



## Harvie Jordan, the Man in the Hat

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By Tony Beckwith

*It was obvious that Harvie loved hats. But until just the other day I'd never given much thought to how many of them he actually wore. Let's consider a few.*

He tossed his hat into the translating ring when he joined Mary Esther and Al as one of the AATIA's founding parents. Since then he's been a translator's friend. Most of us can remember an incident like this: "Harvie was the proctor at my ATA exam. When he found out that I'd come from out of town and was on my own, he insisted I join him for lunch." Or this one: "He knew I didn't know anyone there, so he asked me to sit beside him at dinner."



He certainly knew how to pass the hat, to ask for support of one kind or another for his beloved AATIA. Or for SpanSIG, his own creation. Some thought he must have lots of spare time on his hands to be able to devote so much to these organizations. Now we find that he was also giving of his time to neighborhood association projects, and church activities, and taking part in all manner of workshops, and of course he also had his own business and a family.

Wearing a hat is one thing. Knowing how and when to doff it is an entirely different matter. Harvie was a master of civilities. He delighted in the measured pleasure of exchanging traditional greetings, for example, and was never too busy to

enjoy the pleasantries of civilized relationships. We occasionally addressed each other as *caballero* in our conversations, and it hadn't really struck me until now how entirely appropriate the word was in his case. One day a Spanish word for hat—*chambergó*—caught his fancy, and led to a conversation that in turn brought up something the Argentine gauchos say: *La vida es una cebolla y hay que pelarla llorando*. Life is an onion, and we must peel it and weep.

Autumn was glorious this year. If color were sound, it would have been deafening around here in the early days of November. But our symphony in the streets played its saddest movement when we heard the news of Harvie's passing, and suddenly countless golden leaves lay scattered at our feet. None of us could believe that we'd never hear that mellifluous, well-polished baritone voice, ever again.

Rather than dwell on the aching void he has left among us, I'd like to imagine Harvie in high cotton, in a linguistic paradise of some kind. Perhaps, as Maurine speculated, he is now fully omnifluent in all languages. And is no doubt wearing that halo at a jaunty angle. ★