



weet Success

J&B Construction and Services Inc. turns to ultra high reach demolition equipment to take down an old candy factory in Augusta, Ga.



Straying from familiar territory can be a daunting experience, but often trying something new can yield surprisingly good results.

With more than 20 years in the demolition business, Preston and Tony Tutt, the brothers in charge of demolition services for Grovetown, Ga.-based J&B Construction and Services Inc., know the ins and outs of taking a building down. Both are experienced crane and wrecking ball operators—a skill that is becoming increasingly hard to find in the industry. But when confronted with a recent job in a busy section of downtown Augusta, Ga., they knew their trusted wrecking ball would be unwelcome, which led them down the unknown path of controlled demolition with the help of ultra high reach demolition (UHD) equipment provided by Kuhn Equipment of Summerville, S.C.

With UHD equipment on the job, Preston Tutt says his crew completed the demolition in record time—one month—and with record levels of convenience for the city itself. After his experience in Augusta, Tutt considers himself a controlled demolition convert. “It changed the way we tear buildings down,” he says.



The building's proximity to the street meant J&B Construction and Services Inc. had to explore alternative methods of demolition.

To keep the street open and disruptions to the downtown area to a minimum, the Tutt brothers needed a more controlled means of demolishing the old factory. But the decision to go with high-reach equipment wasn't an easy one at first. Tutt spent several months consulting with Mike Schulz of Kuhn trying to come up with the perfect solution to his demolition problem.

“They were more than a little nervous about the rental commitment in terms of dollars and the ‘what if this doesn't work’ scenario,” recalls Schulz. “I just kept reassuring them that it would work and in the end

they were able to demolish this entire building in one month, which was on time and under budget.”

For the actual demolition, Tutt and his crew employed a Komatsu PC450 UHD with a Genesis Demo Pro attachment. A Komatsu PC300 equipped with a Labounty UP50 concrete pulverizer sized up the material once it was on the ground.

The building's location made the job tough to plan

and its construction made it a challenge to actually take down. First of all, when the structure was originally converted from candy factory to courthouse, only the first floor office area was used as the courthouse, Tutt says. Manufacturing had taken place on all five floors, so the crews still had equipment and piping to remove before they could tackle the structure itself.

Furthermore, the equipment had its work cut out of it—demolishing the 20-inch concrete floors with 1-inch rebar throughout that had been built tough enough to hold the heavy candy machines, says Mike Schulz of Kuhn.

Not only did the controlled demolition get the building down in just one month, the crew was able to pull a large percentage of the debris out for recycling, Tutt says. “Only 8 percent of this building went to a landfill,” he says. The rebar, copper piping and other metals were sent to a local scrap yard. The concrete debris was processed by a Rubble Master RM 60 compact crusher, also rented from Kuhn, and recycled onsite as a roadbase material, according to Tutt.

The Tutts were so impressed by the whole controlled demolition and high-reach process, that Preston Tutt says they'll never go back to their old wrecking ball ways.

High reach demo equipment goes to work in Augusta, Ga.



HOW SWEET IT IS

In its original incarnation, the building slated for demolition by J&B Construction and Services Inc. was a Hollingsworth candy factory, a 97,000 square foot building that was five stories high, Tutt says.

When Hollingsworth went out of business in the 1980s, the building was converted into the county bankruptcy court. The city then acquired the property and wanted the building cleared to make room for the new Augusta library.

The building's location—about 18 feet away from the curb and directly across the street from the new courthouse—meant that the company's wrecking ball would have been a possible but extremely unpopular choice. “We would have had to close the street down, so we had to look for some better options,” says Tutt.

JOB STORY

IN CONTROL

Tutt was impressed by the speed and efficiency of using ultra high reach equipment to demolish the building in a more controlled manner. Even though he was taking down the structure piece by piece, the whole process took far less time than he'd first anticipated.

method of demolition with the ultra high reach equipment. "When you're using a wrecking ball, there's no telling where that stuff is going to go," Tutt says. "You're left with this mound of entwined rebar; it's just a mangled mess. This is so much cleaner and neater."

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—Preston Tutt, J&B Construction and Services Inc.

"It's the fastest we've ever gotten a building down," he says, adding that the nature of controlled demolition with an arsenal of attachments allows a contractor to do several things at once. "When you're using a processor, you're accomplishing three things at once—demolishing the building, cutting the rebar and sizing the concrete."

Tutt was also impressed by the more orderly job site that resulted from employing a more controlled

While he had doubts at first about abandoning his wrecking ball, Tutt says the results of the Augusta job have made him a controlled demolition believer. "We've torn down our last building with a wrecking ball," he says. **C&DR**

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