

The 6th International NMR Meeting, Edinburgh, July 10-15 1983

A report by J.W. Emsley, Chairman of the Organising Committee

The previous five International Meetings organised by the NMR Discussion Group of the RSC were held at intervals of three years, but the growth of the applications of NMR was felt to warrant more frequent conferences, and so two years following Exeter saw a gathering at Edinburgh. The attractions of that city, plus the insatiable appetites of NMR spectroscopists to confer, gave rise to a record attendance of 500, who flocked to hear news of the applications of NMR in chemistry, physics, biology and medicine.

Eight symposia and two poster sessions, each containing about sixty presentations, cannot adequately be described here. A meeting whose unifying theme is a technique, no matter how versatile, does not develop the cut and thrust of debate which can enliven smaller conferences devoted to a narrower topic, and at Edinburgh the prevalent mood was celebratory. The subject is buoyant, and everyone is excited by the superb pulsed spectrometers and the ingenuity of those who develop new experiments to aid in the solution of ever more complex problems. These International Meetings have always aimed to provide a forum for all those who use NMR and to be an opportunity to hear talks on a wide range of topics. Whether such a broad scope can be maintained at future meetings without limiting in some way the number of participants is uncertain. Placing a restriction on the topics represented at the meetings would I believe be a mistake, for example, I suspect that most chemists welcome the opportunity on these occasions to hear about the developments in NMR imaging and its uses in clinical medicine.

Edinburgh proved to be a magnificent venue, not least because of the hard work and enthusiasm contributed by Professor Evelyn Ebsworth and his colleagues in Edinburgh who made sure that this large meeting proceeded efficiently, but also with its usual conviviality.