

Old trade, **new tricks**



There used to be a special bookstore in New Paltz, N.Y., that Dr. Joel Fischer frequented. He'd spend hours there. The Ariel Bookstore was owned by patients of his; aside from returning the favor as a loyal customer, he had a fondness for the shop. Then, the bookstore closed.

Looking back on it now, there's no way Dr. Fischer could've ever predicted how things would turn out. There's no way he'd know that after practicing in New Paltz for more than 30 years – the last 20 in the space in which he assumed he'd retire – that he'd be told he had three months to vacate. There's no way he'd know that at the age of 60 he'd embrace the possibility of opening a new dental practice. Late in 2009, however, that's exactly what happened.

Dr. Fischer had always been told his practice was an anchor of the building it was in and the space was his for as long as he'd want it. As it turned out, that wasn't the case.

"I had no desire to move. I wasn't at a point where I was ready to retire. It was a matter of, 'What do I do now? I've got to continue my practice,'" Fischer said. "It was certainly a rather overwhelming situation to be in."

As a first step, Dr. Fischer called Steve Dambra, his Patterson representative, to begin discussing his options. In short order, the entire Patterson team was on board. There was no question in which city Dr. Fischer wanted to house his practice. "I wanted

to stay within my town," he said. "I didn't feel a move outside my area would have kept my patients coming. I'd been practicing in New Paltz since '79. I didn't really want to start over in another place."

The practice he was vacating had 1,400 square feet that seemed to be shrinking. Dr. Fischer said he knew he needed more space. The properties he was finding, though, weren't significantly bigger – and those that were used two levels. "I wasn't about to spend my day climbing up and down stairs. In terms of properties available with greater than 1,600 square feet on a single floor, there was not a lot to choose from. Not only in terms of the quality of the building, but also the layout of the building and the location."

And then Dr. Fischer thought of the old Ariel Bookstore.

He knew it was empty and had most recently been occupied by a restaurant. He knew

the owners were looking to sell. And, most importantly, he felt it was the best building in the best location in New Paltz.

"It's a lovely building. Even though I had this catastrophe to deal with, things really came into place," he said. "We found a temporary office to practice in quickly, all the permits fell into >>



Practice Profile

DENTAL PRACTICE
Ariel Dental Care
New Paltz, New York

Joel Fischer, DDS
Harrison Linsky, DDS, MD

OFFICE
Square feet: 3,100
Eight operatories

EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- Accutron Newport Flowmeter
- A-dec 12 O'Clock Assistant's Instrumentation
- A-dec 1601 Doctor's Stools
- A-dec 1622 Assistant's Stools
- A-dec 511 Chairs
- A-dec 5590 Sterilization Center
- A-dec 6300 Dental Lights
- A-dec Treatment Consoles
- CEREC AC & Milling Unit
- Eaglesoft Practice Management Software
- Midmark Air Compressor
- Midmark M11 Autoclave
- Progeny Preva Intraoral X-ray
- Sirona GALILEOS Cone Beam

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place and things came together nicely. It kept things running – well, I kept running – from meetings on construction, equipment selection, electrical layouts and there was always something.”

The three-month window within which Dr. Fischer had to vacate his office of 20-plus years wasn’t ideal. But with the help of the Patterson team, he kept his practice open while the new 3,100-square-foot space was being renovated. Though he’d been practicing for more than 30 years, he found Patterson’s expertise on the floor plan invaluable.

“I had chosen the chairs and cabinetry and what I wanted with those chairs. [Patterson] came in and had their drafts people design the office; we went through several iterations of that until we all agreed it would work,” he said. “I had just purchased CEREC before I found out I was losing my lease, and I knew I wanted to showcase that.”

The new office would also showcase GALILEOS, which Dr. Fischer had decided to add. According to Dambra, the transition Dr. Fischer was making was more than just geographical – it was philosophical as well. “His horizons broadened,” Dambra said. “Now, he’s doing things with the GALILEOS, airways, implants and getting a lot more involved in new techniques. A man who was close to retiring now has a whole different outlook on dentistry. It was fun to be part of that, and rewarding to see that transition take

place. I just think he’s much happier.”

