



AWARD SUBMISSION FOR THE 2015 AGC TEXAS “OUTSTANDING CONSTRUCTION AWARD” – MAGNOLIA SILOS

What was once an abandoned, graffiti-covered mill silo is now the number-one tourist destination in Central Texas. Fans and followers of HGTV’s hit show “Fixer Upper,” are coming from all over the world to this formerly trash-filled eyesore, and all thanks to the vision of “Fixer Uppers” Chip and Joanna Gains, and the work by done by Pearson Construction.

The owners’ vision was to maintain the open, rustic charm of the old silos while making them spacious and comfortable enough to practically live in. This presented a bit of a problem. For example, the existing features—which the owners wanted to maintain—introduced unanticipated space issues when planning the windows, but Pearson designers were able to work in harmony with the existing structure to position the windows in just the right locations to make the owners happy.

To better preserve the exterior, Pearson painted the outside with high-quality elastomeric paint, which will provide years of protection for the structure. The painting process proved difficult as well. While washing and painting the exterior, the crew had to provide a lift system to reach the towering silo. It was a three-minute ride to the top of the 85-foot boom.

The crew installed ADA-approved handicap ramps and rails on a 4.5-foot elevation, nearly twice the height of a typical building and completely unthought of when the original structure was designed. The seven-foot-wide ramps provide ample room for patrons to access the facility as they wait for their chance to tour the renovation. Pearson also installed four-story elevators that that provide landings from the barn to the mercantile to the office to the roof. It was the first time Pearson installed an elevator with a dual-opening cab. They laid a foundation on previously dirt floors, and wood over existing train tracks.

Chip even broke a sweat in from of the HGTV camera crew as he helped rake the concrete into position. Joanna had a hand in things, too; she and her husband left palm impressions in the freshly poured cement for a little “Hollywood” commemoration. Their work on the project was featured in season 3 of “Fixer Upper.”



The offices were developed into loft-style working areas. Pearson put up walls for offices and support beams to give employees the cozy feeling the owners wanted. The crew laid turf on the roof and, as always, safety is top of mind. Rails are installed along the perimeter of the roof area with cables instead of steel rods. Additional structural steel beams and columns were engineered to support the load for foot traffic on the rooftop.

Pearson's creativity and attention to detail did not go to waste during this project. The conduits were hand-bent to create a mid-century, postmodern aesthetic throughout the facility. As per the owners' vision, Pearson utilized century-old reclaimed studs, recovered barn tin pressed by forklifts into ceiling tiles, and antique lights throughout the store. The project received tax increment financing from the Waco for beautifying the city. High efficiency LED lighting brought the building up to modern code while keeping the festive atmosphere.

In less than seven months, the 26,000 square-foot silos were completed. Pearson gave the Magnolia Market's owners—who are world-renowned for their discerning eye and attention to detail—exactly what they were looking for, all on-time and in-budget.