Migration adventures

IN CONVERSATION WITH PROFESSOR SHAHED QURAISHI

One of the most inspiring stories in this issue comes from our very own **Shahed Quraishi, OBE.** His first mentor in the UK, **Pat Bradley**, spoke with him about his fascinating journey.



Professor M Shahed Quraishi, OBE, FRCS, FRCS(ORL, H&N),

Consultant Otolaryngologist, Thyroid and Parathyroid Surgeon, Doncaster Royal Infirmary, UK.

E: shquraishi@hotmail.com @entmasterclass

Shahed, by way of introduction could you briefly tell us about your family background, early education and decision to enter Dow Medical College in the 1980s?

My family tree originates from the Northern Indian city of Azamgarh and after the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, my parents migrated to Pakistan. My late father was a businessman with important trade links with Nottingham and the UK. My mother was a devoted housewife and mother who brought up my four siblings and me. My early education was at St Placid's School in Chittagong, Bangladesh, one of the best Catholic schools of the sub-continent. After surviving a tragic civil war, which resulted in the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971 we fled as refugees to Karachi, Pakistan. I then followed my sister into medicine and Dow Medical College, Karachi, graduating in 1985. My decision to go into medicine and ENT was probably influenced by the fact that I had nasal surgery as a 10-year-old after a football injury!

Did your achievements at medical school meet your expectations? Who were your mentors? What were you plans when you graduated in 1985? I know you worked in Karachi for 24 months to gain your registration.

Medical school was an interesting part of my life. During a period of military dictatorship in Pakistan, Dow Medical College was the epicentre of a progressive democratic struggle led by a very active left-leaning students' union of which I was a part. I was very fortunate to have Prof Adeeb Rizvi, a contemporary of Sir Roy Calne and Pakistan's leading transplant surgeon as my mentor in medical school. I spent my first two years undertaking my internship in Karachi and preparing for the PLAB exam (for GMC registration).

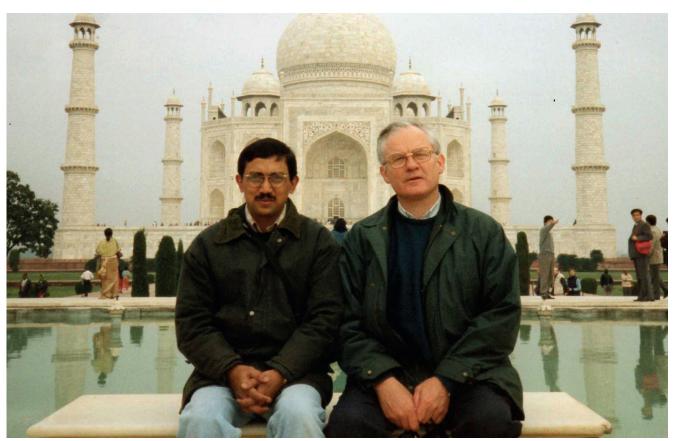
What made you come to the UK in 1987, when we first met? Had you decided to be an ENT surgeon or was it 'just a job'?

On graduating in 1985, my immediate group of friends decided to go for higher medical training in the West, encouraged by our mentors in medical school, all of whom had done their higher medical training in the UK during the '50s and '60s. I chose the UK as I had some senior friends in London who were kind enough to help me with the move. I was very fortunate to pass my PLAB exam on my first go and within 12 weeks of arriving in UK I was looking for my first training post in ENT. A friend suggested Nottingham as a good centre and was given your name as a contact. I still remember my first meeting with you in June 1987 at Queens' Medical Centre Nottingham, which led to my first training post in ENT and in the UK.

Since then, between 1987 and 2000 (some 14 years) you have worked on and off in Nottingham in many guises during your ENT training. How did your training in the UK differ from Pakistan? You spent a short time in Ireland (when working visas became a problem!)-how did that training experience expand your knowledge?

In those days non-EU trainees had to face major challenges and were not eligible to apply for career registrar jobs in the UK. There were visa restrictions as well. On your advice I managed to get a four-year registrar post in the Irish training scheme in Dublin. I returned to Nottingham in 1992 to continue my higher surgical training as a non-career senior registrar. Under the mentorship of Kevin Gibbin, Nick Jones and yourself I managed to complete my training on par with the 'official' trainees.

Pakistan has very few structured ENT training posts and the training programme



Shahed Quraishi and Pat Bradley at the Taj Mahal in 1996.

is shorter compared to the UK structure. The Irish training structure was a well-run programme rotating amongst the major teaching hospitals In Dublin and it helped me pass the old style ENT FRCS in 1992.

