

Curtis Clayman

1937 - 2020



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Curtis Reid Clayman, MD 82 years

Gardner, MA - Curtis R Clayman, MD of Gardner, MA passed away

peacefully at home July 17th, 2020 from metastatic melanoma. He leaves behind Barbara, his loving and devoted wife of 58 years, and a brother, Dr. Loren Clayman of Jacksonville, Fla.

He was a graduate of Chelsea High School in 1955, Harvard College in 1959 as a biochemistry major and Boston University Medical School in 1965.

He trained at the Rhode Island Hospital in Internal Medicine and then enlisted into the Public Health Service during the Vietnam war. Curtis spent two years at the federal penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas where he was Chief of Medicine. Returning to Massachusetts in 1969, he trained at the Boston City Hospital in Ophthalmology. In 1971, he became chief of the emergency department at Heywood Hospital in Gardner, MA. In 1981, he opened a private medical office in Ashburnham, MA.

Curtis's favorite activity was practicing medicine. His office was an extension of his home and the purest expression of his personality and philosophy.

Inside the office were all of the things that Curtis loved. There were pictures of trains in all of the rooms, pictures of past dogs (Boston Terriers) and stuffed into one corner was a pet tarantula. His patients adored him and would bring him all sorts of objects and Curtis would display everything. Old railroad lanterns, an initial issue stock certificate for the defunct Grout Automotive Company and a picture of the largest snapping turtle ever caught in Ashburnham, 3 feet in diameter being held in the air by one of his patients.

Making sick patients laugh was Curtis's strong suit. He had a box of rubber noses and disguises that he would dip into with particularly difficult patients. For a mild effect, he would wear a rabbit nose, a

moderate effect a pig nose and when maximum effect was needed he would wear the Groucho Marx nose/eyeglass combination. He knew how to perfectly calibrate his tools to the mood.

If the noses were ineffective, he would then resort to an expansive database of stories based on personal experience. He would often talk of his time working as a physician at the Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas and what it was like caring for some of the worst criminals in the United States. If that did not provide a suitable point of reference, he would tell stories from his colorful childhood in Chelsea or from other experiences that he had driving cabs in Boston, organizing a strike at a metal plating factory in Chelsea and working as a medical student and resident and house officer at Boston City Hospital and in Providence at Rhode Island Hospital.

Curtis held the patent on using a paper clip as a tie clip.

If there was a single skill which could characterize this man, it would be his latent ability to relate to those around him and find common ground to build a relationship. He developed a following in his office that was massive and dedicated. Patients would be willing to wait hours to see him and spend time with him. He would give everyone the time they needed and did not rush anyone out the door no matter how challenging the situation. He was a true family doctor, who treated the whole body due to his extensive training in many areas.

In 2018, after decades of service he was named physician of the year by the Massachusetts Medical Society.

Besides his wife Barbara, he is survived by his sons Jeffrey, David, and Jonathan, six grandchildren, Isaac, Emma, Kate, Amy, Brian and Danny and 1 great grandchild, Jaxon.

A celebration of his life will be held in Gardner when a large gathering is possible.

In lieu of flowers, any donations to his memory could be directed to the Ependymoma Research Foundation, 1337 Massachusetts Ave., #219, Arlington, MA. 02476 or on the internet at:

www.braintumorwarrior.org

To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit our [Sympathy Store](#).

Published in Worcester Telegram & Gazette from Oct. 4 to Oct. 9, 2020.

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MEMORIES & CONDOLENCES

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19 entries

November 24, 2020

Family doctor. He treated me, my mother and 2 uncles and their wives.
RIP Dr. Clayman. It was worth waiting in your waiting room

Paula Erickson

Friend

October 15, 2020

I am so sorry to hear about the loss of one of the families loved one. May the families hearts ♥ be filled with wonderful memories of joyful times the family shared together with the dear loved one lost in death. As the family cherished a wonderful life that was well lived and loved by families and friends. May deepest sympathy and condolences goes out to the families during this very difficult time of deep sorrow and pain.

GHP/LM

October 14, 2020

If it was not for you Dr. Clayman I would not have my father with me today. Your bedside manner and caring for your patients were unsurpassed.

