

Cardiff Migration Stories

Daoud

Daoud is 67 years old (2015)

Daoud's family is originally from Yemen; however, I was born in Cardiff and grew up in Butetown. "There were people from all over the world there, different nationalities, and everybody got along just fine, no problems". His mother was from the Rhymney Valleys; she left home aged 14 to work in the Royal Infirmary. His father came to Cardiff in the 1930s.

He keeps in touch with friends abroad through the telephone.

Life and growing up was not better in Cardiff compared to the Yemen, but it was easier due to the country's wealth.

Daoud was around 10 years old when he visited Yemen for the first time by himself: "without my mum and dad, and I stayed there for two years."

"Well, the reason my dad came to Cardiff was because he needed to earn a living. He needed work, in the Yemen there was no work and he came to Cardiff to seek a better life."

"My dad was a cook so he opened up a restaurant. He sold Arabic food and there weren't many foreign restaurants around in those days".

His family lived above his father's restaurant.

Daoud and his siblings would help out in the restaurant when older.

"In Butetown the majority of people were Seamen on ships and would bring back spices from abroad".

Daoud has five brothers and five sisters; as well as 14 adopted siblings. "We'd make up in some mornings and there'd be somebody else in the bed with us, and he'd be a total stranger!"

"As a Muslim we don't eat anything pork, or from the pig". "The most popular food we like is lamb." "The festivals we had in Yemen we still celebrate here, so we don't really miss them". The festivals in Yemen are mainly religious. "We keep all Islamic traditions and one of the big traditions is during the month of Ramadan, we have to fast all day from sunrise to sunset and then at sunset we can eat as much as we like and what we like. So Ramadan is a time of family gatherings because we all get together and share our food and what not."

In the villages in Yemen there were "no cars, no bikes, no electric, no running water. The women had to get the water from the well".

"In them days there was no aeroplanes, it was very expensive then to travel by plane". It took Daoud two weeks to travel by ship from London to Aden.

Nowadays Daoud's family has dispersed to places such as USA, Malta and other parts of the UK.

