

McCann Center framework

MaristLand



Jack Gartland indicated that the McCann would not be ready to support the McCann Center project for two years, as it was committed to the McCann Golf Course and the McCann Ice Skating Arena at the Civic Center. This gave the college the leisure to plan.

At first we thought of a *Butler* building, a pre-fab unit which might easily be constructed. Paul Canin explored over a dozen different manufacturers. Richard Foy contacted a specialist in sports arenas from Hofstra University to locate places in the US which had innovative designs. He and his wife visited

Oral Roberts University in Tulsa Oklahoma. The facility was innovative in that it is served occasionally as the venue for the Oral Roberts television shows, which normally were filmed in Los Angeles. In the times when the show moved to Tulsa, the teams practiced in a *basement* under the main floor which had the same dimensions including height as the main floor.

Graceland College, a small college operated by the RLDS (Reformed Latter Day Saints) in Lamoni, Iowa. The athletic complex together with the student union was housed in a huge oversize plastic dome, with the dome about 12" thick. The unit had been in operation for five years with no leakage in a very cold section of the country. Graceland is best known for being the college of Bruce Jenner, the Olympic decathlon champion.

Next he visited Mercer Island near Seattle, Washington. Here he saw domes kept upright via air blowers (now similar to many tennis installations). When he asked a young lady if they ever had snow, she replied that they had about two inches about five years ago.

Laverne College (now University) in La Verne CA about 35 miles east of Los Angeles. We were shown two tents, one housing a theater, the other a combination athletic center and student union. La Verne enjoys mild southern California weather, and heating such a facility would be a problem in Poughkeepsie.

So Paul Canin, the architect, issued several requests for proposals, expecting that a *butler* type edifice would be the winning choice. It happened that there was a lull in construction at that time. A Baltimore regular steel company bid on the project. It did the engineering design and won the bid. So Marist has a standard engineered building which has held up nicely for over 35 years.

When it came time to design the interior, Louis Greenspan, who worked with the McCann Foundation, located a large shipment of wood in Maine. The first floor was designed with an asphalt composition, so the wood was used for the walls. This gives the interior a distinctive look and feel. A wood floor was installed later.


 gem interior

Photo above taken April 2012. Photo below taken shortly after the gym was opened.



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photo by digitized version of Kodak slide. Interior photo by Richard Foy March 2012.

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