

### *Success at the new Leon Paul Centre!*



**John Troiano and Anthony Bartlett in action in the Men's Foil Final**

Photo by Editor

**VLSO photos**

**Ralph Johnson on TV**

**Memories of starting fencing**

**BVF 100 Club**

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## Chairman's letter

Dear Members,

The Veterans London Spring Open competition, organised and run by Peter Baron, was a great success over the weekend of 22nd and 23rd March, with over 100 entries enjoying the new facilities at the excellent Leon Paul Fencing Centre in London.

Fencers came from across the UK, not just London and the South as one might expect, and with such support it is intended that this competition becomes an annual event.

The West Midlands Open in Dudley, also very well run by Peter with help from Janet, was most enjoyable and it a shame that many more fencers don't take advantage of an enjoyable and competitive competition. Results for both can be seen on our website.

Next month sees the European Veterans Team Championships starting in Poreč on 15th May, with Team Manager Gillian Aghajan looking after a full squad.

It was two years ago that Great Britain put forward a proposal to the EVFC that a team competition for older fencers be organised alongside the established team championships.

This year will see that happening with teams with an aggregate age of 195+ taking part. The concept was that there should be no doubling up between fencers over the two competitions or between weapons. Some countries have evidently found this impossible to meet and a set of temporary rules from the EVFC allowing such doubling up will be further discussed at the meeting of country representatives in Poreč. The BVF Committee voted to uphold the principle of no doubling up at our last meeting, and this has been possible for every weapon except men's sabre where, due to illness and family commitments causing fencers to recently drop out, we have had to double up in order to field a competitive team.

Our next big event is the Age Group Qualifiers to be held in Bletchley, Milton Keynes, on 7th and 8th June. Just a reminder that if you are going to book accommodation at the Premier Inn, you need to do this before 9th May as rooms will be released by the hotel after that date.

I know that you will join me in wishing our teams every success in Poreč and we look forward to seeing the results on our website.

**Frank Mills**  
**Chairman BVF**

**MALTA 2014**

**21-23 June**

for a fabulous fencing holiday

[www.salago.co.uk](http://www.salago.co.uk)

## BVF Calendar 2014

BVF CALENDAR 2014	
Apr 12-13	West Midlands Open 2014, Dudley, West Midlands Event Manager - Peter Baron
Apr 26-27	Veterans Home International, Edinburgh
May 10-11	Hampshire (Veterans Tournament) Portsmouth Details: <a href="http://www.southhampshirefencing.co.uk/hampshire-open/">http://www.southhampshirefencing.co.uk/hampshire-open/</a>
May 15-18	European Team Championships, Poreč, Croatia Event Manager - Gillian Aghajan
May 31 - Jun 1	Can/Am Veterans Cup, Toronto, Canada
June 7-8	Age Groups 2014, Bletchley Event Manager - Frank Mills
Aug 24-29	Veterans Training Camp, Valles (BZ), Italy
Sep 6-7	Veterans Winton Cup, Lilleshall Event Manager - Frank Mills
Oct 11-12	Welsh Veterans Championships, Wrexham details: <a href="mailto:g.aghajan@virgin.net">g.aghajan@virgin.net</a>
Oct 21-26	World Championships, Győr, Hungary Event Manager - David Sweeney
Nov 16-19 (tbc)	Veterans Commonwealth Championships, Largs, nr Glasgow

See BVF website home page for European competitions and events -

[www.veterans-fencing.co.uk](http://www.veterans-fencing.co.uk)

### Get well soon!

Best wishes to BVF members who are injured, recovering from surgery or unwell:

**Paul Straupmanis** - starting to walk again after breaking his back in a car accident.

**Vanessa Hendra** - making good progress following her hamstring injury and surgery.

**Duncan Rowlands** - recovering well from his recent bowel surgery but unable to compete in the European Veterans Team Championships.

**Editor**

*Photo by  
Editor*



## BVF's Amazing Grey!



*How many  
'Grey's can  
you  
recognise?*

It was back in early December that Gillian's round-robin email arrived notifying us of a new TV game show to be called "Amazing Greys", the concept of which would be to pit young wannabees against wrinklies who have had a certain amount of success in a particular area of knowledge or sport. If a wannabee beat 2 out of 3 wrinklies he or she would walk away with £10,000! And before you start assuming that the corollary would apply if they didn't, think again!

