



NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2012

Tragic death of Carol Wengraf in Galicia



The Galician tribute to WVFA fencer Carol Wengraf who died on the piste at the Celtic Challenge in Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Celtic Challenge photos
Fencing in Erfurt
White Horse Trophy report
Flying Friendship Cup

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Chairman's letter

Dear Members,

Many of you will have heard by now that our colleague Carol Wengraf collapsed and died whilst fencing in the Celtic Challenge in Galicia, Spain on 23rd June.

I deem it a privilege to have known Carol who was not only a kind and generous person but a remarkably good fencer who was typically modest in victory.

She will be missed by us all and our thoughts are with her family at this time.

Although the fencing season has been split this year due to the Olympics, the next event opportunity is The Winton Cup which is now in its 5th year. The competition returns to Lilleshall once more as RAF Cosford, after initially telling me that it was good for 2012, called me to say that due to cutbacks, they do not have the staff to administer the weekend.

The respective Regional Team Captains are already in recruitment mode and if you would like to take part and have not been contacted, then please email or call me and I will put you in touch with your relevant Team Captain.

I received some good news this week when, in conversation with David Sweeney, he informed me that he has received the "All Clear" from the hospital after his recent illness. David is back in harness on the committee and working as Team Manager with Marcia on the organisation of our GB Team's participation in the Veterans World Championships in Krems, Austria in October.

Your committee meets in July when we will be discussing the matter of the selection rules but we will not be implementing anything without due consultation with you.

I hope that all of you who are volunteers for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics enjoy the experience and join me in wishing our fencers every success.

Sincerely

Frank Mills
BVF Chairman



Carol Wengraf

1938 - 2012

Carol tragically died whilst fencing in the Celtic Challenge taking place in Galicia, Spain on 23rd June 2012.

She joined the NVA in 1997 and immediately earned the respect of her veteran fencing colleagues through her warmth and generous attitude towards everyone who met her.

Carol was a 3 weapon fencer and always entered all 3 weapons in the National Championships and was remarkably consistent in displaying her considerable fencing ability.

From 2001 to 2011 she won her age category medal in Women's Sabre every year at the British Veterans Championships and missed just one medal in 2008 when she retired injured.

From 2003 to 2011, she competed in the European Veterans Individual Championships, a competition held every 2 years, and in 2007 she won the Silver Medal. In every other event, she won the Gold Medal which was a truly remarkable achievement.

During this time, she also won 2 Bronze medals at Epee in 2009 and 2011 and won the Women's Sabre Gold Medal in the 2011 Veterans World Championships.

Before she retired, Carol was an ENT surgeon at a time when there were considerable barriers to women in the profession. Carol leaves a son, David, daughter-in-law Helen and a grandson, Patrick, who she affectionately called "sprogget".

Carol was a true Ambassador for Great Britain's veteran fencing and she has certainly left a legacy of achievement as an example for all veterans to follow and she will be sadly missed by us all. (FM)

My friend and Welsh team mate

It is difficult to describe in words the events and emotions of the weekend in Galicia. Carol collapsed on the piste during the women's foil event on Saturday afternoon already having fenced sabre earlier in the day and had commented on how she much was enjoying the foil. She was winning fights and had said to me that she was both thinking and fencing like a foilist.

She collapsed suddenly and did not regain consciousness nor respond but we carried out CPR until the ambulance arrived and the medics pronounced her dead. We tried to save her and after a short time knew we couldn't but did not give up until we were told to stop.



I cannot express in words how grateful of all us who were there are, especially the Welsh Vets team, to our Galician friends for the kindness, love and respect they showed us, and to Carol in her death; and the Spanish authorities too were wonderful. The gestures our Galician friends made were so thoughtful and respectful. They laid out the Welsh flag on the piste where Carol had died after her body had been taken away and lowered all the flags on the wall.

Carol had always said that if she died during a competition that we were not to stop the rest of the event and we all agreed to continue the next day and to still hold the gala dinner that evening in her honour. It was a good evening and it was dedicated to her.

