

Main Street Dental and Dr. Gary Magder mark 50 years of smiles in Shelburne

Written By PAULA BROWN

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Main Street Family Dental and Dr. Gary Magder are celebrating 50 years of dentistry in the Shelburne community.

"We didn't know what we were getting into all those years ago. It's amazing to be here now, having employed dozens of people, changed many lives, and to hand it over to three wonderful young dentists taking it to the next level," said Dr. Magder. "It's been rewarding and amazing, and I appreciate this town more than you can imagine."

Dr. Magder studied at the University of Toronto from 1971 to 1975 and graduated with a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree. After working for a dentist in Alliston for a few months, he came across an advertised dental space opening in Shelburne and decided to take the leap into starting his own clinic.

"I've always loved small towns coming from Toronto and the atmosphere has always intrigued me," recalled Dr. Magder. "The fact that I could immediately get established because there wasn't any competition and there was a need. They needed a dentist and I needed patients so it worked out great."

Dr. Magder officially opened the doors to his practice in September of 1975, with his first patient being the daughter of the clinic building's landlord.

As a dentist in a rural community, Dr. Magder recalled the quick learning curve that came with opening his own practice, including becoming comfortable with services like tooth extractions, root canals, and orthodontics.

"I had to learn to do everything very quickly. Many dentists that stay in the city will refer to specialist that are just down the road, but here there were no specialists down the road. We were at the end of the road. So, I learned how to do all the different facets of dentistry," said Magder.

Main Street Family Dental hired its first employee, Denise, not long after opening its doors to the community. Initially hired to help around the clinic, she was eventually trained as the clinic's office manager. Denise was Dr. Magder's longest-standing staff member, spending more than 40 years with the dental practice before retiring.

"Celebrating 50 years of dedicated service to our community, what a remarkable journey," wrote Denise. "Your kind heart, dedication and caring not just for beautiful smiles but for all your patients and staff. Congratulations and thank you for being more than just a dentist, but a true part of all our lives."

Since opening its doors in 1975, Main Street Family Dental has grown from a one-dentist-run clinic to being owned and operated by three dentists: Dr. Christopher Chan, Dr. Sze Sen Samson So, and Dr. Martin Reiss. The dental clinic also employs one associate dentist and 12 staff members, including hygienists, dental assistants, front office personnel, and an office manager.

When asked what he is most proud of in the five decades of his practice, Dr. Magder humbly speaks about the staff members, both past and present.

"This is probably the most rewarding experience I've had. It's a fun place to be," he enthused.

Over the years, Dr. Magder has pulled back from his role at the clinic, but still continues to practice twice a week for his older patients.

?I've had a long-term goal to make it to 50 years, and now I'm here, and I still want to be here,? he said.