Amy Fischer

Friend

October 11, 2020

Thoughts and prayers for Barbara and family. He was truly a special physician

Stacia Sailer

Acquaintance

October 10, 2020

Dr. Clayman was my doctor for many years and every word that is written about his ability to relate to all his patients is very true! My bonding moment came when I presented him with an autographed baseball from Johnny Pesky! My condolences to his wife and children, he will be missed!

Gil Cote

October 8, 2020

DR. Clayman was my physician for over 30 years. He was by far the the definition of the hometown Doctor. It didn't matter how many patient's were waiting to see him, you were the most important patient at the time. He helped me through many medical issues over the years and always would say that I needed to grow taller to match the weight that I was at that moment. He was more interested in his patient's health then how much money he could make. My heart goes out to Barbara and the family for allowing the community to have him available to us to address our medical needs. No doubt their will be no one that will replicate what this man provided in medical care for all of us. He was simply the best. I miss his wit, wisdom and friendship. God bless you.

Ron Reed

Friend

October 8, 2020

I did not have the obvious good fortune to know Dr. Clayman in any capacity.

I stopped to read about him because his warm, smiling face looked familiar.

The article and guestbook comments painted a beautifully entertaining picture of a joyful and well-loved person who brightened his corner of the

world.

My heartfelt condolences to all left to mourn this beautiful soul.

Sincerely,

Annette Tsuji

October 8, 2020

He was a great doctor who will be sadly missed. Sincere sympathy to Barbara and family. Rest in peace, Dr. Clayman.

Jean and Bob Kokernak

Friend

October 7, 2020

In loving memory of a wonderful person. We will love you and miss you always.

Evelyn Laroche

October 7, 2020

My favorite doctor. Always took his time with you, listened to whatever you had to say, and you felt comfortable to talk to him about anything. He would tell stories, and make you laugh. He will be missed.

Lisa Marion

Friend

October 7, 2020

I worked with Dr Clayman in his ER days also worked briefly in the office in Ashburnham. He always took time to get to know his patients that's why they were loyal to him. He was a listener as well as a talker. One of my favorite ER memories is him talking everyday to the cleaning lady. It didn't matter if you were the CEO or the cleaning lady your life mattered to him. Prayers and condolences to his family

Linda LaRoche RN

October 7, 2020

I first met Curtis on a trip to the emergency room in 1972 for a crushed finger on my left hand. Laying on the table the nurse was tying my right hand to the railing and I looked up at Doc and asked why she was doing this and Curtis said I don't want you slugging me when I cut the rest of your finger off. I was his patient till the end. I consider myself honored to have known him. R.I.P. Doc

Jeffrey Hermanson

Friend

October 6, 2020

Dr. Clayman was my neighbor for 28 years in Gardner. He loved to work on his cars and always had the time to stop and tell an amusing story. He will be sorely missed and I feel so fortunate to have known him. His passing is a huge loss for our community.

Kathy Sullivan

Neighbor

October 6, 2020

Doc Claman was the best Doctor that I ever had and he was a great freind. We had many enjoyable times together. He was a real comedian, we shared many good times , Doc Claman is my freind, he has gone on to the next demention and I hope I will be worthy to cross trails with him again on the other side

Tim Murphy

Friend

October 6, 2020

The Best!

Seamus Pender

Friend

October 6, 2020

I was a patient of Dr Claymans and he always made me feel comfortable in his prescence. R I P and condolences to the family and friends.

Helen Collins

October 5, 2020

I was so sorry to hear of Dr. Clayman's passing. I will always remember his kindness towards his patient's and his many funny stories. He will be missed.

Kathy Barnes

Coworker

October 5, 2020

I loved him, he saved me. He carried me through the toughest times. I admired him. My Mom was also a graduate of Chelsea. Oh how my heart aches. I am truly sorry for your loss Barbara and sons.

Linda Hanssen

Friend

October 5, 2020

I was a patient for 30+ years as was my wife and other members of the extended family. We all so lucky to have had him as our physician and we thought of him as a friend. We all missed him when he closed his practice and are saddened to hear of his passing. So many good and amusing memories to list. Our condolences to his family

Jim Sadin

Friend

INVITE OTHERS TO ADD MEMORIES

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