

Preface



Professor Brian F.G. Johnson

Continuing the tradition of the *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry* to dedicate issues to eminent chemists in the field, this issue is dedicated to Professor Brian F.G. Johnson on the occasion of his 60th birthday. Brian was born in Northampton on the 11th September 1938. He received his B.Sc. in 1960 and his Ph.D. in 1963 from the University of Nottingham. His Ph.D. studies were carried out under the supervision of Cliff L. Addison. Brian then moved to Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he spent one year working with Professor F. Albert Cotton. In 1964 Brian returned to England, working as a research fellow with Professor Jack Lewis at the University of Manchester, which turned into a lectureship in due course. This marked the beginning of a long and fruitful partnership with Jack Lewis and they moved together on two occasions, first to University College London in 1967 and then to the University of Cambridge in 1970. At

Cambridge the Johnson–Lewis group flourished and became a world leader in the chemistry of transition metal carbonyls. However, in 1991 Brian moved to the University of Edinburgh where he became the Crum Brown Professor of Chemistry and in the same year he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society and in 1992 Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. In 1995 Brian returned to the University of Cambridge as Professor of Inorganic Chemistry.

Brian's contribution to the field of organometallic chemistry has been enormous with publications in the region of 800. Perhaps the most significant aspect of Brian's work which most people would associate with him is his investigation into transition metal clusters of ruthenium and osmium. This includes many different facets such as the design of rational synthetic routes to these compounds together with detailed reactivity studies. Much emphasis was placed on the structural char-

acterisation of these intriguing compounds and several pioneering papers describe the application of new spectroscopic and analytical techniques to cluster compounds. In solution the structure of clusters is less clear and the Johnson Polyhedral Model was developed to rationalise certain fluxional processes which take place. Brian's chemistry is continually moving forward and his most recent investigations with Sir John M. Thomas have shown that clusters are extremely effective catalysts, which has been a matter of much debate in the organometallic community until now. Other recent work includes the gas phase preparation of very large metal clusters containing in the region of 300 metal atoms, a huge leap forward.

Brian's extensive research interests reflect the enthusiasm and energy he has for his subject. Without doubt Brian has been a true ambassador to organometallic chemistry and as such he has been the recipient of numerous awards and distinctions including The Royal Society of Chemistry Corday–Morgan Medal and Prize (1976) and Award for Chemistry and Electrochemistry of Transition Metals (1984). Other recognitions of his work include: University of Otago Mellor Visiting Fellow in Chemistry (1971); Chini Commemoration Lecturer at the University of Milan (1980); Simon Fraser

University Visiting Professor (1982); University of Wisconsin Visiting Professor (1985); Texas A & M University Visiting Professor (1986); 3e Cycle Lecturer (1988); Pacific West Coast Inorganic Lecturer (1988); Tilden Lecturer (1988/89); Mond Centenary Lecturer (1989); University of Minnesota Kolthoff Lecturer (1991); Lund University Visiting Professor (1994) and University of Modena Visiting Professor (1995). Brian is also well known for his inspirational approach to teaching chemistry and this aspect of his work is demonstrated by the number of institutions throughout the world in which he has acted as examiner.

Brian's commitment to chemistry remains as strong now as ever before and he is currently the President of the Royal Society of Chemistry Dalton Division. We are sure that all Brian's students, co-workers and colleagues will join us in wishing him a very happy birthday and hope that the symposium held in his honour is a truly memorable occasion.

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