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## Journal of Inorganic Biochemistry

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/jinorgbio](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jinorgbio)6<sup>th</sup> Georgian Bay International Conference on Bioinorganic Chemistry

The 6th Georgian Bay International Conference on Bioinorganic Chemistry (also known as CanBIC) was held in the dockside Charles W. Stockey Centre, in Parry Sound, Ontario, Canada from 23rd to 27th May, 2017.

Turnbull - Volunteer Student Participation; Dorothy Ott (KIT) photographer. Of course, the team pulled together for the poster board setup, evening reception setup and clean up, as well as the final clear up before the Banquet.



This small conference attracts a stellar array of international speakers and poster-presenters in a wide range of fields related to metals in biological roles. Nagao Kobayashi (Tohoku University, Sendai, Japan), John Dawson (South Carolina, USA), Zhifeng Ding (The University of Western Ontario) and Martin Stillman (The University of Western Ontario, Canada) were the international co-organizers. (Figs. 1–8)

The CanBIC-6 International Organizing Committee's role is to select and invite the best speakers for the series of specialist symposia. Co-organizers Nagao Kobayashi, John Dawson and Zhifeng Ding were joined by Andrea Hartwig (Karlsruhe Institute for Technology, Karlsruhe, Germany), Tim Storr (Simon Fraser, Vancouver, Canada), Charles Walsby (Simon Fraser, Vancouver, Canada), James Kincaid (Marquette, Milwaukee, USA), David Petering (Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA), Angela Rosa (Universita della Basilicata, Italy), Sam de Visser (University of Manchester, Manchester, UK) and Stephen Ralph (University of Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia). This group span the globe and by bringing together the top researchers in their respective specialties world-wide and make CanBIC a truly international meeting.

Sadly, we noted the passing of our longtime friend, collaborator and co-organizer of all previous CanBIC conferences starting in 2007, and with Martin, a symposium on metallothioneins at the 2nd Pacificchem Conference held in 1989 in Hawaii.

Parry Sound is a small town in northern Ontario that is perched on the edge of the rugged and magnificent granite Canadian Shield adjacent to the shores of Georgian Bay. Our conference center is the remarkable Stockey Centre where we combine world-class science with talks, posters and much discussion, with world-class musical interludes. The Local Organizing Committee was: Martin Stillman - Chair; Daisy Wong - Finances; Gordon Irvine - Hall Manager & Transportation; Angel Zhang - Programme Book - Symposium Scheduling; Zhifeng Ding - Student Symposium; Amy Tapley & Michelle Li - Catering; Sharbari Lahiri - Abstract Editor; Fraser Filice - all Technical aspects; Matthew

CanBIC only functions because of the dedicated assistance of very many – in 2017 we were pleased to welcome to the team also Lucas Prieto (U of Zurich), Angelo Frei (U of Zurich), Alejandra Enriquez (U Calgary), Kengo Kuribayashi (Shinshu U), Teruaki Ohshima (Shinshu U), Takahiro Kawata (Shinshu U), Esther Johnston (U of York, UK), and Matthew Gibson (U of Calgary). Finally, we wish to acknowledge all those who bring their science to Parry Sound every 2 years – thank you.

The Thursday afternoon outing as usual was on the Island Queen, unfortunately, the rain and fog did coax most to discuss the scenery from inside.

The CanBIC conference joins a select group of conferences focusing on the role of metals in biological systems. With CanBIC-6 it is clear that CanBIC has become a fixture in the “BIC” conference series, the bioinorganic conference group, joining the International Conference (ICBIC), EuroBIC, AsBIC and V Latin American Meeting on Biological Inorganic Chemistry (V LABIC), and as well the numerous flavors of Gordon Conferences that are available throughout the year. The 6th CanBIC Conference in 2017, follows the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5th biennial conferences held in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015, respectively, all in the lovely small and perhaps could be said “isolated” lakeside town of Parry Sound, Ontario.

A general introduction to bioinorganic chemistry is perhaps not necessary for this special issue of the Journal, but the frequently used statistic puts the scientific background of CanBIC into perspective. Metals are considered to be the key cofactors in more than 30% of known proteins. Two diverse examples emphasize this: metals are critical in muscle and synapse action, and metals completely control respiration in all species. Metal-dependent biological chemistry is therefore critical to all forms and phyla of life. The complexity of these systems, and often an inability to obtain single crystals, has meant that structural and mechanistic studies are often very challenging. This complexity was addressed by the 2017 Plenary Speaker, professor Alison Butler (Santa Barbara, USA), with her lecture entitled “Elements of Marine Bioinorganic Chemistry: from Microbes to Mussels”. As was

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Fig. 1. The 1st CanBIC was held in Parry Sound in 2007, CanBIC-7 will be held in 2019.



Fig. 2. The Stockey Centre is perched on land between Georgian Bay and the Parry Sound harbour.



Fig. 3. We missed our friend and colleague C. Frank Shaw.

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