Like many fencers I'm a "why not?" person so I emailed ITV with a brief biog and got a call the following day asking me to come to their studios close to Waterloo Station and to bring my fencing gear. They also asked me to bring an opponent to fight against and Kate Smith kindly agreed. There it soon became apparent that the only fixed idea was the show's name.... they had no real understanding of what fencing was about and no definite ideas of what the various games would be! It was to be a learning, evolving process for all concerned right up to and including the days the 6 shows were filmed.

So Kate and I were filmed fencing and I then I was interviewed on camera by a young lady, at the end of which she said: "You're quite articulate, aren't you?".....I reflected that perhaps I hadn't been a complete disaster during my 36 years as a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Judicature, a Commissioner for Oaths and a Public Notary after all!

Next I spent an entire day at the Leon Paul Fencing Centre in Hendon with 4 (yes 4!) ITV staff doing a photo-shoot, endlessly repeating various moves to camera and then being interviewed. And the result of all this effort? One 2-second shot in the montage to be seen at the beginning of the shows and a 30-second monologue by me before I compete.....

*Photos  
courtesy of ITV*

Then came the games testing; two days in the studios to refine what the wrinklies and wannabees were going to be required to do. It was then for the first time that I was told what the nature of my game would be, but not the final details. As will be seen in the shows where I compete the connection with fencing as we know it is barely tangential! Yes, epees and masks are used but that's it! So they then produced two epees thoughtfully acquired from Leon Paul for me and the wannabee to use.....unfortunately, whereas I use left-handed pistol grips they were both right-handed French grips.....hmm!.....so I used my own.

And in late March the shows were eventually shot and I got to meet all of the other wrinklies, some of which were indeed household names. Was my head turned.....?!.....did I enjoy rubbing shoulders with such glitterati, albeit briefly before I returned to my well-deserved obscurity....?!.....YOU BET!!

As you may have seen, the first show was on Saturday evening, the 12th, and I can now confirm what John said in his email on 4th April, that I appear as a reserve on the 26th April and compete on the 3rd May and 17th May. And how did I do.....?!.....ah, that would be telling!!

**Ralph Johnson**

## Vets London Spring Open

Congratulations to Peter for organising this so well and thanks to all the helpers, referees and last but not least, armourers.

**Sara Spence**



Just learnt that George Dell our US entrant came over SPECIALLY for the event!!!

**Peter Baron**

Thank you for a good days fencing.

**Catherine Bowd**

**Have you joined our British Veterans Fencing Group on Facebook?**



**Peter Baron and friend at work behind the scenes at the VLSO**

## VLSO Winners



### WS

Gillian Aghajan, Caroline Clancy,  
Michele Narey, Lucy Wright



### WE

Mariette Mason, Sue Brooks,  
Sara Spence, Marg Oniye



### WF

Angela Findlay, Shelagh Baines,  
(Jon Willis), Dawn Townsend  
Gina Hall



### WE

Emmanuel Therond,  
Pete Hutton, Rob Penton,  
Julian Ghosh



### ME

Jason Scrimshaw, Claude Haller (FRA),  
Paul Townson, Will Miller, (Jon Willis)



### MF

Richard Sage  
Michael Thomas  
Anthony Bartlett  
John Troiano

# Smiles at the VLSO



*Photos by Editor*

## How it came about that I took up the sport of fencing by Lawrence Gough

February 1964. Dublin. I was 14 years old.

The conversation at home was moving towards my joining the Boy Scouts and I could sense I wasn't going to have much say in the matter. Things were looking very serious indeed. Now, I didn't have anything against tramping up and down the most beautiful countryside in the world and sitting down, making mugs of tea and eating bacon and sausages at an open fire and maybe even singing a song or two, but a certain lad, I will call him D, was in the Scouts!

D lived across the road from us and was every mother's 'dream' son. His hair was always combed neatly and he didn't look like a hedgehog. His shirt collar was buttoned and the tie-knot was pristine. His glasses sat fair and straight and clean on his nose. You could see yourself in the shine on his shoes. Worst of all, D spoke through his nose! I dreaded banging into him whenever my mother and I were returning from doing some shopping.

"Yes, Mrs Gough." "No, Mrs Gough." "Certainly, Mrs Gough" - straight down his nose and his spectacles bobbing up and down on his ears! My goodness! Where did they find him? The fellow was only 14! Things were looking bleak. Enquiries were made as to when and where I should present myself and where the Scout's uniform could be bought. Time was running out!

