



Building Type: *Medical Clinic/Medical Office*

Project: *Cotswold Medical Building, Charlotte, NC*

Architect: *Heery International Raleigh, NC*

Contractor: *Edifice Charlotte, NC*

Hickman Representative: *Kelley Products Company*

Materials: *Custom Designed Mechanical Equipment Screen. Fabricated from .080" aluminum sheet and .125" extruded tubing. Clear Anodize finish.*

Unusual Metal Architectural Highlight Provides "Signature" for Cotswold Medical Building

Asheville, NC—Wanted: one most unusual special metal architectural highlight that's both functional and aesthetically pleasing to hide mechanical equipment protruding from a flat roof. When Charlotte, NC general contractor Edifice studied this request from Heery International architect H. Joseph Wynn, they referred it to their chosen roofing contractor.

The roofing contractor took a long look, then came back to Edifice with this advice. Talk to W.P. Hickman. So began a fascinating assignment for the Hickman special fabrication team.

"When the roofing contractor took a look at this feature, they decided it was just too complex for their sheet metal capabilities, and suggested that Edifice call us," began Tom Kelley, Kelley Products and Hickman representative. "When I saw what they wanted, I got really excited.

This was a wonderful opportunity to show our creativity and responsiveness, not only to Heery International, but to the architectural community at large."

The resulting creation? A handsome mechanical equipment screen fabricated from .080" aluminum with curved tops on the column covers and a delicate-looking punched lattice work screen. 10" diameter pipes running across the front of the screen visually anchor the columns. The pipes are made of 1/4" thick extruded tubing. To protect the entire structure from the elements, clear anodize provides a beautiful finish.

"The building design was somewhat dictated by site constraints," explained H. Joseph Wynn, AIA, Senior Associate at the Raleigh, NC location of Heery International, PC, one of the country's largest architectural firms. "We had a long, skinny lot and parking requirements, so

W.P. Hickman Company

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we decided on a three-story building due to the limited foot print size. To help cut down on the building's massiveness, we stepped down the third floor. Placing this mechanical screen on top of that helped us create an even more vertical look—this is really a main feature.”

By incorporating the screen, Wynn not only wanted to create a more vertical look for the building, he also wanted to use materials that would pick up other design elements; especially the finish on windows and the curved screen tops which repeat the curve in elevation and plan view. The design's simplicity called for this additional element to give the building its own signature.

Kelley took the architect's drawings and shared them with the Hickman fabrication designers. Some details needed refining to meet fabrication realities, and the team worked closely with Edifice and architect Wynn to address all issues.

“We realized that the folks at Hickman were one of a few, if not the only, people who could actually build the screen,” explained Wynn. “There was a lot of back and forth to get the design right, but we found they could do almost everything we wanted. Hickman really contributed to the creative process. They were helpful—instead of saying it can't be done, they figured out a way to get it done to achieve our desired effect.”

“Completing this project gave us a great sense of accomplishment,” commented Richard Tuttle, National Account Manager for Hickman. “The most interesting part of it was figuring out how to put the pipes on because they had to simulate an arc to fit the design. We ended up creating brackets to hold the pipe. Then each bracket was attached from the outside to the inside, each one attached slightly higher than the previous one, to look like a curve.”

“The large arcs that fit the top of each box are all one piece and are about 6' x 3'. They looked like big canoes in the shop,” recalled Greg Henson, Inside Sales Coordinator for Hickman. “The boxes or columns themselves looked like huge refrigerators, and required either four or six pieces for assembly—each column required 250-300 stainless steel screws! It was really neat to see it all come together, not many metal companies could have done something like this.”

Due to the complex nature of the design, Hickman representatives were present at the installation to assure everything went smoothly.

Wynn reports that the owners are quite pleased with the screen as a major building feature and believe it lends a distinctive quality to the entire building.

“I knew we had the capability to complete



this project because Hickman has a precision manufacturing process and the high tech equipment needed for this kind of creative fabrication. We set our sights on this project, and just figured it out, and we had a lot of fun doing it!” Kelley commented. “I also learned that we can probably come up with a solution to just about anything an architect imagines.”

Heery International is now working with Hickman on another equally unusual project; a series of metal columns placed on the face of a building to look as if they hold up an arched roof.

Whether it's canopies, entrances, archways, or equipment screens, now you have a source for special custom metal projects. With Hickman on your team, you can let your imagination soar.



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