**Leonard (Len) James Holzer**

Len Holzer was born in Melborne, Australia on April 21, 1914. He left school in his early teens and was employed as an office junior in Stirling Henry Ltd, a cotton textile manufacturing company producing knitted garments. He was later promoted to the company’s Sydney office and became experienced in the factory and manufacturing side of the business. In Sydney, he met Clarice Unwin and became engaged to her. In 1938, Len was sent to New Zealand to establish a branch of Stirling Henry in Auckland. Clarice subsequently joined him, and they were married in St Patricks Cathedral on the day of her arrival. An important part of his work responsibilities in Auckland was the setting up in 1941 of the Auckland Knitting Mills.

In the late 1940s, Len left Stirling Henry to set up his own business in Victoria Street, manufacturing lingerie under the brand name of La Mode and later, a more luxurious brand, Festival. It was to be a successful decision with his growing business soon requiring a move to a larger factory in Mt Roskill. In later years, after a new, larger factory was established in Glen Innes, Len’s lingerie business attracted the attention of Bonds and they eventually acquired it.

Len did not take a quiet retirement and he continued to be actively involved in using his business knowledge to mentor other businesses who were struggling, providing financial assistance if appropriate.

Len was a member and office holder of the Manufacturers Association and was also very involved with the Lions Club.

A keen sportsman, Len was a very good cricketer, playing senior cricket for Parnell. He also coached the Auckland representative women’s cricket team. He was also a keen golfer and founding member and President of the Maungakiekie Golf Club and a member and President of the Eagles Golf Club.

Len was very involved in charitable work through the Lions Club, but more personally through his commitment to meeting needs in the Catholic community in Auckland. An early example was providing sewing machines to the Good Shepherd Sisters Home in Waikowhai, a reformatory for young women, so that these women could learn a useful skill rather than just carrying out the menial laundry work conducted by the Home. Also, of particular note, was the support he gave over the years to teaching orders of religious nuns in Auckland.

Len Holzer died on January 2, 1991. He is survived by five daughters, thirteen grandchildren and a growing number of great-grandchildren.