

Today in Chemistry History

25th July – Rosalind Franklin's birthday (1920) and DNA's structure



Rosalind Franklin

Born

25 July 1920

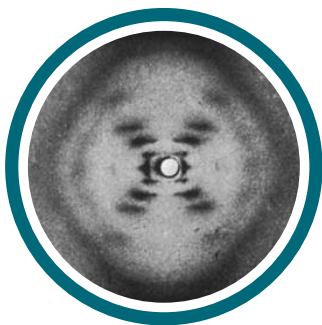
Died

16 April 1958

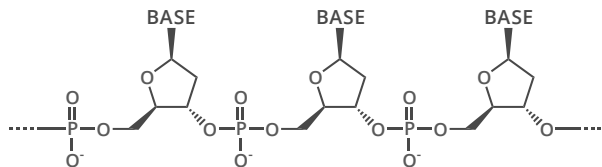


Rosalind Franklin was a chemist and X-ray crystallographer whose work was instrumental in the discovery of the structure of DNA. She missed out on a Nobel Prize for her work as they are not awarded posthumously.

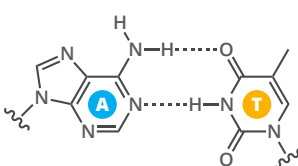
Photograph 51 and the structure of DNA



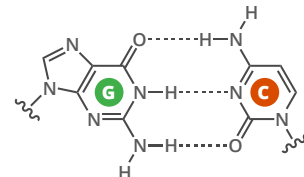
Photograph 51 is an X-ray diffraction image of DNA taken during Franklin's research. It was crucial in developing a model of DNA and confirming its double helical structure.



DNA is a polymer made up from monomers called nucleotides. A sugar phosphate backbone (above) forms the two strands, which are held together by hydrogen bonds between the bases found on these strands (below).



Adenine (A) & thymine (T)



Guanine (G) & cytosine (C)