

## C. Barber Mueller: Appreciation

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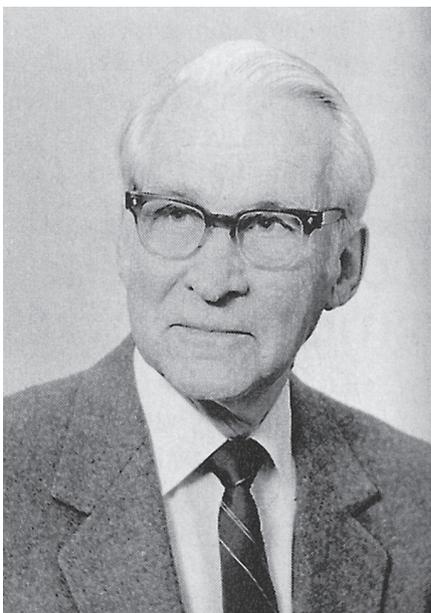
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### SUMMARY

This commentary was written in memory of C. Barber Mueller, who died at age 97 on Feb. 13, 2014. He was coeditor in chief of *CJS* from 1972 to 1992.



C. Barber Mueller was a remarkable person. It is a great pleasure to reintroduce Barb to Canadian surgeons in recognition of his contributions to the *Canadian Journal of Surgery* and to surgery at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont., in Canada and in the United States.

Barb was marked for a significant career from the time of his entry, on scholarship, to Medicine at Washington University in St. Louis, Mo; his membership in the Alpha Omega Alpha fraternity; his role as the last chief resident of Evarts Graham; and his role as an initial Markle Scholar with numerous publications in basic science journals. In medical school, his first paper was with Evarts Graham as his coauthor. Following internship, Barb served with distinction in the Pacific Theatre with the 4th U.S. Marine Division, participating in landings on 4 islands, including Iwo Jima, and winning the Bronze Star for meritorious service while being wounded twice. After finishing his residency in 1951, Barb joined the faculty at Washington University School of Medicine. At age 39, he became professor and chair of surgery at the State University of New York in Syracuse. In 1967, he moved to McMaster University and was integral to the planning and development of the novel “problem-based curriculum” as well as the planning and design of the medical centre.

Education was Barb’s passion. Indeed, he viewed himself “an educator by profession and a surgeon by trade.” Those who had the pleasure of being his guest as visiting professors also discovered, occasionally to their chagrin, that Barb had an uncanny ability to ask the key question that tested their presented research. I experienced his puckish sense of humour, clinical acumen and insight as he honed in on any weakness in my Grand Round or his evening case discussions with the students. Working with Barb was an educational experience for everyone. Five years after he retired, the students at McMaster awarded him the Student Teaching Excellence Award — a clear reflection of his devotion to them and his ongoing involvement after retirement from official positions. He brought that same educational drive to *CJS*.

Retirement simply brought a reorientation of his interests — almost a lateral arabesque — as he founded The Friends of the Health Sciences Library and personally made significant contributions to the McMaster library. His contribution was so great that the university has created an elegant space within the library, The C. Barber Mueller History of Health and Medicine Room. The university has honoured him with an Emeritus Professorship, inducted him into the Faculty of Health Sciences Community of Distinction and given him an honorary degree (his third).

Most of us would have been tired out at this point, but Barb, remembering his chief, Everts Graham, finished his biography, *Everts A. Graham: The Life and Times of the Surgical Spirit of St. Louis*, in 2002. The title is an interesting reflection on Lindbergh's airplane and Graham's independent and innovative leadership in surgery. At age 94, Barb completed another work, *Excalibur:*

*the Sword of Science that Reshaped the World*, which was published in 2012.

On a personal note, I have many fond memories of my meetings with Barb. The most memorable was one in which I was a visitor to his teaching exercises with the students. Barb was a great role model, and I left feeling better than when I arrived. In preparing this commentary, I was delighted to find that Barb had contributed a chapter to my grandfather's text, *Practice of Medicine*, on the electron microscopy of the kidney. Barb and I met at least twice a year at the American Surgical and the American College meetings. I always left our visits feeling good about things; he had that way about him. He was always most interested in who he was talking with and with his lively sense of humour, bringing out the best in all those around him.

**Competing interests:** None declared.

#### CORRECTION

The article entitled "Low-intensity pulsed ultrasonography versus electrical stimulation for fracture healing: a systematic review and network meta-analysis," published in June 2014 (*Can J Surg* 2014;57(3):E105-18), contained errors in references 35 and 39. The correct references are

35. Heckman JD, Ryaby JP, McCabe J, et al. Acceleration of tibial fracture-healing by non-invasive, low-intensity pulsed ultrasound. *J Bone Joint Surg Am* 1994;76A:26-34.
39. Mayr E, Rudzki MM, Rudzki M, et al. Does pulsed low-intensity ultrasound accelerate healing of scaphoid fractures? *Handchir Mikrochir Plast Chir* 2000;32:115-22.