



Shin-ichi Sasaki

In the 1960s, when most chemists were only dimly aware of the possibilities of computers (remember, in 1962, electronic calculators had not yet displaced slide rules), Shin-ichi Sasaki with the Japan Electron Optical Laboratory (JEOL) was already exploiting computers for their utility in chemical structure elucidation. At JEOL, at Tohoku University, and finally at Toyohashi University of Technology, he laid the foundations of CHEMICS, which was one of the first computer programs which generates structures corresponding to a given molecular formula and then seeks structures from this set that are consistent with available spectral data.

Whether or not this predated Lederberg and Djerassi's DENDRAL project at Stanford is no longer clear to me, but it doesn't really matter. Sasaki has always been a pioneer, and, indeed, with papers on automated structure determination published in 1967 and 1968, he had already established himself as a serious contributor.

In 1996, many years and many publications later, CHEMICS still lives and thrives. Now, however, it is being cared for by numerous gifted Japanese scientists who have the additional advantage of having been trained by Professor Sasaki.

This year, Sasaki-san retires from his last and highest position, that of President of Toyohashi University of Technology in Tsukuba. He can count many friends, students, admirers, and colleagues all over the world, and under the able leadership of Kimito Funatsu (Toyohashi), Johnny Gasteiger (Erlangen-Nürnberg), and Mort Munk (Arizona State) several of his colleagues have contributed to the papers which comprise this issue of the *Journal of Chemical Information and Computer Sciences*.

I have known Shin-ichi for over 25 years, count him as a good friend, and am delighted that this issue of JCICS has been assembled and dedicated to him. As a leader and a scholar (read his Introduction on page 158), as well as a gentleman from the old school, he will be hard to replace.

Good luck Shin-ichi! I hope you enjoy your retirement as much as you enjoyed your research!

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