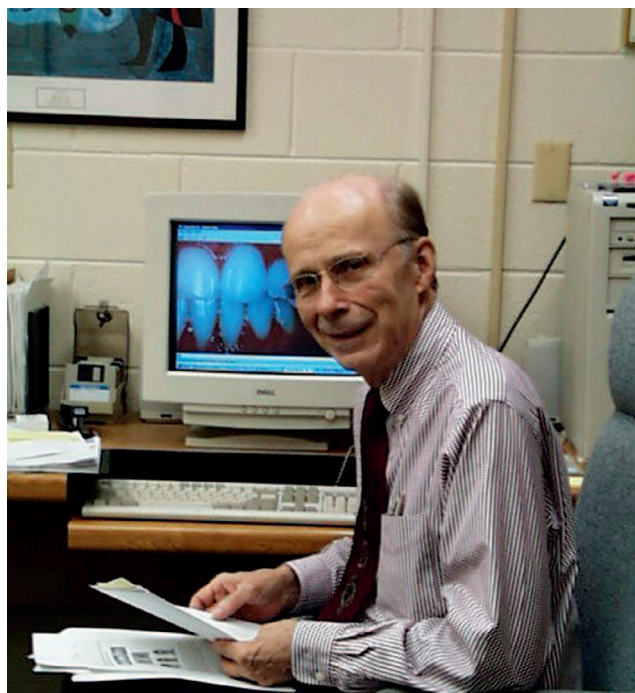


In Memoriam

In Memory of Robert J. Isaacson

Steven J. Lindauer



Bob in his office at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Robert J. Isaacson, Editor-in-Chief Emeritus of *The Angle Orthodontist*, passed away peacefully at the age of 86 on September 15, 2018 near his home in Wayzata, Minnesota. Bob was born in Flushing, New York on July 12, 1932, and spent his childhood years growing up in New Jersey. He was a proud graduate of the University of Minnesota where he earned his BS, DDS, MSD, and PhD degrees from 1950 to 1962. He served as a Captain in the US Army from 1956–1958. In 1962, Bob joined the faculty of the University of Minnesota in the Department of Orthodontics, where he began his distinguished orthodontic career.

During his career spanning more than 50 years, Bob Isaacson chaired three orthodontic departments

(University of Minnesota 1965–1977, University of California San Francisco 1977–1987, and Virginia Commonwealth University 1987–2000) and, for 12 years at the end of his career, he served as Editor-in-Chief of the Edward H. Angle Society's journal, *The Angle Orthodontist*. Along the way, his research contributions, service endeavors, and teaching philosophies profoundly influenced the lives and practices of most of the academic and clinical orthodontists in the United States and around the world.

As an orthodontic educator, Bob pioneered the movement incorporating key elements of the private practice model into graduate orthodontic education. This was a revolutionary departure from past practices. Residents completed his programs knowing that they were fully prepared to treat the entire spectrum of orthodontic patients efficiently and effectively. By establishing an environment that was

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energetic with an atmosphere of mutual respect, residents quickly acquired a sense of responsibility, appropriate self-confidence and, by example, an awareness of their obligation to make treatment decisions based on the highest ethical and moral values. Bob's own enthusiasm for understanding, analyzing, and implementing new concepts and techniques instilled in his students a motivation to pursue lifelong learning through continuing education and by reading the orthodontic literature. The 2009 Orthodontic Educational Leadership Conference held in conjunction with the American Association of Orthodontists' annual session in Boston was named in his honor.

Over the course of his career, Bob published more than 100 scholarly manuscripts in scientific journals on topics including rapid maxillary expansion, growth and development, biomechanics, orthognathic surgery, and evolving technologies. Many have become often-cited classic works in the orthodontic literature. He was invited to be the first Guest Editor of *Seminars in Orthodontics* when it premiered in 1995, creating an issue appropriately devoted to *Biomechanics and Appliance Design*. Bob lectured throughout the United States and around the world extensively. He was invited to speak at the annual session of the American Association of Orthodontists several times and was also a Keynote speaker at the European Orthodontic Society's Congress in Belgium in 2001. It was a fitting conclusion to his career to become the gatekeeper of our journal in his role as Editor-in-Chief of *The Angle Orthodontist* (2000–2012).

Through his numerous service roles, Bob significantly influenced the course of development of our profession and specialty. He served as President of both the Northern California and North Atlantic components of the Edward H. Angle Society. In Virginia, Bob was the first orthodontist and first academic dentist appointed to the State's Board of Dentistry. At Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), he headed the committee that rewrote the University-wide guidelines governing Promotion and Tenure policies. He also chaired the committee that developed the VCU School of Dentistry's Constitution and Bylaws, increasing faculty input into the way the school was administered. During his career, Bob served on the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) and was also an Examiner for the Northeastern Regional Board of Dental Examiners (NERB). He was named "Distinguished Practitioner in Dentistry" in 1995 by the National Academies of Practice. In 2002, Bob was recognized by the American Association of Orthodontists for his distinguished contributions to the specialty, receiving the prestigious Albert H. Ketcham Memorial Award. He

was also honored at the 2011 Biennial Meeting of The Edward H. Angle Society of Orthodontists held in Charleston, SC.

The basis of Bob's ability to produce sustained and meaningful impacts in research, service, and teaching throughout his life was his gift for forward-thinking, "out-of-the-box" dreaming. He was a visionary. His mind instinctively saw how things could be when most others just accommodated to how things were. Bob's ideas were always born of the attitude of moving ahead; he never spent time pondering the past. This was done without selfish motivation, taking steps to implement change because it was the right thing to do. He had the true leader's flair for being the originator of thoughts that were ahead of their time.

Bob also had an exceptional ability to motivate others: colleagues, junior faculty, and staff members, empowering them to take control, work as a team, and make things happen. In 1991, he introduced electronic recordkeeping to the orthodontic clinic at VCU, well before that technology was universally accepted. Similarly, he embraced 3D digital technology as it was being developed and began using virtual study models clinically at the university. After he became Editor of *The Angle Orthodontist* in 2000, Bob was determined to have the entire archives of the journal digitized for electronic access. Only now that he has passed, can it be revealed that he financed this process with his own personal savings. Subsequently, he moved quickly to make the journal a completely free, open-access resource "in the interest of propagating the science of orthodontic research and knowledge". *The Angle Orthodontist*, at this time, remains the world's pre-eminent, peer-reviewed, open-access orthodontic journal because of Bob's vision. The Angle Heritage Campaign was Bob's inspiration to ensure the preservation of this resource for future generations.

In his personal life, Bob was a devoted son, husband, and father. The happiest day of his life, undoubtedly, was the day that he married Delores on September 14, 1970. Bob and Delores worked as a team on many projects together, both in cultivating their flower and vegetable gardens at home (roses were of special interest) and working to make the Orthodontic departments that he Chaired into the most successful ventures possible. At their home, they often hosted festive gatherings for orthodontic residents and department faculty members to foster camaraderie and cohesion. During his time as Editor of *The Angle Orthodontist*, it was Delores who worked behind the scenes, handling correspondence, organizing files, and formatting papers for publication. They traveled the world and life together, both literally and figuratively. His passing occurred

one day after they celebrated their 48th wedding anniversary. Bob leaves behind his wife Delores, his 3 children, Cathy, Mary and Bob, and 7 grandchildren: Katy & Chris, Haydn & Regan, and Libby,

Zachary & Frank. He will be greatly missed but remembered fondly by all of them and by colleagues, former students, and orthodontists throughout the world.



Bob and Delores, 1998.