

Anglo-French NMRDG-GERM Meeting
Southampton 4-7 September 2002

Location: This was at Highfield Hall and the Avenue Campus of Southampton University. This was a very convenient location with the accommodation and scientific meeting in adjacent buildings. Lunches were taken at the conference site and were dealt with efficiently. Breakfast and dinner on Wednesday and Friday were in the Hall. The Wednesday dinner serving was rather inefficient. The conference dinner on Thursday at the University was excellent. The local organisation worked extremely well. For example, the audio-visual arrangements were very satisfactory and access was provided for delegates to deal with their e-mails. The cost appeared to be reasonable.

Attendance: This was about 134 according to the attendance list which was circulated with e-mail addresses - a useful document. Of these, about 69 were from France (or Belgium), with some participants traveling long distances, there were 46 scientific participants from the UK with 6 from Germany and three from other countries (Australia, Brazil, Israel) who were probably already visiting the UK. In addition the numbers included about 10 company personnel covering the exhibition stands, again another useful innovation for these short meetings. It seemed to me that the French participants had made significant efforts to attend from as far away as Lyon and Toulouse and the numbers from the UK were slightly disappointing. The attendance from NMR spectroscopists in the UK pharmaceutical industry was sparse. This may have been a consequence of the broad scientific program.

Scientific Program: This was very well constructed, comprising invited lectures of 40 minutes with contributed talks of 20 minutes, with time allowed for questions and with equal participation from both nations. Sessions covered many diverse aspects of NMR spectroscopy, including protein and peptide structures and dynamics, small molecule studies in chemistry, biochemistry and biology, solid state chemistry and biology, membranes and other oriented systems and methods development - particularly pulse sequences for solids. In addition, over 50 posters were presented at two poster sessions at the meeting. Overall, personally, I felt that the program was balanced and offered something of interest to everyone and, in my case, it was certainly an opportunity for a two-way transfer of ideas from one field of application to another.

Summary: An innovative, efficiently-run, well-structured, scientifically-diverse meeting which can be judged a success. If further occasional meetings of a bi-national basis are suggested, then they should be considered positively.

John Lindon
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