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MEETING REPORT

Report on the 11th Annual British Liquid Crystal Society Meeting

1-3 April 1996

University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK

This year's meeting was held at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston and was attended by 185 delegates. The meeting was organized jointly by Professor Mike Holmes and Dr Richard McCabe and took place in the recently completed Harrington conference facilities. It provided a lively interchange of information on a wide variety of topics, led by the invited speakers who covered four important areas of interest. The Ben Sturgeon Memorial Lecture was delivered Professor Bill Doane from Kent State University. His up-to-the-minute presentation dealt with reflective cholesteric liquid crystal displays and the progress that has been made in developing low cost, low power and high-resolution displays capable of delivering the type of switching rates that will make them serious rivals to the printed page. He provided his audience with both the scientific background and the challenges remaining before commercial displays of this type are available.

In an invited lecture entitled 'Nematic Micellar Phases: Experimental Facts and Theoretical Problems' Professor Bertil Halle from the Condensed Matter Resonance Group at Lund University, Sweden outlined some new NMR results from lyotropic nematic phases, used them to understand the shape and evolution of the micellar structure and went on to elegantly outline their limitations for lyotropic systems. The invited lecture by Professor Robert Deschenaux of the Institut de Chimie of the Université de Neuchâtel, Switzerland reviewed the synthesis and development of ferrocene based mesomorphic materials. His presentation managed to convey clearly and enthusiastically the methods available to synthetic chemists in their search for new and interesting compounds. The final invited lecture was by Professor Harry Coles, University of Southampton. His lecture was on the progress that has been made in the area of organosiloxane polymer liquid crystals and their ability to ruggedly store information. The lecture included a discussion of the development of these materials as commercial devices and the interesting scientific challenges they raise.

There were 21 oral and 80 poster presentations of very high quality covering a wide variety of topics ranging from synthetic chemistry, through device construction to mathematical modelling. It reinforces the multidisciplinary nature of the field of liquid crystals and stimulated a high level of scientific



John Goodby receives the George Gray Medal presented at the 1996 BLCS Conference.

discussion. Dr G. Bryan-Brown from DRA, Malvern delivered the British Liquid Crystal Society Young Scientist Lecture entitled 'Non-rubbed liquid crystal alignment and applications' and was awarded his prize at the conference dinner. The prize for the best oral presentation of the conference was awarded to Dominic Mikulin from the Physics Department at the University of Exeter and the poster prize was awarded to Emily Corsellis, Institut de Physique et Chimie des Matériaux de Strasbourg. In keeping with the ethos of the conference, many of the presentations were given by young researchers in their chosen fields, and in general, the quality of the work presented was excellent. It was clear that much effort had gone into the preparation of both the talks and the posters.

The organizers would like to thank all the people who attended the conference for making it such a success. In addition Taylor & Francis Ltd. and Lancaster Synthesis are thanked for sponsoring the conference.

PRODUCT NEWS

Introducing the new VGA1 Spatial Light Modulator from CRL

The compact VGA1 from CRL is a new generation in high resolution spatial light modulators. Based on a TFT twisted nematic LCD, the VGA1 is a black and white 640 × 480 array that interfaces directly to the monitor output of a PC, and behaves as though it is the computer's display.

The VGA1 has been designed for use as a low-cost input device for optical processing systems, helmet-mounted displays, miniature displays, low power marking systems and other applications requiring a compact high resolution device. With its greyscale capability and compact design, the VGA1 is perfectly suited to systems integration.

Further information from

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