When we arrived back at the sports hall on Sunday there were flowers on the flag. One of the Galician fencers was wearing a black armband. We all agreed that Vivienne Frith of Scotland would fence for Carol as honorary Welsh and she fenced brilliantly in the epee team to put Cornwall into bronze position giving us the silver. Carol would have been so proud and I am sure she would have chuckled to see Viv's new found epee skills. Viv accepted Carol's team bronze medals for sabre and foil, which are now with Carol's family, and the WVFA team were honoured to ask her to keep the epee silver medal which we are sure that Carol would have wanted her to do.

Before the finals every single person joined together and spontaneously formed a large circle linking arms around shoulders for a minute's silence and whilst we bowed our heads the Welsh National anthem was quietly played. This was such an unexpected and poignant gesture that I was not the only one who sobbed. During the medal presentations one of the Galician fencers wore a Welsh tracksuit top in Carol's honour.

Despite the sadness of everything I must say it was so heart warming to feel the love and empathy, and Carol would have been honoured and proud. I am sure she was smiling down at us.

To our Galician friends - muchos gracias and besos :-). We will never forget.

Carol's body was cremated in Santiago de Compostela and her ashes brought back to the UK by her Welsh team mates who had travelled with her from Manchester to Spain.

There have been many tributes to her on Facebook and the Fencing Forum.

It is hard to see a friend die and Carol was a good friend to me from the moment I joined the Welsh Vets when we laughed at our 'Welsh' surnames and to me was 'Auntie Carol'. We shared some very happy times and sad times too and she was always there for me.

'Auntie Carol' I will miss you so much. Xxx

Gilly



Memorial Service for Carol

This is a message from her family:

Carol's memorial service will take place on Wednesday the 4th of July at 3pm at the church of St Michael and All Angels in Hathersage S32 1AJ

There's a train station in Hathersage, connecting ...to Manchester and Sheffield, and there are buses from Sheffield (272 to Castleton).

There will be a wake at her house after the service.

To any fencers reading this - we think she'd like a guard of honour, so could you bring a weapon! Foil, epee and sabre are all OK, she used all 3.

Dave Wengraf



WVFA sabre team

Celtic Challenge - 23rd June 2012

(photo courtesy of Santy Vazquez Seixo)

If you have a personal reminiscence or photo(s) you would like to share, or would like to say something for inclusion on Carol's obituary on the BVF website, please email John Mason:

BVF@jrmason.demon.co.uk

*Do not grieve for me, for I have not gone,
My body worn out, but the spirit is strong.
That little movement in the corner of your eye,
Yes that was me, letting you know I am still close by.
We will all look forward to that little flash of light.*

Yes that was our friend Carol, she's here, but only just out of our sight. So I will not say goodbye to you, just cheerio my friend, as I know in my heart, we will meet up once again.

Rikki Howdle
WVFA



Galician Celtic Challenge - 2012

Grateful thanks to the organisers of the Galician Celtic Challenge and to the Galician team for the support, respect and love which they showed to all of us who were there and the respect they gave to Carol.

The competition was superbly organised with immense attention to detail throughout and the Gala evening fantastic.

Congratulations to the Galician fencers who took the Dragon trophy from the previous winners, Wales. The dragon has now been named Arthur (Arturo in Spanish) by the Galicians and they will be bringing him to Edinburgh in 2014 for the next Celtic Challenge, which will be very strongly contested.

Individual and team weapon results will be published in the July newsletter.

Editor



Some of the Galician team

A proud Nena Cano holds Arthur aloft



*Arthur (Arturo)
The Celtic
Dragon
(born in Wales)*

*Photos by
Editor*



The White Horse Trophy - 24th June 2012 organised by Abingdon Fencing Club

Our Domestic Fencing Officer, Peter Baron, organised two teams to enter this popular competition with each team having 1 Foilist, 1 Epeeist and 1 Sabreur. Teams comprising men or women fencers at any of the weapons. No doubt Peter will be hearing from one or two of the team members as we were entered as the "Codgers" and the "Fogeys" which caused some amusement amongst the other teams :-).

It was an excellent turn out on the day with 17 teams taking part. They say you're getting older when policemen start looking young but most of the teams there looked even younger than the policemen I thought were getting younger!

