

Welcome to our latest eNews

On first impression it would seem that our two featured projects in this issue, an architecturally significant bank in Villa Park and a medical space in Northbrook Court, have nothing in common. However, from a Frank H. Stowell & Sons perspective they are cut from the same cloth.

In 1964 we were on the forefront of Chicago's Mies van der Rohe movement to glass and steel minimalism. 2006 finds us on another frontier, this time in the medical field. The excitement is similar. Then we could observe the look of surprise of passing pedestrians at a building whose roof was suspended from huge trusses. Today we see patients leaving our client's clinic amazed that they have had a significant medical procedure and, yet, have no outward physical evidence to prove it.

It seems we build and create consternation at the same time. Read on and find out more.

Sam W. Stowell
President

Our Latest Projects

When is surgery not surgery?



Imagine going to a clinic and making yourself comfortable on a patient table while high frequency sound waves focus on, and heal, an internal medical problem. No hospital visit, no intimidating operating room, no invasive surgery, no risk of infection and no painful post-operative recovery. Too good to be true? The future may be closer than you think.

InSightec, in cooperation with GE Healthcare, has developed a procedure that is taking us there. They started with the long-held recognition that highly focused ultrasound (FUS) could be used to destroy cells by concentrating enough energy at a single point. Still, this was of only academic interest until Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) technology reached a very high level of



Medical technicians Richard Falls and Nancy Curran

- diagnostic precision. Put them together and you have a tool (the MRI) to pinpoint, in three dimensions, a uterine fibroid for example, and another tool (FUS) to generate enough energy to ablate (destroy) the offending tissue.

Well, putting the concept into an operational system with fail-safe clinical procedures that meet rigorous standards and umpteen trials has required millions of dollars in investment and years to make it happen. But happen it did.

We are fortunate to have been hired by Dr. Richard Mintzer and Mr. James Katz, co-owners of Medical Imaging of Northbrook Court, LLC to be part of

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Insightec ExAblate 2000 FUS table and GE Healthcare MRI

one of the first installations of an ExAblate 2000 FUS table in North America.

Today, it is used to destroy fibroids. Tomorrow breast cancer, brain tumors, central nervous system diseases, and liver, bone, prostate, kidney and thyroid tumors will be the targets. Tomorrow cannot come soon enough.

Construction Perspective

It took more than the commitment of our client to bring this latest breakthrough in medical technology to fruition. It took a handy dose of design and construction ingenuity. We needed to add another 1500 square feet of adjacent space within this prestigious retail mall and to find a way of bringing in a large MRI without dismantling the mall entrance.

We caught a break. Behind the clinic was part of the mall's storage area and behind that an exterior wall. Despite grave misgivings, the mall management and owners agreed to our plans. First, the irregular shaped "closet" was transformed into spacious procedure, wait/prep and control rooms and, then, a temporary exterior entrance, supported by a sturdy lenticular, was carved out.

Within days the equipment (comprising the MRI, the focused ultrasound system, computers and voluminous cables) was delivered and installed for testing. The opening was immediately closed and restored to its prior state but with the addition of a window set high enough to maintain privacy and security. The natural light is important because it mitigates a patient's stress significantly. Finishing activities followed to create this attractive and highly functional area.

Our architect, David Selinger, AIA, feels justifiable satisfaction that, despite all the site constraints, the owners feel that we have met all their needs and compromised nothing in the process. Perhaps that also explains the patients' smiling faces. Of course, it could be the zero-discomfort successful treatment and immediate return to normal life. Who knows? ●



Medical Director Richard A. Mintzer, MD, FACR, FCCP



Co-owner Jim Katz shows David Selinger the plaque commemorating the partnership



Villa Park Bank 1964



Villa Park Bank Today

Built to last

Perhaps you are not a fan of Mies van der Rohe's 'skin and bone' architecture and can live without 'material honesty and structural integrity'. Still, this bank building has lasted better than anything else in the original photo. The Studebaker's long gone, as is the Family Shoe store and that restaurant peaking through from the back? Removed to make room for the McDonalds. As for the bank, it's no longer Villa Park Trust & Savings. It's Harris Bank.

This was a project that Uncle Frank ran back in 1964. Peter Roesch of Hammond and Roesch, a former student of van der Rohe, was the architect. If you think the style looks familiar, you may be recalling Crown Hall at IIT. No doubt that Mies was flattered by the imitation. In fact, the design was a

structural necessity given the poor soil conditions. The overhead trusses, with only four column footings, support the roof plate and allow a clear span interior space.

The bank was revolutionary at the time it was built, offering drive-in banking stations, a drive-up night depository, safety deposit and cash vaults, zone air-conditioning and, most importantly, flexible space. Forty years later we take all of that for granted.

Though considered an architectural gem, the Villa Park Bank may not appeal to everyone. Still as General Contractor, we are proud of our role in bringing it to fruition and of the quality of our workmanship that has made it last so well. ●

- **LEED lighting, watch out**



With Wal-Mart and GE joining forces in a big marketing push, it's unlikely that anyone will not have heard about compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) by the end of this year. Meanwhile, here's the scoop.

After years of refinement they have finally produced a fluorescent light that is just about as good as your regular incandescent light bulb. Just about? So it takes a split second to come on and many seconds to reach a full glow (sorry, no instant gratification here). The sticker shock, in contrast, will be immediate with prices as high as \$10 per bulb. While in full disclosure mode, there is one other issue. GE kindly notes that occasionally, very occasionally, turning on these lights may change your TV channel (thanks to a little wayward infrared light).

Enough good reasons to stick to what you are used to? The answer should be no. CFLs are improving all the time and, with at least 25 different styles designed to fit into the screw-in sockets, they can match in looks as well as performance.

What performance, you may ask? Well, they use one third of the energy and last ten times as long as their predecessor. According to the EPA, if every household replaced just one light bulb it would be the pollution saving equivalent of taking one million cars off the road. Yes, one million. Less energy also means no burnt fingers. The bulbs barely get warm. The reduced waste from the much longer life-span is an ecological bonus. Oh yes, the economic payback from reduced electricity usage averages just a few months.

In conclusion, let us be patient for that half a second and let us enjoy the momentary twilight and gradually adjust to the added lumens. That is a minor sacrifice for a very appreciable step to a sustainable energy program and a healthier environment.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – US Green Building Council)

The use of CFLs is just one of the technologies endorsed under the LEED program as a means to make our construction industry environmentally responsible.

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