









Woodbury, Black Onyx trim (exterior); Bethel White columns with Prairie Green pavers; Danby Marble trim (interior); Black Onyx planter; Oconee bathroom counters.

Winter 1999

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Sunrise breaks over a hill and casts shadows in *Cutler Cemetery* in East Montpelier. Photo: Patrick Timothy Mullikin



B A R R E

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Through HELL & HIGH Water

IN BARRE, VERMONT

The Flood Of 1927

By Patricia W. Belding Photos Courtesy Aldrich Public Library

hen the 50th anniversary of the Flood of 1927 prompted people to gather for "Remembering-the-flood" meetings, Patricia Belding, retired librarian and writer from Barre, decided she would start her own collection of reminiscences of longtime Barre residents. These interviews served as the basis of her new book, Through Hell and High Water In Barre, Vermont: 25 Evewitness Accounts of the Flood of '27, Potash Brook Publishing, Barre, Vermont (802 476-8732). Of the 25 men and women she interviewed during February and March of that snowy winter in 1977, only two-Dorothy Billi and Rose Sassone-remained in 1998 to mark the flood's 71st anniversary and the publication of her book.

On November 3 and 4, 1927, Thursday and Friday, the Winooski River spilled over its banks bringing death and damage to the Winooski River Valley, of which Barre is a part. Besides the 84 who died, 9,000 were left homeless, nearly 275 houses were destroyed, 1,250 bridges were washed away or undermined, and



Lieutenant Governor S. Hollister Jackson drowning victim

hundreds of miles of railroad track were ruined in Vermont and New England.

Barre's deaths, which occurred on Thursday, included the state's lieutenant governor, S. Hollister Jackson, 51, who drowned in the Potash Brook, a normally-quiet stream shown raging in the photo at top left. A lawyer and prominent Barre citizen, Jackson was considered, at the time, the leading Republican candidate for governor.

Two young men, Gerald Brock, 33, and Ralph Winter, 30, lost their lives when a wall collapsed while they were helping remove merchandise from the basement of the Rogers Shoe store where Homer Fitts is today on North Main Street (photo opposite). And four young children, the sons of Mr. & Mrs. Fred Thomas, drowned when a rowboat capsized during a rescue attempt on Webster Avenue (present site of the Wall Street Complex in the city's south end). They were Ralph, 11, Clyde, 9, Dean, 7, and Carroll, 5. All of the bodies, except for that of the youngest of the Thomas boys, were retrieved on Friday. Carroll's body was never found.

When Brock and Winter drowned Thursday afternoon, Ralph "Gene" Pierce was there. He remembered, "When that wall broke, the water gushed in there....The shelving being loose and laden with stuff came over onto 'em and held 'em down—because that's where they found the bodies. They were both good swimmers, but they were trapped." It took 36 hours for the fire department to lower the water level in order to remove the bodies.

Jackson's drowning occurred in the early evening. He had driven his roadster into a ditch on Nelson Street





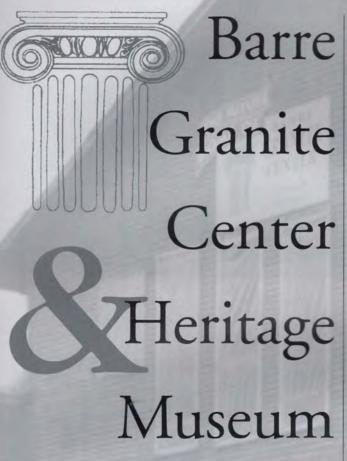


and was sitting in the car when Eldon Heath and his brother Elwin, along with two other young men came down the road, having just jumped the swollen Potash Brook. They agreed to help Jackson get back to his house, located on Tremont Street just beyond the washout. Eldon recalled, "My brother and the other two fellows jumped the brook again. I took his hand. We told him to jump and they'd grab him on the other side. Well, he never waited, he just walked right into the brook. I slid

down....I caught a little bush, a fir tree, I hung on and then came up....Oh, I knew he'd gone, and we felt so bad, but he was insistent on going."

