

BUILDING BRIEFS

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Published by:

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MARCH/APRIL, 2003

Old World Skill For State-Of-The-Art Boardroom At Knights Of Columbus

When you govern a national and international business, you need a boardroom that provides state-of-the-art technology, efficiency and comfort. The Knights of Columbus was faced with the need for such a boardroom in their New Haven World Headquarters. They wanted to become highly efficient by reducing the need for travel that was typically required to conduct their meetings. The decision was made to build a unique boardroom that could deliver a practical solution for serving their wide range of business communications. Petra Construction was selected to carry out the construction of their new working Boardroom and communications center.

The project's work would require high tolerance, custom finished carpentry, matching of woods, creation of a conference table with hardwood veneer for a natural finish, and many other striking, yet critical features.

One of the reasons Petra was selected was its full-service custom Mill Shop. In this unique Mill Shop, Petra craftsmen can create cabinetry, custom doors, match historic moldings and wood panels, and so on. The Petra Mill Shop holds a solid reputation as a distinctly unique service that brings significant solutions to some of the most

difficult woodworking challenges.

"A look at the finished Boardroom (see photo), will demonstrate the seamless flow that is easy on the eyes. It reflects soft natural color and light that a long narrow boardroom like this requires," said Al Pacelli, Senior Project Manager for Petra.

This project also required a blend of high technology teleconferencing with connections to 14 conference table stations, plus hookups, video, microphones, and ports for main control of the projection screen, all wrapped in a visual beauty that reflected natural woods. The Petra Mill Shop was perfectly suited for the challenge. In fact, the Boardroom's

conference table is the centerpiece of the room, both visually and as its control center. The table was custom built in the Shop, section by section, by woodworkers Steve Carter and Vincent Labutis. Each section was then transported to the fourth floor of the Knights of Columbus World Headquarters. The table required not only custom woodworking but careful assembly. The conference table is a wonder of beauty, technology and functionality, all in one. Each seat at the table accesses pop-up video monitors, and a host of technical connectivity. The Boardroom now allows participants around the world to see one another to discuss issues and

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The new custom built boardroom at the Knights of Columbus World Headquarters.

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business matters. Charts and information can also be displayed. All of this would have been extremely difficult to do previously without meeting in person.

A large audio/visual screen in the room moves up into place rather than down. Once stationary, the screen is beautifully framed by custom wood panels; a blend of the technical and the beautiful. This difficult project was a challenge to the craftsmen on many levels. Petra held detailed weekly meetings to handle any issues and to

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carefully monitor the schedules. This is where the importance of teamwork and collaboration are key to success. Petra Construction worked very closely with the project architect, Bruce Detmers, to maintain the integrity of the work, the production schedules and in the handling of

unforeseen problems.

“Of course with any project of this detail there will be obstacles, but due to Petra’s skill, perseverance and personal approach to their projects, they always have the ability to overcome the obstacles and accomplish the work,” commented Biagio Gulino, Facilities Director for the Knights of Columbus.

Petra Construction has worked with the Knights on many occasions over the years. Their clear understanding of the project’s challenges, as well as their millwork capabilities, helped Petra win the bid.

“Petra did a wonderful job on our museum and we were pleased to work with them again,” said Jean Migneault, Deputy Supreme Knight. Petra received numerous awards for the museum, including the 2002 ABC Excellence in Construction Award, and the AGC-Build Connecticut Award.

The Knights of Columbus Boardroom project was a resounding success thanks to a number of skilled and dedicated individuals:

Owner’s Executive: Jean Migneault, Deputy Supreme Knight, Knights of Columbus

Owner’s Representative: Biagio Gulino, Facilities Director, Knights of Columbus

Project Architect: Bruce Detmers, Kevin Roche, John Dinkeloo & Associates

Senior Project Manager: Al Pacelli, Petra Construction Corporation

Mill Shop Foreman: Charles Grova, Petra Construction Corporation

Carpenters for the Boardroom Table: Steve Carter and Vincent Labutis, Petra Construction Corporation

Wood Finishing: John Reprin, Petra Construction Corporation

And of course all of the people behind the scenes at all the companies involved.

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In today’s world, sometimes the focus is strictly on technology and aesthetics are overlooked or treated as less important. Petra Construction has maintained a fully staffed and equipped mill shop because quality architecture and craftsmanship are still things of beauty.

If you are seeking a better way to craft your next project, contact Petra Construction today. Contact Mr. Guido Petra or Mr. Terry Wooding at 203-865-6043. Learn more at our website: www.petraconstruction.com.

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