Unfortunately, the Codgers started with a distinct disadvantage as the epeeist was unable to turn up for the event but Sabreur Michael Compton and Foilist Dawn Townsend fenced their hearts out to achieve some good results.

The competition was run with two rounds of poules followed by DE. In the first round the Fogeys, comprising Jeanne Brooks - Sabre, Bob Sonderman - Epee and myself - Foil won a total of 3 fights and the Codgers won 4 fights. It was at this point that I thought, speaking just for myself, that Peter's team name was correct!

In the second round of poules, the Fogeys won 4 foil fights and one sabre fight whilst the Codgers won 4 sabre fights and 2 foil fights.

In the Direct Eliminations, which were run as Italian relay with each weapon to 10 hits or 5 minutes, the Codgers faced an impossible task with a missing epeeist and did well to finish with a score of 25 hits against York's 30. I'm sure that if they had managed to get even a few epee wins they would have been a real contender in the competition.

The Fogeys fared a little better by winning the first DE against Watford B 30 - 18 but went out in the second DE against St Albans A 30-11.

It was an enjoyable day's fencing and against some excellent young teams; always good to help build the reflexes, speed and stamina for veterans events.

Frank Mills (feeling aged 98 after this event)



***Michael
Compton
attacks***



***Dawn
Townsend
in action***

Richard and John go to Germany again!

Another year, another trip to the German Mitteldeutsche Seniorenmeisterschaften event at Erfurt. John Troiano and I met up at Heathrow mid afternoon on Friday 8th June to fly to Frankfurt. Unfortunately the windy weather and British Airways had different ideas! BA cancelled our flight and we flew out to Frankfurt a couple of hours later on another BA flight. The delay was ok as we had a pleasant couple of hours, and a couple of beers, in the BA lounge. John and I also started a backgammon series with me taking an early lead.

About 3 hours later we landed in Frankfurt to be reunited with our bags, always a relief, particularly after coming back from Italy in Jan this year to be told my bag was still in Rome!

Those of you who remember my literary masterpiece when John and I went to this same competition last year will know we had a problem with the car's wing mirror last year - we returned it without one! Clearly Hertz remembered us as they wouldn't trust us with a sporty BMW, giving us a huge Volvo SUV instead. As last year we set off on the 2 1/2 hour drive across Germany to get to Erfurt. Gladys, my trusty satnav, was with us but she'd lost her voice and I just couldn't work out how to tickle her into speaking to us, so we took a wrong turn at a motorway junction and finally arrived at our Erfurt hotel at about 23:00. Jon parked the car, I went to the bar. The charming German barmaid explained to me that Erfurt has the oldest bridge in Europe and is situated as the belly button of Germany. I wanted to ask her to show me what she meant, demonstrating using her own anatomy, but I was struggling to find the words "auf Deutsch" and unfortunately John arrived and saved her. A couple of beers and a large German sausage later John and I were joined by a travelling troupe of British Shakespearean actors who were touring and performing in castles of Europe. They were performing the Scottish Play and the two male leads were with us in the bar. Fortunately, or not as we never got to meet them, the three witches had gone to bed (hubble, bubble, toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble) – just as well as the barmaid had already cast a spell on me! John and I rolled into bed (separately) sometime after midnight (isn't that a Clapton song?). Having shared a room with Ralph in Kalmar and again with John in Erfurt I realise I will be getting a reputation of sleeping with most of the men's veterans team, but it's all in the interests of economy, nothing more!

Saturday dawned and Gladys directed us to the fencing. Last year John won the event and I was third, so we had high hopes. There were two seeding poules of 7 but my mask bib failed weapon control (where were you Jane to lend me your bib as you did in Kalmar?) but the Germans, helpful and resourceful, sewed on a new bib for me. However, that meant I didn't warm up at all, going on to lose my first fight to Martin Eitz who went on to win the tournament - not a great start! John had a good seeding round and we both went into the first round of the DE. We both won our last 16 DE fights - John had a comfortable victory to get to the last 8 and I, having decided I needed my opponent to come to me, had an unusually patient and tactical fight for me, being 1:1 after the first 3 mins. Things livened up in the second period and I won 10:6 to follow John into the last 8.

