

## Eulogy: In Memory of Stephen A. Copeland, the Father and Friend in Shoulder Surgery and Orthopedics

On behalf of the Korean Shoulder and Elbow Society, we feel deep sorrow and despair with the loss of Dr. Stephen A. Copeland. He was a great surgeon, teacher, family man, and a true friend. We are all aware of his great work in the field of shoulder surgery and today the knowledge flourishes among young surgeons and societies.

He was our honorary Codman lecturer for The 13th International Congress of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery (ICES 2016) in Jeju, Korea, and although he will not be able to give the speech personally, he will be remembered in the Lecture session, by Dr. Wallace. Furthermore, he will be remembered in our hearts for eternity.

If the readers want to know more detail about his biography and career, please refer to the obituary previously published in *Shoulder & Elbow*.<sup>1)</sup>



**Stephen Andrew Copeland, FRCS, FRCSEd (Ad Hom)**  
**The Master Shoulder Surgeon (1946–2015)**

### Editor-in-Chief Elect

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Jenny, Sara & Ollie, Matthew & Jules, Family and Friends,

The Urban Dictionary Definition of a Gentleman is

“A man of calm demeanor, strong preserve, intellectual thinking, polite yet meaningful speech and a good upbringing. A fighter for the cause of right with words, not guns.”

Stephen A. Copeland was all of these things, as well as one of the world’s leading shoulder surgeons.

Steve studied medicine at St Bartholomew’s Hospital, Medical School from 1965 to 1970. After his early surgical and orthopaedic training he was appointed Lecturer in Upper Limb Surgery at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, London in

1977 with Professor Lipmann (or Lippie) Kessel, who became his mentor and guide, and started his career in Shoulder Surgery. He began research into shoulder arthroscopy at this time. In 1979, at the age of only 33 years, he was appointed Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at The Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading. I first met Steve at the 1st International Congress of Shoulder Surgery held in London in 1980 where we both presented scientific papers. In 1982 he was awarded the very prestigious ABC travelling Fellowship to the USA, by the British Orthopaedic Association, during which he met Dr Charles Neer and Dr. Louis Bigliani in New York, who became life-long friends. Dr. Neer died in 2011 but Louis has flown from New York to join us for Steve’s funeral.

From early in his Consultant career, Steve provided Reading and Berkshire with an outstanding National Health Service Shoulder Surgery Service. He developed a great team, including his professional colleagues Ofer and Guiseppe—and many others, a number of whom are here today. I am not going to name all of

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you but I know he loved you all. The efficiency of a Consultant is really dependent on his secretary; both Angela and Sandra were helpful to Steve in delivery of his incredible shoulder service. In the operating theatre with his anaesthetist, Rachel, and his Scrub Nurse, Patsy, he performed more than 10 keyhole surgeries per day.

I was honoured to be invited to Steve's first Reading Shoulder Course in April 1984, as a Guest Lecturer alongside Lippie Kessel from London and Charles Neer from New York. This is when I learned of Steve's great ability to be diplomatic. Lippie Kessel and Charles Neer disliked each other, in fact they would not speak to each other. All the Guest Lecturers were invited to Steve and Jenny's home for dinner. They had a very long dining room table at Woodlands and Steve placed Lippie Kessel at one end and Charles Neer at the other; throughout the entire meal he ran from one end of the table to the other serving wine and making sure his esteemed guests were happy—he succeeded; and his skills in diplomacy became even greater later on, as you will hear. The Reading Shoulder Course became a national and indeed an international institution.

In the early 1980s, Steve developed his Copeland Shoulder Replacement and popularised the surface replacement design around the world with great success. Later, he was also involved in the design of the Verso shoulder replacement. In addition to becoming the leading keyhole or arthroscopic shoulder surgeon in the UK and a great mentor for all his shoulder Fellows, his teaching became legendary. He has written many scientific research papers and four books on shoulder surgery. But it was his tact and diplomacy that was so outstanding—the Gentleman Stephen A. Copeland achieved things other mortals could only dream of. He was invited to lecture worldwide. He was President of the British Elbow and Shoulder Society from 1995 to 1997 and the year after was appointed President of the European Society for Shoulder and Elbow Surgery from 1998 to 2000. In this latter post his diplomatic skills were sorely challenged—keeping the European Shoulder Surgeons Executive Committee Members working together and moving them forward was not easy and he often chaired the Committee Meetings into the

early morning hours. Finally he became President of the International Board of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery 2005 to 2010, which culminated in Steve, Jenny, Roger Emery, myself, my wife Jackie, and Ian Kelly's wife Helen organising the 11th International Congress of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery in Edinburgh in 2010, rumoured to be the most successful of all International Shoulder Congresses.

Steve and Jenny were a lovely couple together and developed friendships both locally and throughout the world. Many of you took time to visit Steve during the last 18 months of his illness. He really appreciated these visits and Jenny has asked me to say a special thank you to those of you who took time out to visit and have a laugh with him.

I said at the beginning that Steve was always a Gentleman. But I forgot one thing—put Steve behind the wheel of a racing car and he became shoulder surgery's Lewis Hamilton. Last year Steve took me out onto the back roads of Berkshire, in his Ferrari, and I have never been so terrified in all my life.

Steve, you have been our friend, and you have had an outstanding life caring for other people—your family, your patients, your students and fellows, and your colleagues. We know that all of your achievements would not have been possible without Jenny's support throughout your lives together. We will really miss you but you will never be forgotten.

Thank you for all you have done for all of us.

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**Dr. W. Angus Wallace**

## References

1. Wallace WA, Thomas M. Stephen Andrew Copeland FRCS, FRCSEd the master shoulder surgeon (1946 to 2015). *Shoulder Elbow* 2015;7(3):151-2.