But all was not lost! One evening, my father came to my rescue. He announced that he had met an old friend, Kevin Smith, who happened to be a fencer, and not only that, but was on the Council of the Irish Amateur Fencing Federation.

Kevin mentioned to my father that there was an international fencing tournament being held in Dublin the following weekend and he invited me to come and watch. My parents agreed to my going and I saw D's airy nostrils disappearing rapidly.

The tournament in question was the Quadrangular Match which was held in Cathal Brugha Military Barracks on Saturday, 18th April 1964. I was to be there at 2.30pm and enquire for Kevin Smith. When I arrived at the barracks, Kevin was not present and nobody knew whether he would be there later, or not.

I was amazed to see all these women and men walking and running around in white outfits. It was the first time that I heard the 'sound' of fencing! What impressed me most were the large rows of silver buttons on the fencing jackets! I had not got the slightest idea of what was going on as I understood nothing about fencing.

I also noticed a gentleman who was impeccably dressed, sporting a well-trimmed moustache. His name was Charles-Louis de Beaumont. Little did I know, but this man would play the most pivotal of roles in my entire fencing career (and indeed, my life) some 5 years later.



*Lawrence in  
1968*

I sat on a bench at the side of the gymnasium taking everything in. At some stage, a fencer came along and sat down beside me. He said hello and immediately took out a needle and thread and started stitching and mending some small holes in his fencing jacket. I was a bit surprised.

We fell into conversation. He wanted to know all about me. He explained the basics of fencing to me. He told me that he was an épée fencer and that he was representing England at the match. He showed me how to hold an épée, allowed me examine his mask, explained the scoring system, footwork, etc. I was fascinated by him. We discussed everything under the sun and I vividly remember having a chat with him about the Norman invasions of Ireland in 1169. He seemed very interested in history!

Time rolled on and it was time for me to return home. We shook hands. I thanked him. He suggested that I might go to a fencing club and see if I liked the sport.

This chance meeting between a young Irish boy and an English fencer had a profound influence on my entire life. I had not got the foggiest idea of who this gentleman was. Of course, I knew his name, it was printed in the programme! It was only some years later that I realised who had befriended me that day. I had spent an afternoon with John Fairhall, one of the world's foremost fencing masters. It was John Fairhall's kindness, warmth and enthusiasm that led me to take up fencing, not forgetting of course, D's flappy nostrils.

The following Wednesday, 22nd April 1964, I went to a fencing club in Dublin and started to learn how to fence. My next meeting with John Fairhall was when we fenced épée in the last 16 of the Birmingham Open in 1976. I won.

I can only hope I have been as successful as John was, in kindling the fire of enthusiasm for our sport in the hearts and heads of my pupils over the years.

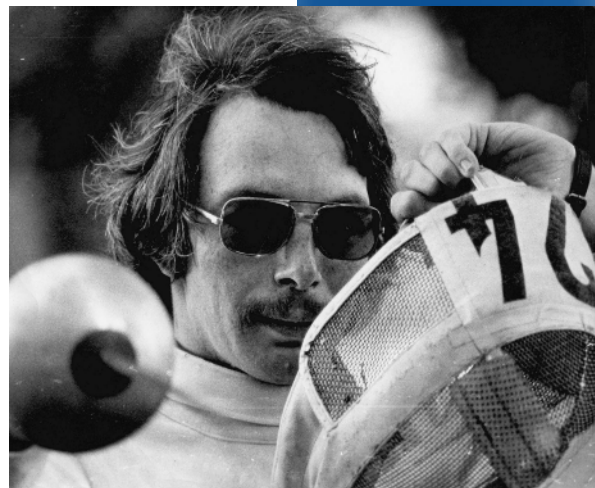
Today, 50 years later, white-haired and a little wiser, I still fence actively twice weekly and also give lessons. I have lost track of D but I shall never forget his proboscis.

### **Lawrence Gough**

Lawrence has been living in Germany for more than 40 years and represented Great Britain (Vets) in 1995 in Luxembourg at the Europeans and also the Germany v Great Britain match in Munich in July 1995. In the Vets Championships in 1995, he was 3rd in Épée, 4th in Sabre and 10th in Foil. He won the Master at Arms Trophy that year. He still holds an Irish passport and has recently been elected to the IFF.

