



William and Anne McLendon

William W. McLendon, M.D., and Anne Whittington McLendon are being honored as 2013 Town Treasures for their more than a century of combined commitment and compassion to patient care, research and education.

Arriving in Chapel Hill shortly after their marriage in 1952, Dr. McLendon is a member of the third graduating class of the four-year UNC School of Medicine. He first fell in love with Chapel Hill as an incoming UNC freshman in the fall of 1948. A founding father and visionary leader of the modern discipline of laboratory medicine, Dr. McLendon is emeritus professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at UNC and former chair of the Department of Hospital Laboratories at UNC Hospitals. Under his leadership, the hospital laboratories became recognized internationally as models of efficiency, innovation, scientific rigor and service to physicians and patients. The hospital laboratories were among the pioneers in the application of cutting-edge DNA research to diagnostic studies. Dr. McLendon embraced the newly emerging application of computers to manage laboratory instrumentation as well as the use of computers to generate test results and expeditiously make them available to clinicians. In recognition and appreciation of the critical role he played in the development and elevated status of these departments worldwide, the clinical laboratories at UNC Hospitals are named the William W. McLendon Clinical Laboratories. Retired since 1995, Dr. McLendon continues to contribute to UNC Hospitals as the School of Medicine's unofficial historian, researching, writing and giving presentations on the history of medicine and medical education in North Carolina. Anne McLendon, a former admittance secretary at UNC Hospitals, witnessed the arrival of the first patient on Sept. 2, 1952, and Dr. McLendon started medical school the following week. Anne was an active UNC Hospitals' volunteer from 1952 to 2005. As president of the UNC Hospital Volunteer Association in 2005, she led from the heart, assuring that patient-centered care is at the forefront of every volunteer opportunity. For her commitment and dedication, she was named Volunteer of the Year in 2002 during the 50th anniversary of the volunteer association.

- Dr. McLendon is most grateful for having had the opportunity to be part of the evolution of the public academic medical center from a regional upstart in 1952 to its status today as a national and global leader in addressing the most pressing human health issues on the planet. That he is able to document much of the evolution in his retirement is equally gratifying, a labor of love in its purest form. Anne McLendon is particularly grateful for her years of volunteer service in the ICU Waiting Room “where we were able to assist patient families from all over the state during some of the most stressful times in their lives”.
- The McLendons' fondest memories of their adopted hometown—he was born in Durham and she in Greensboro—include the early years when they lived in Victory Village (1952-56), where they made life-long friends with other young couples with small children. That life-long pleasure of building relationships and community continued when they moved to Glen Lennox (1958-61). The challenges of being young parents were made lighter because of the community they shared. They have lived in Chapel Hill continuously since 1973.
- In 1952, Chapel Hill and Carrboro were a caring, but still segregated community of about 10,000 residents, plus some 6,000 students. Today the McLendons marvel at the vital role the Southern Part of Heaven plays in the rapidly growing, diverse and vibrant region that is home to more than a million people.
- “We cannot know everyone now, but we hope the community can maintain the small-town caring and collegiality we’ve enjoyed all these years,” they said. “And we hope that caring continues for strangers and friends alike.”