You returned to Karachi as a consultant at Ziauddin Medical University for a short period; I visited you there. Give us a flavour of consultant work there. You achieved much while you were there, setting up a cochlear programme, post-graduate training etc.

My main career objective was achieved in February 2000 when I returned to Pakistan and was appointed as an Associate Professor and Chairman of Otolaryngology at Ziauddin Medical University, Karachi. In the 18 months I was there, I developed the medical school ENT curriculum that included an undergraduate ENT exam at a level of the old DLO exam and I invited you as the external examiner. I also arranged a student exchange programme with Nottingham University (James O'Hara was the first to come to Karachi for six weeks). Within one year we had set up a fully-fledged head and neck service undertaking major surgery and reconstruction. Unlike the UK, there was no concept of subspecialty interest and there were times when I

undertook a laryngectomy, rhinoplasty and mastoidectomy on the same day. My training at Nottingham was instrumental in helping me with this mix of skills to serve the people of Karachi. I soon started setting up Pakistan's first cochlear implant programme in the summer of 2001, something which was left incomplete when I left Pakistan in November 2001

Because of the 'troubles' locally you came back to UK and after a short time were appointed Consultant Head and Neck Surgeon at Doncaster Royal Infirmary in 2004. How did that work out?

Tuesday, 11th September 2001 started off as any normal day for thousands, but soon the day of infamy, changed lives in every corner of the world. The shock waves from the Twin Towers attack were felt in the streets of South Asia. The world was in shock, within days the Americans were bombing the caves of the Tora Bora Mountains in Afghanistan. Overnight Karachi was a different city, infiltrated by the Taliban who escaped from Afghanistan. The city was awash with guns and violence, which led to the assassination of dozens of 'western trained' professionals, including two UK-trained professors of ENT. On the 23rd October 2001, I survived an attack and made the difficult decision to leave Pakistan for good for the safety of my



Charity clinic at Baba Bhit fishing village on an island in the

.....

"In early 2004 the idea of launching the 'ENT Masterclass' first came into my mind as a high quality training platform, free at the point of delivery. Within a few years, this has grown beyond my wildest imagination into a worldwide training platform in 12 countries across four continents."



Not a worry in the world... as a three-year old on the family Morris Minor.



Family time in the 'Middle Kingdom', Beijing, June 2017.

family.

After a few months of uncertainty I was fortunate in getting a consultant head and neck job at Doncaster, my mentors in Nottingham were very supportive during this time. Doncaster is a large district general hospital, the ENT service was very well organised under the leadership of Keith Hughes, who was instrumental in my appointment. After a few years, due to the reorganisation of the regional cancer services, I was nudged into a benign head and neck practice and developed a busy minimal access, day care parathyroid service.

You volunteered your career and time to patients and education. What has driven you to pursue such a heavy work schedule?

Soon after taking up my consultant post, I was encouraged to take up the post of Training Programme Director for South Yorkshire. I realised the multiple challenges that trainees were facing, including the lack of resources for training courses. In early 2004 the idea of launching the 'ENT Masterclass' first came into my mind as a high quality training platform, free at the point of delivery. Within a few years, this has grown beyond my wildest imagination into a



worldwide training platform in 12 countries across four continents. This has been the result of generous support from over 150 senior colleagues from the UK and all over the world who give their time and cover all their own costs. A true example of 'giving back' to the specialty. The feedback from trainees has been my greatest motivation.

Your wife Humaira is a general practitioner and your two children, Sarah and Natasha are both medical students. How do you find time together to detox from medical matters?

I am very fortunate that my wife and children have happily supported the ENT Masterclass phenomenon over the last 14 years. Quality family time has been the main casualty but careful time management and a loving family have also been the secret of success. Natasha and Sarah have taken up careers in medicine resulting in some dinnertime conversations drifting into the style of a ward round! The family detox model is travelling and we have had some very nice holidays together. The last was spending a couple of weeks last summer exploring the 'Middle Kingdom'... China.

"My decision to go into medicine and ENT was probably influenced by the fact that I had nasal surgery as a 10-year-old after a football injury!"

......

Organiser of the Mughal painting exhibition, 1989, Nottingham for the Cochlear implant appeal (R-L) Shahed Quraishi, Lord Mayor of Nottingham, Gerry O'Donoghue, Lady Mayoress. Prof Barry McCormick.

.......

INTERVIEWED BY



Professor Patrick J Bradley, MBA, FRCS,

Emeritus Professor, Nottingham University Hospital, Nottingham, UK.