

An MD Anderson Story About: **This is MD Anderson**



Michael J. Ahearn, PhD

Former Dean,
School of Health Professions
(1987 – 2011)

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This selection is read by Warren Holleman,
PhD, retired director of the Faculty Health and
Wellness Programs.

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R. Lee Clark

and the Story of MD Anderson's Pink Marble

Dr. Clark was such a charismatic person that he attracted people and got them to see the vision that he saw for MD Anderson He could talk about anything.... He had a tremendous engineering background, and was sort of a Renaissance man....In fact, being an engineer --you know, the stone that clad the original building is that pink marble that you see still today. He had seen that when he was in medical school in Georgia. He used to hitchhike back and forth from medical school to home on the weekends and would have to get up real early on Monday morning in order to be sure and catch a ride and be back at medical school by the time classes started. So he said as he would be standing on the highway, the sun would come up on this quarry. And he said that the marble took on a rosy pink glow that to him indicated hope. He said, "If I ever have a hospital I'm going to have that marble at the hospital." And so sure enough, R. Lee Clark had a hospital, and he used the pink marble. The only problem was that the quarry ran out of pink marble, and so now the additions have to have it stuccoed on the side. I understand that when the Anderson-Clayton Foundation gave the building, wanting to preserve the quality of the structure, they said that all additions should have that pink marble.

About This Content

This interview clip was taken from an in-depth interview conducted for the Making Cancer History Voices Oral History Project. This ongoing project currently contains almost 400 interview hours with MD Anderson institution builders.

The transcript has been edited from the original.

The content is available for all uses.

To explore the full interview go to: <http://mdanderson.libguides.com/AhearnM>

About the speaker:

Michael Ahearn, PhD served on the faculty in the Department of Laboratory Medicine with research areas in ultrastructural pathology. He served as Dean of the School of Health Professions from 1987 until his retirement in 2011. He passed away in 2016.

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