations of glassware to suit the particular experiment, and ensure the assembly is leak-free!”

The top ten nominated objects will go into the Show’s ‘Hall of Fame’ on 25th May, and delegates will be asked to vote for their Number One object during the Show and conference.