

BUILT FROM STONE

THE WESTERLY GRANITE STORY

VOLUME
35 of 52

WORDLESS STORIES

If a two-dimensional picture is worth a thousand words, then a three-dimensional statue may be worth a million. Hundreds of lifelike statues, representing the greatest talent and highest achievement of the Westerly granite industry, wordlessly tell stories of heroism, devotion, patriotism, motherhood, hope, and faith.

Linda Smith Chaffee

From a distance, most statues of soldiers indicate, primarily by their stance, values of strength, bravery, and determination. Up close, however, the facial expressions may reveal more vulnerability or tell a different story. What do you see in the face of this soldier on the Civil War memorial to Ohio soldiers on Missionary Ridge in Chattanooga, TN?



At right: "Faith," the Sanders Monument in Evanston, IL, carved by James Pollette. Far right: "Hope," Austin monument in Syracuse, NY, carved by C. A. Pinardi



"Faith" and "Hope" were standard models at the Smith Granite Company and were used frequently to help the bereaved declare their faith that their departed loved one was experiencing eternal life. Both models featured graceful hands and artfully draped garments. In the model of Hope, a woman held an anchor which could be plain, attached to a rope, or decorated with a garland of flowers. The degree of decoration would, of course, affect the price of the monument. Statues of Faith were symbolized by a woman holding a cross which could also be plain or decorated. Sometimes these figures were pointing upward, symbolically showing the way to the heaven.



Angels, with or without wings, were popular monuments because they symbolized the loved one's ascension to heaven. Here we see essentially the same statue, one with wings and one without. The Cable (Poughkeepsie, NY) was created in 1892 for \$2405 without wings and with a single base. The Pomeroy (Utica, NY) was created in 1890 for \$4000 with wings and two bases.



The stance of the flag bearer on the 10th Wisconsin Infantry monument in Chickamauga National Military Park is confident, ready to defend the flag at all costs. Sculptor was Edward Pausch and statue cutter was Joseph Bedford of the Smith Granite Company in Westerly.

All photos courtesy BSH Museum

TODAY IN GRANITE

Granite has many life cycles. Pictured below is "used granite" which was quarried as many as 100 years ago for street curbing. When streets are rebuilt, old curbing is replaced with new curbing — cut on automated machinery to exacting dimensions to meet today's standards.

The old curbing now takes on a new life as used granite, which has a patina only time can bestow on stone. Its many uses include landscape edging, steps, stepping stones, pathways, driveways, walls and more, all with the unique look that only age can add. Used granite can also be cut to become granite veneer, and because of the patina and many colors it is unique and unlike anything fresh from a quarry. United Builders Supply, Co. Inc. offers a large selection of used granite, used granite curbing and antique granite veneer."

Pictured here is antique granite at the UBS Storage Yard at Mountain Avenue in Westerly.



WESTERLY GRANITE



BSH Museum

All in the Family

"The beautiful Richardson stone at River Bend Cemetery stands out as an example of the workmanship produced in Westerly's quarries and sheds. Tradition has it that the woman is Mrs. Bertha Barr, wife of the sculptor Robert Barr. The boy is the late Robert F. Barr, who died in 1937. The statue was cut by Columbus Zerbarini." (*The Story of Granite* by Stephen W. Macomber, 1958)

STONE CHIPS

On lifting stones with chains: "I was chaining stones to put over so the overhead crane could put them in the car and take to the stone crusher. I was pickin' up a couple at a time. That big derrick, of course, that big derrick would pick up 50, 60 ton. Sullivan comes down and he says, 'Mr. Kenney, you can pick up more than two of them at a time.' I never said anything. Handed him the chains, never said a word. So he chained seven or eight. When he got through, he had one. I says, 'Well, you have done real good, old boy!' He went right up to the office!"

John (b. 1909) or Fred (b. 1920) Kenney in an interview in 1993.

YOUR PART IN HISTORY

Share your stories, photos and artifacts. Earlier volumes of "Built From Stone" are now on the museum's website; www.babcocksmithhouse.org.

Please call us at 401-377-8490 or 401-322-0452 or e-mail us at builtfromstone@gmail.com.

COMING

NEXT WEEK

The Mystery of a Small Quarry

PEOPLE WHO BUILT WESTERLY DOCUMENTED GRANITE WORKERS

Murphey, Michael	Myllymaki, K.	Neville, Partick J.
Murphy, C. J.	Nagale, John	Newall, David McG.
Murphy, Conrad	Nagle, John	Newall, Joseph
Murphy, Cornelius	Nalbandian, Ron	Newton, George S.
Murph, Dennis	Negretti, John	Nichols, John D.
Murphy, John	Nelson, Alexander	Nichols, William H.
Murphy, John M.	Nelson, Axel	Nisler, George H.
Murphy, Joseph	Nelville, Michael	Norman, James
Murphy, Michael	Nester, Patrick	Norman, G. W.
Murray, Alexander	Neville, Michael	Norman, George W.
Murray, John	Neville, Michael J.	Norman, Ira
Murry, Daniel	Neville, Patrick	Norman, William



Babcock-Smith
House Museum

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