



BUILDINGS

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PROJECT PROFILE

HEALTHY BUILDINGS, HEALTHY PEOPLE

When Westland Construction Superintendent Wayne Brown takes on a renovation project at a hospital, he knows he isn't merely modifying spaces. He and his colleagues believe that they are helping to improve the healthcare system.

"It feels like an important contribution - absolutely," says Brown, a Westland staff member for seven years. "If I'm able to develop a space to accommodate a new piece of cancer treatment equipment, or set up a lab so research and testing can be done, that's pretty powerful." *Continued on pg. 2*

Westland Construction built a reception desk and renovated offices at Victoria General Hospital.



Continued from pg. 1 That all said, renovation projects in hospitals – or any healthcare setting, for that matter – pose unique challenges.

"A hospital never shuts down. There are always patients around and important work going on," says Ernie Goetz, Assistant Director of Facility Management for Concordia Hospital. "The logistics can sometimes be very difficult."

For example, says Goetz, you can't simply shut down an elevator without planning for what would happen in the event of a "code blue" (a situation where a patient requires resuscitation or other immediate attention). "And if you're planning a construction project in an emergency room that will affect your capacity, there's a trickle-down effect throughout the Winnipeg Health Region. It takes a lot of planning and coordination."

For Wayne Brown, one of the keys to successful construction work in a healthcare setting is to manage the strict guidelines around infection prevention, which are mostly centred around dust mitigation. "We have to pay close attention to dust containment and air quality," says Brown. "These are live sites with vulnerable people around us."

Another key is flexibility. Brown has been in situations where the renovation project has to be shut down on short notice to accommodate a hospital's needs. Addressing those challenges means some off-hours work and some creative scheduling. "When you do a lot of hospital work, you learn the tricks of the trade and you learn to expect the unexpected," says Brown.

"I've had great experiences with Westland," says Goetz. "Their people are personable and approachable and they are great communicators. That's essential in a healthcare setting where the needs of the patients take absolute priority."



A waiting room in Concordia Hospital's diagnostic imaging area. Westland Construction built the room and modified nearby office space in 2013.



A neuropharmacology lab at Health Sciences Centre, built from scratch by Westland Construction in 2008.

CELEBRATING OVER 30 YEARS; CELEBRATING THE FUTURE

DID YOU KNOW?

YESTERDAY



In 1987, at the site of the historic **ST. NORBERT TRAPPIST MONASTERY**, Westland Construction completed a major park renovation.

TODAY



Westland Construction is currently working on the **PUBLIC WORKS OFFICE (MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE BUILDING)**, a three-phase project for the Rural Municipality of East St. Paul.

TOMORROW



Starting in June 2014, Westland Construction will be renovating the downtown **YMCA-YWCA** to make way for a youth drop-in centre.

THE GROSE REPORT

THOUGHTS FROM WESTLAND'S CEO



Peter Grose

Noted speaker and business author Harvey Mackay once said: "Your workforce is your most valuable asset. The knowledge and skills they have represent the fuel that drives the engine of business - and you can leverage that knowledge."

I can't think of a greater truth in the workplace, but as I look around Westland's offices and our jobsites, I'd like to take Mackay a step or two further. Knowledge and skills are essential, but there are two more factors that truly elevate the Westland workforce.

First, I see a tremendous work ethic - not just in terms of people working hard, but in terms of people doing the best job possible. We have a workforce that knows how to problem-solve and innovate, without ever compromising the integrity of the project. They wear their onsite challenges like badges of honour, and they take great pride in their ability to get the job done.

Second, I'm a bit biased of course, but I see a superb culture at Westland. Our staff members communicate well with each other as well as with clients and tradespeople; and you'll hear more than a few laughs during a typical work day. Even though they're here to work, our folks enjoy each other's company. You can see it at our annual holiday party, you see it at our annual golf tournament, and you see it at the end of a long week.

We're pretty proud of what we're building here. When staff members are motivated and engaged, the company thrives, and clients get unparalleled service and performance.

When I think of staff members who are motivated and engaged, the first name to pop to mind is Abe Penner, our long-time Site/General Superintendent who retired in November 2013 after about 30 years of service. In my early days at Westland when I was on jobsites, I worked for Abe in the field. He's a great man who led by example. Abe worked like a horse, had superior instincts, and made excellent decisions. He's featured on page 4 of this issue of *Building Up*.

When I became CEO, I trusted Abe, sought his input, and encouraged others to follow his example. So, even though Abe is probably lazing at the cottage as I write this, the fact is, no one worked harder than Abe and his impact will be felt around here for a long, long time. 🍷

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INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN: GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

In the last few years, the construction industry has seen an "explosion of acceptance" of green buildings and sustainable design, says Greg Hasiuk, Practice Leader at Number TEN Architectural Group.

