

## History of Eye Clinic North

Dr. I. E. MacDonald founded the Virginia Optometry practice in 1930. Originally located in the rear of a Jewelry Store in the 400 block of Chestnut St., he later moved to more private office space adjacent to the former Granada Theater.

As a patient of Dr. MacDonald, known as “Mac”, a young student, Les Sipola, was inspired to pursue Optometry, and joined him in practice as Dr. L. M. Sipola in 1952. MacDonald and Sipola, Optometrists, were well known in the community. In the early 1960’s they moved to more spacious offices on the west side of the MACO Theater. Mac retired in the mid 1960’s.

Dr. Les’s son, Don, was equally inspired with them both and in the field of Optometry and joined his father as Dr. D. H. Sipola in 1973. Needing more space, they purchased the current building east of the MACO and remodeled it include four exam rooms. Then it was Sipola and Sipola, Optometrists. Les retired in the later 1980’s.

Dr. Don’s son, Matt, chose to pursue Optometry while in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. He often shadowed his dad and worked for his mom in the office to help out wherever he could. After 9 long years of college and residency training, Dr. Matt Sipola joined the practice in July 2014. Dr. Don is beginning to see a light at the end of the tunnel.

Matt represents the third generation Sipola and the fourth generation optometrist to staff the longest continuously operating eye clinic in Northern Minnesota, established in 1930. We have prided ourselves on excellence in eye care and have cared for multiple generations of “Rangers” as though they are a part of our extended family.

In July 2015, Dr. Hannah Hays will be joining the practice after completing her residency in Medical Optometry, and Dr. Matt and Dr Hannah will be married in September 2015. Watch for Sipola, Sipola and Sipola, Optometrists, coming soon.