

Dr. Glen Anderson



Dr. Glen D. Anderson from Winter Haven, Florida (September 11, 1936 - April 11, 2018) was a U.S. veteran, dentist and teacher of dentistry and life lessons.

Born in Minneapolis, and class of '54 South High, he joined the Navy and served in Japan as a dental assistant at Yokosuka Naval Base. His ship almost sank on the way over there. Make no mistake, when you enlist in the military, it means you're willing to die for your country, and he was.

In 1957, he married his high-school sweetheart Joyce Prior. The two had a grand plan to get their college educations, spend a summer touring Europe in a VW Bug they would buy overseas, get their careers going, and finally have a family. They did it all.

Education was so important to the couple as they knew it would help them accomplish their goals. Joyce became an elementary education teacher to help hold down the fort until her husband could take his college education as far as he could.

And he took it far. With his GI Bill, he attended the University of Minnesota earning BS, DDS and MSD degrees. His first patient was a human cadaver, donated for the purpose of enhancing a health science student's understanding of the human body. He treated his cadaver with respect and meticulous care as he excelled in the art and science of anatomy. With his degrees, he became an associate professor at the U of M and taught dentistry and head and neck anatomy at the Dental and Medical Schools.

Much of Dr. Anderson's civilian life was devoted to science and giving his family a better life than he had growing up. In 1964, their son, Erik, was born, followed by daughter, Kristine, in 1966. The Anderson family lived on the Mississippi River in Brooklyn Park in a unique home Dr. Anderson designed. He was a hands-on kind of guy, sourcing indigenous materials from all over Minnesota engineering sprinklers, planting trees, laying railroad ties to secure the river bank and making sure the property was as he had designed it.

At home, he enjoyed working with his hands and DIYing. He could often be seen landscaping in nothing but a Speedo. His kids would play in the neighborhood until dusk, when they heard their dad's distinct whistle signaling them home. Boy, he could whistle!

He also loved an early-morning skinny dip, smoking his pipe and holiday get togethers with his sister Bonnie and her family. He and his brother-in-law, Tom Beattie, would laugh together until they cried.

In 1974, when his children went on Suzuki violin tour in Japan, Dr. Anderson jumped at the chance to return to the Asian country and lecture to the Japanese dentists he'd met while he was in the service. He and the

Anderson family were invited into one dentist's home. The mutual admiration the two dentists from opposite ends of the earth felt for each other was very apparent, and it was reflected in the hospitality the Anderson family were given.

In private practice, Dr. Anderson joined forces with Dr. Douglas Blesi on Brooklyn Blvd. When Dr. Blesi retired, Dr. Anderson moved to downtown Minneapolis and established a new practice with Dr. Kenneth Meyer, Dr. James Baker, Dr. Richard Goodkind and Dr. Timothy Peterson. His loyal right hand and assistant, Patti Lee, who was with him from the beginning, made the move downtown.

Dr. Anderson was a true artist, sculpting his patient's dentures by hand in his own lab, never sending any work off to a dental laboratory. He felt the fit was too important, and he knew his patients best. In addition to dentures and bridges, he was a pioneer of dental implants in Minnesota. He lectured on this cutting-edge (at the time) procedure at Mayo Clinic. For 30 years, Dr. Anderson practiced dentistry and prosthodontics in Minnesota and lectured regionally and around the world.

Dr. Anderson was Diplomate of the American Board of Prosthodontics, and president of the Minnesota Prosthodontic Society, Minnesota Association of Prosthodontists and Midwest Academy of Prosthodontics, as well as a member of Psi Omega Dental Fraternity and American Board of Dentistry.

In 1992, he and Joyce decided it was time to hang up the career and retire. Their children were out of the house and gainfully employed. The pair moved to Winter Haven, Florida where they joined Lake Region Country Club and he became president of the Men's Golf Association there. He also loved photography, cooking, world travel, classic cars and his collection of American Standards vinyl. Glen and Joyce lived it up for eleven years, until 2003 when he suffered his first of a series of strokes rendering him speechless and without the use of his right hand, his dominant hand, the one that created all those smiles.

But that didn't stop him from spinning his records. He couldn't talk but somehow he sang joyously all those old tunes by heart. He had a major crush on Lena Horne, but his favorite song was "My Way" which is so fitting. When he had his final stroke on Thursday, April 5, 2018, he wanted it his way. He was brought to the hospital but fought the nurses, kicking and thrashing, ripping out his IV. He didn't want treatment.

He was moved to hospice and passed away the following Wednesday night. Gifting his body to the University of Central Florida anatomical board is a way for him to keep teaching and to complete his scientific journey. When he is done there, his ashes will be inurned with military honors at the National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida. Until then, the family continues to celebrate his life. The military ceremony and service will be announced at a later date, likely in 2020, with friends and family welcome.

Dr. Anderson will be remembered as a generous sharer of knowledge, a great provider and a wonderful contributor to the art and science of dentistry. He is survived by his wife of 60 years Joyce Prior Anderson, son Erik, daughter Kristine, grandkids Afton and Julian, and nieces and nephews. He is a member of First Presbyterian Church of Winter Haven.