



## Editor-in-Chief's Introduction

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It is truly a special honor to reminisce about my observations of a phenomenal scientist, teacher and friend, Professor Herman Berendsen.

I spent a full year sabbatical in Groningen during 1977–1978, where I worked with a close friend and colleague, Professor George Robillard, in the Department of Physical Chemistry, Rijks University of Groningen. I have three distinct reminiscences that will always be special in my memory. George lived almost next-door to Herman and his family and they had a tradition, usually on Sundays, to get together for wine and cheese, solve the problems of the world and discuss life, science and the joys of living in this beautiful country. I distinctly remember his two daughters, Frederieke and Astrid, who have written a phenomenal biography in this special issue about their father. As I was naïve about the *gymnasium* system in European high school educations. I was amazed by the number of foreign languages that the girls had to master as well as a plethora of courses ranging from science to liberal arts, etc. It was truly an admirable educational system that I'm not sure exists in my country at a comparable level of rigor.

Herman was responsible for facilitating the installation of the 360 MHz NMR instrument, the only one in the Netherlands at the time and one of the few institutions in Europe to have high NMR available for biological and other studies. This was important as part of my research impinged on having access to this level of instrumentation. Herman's

insights were phenomenal; I will never forget an very extremely important paper written by him and a student, Ad Kalk, on spin diffusion in protein molecules in aqueous solution. They pointed out that all of the relaxation experiments in the past were simply looking at water molecules interacting with the slowly rotating macromolecule surface and cross relaxation with other protons on the protein.

Lastly, Herman was a phenomenal teacher. I will never forget being able to teach and participate in a European organized school on the island of Schiermonnikoog, off of the northern tip of Holland in the North Sea. It was an amazing place to hold a meeting. I'll never forget that when the tide was down, you could literally walk to the island. The school was organized extremely well with a text/guidebook containing appropriate cartoons and graphics to make learning about magnetic resonance very easy. As his daughters article display, he was truly an amazing scientist, thinker, mentor who will inspire us many decades into the future.

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