

George's Story

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Editorial

Before the advent of Hair Restoration Surgery in the UK, back in the early 1970's I promoted hair 'systems', toupees, wigs, for a well-known Hair Salon in Manchester UK.

One of my first clients, a man I estimated to be about 65 years old called George, provided me with what I can only describe as a 'profound experience'. An experience that impacted my life and has continued to do ever since (Figure 1).

To those of us who are concerned about hair loss and thinning hair problems and to those of us who consider such fears to be pure vanity, please read.

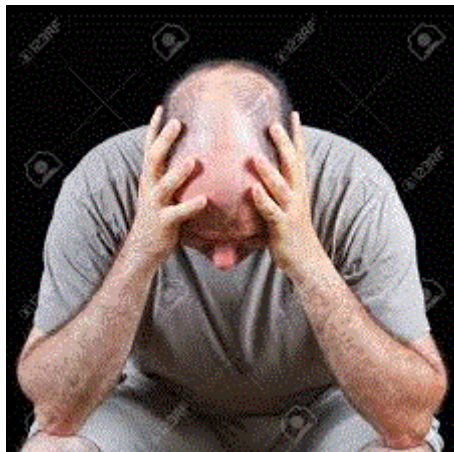


Figure 1: Malcolm Mendelsohn high density hair transplants Athens, Greece.

George had Total Top Scalp Loss. He was 'Clean' Bald

George's daughter Pauline was his spokeswoman. As Pauline explained, her dad wouldn't open his mouth. He had lost his speech. He either couldn't or wouldn't talk? That soon after he lost his hair he stopped communicating with people included her.

Part of my job was to take a template of the client's bald head. This was done by wrapping the client's top scalp with layers upon layers of 'cling film'. Then applying numerous layers of 'cellotape' onto the 'cling film' until it became stiff, forming the precise shape of the man's skull.

I then marked out George's proposed hairline on the template, explaining every move to George as I did but he didn't respond. He just sat there, silent and expressionless.

When the initial fitting was concluded, the template, along with a lock of George's hair for colour matching was sent away for making-up. The process took about 6 weeks to complete, ending with the final fitting and styling at the salon.

I was there at the fitting but had to leave before the cutting and shaping of George's new hair piece into the required style was completed. I left George in his daughter Pauline's capable hands.

George's hair 'system' was the latest 'skin' type. It had a translucent plastic base and showed the wearers scalp when the hair was parted. The parting was so realistic you couldn't tell it was his real scalp.

The results were generally excellent, all down to final cutting and trimming. All done 'in-house' at the salon.

One day, a few weeks later I was in the salon having my hair cut. The cutting and styling room was in the basement of the building with a metal staircase outside the property leading down to the basement from street level.

I was sitting in the cutting chair facing the mirror, with the mirror reflecting the very steep stairs down to the salon through the glass windows and door.

As the hairdresser was styling my hair, my glance caught a guy running down the stairs in the reflection of the mirror. He was literally 'skipping' down what were really steep stairs. I remember thinking at the time, I hope he doesn't reach such momentum that he couldn't stop, resulting with him crashing through the glass doors!

I hadn't followed his final movements for a couple of seconds as he was out of the mirror's reflection and I had changed position, with my neck bent forward looking at the floor as my hairdresser was cleaning my neck with a razor.

However, I sensed someone standing next to my chair. First I saw his shoes. Brand new 'Hush Puppies,' the coolest shoe of the 60s/70. Light brown suede no less!

Next, as I slowly unwound from bending forward to an upright sitting position, I caught sight of his 'slim line' dark brown, fine quality trousers and finally his beige colored 'Crombie' - type top coat.

It was then I saw his face. He was a pleasant looking guy wearing a beaming smile. A man whose age I reckoned to be around 48/50 years old. He was immaculately dressed. He looked 'the business'!

He thrust his hand out and I instinctively responded, returning his powerful, solid and confident handshake. I didn't have clue that he was until he leaned his head closer and spoke. "Malcolm, it's George I just

wanted to say thank you Malcolm from Pauline and me for everything".

He then literally turned on his heels, opened the door, momentarily glanced back, waived, then took the stairs 2 steps at a time up to ground level. It all happening so quickly I didn't have time to respond.

I have to admit I was 'choked' - as I am right now relating this story. I sat back in the chair facing the mirror. Fighting back the tears, I just sat dead still and silent for a few minutes with tears streaming down my face, trying to contain my emotions.

When I had finally composed myself I looked over at my hairdressers and she too had 'welled up'. Probably in sympathy with me? By the time I had told her the whole story she was sobbing her heart out and I was consoling her. As the saying goes, 'you couldn't make it up'!

That situation had a profound effect on my understanding of the affect that male pattern baldness can have on someone's life. An extreme case for sure but it 'blew me away'.

As I recall the events of that day, I can clearly remember that the experience left me in a near state of shock. I had witnessed an absolute personality swing from one extreme to another.

Not a 'mood swing'? George wasn't going back. His whole identity had returned and he was articulate and confident. He was a 'winner' again. He'd also shed at least 10 years off his age! He felt good about himself again.

From Hair Restoration to Life Restoration.

Worth writing about!