

British Academy of Fencing

ACADEMY NEWS



February 2012
Issue 64

"Run by coaches for coaches"

PROFESSOR LEON HILL MBE

Professor Leonard Wareing Hill – for services to Fencing. Thus read the announcement of the award of an MBE to Leon Hill in the New Year's Honours List. As many members of the Academy, past and present, will agree, this was a richly deserved honour.

Here is a brief quote from the nomination document that started the process of gaining the award: *"Leon has excelled in the educational field as a dedicated teacher and Headmaster at West Hill School for most of his working life.*

At the same time, he has given a lifetime of service to the sport of fencing in this country, both as national coach, as trainer of many international fencers and as an educator of fencing coaches. In this capacity, he served for 20 years as the President of the British Academy of Fencing (an unpaid position) and has been a leading force in modernising what was an archaic and unaccountable system of training fencing masters and coaches.

His desire to create a clear and transparent system of training coaches to the highest standards has benefited not only coaches themselves, but also the many thousands of children, young people, and sports men and women who choose to engage in this sport, be it in a competitive or recreational manner. Since its introduction, there have been some 300 fencing coaches in this country trained under the system he helped design and more are coming forward all the time, from this country and abroad, to improve their skills.

He has been a constant source of support and wisdom to his colleagues, enabling them to build on the foundations he has laid, with the result that only last year, the British Academy of Fencing was proud to run the biggest English speaking course on the teaching of fencing in the world."

Leon's involvement with fencing extends back over 50 years and has been marked with much success as a coach. He has served as a National Coach for the Amateur Fencing Association and was also the GB Men's Foil coach at two World Championships. Young fencers from his school, West Hill, went on to international representation at Under 20 level.

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Contributions by April 10th, please

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ACADEMY WEB SITE

FOR ALL THE LATEST INFORMATION AND MERCHANDISING GO TO THE ACADEMY WEB SITE AT WWW.BAF-FENCING.ORG



RECOMMENDED RATES OF PAY

Level	Rate
Diploma	37.75
Maitre d'Escrime and Provost	30.35
Member	25.00
Associate	22.35

Please Note: These rates are given for guidance only. Coaches are free to negotiate their own rates, according to local conditions. The Academy recommends that travel, up to 20 miles from home, should be included in the basic fee.

PROFICIENCY AWARDS

The current rates for awards are:

BAF Members:
1 - 4 Awards £3.70 each
5 - 9 Awards £3.60 each
10+ Awards £3.40 each

Approved non-Academy Coaches:
1 - 4 Awards **£4.70** each
5 - 9 Awards **£4.10** each
10+ Awards **£3.90** each

A5 Study Guides:
1 - 4 £2.65 (**£2.90**) each (incl. p&p)
5+ £2.30 (**£2.65**) each

A4 Syllabus leaflets:
Free with Study Guide, otherwise 60p (**70p**) each.

A3 Sized Wallcharts:
65p (**75p**) each
Figures in **RED** are for non-BAF members

EXAMINATION FEES

Level 1 Assessment £11.00
Level 2 to Diploma £21.00 (**£26.00**)
These are for "normal" exams - for Special exams, consult the Course Officer. Figures in **RED** are for non-BAF members

DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation is available from the Course Officer, Dave Jerry

Key Teaching Points Foil	}£7.35 (£9.45) each
Key Teaching Points Epee		
Key Teaching Points Sabre		
Key Coaching Points Foil		
Key Coaching Points Epee		
Key Coaching Points Sabre		
Glossary of Terms (including Translation of Fencing Terms).....		£7.35 (£9.45)
Employment Guidelines.....		£7.35 (£9.45)
Teaching/ Coaching Tactics (2nd Edition).....		£16.80 (£21)
CD-Rom Issue 5 – this contains all the syllabuses and current questions for BAF examinations, as well as other examination material.....		£10.00 **
Examples of past written Papers – for the Advanced and Diploma examinations -		FREE - apply to Course Officer

All prices include p & p. Figures in **RED** are for non-BAF members
** Price of CD-ROM includes lifetime replacement guarantee - only buy once!

THE PRESIDENT WRITES.....



