

In Memoriam: Professor Georges Guiochon (Sept 6th 1931–Oct 21st 2014)

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It is with great sadness that I learnt of the death of Georges Guiochon. Georges' date of birth is significant; many well-known names in chromatography (well known to me if not to the current generation) were born in the period from about 1924 to 1931. The unfortunate corollary is, of course, that many are no longer with us and Georges was almost one of the last survivors of the golden age of chromatography.

Georges was born in Nantes and was educated at the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris which is the French equivalent of Oxbridge in the UK and the Ivy League in the USA. His PhD thesis was concerned with the decomposition of ammonium nitrate which results in completely gaseous products. This made GC an ideal technique for such an investigation and as a result of this fortuitous circumstance, Georges embarked on a study of chromatography which he pursued with the greatest distinction for the rest of his life.

Before he completed his studies, he had the misfortune to contract polio which left him with a slightly paralyzed arm. After a career in France where he held a number of senior academic appointments, Georges moved to the USA where he spent the second part of his life although he made frequent visits back to France.

Georges was a firm believer in collaboration with the UK Gas Chromatography Discussion Group (now the Chromatographic Society) and he, together with Dr. Peter Tuey were largely responsible for GAMS organizing the 13th ISC in Cannes in 1980. This meeting was attended by around 1,000 delegates and guests and, in retrospect, probably represents the high point of such symposia as far as numbers are concerned. In his later career, he was best known for his work on the theoretical aspects of large-scale separations but he was far more versatile than this may suggest. For example, I heard him give an excellent talk on heterocyclic analogues of polynuclear aromatics in crude oil and he did notable work on high-speed GC and this, in conjunction with the work of Professor Cramers at Eindhoven, led to large reductions in analysis time.

There are a number of excellent French separation scientists, many of whom were students of Professor Guiochon, but he was undoubtedly their doyen. Georges was the recipient of many honours too many to list here, but the one that I was concerned with was the award of the Martin Medal of The Chromatographic Society in 1980.

Georges will be greatly missed and we offer our sincere condolences to his wife and family.

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