The four Thomas boys drowned Thursday night on a street where 13 small, 1-1/2-story houses were located. Helge Carlson, a granite worker, and Sheriff Sarsfield McNulty attempted to rescue the boys in a rowboat which was no match for the Stevens Branch of the Winooski River that had inundated the avenue. Harley DeCoteau recalled in his dramatic

interview, "When the boat tipped, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas went and sat down side by side on the bed....They didn't say one word, not one word." Carlson's account was equally exciting as he described how he grabbed two of the boys when the boat tipped, but had to let them go when he nearly lost his own life. He was carried down the river in the darkness, ending up on a granite-shed roof where he stayed for 12 hours until found the next morning.



Grows

hat some people discounted as a mere pipedream, dreamt collectively a few years ago at the Barre Community Economic Retreat, continues to materialize day by day.

The Jones Brothers building, purchased Oct.10, 1997 through generous contributions of area banks, businesses, and individuals, support from the Vermont Legislature and financing from the Granite Savings Bank & Trust Company and Northfield Savings Bank, has taken on a new life: Extensive work on the roof and exterior walls have stabilized the building for at least two years.

This past September, a Barre Granite Festival brought more than 400 people to the site of the future museum and helped raise more than \$15,000 in cash and in-kind donations. Senator Patrick Leahy was successful in obtaining a \$600,000 federal

appropriation to be used for acquistition and development.

On January 20 a Master Planning Public Forum was held at the Barre Opera House in Barre with an outstanding team of experts in: exhibit design, architecture, historic preservation, archaeology, business planning, education, landscape architecture and engineering. And plans are underway later this year for a major capital campaign, according to William D. McMeekin, Chairman. The museum is also looking for donations of the items listed below. Call Marcia Davis, executive director, at 802-476-4605, or write to P.O. Box 282 Barre, VT 05641.

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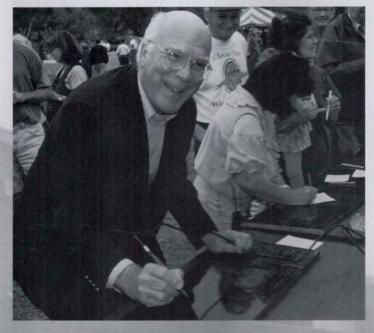
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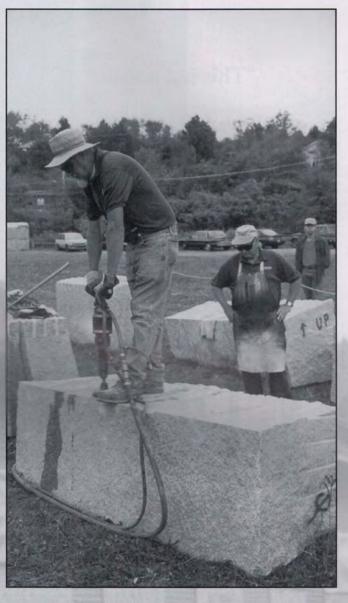
Photographs Helmets

> Miscellaneous Hoses









Barre Granite Festival September 12, 1998

Clockwise, from top left: Senator Patrick
Leahy D-Vt., etches his name on a black
granite plaque; Allen Coburn drills core holes
during a demonstration on granite splitting;
George Kurjanowicz, a voting member of the Barre
Granite Association, sculpts a piece of Barre Gray
granite; a couple tries their hand on identifying
granites of the world.

5

"This is a real-life
Private Ryan story,
right here
in Lyndurst."

Saying Lexander E WILLIAM 2 WILLIAM

If it's true that art imitates life, then the saga of the Lewandowski brothers proves that art may also imitate death. Specifically, the parallels between the real life story of three brothers -- William, 27, Walter, 24, and Alex, 19 -- who died in action during World War II, and the recent Spielberg film, *Saving Private Ryan*.

