



**Robin Adams**

**UNITED  
KINGDOM**

Robin Adams took his first degrees in New Zealand and his Ph. D. in Geophysics at the University of Cambridge in 1957. After returning to New Zealand, in 1959 he led a marine geophysical expedition to the Ross Sea, leading to a life-long interest in the Antarctic – he was Secretary of the Solid Earth Geophysics Working Group of SCAR from 1965 to 1975 and authored several papers on Antarctic seismology, including one detailing the first confirmed earthquake in continental Antarctica.

In 1960 he joined the New Zealand Seismological Observatory and served as Superintendent from 1964 to 1978, being responsible for the operation of the New Zealand seismograph network and seismological research programme. In addition to seismicity, his main research interest was the study of core phases and their use in the study of Earth structure. He acted as UNESCO consultant on the seismological effects of filling Mangla Dam in Pakistan, and was involved in disarmament talks with the UN Committee on Disarmament. In 1970-1971 he was visiting Associate Research Seismologist at the Seismological Stations of the University of California, Berkeley, responsible for the operation of the network and analysis. In 1975 he was the first foreign seismologist to be invited to visit the site of the Haicheng earthquake in China.

He was a founding member of the Governing Council of the International Seismological Centre and in 1978 joined its staff, and remained there until retirement in 1995, during which time he played a major part in editing and producing the ISC Bulletins, and also acted as research fellow at the University of Reading.

In 1979 he was elected Secretary-General of IASPEI, a post he held till 1991. During this time he worked closely with UNESCO, in 1981-1982 being Principal Coordinator for a seismological programme in the Arab region. He initiated many joint meetings and projects between IASPEI and UNESCO, in particular in Africa, where he was involved in setting up a regional seismological group. From 1991 to 1997 he was Chairman of the IASPEI Committee for Developing Countries and from 1991 to 2003 IUGG Liaison Officer to UNESCO.

He has worked closely with earthquake engineers in New Zealand and the United Kingdom and in 1999 was elected an Honorary Life Member of the Society for Earthquake and Civil Engineering Dynamics, London.

After retirement in 1995 he remains an Honorary Seismologist at ISC, and has continued his research on seismicity and location methods, and studies of particular earthquakes. In later years he has worked on re-location of historical earthquakes, and co-authored two books. He has also acted as consultant to the European Commission and the Forensic Seismology Unit of the British Atomic Weapons Establishment.

In 2013 he was the first recipient of the IASPEI Medal.

