

Technician of the Moment: **Brian Flood**

This time managing editor Paul Gadsby interviews **Brian Flood** of Associated Laboratories Ltd in Surrey

PG: What or who made you first decide to be a dental technician?

BF: I kind of fell into the business as I had just come back from a year in Australia and a friend mentioned that there was an apprentice vacancy at the lab he worked at; we are now both directors at Associated Laboratories.

PG: Where and when did you qualify, and is there any further training you have undertaken since?

BF: I qualified at Lambeth College many moons ago; I update my training on a regular basis as we are now entering the era of digital dental technology, which is a whole new ball game akin to leaving the stone age and joining the industrial revolution

PG: Associated Laboratories was formed in 2004 – can you give us a brief rundown on your career before then?

BF: Before we formed Associated Laboratories we were the resident laboratory for a large dental surgery operation. We felt quite constrained in this environment so we bought ourselves out of the company and set up on our own; it was the best move we ever made and allowed us to focus on areas we felt we were unable to before.

PG: Tell us about your laboratory and the work it carries out.

BF: We are a full service crown and bridge laboratory carrying out all aspects of the job from relatively straightforward gold work to all ceramic and complex implant cases for local, national and international clients. We have invested heavily in CAD/CAM technology to help streamline our business and reduce costs which we can pass on to our clients. All our work is done in-house and the majority of cases are now scanned and milled on our machines, leading to greater accuracy and avoiding human error.

PG: What have been the main challenges in growing and then sustaining the business?



BF: The challenges to our business growth have always been getting the right people in with the right skills – the digital age has and will continue to reduce this need.

PG: What do you think is the key to developing strong relationships with your dental clients?

BF: Communication and attention to the specific needs of the patient. With the aid of computer tools such as Skype and digital photography we are able to communicate with our long distance clients as well use newsletters and regular flyers to let our clients know of any new innovations on the market.

PG: Professionally, what are you most proud of?

BF: Building up the business from a small base to what we are now.

PG: What aspects of your job do you enjoy the most?

BF: Mastering the new technology and being able to produce high quality work.

PG: You have 20 years' experience as a dental technician. What have you learnt the most during that time?

BF: I have learnt that you must move with the times and be prepared to invest in things that will help promote your business and achieve the best possible results.

PG: Where do you see dental technology going in the next decade or so?

BF: I see dental technology moving forward at its fastest ever rate due to digital advances such as intra-oral scanning and CAD/CAM production; anyone who refuses to embrace these improvements will not be around in five years time.

PG: What are your top tips for becoming a successful dental technician and running a laboratory?

BF: Caring for your customers needs, providing a first class service, embracing new advances, attention to detail.

Care to comment? @AesDenToday