



A young Mike Sheldon holding up two Wolf River trout in or around 1962. Around the same time this photo was taken, Todd Sheldon, Mike's father, sold his Sport Shop in downtown Antigo, Wisconsin and formed Sheldon's Inc., with a special interest in selling more Mepps® spinners. The company's new building at the time is still located on Hwy 45 in Antigo where the front half of the building is now rented out and the back half is still being used by Mepps®. Today, this building is used for painting lure components and pad printing Mepps® blades.

**Fun Fact:** Our new, but still famous "Squirrel Tail" sign is located at the front of the original Sheldon's Inc. building on Hwy 45. Our current Mepps® headquarters is located just down the road, on Center Street. Stop in for a FREE factory tour, please call ahead for large groups! And YES, you can buy Mepps® lures on your visit! Disclaimer: the original Sheldon's Inc. building is closed to the public and we do not show anglers top secret rooms such as the alleged "magic room" where lures get blessed by the Fish Gods.

You could say I was born casting a Mepps® spinner. My dad was selling Mepps® in his retail sport shop in the late 1940s, and I was born in 1950. Many of my childhood memories involve my dad taking me fishing. As a kid, Mepps® only had plain treble hooks as dressed hooks did not exist. I loved the #1 or #2 silver Aglia® and caught everything from panfish to bass and pike. One day in the 1950s, my dad made a nice catch of trout on the Wolf River. Returning to his car, he proudly showed his catch to a young fisherman. The young fisherman showed my dad his catch, which was more impressive than my dad's. He was using a Mepps® spinner with which he had tied squirrel tail dressing onto the hook. Dressed Mepps® spinners were born. My favorite became the same #1 or #2 Aglia® with squirrel tail.

My dad sold his sport shop and moved to a depression era building to sell Mepps® spinners full time. To make the spinner offering more diverse, he introduced decals and dyed bucktails to the selection. He also added painted blades and bodies to further enhance the selection. Originally, colors like rainbow trout were painted lengthwise on the blades. Our color studies showed the scheme blended when the blade spun in the water. Thus, the design was changed so the pattern went across the blade. The across pattern makes each color distinct when the blade spins.

The Mepps® fish catching history and quality of the lure has become iconic. In 2025, the United States Postal Service® featured a rainbow trout Mepps® spinner fixed with a brown squirrel tail dressed hook on a forever postage stamp. My dad would be ecstatic to see the long journey Mepps® has made to become a fisherman's staple.

**Mike Sheldon**  
Mepps® President

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## Creating the Rainbow Trout Blade

Mike Sheldon said, "We need a rainbow trout Aglia blade." So, working with both Mike Sheldon and Mike Keen (*Retired R&D/Fixer of Everything*), this is the blade we came up with. I spent 28 great years at Sheldon's, Inc. During that time I had the opportunity to work with a lot of creative people. But I never, in my wildest dreams, ever thought what I was creating would become a U.S. postage stamp.

**Jim Martinsen Retired Mepps® Communications Director**

