

The History of International Association of Trichologists

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¹International Association of Trichologists

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In 1973, a large donation was given by the Redken Foundation, run by Paula Kent Meehan, to the university of Southern California, Los Angeles, to develop a trichology course. David Salinger, a trichologist from England, was hired as the Subject-Matter-Expert and David guided a group of medical experts/writers in developing the course, which took two years. As part of the course development, David spent a few days in the UK talking with Prof. John Ebling from Sheffield University and dermatologist Arthur Rook at Cambridge University; at the time, they had written a major dermatology book.

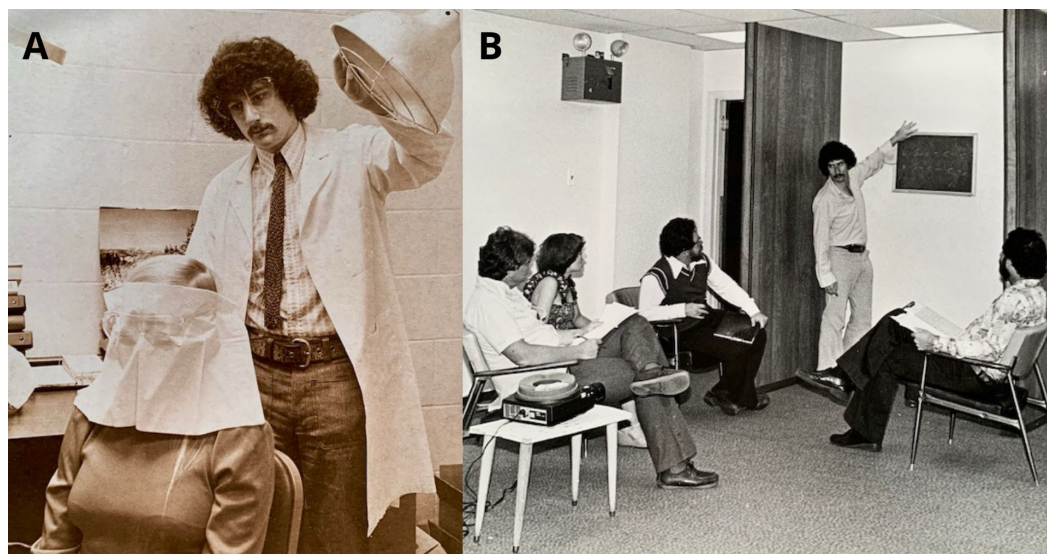


Image 1: A- Los Angeles, USA Clinic. B- Lecturing in Philadelphia with some of the early members

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Many of the photos for the course were taken at the University's Medical Centre, which is where we also started using tyrosine to treat alopecia areata and psoriasis. (At the time, we did not know that alopecia areata and psoriasis were autoimmune problems, nor did we know how the tyrosine was helping.) The photos were originally put in a photo album for each student, which, later, progressed to being printed on a fold out poster. Computers were in the early stages, but we were able to obtain a print-out of a list of all the articles to do with hair, hair loss and scalp problems that had been published over the previous 10 years, and the relevant articles were found and copied so that information in the course was up-to-date. The course was typed up on typewriters and then printed into books. So, when we wanted to update the information, one or more of the books had to be reprinted. What a delight it is now to be able to update the digital trichology books every day at no cost.

The course was developed as a home-study course so that students could progress at their own speed. Once the trichology course was completed, it was given to the International

Association of Trichologists (IAT) to administer. The IAT is a non-profit corporation that was founded in California in 1973 (by people associated with Redken) to educate students in hair and scalp problems. David was appointed its Executive Director.

