



BREAKING STORY

August 14, 2008

Museum of Health Care accepts significant donation from WWII veteran today at 2pm

Mr. Albert Barris, retired Canadian Air Forces veteran, now 93, and his son-in-law Mr. Ted Bellinger are today officially donating a custom back brace to the Museum of Health Care at Kingston. The brace, made in the 50s and subject of Barris' recent claim to Canadian Veterans Affairs in March of this year, will be accessioned into the Museum's medical artefact collection after a brief ceremony at 2pm.

Mr. Barris left the Air Force with a military work-related injury after World War II. With no-medical records in existence, Barris, having no proof of his injury being military related without said records, had only his injury, memory and the special brace to justify a claim.

Two-years ago, with the help of his son-in-law Ted Bellinger, Barris and family reapplied to Canadian Veterans Affairs. Central to the claim was the back-brace, which was used to provide evidence and timeline for Barris' injury.

The Museum of Health Care was approached in May 2007 to identify the creation date, manufacturer and medical purpose of the brace for the purposes of aiding the claim. Curatorial staff at the Museum were able to narrow down the possible date of creation to a window of a few years time.

The work of the Museum was instrumental to Mr. Barris' successful claim: Mr. Barris has been awarded a retroactive Pension and other coverage. In thanks for the work of Museum staff and in recognition of the Museum's mission to preserve material culture and enhance understanding of the history of health and health care in Canada, Mr. Barris and Mr. Bellinger will present the artefact to the Museum this afternoon at 2pm. Media are asked to attend.

As cultural resources, the utilization of museums in this fashion speaks to the relevance and significance of the activities and efforts to record and understand our stories.

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