


PREFACE

The current special issue of *Heterocycles* is dedicated to Professor James P. Kutney on the occasion of his 70th birthday. I am delighted to contribute the preface to this splendid recognition of a truly great organic and bioorganic chemist who has made many important contributions to the chemistry of heterocyclic compounds. Fortunately for me, I've had the professional and personal pleasure of knowing Dr. Kutney for forty-six years. From the time we were graduate students together, under the direction of Professor Carl Djerassi, it was always very clear to me that Dr. Kutney would become the outstanding and internationally known research chemist he has continued to be for decades. Indeed, from 1957, Professor Kutney has authored and co-authored 268 research publications. Early on, he made particularly outstanding contributions to the chemistry of natural products, especially in the alkaloid and steroid fields. His synthetic approaches to structurally complicated vinca alkaloids were notably impressive and culminated in the first total synthesis of vinblastine, a very important clinical agent for cancer chemotherapy. Professor Kutney's studies in the field of natural products biosynthesis and plant tissue culture has yielded very important knowledge and advances. On each of his research and teaching endeavors he has proved to be an exceptionally talented, creative, productive; and vigorous natural products chemist and teacher. Through the years, he has received many academic awards, including: the Fred H. Irwin Prize in Organic Chemistry at the University of Alberta in 1953; the Merck, Sharp and Dohme Award from the Chemical Institute of Canada in 1968; and the Jacob Biely Research Prize from the University of British Columbia in 1972. He served as a consultant to the United Nations Development program on biotechnology in Chile and Bulgaria from 1989 to 1991. He has been an active contributor at more than 100 symposia and conferences in many parts of the world, including: Germany, Brazil, Jamaica, Japan, Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland, Iran, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Holland, South Africa, Denmark, Bulgaria, Peru, Colombia, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Thailand, Chile, South Korea, Pakistan, Nepal, Belgium, Egypt, Malaysia, Uruguay, China, and Turkey. And, while Professor Kutney has been truly a great Canadian and international research chemist, he has at the same time displayed a strong sense of loyalty and dedication to the University of British Columbia where he has been professionally associated since first joining the faculty in 1959. In every respect, Professor Kutney continues to be a brilliant and productive chemist. Furthermore, he is also an outstanding human being. As always, I wish my great friend continued remarkably good personal and professional success on his 70th birthday, and beyond!


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