I had a fast DE fight to lose 10:6 in the second period, to Eitz again. It was a good fight but in honesty he was always ahead. John had a slower fight and was 4:4 at the end of the second period. He had priority but after a double light the referee thought for a minute and awarded the German's beat attack rather than John's parry riposte. End result was John was 6th and I was 7th.

Not the medal placings we had last year but the standard was high and we'd had 6 good seeding fights and 2 tough DE fights each. Furthermore, as last year, the Germans made us very welcome and were genuinely pleased to see us there.

So, time to think about returning home. Having both decided we would rather sleep with our wives than another night with each other we decided to head back to Frankfurt and London on the Saturday night rather than wait for our Sunday morning flights. The only way to do this was the judicious use of some air-mile points and an upgrade to Business Class. More backgammon followed in the BA lounge, John clawing his way back into the series, and then we boarded.

Bruce, the Business Class cabin attendant was a great guy. He'd been with BA 30 years and understood service. He quickly worked out that service to me equated to copious amounts of G&T. This was great but allowed John to take a narrow lead and close out the backgammon series. Still, Bruce made up for this by giving me a travel bag containing a couple of cans of gin and bottles of tonic for my train journey back to Cambridge. He was even apologetic that he couldn't give me any ice for the journey. Now, in the dim and distant past I spent 2 years as a customer service manager and BA got this service episode right - I don't remember the flight they cancelled, I remember the attention that Bruce gave me on the way home!

So, all on all, a great trip. Great company, good fencing, great hospitality from the German organisers and another real adventure. John and I are committed to going again next year and will be pushing hard for medals that eluded us this time. Anyone want to join us next year?

*Photo
courtesy of
Richard Sage*

Richard Sage

***The competition in
progress at Erfurt***



How many competitions have been running for 53 years?

Not too many I suspect but the Flying Friendship Cup has.

This annual competition was initiated and arranged by BEA (the future British Airways) and ASADP (Paris Airports) in 1959, 53 years ago!, by a former Vet chairman Joe Garratt who was a British Airways senior manager.

The FFC is a closely fought affair with a team made up of one fencer in each of the four disciplines. Wellesbourne Sword Club was fortunate to have Joe, who had been fencing since his Navy days, join as a member some years ago when he was still at British Airways. Due to a lack of BA fencers WSC Joe asked if WSC would like to come to the competition as and for many years the club has been fencing as the British Airways team . (I did work at BEA in the 70's so feel OK about this).

So each year we fence in a different city against KLM, Iceland Air, Air France and Aeroport de Paris and although many of Joe's old friends have retired we have made many new friends over the years of travelling to Paris, Amsterdam and Brussels and we have hosted the event here in London on three occasions.



Janet Baron



Malcolm Fare

This year was no exception and a WSC team with help from Vets Malcolm Allton, Sylvia Brown, Mike Bradbury, Peter and Janet Baron, Malcolm Fare, Silvia Earl, Nigel Hinchliff and myself Andrew Brown travelled to Paris to fence in early June in the magnificent fencing salle under the Tour de Montparnasse.

There were 63 entries making up 8 teams and individual combatants. The BA1 team came 4th.

Individual medals are also awarded in each weapon and the Vets gained credible results fencing much younger fencers. Malcolm Fare won a bronze in

foil- Sylvia Brown a bronze in Women's foil - Peter Baron a bronze in Sabre - Janet Baron and Silvia Earl were awarded Gold in women's events in Epee and Sabre respectively.

For some strange reason it was decided that the dinner dance would be held in a Mexican restaurant so we were entertained by musicians in rather large hats on the Saturday night.



Andrew Brown

Peter Baron

England Veterans Fencing

Commonwealth Veterans Fencing Championships Singapore 27 – 30 September 2012

Details can be found on www.cvfc2012.sg

Entries

Individual entries have to go through National Bodies. For England fencers I will co-ordinate these once entry forms are available and we know the actual costs. I assume that the other Home Countries will co-ordinate their entries.

