



The Wall™

Thank you for your response to our last newsletter. We are pleased to be able to inform our readers about architecture and the projects we are currently working on.

In the news...Steven Kratchman recently taped two half-hour segments on Keith Steier's *Knockout Renovation Show*. It appears on Manhattan and Brooklyn Cable as a special (check local listings). Keith selected Steven Kratchman Architect, P.C. because of the firm's variety of project type experience as well as knowledge about a project's approvals process.

The theme of the Fall 2004 issue of the newsletter is urban private clubs and sport facilities. The theme parallels a recent trend and growing interest in the game of squash. This issue details some of our work at three different clubs, all of which played a significant role in the history and development of squash and other racquet sports in the United States. For additional information on this fascinating history read James Zug's *Squash a History of the Game*.

International court dimensions have recently been adopted by North American squash players. The courts are now required to be 2'-6" wider. A change in the dimensions can trigger a change in the physical facility that will have a ripple effect on large parts of a club building, especially if it is urban, where every square inch is accounted for. Court dimensions and the rules of the game are central factors contributing to change and constancy in these historic clubs.



Harmonie Club

Union Club



Racquet and Tennis Club

There is an 85 foot wall in our office which we use to display projects and is the visual backdrop to the office. It represents our working philosophy and is used to critique the work as a team and is a tool to enhance our objectivity. We "walk the Wall" daily with staff and clients. This is why our publication is entitled "The Wall™."

THE DESIGN OF URBAN PRIVATE SPORTS CLUBS IN NEW YORK CITY

STEVEN KRATCHMAN, AIA

The 1920s and 30s saw a remarkable flourish of urban private club construction. These facilities accommodate indoor sports activities, dining rooms, meeting places, lodging, food services and storage. Almost 80 years later, portions of these buildings appear well suited for their original and current intentions, while other parts need modernizing. The public face of the facility, known as the formal spaces, has remained essentially the same. The back of the house and game courts, however, have undergone significant renovations. Our recent work at three New York City private clubs, Harmonie, Racquet and Tennis, and Union, reveal three distinct and common factors relating to the design of urban private clubs: institutional memory, demographic trends, and technology. A better understanding of what and why certain parts have stayed the same and what is most susceptible to change can inform other clubs on how to improve and extend the use of their facilities long into this century.

...what has changed and why

Many private clubs in New York City were originally exclusively men's clubs. Today, clubs throughout the country are modifying bathrooms, lockers, and game courts in order to accommodate women and the handicapped. The Harmonie Club converted an entire spa floor level into equal men's and women's locker rooms, steam, and changing facilities. The Union Club created a new women's locker room as part of a larger renovation. Both clubs provided handicap accessibility. Owing to the historic importance of this particular group of clubs, project success is often defined by the preservation of the original architecture and new work that seamlessly extends the existing building interior.

At the Union Club, approximately 50% of the 5th floor needed re-planning. Our designs consolidated all wet functions into a central location, creating a core of plumbing services. Remaining dry areas were re-planned. "Invisible" new architecture was achieved by confining all new work to rooms on either side of the public corridors. New work was based on original club precedents.

The manipulation of water, temperature and air in the form of whirlpools, hot tubs, saunas, and steam rooms require technology. Today's technology has introduced variable speed fans and motors, and remote computerized controls, all of which combine to save valuable floor space, reduce staffing levels, and consume less energy. At the Union Club we proposed replacing the existing static aisle and fixed metal shelf system with a system of rolling shelves on tracks. Rather than one access aisle serving two rows of shelves, one moving access aisle serves as many as ten rows. As a result, the same amount of storage can now fit into one quarter of the space.

