

Bartlett, Dr. Lloyd C. #15 *

Honoured by Dr. Rod Johnston



In my teenage years, my only desire was to be a disc jockey on a radio station. I played the music for dances all through high school, enrolled in the 3 year Radio and Television Course at Ryerson in Toronto, and managed to get a summer job as the all night disc jockey at a radio station(CKDM) in Dauphin, Manitoba. I was in heaven at the age of 18, and felt that this was my life.

I had to get a medical exam for school for some reason, and stopped in Winnipeg to see my family MD. This was Dr. Bartlett. He was asking me what I was up to and when I told him about being a DJ with some pride, he said "you could do better you know, you could get into medicine if you wanted to." I protested that I had only 60's and 70's in high school, and that you had to be SMART to get into medical school, and besides, I loved being a DJ. He then said " I know people with IQ's of 98 that got into medical school and became doctors. Many of them didn't have good marks in high school, so you could do it if you wanted to."

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As I became disenchanted with working in a radio station and then later in a television station in Hamilton, his words resonated with me many times, the idea germinated and began to grow. Two years after that meeting I went back to University, starting all over, and eventually graduated as a dentist.

After choosing Dr. Bartlett as my inspiration, I searched his name, and much to my surprise found he was still practising in Winnipeg. I corresponded with him, and discovered that at the age of 93 he is still practising, working 5 days a week, and doing minor outpatient surgery! He works out regularly including running at least 1 hour every day, and still loves what he does.

He graduated from London Ontario in 1941, did his internship in Ottawa where he met and married his wife Desta, a nurse. They immediately went to Northern Ontario to Favorable Lake, an isolated mining town north of Red lake, and practised there for 7 years. Not only did he service the local population, but he also served the surrounding native population and he travelled by foot, dog team, canoe, and airplane to reach his patients. TB was rampant at the time and he introduced the first BCG vaccine into this northern part of Canada, which led to a marked reduction in the death rate due to TB. He also did refractions for glasses, dental extractions and fillings, most of his own lab work and x-rays. He introduced a new discovery at the time, fluoride, to prevent dental caries. He also immunized the native population against diphtheria and other infectious diseases. There was no hospital in the native community, so he built a large log building into which a patient could move with their family who acted as the staff. He developed the first cannulated needle for intravenous infusions, now used world wide.

When the town of Favorable Lake closed, he and Desta moved to Winnipeg where he enrolled in General Surgery and Pathology. During this training period, he developed tube feeding formula and techniques which he made available to the pharmaceutical industry, and are now available commercially. Among his other inventions he developed a device for gastric suction which was used in Winnipeg hospitals for many years.

Upon his graduation, he became the Director of Post Surgical Education at the University of Manitoba from 1959-1967. He developed tutorial and teaching methods which are still in use today. He later held posts of Chief of Surgery at the Misericordia General Hospital, and Staff Surgeon at Grace General Hospital, both in Winnipeg. Over the years he created many more inventions, and was president of the Manitoba Medical Association from 1982-1983, as well along with various other positions.

He was very involved in lobbying for compulsory seat belt and motorcycle helmet legislation in Manitoba, and was also instrumental in anti-tobacco legislation.

Dr. Bartlett is still married to Desta, has 5 children, 9 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren. His hobbies include the family cottage, reading, photography tropical fish, and of course, inventions!

If it was not for Dr. Bartlett suggesting that I could do better, I would not be a dentist today, and would not have enjoyed the amazing life that I have had. Because of him, I often suggest to young people that they can do better and returning to school to explore their dreams is well worth considering.

They say that some people are meant to appear in your life at very important moments, and even though I have not seen Dr. Bartlett since I was 18, he inadvertently changed my life, and is now a great mentor for me! I hope to work well into old age as long as it is fun, and I will be forever grateful to him.