

Spring 2007

Dear Patients, Neighbors, and Friends:

It does not seem possible that it has been 20 years since Dr. Bennett opened her office in Belmont. So many things have happened since February 1987. The practice moved from its Cushing Square office on Common Street to expanded quarters on Trapelo Road. Now we are in our second year in the spacious facility on Belmont Street. Nearly three years ago, Dr. Macbeth joined the practice.

All of this does not happen without the help and support and confidence of a loyal patient base. Don't for a minute think we do not appreciate your support. We *know* we could not have done it without you. Thank you so very much.

The eye care field is changing constantly and we all do our best to keep up. Here are a few happenings since we last wrote to you:

NEW INSTRUMENTATION: Patients often remark that there seems to be new equipment in the office every time they come in for their yearly examinations. Well, that may not be completely accurate but we do keep up. On your next visit you will see our new three-in-one automated refractor / keratometer / corneal topographer. This state-of-the-art technology precisely measures the power of the eye, the curvature of the cornea (front of the eye), and also provides a topographical map of the cornea. The machine is connected to our computer system, so all of the results are stored and can be retrieved from any computer in the office.



Dr. Macbeth and Dr. Bennett with new instrument

EYE CONDITION BY THE NUMBERS: Data recently published by Prevent Blindness America on the numbers of Americans with each of the three major eye conditions – cataracts, macular degeneration, and glaucoma – are a bit frightening. There are 20.5 million Americans living with cataracts, 10 million with age-related macular degeneration, and more than three million with glaucoma. Early detection of these conditions can allow for treatments that may slow their progression, so don't skip your annual eye care visit just because you may not need new eyeglasses.

ASPIRIN AND DIABETES: A daily dosage of a low concentration of aspirin (a baby aspirin) may inhibit diabetic retinopathy, according to new research published in the December issue of the magazine, *Diabetes*. Before aspirin can be recommended to help prevent diabetes, though, further research must determine which minimal dose is effective and which processes it targets in the retinal blood vessels. This reported conclusion may be early but it is very encouraging.


GLAUCOMA TECHNOLOGY BEING BROUGHT TO OUR OFFICE: As you know, we provide a very comprehensive eye health evaluation as part of each examination. Glaucoma is one of the diseases that we are looking for when we carefully evaluate the health of the optic nerve (the part of the eye that can be damaged by glaucoma), check the eye pressure (a high eye pressure is a risk factor for glaucoma), and test peripheral vision (side vision is lost first in glaucoma). Now we are able to offer another test for those patients that look suspicious for glaucoma. The machine is called GDx, and it measures how thick the nerve fibers are in the retina (sensory tissue in the back of the eye). The machine will be coming to our office for the first time on May 30th.

HERE COMES THE SUN: Spring is finally here, and summer is just around the corner! More time outdoors and longer hours of sunlight mean greater exposure to ultraviolet light, which can damage the eyes. Ultraviolet light is known to be a factor in causing cataracts and macular degeneration. Sunglasses are so important, both for your eye health as well as for clear and comfortable vision. Our office carries a wide range of non-prescription sunglasses as well as frames for prescription eyewear. A good pair of sunglasses is well worth the investment.

OPTOMETRY CONFERENCE IN BOSTON: We are so fortunate that the American Optometric Association will be holding its annual congress in Boston this year. It will take place from June 26th through June 30th. Dr. Bennett, Dr. Macbeth, and several staff members will attend the conference – taking continuing education courses and learning the latest in the eye care field. We are always keeping up on the latest research and technology so that we can provide the best and most up-to-date care for our patients.

Lastly, have a great summer and continue to remember us when you are in need of eye and vision care.

Sincerely,



Melanie Macbeth, O.D.



Linda Bennett, O.D.