...what has stayed the same and why

Many private clubs have been designated "Landmarks" by the New York City Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC). Any changes to a designated landmark need to be approved by the LPC. Even though clubs have senior members, they don't always know or remember what was original. Collective memory is a series of images, feelings, and events that have occurred in their lifetimes; it is sometimes different than actual fact. At the Racquet and Tennis Club we recently replaced the second story windows looking out on Park Avenue. The "Certificate of No Effect," an LPC approval for applications that have no effect on the historic material was withheld until it could be proven that the hunter green paint that had trimmed the club's stone façade for decades was original. A microscopic analysis of a paint chip revealed 22 coats of paint; the first 8 were a lighter color, and the most recent were green. Buildings from this era were often detailed with trim that matched the color of the façade material. Due to the fact that the windows were recently painted a fresh coat of green, an understanding was agreed to between the club and LPC that within five years, all windows and trim would be repainted their original, lighter beige color.

While clubs evolve, most are able to accommodate changes largely within their existing framework. It is a credit to the original architects that their designs are largely intact. Awareness of collective memory, knowledge of technology, and familiarity with demographic trends are vital to private club design.

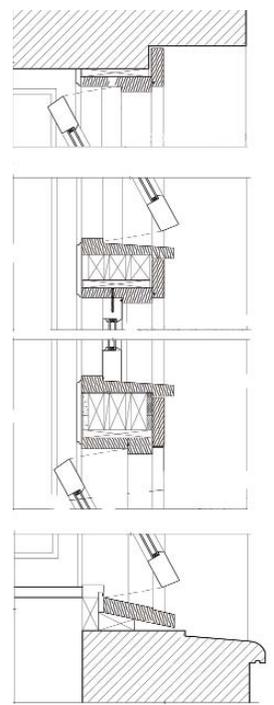




Paint Chip Analysis



Window Detail



Section



Racquet and Tennis Club, 370 Park Avenue, New York, NY built in 1917 to the designs of McKim Mead & White. The club was individually landmarked in 1979.

Park Avenue façade drawing showing second floor replacement windows. Existing frames were reused as they were in good condition and their reuse reduced disruption to existing interior finishes. New windows are detailed with insulating glass to reduce energy consumption and noise. They are constructed from new growth mahogany assembled locally in Connecticut.

Sample of paint chip seen under high powered microscope as requested by the Landmark Preservation Commission. Starting from the bottom, the sponge like material is natural wood. The next layers are original coats of light paint followed by several coats of darker paint. Additional analysis can determine paint ingredients and can lead to more precise dating if desirable.



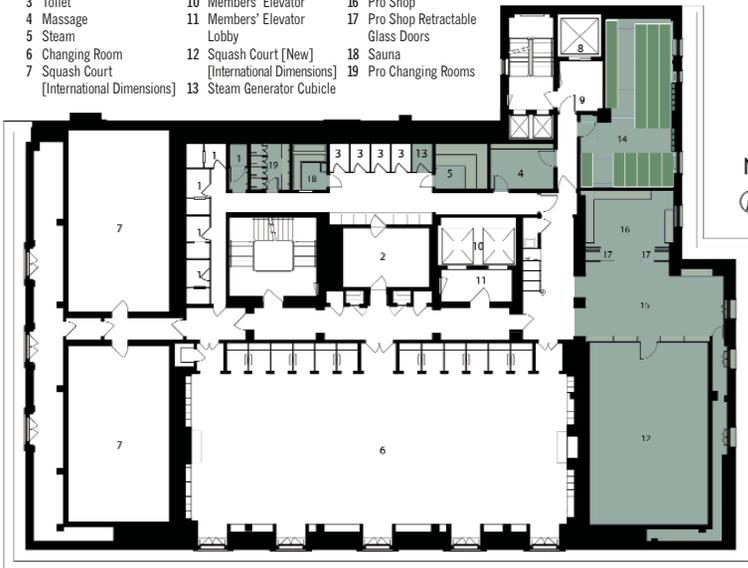
- 1 Shower
- 2 Washroom
- 3 Toilet
- 4 Massage
- 5 Steam
- 6 Changing Room
- 7 Squash Court
- 8 Service Elevator
- 9 Service Elevator Lobby
- 10 Members' Elevator
- 11 Members' Elevator Lobby
- 12 Tub Room
- 13 Electrical Treatment
- 14 Slab Room
- 15 Supply Room
- 16 Pantry
- 17 Attendant's Room



