

Frain Mortuary in Indiana completes New Prep Room



The efficient layout puts equipment and instruments conveniently at hand.

WINAMAC, IN— When brothers Sam and Dan Frain decided to renovate the preparation room in their Frain Mortuary, they faced a formidable challenge—how to modernize facilities in a 120-year-old structure. Furthermore, they desired to complete the work in the short span of three weeks.

To help them navigate the intricacies of bringing the prep room into current OSHA compliance and provide a safe and comfortable work environment for their employees, the Frains called on the preparation room specialist firm of Duncan Stuart Todd, Ltd.

What DST, Ltd. found on initial assessment of the project was that the room in question was a completely fixed internal space with a floor level high above ground level and with doorways too narrow to accommodate the larger caskets used in today's services.

The walls and ceiling of the existing prep room were completely lathe and plaster. There was only one sink for employee cleanup as well as for the washing of instruments. The wood-faced cabinetry was, by nature, not sufficiently sanitary and was also insufficient in storage capacity. Finally, the ventilation system greatly troubled the Frains from an employee standpoint, as it did not adequately service the room.

The Todds recommended "gutting" the room, leaving only bare studs and floor joists from which a complete rebuilding process could take place. Access to the room was made possible by building a ramp from ground level into the prep room and wider doors were installed to allow for the loading of caskets. Fortunately, the room dimensions allowed for a good working layout, which is not always the case in older buildings. The Frains greatly aided in the success of the room by making space available in an adjacent room for new OSHA compliant mechanical equipment.

A major factor in the success of the renovation was

installation of the PrepAir ventilation system, which is available exclusively from DST. The Frains are enthusiastic about the benefits of PrepAir. The system allows them to control the heating and cooling in the room independently of the rest of the funeral home as it removes pollutants. They also appreciate that the system also prevents contaminated air from passing over their faces during a procedure as it once did. And they further noted that even when fluids are spilled, there are no fumes to contend with as air borne particulate matter is expelled through the system.

Within the room, the layout and cabinetry now put instruments and equipment at hand, making the workplace much more efficient and convenient. Hands-free sinks for both instrument cleanup and employee hand washing have been provided along with the necessary eye-wash and ceiling drench shower safety equipment. An efficient and sanitary table drain solution almost completely eliminates the possibility of air borne particulates in the draining process. New sanitary and



Hands-free sinks for instruments help prevent cross contamination.



Cabinetry maximizes storage space with niche cut out to store mobile lift.

stain resistant cabinetry maximizes the available storage space while an area was allocated to "park" an existing rolling body lift. As well, a floor drain was installed; a desirable feature in any remodel and an absolute must in any new construction.

The Frains relied heavily on DST for specifying the proper flooring, ceiling and wall materials. The result in this case was that clean-up was made easier with the application of vinyl wall covering and a seamless floor.

Dan comments that with the limitations involved, they necessarily had to make changes as the project progressed. "It was as easy as picking up the phone, and calling Duncan Stuart Todd. We really appreciate their cooperation and assistance." As a registered architect, Duncan Todd is well qualified to provide service beyond what would normally be available from other sources who offer only the sales of prep room equipment.

The Frain Mortuary holds a unique position in the community and with their latest

renovation, they can be more efficient in serving approximately two thirds of Indiana's Pulaski county, population, 13,500, and embalming for a neighboring funeral home. Active in their community, Sam Frain currently serves as president of the Pulaski County Council, which is responsible for the county's fiscal policies. Dan Frain is a former two-term county coroner.

The structure that is now The Frain Mortuary was first used as a residence. In conjunction with a furniture store, the building became the Fry and Lange Funeral Home in the 1920's. Max Frain, now retired, purchased the firm in 1967 with sons, Sam and Dan, becoming sole owners in 1990. The Frains have a combined length of service to the community of over 100 years. These latest ambitious renovations are an extension of their commitment to serve, as were past improvements like a new chapel and an expansive project to bring their facilities into ADA compliance.

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