All three brothers had grown up in Lyndhurst, N.J., and each was killed within an 18-month period. According to Amvets Post Commander John A. Scalese, who presided over the November 1, 1998, dedication ceremonies of a black granite memorial bearing the etched images of all three Lewandowskis. "A fourth brother, Ted Lewandowski, was on his way to basic training in 1945 when two military police officers pulled him off the train and told him to go home."



Ted
Lewandowski
at the
dedication of
the memorial
honoring his
three fallen
brothers

William Lewandowski had been killed while flying a bombing mission in Germany, the third brother to die for his country (Walter Lewandowski died on the first day of the U.S. invasion of Guam. Alex was killed in action in Germany near the Roer River.) "Two boys are buried in Europe, and one in the Pacific, and this is a way of bringing them home," Scalese said.

"This is a real Private Ryan story right here in Lyndhurst," said Philip Spanola the State's Amvets commander. Spanola was the commander of the local post when the idea originated seven years ago to erect a memorial to the brothers.

The granite memorial, manufactured by Adams Granite Company for Thomas Meloro & Son, North Arlington, rests next to an actual M-60 tank in the parking lot of the Amvets Post 20, Lewandowski Hall in Lyndhurst.

"I know the people on this committee worked very hard on getting this done," said Ted Lewandowski, 82, at the November 1 ceremony, which drew hundreds of people. "They (the committee) deserve so much thanks."

NEWS AROUND TOWN

SEE SAW

with the new at Montpelier Granite Works in 1998. "It did not hurt our feelings to see our 60-year-old saw go out the door," says Plant Manager Doug Mureta. "We are now operating at full capacity with our new automated saw. Margins, special cuts and custom sawing is a pleasure with the accuracy of this diamond-tipped saw."

The 75-year-old company's new saw cuts stone accurately and quickly, using a laser light instead of the old fashioned "by-the-eye" method. "It's an unbelievable difference," he says.

Doug Mureta, plant manager, makes final adjustments to the blade on his firm's new saw. The saw replaces one that had been in use since 1938.

AN ETCHER SKETCH

RANITE INDUSTRIES OF VERMONT has converted a 1,500-square foot building located next to its main facility into an etching studio. The new studio makes it possible for all five of the company's regular etchers to work on jobs at the same time. The building had been leased to a local diamond saw company for many years.

"We have some of the most talented etchers in the industry, and they all agree that the new environment provides the ultimate in comfortable and efficient working conditions," says president Jeff Martell. "The space is well lit, quieter than the main plant, and warmer, particularly during the typical Vermont winter." While high-quality, hand-etched portraits, scenes, and custom art work of all kinds have been available from GIV for years, the new studio allows for faster



From left: Etchers Genny Hagopian, Philip Hagopian, Jean Lennox and Anita Lucero in their new quarters. (Not shown, Kevin Neilson)



turnaround of both the etchings and the full size drawings that each etcher produces.

In the past, there was limited drafting space available to etchers within the main plant — especially since last February when Granite Industries of Vermont purchased Barre Drafting Company, and brought former owners Armand, Dana and David Morissette on board as full-time, in-house draftsmen.

The new etching studio, however, is equipped with two drafting rooms, one with a drafting table with all the accessories, and the other with a huge light table for the five etchers to use exclusively.

NEWS AROUND TOWN



IN MEMORIAM

JOHN F. CULLIS, 68, OWNERoperator of Cullis Memorials in Brookhaven, Pa., and a long time Barre granite representative, died June 22 at his home in Aston, Pa. He was a 1948 graduate of Chester High School and a 1952 graduate of Bethany College. Along with his brothers, George and

Norman, John was a granite representative and monument designer who enjoyed traveling and reading. Most recently, he worked with his daughter, Mary Elizabeth Cullis, designing memorials. He was an associate member of the Monument Builders of North America, member of Chester Lodge No. 236, F&AM and member of



Sigma Nu fraternity. Surviving are his wife of 13 years, Kathleen L. Churchville Cullis, his daughter and his brothers.

