

Editorial

This special Symposium issue brings together many of the invited lectures presented at the Second International Symposium on Drug Analysis held in Brussels from 27 to 30 May 1986. This meeting was organised at the Catholic University of Louvain (Woluwe) in Brussels under the chairmanship of Professor R. Bouché. It followed the highly acclaimed first Symposium in the series, organised in Brussels by the Société Belge des Sciences Pharmaceutiques in 1983, the proceedings of which were published in the *Journal of Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Analysis* 1 (4), 381–572 (1983).

The Organising Committee wisely followed the successful format developed for the earlier Symposium in having Plenary Review Lectures, presented by acknowledged experts in their fields, together with parallel sessions where each of the two streams was introduced by a Keynote Lecturer of international standing. The Symposium opened with an inaugural Plenary Lecture presented in characteristically polished and urbane style by Dr C.A. Johnson (Scientific Director and Secretary of the British Pharmacopoeia Commission). This was followed by a number of Plenaries on successive days reviewing the field of analytical endeavour in the pharmaceutical sciences, ranging from automation in HPLC, dissolution testing and bioavailability, to aspects of drug purity and biological radioreceptors.

Consistent with the high standards established for this Symposium series, the Keynote topics provided an up-to-date overview across the whole panoply of pharmaceutical and biomedical analysis, from mass spectrometry, X-ray diffraction and thermal analysis, through to immunoassays and chromatographic methods. The principal themes of the Brussels Symposium were well illustrated by over 200 oral papers and posters, presented by authors emanating from more than 30 countries. These themes, which included quality control of natural and synthetic raw materials, formulation analysis, bioanalysis and automation, were illustrated by a series of enjoyable late-afternoon discussion sessions. In these, the authors of posters in particular were invited to take an active part in making short, informal presentations for critical discussion by fellow participants.

The Belgian Organisers are to be warmly congratulated on their choice of venue, where the lecture theatre and poster-presentation facilities were of a high standard, with ample room for the more than 300 delegates to meet one another, discuss, drink coffee or spend time viewing the small but informative commercial Exhibition. Although a transport strike created considerable difficulties for delegates travelling from downtown Brussels to the university campus, the Organising Committee did an excellent job in providing buses to overcome the problem. The social programme continued the high standards established in the earlier Symposium and included a Reception in the magnificent "Palace of the Governor of Brabant", followed later in the week by a Dinner in the Arcade of the "Cinquantenaire", with its panoramic views over the city of Brussels.

All in all this was an excellent Symposium, organised with meticulous, analytical attention to detail, and giving the most discerning delegate a broad overview of the

contemporary analytical scene. As Editors of this international journal, it is our privilege to have collaborated with the Organising Committee in publishing the invited papers collected in this Symposium issue. We speak for many in hoping that the Belgian Organisers will continue this superb series of international meetings by undertaking the organisation of a further symposium focused on advances in the field of analysis in the pharmaceutical sciences.

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