

## The Bat in the Operating Room

After graduating from Medical School at the University of Minnesota, in 1967 I went on to US Naval Hospital Pensacola Florida for my rotating internship. The hospital was a very old wood structure built on stilts like something out of the 1890's.

One day, as I was assisting one of the staff surgeons, a bat squeezed through a crack in the ceiling and began flying around the operating room. The surgeon shouted to the circulating nurse who grabbed a broom and carefully swatted it down taking care to protect the sterile field around the site of the surgery.

The surgeon yelled. "Send it to the lab." It was placed in a bottle of formalin as if it were a surgical specimen. The pathologist issued a report about an hour later.

"Gross examination reveals a small mammal with membranous wings, length 2 cm, weight 10 grams, wingspan 20 cm. Identified as *Myotis lucifugus* (common name, little brown bat).

Microscopic sections of frozen stained tissue stained with Haematoxylin and eosin as well as giemsa, reveal no sign of rabies and no other pathology.

Cause of death, blunt trauma to the head."

Reported by Lt Ross S. Olson MC USNR, surgical intern