Henri Bernard de Diesbach (1880 – 1970)

Professor of Chemistry, University of Fribourg

Henri Bernard de Diesbach was a distinguished Swiss chemist, academic, and civic leader. Born in **Fribourg in 1880**, he first pursued his studies in chemistry at the **University of Fribourg**, where he developed the scientific foundations that would guide his lifelong career. He then continued his education at the **University of Munich**, earning his **Doctorate in Science in 1906**.

From 1907 to 1919, he worked as a chemist in the research laboratories of **Badische Anilin und Soda Fabrik (BASF)** in Ludwigshafen, Germany, before returning to Switzerland to begin a distinguished academic career.

In **1920**, Henri de Diesbach was appointed **Professor of Inorganic Chemistry** at the **University of Fribourg**, later extending his chair to **Organic Chemistry** in 1932. He remained an influential figure there until his retirement in 1955. His research and teaching inspired generations of chemists, helping to establish the University of Fribourg as a centre of excellence in chemical sciences.

Professor de Diesbach also played a leading role in the broader scientific community. He served as **President of the Swiss Chemical Society (1932–1934)**, and as a **member of the editorial board** of *Helvetica Chimica Acta* (1944–1954), one of Europe's most respected chemistry journals. He was also elected **Rector of the University of Fribourg** and served as a **member of the Grand Council of the Canton of Fribourg** in 1921, reflecting his strong commitment to education and public service.

In recognition of his pioneering contributions, the **De Diesbach Chemical Landmark** was established to honour his role in advancing Swiss chemistry and his enduring impact on the University of Fribourg's scientific legacy.

Henri Bernard de Diesbach passed away in 1970, leaving behind a remarkable legacy of **scientific rigor, intellectual curiosity, and civic engagement**.

Legacy & Significance

Professor de Diesbach's long career in chemistry and academia, plus his civic involvement and family heritage, mark him as a figure of importance in Swiss scientific and academic history. His tenure at the University of Fribourg (35+ years) ensured he influenced generations of chemists and scholars. The combination of scholarship, institutional service, and public role makes him a fitting person in whose honour a lecture series could be established.