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Liquid Crystals Today

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Liquid Crystals Institutionalized at Southampton

A new initiative by the University of Southampton in the area of interdisciplinary science has created the first Liquid Crystal Institute in Europe. In the United Kingdom, Southampton has been a centre for liquid crystal research for more than twenty years, and in 1995 the established strengths in the Departments of Chemistry (with George Attard, Jim Emsley and Geoffrey Luckhurst) and Mathematics (with Tim Sluckin) were reinforced by the arrival of Harry Coles and his liquid crystal group in the Department of Physics. These different groups have

now been brought together through the Southampton Liquid Crystal Institute (SLCI), which will foster interdisciplinary research in all areas of liquid crystal science and technology. The Institute was formally launched by Professor Howard Newby, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Southampton, at an Inaugural Meeting on 9 January 1997. In addressing a large invited audience of academics and industrialists from the United Kingdom liquid crystal community, Professor Newby emphasized his vision of interdisciplinary science, and the commitment of the University of Southampton to support new alignments in scientific disciplines.

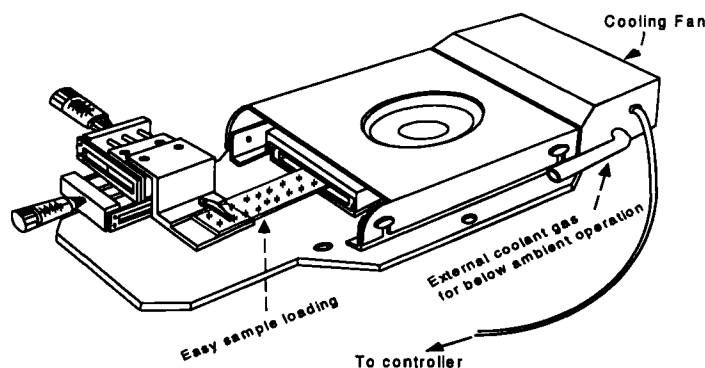
The highlight of the Inaugural Meeting was a wide-ranging lecture by Kyoto Laureate, Professor George Gray, entitled 'The World of Liquid

Crystals', which fascinated and intrigued his audience. As Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Liquid Crystal Institute and a Visiting Professor in the Department of Chemistry, Professor Gray has close links with liquid crystal activities at Southampton. At the Inaugural Meeting a poster display demonstrated the breadth of liquid crystal research at the SLCI, and with 40 associated faculty and researchers, the Institute is well-placed to make a major contribution to liquid crystal science. Further information on the facilities and activities of the Southampton Liquid Crystal Institute can be obtained from its Director, Professor Harry Coles (Physics), or from the liquid crystal group leaders, Professor Geoffrey Luckhurst (Chemistry) and Professor Tim Sluckin (Mathematics).

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