

Conference report

Macromolecular Engineering: Recent Advances 2nd International Polymer Conference on Advanced Polymers via Macromolecular Engineering (APME '97), Orlando, Florida, USA, 19–23 April 1997

After the idea of a conference based on the theme 'Macromolecular Engineering' conceived in 1992, we have organized two international conferences including APME '97. The idea of the conference was to bring the researchers together and to have a forum for addressing the advances in macromolecular engineering. This is what exactly happened and the APME '97 conference was very successful.

APME '97 was organized and sponsored by the Polymer Frontiers International, Inc. The organizing committee consisted of co-chairmen Dr. M. K. Mishra (USA), Professor O. Nuyken (Germany), Professor S. Kobayashi (Japan), and Professor Y. Yagci (Turkey); honorary co-chairman Professor M. Kamachi (Japan); and associate chairperson and coordinator Dr. B. Sar (from PFI, USA). This was truly a global conference; about 250 participants attended, from over 25 countries.

The conference was officially opened early on the morning of 20 April 1997 and was followed by over 150 presentations which concluded in the afternoon of 23 April 1997. The technical program ended with a panel discussion on the future advances of macromolecular engineering. The panel included seven distinguished international scientists representing academia and industry and was chaired by Professor J. P. Kennedy of the University of Akron. The panel discussed the future research areas on the advanced field of polymer science and the challenges that we are facing today and beyond. It was stressed that the balance between applied and basic research should be maintained. There were a considerable number of discussions during the panel session.

TECHNICAL PROGRAM

The scientific program covered recent advances in macromolecular engineering. The technical program was categorized by over a dozen subsections such as Advances in Polymerization and Processes; Molecular Modeling, Networks, Blends, and Composites; Fluoropolymers; Supramolecular Polymers; Polymer Analysis and Proper-

ties; Bio-related Polymers; Polymers in Coatings, Electronics, and Photonics; Star-branched Polymers; Block and Graft Copolymers; Iniferters/Macroiniferters; Macromonomers; Photopolymerization; Functional Materials and Monomers. These areas covered almost all advanced fields of polymer science. The majority of presentations included the synthetic aspects of recent advances in polymer science. The application of novel polymers in many advanced areas including bio-medical applications was discussed. There were so many distinguished scientists and so many interesting presentations, it is extremely difficult to describe to the reader all the aspects of this conference. However, a glance at the APME '97 Book of Abstracts will provide a hint.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Certainly an international conference would not be complete without social events. Despite the heavy load of technical programs, we found time to relax for a little over half a day. A trip to the Kennedy Space Center was quite memorable. The weather was perfect and we had a good view of the Space Shuttle launching pad; we enjoyed the space shows, the IMAX movie on the launching of the Space Shuttle, and the rocket displays. It was breathtaking. Accompanying guests toured some of the local areas and shopping places. The banquet night was extremely enjoyable with a cake-cutting ceremony. The large cake decorated with the APME '97 logo and candles was spectacular. Scenes of the conference were captured by a professional photographer. Many participants took tours to nearby locations — Orlando is considered to be one of the most popular tourist attraction places in the USA.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The conference was supported by many industrial sponsors (Cytec Industries, Inc., USA; DSM Research, The Netherlands; Elsevier Science, Inc., USA; Ethyl Corporation, USA; Mitsubishi Chemical Corp., Japan; Monsanto Co., USA; Polymer Source, Inc., Canada; VSP, The Netherlands). The APME '97 conference provided us with a great opportunity for idea interchanges between researchers. We certainly made new friends and renewed many old acquaintances. We learned a great deal from each other during APME '97. Well, this is just another beginning! The third APME conference, i.e. APME '99, will be held in the USA in 1999. For further information on APME '99 please contact APME '99 Conference P.O. Box 4754, Glen Allen, VA 23058-4754, USA (E-mail: 203-5636@mcimail.com).

Co-chairmen of the APME '97 Conference