

In Memory of Masanori Kaji (1956-2016)

The Commission on the History of Modern Chemistry is saddened by the loss of our esteemed and dear colleague and Executive Council member, Masanori Kaji, whose death from cancer was announced on July 18, 2016. Masanori's last great service to us was in leading the highly successful International Workshop on the History of Chemistry (IWHC2015) in Tokyo in March 2015 and in co-editing the proceedings, which appeared in March 2016 (see the link on our main webpage under the listing of the IWHC2015). In his honor, CHMC has collected the many messages posted on CHEM-HIST by colleagues mourning his death. We miss him greatly and will never forget him.

From Carsten Reinhardt, outgoing President, Chemical Heritage Foundation, and Bielefeld University, July 18:

Dear colleagues:

It is with great sadness, and shock, that I report to you that our dear colleague and friend Professor Masanori Kaji of Tokyo Tech has passed away earlier today. The cause was cancer.

Masanori, as you all know, was a true cosmopolitan, who has played a decisive role in our small international community. Above all, he was a true friend. His beloved Mount Fuji must be in clouds today.

Carsten

From the Japanese Society for the History of Chemistry (Yasu Furukawa, Nihon University, and Yoshiyuki Kikuchi, Graduate University for Advanced Studies (Sokendai), Hayama), July 19:

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Japanese Society for the History of Chemistry, we are writing to you.

As some of you have already heard, it deeply saddens us to inform you that our friend and colleague, Masanori Kaji, passed away on July 18 after a fight against cancer. He was 60 years old.

A leading scholar of Dmitri Mendeleev and Russian and Japanese chemistry, Masanori served the Japanese Society for the History of Chemistry for many years as a Council member and was Secretary in Chief in 2007-2013. He was also an Executive Council member of the Commission for the History of Modern Chemistry, International Union of History and Philosophy of Science, Division of History of Science and Technology.

As you know, Masanori was the driving force behind the International Workshop on the History of Chemistry, held in March 2015 at the Tokyo Institute of Technology as its Organizing Committee Chair. He will be missed by all of us in the history of chemistry and history of science community in Japan as well as worldwide. Our heartfelt sympathies are with his wife, Michiko Akamatsu (email: gwm01032@nifty.com) and their family.

The funeral will be held in Shin-Yokohama on July 23.

Yasu Furukawa and Yoshiyuki Kikuchi
Japanese Society for the History of Chemistry

From Stephen J. Weininger, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (emeritus), July 18:

This is truly terrible news. Masanori was one of our most enthusiastic, generous and capable colleagues, all behind an unassuming exterior. I will miss his yearly greetings accompanied by his pictures of Mount Fuji.

Steve Weininger

From the Commission on the History of Modern Chemistry, July 18:

Dear Colleagues:

As president of the Commission on the History of Modern Chemistry, I join Carsten Reinhardt, Steve Weininger and I am sure all of you in mourning the death of our great friend and colleague, Masanori Kaji. All of us who had the opportunity to participate in last year's International Workshop on the History of Chemistry in Tokyo will remember the hard work he did in making that meeting the great success it was, and the wonderful tour he gave us to Kamakura and to his home city, Yokohama. What a terrible loss!

Jeff Johnson

From Gary D. Patterson, Chair, Division of the History of Chemistry (HIST), American Chemical Society, and Carnegie Mellon University, July 18:

Dear Carsten and HIST:

I propose that we observe a period of remembrance at the August HIST meeting in Philadelphia. I will look for a time when more than a "minute of silence" is available to allow people to say a few words.

Yasu Furakawa will be at the meeting and can join us in our sorrow.

Gary

From Ernst Homburg, Maastricht University, July 18:

I will Always remember his subtle humor and his smile; his desk in Tokyo in a jungle of Russian books; his attentiveness and great hospitality; his culture of mind; and all the many group pictures he took at all our meetings; and so much more ...

A terrible loss...

Ernst Homburg

From Rudolf Werner Soukup, Technical University, Vienna

Dear Colleagues,

thank you for reporting the very sad news about my dear colleague Masanori.

My wife and I will always remember the sunny days, when we stayed with Masanori in Haydn's chapel in Eisenstadt and at the "Heuriger" in Perchtoldsdorf.

Rudolf Werner Soukup, Vienna, Austria

From Marco Taddia, Bologna University, July 18:

Thanks Masanori for having lightened also my life. Your kindness and your grace are difficult to replace.

Rest in peace.

