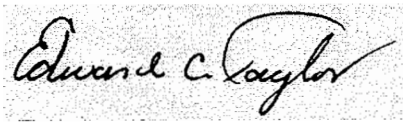
PREFACE

This special edition of HETEROCYCLES celebrates its 30th year of publication. Back in the early 1970s, I think it is fair to say that heterocyclic chemistry was still considered to be a specialty field of particular interest to natural product and medicinal chemistry, probably meriting special treatment in a specialized journal, but of peripheral interest to the large majority of mainstream organic chemists. How this situation has changed! Heterocycles are now thoroughly integrated into the warp and woof of almost all of organic and medicinal chemistry. The varied uses of heterocycles -- as structural motifs for new materials, as protecting groups, as unique solvents and reagents, as latent functionalities in organic synthesis, as chemical entities that can be modified and substituted, but then destroyed to create new, non-heterocyclic or heterocyclic products --constitute an integral part of modern synthetic methodology. Heterocylic compounds far outnumber aliphatic and carbocyclic compounds, and it has been estimated that some 85-90% of all publications today in organic chemistry utilize or are concerned in one way or another with heterocycles. The broad area of natural products -- alkaloids, DNA, vitamins, hormones, sugars, antibiotics, drugs, herbicides, insecticides, pesticides, dyes -- is dominated by heterocycles. So what is the role of a journal that aims to cover this immense field?

HETEROCYCLES is a quality journal dedicated to the presentation of new chemistry, the synthesis and properties of new heterocyclic systems, new applications and new properties of known heterocycles, and up-to-date reviews of specific topics. Its occasional compilations of new heterocyclic natural products, and new total syntheses of heterocyclic natural products, is simply invaluable, and this service now been supplemented by a recently launched, unique, internet-accessible database on the synthesis and/or structure of natural products with heterocyclic ring systems, covering the period 1975-2003.

The 30 years of HETEROCYCLES have mirrored, inspired and forecasted the current status of heterocycles in organic chemistry. The Editors have been exceptionally conscientious, with reviewing policies that are among the most penetrating, thorough and helpful in modern chemical publications. The contributions of this journal to the present-day significance of heterocyclic chemistry have been seminal, for which the entire community of chemists can be grateful.



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