

Works

Issaquah Dental Lab
Defining Innovative Service and Aesthetics™

August / September 2009



Dr. and Mrs. Donald Deans smile as they reflect on their careers in dentistry—spanning 60+ years—with no retirement plans in sight.

Six Decades of Service

Donald Deans, DMD

By Louise Holder

Donald Deans, DMD, was born and raised in Kelowna, Canada, and did his undergraduate studies at the University of British Columbia. After graduation, he was a dental assistant in the Canadian Army for four years. This experience attracted him to working on the other side of the chair. So, he entered the University of Oregon Dental School (now OHSU) during which time he worked as a night-call driver for the local mortuary. In 1949 he graduated from OHSU among a class of 80+ students. His new dental career soon began as a fill-in dentist at a Seattle practice. (He was interviewed and hired by a lovely lady, Ethel—who he promptly married.)

The couple started his three-operator practice in 1950 in the Montlake District of Seattle. He charged \$8 for teeth cleaning, and occasionally even made house-calls. As his experience broadened he taught at UW dental school (being paid \$3/hour!). He claims, “I don’t sit still very well. Most days I would go home to cook dinner while Ethel stayed at the office to work on the books of the business.” Ethel nods in agreement.

Thirteen years later they moved the practice north of University Village where it remained for ten years. In 1973, they bought into a dental condo and moved to 45th Street.

Dr. Deans is the only member of his OHSU class still practicing, and recently attended his 60th Class Reunion—with two remaining colleagues.

Very active at age 88, he presently works



four mornings a week (Tue, Wed, Fri, and Sat). Patients come from all over the area—some having been with him for 50 years. He cherishes a photo of patients comprised of five generations of a single family!

Dr. Deans does his own hygiene work and when an assistant is needed, Ethel steps in. She is a 1948 graduate of the San Francisco Dental Nursing School and has been a leader in the industry ever since—holding State and National offices. She is creator of a “Play Dentist Office” for preschoolers, an innovative program for early dental education.

Dr. Deans is a founding member of the Gold Foil Study Club (1956) and still attends its meetings. A former participant in the Seattle Indirect Inlay Club, he enjoys observing differences between the “old” and the “new” ways of practicing dentistry. The biggest change he’s witnessed is the speed and sophistication of cutting instruments.

The Deans have four children and eight grandchildren. He bait-fishes for steelhead, salmon and trout (in fact, he just floated the Skagit River with a buddy in early July). He’s travelled to Alaska a dozen times and fly-fishes occasionally in B.C. Ethel has

flown to New Zealand (where their daughter lives) about 20 times; Don 10 times.

In his spare time, Dr. Deans loves to garden. Their modest Kenmore home and garden displays 24 lily plants, 10 or 11 peonies, 50 sunflowers and at least 1,000 gladiolus—the jewels of the neighborhood.

When prodded about advice he might give new dentists, Dr. Deans thoughtfully stated, “Pace yourself enough to really enjoy your profession, as I have. Give yourself time to talk with each patient, and charge a fair price.” In addition to this practical advice, it is clearly evident this beautiful couple has enjoyed a rich life of mutual affection and respect—the greatest lesson of all.

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“ In uncertain economic times, it is more important than ever to define who you are, not just as a clinician but as a business owner as well. ”

—Jeffrey Rohde, DDS, MS

7 Steps to Practice Success: The Obama Way

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To say the least, this has been an interesting year for our country, our economy, and our profession. In the midst of all the chaos, tried and true principles still apply: know your business, know your goals, and execute well. Gone are the days of allowing your personal or practice budget to go by the wayside simply because more money is coming in this month than the month before. We have all had to tighten our belts, and at the least, take a hard look at every aspect of our business.

Dental professionals come out of dental school ill-equipped to handle the finer points of business. And while schools nationwide are starting to update their curricula, there are several generations of dentists out there who are still taking on this whole idea of running a small business with trepidation, one day at a time. I am one of them.

One of the best pieces of advice I have ever gotten is this: realize your own limitations and surround yourself with a team of people who know more than you. It's the idea behind a good

team of consultants, or a president's cabinet. In my own practice, I have checked in with mentors and consultants on a regular basis, and I'm always looking for new advice. Interestingly enough, the most recent advice I had gotten had nothing to do with the dental practice, but with politics.

I was reading an article written by Howard Fineman on MSNBC.com about Barack Obama, and David Plouffe's campaign strategy that launched him into office. Whether you voted for Obama or not, it is undeniable that his team's approach to the business of politics was focused, and effective. The article discussed the "Obama Way", seven steps that applied to his success. After reading it, I thought immediately how any business could use these same cues, and how the business of dentistry was no exception. Here are those same key points:

- Be decisive
- Have a tight circle
- Stick with the plan
- Sweat the details

- Understand your brand
- Go digital
- Use caution.

In the next issue of *LabWorks* I'll share details about each of the above points.

Dentistry is not easy. It is difficult to do what we do, much less run the business that allows us to do it. With the right approach and proper assistance, success is assured.

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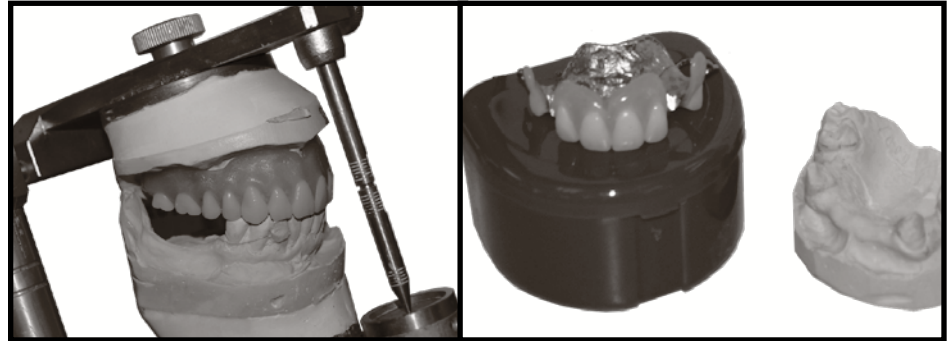
The tooth is the only part of the human body that can't repair itself.

—coopsfacts.com



Removable Prosthetics: From the Hands of Oregon Masters

by Louise Holder



One of the most exciting benefits of IDL becoming a Novadent Company is that we have expanded our network of partnering labs. We'd like to recommend to you one lab in particular as a superb resource for removable prosthetics: **DFF Dental Lab** in Portland, Oregon. DFF formed in 1986 and serves doctors from Alaska to California. And DFF can be as close to *you* as your computer keyboard and UPS/FedEx delivery.

DFF has invested much time and expense in LVI and Pankey Institute training of their technicians, who also contribute decades of combined experience.

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Photos add abundant detail. DFF especially appreciates when a doctor takes a photo of the natural teeth before extractions to show midline or old dentures to be replaced. Conversely, DFF emails the doctor digital photos of any areas of concern. Online consults are available for unusual cases.

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with quick turn-around time.

For decades you have trusted IDL with your crown and bridge cases, now we recommend you trust DFF Dental Lab for prosthetics. **Simon Bosley**, DFF Sales and Marketing Manager, would be happy to answer any questions or provide more details at 503-240-1910.

Give DFF a try and be sure to let George, Larry or Barney know what you think.



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Issaquah Dental Lab dedicates itself to providing the highest standard of lab services to quality dentists in an environment of honesty, creativity, education and mutual support. For information, seminars or consultations on any issues explored in *LabWorks*, contact Larry or George at any of the above numbers.

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Comments & submissions for future articles are encouraged.

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