AGM – January 2012

This year’s AGM and dinner was held at the Hilton Warwick and was organised by Prof. Louisa Miller. Despite the difficult financial times we live in, our AGM was well attended and, judging by the lack of complaints and the number of congratulations I received, the venue proved to be well suited to all concerned.

I opened the AGM with the sad announcement of the deaths of Profs Bob Anderson and Akos Moldovanyi. After a brief tribute to two remarkable and outstanding fencing masters, the AGM observed one minute’s silence

The AGM came and went without issue. Whole hearted congratulations were offered to Prof. Leon Hill who was named in the New Years Honours list, receiving a well deserved MBE. One other notable piece of business was the elevation of Leon to the position of ‘President of Honour’.

The AGM elected the following committee

- Vice Presidents*
- Prof. Lousia Miller
and Peter Cormack
- Secretary*
- Prof. Bob Merry
- Assistant Secretary*
- Dave Jerry
- Treasurer*
- Stuart Clough
- Members’ Representative*
- John Worsley
- Proficiency Awards Administrator*
- Donald Walker

At our annual dinner I had hoped to present Prof. Sue Benney, with an

award for ‘Outstanding Achievement with a Pupil’ (this took the form of a commemorative sword with an engraved plaque). Unfortunately, Sue was not able to attend our AGM or dinner due to her work commitments (no surprise there). Prof. Peter Cormack accepted the award on Sue’s behalf and it will be presented to her in the next couple of months

Coaching Fees – what should I charge?

The recommended scale of fees as published in the Academy News was raised at the AGM. This is always a thorny issue, as some coaches are unable to charge the recommended rate, whilst others are able to charge significantly more. Our recommended scales of fees are a starting point when negotiating or quoting for services provided and regional variations can be significant.

During the AGM, it was suggested that our recommended scale of fees should be based on University visiting lecturer rates. However, most lecturers have a salary-based income. It might therefore be better to use a fee structure of peripatetic teachers (e.g. private music teachers). Such a fee structure is also more likely to be familiar to our target audience (parents and schools)

During January and February 2011, statisticians at the University of Reading conducted a survey of 1000 music teachers, concerning the level of fees charged during the 2010/11 academic year.

The table below shows the survey results broken down by region and teaching experience. (Fees charged in September 2010, in £ per hour.)

	Central London	Outer London S & SE England	Rest of the UK	
> 15 years' experience	£35 - £51	£30 - £40	£27 - £35	£25 - £32
< 15 years' experience	£30 - £45	£25 - £36	£24 - £32	£21 - £30

Unfortunately, recommending a scale of fees that is acceptable to all concerned is not an exact science as there is a long list of variables. The variables differ from coach to coach and geographical area.

Items you should consider when setting your fees

Remember that your fees should cover not only the time you spend actually teaching or coaching, but also the administrative and other time you spend maintaining your business. This may, for example, include (this is not a definitive list but will vary from coach to coach):

- time spent travelling
- time spent on lesson preparation
- time spent updating pupils' records and administering proficiency awards
- time spent accompanying pupils to competitions and training events or workshops.
- an allowance for holiday periods
- your own professional development - coach education courses, exam fees, first aid courses etc
- your overheads.
- equipment maintenance and repairs
- insurance - property, car, health and public and employers’ liability insurance (provided by your Academy membership)
- pension contributions
- income tax and national insurance contributions
- accounting and audit fees
- interest on business-related bank loans and mortgages
- venue hire charges
- fencing books and publications, stationery, advertising
- subscriptions to the BAF and other organisations
- telephone (landline and mobile etc.)

using your home as an office (rent or mortgage), lighting, heating and maintenance
cost of transport or car mileage.

How often should you review your fees?

It is sensible to review your fees regularly. In the survey quoted, most music teachers do so once a year, even though they may not always raise their

Continued on page 5.....

charges. Regular reviews enable you to adjust your fees gradually upwards to reflect your accumulating experience. They also allow you to take account of general price inflation, as measured by official statistics, such as the Consumer Price Index (published monthly by the Office for National Statistics). In deciding whether or not to raise your fees, and by how much, you will probably also want to bear in mind the general economic environment and how this might be impacting on demand for the fencing services and fees charged by other coaches in your area.

