

After more than a year, we are delighted to present *TOS Forum* to you again. One of the important missions of this issue is to provide the latest information on the 10th World Conference on Sampling and Blending (WCSB10). In these times of coronavirus, will the International Pierre Gy Sampling Association be able to continue the format of biennial *in-person* conferences, or not? IPGSA have made plans for conducting WCSB10 as planned ever since WCSB9 (Plan A), as well as being prepared for a Plan B—a simple one-year postponement. With the latter now having been decided upon, presenting the WCSB10 conference in detail is still the objective of the first feature in this issue.

We also answer the question “Exactly how did the World Conference of Sampling and Blending originate?” With WCSB 10 approaching, “three fellows” decided to do something about this. It turned out to be quite a detective story spanning 20+ years, three continents, many obsolete PC platforms and searching through several thousands of old e-mails. The story, as told here by Messieurs Francois-Bongarcon, Vann and Esbensen, is a tour-de-force of the pre- and very early history of the WCSB institution. I am sure many will enjoy this piece!

Next, a comprehensive *In Memoriam* for one of our most influential and respected members, Ian Devereaux (1940–2020). Scott Technology, who acquired Ian’s lifetime achievement company Rocklabs in 2008, have prepared an obituary over Ian’s remarkable life, together with a thorough scientific, technological and business history, which *TOS Forum* is honoured to bring here: RIP Ian Devereaux.

Next up is an absolute highlight in the life of IPGSA, a feature the editor has had in his sights since 2017, when at WCSB8 (Perth) it became clear that there were no less than three textbooks in preparation within the field of Theory and Practice of Sampling! This more than 20 years after the last such one was published, Pierre Gy’s own: *Sampling for Analytical Purposes* (1998). The editor has asked the authors of these books to present their works in parallel here. This comparison reveals three books with the

most different scopes, contents, layouts and writing styles imaginable while pursuing the *same goal*. The editor also asked all three authors to supply a “companion piece”, indicating that it might be useful if these pieces had at least some relation to the topics treated in the books... What ensued were three even more different pieces, truly reflecting the individual interests and drives of each author.

The reader will next find a frontline R&D report introducing advanced on-line monitoring of automated sample preparation processes based on accelerometer sensors for Process Analytical Technology (PAT) application. This offers a glimpse of the future in industrial process technology. This is followed by a piece which has been under way a very long time, introducing “TOS principles for gas sampling”.

The last feature takes us to a place very far away from the down-to-Earth problems of practical sampling. It introduces the new version of Francis Pitard’s earlier book: *The Theory of Vacuoles and Low-energy Nuclear Reactions: A Correct System of Dimensions and Units*. This book represents a monumental attempt “to look behind the veil of standard physics”, which should be of interest to most who have ever contemplated the innermost nature—of Nature. The following snippet should bring you out of your armchair: “The mass of the electron is an established physical constant, as is the mass of the proton. The ratio m_p/m_e is about 1836. No one has so far been able to explain this ratio... In Chapter 7, this new book provides a clear answer! The electron shell that surrounds the central vacuole, or vacuoles, is mostly *outside* our three-dimensional universe. Only that fraction of the electron that lies *inside* our universe affects our mass measuring devices. The electron has the same mass as the proton, but is inside our universe for only 1/1836 of the time”. You will have to pay your respect to the entire book, but then you will *understand* this argument!

Et voila—the editor has fulfilled his duty trying to raise the interest of the potential reader for the entire 10th issue of *TOS Forum*. Enjoy your reading!

Kristiansand, Norway, will be the venue for WCSB10.



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