"It has now become an industry standard for many of our clients and contractors," he says.

That wasn't always the case. As recently as five years ago, it wasn't always easy to get green products or even the information you needed to make sure your project was LEED-compliant. Launched in 2000, LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) is a green

building certification program, designed to inspire architects, building owners, construction companies, and others to consider the environment when advancing a project.

Although it took some time to catch on, "LEED has been very successful in changing the industry," says Hasiuk. "It's been the hammer the industry needed to push stakeholders to a shared, standard vision. The market now accepts sustainability, perhaps even expects it."

As valuable as LEED is, says Hasiuk, advancing sustainable communities through construction is about changing our mindsets.

"What we talk about now is designing and building spaces that have real value for the owner and for the community, and that have a long future ahead of them," says Hasiuk. "We encourage people to ask why they are building what they are building, what its purpose is right

now, and what might it be used for next."

Case in point, Number TEN's offices are located in a 110-year-old bricks-and-mortar building in the Exchange District, east of Main. The solidly built flexibility of the original design allowed for its future use.

"We encourage our clients to consider 'future proofing' their projects so the building can easily adopt new technologies, like
Continued on pg. 4



Greg Hasiuk, BES, M. Arch., MRAIC, MAA, SAA, LEEDAP, Practice Leader at Number TEN Architectural Group, Winnipeg



Continued from pg. 3 photovoltaic cells for solar power, in the future," says Hasiuk.

Another positive trend that Hasiuk notes is that businesses and organizations aren't assuming they have to build new. They are willing to look at repurposing older buildings. In Winnipeg, repurposing can sometimes make more sense than building something new through a cold winter.

"When you repurpose a space, you are reducing the project's carbon footprint, you are preventing sprawl, and you are turning what might be an eyesore or something neglected into something that benefits the community."

WESTLAND PERSONALITY

ABE PENNER



Abe Penner

After over 30 years in construction, Abe Penner's fingerprints are all over some of Manitoba's most important and iconic structures. Today, as a retiree, his fingerprints are mostly all over his steering wheel.

When Penner started at Westland in the early 1980s, the company was only three years old, still small, and just starting to make a mark in the marketplace. There were occasional seasonal layoffs and some slow times, but Penner's faith in original owner Norm Young and current CEO Peter Grose paid off.

"I enjoyed my work and the people I worked with," says the 68-year-old Penner, who looks at least a dozen years younger. "I always felt appreciated by Norm and by Pete... and I always like to remind Pete that he used to work onsite for me!"

As a Site Superintendent for most of his career and a General Superintendent when he returned to work after a short-lived retirement in 2008, Penner worked on some fascinating projects including the Jenpeg Generating Station, the original polar bear pit at the Assiniboine Park Zoo, the hospital in The Pas, the museum in Kenora, and dozens

of others. Cumulatively, he spent about half of his Westland tenure working on a variety of projects at Health Sciences Centre.

Improved technology has had a significant role to play in growing acceptance of sustainable design and construction. Materials and systems have come a long way, and so has energy modelling – now a critical part of sustainable design, originally funded through the now-defunct Commercial Building Incentive Program (CBIP).

But as impressive and important as the technology is, for Hasiuk, simplicity is a key to sustainability. "I like to rely upon passive mechanical systems and natural light like our ancestors did," says Hasiuk. "What's old is new again." ❏

"I really enjoyed working at HSC," says Penner, who officially retired in November 2013. "Construction is above all a people business and I really liked working with those people."

Of all the war stories, Penner likes to talk about an early job at the Grace Hospital. He and his crew had to dig two 12-foot holes by hand for new piles. "We got to 12 feet and there was no hardpan so we had to keep digging," he recalls. "We dug one hole to 19 feet and the other to 21 feet. Three guys, a couple of shovels, a couple of pails, and a rope. And we still made the deadline."

That little tale sums up Abe Penner's career. You work hard until the job is done, you cooperate, you enjoy the rewards.

Today, that's what Penner is doing – enjoying the rewards. He and his wife Lois recently returned from a motor trip in their new Ford F150 to the southern U.S. (which included seeing a couple of Jets' road games). They sold their city home last year and moved to their winterized cottage in Lac du Bonnet. They've spent much of their winter on their snowmobiles, and they'll spend much of the summer building a garage. They drive to Morden monthly to visit with Penner's 96-year-old mother, and they enjoy spending time with their two kids and one grandson in the city.

"I've had too much to do to miss the daily grind of construction work yet," says Penner, "but I will certainly miss the people." ❏

Westland Construction is a full-service General Contractor serving the institutional, commercial, and industrial sectors through new construction, civil support, and renovations. We care about process and getting it right – for the buildings you see and the infrastructure you don't.

Westland Construction – building a better way for over 30 years.

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