Individual and class/group lessons

Ways of charging: There are many ways of charging for lessons, but the following variations may make your fees more financially attractive

- charge more for one-off bookings relative to block or regular bookings

- offer discounts for block or regular bookings

- offer discounts for payments by standing order

- allow the time booked for a private lesson to be split with a friend, spouse or sibling

- offer discounts for fencers who have their own kit

- offer extras for people who pay for regular private lessons -e.g. free weapon repairs, coaching at competitions, discounts on ordering equipment, free club sessions, free proficiency awards

Local universities or colleges may be interested in a 'group membership' (e.g. - they pay a flat fee of say £30 per week but can bring as many of their members as they want to your club session for training.

Some coaches do not charge for advanced pupils (those who enjoy competitive success) as they could be regarded as a means of advertising. You could also consider offering discounts to fencers who are willing to help you out with other jobs (e.g. taking attendance and collecting subs, being an official 'befriender' for beginners, acting as assistant coaches (but encourage them to get qualified and insured))

Clubs often assume that free taster sessions will attract more potential new members but you may just be attracting 'freebie' tourists who occupy your time and then never come back. Ironically, charging **more** for an initial session (and perhaps offering a small money off voucher for the next session) can be very effective - you are more likely to get people who have a genuine interest and if they don't come back then at least you are compensated for the extra time a beginner takes up.

Financial hardship

If you teach or coach in an area where there is particular financial hardship or if an individual is experiencing financial difficulties, you may consider reducing the length of lessons and adjusting your fees accordingly.

Another way of helping fencers who are having difficulty paying your normal fee is to award a bursary for a specified period. The terms of the bursary should be put

in writing, as it is a variation to the terms of tuition. It is a good idea to make clear that the bursary is made at your discretion, that it lasts for the stated period only and that it is not necessarily renewable. Bursary amounts should be shown on accounts. However, remember that fencers are sensitive types and removing a bursary may mean losing the pupil!

With a younger fencer, there may be a parent who is willing to help you with administration, etc., in exchange for reduced fees for their child. A parent who has current CRB clearance can be a very useful asset at children's clubs, etc.

Finally

You can only charge what the market will stand in your area. This is never easy to get right. If you charge too much then there might be little or no take up or you'll simply not get much work. Charge too little and it's too easy for the fencer to cancel at the last minute and you won't be valued. Understandably, most fencing coaches are very cagey about how much they earn and how many hours they work. However it's highly unlikely that you'll have much in the way of direct competition. You'll almost always be competing with other sports. A great source of what other sports coaches are charging in your area can be found in the foyers/reception of most sport centres

With all that in mind, our current recommended rates of pay are as shown on page 3 and can be used as a basis for negotiation.

HMRC - A word of warning - don't imagine you will be overlooked because you are not a big business. HMRC have also announced a campaign to investigate tutors and coaches, with particular focus on those providing private lessons - for more information on how this may affect you please visit the HMRC <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ris/tcup/index.htm>

More information from HMRC can be found at

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/employment-status/>

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/selfemployed/tmaemployed_or_self-employed.shtml

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/selfemployed/>

Sports Coach UK also have a range of useful guidance documents for employment as a coach. These include:

<http://www.sportscoachuk.org/sites/default/files/HMRC%20GuidanceDocumentAug11.pdf>

<http://sportscoachuk.org/sites/default/files/HMRC%20Responses%20to%20Employment%20Questions%20FINAL.pdf>

So, whatever you do charge, ensure you keep accurate records. Employing an accountant may cost less than you think and will be well worth it both for peace of mind and to have someone in your corner should HMRC decide to pay you a visit.

Philip Bruce

COMMENT

MIXED EMOTIONS

This edition of Academy News carries news that is both a cause for celebration and for sadness.

As can be seen by our lead story, Professor Leon Hill has been honoured by the award of an MBE in the New Year's Honours List. On behalf of all BAF members, we congratulate him on a well-deserved reward for the many years service he has given to fencing and education.

On a sadder note, we have to report the deaths of two of our most senior and long-serving members, Professors Akos Moldovanyi and Bob Anderson. This edition carries an obituary for Akos. Many other people have expressed a desire to share their memories of Akos, so we invite letters for publication in the next edition.