Teams will be selected on the results of the individual events.

Several people have already indicated an interest in entering. If you are intending to go would you please drop me an email (johncrouch@fsmail.net) and I will ensure that you get any relevant forms and information. Fencers will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation and may be required to make a contribution towards the cost of a referee.

John Crouch
Chairman England Veterans Fencing Association

The Noble Art of the Sword

Thanks to Austen Rose for sending me the following information on what looks to be a very interesting exhibition:

[The Noble Art of the Sword: Fashion and Fencing in Renaissance Europe](#)
The Wallace Collection, Hertford House, Manchester Square
London W1U 3BN

Thursday 17th May, 2012 - Sunday 16th September, 2012
Admission Free

The Noble Art of the Sword: Fashion and Fencing in Renaissance Europe comprises exquisite and deadly weapons and other works of art from the Wallace Collection, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Royal Armouries, and British private collections, brought together with stunning princely weapons and costume from some of the greatest continental collections, exhibited in Britain for the first time. The very best sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century swords will be seen alongside beautifully illustrated fencing manuals from the Howard de Walden Library, on long-term loan to the Wallace Collection, while portraits, design books and documents will help place the Renaissance rapier in its social and artistic context to tell us more about the men who owned and used it.

<http://www.wallacecollection.org/collections/exhibition/93>

Editor



Competition results (top half)

Chichester Open - 26/5/2012

MF (38)	11	Malcolm Rule
ME (58)	5	Howard West
	26	Will Miller
	27	Alan Knowles
WF (17)	3	Nicola Hull

Wrexham Open - 9/6/2012

MF (37)	15	Paul Kennea
ME (53)	9	Granville Ward
	15	David Hiam
	16	Tim Pearce
	21	Denis Callanan
	22	Darryl Hazlewood
	26	Paul Cooper

Herts Open Sabre - 27/5/2012

MF (49)	21	Julian Ghosh
WS (28)	6	Jane Hutchison
	13	Lucy Wright

MS (23)	3T	Stefan Leponis
	9	Steve Potter

WF (13)	3T	Kati Archer
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Bexley Open - 10/6/2012

ME (66)	7	Howard West
	14	Will Miller
	15	Stephen Domek
	22	Adam Steiner
	23	Stephan Munn
	24	David Karlin
	26	Etineen Deburgh

1	Galicia
2	Cornwall
3	Wales

Individual results will be published in the July newsletter

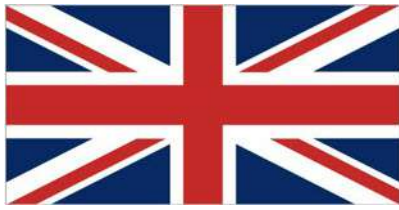
See BVF website home page for European competitions and events - www.veterans-fencing.co.uk

BVF Calendar 2012

BVF CALENDAR 2012	
Sep 27-30	Commonwealth Veterans Championships, Singapore
Oct 13-14	Welsh Veterans Championships, Aberystwyth Contact Gillian Aghajan (g.aghajan@virgin.net) for details
Oct 17-21	World Championships, Krems, Austria
Nov 10-11	Veterans Winton Cup, Lilleshall, Telford (Note NEW DATE)
Nov 25	BVF v Royal Navy, HMS President, 72 St Katharines Way, London E1W 1UQ

Tracksuits

I was asked to publish this article in this month's issue, the content of which I have not edited or altered - **Editor**



v

Flying the drab !



I write this contribution to the Vets Newsletter on the Jubilee Weekend of our glorious Queen (and Patron of British Fencing) Elizabeth 11. The land is awash with red white and blue. The Union Flag is to be seen everywhere. The flag that flew at Waterloo, Rorke's Drift and Goose Green is proudly displayed on almost every house in the kingdom as well as being waved by countless excited smiling children. It makes one proud to be British and inspires one to stand on a table, glass in hand and quote those famous lines from Shakespeare's Henry V. *'We few, we happy few, we band of brothers'*. (No doubt historians among you will point out that the Union Flag was not around at the time of Agincourt, but hay, a little poetic licence is permitted).

