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PREFACE

Dr. Keiichiro Fukumoto

I would like to give my sincere congratulations as we celebrate the seventy-fifth birthday of Emeritus Prof. Keiichiro Fukumoto of Tohoku University. Also, as one of his friends, I would like to thank the Editorial Board of HETEROCYCLES for the timely publication of a special issue recognizing his work. We became good friends while we were undergraduates in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Osaka University.

Although we were in different research groups, we both followed programs at the undergraduate and master's level acquiring laboratory techniques in the synthetic organic chemistry of natural products. After he finished his master's program, he became a faculty member at Tohoku University assisting Prof. T. Kametani who published many textbooks and reference books in synthetic organic chemistry. These books would not have been published without Prof. Fukumoto's help. I am sure that Prof. Kametani appreciated the contributions made by Prof. Fukumoto.

While at Tohoku University, he published many valuable reports. I don't know the exact number but he is one of the most productive chemists in terms of the number of reports published in prestigious journals. In those days, many journal publications were simply communications. However, Prof. Fukumoto endeavored to write complete papers including the experimental procedures and results.

On the other hand, Prof. Kametani thought there was a need for a special journal for communicating results in the field of heterocyclic and medicinal chemistry, so he inititiated the publication of HETEROCYCLES. Prof. Fukumoto always read the contributed papers as one of the referees, and was an excellent adviser to Prof. Kametani. Thanks to Prof. Fukumoto's energetic assistance, HETEROCYCLES is maintaining its status as a prestigious international journal.

I think that the chemists of our generation have benefited immensely by the developments in instrumental analysis. When we were undergraduate and master's level students, the primary laboratory instruments were UV and IR spectrophotometers. With the development of NMR, and Mass spectrometers, progress in synthetic organic chemistry was astonishing. Also, in synthesizing natural products, dramatic changes have occurred in the quantities of the starting materials needed for syntheses. When we were students, more than 100 gms was usually needed.

The awards that Prof. Fukumoto has received include the Pharmaceutical Society of Japan Award for Young Scientists in 1976, the highest award from the same society in 1997, the Academic Award of The Society of Synthetic Organic Chemistry, Japan in 1993, and the Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon in

2000. All the awards have been conferred upon him for his persevering efforts in the field of synthetic organic chemistry.

Recently, we spent some time reminiscing about our school life. My, how time flies! When we were students, we had baseball matches between our research groups. He was the pitcher for his team and was the "ringleader" at our post game parties, always keeping the conversation going. He has recovered from a serious illness and I am happy to hear he is now enjoying gardening of wild flowers in the back yard of his home. I am pleased that he and his wife are well and enjoy their life in Sendai.

Hiroshi Irie

Hiroshi Irie
Emeritus Professor, Nagasaki University

Hiroshi Irie, born in Tokyo (1931), graduated from Osaka University, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences (1956), received a Master degree from the same University (1958), moved to the Graduate School of Kyoto University and received a PhD degree in 1962. After postdoctoral training in Iowa State University in Ames, he came back to Kyoto University as a research assistant and worked as an Associate Professor. In 1980, he moved to the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Nagasaki University and retired in 1996. His research works were the isolation, the structure elucidation, and the syntheses of natural products, for example, Amaryllidaceae alkaloids, the toxins to Japanese White Pear produced by fungus, and the Spider toxins.