Bob Anderson's career stretched beyond the world of fencing and he is remembered as one of the greatest sword masters associated with many Hollywood blockbusters, from the time of Errol Flynn right up to the present day. In the days following his death, the Academy was inundated with requests from various media outlets on both sides of the Atlantic for help in preparing tributes. As a result, it has been decided to produce our own tribute as a celebration of his long and varied career. This will be forwarded to all members when it is produced, which will hopefully be soon. Again, members with personal memories of Bob might care to contribute a letter to Academy News. We will attempt to publish as many as possible.

Bob Merry, Editor

.....from front page

PROFESSOR LEON HILL MBE

Most, indeed all, Academy members will have benefited from all the hard work that Leon has done in his long years of service to fencing in general and the Academy in particular. Under his chairmanship of the SSTT, we now have a coach education system that is admired internationally and support documentation that is unequalled.

Let us conclude with Leon's own reaction to the award. *"A few weeks ago, when I received notification from the Cabinet Office, I was absolutely stunned. So much so that I was in daze for some time, then I was overcome with the desire to tell someone – everybody – but that was forbidden until after the official announcement was to be made on the 31st December. It was frustrating, but I survived.*

I think I am the first fencing coach to be honoured in this way and it is my sincere hope that I shall not be the last, but the first of many. What a progressive step it would be for the fencing fraternity to realise that the future of fencing depends upon the work that we do and that we should not be simply taken for granted."

AN APOLOGY

*On behalf of the Academy I should like to apologise to David Austin for the omission in the recently published Academy list of addresses of the title **Honoured Former President** associated with **Professor David Austin***

Philip Bruce

READ ALL ABOUT IT

Over the last ten years or so, the SSTT has produced a wealth of documentation, covering all aspects of the Academy's coach education system. Many of our members will have collected a number of these useful booklets as they have progressed up the coaching ladder.

It may, at times, have proved difficult to pinpoint the exact piece of information needed from amongst this wealth of material, or to find the exact publication you need. Now there is a solution.

All the various publications have been brought together into a single, fully-indexed, Compendium. This was shown to members at the AGM and provided a powerful testimony to all the work of the SSTT, under the chairmanship of Professor Leon Hill, in whose honour the Compendium is dedicated. In A4 format, it consists of 547 pages and weighs in at 1.8 kg!

There are two versions of the Compendium, one with flow-charts and diagrams in full colour (price £87 + £10 p&p) and the other in black-and-white at £19 + £5.50 p&p. To get your copy of this seminal work of reference, send a cheque, payable to The British Academy of Fencing, to:

Prof. Isobel Combes
90 Ashurst Road
Peel Hall
Manchester M22 5AZ

I SAY, I SAY, I SAY.....

This was a reject from the Christmas Cracker factory:

Q. Why was Cinderella a poor fencer?

A. Her coach was a pumpkin!



Akos Moldovanyi 1918 – 2011



Akos was born in what was then Eastern Hungary on 13th January 1918, one of nine children whose parents were both teachers. When the borders of Eastern Hungary and Romania were altered in 1920, the family moved home in order to remain in Hungary. They settled in a town about 150 miles South West of Budapest. There Akos attended secondary and grammar school.

In 1936 he entered the Military Academy in Budapest, graduating as an officer in 1939. His marriage in 1942 produced one son Akos Junior, still residing in Budapest with his mother, who succeeds him.

Akos served in the Hungarian Army during the war and received a bravery award. He spent some time on the Russian front and suffered a leg injury during the siege of Budapest. From 1946 he served in the Ministry of Defence, retiring in 1950 with the rank of Captain.

After recovering from his leg injury, he returned to his favourite sport of Fencing. While at the same time training on a fencing coaches' course, gaining his coaching qualification in 1956, he worked as an assistant to a Fencing Master at the Technical University Fencing Club in Budapest.

That same year, the Hungarian uprising commenced against Communist rule. As Soviet troops marched into the country, Akos was advised, as an ex-Hungarian Army Officer to leave and so he crossed over the border into Austria one night with a couple of friends.

The International Red Cross were aiding refugees to resettle – nearly a quarter of a million people fled the country. With a choice of countries available, including the United States of America and Canada, he decided to go to England. He had learned English at school though that was 26 years earlier. He felt confident in his ability to start a new life as a fencing instructor in a new country. So it was on 26th November 1956 that he arrived in England as a Hungarian refugee.

