

Life Long Care

A Family Medical Practice - Pediatrics to Geriatrics A Medical Home

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Fenton's Construction, Inc.

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All Sport Sale
Saturday, March 27
@ Outing Club Indoor Center
9:00-12:00pm

Clean out your closets, garages & attics!
 • The Outing Club will be accepting all Spring, Summer and Fall sporting equipment with the exception of ski and snowboard equipment/apparel, single sporting balls, and workout apparel.

Drop off: Friday March 26
5:30-8:00pm
 • All unsold items and sales money must be picked up following the sale on March 27 between 12:30-1:00pm.

NLOC will keep 25% of the sales price on all consigned items if sold

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Sheldon from page 38

A trip to the dump can become a day-long adventure. There is almost no one he doesn't find a common interest with."

With age, she says, Sheldon's interests have had to be honed down to a few dozen. "He used to be the president of this, and the chairman of that, but now he is living a slower life, he is settled down here in Andover. But he hasn't given up eating! His biggest hobby is eating out. Any church that has a supper is fair game!"

One might think it would be difficult to live with a man so intensely engaged in life. But Shirley says, "Our slogan is, 'We get along!' No arguing. No fighting. Our children thought we were boring." As if in testimony of those words, one feels that their home exudes warmth, safety, and happiness.

Sheldon was born on May 21, 1921 in Saugus, Massachusetts, but early in his life his parents bought a house in North Revere. "At that time it was considered moving out into the country," he chuckles. From as early as he can remember he was interested in firearms. His father and grandfather were both mechanically inclined people, and Sheldon enjoyed putting about and learning basic carpentry in their workshops.

"The day I graduated high school in 1939, I walked home, took off my suit, put on my dungarees, and walked across the street to F. L. Maddison, which was in the business of installing steel beams. I introduced myself and told the owner that I had some experience with tools. 'We could use you,' he said. 'Come here tomorrow morning at 7 AM and I will have a job for you at \$15 a week.' Well, \$15.00 a week was a respectable amount of money back then at the end of the Depression. I showed up bright and early the next day. He had gotten in two freight cars full of 100-pound steel windows. I moved those windows all day long and went home with a groove in my shoulder, but I had a job. I worked there for three years until World War II. The owner of that company got me into the Boston Iron Workers Union, and when I left I was a journeyman with experience in precision tool making.

"Then came the war. My father and grandfather, both watermen, had been

in the Navy, and I very much wanted to follow the tradition. I showed up for the examination. There was something wrong with my eyes. The man in charge told me to go through 'that door.' I did and found myself in an alleyway, unable to get back in. I was devastated, but no more so than my father.

"I happened to meet my old manual training teacher from high school. He said, 'With all your expertise in firearms and your new skills in tool making, you really should be in Army munitions.' He gave me a piece of paper on which he had written a letter of introduction to a colonel, and in April of 1942 I found myself at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland.

"At Aberdeen I both learned and taught the repair and maintenance of small arms. At first they put me in a very large room with few tools. I wired my father to send me some equipment, and with that I commenced what was to become a wonderful career in the 78th Infantry Division.

In October of 1944 our unit was shipped to Berlin, Germany. I followed just behind the lines as we fought the Germans through Holland, Belgium, and France. I repaired and maintained the arms used by our forces until I was mustered out of the service as a Technical Sergeant on the 26th of December 1945."

Called "the greatest battle implement ever devised" by General George S. Patton, the M1 Garand was the first semi-automatic rifle to be generally issued to the infantry of any nation. This was the main ordinance Sheldon dealt with.

During the war he corresponded with a former Marine Captain, also an expert in the field of rifles, who had invented a rifle to compete with the very popular M1. Interestingly, Sheldon kept all of the letters sent to him by this man. Many years later he showed them to the man's heirs, who said, "That's not all, look at this!" The former Marine had also saved all the letters Sheldon sent him. Sheldon now shows both bound collections with almost a reverence.

Next month: Sheldon returns from the war; marries; delves into metallurgy, magnetism, silversmithing, mineralogy, riflery, farm tools, painting, drawing, and travel; and moves to Andover by way of Contoocook.

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