*If you would like to share your story of how you started fencing please email me.*

### **Editor**



**Lawrence  
looking cool in  
1975**



**Lawrence 50  
years on**

## West Midlands Open



**ME**  
Malcolm Allton  
Rob Brooks  
Peter Fenton



**WF**  
Jane Clayton  
Caron Hale  
Catherine Heyes  
Susan Uff



*Photos courtesy of  
Sue Brooks*



## Competition results (top half)

### Invicta Open - 15/03/2014

MF (72)	5	Anthony Bartlett
	11	Paul Lowen
	24	Nick Fihosy
	25	Nicholas Mort
	27	Nick Hills
	31	John Hyde
	32	David Exeter
	34	Kamal Yasin

ME (79)	3	Tim Buzwell
	15	Stephen Domek
	17	Howard West
	22	Paul Willmott
	36	Ralph Johnson
	39	Jon Nottingham

MS (40)	8	Kamal Yasin
	19	Kevin Alexander

WF (33)	12	Jane Clayton
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WE (33)	6	Jane Clayton
	9	Nicola Hull
	11	Sara Spence
	20	Marg Oniye

WS (24)	3	Lucy Wright
	10	Silvia Earl

### Edinburgh Open - 29/03/2014

ME (18)	3T	Tristan Spicer
	7	Tom Chrisp

### Glasgow Open - 05/04/2014

MF (70)	20	Mike McKay
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ME (18)	3T	Duncan Salter
	18	Tristan Spicer

MS (15)	6	Stephen Rennie
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### Elite Epée Spring Open - 05/04/2014

ME (83)	27	Stephen Domek
	29	George Liston
	33	Chris Howser
	40	Paul Townson

### Brighton Open - 12/04/2014

MF (47)	3	Anthony Bartlett
	5	Nicholas Mort
	18	Nick Fihosy
	20	Brian Causton

ME (68)	16	Howard West
	17	Simon Pink
	31	John Hyde

MS (29)	8	Kevin Alexander
	11	Adrian Medhurst

WF (18)	3	Jenny Morris
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WE (33)	2	Nicola Hull
	6	Jenny Morris
	10	Ingrid Heskett

### Birmingham International - 19/04/2014

MF (134)	38	Paul Wedge
	63	Paul Abrahams

ME (68)	12	George Liston
	21	Stephan Munn
	29	John Leahey
	38	Stephen Domek
	51	Paul Willmott
	52	Adam Steiner
	58	Keith Phillips

WF (29)	27	Gillian Worman
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WS (35)	11	Rachel Lasance
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## You could win £500 in the new BVF 100 Club!!

BVF is running a 100 Club to raise finance for the 2016 European Team Championships (ET16) that we are hosting in Medway.

### What is the 100 Club?

100 numbered slots are sold for £20 each. When the slots are all sold, 3 numbers are drawn at random.

- The first number wins £500
- The second number wins £300
- The third number wins £200

The remaining £1,000 is retained as a contribution to ET16.



### Who is the organiser?

Sue Church email to: [sue.trysport@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:sue.trysport@tiscali.co.uk)

### How many slots can I buy?

Each slot costs £20. You can buy as many slots as you like.

### Can I choose my slot numbers?

Yes. Select a set of your favourite numbers. The first available will be allocated to you.

### Can I buy my slots over the Internet?

Select the set of your favourite numbers. Email Sue with the list.

Pay on-line for the number of slots you wish to buy:

Account: Sue Church  
Sort Code: 09-01-28  
Number: 5958 1043



### If I don't bank on-line can I still buy slots?

Of course. Select the set of your favourite numbers. Send the list with a cheque, payable to BVF, for the number of slots you wish to buy to:

Sue Church (ET16)  
3 St Martin's Cottages  
St Martin's Road  
Bilborough NG8 3BH

### When does a draw take place?

When the 100 tickets have all been sold. The draw will take place at a BVF dinner e.g. BVF Championships, Veterans Winton etc.

### How will I know who has won?

Prizewinners will be announced in the next BVF Newsletter.



## 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](mailto:g.aghajan@virgin.net)

## Caption Competition

**April**

send your entry to Editor

[g.aghajan@virgin.net](mailto:g.aghajan@virgin.net)



## Caption Competition Feb/March

*Editor's choice*

*'Richard gracefully accepts the white flags of surrender from his table as they acknowledge the depth of his superior intellect during Gillian's mind boggling quiz.'*

**Richard Bonehill**

*'The fear of 'guilt by association' sometimes brings out the worst in people.'*

**Carl Morris**

*'Richard is initiated into The Royal and Ancient Order of Mexican Bandits'*

**Paul Brenda**



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

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