He borrowed £15.00 – which he later repaid – from the British Council for Aid to Refugees, and spent “it all” on buying fencing equipment. The owner of the shop where he purchased the goods was Maître Leon Paul, one of the most prominent Fencing Masters of the time (who also had been a founder member of our British Academy of Fencing in 1949). He invited Akos to his fencing club, Salle Paul, and asked him to give demonstration lessons to three of his best pupils, all of them British Champions and Olympic Squad members. As a result of this, Akos was given a contract to teach there part time and he continued to teach at Salle Paul for the next 26 years until he retired from there at the age of 65.

During the early period of his life in the U.K., he joined and gained his full Diploma of the B.A.F. and soon became the Academy International Secretary. This was aided by his knowledge of several languages which he spoke fluently including Hungarian, English, Russian and German, with a smattering of Italian and French. He was renowned for always correcting grammar and punctuation when attending Committee meetings. His linguistic skills extended to his love for reading, in particular, Hungarian poetry and he could recite a great deal from memory. He also enjoyed music and going to concerts.

Soon after this Akos was elected a Vice President of the B.A.F. and having attended the inaugural A.A.I meeting in 1962, it was not long after that in 1968 he became a Vice President of that organisation. He was actively coaching in London during this period, at Highgate, Merchant Taylors and Alleyns schools along with Imperial College and London University, all of whom he remained with as Senior Coach into the mid nineties and who benefited immensely from his teaching, coaching and administrative skills. He was reluctantly allowed to retire. He taught at all levels from basic through to the highest and was involved with several famous Olympic fencers. He was a tough taskmaster. He did not suffer fools readily. All were made to work and train hard relentlessly. He forced them to prove themselves worthy of his tuition. Yet he did so with courtesy, charm and kindness. He was an extremely intelligent man with a sharp sense of humour. He was proud, fiercely independent and very particular about his appearance and presentation. His pupils inevitably trained tirelessly to please him.

In 1970 Akos undertook, on behalf of the BAF, the organisation and management of the Fencing Masters World Championships under the auspices of the A.A.I. This was a massive enterprise into which he threw himself wholeheartedly. He drew on all sources of help to raise the funding to stage the games at Crystal Palace. Out of respect and affection for him, many people from all avenues within fencing gave freely of their best just to be part of the event. He divided the different aspects of the initial preparation and running amongst his helpers and then went to government and celebrities for support, which came willingly. He also made decisions on the representation of the U.K. on the piste which produced some outstanding results. It is impossible in this short eulogy to elaborate too greatly on all that he achieved. On reflection, to say it was a success would be a complete understatement. It was and remains still, without a shadow of a doubt, the finest staging of the FMWC ever put together in over 50 years of the Championships and sets a standard for all other championships.

To conclude, he organised a dinner for all the participants and helpers and it was graced by the then Minister for Sport. He went on to manage and Captain the British Teams on several other occasions in other parts of the World when participating in further Fencing Masters World Championships. The BAF honoured him with their highest award of the Gauthier Trophy in 1984, which he proudly displayed in his home in the most prominent position.

David Austin



Perhaps his finest hour. Receiving the A.A.I medal of honour from the then President of the A.A.I. Herr Oscar Adler

SOME MEMORIES OF AKOS MOLDOVANYI

In the late 1960s and early 70s I was studying to obtain my Diploma, which I gained in 1975. I was lacking in Sabre skills and my Foil/Epée Coach Professor Reggie Behmber introduced me to Akos. He decided, only after thorough examination, that I had "some ability". Although I had been under the supervision of Professor Nicklen, highly regarded as a sabre coach, he insisted on teaching me how to fence the weapon "properly" before teaching me how to coach it. He set me many tasks including masses of homework and I was not allowed to move on to a new manoeuvre until I had mastered what he had previously set. He was passionate about his sport. I worked as his assistant by giving simple instruction to his best fencers for which privilege I was obliged to pay and them to suffer. His thoroughness with me paid off. I owe him much personally. I travelled to many A.A.I. events with him in Europe and 2 World Championships over a period of some 2 years. I have never forgotten all the lessons I learned.

