

It's the doctors who make the difference.™



**PLASTIC & HAND**  
SURGICAL ASSOCIATES

Plastic, Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surgery  
Surgery of the Hand

## Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates: Physicians dedicated to excellence in patient care

The scope of work done by the seven plastic surgeons of Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates in South Portland is rather remarkable.

Perhaps because of television shows like “Extreme Makeover” and “Nip/Tuck,” most people these days can’t help but think of breast lifts and Botox® injections when they hear the term “plastic surgery.”

While Plastic & Hand’s surgeons certainly do handle these and many other cosmetic

procedures – and welcome them – cosmetic work actually is just one branch of their diverse practice. (“Plastic” derives from the Greek “plastikos,” meaning to mold or shape, and covers a broad spectrum.)

First and foremost, these seven doctors are all certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, indicating that they have extensive, specialized training in plastic and reconstructive surgery. This gives each the ability to

handle a vast variety of cases on a daily basis.

Which they all do, be it correcting a baby’s cleft lip and palate or removing a cancerous lesion from a woman’s face. Or reconstructing a car-crash victim’s crushed arm or smoothing a self-conscious woman’s acne scars. Or relieving the pain caused by a carpenter’s carpal tunnel syndrome or creating a new breast for a woman who’s had a mastectomy after cancer.

To help keep their surgical

skills sharp...“All seven of us do everything...”...hand, reconstructive as well as cosmetic surgery, explains Dr. Richard C. Flaherty, who has been with Plastic & Hand since 1981. That keeps the workday stimulating and is one reason the practice has endured for 30 years.

It’s also what attracted the surgeons to Plastic & Hand in the first place and has kept them together – most for an

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**“Everyone wants to give the best quality care and get the best results possible.”**

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– Dr. Richard C. Flaherty

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extraordinarily long time.

Seven plastic surgeons practicing together successfully may not seem unusual to the lay person, but in this field, a practice of this size is not the norm, says Flaherty.

So why does this collection of doctors defy the odds and work so well together?

The Plastic & Hand doctors routinely cover for and seek advice from one another – and that’s a plus for patients, notes



**Michele Smith, right, a physician assistant at Plastic & Hand, assists a patient after a treatment. (Merry Farnum photo.)**

Dr. Therese K. White, who has been with the practice since 1996 and has known four of her colleagues since their residencies at Maine Medical Center. “People actually get better and more personal attention because often there are several of us involved in their care,” White explains.

Adds Flaherty: “Everyone wants to give the best quality

care and get the best results possible. And we all help each other and like each other. That’s all part of the deal. We all love what we do, and it’s a very happy place to work.”

That spirit of camaraderie and commitment to excellence is reflected throughout the Plastic & Hand team. The staff of approximately 79 includes two nurse practitioners,

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**– Dr. Richard C. Flaherty**

two hand therapists and a physician assistant. Added together, there are more than 500 years of experience in providing patient care and service.

Patients can sense they’re in a happy, collaborative workplace, Flaherty says, and that keeps the atmosphere relaxed and pleasant – and makes it comfortable to return.

“We have a lot of people who have been coming back for years,” he says. “They may have been here initially for a finger or hand fracture 15 or 20 years ago, and they come back because they know that we also do cosmetic surgery.

And there’s already trust established.”

Plastic & Hand patients have much to feel confident about.

Safety and quality standards at the practice greatly exceed requirements and are constantly reviewed.

The Western Avenue Day Surgery Center, a state-of-the-art, outpatient surgery center conveniently attached to the Plastic and Hand offices, includes two operating rooms and eight recovery bays. The facility is accredited by the American Association

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for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities, Inc., and by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.

The facility is also Medicare-certified and licensed by the state of Maine. More than 2,000 surgeries were safely performed at the Western Ave Day Surgery Center in 2006.

WADSC is staffed by nurses dedicated to ensuring the safety and comfort of the patients who have procedures there and the results of patient surveys prove it.

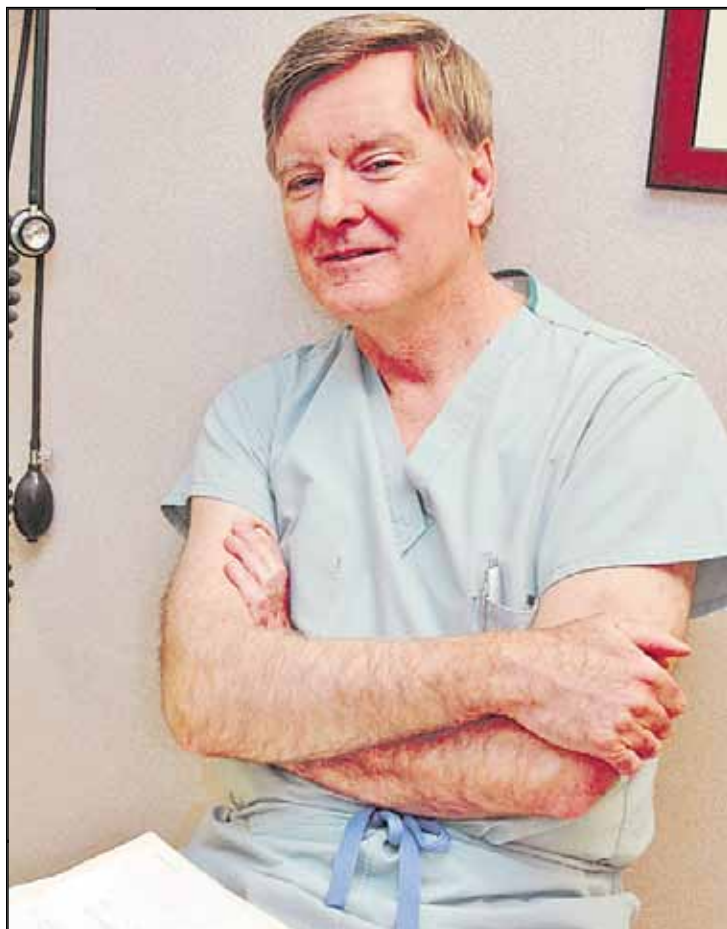
More than 95 percent of patients who pass through the facility give it the highest ratings. WADSC is the only fully accredited ambulatory surgery facility dedicated to plastic surgery in Maine. It has been open since 1986.