The Union Flag – in addition to its excellent and colourful design is recognized throughout the world as a symbol of freedom, fair play and free speech. We often see it proudly draped over the shoulders of our victorious sports men and women. Red white and blue should be an obvious choice for the new British Veteran Fencing Track Suit. Not so I fear. We have settled for a drab blue with very small embellishments of red and white. Not only (in my humble opinion) is it uninspiring, unimaginative and instantly forgettable but worst of all bland and boring. Those of you, who know me and know my reputation for sartorial elegance (as long as it involves T shirt and shorts) will realize that I am an expert on fashion and I think the new kit is a complete disaster. It reminds me of the boiler suit of an Eastern European plumber. However using the favoured language of British Fencing and wishing to be *'open and transparent'* and *'fit for purpose'* I will address certain concerns which have been voiced to me by individuals who have purchased the new track suit.

'open'. Certainly, the jacket and trouser pockets remain open as there are no zips – has anyone seen my glasses, cigarettes and car keys? – *'transparent'* Absolutely, wear the new strip and you will instantly disappear in a crowd.

'fit for purpose' Apparently not. I understand that the zips on the trousers are too short which makes it very difficult (certainly for ancient fencers like myself) to remove them over fencing shoes. It will not be a pretty sight to see the British fencing team rolling around on the floor imitating a bale of stranded turtles.

There are also *'issues'* concerning the sizes but I regard these as technical issues rather than design disasters. So trying to be positive can I say anything good about the new strip?

Well, the white Great Britain on the back stands out well against the drab background and the cost of the new track suit is not too bad.

I do agree that the old 'bat wing' shell suits looked very dated and needed to be replaced but why did it have to be such an uninspiring design? No doubt it will be pointed out that the Union Flag is featured on the strip as part of the new BVF logo (which I think is excellent) however it is very small and as I have lost my glasses again, I cannot see it!

I will try and be positive and offer some advice to those who have purchased the new track suit.

- Do not stand in front of a dark background – such as the black backing of a finals piste - you will disappear.
- Do not fraternize with our rebel colonial friends – astonishingly the USA Vets team have opted for a very similar all blue kit -.
- Most important of all, do not hang around the central heating cupboard at any event as you may be asked to replace the boiler!

On my recent trip to Sweden, walking back to the hotel from the venue it was easy to spot different national teams relaxing in the evening sun outside various watering holes. The Germans in their striking black, red and white strip, the Italians in their blue and white flamboyantly decorated in gold and the Russians in their red and white - visible even through a haze of cigarette smoke -. I didn't spot any of the GB squad. Maybe they were not there. If they were I may well have mistaken them for a group of council workers.

I am sure there are fencers who are excited and inspired by the new kit. I am not one of them.

As you may have guessed I will not be purchasing a new track suit and will continue to wear the Great Britain colours that I have worn so proudly for the past 13 years. I will however try to have my old track suit tailored so I do not look so much like a demented bat. Will I be accused of being a fashion victim? Yes – no change there then. Will I be accused of being reactionary? Yes – no change there then. Will I be easily identified as a Great Britain fencer? Yes. Mission accomplished! HUSSAR !

Richard Bonehill

PS Have a spiffing weekend Your Majesty

'I thought that the new tracksuits were superb. There was a real team identity and the union flag fencer really stood out. The material was light, it felt good and it looked good. I was certainly proud to wear it as a Great Britain supporter on the days when we weren't fencing. From your photos the tracksuits also looked good from in front and behind and stood out on the podium!'

Michele Narey

Gold medallist GB Women's sabre team



Editor's Note:

The BVF newsletter is your voice: a chance for you to put forward your views, send reports, letters, photos or articles.

Please speak up!

Send to me:

g.aghajan@virgin.net

NOMURA

**Caption
Competition
June**

send your entry to Editor

g.aghajan@virgin.net



**Caption
Competition
May**

Editor's choice

"Dear Mum, Buy Champagne, Love Vanessa"
Paul Brenda

*Photos by
Editor*



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PLEASE NOTE
 Any articles or letters for the July BVF Newsletter should be sent to:-

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 by 17th July 2012

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