One of the major considerations in laying out the floor plan was establishing a welcoming feel. It was paramount to Dr. Fischer to mitigate patient fears. “I wanted it to be very clean-looking and not have a cluttered feel – mainly, I didn’t want it to be overwhelming to the patient. We accomplished that with very high ceilings in the main area and also implemented a bay design.”

Because the bay design was new to Dr. Fischer, and because he knew some patients may be more comfortable with a more traditional room design, the expansive office also features three private operatories. Those operatories are located near a second private doctor’s office and sterilization area. Patients can choose one or the other based on their preference. “Everyone has loved it,” he said. “‘Wow,’ that was the general consensus.”

The practice fits its surroundings and Dr. Fischer’s personality





in a special way, too, Dambra said. Some of Dr. Fischer's photographs adorn the walls, and New Paltz is an eclectic community with an artistic side. "When you walk into his office, it reflects that," Dambra said. "It's kind of like a small art gallery. It's very modern, sleek and clean. When people walk in there the first time, they are impressed."

The additional space gave Dr. Fischer new opportunities for growth, and he brought on another dentist: Dr. Harrison Linsky, a board-certified maxillofacial surgeon with both dental and medical degrees. The results were instantaneous. With eight functional operatories, 2011 was Dr. Fischer's first full year in Ariel Dental Care's new office. And it was the best year Dr. Fischer's ever had – growing 23 percent.

The business's value has significantly changed, which was another of Dr. Fischer's goals. He has always appreciated A-dec quality, he said, and it was an easy choice for his new chairs. "I started this when I was about 60 years old and I didn't want to revisit this again. I wanted the kind of quality that would eventually add to the value of the practice down the line."

Fast, efficient sterilization was always something Dr. Fischer placed importance on. That didn't change in the new facility. He added a Miele Dental Washer for hands-free instrument preparation and an Assistina to lubricate handpieces and keep

them in working order. In essence, he built a practice that was built to last. And he did it in an impressive fashion. "Rather than a back area hidden away, we have a sterilization zone," he said. "It's open, kind of like an open kitchen in a restaurant. Obviously, it was very important that it be very clean and very organized. That hasn't been a problem and people are always impressed."

The additional space also afforded the opportunity to add a consultation room. It's something Dr. Fischer didn't have space for previously, and he has found that having a private location to speak with patients on sensitive issues has made a big difference in patient comfort.

Equipment wise, Dr. Fischer said that without question CEREC has changed the way he practices dentistry more than anything else. The speed and efficiency of the process delights patients and still surprises even the staff at Ariel Dental Care. "The patients still feel very, very excited that they are able to get the restoration done in one visit," he said. "We took a few steps to make sure they're comfortable throughout the process, too. There are noise-canceling headphones at each station – they don't want to hear what's going on and it also helps distract them from the amount of time they're in the chair. They do love watching the whole process."

As Dambra noted, the new office has allowed Dr. Fischer >>

to broaden his horizons. It's something that he has always valued about dentistry, and something that was missing from his comfortable, albeit ill-fated, previous practice. The space was essential, but so was Dr. Fischer's desire to grow, both in business and as a dentist.

"That was one of the main reasons I wanted to build a larger facility – to grow," he said. "There was no room to do more in my old office. This is much more stimulating and that was one of the reasons I'm still practicing – that I'm always looking for stimulation. Without a doubt, I'm having more fun here."

There used to be a special bookstore in New Paltz, N.Y., that Dr. Joel Fischer frequented. Now there's a special dental practice that he goes to every day. **PT**



To watch a video of Ariel Dental Care, scan this QR code with your smartphone.

If you don't have a QR code reader on your phone, there are free apps available for download. Once you've got your free app, point your phone's camera at the QR Code and you'll be taken to the video!



From left to right:
Glenn Frank, Sean O'Connell, Dr. Fischer and Steve Dambra

PATTERSON TEAM

- Glenn Frank, *Branch Manager*
- Sean O'Connell, *Equipment Specialist*
- Steve Dambra, *Sales Representative*
- Chris Fostbauer, *Service Technician*
- Sherry Tassavori, *Office Designer*



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