John George Kemeny

(1926-1992)

Biography:

He was born in Budapest, Hungary on May 31 1926. He attended primary school in Budapest. Later his family emigrated to the United States when Hungary was invaded by Nazi Germany. Kemeny's family settled in New York City where he attended George Washington High School. Then he went the Princeton University, where he studied mathematics and philosophy. He completed his Ph. D thesis in 1947. He worked as Einstein's mathematical assistant at the age of 22. He several times met János Neumann and got to know Neumann's concepts on computer. This contact had a deep effect on him.

Scientific achievment:

In 1953, Dartmouth College invited János Kemény to institute a Department of Mathematics, in 1955 he became its chairman. A teaching innovation which he introduced was in developing a Finite Mathematics course including topics as logic, theory of probability and matrix algebra. It was the revolutionary new view of János Kemény that the computer is capable of extremely high performance in respect of common arithmetic operations, should be made accessible to everybody. Later, in 1964, he co-developed the *BASIC (Beginners All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code)* programming language with Thomas Engene Kurtz, probably the most popular one even in our times. He also invented one of the world's first time-sharing systems, The Dartmonth Tima-sharing system (DTSS). In 1984 they wrote TrueBasic, the language they feel the original BASIC should have evolved into. He was also a pioneer in the field of electronic mailing. In the early 1970's he predicted that before the millenium there would be a national computer network with terminals in millions of homes. He became closely acquainted with the leaders of the American nuclear weapons research effort. He was very worried about the consequences of nuclear war and worked with the World Federalists to educate people about the dangers. Kemeny wrote a number of famous texts on finite mathematics.

Place of Birth	Budapest
His schools	Primary School of Budapest George Washington High School Princeton University
Field of research	Developer of the principle of time sharing and BASIC program language. Revolutionised computing and mathematics education.
His awards	He was named honorary doctor of law of Princeton University. He was a winner of New York Academy-prize. The IEEE (Pioneer in Electronic Data Processing) prize (1986) for the development of the time sharing system. He was the first to be awarded the Louis Robinson-prize founded by IBM in 1990.