Spreading the word

In this issue of *The Indexer* appears our obituary appreciation of Leonard Montague Harrod, editor of this journal for fourteen years: his is a loss we feel particularly keenly. He became editor in 1964, with Volume 4 No. 1, of a 32-page journal of tiny circulation primarily in the UK, treating of back-of-the-book indexing by the solitary freelance; in 1978 he resigned from the editorship of a journal whose size had nearly doubled and circulation trebled, which had readers in 53 countries and was subscribed to by most schools of librarianship and information science, and whose scope had extended to match the rapid technological developments of those years. On Monty Harrod's resignation, Robert Palmer, a founder-director of the American Society of Indexers with whom he had been in constant liaison, wrote, 'I see that you are leaving the editorship. The work you did there was wonderful and you well deserve praises and all honors for it': sentiments with which all who knew of his diligent and meticulous work will concur.

A distinguished librarian and educator, Monty Harrod did much to promulgate good librarianship throughout the world, as Director of the National Library of Singapore, later Lecturer-in-Charge of Overseas Librarians at London's North-Western Polytechnic. Similarly, he was in some measure responsible for the international spread of societies devoted to promoting high standards of indexing: he was an active member of the Council of the Society of Indexers throughout the period when similar societies formed overseas and affiliated to SI: the American Society of Indexers affiliated in 1971, the Australian Society of Indexers in 1977, and the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada on 1 January 1979. Monty Harrod gave help in their establishment and welcome to their affiliation.

Today we remain four societies, far apart, independent yet interdependent, all facing alike the same professional problems in our separate countries. Our strength is not in numbers – none of the societies yet has a membership approaching a thousand – but geographically our span is wide. Each society produces its own newsletter, and these are exchanged among the four and surveyed in this journal's regular feature, 'Shoebox international'; they often show identical concerns, difficulties, and topics debated. Clearly we have much to learn from each other, have the same interests at heart, and need each other's support and exchange of solutions found; clearly we enjoy as well the reassuring knowledge that, solitary as our professional lives are, few indeed as we number in our nations, yet we have a comradeship that spans the world. Our chief link still is the journal so ably developed by Monty Harrod as the voice of all four societies in the pursuit of our common aims.

The guest editorial contributed to this issue by the Immediate Past President of ASI, to be followed by others from the Presidents of AusSI and IASC, commenting as they do on matters of equal concern to us all, affirm the achievement of the chief goal that Monty Harrod set himself during his fourteen years of editorship.

-- by Hazel K. Bell in *The Indexer* Vol. 14 No. 2 October 1984, pages 81-2