

Editorial

Over the past few months, many well-deserved tributes have been paid to Robert L Marshall on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday. Readers of this Journal and members of the UK Society for Co-operative Studies have particular reason to appreciate his formidable contribution to co-operation. He was a driving force in the formation of the Society and, for over twenty years, was co-editor of this Journal with Professor Tom Carbery. Between them, they laid a strong foundation upon which the Society continues to build. As a mark of the Society's appreciation of RLM's work it has been my pleasure in this issue to welcome Tom Carbery back to the Editor's chair as the contributor of a guest editorial offering a well deserved tribute from the Society.

Professor Carbery rightly emphasises the centrality of RLM's role, likening him to the centrepiece of a clock. Yet it is a reflection of his contribution as a co-operative educator that, when he decided to step down from active engagement with the Society, he had developed and motivated a strong cadre of committed co-operators to take forward the work of the Society and the Journal. To this day, many of our active members and participants at annual conferences would acknowledge the part he played in shaping their thinking.

His emphasis on the need for the Society to bring together academics, active lay members and co-operative managers is reflected in the way the Journal has subsequently developed. It has sought both refereed contributions from academics and shorter reflective and analytical articles from active co-operators in both the UK and the international movement and has thus developed a wider readership than a conventional academic journal. As reported at the last annual conference, the Executive Committee is reviewing the format and editorial policies of the Journal to further develop this bridging role. Starting with the spring 2004 issue, readers will see a significant change in the format of the Journal designed to enhance its readability. Over the coming year, we will also be reviewing our guidelines for contributors with the aim of encouraging an increased flow of contributions that both

stimulate debate and influence research direction to further
strengthen the bridge between practitioners and academics.

Ian Pyper
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