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Journal of Chromatography A, 892 (2000) 1

JOURNAL OF
CHROMATOGRAPHY A

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Foreword

Many were seduced by the idea that a new millennium was a turning point in the history of mankind. A little wiser after the celebration we realize that it forms but a small part of life's continuum, barely distinguishable from the year before or after it. Still it provided an icon for celebrations throughout the world and for contemplation in quiet times. In my case it also provided an opportunity to organize Analytical Separations 2000 on behalf of Elsevier Science.

The purpose of the meeting was to summarize current understanding of chromatography as a springboard for speculation on the directions this fascinating and varied field would take in the next decade and possibly beyond. To achieve this goal about 70 prominent chromatographers from around the world were invited to attend the symposium and contribute their expertise and knowledge to the project. Their ideas are set out in this special volume of the *Journal of Chromatography A* and in the accompanying special issue of the *Journal of Chromatography B*. To provide an even coverage of topics with appropriate breadth and depth to do justice to such a common tool as chromatography, and in defense of our multitalented group of authors, I should point out that I provided each author with a topic area to cover. The way this topic should be covered, however, was left entirely to the author.

Each contribution was reviewed according to the normal policies of the Journal. It is hoped that the success of the meeting can be judged by the value of these special issues in capturing the spirit, enthusiasm and ingenuity propelling progress in chromatography today. For me it was a pleasant experience to participate in this endeavor and will remain one of my cherished memories of the "millennium experience".

All work would make for a dull experience. The secluded Kasteel Bloemendal provided an elegant reminder of the past with its woodlands and gardens creating the ambiance for relaxation and contemplation about the future. The food was wonderful, the wine plentiful and the company convivial. It would be difficult to ask for more. In these days where the success of symposia are often judged by their size, if only out of commercial necessity. I think I can speak for all, when I say that this meeting was memorable for elevating quality over quantity and for the excellence of both the science and social program.

As a final comment I would like to thank the staff of the *Journal Chromatography A* and *B* and Elsevier Science, who not only made it all possible, but fully deserve our praise for selecting the location and ensuring the smooth running of the meeting.

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