



Obituary

David Trimm 1937–2010



David Lawrence Trimm contributed to the progress of catalysis through his professional work for almost five decades. He graduated from the University of Exeter and got his PhD in 1961 and, after a postdoc period at Imperial College and at University of Chicago, he joined Imperial College as lecturer in the Department of Chemical Engineering and Chemical Technology (1963–1976).

During David's early years at Imperial College, he became one of the pioneers in studying and explaining the mechanism of carbon formation on metal catalysts. This resulted in a number of important publications and PhD degrees. His experience was applied in studies of the complex mechanism of coke formation in pyrolysis (steam cracking), with early work on the coupling of homogeneous and heterogeneous reactions. Later studies dealt with catalytic combustion with a view to practical applications and fuel conversion for fuel cell driven cars. David was currently engaged in research on making synfuels via acetylene. His achievements in catalysis are reflected by a large number of papers (286), many of which are highly cited (of which a selection is given below [1–6]). David's attitude to catalysis was focused on the applications as reflected by his ambitious book "Design of Industrial Catalysts" (1980).

After a few years as professor in Trondheim (1976–1979) David moved to Australia, which became his home. He continued the scientific work as professor at the University of New South Wales where he functioned as Head of School of Chemical Engineering and Industrial Chemistry for two periods (in total, 18 years) until he was

appointed to the prestigious position of Scientia Professor in 2001. At the same time, he contributed to the analysis of the feasibility of GTL projects for Australia through his work at CSIRO (2000–) where he was appointed CSIRO Fellow in 2007 and as advisor to the government on numerous committees. David mastered the ability to be the link between science, industry and policy-making bodies.

David served as regional editor in the first editorial team of Applied Catalysis; this was launched in 1981 with Bernard Delmon as Editor-in-Chief. He was also on the advisory board for several journals in the field. David was one of the founders of the Natural Gas Conversion Symposia (NGCS) in 1987 and he received the NGCS Award in 2007; he was also behind the APCAT conferences and instrumental in creating the APCAS organization (Asia Pacific Association of Catalysis) in 2004.

David was strict on scientific principles but had a great heart when dealing with people. He was an inspiring team leader and, with his sense of humor and his charm, he was able to create a strong worldwide network of friends, many of whom have enjoyed his and Gabi's hospitality in their home at Watson Bay.

We are many who will miss David.

Some highly cited publications by David Trimm:

- [1] D.L. Trimm, Z.I. Önsan, Onboard fuel conversion for hydrogen-fuel-cell-driven vehicles, *Catal. Rev.-Sci. Eng.* 43 (1–2) (2001) 30–84.
- [2] D.L. Trimm, Catalysts for the control of coking during steam reforming, *Catal. Today* 49 (1–3) (1999) 3–10.
- [3] D.L. Trimm, Formation and removal of coke from nickel catalyst, *Catal. Rev.* 16 (2) (1977) 155–189.
- [4] J. Rostrup-Nielsen, D.L. Trimm, Mechanisms of carbon formation on nickel-containing catalysts, *J. Catal.* 48 (1–3) (1977) 155–165.
- [5] J.H. Lee, D.L. Trimm, Catalytic combustion of methane, *Fuel Process. Technol.* 42 (2–3) (1995) 339–359.
- [6] C.J. Jiang, D.L. Trimm, M.S. Wainwright, N.W. Cant, Kinetic mechanism for the reaction between methanol and water over a Cu–ZnO–Al₂O₃ catalyst, *Appl. Catal. A: Gen.* 97 (2) (1993) 145–158.

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Available online 16 December 2010