

Conference Report

CELLUCON 1986

The second international conference on the structure, biotechnology, and applications of wood and cellulose, organised by Cellucon Conferences, was held at Cartrefle College, North East Wales Institute, Wrexham, 14–18 July 1986.

Following the successful Cellucon '84 Conference in 1984, Cellucon Conferences held the second international conference in July 1986. It was a truly international conference with 160 delegates from 21 countries which ranged from Japan, Australia, USA and the African continent to mainland Europe. The conference was sponsored by the Biochemical Society, Biotechnics, Hoechst, the North East Wales Institute, US Air Force European Office of Aerospace Research and Development, US Army Research Development and Standardization Group (UK) and the Welsh Development Agency, and supported by the American Chemical Society, Berol Kemi, Courtaulds, the Ministry of Defence, Crown Decorative Products, Hercules and the Forestry Commission. Cellucon '86 was organised on similar lines to the previous conference with the scientific programme divided into three main sections with three or four sessions being devoted to each section.

The first section, on structure and properties, contained an introductory lecture by Mr A. Francis (Forestry Commission), a review lecture on the structure of cellulose (Professor A. Sarko, Syracuse) and 22 papers on various aspects of structure determination, analytical techniques and properties of cellulose and cellulose derivatives. The second section, on biotechnology, contained review lectures on the microbial degradation of wood (Dr T. W. Jeffries, Madison, USA) and fermentation of cellulose feedstocks (Professor M. Linko, Finland) and 14 papers on a wide range of biotechnology subjects from the high technology production of cellulolytic and molecular cloning of genes to enhance bacterial degradation of lignin to the low technology conversion of cardboard to protein enriched fodder and upgrading of straw by low temperature ammonia- tion for use as an animal feed. The third section, on industrial utilisation,

contained review lectures on chemical aspects of wood processing (Professor E. J. Gibson, Bangor), on properties and applications of cellulose ethers (Dr L. Dahlgren, Berol Kemi AB) and on recent progress in wood chemistry (Professor J. Nakano, Tokyo), and 26 papers on a wide variety of industrial applications ranging from increasing wood yields and storing/protecting wood and wood products to use of derivatives in paints, medical applications and food uses.

In addition to the presented papers, delegates were able to gain up to date information from a display of poster presentations and an exhibition of products and information from industrial companies, academic institutions and related organisations. The social programme combined a blend of Welsh art and history with visits to see planting and harvesting in a Welsh forest and to the Shotton Paper and Pulp Mill. The organisation of the conference was well executed to allow the large number of papers to be included (albeit with the aid of parallel sessions which were well organised and did not produce conflicting interests) whilst allowing time for informal discussions of the material. The standard of lecturing was very good with clear presentations from all speakers irrespective of their country of origin.

The proceedings of the conference will be published in early 1987 by Ellis Horwood, using a similar format to the Cellucon '84 proceedings (for a review, see *Carbohydrate Polymers* **6**, 81 (1986)), under the editorship of J. F. Kennedy, G. O. Phillips and P. A. Williams.

Cellucon '86 built on the success of the previous Cellucon Conference to provide an excellent forum for bringing together academic and industrial scientists from throughout the world and has demonstrated the need for a regular meeting of this type in the U.K. The next conference, planned for 1988 or 1989 is eagerly awaited. The production of a conference tie has produced another landmark in history, it being the first to feature a carbohydrate structure in the motif.

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