

**The Making of British Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery: Voices of Pioneers and Witnesses to its Evolution from Hospital Dentistry  
by Andrew Sadler**

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The author, a retired Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon has produced an oral history from a variety of surgeons who practised dentistry and maxillofacial and oral surgery over the last 80 years. The interviews, taking place between 2012 and 2020, are now part of the British Dental Association's John McLean Oral History Archive.

The book takes the reader through the development of maxillofacial surgery from the conception of the National Health Service in 1948. It discusses how dental surgeons were trained and how a select group became excited about treating patients with oral diseases, cancers and, of course, trauma. The author provides insight into the antagonism that was created, in the early days, between Maxillofacial surgeons and Plastic and ENT surgeons.

It is fascinating to learn why the interviewees chose dentistry and then went on to study medicine but the argument is comprehensibly made that, in order to be a maxillofacial surgeon, it was essential to be doubly qualified in both dentistry and medicine.

What is really clear, is that these surgeons were highly motivated to improve the care of their patients, particularly cancer patients, based on their knowledge as dental surgeons, combined with their surgical training in head and neck dissection and reconstruction. The role and importance of the European Union on medical specialisation is discussed and how this influenced the development of maxillofacial and oral surgery.

The book is easy to read and has been skilfully edited with the author introducing each section. It is well referenced with the facts being explained in footnotes.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book; it contains a lot of useful information. Many people of all interests will take pleasure in reading it and the author is to be congratulated on producing a very important record of an exciting era of surgery with the development of a new speciality which is also a vital record for the archives.

**Sean P Hughes**  
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