

Editorial

Dr A P Wolf

With the retirement of Dr Al Wolf as editor a long chapter in the history of the Journal comes to an end. Older members of the International Isotope Society (IIS) will remember that the Journal of Labelled Compounds, as it was originally called, was first published in 1965 by Presse Académiques Européennes in Brussels. The Journal was devoted to publication of papers on the synthesis, purification, analysis, autoradiolysis and storage of labelled compounds and also contained abstracts of papers, frequently presented at conferences. The Journal was published quarterly with J. Sirchis, Directorate General for Research and Training, EURATOM as "Editor-in Chief".

Al Wolf was one of the four founding editors, N. Hayes (Los Alamos), A. T. Balaban (Bucharest) and P. Osinski (Louvain) being the others. They were supported by both an editorial board as well as an advisory board. In 1974 John Wiley and Sons Ltd. assumed responsibility for publishing the journal which in 1976 took on its present title with a revised list of editors - Al, Balaban and Osinski remained and J. R. Catch (Amersham), G. Stöcklin (Julich) and T. W. Whaley (Los Alamos) joined. The editorial board was disbanded but an advisory board of some 24 internationally acclaimed scientists retained. In 1978 the journal was produced bi-monthly and Tony Evans took over from John Catch as one of the editors. In due course all of the editors retired, except Al, who by the end of 1998 will have rendered 33 years service to the journal, a record that is unlikely to be broken.

Al Wolf began his career as a physical organic chemist after his education had been interrupted by World War II, when he spent some time working on the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos. In 1951 he joined the chemistry department at Brookhaven National Laboratory which had been set up as a multi-disciplinary facility dedicated to the peace time applications of atomic energy. His early research was in the area of "hot atom" chemistry, which as well as providing new routes to the labelling of organic compounds, provided much needed information to control the chemistry occurring in accelerator targets.

By the 1960's his research interests had moved on to developing radiotracers labelled with short-lived positron emitters such as ^{11}C and ^{18}F and much of this pioneering work was brought together in a monograph Al wrote with his colleague Joanna Fowler entitled 'The Synthesis of Carbon-11, Fluorine-18 and Nitrogen-13 Labelled Radiotracers for Biomedical Applications'. He was chairman of the 1st International Symposium on Radiopharmaceutical Chemistry, the 12th having taken place recently in Uppsala. In 1997 he was honoured by the International Isotope Society with the Melvin Calvin Award in recognition of his many contributions to the field of isotopic labelling and radiopharmaceuticals. Indeed his pivotal role in the development and application of ^{18}F - fluorodeoxyglucose for the study of neurological and psychiatric disorders is largely responsible for the current worldwide growth in the use of PET for basic and clinical research. In the process his basic and applied studies have greatly advanced molecular nuclear medicine and the neurosciences.

Those who worked with Al Wolf testify to his rigorous mechanistic approach to problems both in the chemical and biological sciences. This was combined with an intellectual curiosity, imagination and enthusiasm which greatly stimulated the many scientists who spent time in his

laboratories. In fact most of the cyclotron-PET centres around the world have staff who, to their great advantage, worked with Al Wolf at Brookhaven.

In thanking Dr Wolf for his long and outstanding service to the Journal we also wish him well for the future. We are also grateful to Dr Tony Evans and Dr J Fowler for supplying us with information relating to Dr Wolf's career.

Professor Bengt Långström

Professor Långström who will deal with the radiopharmaceutical papers in Europe studied at Umeå University for his first degree and at Uppsala University for his PhD. His long association with the latter institute remains as he is now a professor of chemistry there as well as director of their internationally recognised PET centre. Professor Långström was chairman of the 12th international symposium on radiopharmaceutical chemistry which was held in Uppsala in 1997.

He has published some 270 papers in chemistry journals and another 320 papers in the area of life science and medicine. During the course of his research a large number of e.g. ^{11}C , ^{15}O , ^{18}F and ^{76}Br labelled compounds have been synthesised and new developments in analytical procedures and technology e.g. the use of supercritical fluids quickly used to full advantage.

Professor Robert F. Dannals

Professor Dannals received his BA, MA and PhD degrees from John Hopkins University where he is now Professor of Radiology and Radiological Sciences as well as the Director of the Positron Emission Tomography Center. His research, which has led to the publication of some 160 papers and over 20 book chapters, has largely been concerned with the development of short-lived radiotracers for positron emission tomography and single photon emission computed tomography. He co-edited the well known book on Nuclear Imaging in Drug Discovery, Development and Approval.

Professor Dannals will look after the radiopharmaceutical papers in North America and like Professor Långström will take up his duties in January. The Journal is particularly fortunate in being able to attract two such distinguished editors to follow in the footsteps of Dr Al Wolf.

J. R. Jones
3/11/98

E. Buncel