BGA HOLIDAY CHEER

Association -- some old, some new, and some newly reunited with the BGA - gathered at the Barre Elks' Lodge on December 12, 1998, for the Association's annual holiday party. According to Gary Watson, BGA manager of member services, who has overseen some 12 annual parties, this year's gathering was one of the better attended. Following the dinner, members and their guests danced well into the night to the music of the Abair Brothers, a popular band that has performed previously at BGA events.

From left: Holiday Party-goers Skip Poczobut, an unidentified guest, David LaCroix, Sue Poczobut, Nancy LaCroix and Nancy Martell.



NEWS AROUND TOWN

ADAMS TURNS 65

A DAMS GRANITE COMPANY OPENED its door for business in 1934, a year when most businesses were padlocking theirs.

In the 65 years that have followed since its founder, Adam Podskalny, began the monument business, the Barre company has emerged as one of the granite industry's leaders — earning a reputation for its one-of-a-kind, custom monuments, its duplicate work and its hand-carved roses.

During the fifties, sixties and seventies, Elgio Zorzi, Podskalny's nephew, owned and operated the firm. In 1984, the company entered the newest chapter of

From left: Kerry Zorzi, owner, Rich Tousignant, sales representative, Carol Cecchini, office manager, and Joyce LaRose, administration and sales its history when Elgio's son, Kerry, a certified public accountant, decided to enter the monument business and purchased the company from his father. After six highly productive years, Kerry concluded that the plant that served his father and great-uncle so well had finally reached its full capacity, and he decided it was time to build a modern facility. Construction on a new 13,600-square foot building in Barre Town's Wilson Industrial Park began in July 1991 ended in February 1992.

The plant was designed by Kerry and his foreman Armand Maurice, while Carole Cecchini, office manager of 44 years, and Joyce LaRose, administration and sales, helped with the office design.

The result has been seven years of top monumental production from one of the Barre Granite Association's oldest and most respected firms.



Montpelier Granite Works sports a new sign, as part of its extensive exterior facelift that begin in 1998 to help keep heat inside the building.

Windows 98

ontpelier Granite Company is getting a full facelift on the outside —to benefit the working environment inside.

"We have put in new windows and rigid insulation to keep the heat inside and added Galvalume steel siding over the old painted clapboard to spruce things up a little," says owner Joe Mureta.

"With the building being so old, we would like to give thanks to our friends at Groleau Construction in Barre for doing a dynamite job."

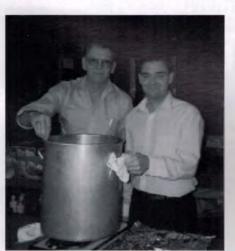


NEWS AROUND



OH, DEER!

OULEAU GRANITE COMPANY, WHO returned recently to the BGA fold, held its 10th annual vension stew feed December 18 — the day prior to the industry's annual winter shutdown.



YANKEE INGENUITY

HE BARRE GRANITE INDUSTRY WAS THE subject of a feature story in the November 1998 issue of Yankee magazine, New England's highly revered publication.

The article entitled "Rock of Ages," cowritten by Wayne Worcester with photography by Viviane Moos and historical photographs courtesy of Aldrich Public Library, traces the development of the industry in Barre, and delves into the current state of the industry. It includes interviews with local sculptors and manufacturers, including Frank Gaylord, who arrived in Barre 40 years ago from West Virginia, and Giuliano Cecchinelli, who talks about the past masters whose



"The meal includes polenta, salad, butter and rolls and is the sales staff's way of saying thanks to the production crew for getting the work done and in getting the finished product out the door and to our great office crew," says Bud Smith, who has prepared and served hundreds of gallons of his famous stew over the years. Son Greg, also Rouleau salesman, is taking over as the event's organizer in 2000. His Italian stew recipe remains a Smith family secret.

Far left, from left: Chef Bud Smith and his son, Greg, man the stewpot at the annual vension feed as plant and office personnel enjoy the feast.



