



Anne Utley Barnes, MD, FACS



Professor of Anatomy, Woman's Medical / MCP



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Dr. Anne Utley Barnes never intended to be a pioneer, but she led a remarkable life for a woman of her generation. Born in 1926, she graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1948 and then went to work for the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Nashville, which was her native city. Two years later, when she was 24, she was diagnosed with thyroid cancer and successfully treated with a thyroidectomy. That experience made her decide to become a physician. She enrolled in the medical school at Vanderbilt in 1951. While in medical school, she met the Reverend Sidney Barnes, the junior pastor at the Presbyterian church on campus. They married in the fall of 1954 and she graduated the next spring.

Following an internship at St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville, she did her surgical training at Northwestern University, the Medical College of Virginia, and the University of Pennsylvania. This highly unusual, geographically scattered training was because she followed her husband to his pastoral training and assignments, and interrupted her training with the birth of two children, her son Sidney, who grew up to be an engineer, and her son James, who grew up to be a physician. On the other hand, it did afford her the privilege of being taught by Dr. Thomas Starzl at Northwestern, and Drs. I.S. Ravdin and Jonathan Rhoads at the University of Pennsylvania.

Those who are familiar with that era, before women's equality, might find it unimaginable that a woman could follow her husband around the country, have a family, and complete surgical residency in the days of pyramidal programs and every other night on call. Even more so, because Anne was refined, soft spoken, and extremely kind. In an era when women were often expected to be "one of the boys," Anne was a lady first and a surgeon second.

Following her training, Anne was able to balance being a surgeon and mother by teaching anatomy and providing surgical services as the chief surgeon at the old Philadelphia State Hospital at Byberry. In 1966, Anne found a home at the old Women's Medical College, a few years before it became the co-educational Medical College of Pennsylvania and, ultimately, part of Drexel University School of Medicine. She was on the faculty of anatomy and of surgery and subsequently added a private practice at Frankford Hospital. She retired from surgical practice when she was 75. On her own initiative, she made sure every graduating chief resident at the Medical College of Pennsylvania had an autographed, framed picture of the Chair of the Department.

Anne loved to teach and, with her surgical experience, was a gifted teacher of anatomy. She taught gross anatomy at the medical school from 1966 until 2007, when she was over 80 years old. In her prime, she presented an interesting anatomic dissection at the American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress poster session every year – not as a poster, but the actual dissection! In 2009, the Alumnae/I Association of the Women's Medical College and Medical College of Pennsylvania presented Anne with the Phyllis Marciano Woman in Medicine Award for her outstanding contributions to teaching, mentoring, and patient care, and for her leadership as a role model for women in medicine.

Anne died at the age of 85 on February 18, 2012. In keeping with her personality and beliefs, she asked that friends and family remember her by doing "a kindness for someone in need."