Cardiff Metropolitan University School of Dental Technology

by Mike McGlynn

Former Cardiff Dental Technology students were invited back to Cardiff to help celebrate 50 years of dental technology training in the Welsh capital, 1966-2016.

There have been many changes over the last 50 years in the training methods employed to train dental technicians in Wales and vast improvements made to the training facilities at the Llandaff Campus site.

Many of the buildings have been completely refurbished in recent years including the Dental Technology department and new buildings have been added to the Metropolitan University including the impressive Cardiff School of Art and Design.

The different year groups gathered on each of the tables, discussing friends, family, laboratories and life changes since they attended college.

Professor Adrian Peters, Dean of Health Sciences

The Dean of Cardiff School of Health Sciences gave a brief talk in the evening of the re-union celebration, explaining the changes and improvements that had taken place in the Dental Technology School.

The two new teaching laboratories have a joint, large and well-equipped plaster/polishing room with a separate casting room including burnout furnaces, induction and vacuum casting machines, ceramic pressing furnaces, air abrasion units and orthodontic welders that serve the new intake of 24 first year BSc full-time students, together with the 2nd year and 3rd year BSc degree students.

The part-time MSc and Foundation Degree students undertake most of their dental technology courses off site either in their own labs or at home using online distance learning webinars.

The two teaching laboratories feature numerous large flat screen monitors around the walls, used for displaying
digital dental images, webinars and dental technique videos, radiographs and live practical demonstrations, mainly for the full-time BSc students.

Each of the two teaching laboratories have a digital visualizer camera display unit to enable students to view practical demonstrations by the instructors to any part of each teaching laboratory using the large wall mounted TV display units. The images can be frozen to show a particular interesting feature of the restoration or appliance.

Jeff talked about the history of the dental technology course in Cardiff and about some of the previous instructors from the early years of the course who are now retired including Professor Robert Williams, who insists he is only semi-retired and still enjoys going in for a few hours each week.

Jeff also enthused about the recent refurbishment of the dental labs, enabling the installation of 27 fully equipped bench spaces in one of the new labs and 24 bench spaces in the other laboratory. In addition, a new digital technology suite has been added which includes a Renishaw touch probe scanner as well as a 5 axis, 3D white light scanner and several CAD computers for students to learn more about 3D designed appliances and restorations.

Other members of the current college dental technology team at Cardiff include Chetan Geisel, Edward Mapley Lauren Williams and semi-retired Professor ‘Bob’ Williams.

Many students will remember Edwin Heycock who is now retired from the college, but was present throughout the reunion event and formed the backbone of the evening’s excellent entertainment as the drummer with the live band, Ed and the Haymakers.

A group of attendees were shown around the impressive new laboratory facilities.

Digital Dental Suite

The Visualizer camera used to show large scale images of models during practical demonstrations.

Ex-students were invited to take part in a memorable 50th reunion photograph.

Ed Heycock chatting with some of the old Cardiff students beside one of the sponsors stands, ESM Digital Solutions.

Ed and the Haymakers on stage