



*New fire headquarters in Lethbridge.*

# Building on a legacy in Lethbridge

## Celebrating the 90th anniversary of FWBA Architects

*By Deanna Kerr*

FWBA Architects (FWBA) is a Southern Alberta firm established by H. William Meech in 1928. Although the company has changed names and evolved over the years, it has never lost touch with its roots in Lethbridge.

Building on this 90-year legacy, principals Dan Westwood, Christopher Babits, and David Cocks have strong ties to the region. Westwood, born and raised in Lethbridge, became a partner in 1999. Babits, who relocated from Ontario to Alberta 20 years ago, became a partner in 2008. And Cocks, who hails from Medicine Hat, started as a technologist with the firm and eventually became a partner in 2016.

Since the beginning, the firm has specialized in institutional buildings throughout Southern Alberta. It is impossible to walk through downtown Lethbridge without seeing a building designed by the firm. City hall, the public library, city police headquarters, the fire headquarters, the Southern Alberta Art Gallery renovations, and CASA are a few of the 90+ projects the firm has been involved with throughout the city. Through offices in Lethbridge, Calgary, and Medicine Hat, FWBA serves its clients with a

commitment to exceptional customer service, excellent and functional design, and thoughtful advice.

“Continuity of expertise, as well as renown for successful, innovative design contributes to the longevity of this practice,” says Westwood. “The firm has become very familiar with designing functional buildings that fit into the fabric of the community of Lethbridge, as well as smaller surrounding communities.”

Both Westwood and Cocks have proven track records of designing schools focused on healthy built environments that encourage young minds to flourish and grow. The Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School located in West Lethbridge was designed for a variety of learning group sizes and activities. With a multifunctional gathering space located at the school’s core, all major functions feed into it so the school offers increased flexibility for both student programming and community events. Additional recent school successes include École St. John Paul II Elementary School in Medicine Hat and the Schuler Replacement School in Schuler, Alberta.

Splitting his time between the Lethbridge and Medicine Hat

*“We’re interested in leaving a legacy of well-designed, quality facilities in Southern Alberta.”*

– David Cocks, Principal, FWBA Architects



ATB Centre in Lethbridge.



Chinook Regional Hospital cafeteria upgrade.

offices, Cocks is also involved in numerous projects for the City of Medicine Hat, including the airport terminal renovation and expansion completed in 2015. A newly modernized passenger screening and holding area, a new arrivals hall and a new concourse improve the circulation of the terminal and allow natural light and warmth to fill the space.

Babits brings a wealth of experience on large seniors care and hospitality projects. He led the design of St. Therese Villa, a 200-bed assisted living facility for the St. Michael's Health Centre in Lethbridge, and St. Teresa Place, a 250-bed supportive living facility in Calgary. Utilizing structural precast concrete, St. Teresa

Place is innovative in terms of its layout, size, and construction.

"The recognition we have received for the design of these facilities is appreciated, but the hard work of our 30 staff and the collaboration of our consultants is what really pulls it all together," says Babits.

The partners all express thanks to the clients, consultants, and communities involved in the mid-sized institutional buildings and other projects the firm focuses on.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to continuously serve this area of Alberta for 90 years and FWBA is excited to be part of the future of this magnificent place to live," says Westwood. ♦



2000 City Hall



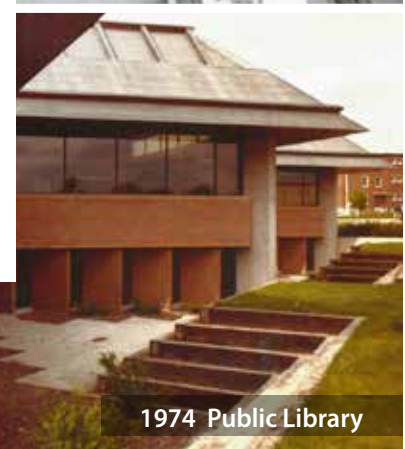
1971 University Hall

Thank you to our  
**EXCEPTIONAL  
CONSULTANTS**

Working together in Lethbridge  
for 90 years



2013 CASA



1974 Public Library