



Innovative Tile and Stone
Installation Systems

The Boston W Hotel with Merrimac Tile and Stone Project Spotlight: July 2011



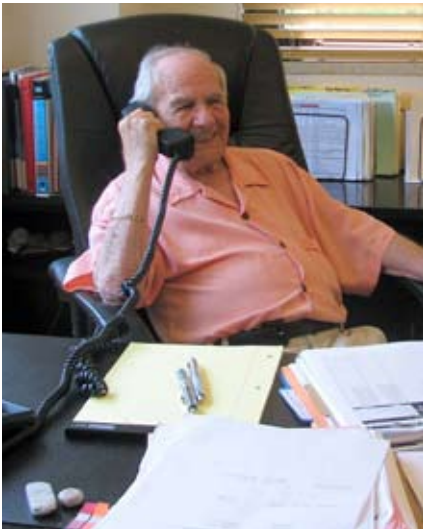
PROJECT:
The W Hotel
Boston and Residences

LOCATION:
Boston, MA

INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM:
Bentel & Bentel
New York City, NY

STONE CONTRACTOR:
Merrimac Tile & Stone, Inc.
Derry, NH

LATICRETE SUPPLIER:
Daltile
Derry, NH



LATICRETE and Merrimac Tile Still Going Strong at the W Boston Hotel and Residences

By Eric Carson

The most recent collaboration involving LATICRETE tile and stone installation materials and Merrimac Tile & Stone was completed just like so many others over the last half century on the job together. This one just happened to be for thousands of square feet of natural stone tiles sprinkled in ever-so lightly with porcelain, metal and glass mosaic tile accents for the new W Boston Hotel and Residences in the Theatre District right where Stuart Street meets Tremont.

The high-profile project itself is evidence of the success the two companies have enjoyed together, a partnership between a pair of family-owned businesses that's been cruising along for 50-plus years with no end in sight. Founded over 61 years ago by the four Indoccio brothers, Merrimac Tile & Stone was one of the very first flooring installation contractors to cease using the traditional mud bed method and embrace LATICRETE innovation. From Derry, New Hampshire, the Indoccio brothers took full advantage of the speed and performance of LATICRETE thin-set adhesive mortar to accelerate growth and expand its reach throughout New England. Frank Indoccio, 89, is the last of the brother team still active day-to-day in the business, but Merrimac Tile & Stone will stay family-run with his son Tom Indoccio now taking over and managing the operation.

The long-standing relationship eventually led both LATICRETE and Merrimac Tile & Stone to 100 Stuart Street, the official address of the 26-story, \$234 million W Boston, the 35th integrated lifestyle destination for the worldwide brand. As the most successful new hotel brand, the W has been expanding in rapid fashion since the original W New York opened in December of 1998. The W has flourished in particular from a design standpoint by remaining true to creating individual, uniquely distinct properties that are highly influenced by the local culture of each location.

For the W Boston, the award-winning interior design firm Bentel & Bentel set out to create a landmark mixed-use destination by incorporating Boston's historic green spaces and widespread use of natural stone in building design. With an impressive open

glass exterior entrance to the main lobby, or what the W refers to as the "Living Room," even the casual passerby can catch a glimpse of the beautiful stone work completed by Merrimac Tile & Stone with a complete range of products manufactured by LATICRETE.

"We use LATICRETE products all the time," said Paul Bentel, principal at Bentel & Bentel in New York City. "We love the materials. Whenever we do have projects that use tile or stone we use LATICRETE for the high performance, the durability of the thin-sets they produce, and the many different colors of grout we can specify to help carry the interior design. We've been in this business for 20 years now and LATICRETE is a very common specification for us."

As one of the most reputable commercial flooring contractors in and around the Hub, Merrimac Tile & Stone used the very same LATICRETE® products they train their apprentice with on every level of the W Boston. In a comfort zone with LATICRETE materials and methods, Ken Sasso led the Merrimac Tile & Stone crew throughout each phase of the W Boston project that prominently featured locally quarried stone on both the floors and walls. In different sizes and finish types, the local stone was the anchor for a modernistic design program that includes steel artwork, falling water and new-age lighting in just the main lobby alone.

Given the varying sizes and most importantly the differences in thickness of the local stone tiles, Sasso's crew worked with LATICRETE® 220 Marble & Granite Mortar on floors to especially avoid any issues with lippage between the tiles. For the 6" x 24" (15x61cm) tapestry-style stone base, Merrimac Tile & Stone used LATICRETE 317 fortified with LATICRETE 333 Super Flexible Additive to take advantage of the resulting thin-set adhesives superior non-sag performance and proven strength.

"With LATICRETE, it's a lot about the performance of the products, but it's also about the people," said Sasso, the hard surfaces division manager at Merrimac Tile & Stone. "In my position I work mostly with architects and interior designers, so if LATICRETE isn't in the original spec we will normally switch it up no problem.

It makes all the sense in the world. There's a comfort level there for us since we always use LATICRETE. It's always best to go with single-source supply and we can get everything we need from LATICRETE."

The complete interior design program from Bentel & Bentel included using the same tapestry stone in several different sizes, formats and thicknesses for all the specialty trim pieces in the main lobby. Merrimac Tile & Stone used LATAPOXY® 300 Stone Adhesive to install the 2" thick treads and landings, 3/4" thick risers and stringers and 1 1/4" thick tapestry stone to even surface radiators and countertops. The specification of LATAPOXY 300 Stone Adhesive was to benefit from the enhanced resistance to staining and chemicals in an easy to work with thin-set that's ideal for installing moisture sensitive and non-vitreous stone tiles.

