

HOSPICE OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

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To the College of Engineering - "Tribute to the Dean's Luncheon"

Never use letterhead that isn't connected to the agency, etc...BUT, after one turns the 60 mark, one can do ANYTHING and folks will scratch their heads and know that she's gone over the edge...

I'd love to come to your Dean's party - but, unfortunately I really must decline. I would really be remiss if I didn't compose the following since I've seen Deans come and go -- and could probably recount some good stories that would have to be censored -- but that wouldn't be any fun, either - so, I shall proceed - with caution.

I had the privilege of knowing the very first Dean of Engineering; namely, Dean Marston. Not that I was there working for or with him during his tenure; NO, not quite - but I would chat with him when he made his return "rounds" during the 70's and 80's when I inhabited Civil Engineering. I used to marvel that he could get through the doorway - he was at least eight feet tall. He'd drop by my desk as politely and kindly as always asking, "What's new, Irene?" and we'd share stories of the old days and remember fondly Dick Higgins, Bill Boyer, Tom Grow, and Karl Hendrickson (now living comfortably at Applewood). He'd also always drop in on Dr. White and they'd share many, many memories of "how it was" or "how it should be". Ah, yes, what a kind gentleman. And, later (just a couple of years ago, it seems) I had the distinct privilege of visiting his home as a Hospice volunteer when his wife Grace was dying. He was the same gentle person then as he was when Dean of Engineering. He cared for her so beautifully and prepared himself for a time when she'd no longer be at his side. Such dignity and humbleness. I shall always remember Dean Marston and Engineering is blessed with a building bearing his name.

Other Deans who I recall: Dean Picha -- always the gentleman -- fair and considerate. He reigned when I was working for Dr. Segool in Comtech for a little while -- up there in the corner office of Engineering East -- with Dean Marcus just across the hallway. Nellie M. was up there as was Marie and Orrie Taylor/Patton. I used to get folks into trouble by shooting rubber bands at them -- and we'd laugh and laugh -- it sort of broke up the monotony -- and everyone was always on a diet or learning how to operate a new sophisticated typewriter (better known as the MTST (or the Hulk) that was mainly Nellie's job -- poor soul). Then along came Dean Jones -- very tall and awesome -- scared the life out of me -- but he and Clive Dym seemed to hit it off pretty well -- at that point in time I was in Civil Engineering assisting Dr. Dym with money matters, etc...what a chore that was when along came Dean John whose wife decorated his office on Valentine's Day with an amazing array of balloons, hearts and flowers -- what a hoot that was.

They all had their own style -- they were all dedicated to the School of Engineering -- and Dean Marcus kept them all on the straight and narrow -- what a gem he was.

Oh, I'd almost forgotten Roscoe Ward -- he was Nellie's idol. Also a very knowledgeable gentleman with a one-track mind of where Engineering was going -- or should go -- He originally was in Tom Feng's empire -- namely, Sanitary/Environmental Engineering down in the bowels of Engineering East originally -- where the aroma of cooking sludge often times invaded Electrical Engineering as well as the Deanery.



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And, also alas, dear, gentle Dean Lindsey and Della Brownell (in the late 60's?) -- that was one of the most dedicated pair I ever saw. Again, so gentle and caring -- rooted in the "old days" of pure education - yet struggling and giving way to "publish or perish" - likewise "research or be replaced."

Engineering has a special place in my heart -- I loved it there -- tho' like every job there were bad times when I over-reacted and good times when I "cut up" just a little too much or laughed a little too hard. Yet, each administration has reached a little higher whether in the Deanery or in the Departments -- each has flourished in its own way -- and each has succeeded in providing a quality education to the hundreds of students who have come and gone -- a little wiser, a lot more knowledgeable and revelling in the UMass College of Engineering.

Thanks for allowing me to think back on the "good old days", our many Deans, and our/my great Department Heads...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Irene Clarke', with a large, stylized loop at the beginning.

R. Irene Clarke
Department of Civil Engineering 1965-1990
and Hospice of Hampshire County 1991 - ?