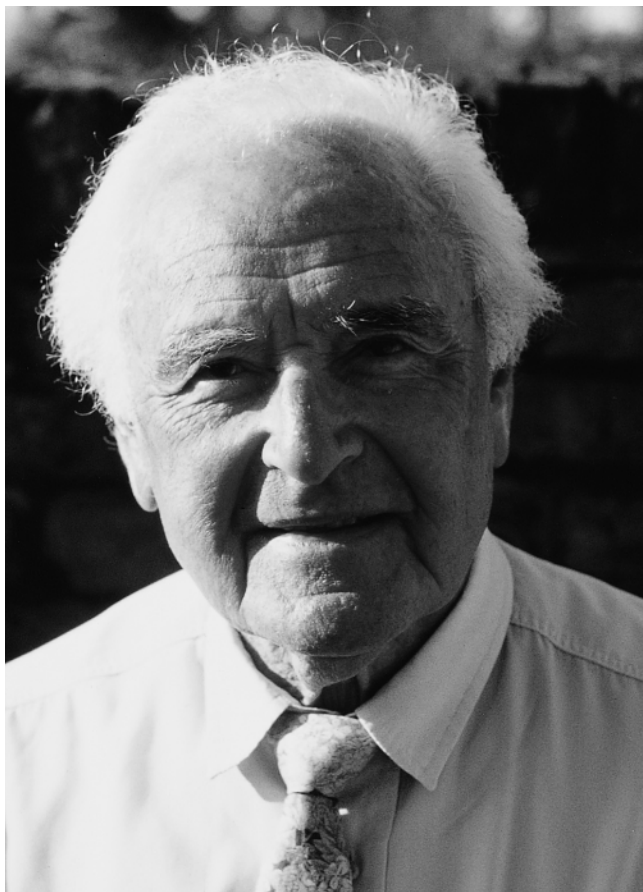


Obituary

Maurice Samuel Berman



Maurice Berman, who died suddenly on November 3rd 1999, was born in Cape Town in 1914 of Russian parents who had emigrated to South Africa in 1890.

Maurice was a man of charm and style with a great zest for life, and had many varied interests which included golf, sculpting, theatre, music, food and, of course, his beloved South Africa, which he visited frequently, often acting as a tour guide for many of his friends. Most importantly, however, he had boundless energy and enthusiasm, which was apparent in everything he did and especially in his teaching of orthodontics. For years to come, orthodontists throughout the world will continue to benefit from his ability to pass on that enthusiasm to his students, many of who have followed in his footsteps and become teachers themselves. British orthodontics has lost a gifted and innovative father figure.

Maurice's early years were spent in Cape Town where he was educated at the South African College School, which he always remembered with pride. He came to London in 1933 to undertake his dental training at the Royal Dental Hospital. He excelled in both academic and extra-curricular activities, had the distinction of becoming champion in both tennis and table tennis, was Captain of the first eleven

cricket team, and held rugby colours for 3 years. After qualification in 1938, he was appointed to various training posts at both the Royal Dental and the Charing Cross Hospitals.

He returned to South Africa in 1940, where he joined the South African Army and was enrolled in the Medical Corps. He subsequently served with the rank of Captain in the 19th Field Ambulance in the North African Desert Campaign and later in Italy. He had married Desiree in 1940 and their only daughter, Karen, was born in 1942. After the war he returned to general practice in Cape Town.

In 1947, the family moved to New York where he attended Columbia University and undertook a 2-year orthodontic programme under the tutelage of Dr Milo Hellman. The training at Columbia was essentially in the Standard Edge-wise technique, but also embraced the Johnson Twin Wire and Labio-Lingual techniques.

On completion of his training in 1949 they returned to Cape Town where Maurice started his private practice as an orthodontist and also undertook some teaching sessions at the Red Cross Memorial Hospital for Children. In the following 12 years he was successful in building up a thriving practice, but he and Desiree were becoming more and more disillusioned with the iniquities of the Apartheid regime. Eventually, in 1962, they decided to abandon their prosperous and successful life in South Africa, and returned to London in search of a new life.

On arrival in London he joined Granger McCallin's practice in Portland Place and, at the invitation of Professor Clifford Ballard, also joined the staff of the orthodontic department of the Eastman Dental Hospital. In addition to his teaching at the Eastman he undertook research into the use and effects of Headgear therapy for which he was awarded an MDS degree by the University of Witwatersrand in 1966. Later, in 1968 he was to introduce the Combi headgear, but it was the adoption of the Andrew's Straight Wire technique in 1976 which led to his pre-eminence. His skills and expertise in this technique were such that the training courses he presented were acknowledged as the benchmark standard in the UK and throughout Europe for many years. He left the Eastman in 1981 following differences of opinion.

He retired from his practice in 1984 and in 1986 he joined the staff at the Royal London Dental Hospital, and continued his teaching role there until 1995 after which he ran typodont courses until 1997. He became President of the BSSO in 1982 and in recognition of his outstanding contribution was made President of the BOS in 1997.

Maurice was a charismatic and generous colleague who will be sadly missed by his many friends. He is survived by Desiree, their daughter Karen, and granddaughters Marinda and Kate Lavut.

A Meeting of Commemoration of his life, organized by the BOS, will be held at the Royal Society of Medicine, Lower Wimpole Street, London W1, U.K., at 11.30 on Saturday July 1st, 2000.