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## Liquid Crystals Today

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## International Conference on Liquid Crystal Polymers, 6-9 September 1994, Beijing, China

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# MEETING REPORTS

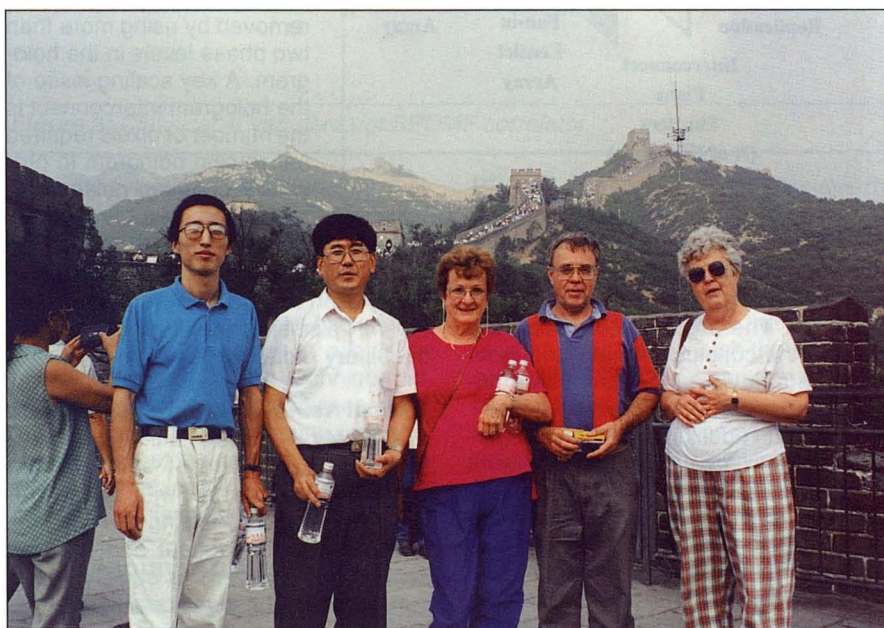
## ***International Conference on Liquid Crystal Polymers, 6-9 September 1994, Beijing, China, reported by Q F Zhou, Conference Chairman (Peking University) and X J Wang, Conference Secretary (Tsinghua University).***

Under the sponsorship of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) and the Chinese Chemical Society, the International Conference on Liquid Crystal Polymers was held at the Twenty-First Century Hotel, Beijing from 6-9 September. The conference provided a forum for scientists in the field of liquid crystal polymers (LCP) to meet and discuss their work, to exchange new ideas and information, and to anticipate the future of LCPs. One hundred and twelve papers written by 295 authors from 17 countries were presented to about 100 scientists who participated in the conference. The programme included 17 invited lectures, 36 oral presentations and posters.

The presentations dealt with molecular design and syntheses, characterisation and structure, manufacturing and processing, composites, rheology and dynamics, theory, computer simulation, device physics and applications. The success of this conference was guaranteed by the presence of many noted scientists and by the high quality of the submissions.

After the opening ceremony, Prof J Economy (Illinois, USA), who was also the IUPAC representative gave his overview lecture on "Cross-linkable vs. linear LC copolyesters", in which recent progress on characterising the nature of the high temperature chemical processes in the liquid crystalline aromatic copolyester was described. How to redesign the linear aromatic copolyesters into cross-linkable systems was discussed. This was followed by Prof G R Luckhurst, ILCS President (Southampton, UK) on "Liquid crystal oligomers: experiment and theory". He addressed the effect of flexible spacers for liquid crystal oligomers, including the even-odd effect and nematic-nematic transition for odd spacers. His conclusion was that the oligomers are excellent models for semi-flexible main chain LCPs.

Prof H Finkelmann (Freiburg, Germany) presented work on the smectic phases induced by applying a suitable mechanical field to cross-linked LCPs. These elastomers exhibit ferroelectric properties, or second harmonic generation and piezoelectricity.



*Visiting the Great Wall of China at Ba-da-ling after the IUPAC Conference at Beijing this summer were (l to r) Shi Donghui, Prof Xu Shouyi, Mrs Shirley Doane, Prof W Doane and Elaine Landry.*

The group from Kent State (Ohio, USA) led by Prof W Doane reported polymer stabilised and modified liquid crystals for display and light shutter applications. The photo-initiated polymerisation in liquid crystal environments formed an anisotropic network. Conversely, the polymer network modified some properties of liquid crystals, such as the orientation and elastic constants. They demonstrated a prototype of bistable switching, having grey scale memory, and a wide viewing angle for reflective display modes.

Prof V Percec, (Case Western Reserve, USA), Prof H Wendorff (Marburg, Germany), Prof N Ogata (Sophia) and Prof J I Jin (Korea University) presented their work on design and structure control, and the organisation and features of LCPs. Prof H W Spiess (Max-Planck Institute for Polymers, Germany) presented detailed multi-dimensional studies on the structure, dynamics, ordering and conformation of LCPs.

Prof G Galli (Pisa, Italy) presented a study on the electroclinic effect of chiral LCPs in the smectic phase, which show very fast response. Prof R Qian (Academia Sinica, China) outlined the advances in the observation of

disclinations in main chain nematic polymers, Prof V P Shibaev (Moscow, Russia) investigated the photo-induced orientation of comb-shaped azobenzene-containing copolyester. A reversible cis-trans conformational change of the side chain was observed due to an interaction with laser beam irradiation.

Many other interesting presentations were given which we can only mention in passing, e.g. those on the electric field effect and nonlinear optical properties of LCPs (C Noel, Z H Luo and M Li), the jacket effect probed by neutron scattering (F Hardouin); computer simulation on nonlinear rheology (Y Yang); theoretical description of semi-flexible nematic polymers (X J Wang), ferroelectric LCPs (L C Chien, M Svennson and G Scherowsky); conducting LCPs (M Mauzac, L I Gabaston and G P van der Laan); conformation and local structure (Q Zhou and X Wang); banded texture study (W Song).

Apart from the Conference Proceedings, the invited lectures and a few selected presentations will be collected in a special issue of *Macromolecular Symposia* and some papers will be published in the *Chinese Journal of Polymer Science* (English edition).