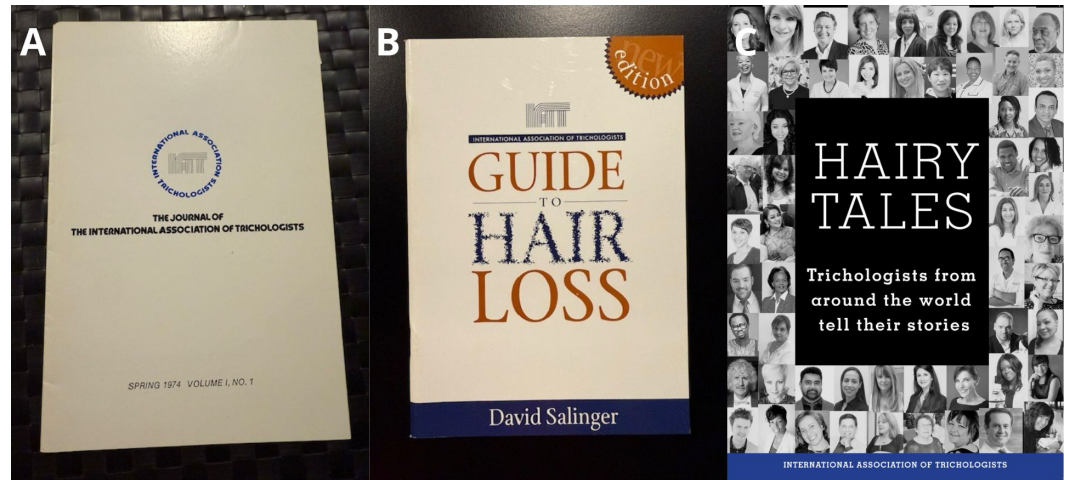


Image 2: A- Early Journal from 1974. B- First IAT's Book Guide to Hair Loss. C- Hairy Tales - Trichologists from Around the World Tell Their Stories, a book in which various trichologists certified by the IAT share inspiring stories from their careers dedicated to hair and scalp health.

Initially, IAT trained students in America and Canada and promoted the course at trade shows and seminar all over America. The IAT also held annual conferences in such cities as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Philadelphia and New York. However, the Redken personnel were disappointed with the response to the course and so disassociated themselves from IAT and left David to run everything. Initially, it was hard going, with David having to borrow money to survive. However, he was supported by several people who believed in trichology as a profession, and it was their support and help that allowed IAT to survive. Over the years, there have been many members who have voluntarily given of their time to help, support and promote IAT – and this is why IAT has thrived.

In the late 70s, IAT started enrolling students from Australia and New Zealand and aided by cheap air fares to Australia, David flew to Australia; the outcome was that several colleges started teaching the trichology course and IAT conducted clinical training and seminars in both Australia and New Zealand.



Image 3: A- Training in USA. B- Training in Viet Nam. C- New Zealand Conference. D - Nairobi Conference

The advent of the internet was a big boost to the IAT. The course, which had been developed as a home-study course, could now be easily and cheaply marketed to anyone in the World, and clinical training was either conducted in Australia or in the country of the students.

IAT initially helped train students and supervised clinical training in South Africa, India, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, Brazil, Russia, Cyprus, Viet Nam, Canada and the U.K. IAT has now trained students in over 75 countries and has become the most prestigious international trichology organization in the world.

When training students in South Korea, IAT discovered that an organization there had copied our entire course, despite the fact it was copyrighted ! We took them to court and won.



Image 4: A- Iceland 50th Anniversary Celebration. B and C - Iceland 50th Anniversary Conference

In India, Dr. Apoorva Shah was a great help in promoting trichology and we taught the course at the Mumbai Educational Trust. However, IAT was not happy how things were being run there so it ceased to allow the college to teach the trichology course.

In South America, Dr. Ademir Leite, a dermatologist and trichologist, approached IAT about offering our course in South America; the course was translated into Portuguese and Dr. Leite now teaches students from his base in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Sometime later, Miguel Cisterna from Argentina translated the course into Spanish, and it is now also in French.



Image 5: IAT's Conferences around the World

The trichology course is continually updated and clinical training is offered in Australia, America, Canada, Kenya, South Africa, Singapore, the U.K., Brazil, Argentina, UAE and India. In 2013, a shorter course – the Hair Practitioner's Certificate Course – was developed for people in the hair industry who wanted more knowledge but didn't necessarily wish to become trichologists. This course has also been very successful and is taught by many of our

members throughout the world. In Singapore, Carienne Hew translated this course into Chinese and Guillaume Rosa from Canada translated it into French.

IAT is proud to have members from all over the World and a Board of Directors consisting of trichologists from Australia, Brazil, Argentina, Singapore, Kenya, Canada, America and Israel.

More recent annual conferences have been held in America, Brazil, Canada, Iceland (our 50th anniversary) the UK and the UAE. For many years, the Ronald Salinger award has been awarded to members who have greatly contributed to the success of IAT. Ronald Salinger, David's dad, was a trichologist in the UK and was of great help when the IAT course was being developed.

The IAT has published two books – “Hair Loss Handbook” and “Hairy Tales”. In the latter book, 57 trichologists from 24 countries tell their stories – and there are some quite amazing stories. We are now working on another book – “Trichologists' Handbook”, which will be launched at our conference in New York in August 2025.

IAT has also just started offering a further qualification, a “fellowship course” for IAT members, which covers many topics by many lecturers in great depth. The fellowship course takes about a year to complete and leads to being a fellow of IAT.

Chelcey Salinger, David's daughter, has been the IAT director since 2024 and the organization has flourished under her leadership.

Key Words: IAT, International Association of Trichologists, Trichology, History