Before

- 1 Shower
- 2 Washroom
- 3 Toilet
- 4 Massage
- 5 Steam
- 6 Changing Room
- 7 Squash Court [International Dimensions]
- 8 Service Elevator
- 9 Service Elevator Lobby
- 10 Members' Elevator
- 11 Members' Elevator Lobby
- 12 Squash Court [New] [International Dimensions]
- 13 Steam Generator Cubicle
- 14 Mobile Storage
- 15 Pro Shop Viewing Lounge
- 16 Pro Shop
- 17 Pro Shop Retractable Glass Doors
- 18 Sauna
- 19 Pro Changing Rooms

Legend Modified Areas



After



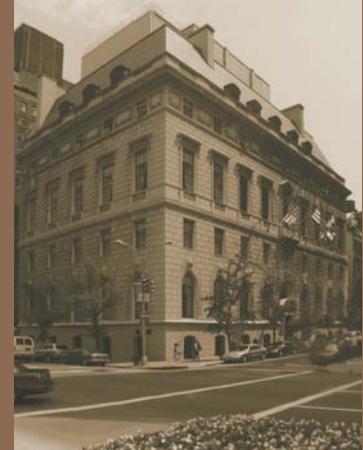
Mobile storage units [14]

Union Club, 101 East 69th Street, New York, NY built in 1932 to the designs of Delano & Aldrich. The club is part of Landmark's Upper East Side Historic District, designated in 1981.

The re-planning of the fifth floor and mezzanine left untouched: the "historic" men's changing room, recent renovations to courts one and two and the ring of circulation. A column was relocated to convert the existing North American court to international standards. We created a wet area core, in which all new spa functions were located. The remaining dry areas were located around the perimeter, behind doors in most locations. This strategy has two benefits:

- 1) new rooms appear invisible.
- 2) wet areas are consolidated with other existing plumbing, minimizing construction costs.

Customized mobile shelving eliminated space consuming aisles and generated four times the quantity of basket storage compared to a standard static system.



- 1 Pool
- 2 Whirlpool
- 3 Shower
- 4 Locker Room
- 5 Wash Room
- 6 Elevator Lobby
- 7 Elevator
- 8 Toilet
- 9 Steam Room
- 10 Massage
- 11 Sauna
- 12 Sleeping Room
- 13 Exercise Room
- 14 Spa Attendant's Room



Before

- 1 Pool
- 2 Whirlpool
- 3 Shower
- 4m Locker Room [Men's]
- 4w Locker Room [Women's]
- 5 Wash Room
- 6 Elevator Lobby
- 7 Elevator
- 8 Toilet
- 9m Steam Room [Men's]
- 9w Steam Room [Women's]
- 10 Massage
- 11 Sleeping Room
- 12 Barbara Shop

Legend	Women's Facilities	Men's Facilities	Mixed [CO-ED]



Ladies Washroom [5]



After



Harmonie Club, 4 East 60th Street, New York, NY built in 1905 to the designs of McKim Mead & White. The club is part of Landmark's Upper East Side Historic District, designated in 1981.

The cellar level was converted into a spa in the 1960's for use only by men. The scope of our project was to make the spa accessible to both men and women. A coed entry and reception area were created and the existing whirlpool and pool are now being shared. Separate locker, steam, and toilets were created. Handicap access was provided throughout.

Special care was taken to reuse existing finishes and plumbing roughing where possible.

The project delivery method was design-build which enabled the architects to prepare drawings with the contractors on day one. Coordination and scheduling were both improved as a result.

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STAFF AT WORK



STEVEN KRATCHMAN ARCHITECT, P.C., IS A FULL SERVICE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN FIRM WHICH PLACES SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON SERVING REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS, PROPERTY AND RESIDENTIAL MANAGERS IN BOTH COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL SECTORS.

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