As age began taking its toll on him and he was more or less living a solitary existence in his home in Finchley, I would call on him and we would play finger fencing. As a coach, I always let him win – well that's what I am suggesting. He was a strong man, even in his latter years, and you would not wish to become entangled in his envelopment when playing at Epée. Game over. We grew very close right at the end. He would not give in to personal discomfort refusing any help or doctor's advice. In his stubbornness he made it abundantly clear that he would end his life in the U.K. which he finally allowed me to prepare for. He never relinquished his Hungarian passport yet would not return to his native Hungary. He passed away peacefully, aged 93, in a Care Home in Highgate, when finally everything shut down. He is and will be sorely missed by all those he touched. A gentleman and an icon. Condolences to his family in Hungary.

David Austin



I first met Akos Moldovanyi in the mid sixties when, as a new Provost Member of the Academy, I attended my first BAF Course in London. The course consisted of sessions conducted by a number of Masters of the Academy and, in his session, Akos gave an impressive lecture/demonstration on 'The Silent Lesson'. I can still mentally recall the picture of Pat Pearson, to whom Akos was giving the lesson, responding correctly with sequences of strokes and movements appropriate to the often complex openings Akos gave without any spoken word of command.

A few years later, I think it was in 1969, I was elected to the Committee. Akos was already an established Committee Member, holding the offices of Vice-President and International Secretary. As I got to know him, my respect and admiration for him rapidly increased with each meeting. Here was a 'man of presence' with a precise and logical mind whose contributions to debate were invariably direct to the point and of obvious value. We very quickly became firm friends.

His insistence upon minute attention to detail meant that any task he personally undertook would be completed brilliantly. A typical example was that he took on the monumental task of raising the finances for the Academy to run the 1970 Fencing Masters World Championships at Crystal Palace and succeeded. He then assumed overall control of the administration of this event, including the International Congress, and it ran with smooth efficiency. In so doing he set a standard for the organisation of these events that has never, in my mind, been equalled by any other host nation.

The BAF is a founder member of the *Academie d'Arms Internationale* (AAI) of which Akos was also (at that time) a Vice-president. In this post and, of course, as our International Secretary his considerable linguistic skill was a great advantage. It was impressive the way he read to the Committee, translating directly into English, from the original letters he had received in French, German or Italian.

At the World Youth Championships in London in 1969 the Academy held a reception to which they invited the coaches of all participating national teams. I accompanied him as he personally made the invitations to the coaches. I watched amazed and considerably impressed by the way he led each of the coaches slightly aside from their teams and chatted with them confidentially and with obvious fluency as he delivered the invitations. When all the invitations had been made, I congratulated him and was very lavish with my praise for his linguistic skills. His face took on that impish smile that he could not hide when he was amused. He then gently informed me that most of the coaches with whom he had spoken were Hungarian. The impish smile was slow to fade.

His impeccable skills as an organiser made him the automatic first choice as Captain of the Academy's Teams for all subsequent Fencing Masters World Championships up to the time that he eventually retired from the Committee.

In 1974 Bob Anderson stepped down from office as President of the Academy and both Akos and I stood for election to replace him. By the narrowest of margins I was elected. It was typical of Akos that, without the slightest hesitation, he congratulated me and assured me of his complete support. An assurance upon which I found I could always rely.

He only had one short break from serving on the Committee, due to a family illness. The Committee did not seem the same without him and so, when I met him by chance at the *en gala* final of the British Foil Championships and I managed to persuade him to come back onto the Committee, all the members were delighted.

We have Akos to thank for the establishment of the Standing Sub-committee for Technique and Terminology (SSTT). Along with his proposal for its establishment he also drafted its 'Terms of Reference'. These were accepted without amendment and the SSTT was set up under his Chairmanship. He made sure that the first item we dealt with was to formulate the Academy's official

interpretation of 'Counter Time' in accordance with its definition in the FIE Rules for Competitions. It had irritated him for some time that many colleagues had misinterpreted the concept.

In 1984, recognising the enormous value of his services to the Academy and to British Fencing, he was awarded the Gauthier Trophy to hold for four years until 1988. As Academy members will know, this is the highest honour that the Academy has in its gift. He was the third recipient of the trophy and it is an indication of the high regard in which he is held by his colleagues.

