

GLYCOPINION

Editor: RAYMOND A. DWEK

The Glycoconjugate Symposium in Toronto was remarkable for the number and diversity of the presentations made both in lectures and on posters, demonstrating once again the strength and range of this rapidly expanding field. The early sessions established a firm structural base from which the meeting proceeded to discuss the biosynthesis of glycoconjugates and their role in events such as transmembrane signalling, immune modulation, development, cancer and cell adhesion. It was evident that since the last meeting in Jerusalem, many advances have been made in the studies of enzymes, lectins, 'O' glycans, glycosaminoglycans and glycolipid receptors, both in mammalian and non-mammalian systems. The concluding session was given by some of Dr Saul Roseman's previous students and colleagues in recognition of his major contribution to the field. It was a fitting tribute as he celebrates his 70th birthday this year.

The co-chairmen of the meeting, Professors Harry Schacter and Jeremy Carver, following the traditions set by a long line of distinguished past chairmen, succeeded in organizing an excellent symposium for more than 800 people. In addition to being both efficient and intense, it retained a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. The informal discussions around posters and in eating places underlined the fact that the formal presentations represented only a small percentage of the impressive and challenging research being undertaken.

Many factors contribute to the rate of progress in any field; not the least of these is good communication. The *Glycoconjugate Journal*, which published the indispensable

volume of abstracts, fulfilled a major and much appreciated role and was proud to be an integral part of such a meeting. The aim of the journal, and of this column in particular, is to highlight the leading edges of the field, to encourage vigorous debate, to build bridges between disciplines and to bring together the complementary skills of academic and industrial scientists. The distinguished editorial board represent a broad range of disciplines and will, by their wide experience, help to shape the future of the journal.

It is clear that this field offers a rapidly expanding base for the applications of chemical techniques in new and exciting areas of biology. The very complexity of carbohydrate structure offers further challenges for structural and synthetic chemists as well as for enzymologists. It is their work which will both provide the future tools for probing the role of glycoconjugates in biology and medicine and enable those embarking on such studies to build their research on a secure molecular base.

A number of contributions for *Glycopinion* have been invited; in addition, the editors would like to encourage scientists to submit mini-reviews which they feel address fundamental and challenging issues in the field. The first of these, by Dr J. Winkelhake from Cytel Corporation, will be on cell adhesion molecules, and will appear in the next issue.

Letters or comments relating to this article would be received with interest by Pauline Rudd, Assistant to the Special Advisory Editor, R. A. Dwek.

Announcements

EUROCARB VI, VIth European Symposium on Carbohydrate Chemistry, Edinburgh, Scotland, 8–13 September, 1991

Topics: Structural and conformational aspects of carbohydrates, Synthesis in relation to carbohydrates, Biochemical and medical aspects of carbohydrates. Industrial aspects will be integrated within the three themes.

Information: Dr John F. Gibson, EUROCARB VI, The Royal Society of Chemistry, Burlington House, London W1V 0BN, England.

International Perspectives in Glycobiology, at the University of Oxford, 15–18 September, 1991

A three-day conference bringing together industry and academia.

International leaders from industry, academia and government research institutions will meet to explore the issues and science associated with glycobiology. This high-level meeting will be held in Exeter College. Participants will stay and will dine in Exeter College. There will be five main sessions which will include presentations and discussions to enable further exploration of the subjects.