For one quick yet important design element, LATAPOXY 310 Stone Adhesive also made a brief cameo at Descent, the exclusive underground bar that's accessed from the main lobby of the W Boston. With an old school, speakeasy vibe, the Descent lounge features a 3/4" thick polished tapestry stone fascia that runs the full length of the bar. Merrimac Tile & Stone used LATAPOXY 310 Stone Adhesive for this particular application because the high-strength construction epoxy is specifically engineered for the spot-bonding method of tile and stone in vertical applications.

In nearly every area throughout the new W Boston including Descent, the porcelain tiles for the leather-like, acoustical flooring of the upscale Market restaurant, all public restrooms, the exercise locker rooms and all back of the house tiling, Merrimac Tile & Stone used LATICRETE® 1500 Sanded Grout fortified with LATICRETE 1776 Grout Enhancer. Tile grout manufactured by LATICRETE is specially blended to be uniform in color consistency, and LATICRETE 1500 Sanded Grout when mixed with LATICRETE 1776 Grout Enhancer produces dense, colorfast grout joints that inhibit the growth of stain-causing mold and mildew with Microban® antimicrobial protection. LATICRETE 1500 Sanded Grout is a premium, factory-prepared tile grout designed for use with joint widths ranging from 1/16" (1.5 mm) up to 1/2" (12 mm), that can be mixed with just water or with LATICRETE 1776 Grout Enhancer for improved performance.

Merrimac Tile & Stone was supplied with LATICRETE® products by Daltille conveniently located right there

in Derry, NH, for a comprehensive hotel and luxury condo design program that also required the use of LATICRETE 1600 Unsanded Grout. For all the same benefits, LATICRETE 1600 Unsanded Grout was fortified with LATICRETE 1776 Grout Enhancer to install polished natural stone tiles using 1/8" (3 mm) grout joint widths. In the 235 guest rooms that occupy the first 15 floors of the W Boston, Bentel & Bentel specified beautiful Chinese Semzio stone in various sizes for the bathroom flooring with polished Bianco Sardo stone tiles for the flooring in the common areas. The polished natural stone in each application was used in various formats including 6" x 6" (15x15cm), 6" x 24" (15x61cm) and 12" x 24" (30x61cm), with 4" x 24" (10x61cm) base cove pieces. The wall tiles throughout the common areas of each guest room were completed with 8" x 24" (20x61cm) polished Bianco Sardo tiles. Consistent with the entire LATICRETE specification used by Merrimac Tile & Stone at the W Boston, the natural stone floor tiles were set with LATICRETE 220 Marble & Granite Mortar, and the wall tiles were installed primarily with LATICRETE 317 fortified by LATICRETE 333 Super Flexible Additive.

In the end, the W Boston Hotel and Residences opened to great fanfare and with its grand, open glass entrance, the powerful natural stone does indeed seem right at home on the edge of where the sprawling Boston Commons gives way to the hustling Theatre District. The W Boston Hotel was in every way a "big-time" project at a pivotal time, and there was no question the final result simply had to be stunning.

This is all news, but so too is the story of how Merrimac Tile & Stone and LATICRETE have enjoyed 50-plus years of continued growth and success together. The story gets even more poignant when the times are considered along with the groundbreaking new materials that tied them together. Through it all, the partnership between LATICRETE and Merrimac Tile & Stone has always been right there offering a strong testimonial to business done right.





By Eric Carson

Frank Indoccio was just 34 back in 1956 when the tile installation company he started with his three brothers came across a chemical engineer in Connecticut that had just introduced latex to traditional portland cement to create a thin, flexible, lightweight adhesive he marketed as LATICRETE.

Already with a full six years in operation as Merrimac Tile & Stone, the four Indoccio brothers had the wisdom to embrace what at the time was an entirely new material and method. They never looked back. With the benefit of history, now it's quite obvious they made the right decision to switch to the LATICRETE® products they still use to this day. But at the time, it couldn't have been easy to suddenly make such a dramatic change to how the entire company had learned the trade. But that's exactly what Merrimac Tile & Stone did to begin a 55-plus year partnership between the still family-run businesses that have each in their own way captured the essence of the American dream.

LATICRETE, the innovative manufacturer of a new product that eliminated the arduous task of installing tile in heavy, thick floating mud beds of cement and sand, and Merrimac Tile & Stone as the dedicated end-user equally vested in quality, performance and productivity. It was never just one company or the other in any way, but rather the commitment of both to doing business the right way that's helped the two family-run companies find continued success.

The Last Indoccio Brother Still on the Job Remains at the Heart of Merrimac Tile & Stone

Through all this time, LATICRETE has stayed true to the ideals the company was founded on, and flourished under current co-owners David Rothberg and Henry B. Rothberg to become recognized global leaders in its field. For Merrimac Tile & Stone a similar storyline played out in Derry, New Hampshire, as the Indoccio brothers grew their business into one of the most respected commercial flooring contractors in Greater Boston. Incredibly, Frank, now 89, still heads off to work every single day at Merrimac Tile & Stone. In his current role as estimator, he's the last of the Indoccio brothers still actively involved day-to-day in the business. The rest of his three brothers have now retired from the company they started with just a single trailer in the aftermath of World War II.

"We're big fans of LATICRETE here," said Frank Indoccio. "We've been using LATICRETE products since their inception. That was when they introduced the thin-set and made the floating mud job a thing of the past. With LATICRETE thin-set we could accomplish more with less people, and it greatly reduced the time it took to train an apprentice to be a journeyman. That's when we really took off and started to grow."

With his three brothers retired and Frank as an estimator, the company will remain a family-run business like LATICRETE has for the foreseeable future as the second generation has come of age. Frank's oldest son Tom Indoccio has stepped in to handle operations for the company he grew up very close to, managing the team with the same values he absorbed on the job for so many years with family at Merrimac Tile & Stone.