Away from his work in fencing and for the Academy, it was a joy to be in his company. He was a great *raconteur* and he could hold almost any company enchanted with his accounts of incidents from his life in Hungary and, of course, Britain.

He had a mischievous side too. Sometimes, with a completely straight face and sincerity of voice, he would make an outrageous statement or ask a ridiculous question to confound either his listening friends or some poor unsuspecting stranger. It was only when that impish smile crept over his features that you realised what he was up to. Instances of this could fill many volumes but I think I could risk just one example. On the day that most of the rest of Europe changed over to the Euro, Akos rushed into a London convenience store seconds before it closed, grabbed a carton of milk and took it to the cashier. The poor girl's mind was probably totally occupied with thoughts of getting home, only to be confronted with this rather pleasant, slightly foreign-sounding gentleman who, with apparently total sincerity asked, "Now, my dear! If I pay for this milk in British currency, could I please have my change in Euros?"

It was a pleasure to know him and I am proud of the firm and reliable friendship we shared.

The British fencing fraternity benefited enormously from the teaching and coaching of this truly excellent fencing master and our Academy was fortunate to have had the devoted membership, allegiance and service of Akos Moldovanyi for so long.

Leon Hill

I was very sad indeed to hear the news of the death of my old master, Akos. I am writing to you as I feel compelled to put down a few words.

I am ever grateful to him for proposing me for membership of the Academy and shall remember him as one of his pupils at Salle Paul in the eighties. He was clearly a master of outstanding ability; this he demonstrated in all weapons especially sabre when I have seen him give and explain lessons in up to 4th and 5th counter ripostes, direct, indirect and compound; but more: in compound ripostes of the same order coordinated with both steps both forwards and backwards. I remember him giving a demonstration of actions leading to the seventh counter riposte in foil. The club presented him with a tulwar on his retirement. The weapon had been acquired by one of the Antiques Roadshow team who described it as a sword made by Rajputs for killing Rajputs!

I'm sure you don't need members like me to remind you of the many stories of Akos, some relating to himself, some to others, some of his time in this country and some of his life in Hungary before he arrived here as a refugee during the Revolution of 1956. There was the duel over which he presided between two Hungarian businessmen in dispute over a sugar beet crop. There was the story of a fellow officer in the Hungarian Cavalry fighting on the Eastern Front who charging his adversary: "Enveloped in quarte and cut off his head". There was the international Hungarian left-handed sabreur snootily patronised by his Russian opponent after losing by just one hit who felt himself compelled to admit that he normally fenced with his right hand.

I'm almost sure that Akos was an unassuming descendant of the Magyar aristocracy who, as horsemen from the east, invaded and settled in Central Europe many hundreds of years ago. This tradition might explain Hungarian supremacy at sabre. I seem to remember his telling me that his country had won the world sabre championship for fifty years nonstop until the 1956 revolution. I also seem to remember his telling me that the word in Hungarian for excellence and for fencing was the same. If so, this fact together with his undoubted charm, character and, indeed, learning in languages - I've known him to humorously use a Latin tag to summarise a successful ceded parry! - goes far to tell us something of the man he was.

Actually, my most vivid and personal memories of Akos was as a student and member of the fencing club at a London College in the late fifties. Once again there was the excellence: the kindness but insistence on high standards. He made sure we learned circle cuts, with cutting edge alone may I add, and to be delivered on the lunge, early in our sabre lessons. There was his generosity; he arranged a fencing display with leading internationals for our college anniversary year and was always at hand to help and advise us outside our lessons with inter-college competitions. Naturally all the women students in the club were madly on love with this charming young 25 year old master. Few of us realised at the time he must have been considerably older!

Now I teach rarely but fence regularly. My debt of gratitude to masters of the Academy for handing on to me the sport I still enjoy and which we all know and love so much is immeasurable. I just hope it is not invidious of me to say that I have a very special debt of gratitude to the Old Master.

Trevor Cox

WORSLEY'S WORDS

Musings from your new Members' Rep.



As this is my first column as the newly elected Member's Rep, I would like to take this opportunity to say hello to my fellow members of the Academy and to introduce myself.

