

language newspaper in the Soviet Union. S M Eisenstein was among his stimulating circle of acquaintance. With an apparent gift for finding himself at focal points of history Bob was privy to the great director's problems with Stalin, increasingly megalomaniacal and paranoid, over the final version of *Ivan the Terrible Part II*. Following Sergei Mikhailovich's heart attack Bob kept him supplied each week – to the disbelief of the FO in London – with two or three dozen whodunnits.

Back in England he returned to the film industry as an assistant on *The Third Man* whose director, Carol Reed, sent him from Vienna to the Excelsior in Rome to persuade a reluctant and cantankerous Orson Welles to accept the smallest part of Harry Lime. He succeeded – and more history was made. Welles and he met again when Bob was production manager on *The Red Rose*, a turgid costume epic on location near the Sahara, in which Orson was mockingly playing Genghiz Khan and simultaneously making off with sizeable quantities of Twentieth Century-Fox's raw stock with which to shoot his own *Ohello*.

Next, on to *Odele* which led to him becoming Herbert Wilcox's General Manager for a while. For nascent "commercial" television he produced and directed a series of documentaries at Associated-Rediffusion, returning to features during the fifties and sixties as the producer of several fine pictures for ACT Films: *The Man Upstairs*, frantically rewritten in Jerry's Club, remained his favourite. Richard Attenborough was so eager to play in it he worked only for his agent's commission.

In 1963 Bob founded The London Film School whose courses he devised and many of whose alumni achieved considerable fame here and abroad. The hope had been to see it recognized as Britain's National Film School but sectarian political opposition prevented that and, despite investment of considerable personal finance, a bankruptcy ensued. Subsequently Bob's green thumb was useful when he spent part of his time developing the roof garden at Berkeley Court and some of his work there is still to be seen.

I think it's fair to say that Bob was no subscriber to "isms" but he was a staunch man of the left, always prepared to be engaged, unstintingly contributing his time, effort and pen to ACT and ACTT in their heyday, serving on General Council, as Chair of the Producers & Directors Section, and as Chair of the Journal Committee when our monthly had a different style. He was active during the period of amalgamation with BETA, joining in efforts to retain a vestige of ACTT's culture. In 1986 in recognition of his long-term input he was made an Honorary Member of ACTT which gave him great pleasure.

He was also there, right from the start and until very recently, with the History Project – indeed it was a two bottle lunch of the house rouge during the 1986 ACTT Annual Conference which saw him and me composing ourselves with tales of "the old days" and that gave me the idea for the oral history initiative which has grown to be of national importance. It's typical of his sensibilities that in his last days it was suggested rather than to spend money on flowers for him it should be donated to the Project.

His was an *interesting* life – varied, colourful, rewarding, and useful. It had its fair share of ups and downs, disappointments as well as achievements, and he was not on occasion without acerbity and impatience, never a sufferer of fools. In sun he was a civilized, talented, witty, urbane man with yet a trace remaining of the naughty schoolboy he must once have been. He'll be greatly missed, especially by those who shared conversation with him over a glass or two of Famous Grouse at BAFTA or in a nostalgic Soho watering hole (sometimes, I suspect, to the limit of Tanya's tolerance).

Our deep and heartfelt sympathy for this irreplaceable loss goes to Tanya, Bob's partner and companion for sixty years of wonderfully successful marriage, to their children Marina, John, Margaret and Jenny, their eight grandchildren and their three great-grandsons,

'Bye, Bob! Here's looking at you, Kid!

Roy Fowler

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