



Editorial

Stephen Copeland, a personal tribute



Much has been written about Steve, the inventor, the Master shoulder surgeon, the teacher and most importantly the well respected and loved colleague, friend and family man.^{1–3} I met Steve in 1993 at the Reading Shoulder Course after hearing he was considering setting up a shoulder Fellowship.

In July 1994 I arrived in Reading with my wife Ann and started with a trip to the Henley Boat regatta with Steve, Jenny, family and friends. Bought an appropriate striped jacket in Marks and Spencer's arriving by Range Rover to the members enclosure for drinks and fun. I remember well jumping from one wobbly boat to another (with drink) watching the fabulous fireworks at night. What a start to my Fellowship...

Steve enjoyed the mindless banter during surgery yet managed to get through 2 shoulder replacements, a couple of decompressions and maybe a small Paediatric case all on a morning list! His hands moved effortlessly, and the surgical exposure was an anatomy lesson in itself. He remained calm even when others (yes me too) lost their heads in the inefficiency that was the NHS. His patients loved him and always needed to know he was close at hand.

He entertained many visitors with enthusiasm and grace and just like his Fellows they left with a yearning to try and mimic the good surgical practice that Steve had developed over many years. Steve liked innovation and was always keen to know what was happening in the world of shoulder surgery. So after some research and discussion we together in Reading performed the first laser assisted arthroscopic capsular shift in the UK (as far as I know). His main interest as we know was in shoulder surface replacement and his prosthesis took off after several positive publications on its outcome. It had exponential growth and sales in the US despite the fact that prosthesis had a different coating when marketed in the States!! In recent years the prosthesis has fallen out of favour and many surgeons have now moved to "stemless" implants or short stems however we must remember the principles were established by Steve in the late 1980s. Also the ease of revision has made it possible for surgeons to achieve better outcomes with second surgery.

Ann and I regret not keeping closer contact with Steve and Jenny over the years as time, family commitment and distance prevented



Fig. 1. Bangalore 2004. From left to right: Mahesh Reddy, VJ Purushotham, Dr Manoj, Steve Copeland, Dr Nanjundappa, BN Muddu.

especially during the latter months of his life. Like many ex Reading Fellows, I often pause and think when faced with difficult surgical challenges“I wonder what Steve would do in this situation”.

I welcome the introduction of the Copeland Travelling Fellowship by the British Elbow and Shoulder Society (BESS) and delighted that the committee chose me to be part of the upcoming exciting trip to India in the Spring of 2019. I think Steve would have liked to come with us but I have no doubt his spirit of enquiry, friendship and education will be with us all the way. We know that Steve travelled to India on at least 3 occasions and really enjoyed the unique experience of that country. I thank Jenny for the photo and Kapil Kumar for helping to identify the smart group of Indian surgeons on his visit to Bangalore in 2004 (Fig. 1).

Conflicts of interest

Mr Kelly has a consultancy with Mathys.

References

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2. Levy O. Copeland, Stephen Andrew (1946 - 2015). In: *Memoriam. The Royal College of Surgeons of England, Plarr's Lives of the Fellows*. 2015.
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