My name is John Worsley and I was elected as the Member's Rep at the Academy's annual AGM in January to replace Stuart Clough, who has moved on to the position of Treasurer. Stuart, a man of Scottish descent, in charge of the Academy's finances, sounds like a safe pair of hands to me; we can't go wrong with a Scotsman looking after money.

Some of you may already know me from previous AGMs, depending on how much you had to drink, or from the residential coaching courses held at Denstone, to a few of which I've been over the years. For those of you that don't know me, I started fencing 11 years ago in Manchester and got into coaching to help out with the beginners that turned up, got "bitten by the bug" and passed my first coaching award in 2005 – level 2 foil. Since then I have achieved further qualifications in épée and sabre and I'm currently working towards level 4 sabre. At present I coach and fence four nights a week at three clubs and juggle this with a full-time job as an industrial chemist. So, like most members of the Academy, I'm not a Diploma Master; just a regular coach like you, teaching the sport I love, trying to improve and gain more qualifications.

My role as the Member's Rep is to give you, the members of the Academy, a voice on the committee and represent your interests at that level. I'm also here to help you get answers to any questions you might have, or suggest who to speak to if you need any advice on fencing related matters. I can't guarantee that you will like the answers you get, but I will try to ensure that you do get some kind of feedback or response.

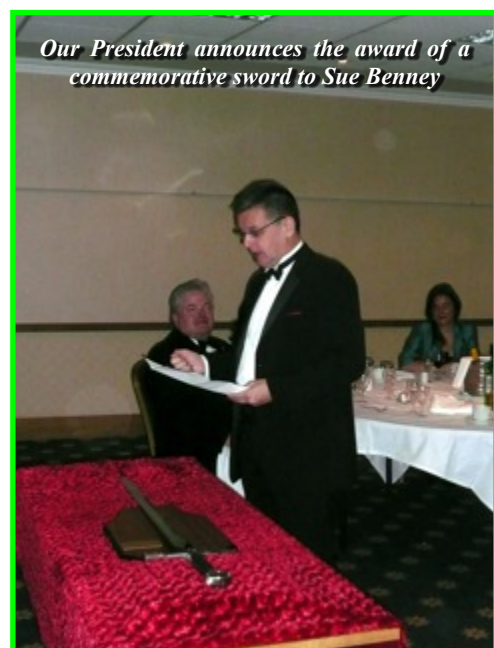
Remember, the Academy exists to serve the needs of you, our fencing coaches. So if you have any thoughts on what the Academy can do for you in 2012, or if you have any ideas or requests for courses or workshops that you would like to see, please let me know. You can contact me at worsleyja@aol.com or on 07857 625 958.

May 2012 be a prosperous year for all of you.

John Worsley, Members' Representative



Kevin Nelson receives his Level 3 Epée certificates



Our President announces the award of a commemorative sword to Sue Benney



A good time was had by all!

**FROM
THE
AGM**

MORE USEFUL BITS.....

BAF RESIDENTIAL COURSEs

Easter Course - 2nd to 7th April 2012

Fees for the Course

£400 for Members and £460 for non-Members

Course to be held at Denstone College, Staffordshire.

Contact Dave Jerry, the Course Officer for full details.

Contact details are on page 3 and further details can be found on our web site.

Autumn Course - 29th October to 3rd November 2012

N.B. These dates are still provisional and await final confirmation

ADVERTISE HERE FOR FREE!

This page is devoted to items letting our members know of courses and other events. If you have a course, event, or even a club you want to advertise here, contact the Editor, Bob Merry, to discuss this. There is no charge to members and you don't even have to supply any artwork. Simply give Bob Merry the details and he'll see you get a mention on this page.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The under mentioned names are published as having applied for membership of the British Academy of Fencing. If anyone wishes to raise objections or has information which he or she feels is relevant, please contact the Secretary of the BAF.

All objections will be required to be made in writing and will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Andrew Higgs	Guernsey
Jean-Christophe Guibert	London
Bhupesh Patel	Cheshire
Barry More	Surrey

See the Academy web site at www.baf-fencing.org for details of the latest applications.

IMPORTANT

All Course organisers and potential attendees should be aware of the following condition, which applies to all BAF Courses, including "non-official" courses run by Academy members.

Please note the Course Officer and the Course Director reserve the right to refuse an application to attend the course.

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