LEGENDS
FROM THE HILL TO THE ATRIUM
A Tribute to the Men and Women
Who Made It Happen

ISSUE 4
Russell L. “Rusty” Malcolm, MD, and
Albert S. Malcolm, MD – Father and Son
Strengthen Hospital Care
Ask Dr. Rusty Malcolm what he is most proud of over his 31-year career and he is quick to say that his son Albert’s decision to practice medicine in Middletown and his daughter Melissa Malcolm Berns’ work as an on-call hospice nurse are high on the list. This *Legends* looks at father and son’s commitment to bringing inspiration and innovation to the practice of medicine in southwest Ohio.

**Russell L. “Rusty” Malcolm, MD**

At age 83, Dr. Russell L. Malcolm, Jr., former director of Middletown Regional Hospital’s pathology department, can claim a long and distinguished career. Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan – where his father, a surgeon, attended the University of Michigan – Rusty grew up in Richmond, Indiana. After graduating from Earlham College in 1951, he served in the U.S. Navy, where he was introduced to the medical laboratory. He worked in Navy hospitals around the country and served on a Navy carrier in Korea.
After leaving the service in 1955, Rusty earned a master’s degree in limnology (the study of inland waters) from Indiana University in 1956. When he discovered that all the good jobs in his chosen field were gone, he decided to return to medicine. Rusty earned his medical degree from Indiana University in 1960 and did his internship at Marion County General Hospital. In 1965, after completing his residency in pathology at Indiana University, Rusty was ready to begin what became a full and memorable career.

ARRIVAL IN MIDDLETOWN

When it came to choosing the hospital he would join, Rusty had well-defined criteria. He wanted to work in a community hospital that was the only one in town, ensuring it would receive 100 percent of the community’s health care support. He didn’t want to be the only pathologist on staff, and he wanted a teaching appointment.

Middletown Regional Hospital filled the bill. Rusty joined board-certified anatomic and clinical pathologists Robert B. Carson, MD, and Ann H. Oyer, MD, and, when Ann retired, neuropathologist Mariano Alviro, MD, became part of the group. To complete the package, Rusty taught for four years at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, followed by 25 years at Wright State University School of Medicine. In the late 1980s, he became director of pathology at Middletown Regional Hospital.
At that time, pathologists were known as the “specialists’ specialist.” They were involved in virtually every case in the hospital and had a bird’s eye view of each patient’s situation. With this perspective, Rusty’s department arranged all in-house physician education. He also reached out to the community to answer medical questions on radio call-in shows.

**LAB TECH SCHOOL OPENS**

In the late 1960s, the pathologists opened a certified laboratory assistant school at the hospital. Atrium Medical Center’s Carol Turner, president and CEO, and Marilyn Noll, director of outpatient and ambulatory services, both registered medical technologists, assisted in operating the school. Rusty maintains that their early experience in the department helped them learn how to “run a good ship.”

Today, pathology, like other medical disciplines, has its own subspecialties, and computers have changed the profession. But as a general pathologist, Rusty handled it all – forensic (autopsy), surgical, cytology (the study of cells), clinical chemistry and microbiology. And in the early days, most of these analyses were done by hand.

From 1968 to 1988, Rusty and his fellow pathologists donated more than $1 million to the hospital to buy equipment for their laboratory. As a result, the lab was always on the forefront of technology.
For example, in the 1980s, Middletown Regional was one of the few community hospitals in the nation with a diagnostic electron microscope.

Rusty retired from practice in 1995. He has been president of the Butler County Medical Society and the Southwest Ohio Heart Association and served on the board of many community organizations. He and his wife of 57 years, Ann, live on 180 acres in West Middletown. Over the last few years, Rusty has had some serious health challenges, including a near-fatal bout with lymphoma, which is now in remission. Lucky for Rusty, there’s a medical oncologist in the family ...

**Albert S. Malcolm, MD**

Oncologist Albert S. Malcolm, MD, 53, is the middle child of three. He was born at Indiana University Hospital in Indianapolis on the first night of Rusty’s internship at Indianapolis General Hospital. Fortunately, the hospitals were across the street from one another. Rusty got someone to cover for him and ran over to meet his baby son.

Albert went to Madison High School, then followed in his father’s footsteps to Earlham College, graduating in 1982. Albert always knew he wanted to be a doctor and be involved in direct patient care. He and his father had discussed oncology as an option. Rusty Malcolm believed it was an exciting field with enormous growth potential. Albert enrolled in The Ohio State University College of Medicine and, after graduating in 1986, did his internship and residency in internal medicine in Columbus.
RETURN TO MIDDLETOWN

In 1991, when Albert wrapped up a fellowship in medical oncology at Pennsylvania State University Hospital and Hershey Medical Center, the question was: Among the many options presented to him, where would he decide to practice? Albert wanted to get back – and give back – to his family, his church and the other institutions that had shaped him. Much to his parents’ delight, Albert, board certified in both internal medicine and oncology, opened a private practice in Middletown. Today, Albert and his wife of 28 years, Leanne, also live in West Middleton. They raised four children in a home built on land carved out of Rusty and Ann’s farm.

In 2001, Middletown Regional Hospital asked Albert to chair its multidisciplinary Cancer Committee. A decade earlier, the American College of Surgeon’s Commission on Cancer (CoC) had accredited the program with commendation. Every three years since that initial recognition, the CoC has reaffirmed the program’s accreditation. In 2010, Albert also became director of Atrium’s Infusion Center.
CLINICAL TRIALS IMPROVE CARE

Albert identifies Atrium’s dynamic research efforts as the backbone of its cancer program. Eleven percent of the hospital’s cancer patients are in clinical trials, far exceeding the 6 percent required for CoC accreditation and almost six times more than the national average. He observes that patients participate in clinical trials for new cancer drugs and procedures not only in hopes of a potential cure, but also out of a sincere desire to help others.

Albert served as physician co-chair of the Foundation’s 2010–2011 Imagine a Cure campaign to support cancer care at Atrium. A proud champion of his fellow physicians, he strongly supports the hospital’s mission to build a healthier community.

Both Albert and his father have witnessed many changes during their respective careers. But the need remains for everyone in the community to work together for the common good. Like father, like son – the Drs. Malcolm continue to care and serve.
This article is the fourth in a series of profiles celebrating the 2017 centennial anniversary of Atrium Medical Center (formerly Middletown Hospital and Middletown Regional Hospital). The series honors men and women whose civic-mindedness and genuine caring for others helped Greater Middletown grow and contributed to establishment of the first-class medical center the region boasts today.

Past Legends focused on:
Paul Galeese, Issue 1; E.O. Bauer, MD, and John L. Bauer, MD, Issue 2; Educating Our Caregivers, Issue 3.