

An Ancient Birthing Chair

by Victoria, 2024

(Birthing Chair)

0:00

Certainly, I'm a man caring and supportive of a woman on her important, difficult, and memorable day. People consider me to be ancient. To be honest, I already forget how old I am. Does it matter now when you've been through so much? Many lives of different generations have passed me by. I'm native Welsh, called a birthing chair. I was made from a solid piece of centuries-old oak, which in its time endured storms and bad weather and survived, as I did, in my time, and still do. I am calm and confident, but have a quiet voice persuasive and reliable, at the same time I am resilient enough to handle my responsibilities. I owe my appearance to an experienced master whose hands didn't know what fatigue was.

1:06

One kind and wise woman and mother of many children, who helped other women in the process of childbirth, once ordered me and paid the master a golden coin for the work. From that time, I used to live in different rooms, rich and poor, dark and light, big and small. I was taken from one house to another. Sometimes I changed places a couple of times a day. I always accompanied the woman, the home midwife, helping her in her work. She took me everywhere she went. We met many people who were waiting for us.

1:58

We were invited into the best, safest and secret parts of cottages, big houses and even castles, to take part in the magical, intimate process of the birth of a new life. We created a special atmosphere for a woman giving birth. It was an atmosphere of love, kindness, calm and undisturbed. The candles were lit, the healing herbs filled the rooms with their aromas (sniffs). Sometimes the quiet singing or purring of a cat was heard.

2:47

My role was to be steady and strong and provide physical support to a woman in labour. Living in the house of my hostess, the home midwife, I had heard many times about the importance of giving birth to a new person naturally and in the correct position for a woman's body during childbirth. I was responsible for maintaining exactly this correct position and I coped perfectly with my duties. Many new lives came into this world thanks to us working in tandem. I understood that healthy bodies become reliable temples for the education, growth, and improvement of souls on their earthly path. I was proud to be involved in such an important sacrament. I witnessed the first breath of a new human and the tears of joy of a woman becoming a mother.

4:12

Now I'm here. I'm a museum object and every day I only witness the cracking of floorboards under the feet of visitors. I was sent here as a serving employee, being sent into retirement, as a weak and feeble old man to an old care home. But I'm still full of strength, I know my job well, and I am ready to conscientiously carry out my duties for a long, long time in some nearby hospital, until time destroys my structure, until I really become old and decrepit.

5:10

But I was made from a solid piece of centuries-old oak, and it means that I'm strong enough in my 200 years of age and I'm glad to retrieve my voice and talk to you. and I'm glad to retrieve my voice and talk to you. So, put in a good word for me.