



**Turning Dreams into Reality
the Wright family are quiet masters of the art**

Dennis W. Jeanes
Special to the Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation

At the top of the up-escalator at Montreal's Palais des Congrès last June, strategically positioned on either side, the brothers Wright lay in wait to engage selected friends and colleagues who were attending the COA's Annual Meeting. With Paul on one side and Stewart on the other, the two guided potential donors to the Canadian Orthopaedic Research Legacy's "Wall of Fame" where they joined, for all to see, the ranks of their generous surgeon colleagues.

Says Paul. "We were politely nabbing everyone we know...in a nice way...to bring a person's attention to a very worthy cause." And quite a few good doctors found themselves donating, being photographed and thanked effusively - all within minutes - as smooth an operation as two fund-raising brothers might improvise on the fly. "We also worked the crowd during the breaks." What keeps the arm-twisting within a sociable comfort zone are the brothers' finely tuned instincts about who to approach and their ability to accept a polite "no" with good grace: "We understand that people have all sorts of passions and worthy causes in their lives, and we respect that."

Of course, our particular worthy cause is to create a legacy of sustainable funding for orthopaedic research - which describes in a nutshell the precise goal of the Canadian Orthopaedic Research Legacy programme or CORL as it has become known.

CORL grew out of a germ of an idea that Paul had more than a year ago and set in motion with the support of the staff at the Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation. The CORL programme was launched in December 2004, and on the eve of its first anniversary has almost reached its target of \$100,000, an accomplishment of which Paul is particularly proud.

"It's so inspiring to look at the CORL Wall of Fame, and see the future of orthopaedics in black and white," says Paul, referring to the residents who have

given almost 10 percent of the donations received to date. “It’s not just the presidents and past-presidents of the COA and the Foundation creating this legacy, it’s also the future of our profession.”

What’s \$300 a year?

For a minimum donation of \$300, donors will be recognized as Founding Contributors in the first years of the CORL programme. “Just imagine if every surgeon in Canada donated \$300 a year to the Foundation through CORL - that’s \$300,000 in one year. In ten years, we’d amass \$3 million to ensure an enduring legacy to our profession.”

A couple of phone bills, a few hours in the OR, a coffee a day - \$300 is an affordable individual contribution that turns the dream of sustainable long-term funding for research into reality.

Orthopaedics is a worthy cause with which the Wright family has become synonymous for the last half-century - more specifically, downtown Toronto’s venerable Orthopaedic and Arthritic Hospital. Paul and Stewart Wright are third-generation orthopaedic surgeons, and, while their professional fate might seem to have been sealed from the outset, it’s a tribute to their upbringing that neither brother was pushed into orthopaedics. “We had a lot of freedom of choice,” Stewart recalls. “Orthopaedics was always there at home but it was never pushed at us. I don’t think I really decided what I wanted to do until about fourth year of medical school.”

If there was any paternal influence, Paul says, “It was as a person above anything else. Dad’s ability to interact with people and help people.” And as anyone knows who has ever tried to raise money for a good cause, it’s really about building long-term relationships and mutual trust. The real work of fundraising is engaging potential donors to believe in your vision - to take a leap of faith - because of your quiet and unswerving dedication to the cause, because of your plain, hard work: “My father and grandfather had this incredible vision of establishing an orthopaedic hospital. When you’re part of something like that while you’re growing up - I can remember as a kid helping to fundraise with Dad - you don’t realize it may be slightly out of the ordinary. It’s just what the family did. It’s hard to find photographs of my father and grandfather, because they were not ones to seek the limelight.”

Nor is Paul. And you can hear in his voice another familiar family trait - his utter conviction that basic and clinical research must continue to inform and propel the profession forward to best practices and continuous innovation in Canada. His quiet determination to launch the Canadian Orthopaedic Research Legacy has received support from all corners of the orthopaedic community, as well as close to home (*see Jean Wright Kilpatrick*).

“We’re within reach of our fund-raising goal,” says Paul. “We need a bit of a surge to push it over the 100,000-dollar mark. We’re very close.”

Leave Your Legacy

- donate by phone – 1-800-461-3639 x 4 and have your credit card handy
- donate by mail – P.O. Box 7029, Innisfil, Ontario L9S 1A8
- donate online – www.canorth.org
- make a monthly or annual contribution – call or visit online

Sidebar (*put text below into a text box alongside the article*)

Jean Wright Kilpatrick: a bred-in-the-bone philanthropist

Jean Wright Kilpatrick has been dedicated to orthopaedics for close to 50 years. Her late husband and Paul and Stewart’s father, Dr. Charles S. Wright, was the co-founder in 1955 of the Orthopaedic and Arthritic (O&A) Hospital in Toronto. In addition to providing continuing financial support to the hospital, Jean has dedicated much of her life to volunteer work at the O&A and participated in many a fund-raising campaign.

And she didn’t need much convincing to give to CORL. “My son obviously thought the Legacy was important, and I thought it important to help get it started by donating privately for a public good,” says Jean Wright Kilpatrick, who is - with characteristic generosity - the single largest donor to the Canadian Orthopaedic Research Legacy.

Legend for photo #12

The Wright Brothers – Paul and Stewart.