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CCMM'98 Chemistry and Characterization of Mesophase Materials

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Although the *International Liquid Crystal Conference* in Strasbourg in July 1998 was a most notable exception, it is unfortunately true that the chemistry content of many liquid crystal meetings is painfully low. This fact, along with a strong desire to show the growing commonality of work in thermotropic and lyotropic liquid crystals, and in block copolymers, was enough to persuade a group of scientists in Bayreuth that it might be timely to organize a meeting primarily to present results on the chemistry and characterization of these mesophase materials. So, from 7–9 October 1998, around 100 delegates from the USA to Japan, via Europe, congregated in the old Franconian city of Bayreuth for two-and-a-half days of synthesis and structure under the title **CCMM'98**.

The meeting was organized by Dr Günter Lattermann, Professor Hans-Werner Schmidt and Dr Peter Strohriegel, and they chose to dedicate the meeting to the memory of their colleague, Professor Reimund Stadler, who had originally been an organizer, but tragically had died earlier in the year at the age of only 41.

MEETING REPORT

CCMM'98

Chemistry and
Characterization of
Mesophase Materials

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CCMM'98 was a mixture of short and long talks, and posters, and each session was characterized by lively and vigorous debate. The oral sessions were organized into thematically mixed blocks, and this served well to illustrate that there was much in common between the subject areas which formed the themes for the meetings, rather than to emphasize any artificial taxonomy.

Through a well-organized *BPP* (Bier, Pretzels und Posters) session and the next evening's *Franconian Brotzeit* featuring

many local specialities, the meeting developed an excellent spirit and atmosphere, which continued through to the last evening with a most marvellous dinner at the Schloss Thiergarten on the outskirts of the town.

For me, and I suspect everyone else who attended the meeting, it was a joy from beginning to end because it addressed the often underplayed relationship between structure and property which fundamentally underpins new developments in liquid crystals; so-called 'banana mesogens' and nanolithography by means of mesostructures formed by organic–inorganic hybrid materials, are only two of the more recent examples of what I mean. Thinking back only 15 or so years, the field of liquid crystal chemistry was predominantly about rods and discs. How things have changed. The synthetic chemist, in collaboration with structural chemists and physicists, is now having a field day which was previewed so well in Demus' excellent review given at the 1988 *International Conference* in Freiburg [1]. So congratulations to the organizers for a wonderful meeting and to the participants for some very exciting science!

Reference

- 1 DEMUS, D., 1989, *Liq. Cryst.*, 5, 75.



In memoriam of Professor Pier Luigi Nordio, 1936–1998

An appreciation
by C. Zannoni
Bologna University, Italy

It is with deep regret that we bring to the attention of the liquid crystal community the untimely death, on 20 October 1998, of Pier Luigi Nordio, Professor of Theoretical Chemistry at Padova University (Italy), and author of many important contributions to the theory of liquid crystals.