

## IN CONVERSATION WITH

# Cameron McIntosh

Interviewed by The PMFA Journal



We were delighted to catch up with **Cameron McIntosh**, ENT and Facial Plastic Surgeon and Founding President of the Society of Rhinoplasty Surgeons of South Africa (SORSSA).

## Can you tell us a little bit about what led you into the field of ENT and rhinoplasty and what have been the highlights so far?

Having retired from the world of international kayaking after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games I wanted to pursue an entrepreneurial future and enrolled for an MBA at the University of Cape Town. My plan was to build a hospital group. The day before I was due to start the MBA I decided I would rather pursue a career as a specialist surgeon.

I had never really considered otolaryngology / ENT as a career until I had a coffee with Professor James Look from the University of Stellenbosch followed closely by spending a morning in theatre with Dr John Black and then realising I had read a story in my Bible that morning about Jesus healing a deaf-mute person! (Mark, chapter 7)

It was all that was needed to light the fire in my belly to pursue a career in ENT.

At the University of the Free State, Prof Seedat wanted me to do my MMed in HPV and oral cancer. I pleaded with him to allow me to instead focus on rhinoplasty and to my delight I was allowed to do this. Towards the end of my residency I took my first overseas trip (2014). The following year I attended my first AAFPRS and EAFPS meetings. It was here that I discovered that facial plastic surgery is a super-speciality within ENT.

In 2019 I was invited to sit the IBCFPRS Examinations in Washington DC and was thrilled to pass!

But I guess I really had no option but to fall in love with rhinoplasty since the meaning of my name is 'crooked nose!' The 'Queen of facial plastic surgery' is rhinoplasty and I think is the ultimate challenge for the FPS surgeon.

Finally, it feels like I have found a family of likeable, passionate and friendly specialists who I call friends in the world of rhinoplasty.



## What has been the best piece of advice that you have received in your career and what advice would you offer to those following in your footsteps?

There are several:

*Never give up.*

*It takes years to be an overnight success.*

*Knowledge puffs up but love builds up.*

*Be excellent in everything you do.*

*It's darkest before dawn.*

## What one paper or book would you recommend every surgeon should read?

Anthony Sclafani's book *Rhinoplasty* is a must-read.

## You are Founding President of the Society of Rhinoplasty Surgeons of South Africa. Do you enjoy this role and what have been your main aims?

It has been an incredible journey. Back in 2017 when we started the society, we had 17

people at our inaugural meeting and had no idea that within three years we would have members from over 50 countries.

I wanted to lay firm foundations so that in decades to come we will still be able to help educating surgeons and patients. The team surrounding me (Drs Peter Scott, Lean van der Nest, Stuart Geldenhuys and Nkhensani Chauke-Malinga) have been outstanding. We did not anticipate hosting international webinars or the World Rhinoplasty Day. Our aim initially was chiefly to upskill rhinoplasty surgeons in South Africa. However, it has morphed into something much bigger than that.

## Of course, the current COVID-19 pandemic has made life very different for everyone; how is the society supporting its members during the crisis?

The two main items were to not increase our yearly subscription of 100 USD and secondly to offer as many world-class webinars as possible to our members.

**You are known for being very dedicated to training and education; do you see this as an important part of your work and are you continuing this virtually?**

Absolutely. Having a 12-year professional athletic career set foundations in place to continually evolve and I would encourage everyone to always improve yourself, plan meticulously, be a team player and persevere

in completing goals you have set. Stuart Geldenhuys has taken over the Presidency of our Society and he is not only a really nice guy but highly competent. It's a pleasure to support him as he continues to grow SORSSA.

**And finally, if you have any spare time, how do you like to relax?**

I always plan down time before anything else. My priority is spending time with my wife and

three children. Following on from that I try to exercise every day be that trail running, paddling, mountain biking or any other outdoor activity. I also love spending time on our game farm ([www.entlegamereserve.com](http://www.entlegamereserve.com)) with friends and family.

**Many thanks for your time!**