The practice also has excellent professional support relationships, including one with Spectrum Medical Group anesthesiologists and pathologists, who work on-site and are members of the same physician practice that provides these services at Maine Medical Center.

Patients also should feel secure in knowing that for Plastic & Hand's highly educated and experienced surgeons, the learning never stops.

They get together weekly to discuss cases and carefully review patient satisfaction surveys to see where improvements can be made. They all attend monthly plastic conferences and hand conferences, as well as national medical meetings, where new techniques and procedures are discussed and taught.

The surgeons are ever curious about new ways to achieve great results, but



**Dr. Richard C. Flaherty has seen great advancements in plastic surgery procedures since he joined the staff in 1981. Proven procedures and therapies are incorporated so that patients at Plastic & Hand can always be confident that they are receiving the best care. (Merry Farnum photo)**

also are fairly conservative about what gets tried and when, explains Flaherty.

"We definitely keep up with the latest trends, but we do it without jumping on bandwagons. A lot of new things don't stand the test of time, and we always want to see the long-term results."

These learners are also teachers.

The practice has a long-term teaching relationship with the Lahey Clinic in Massachusetts, and more recently with Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire. All of the surgeons in the practice are on the faculty of the University of Vermont College of Medicine.

Dr. R. Brannon Claytor joined the practice in 2005 after an intense fellowship in hand, microsurgery and peripheral nerve surgery. With his refined skills, he could have been hired virtually anywhere. That he chose Plastic & Hand Surgical

Associates in Maine says a lot.

Claytor, who recently passed his American Board of Plastic Surgery certification exam, points to Plastic & Hand's national reputation for excellence.

"I was with 200 other plastic surgeons from around the country taking the exam in Arizona. And nearly everybody I met there knew about this practice and would tell me, 'You're lucky. Those are some of the nicest and best people in plastic surgery.' And they're right. The people in this practice are dedicated to taking care of patients. They have no hidden agenda. People know that all over the country."

Flaherty says the practice approach comes down to ensuring patient satisfaction.

"We'll see patients for as long as we need to and do whatever's necessary to make sure they're happy with their results. In the end, we want to have a happy patient."

## Timeline

•1976



Jean J. Labelle, MD

**Dr. Jean J. Labelle, MD,** founds Plastic & Hand. A board-certified plastic, reconstructive and hand surgeon, Dr. Labelle has been a Fellow of the Royal College

of Surgeons (Canada) since 1969 and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons since 1972. He helped train a generation of plastic surgeons, serving as a clinical instructor at Maine Medical Center for the University of Vermont College of Medicine and as teaching faculty of the Lahey Clinic. A native of Canada, Dr. Labelle graduated from Rouyn College and received his medical degree from Ottawa Medical School. Following residencies in general and hand surgery at Grace Hospital in Detroit and in plastic, reconstructive and hand surgery at McGill University in Montreal, Dr. Labelle began practicing in Maine in 1971. He retired in 2000.

•1978



Robert B. Waterhouse, MD

**Robert B. Waterhouse MD,** joins Plastic & Hand. For 28 years of distinction in the practice of plastic surgery, he cared for patients, taught

medical students and served in leadership roles at Maine Medical Center. He has been recognized as a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and the Royal College of Surgeons (Canada), and is certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. Dr. Waterhouse has served on the teaching faculty of the Lahey Clinic and the University of Vermont College of Medicine. He is a member of the board of trustees of Maine Medical Center and a past president of the medical staff. Dr. Waterhouse graduated from Middlebury College and the Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. He completed his general surgery residency at Maine Medical Center and his residency in plastic, reconstructive and hand surgery at McGill University in Montreal. Dr. Waterhouse retired from practice in 2006

•1981

**Richard C. Flaherty, MD,** a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, joins Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates.

•1986

**John A. Attwood, MD,** a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, joins Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates.

•1987

**David G. Fitz, MD,** a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, joins Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates.

**The Western Avenue Day Surgery Center** – an outpatient surgery facility affiliated with Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates – opens its doors. It is one of Maine's first day surgery facilities.

•1996

**Therese K. White, MD,** a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, joins Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates.

Plastic & Hand's Surgery Center becomes one of the first day surgery facilities in Maine to be accredited by the **Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.**

•1999

**Thomas E. Vaughan, MD,** a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery and the American Board of Surgery, joins Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates.

•2000

**Skin Solutions from Plastic & Hand** opens as Maine's only skincare program directed by board-certified plastic surgeons.

•2003



for the day surgery center and a facility for Skin Solutions.

•2005

**R. Brannon Claytor, MD,** certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery and a candidate for membership in the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, joins Plastic & Hand Surgical Associates.

**Plastic & Hand** completes its most recent expansion, providing more recovery room