# PREFACE

**by Steven V. Ley, University of Cambridge, UK**

## IN HONOR OF PROFESSOR LEO A. PAQUETTE AND ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 70TH BIRTHDAY

This is a great personal pleasure and honor to have been asked to write a preface for this special issue of *Heterocycles*. It is also a fairly rare event to honor an American scientist in this way. So, Leo, happy birthday for the 15th July!

Given Leo Paquette's distinguished career, it is not surprising however that a special issue is justified owing to his publication of over 1175 papers, 40 patents, 38 book chapters and 17 books (including edited volumes). The list of medals, prizes, lectureships, and other distinguished honors is equally impressive!

Leo came to Ohio State in 1963 to start his academic career and has been there ever since. When I joined his group as a postdoctoral fellow in 1972, I was greeted with his request that I would be expected to spend 60 hours a week in the lab. My reply was something like "Is that all, I was expecting to do much more?" This was obviously the correct reply and we became good friends from then on.

My work with Leo (Doc) began well in spite of having to devise methods to run columns at –78°C and run NMR spectra in $ND_3$. Our time together was a wonderful experience and lead to 12 publications.

This preface gives me the opportunity to say ‘thank you’ for my 2 years at Ohio State, but more importantly for the constant friendship and generous support I have received throughout my career. I can think of few people who shared their passion of chemistry so willingly and could still enjoy a quad bike race with you in the Hocking Hills at his ranch.

Leo’s chemical hallmark is everywhere and one only has to consult the Institute of Scientific Information to see that he has been ranked in the elite club of 100 most cited “ISI Highly Cited Researchers” ever since 1981.

His work on dodecahedrane still stands as one of the pinnacles of organic synthesis. In being one of the platonic solids, dodecahedranes in all sorts of guises and materials can be found everywhere. This work spawned a long-term fascination with polyquinane chemistry and opened up many new chapters in natural product chemistry. Moreover, these complex architectures led to tremendous advances in stereo-controlled synthesis being developed by the Paquette group and especially the anion oxy-Cope rearrangements and the separate cascade processes. We have all marvelled at the breadth of the target molecules which have been completed which include (from over 60) retigeranic acid, ikarugamycin, magellanine cleoeolide, epoxydictymene, taxusin, spinosyn A, teubrevin G, sclerophytin A, sanglifehrin A and jatrophatrione.

By picking out this area for special praise I realise that I have not done justice to the vast amount of other science to which Leo has made a fundamental contribution. But, Leo, we don’t need to! The world is richer because of the complete dedication and commitment you have made to organic chemistry. For this we thank you and hope this issue of *Heterocycles* plays some small part as a contribution to the recognition you deserve.

In this, your 70th birthday year, we give you, Estelle and the family best wishes from your loyal “Paquetters”.

SVL / VR
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