

EDITORIAL

EUROCLAY'95

This issue of *Clay Minerals* is devoted entirely to some papers presented at EUROCLAY'95, the 8th Meeting of the European Clay Groups, held at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium from 20–24

August 1995. As *Clay Minerals* is the official journal of the European Clay Groups, the Editorial Board is particularly pleased to be able to publish a complete issue of papers from the 1995 Meeting.

APPEAL TO REVIEWERS

The editors of *Clay Minerals* are very concerned at the length of time being taken by many referees to carry out reviews of manuscripts submitted for publication. Reviewing manuscripts is a voluntary task which most researchers carry out willingly and well, but there is no doubt that the average time taken for reviews has increased over the past few years and it is not difficult to suggest reasons for this. Most active researchers find their schedules becoming increasingly busier and we all have to contend with increasing amounts of administration, tight deadlines for research proposals, staff reviews, increased pressure to publish results etc., etc., etc. and the editors understand these factors and sympathize with those involved. However, it has become very common for reviewers to need reminding, sometimes several times, before reviews are received. The people who suffer as a result are the authors, who naturally are anxious to have their work published as quickly as possible.

As most referees are also authors themselves, the editors appeal to referees to consider how they as authors feel when they have to wait several months for a review of their own work.

If a referee receives a manuscript which he/she is unable to review within the timescale indicated by the editor, or very soon thereafter, the editors would much prefer that the referee return the manuscript to the editor indicating that he/she is unable to carry out the review in the time required, preferably suggesting an alternative appropriate referee. It is very frustrating for editors, and even more annoying for authors, to have to wait several months for a review.

Finally, to those referees who carry out reviews conscientiously and within a reasonable period of time, the editors wish to express their sincere appreciation and gratitude for freely giving of their time and expertise. There is no doubt that the single most important factor in maintaining or raising the standards of a journal is the quality of the reviews. So we appeal to all referees to treat authors as they themselves would wish to be treated by referees and to carry out their reviews as speedily and as thoroughly as possible for the mutual benefit of all involved.

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