

SynthCon2: A Forum for Australian Organic Chemists

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In April 2013, the second biennial SynthCon meeting, SynthCon2,^[1] was held in the Yarra Valley at Fergusson's Winery. Building upon the success of SynthCon1,^[2] which had around 45 attendees, 55 delegates attended and presented recent results from their laboratories.

SynthCon focuses on the needs of the synthetic organic chemistry community within Australia. Although the tyrannies of distance no longer impede the timely delivery of the latest international discoveries, conducting research in Australia still presents a unique range of challenges...and advantages. A central motivation behind the creation of these meetings was a desire to address the challenge of performing research within smaller institutes, and often in the absence of colleagues working in closely related fields. By providing a meeting focused on academics, without the distractions of international speakers, it was hoped that an environment conducive to the open and frank development of novel ideas could be created. While we have some way to go, our second meeting allowed delegates from the Australian National University, Biota International, CSIRO, Curtin University, Deakin University, Griffith University, Monash University, Queensland University of Technology, University of Adelaide, University of Melbourne, University of New England, University of New South Wales, University of Queensland, University of Sydney, University of Western Australia and University of Wollongong to meet and discuss new and unpublished chemistry.

This Research Front presents a taste of the chemistry from this meeting, with research papers examining the synthesis and biological activity of Sunitinib analogues,^[3] facial selectivity in benzonitrile oxide cycloaddition,^[4] the enantioselective synthesis of kopsia and aspidosperma natural products,^[5] temperature responsive amphiphiles,^[6] and the ozonolysis of endoperoxides.^[7] Several highlights focused on emerging areas, such as ionic liquid conjugated proline catalysis,^[8] chemical activation of nitrenes and azides,^[9] and the role of peptide secondary structure in electron transfer,^[10] are presented.

Finally, a focus article highlights 1-(acyloxy)benzotriazoles, and examines its utility.^[11]

SynthCon2, and SynthCon1, was financially supported by Davies Collison Cave, CSIRO, Australian Journal of Chemistry, Biota International and Monash University. Thanks also to Amanda Lee, for her help behind the scenes, and in the creation of the cover art for this issue; Simon Lee, our trusted bus driver; Michael Blair, for the homebrew; and the Lupton doctoral students for venue set-up.

Planning is under way for SynthCon3,^[12] which will be held in Victoria's Yarra Valley in 2015. Our chair, Richard Payne, will be in contact in due course. Hopefully, SynthCon3 will see some familiar faces, along with new members of the community, as we continue to foster excellence in organic synthesis within the Australian chemistry community.

References

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David Lupton completed his B. Sc. in 2001 (University of Adelaide) and a Ph.D. in 2005 (ANU), before post-doctoral studies with Professor Trost (Stanford University) as a Sir Keith Murdoch Fellow. In 2007, he commenced an academic appointment at Monash University. David's studies focus on the role of catalysis in chemical synthesis.