Marco

From Trevor H. Levere, University of Toronto (emeritus), July 18:

That is a shock, and very sad news indeed. I will miss his smile, his energy and generous hospitality, his ubiquitous camera and annual photos of Mt. Fuji, and his learning. It is a tragedy for his family, and a major loss to our international community.

Trevor Levere

From Eric Scerri, UCLA, and Editor-in-chief, *Foundations of Chemistry*, July 18:

I am so very sorry to hear this news. Masanori was a true friend. We shared a passion for the periodic table and the work of Mendeleev. One of the most gentle historians and philosophers of chemistry I have known. What a loss.

Eric Scerri

From Eric Scerri later the same day:

Masanori sent me this link only a month ago.

It features an interview he gave to a Japanese radio station following the announcement of the new element name, nihonium: <http://www.tbsradio.jp/43440>

From Mary Jo Nye, Oregon State University (emerita), July 18:

Dear Carsten,

Thank you for conveying this terribly sad news about our loss of a beloved colleague who has been a leader in our field and an ambassador for bringing us together time and again. He has been a joy to know, and he will be greatly missed by all of us.

Mary Jo Nye, Corvallis, Oregon

From Nathan M. Brooks, New Mexico State University, July 18:

Dear Colleagues,

I was most deeply saddened to hear the news of Masanori's death. Over the past 27+ years, Masanori was not only an esteemed colleague and collaborator, but he also became my dear friend. His

graciousness (not to mention, energy) as a host was truly awe inspiring. My family will never forget our memorable visit to Japan in 2004 that he coordinated and hosted for us. We were honored to have him visit and stay with us numerous times over the years. I find it difficult to believe that I will not be able to work with him on another project or see him at a future conference.

Nathan Brooks

From Elena Zaitseva Baum, Moscow State University, July 18:

Dear Carsten,

Thank you for the message about these sad news.

Masanori was in reality an active member of our historical-chemical community, the initiator and the organizer of different scientific events. He had very close contacts to the Russian chemical society. I met him often in Moscow. His death is a big loss for all of us.

My sincere condolences to his family,

Elena Zaitseva(Baum)

From Danielle Fauque, Paris, July 18:

Dear Carsten

Thank you to inform us about these very very sad news. We knew very well and appreciate a lot Masanori.

Friendly yours,

Danielle

From Isabel Malaquias, Aveiro University, July 18:

Dear Colleagues,

It is with deep sadness I received the news on Professor Masanori Kaji and in my name and of the group of Portuguese historians of chemistry wish to offer his family our deep condolences.

Isabel Malaquias

From Maria Elvira Callapez, Lisbon University, July 18:

Dear Colleagues,

This is unexpected and very sad news. I'll never forget Masanori Kaji's smile and his calm image. His departure is a big loss.

I offer my sincere condolences to his family.

Maria Elvira Callapez

From Soňa Štrbáňová, Center for the History of Science and Humanities, Czech Academy of Science, July 19:

Dear Carsten, dear all,

I am deeply moved by this sad news and reading all your warm expressions of sympathy. Let me tell you that I will sorely miss Masanori, his smile, gentle and kind personality, wise remarks. It was such joy to collaborate with him, last time on the Mendeleev volume. He was a great colleague and wonderful friend. Very hard to add anything else... Please pass my sincere condolences to Masanori's family.

Soňa Štrbáňová

From Pnina Abir-Am, Brandeis University, July 19:

Given the extensive outpouring of grief on the chem. list-serve, the question persists as to how we may contemplate to commemorate a colleague who evidently touched so many others in many countries. Perhaps a symposium in his memory on topics on which he worked, including at IWHC-2015-Tokyo, coupled with an exhibition of his highly gifted photographic output could be considered for the first anniversary of his passing away? Just a thought.

With you in our collective loss, Sy, Pnina

From Hjalmar Fors, Uppsala University, July 21:

Dear Carsten, dear all,

I too am very sorry to hear this. He was a wonderful person and I remember him with great fondness. Please pass also my condolences to his family.

Sincerely, Hjalmar Fors

From Anders Lundgren, Uppsala University, July 22:

With sadness I read the news of the untimely death of our common friend Masanori. He will be missed in all our future meetings.

Anders Lundgren

From Gisela Boeck, Rostock University, July 27:

Dear all,

Back to university I read the sad news. I am really shocked because the collaboration with Masanori was very important for me. I remember the time we spent together in Leuven, Sopron, Rostock, Galway and Barcelona.

We have lost such a good friend, we will miss him. Please give my condolences to Masanori's family.

Gisela Boeck