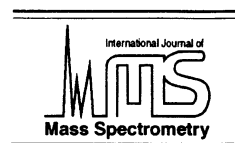




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Foreword

In this special issue of the International Journal of Mass Spectrometry the retirement of Dr. Nico M.M. Nibbering, professor of Chemical Mass Spectrometry at the University of Amsterdam, is honored by a collection of recent scientific publications of colleagues and former Ph.D. students, who find this a way to thank their great teacher in mass spectrometry. For all of us who have known Nico over all the years know that his open enthusiastic drive in sciences has been impossible to resist and upon the first encounter with Nico a start in mass spectrometry was every student's next step. Within The Netherlands Nico's activities had a great impact, which is reflected in a high level and density of mass spectrometers and students from his group. Many of them have created careers in mass spectrometry and have benefited from his never-ending support, not at all limited to The Netherlands, but with a worldwide coverage.

Nico's first scientific degree was a cum laude bachelor's degree in chemistry at the University of Amsterdam in 1960. Followed by his M.Sc also cum laude in 1964 at the same university he specialized in physical organic chemistry and obtained his Ph.D. degree cum laude in 1968 on "Mass spectrometry of some aralkyl compounds with a functional group in the side-chain", his promotor being Prof.dr. Th.J. de Boer. His career moved upwards via associate professor at the University of Amsterdam in 1975 to full professor of Organic Mass Spectrometry in 1980 and subsequently full professor of Chemical Mass Spectrometry in 1988 until his retirement. During this time period he was also scientific director of the Institute of Mass Spectrometry at the University of Amsterdam. An important scientific visit in the early days of his career has been the period spent in Prof. Fred. W.

McLafferty's laboratory at the Cornell University in Ithaca, USA in 1974.

Although the science was gas-phase ion chemistry driven, Nico's interests are much broader and significant achievements have been realized in instrumental and analytical technologies. For instance, modifying a drift-cell ICR-instrument for negative ions in the seventies, building an FT-ICR instrument at the end of the seventies for unraveling complex ion chemical pathways, developing field ionization/field desorption kinetics in the seventies/eighties as well as MALDI analysis of supramolecular structures in the nineties are just some examples. Being highly accessible for everybody with a problem or a desire to learn more in the field of mass spectrometry, many found their way to Nico's laboratory and an impressive series of publications resulted with chemists, physicists, biochemists, biologists, biomedical and pharmaceutical researchers and many others including visitors from other countries, who asked for his support never without success.

Energetic as always Nico has been on the board and member of many professional societies including a.o. member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences since 1989, member of the New York Academy of Sciences since 1995, member of the Royal Netherlands Chemical Society, Honorary member of the Netherlands Society for Mass Spectrometry, Honorary life member of the British Society for Mass Spectrometry and member of the Mass Spectrometry Societies in the US, Germany as well as member of many organizing committees of International Mass Spectrometry Conferences. He has been active within the Netherlands Science Foundation (NWO) and has been member of various scientific and

advisory boards for universities, industrial foundations and research institutes.

As Chairman of the European Society of Mass Spectrometry from 1997-2000 and as President of the International Mass Spectrometry Society since 2000 he has devoted his time to promote mass spectrometry and to reinforce the worldwide mass spectrometry community.

Editorial responsibilities have been part of his commitment to mass spectrometric sciences throughout his whole career a.o. co-editor of *Mass Spectrometry Reviews* 1991-2000, editor of the *Journal of Mass Spectrometry* 1995-2000 and editorial board member of *Organic Mass Spectrometry* 19989-1994, the *International Journal of Mass Spectrometry*, the *Journal of the American Society for Mass Spectrometry*, *Rapid Communications in Mass Spectrometry*, *Trends in Analytical Chemistry* 1986-1990 and the *Journal of Analytical and Applied Pyrolysis* 1979-1984.

He has received prestigious awards : Unilever Chemistry Prize in 1964, Shell Research Chemistry Prize in 1968, Thomson Award in 1991 and the Joannes Marcus Marci Award in 1992.

Over 60 plenary and keynote lectures all over the world have been delivered over the years and countless lectures, courses and inspiring contributions have highlighted his endless energy in spreading the power of mass spectrometry in a broad variety of scientific disciplines.

In total 38 Ph.D. students have obtained their Ph.D. degree with Nico and more than 400 publications are the result of a highly successful scientist. At the end of his career Nico's energy is still as high as in the beginning and a worldwide tour along his many scientific friends, discussing the latest ideas, is ongoing at the moment of this introductory summary and I can speak on behalf of all his students and scientific friends that we all like to thank Nico for his important contributions to our scientific education, his great example in scientific behavior and ambition. We all wish him and his wife Tini, known to the mass spectrometry community as well, a great healthy post-retirement life !

Jan van der Greef