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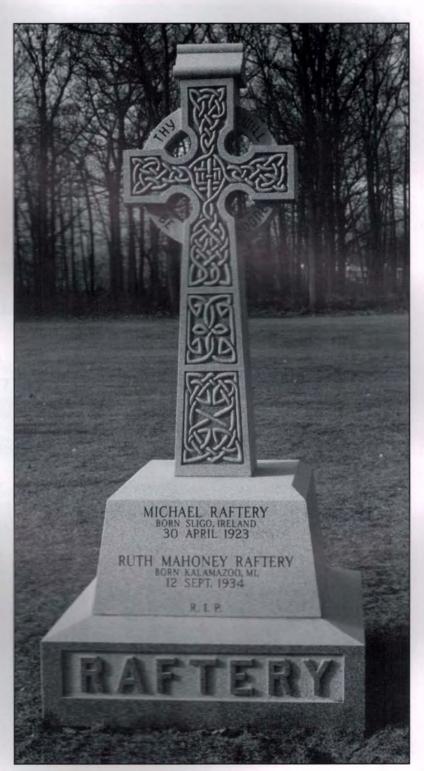
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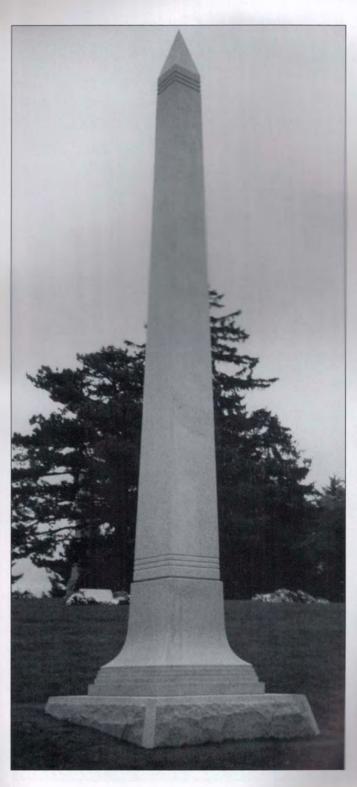
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Celtic Cross
& Two Bases
Overall Height: 9-8
Ledger: 6-6 x 2-10 x 0-8



LaCross
Memorials,
Inc.
For
Jones
Monument
Company
Port
Huron,
Mich.

Medium Barre Gray Celtic Cross, Cap & Two Bases Overall Height: 8-2







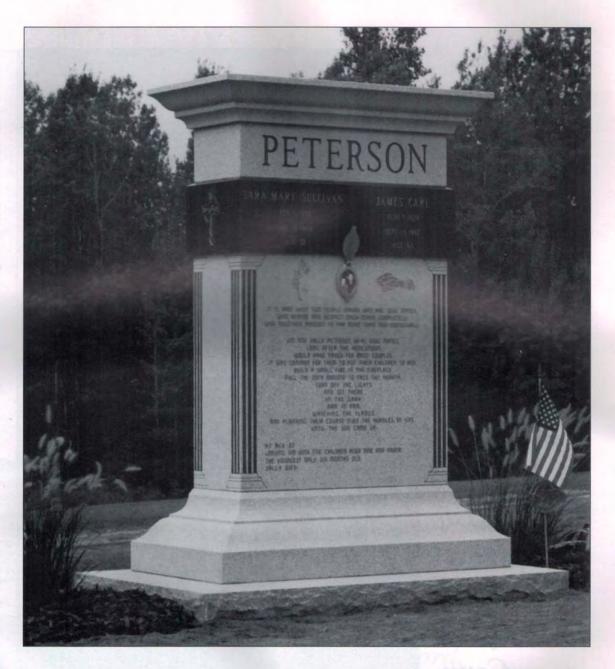
Granite
Industries
Of
Vermont,
Inc.
For
Beij,
Williams
& Zito
Hartford,
Conn.

Barre Gray Obelisk, All Hand-Axed Height: 22-0

Gandin
Brothers,
Inc.
For
Lupinacci
Memorials
Stamford,
Conn.
Impala Black

Impala Black Obelisk, All Polished Height: 10-0





Pepin Granite Company For Clicko, Inc., Erie, Penn.

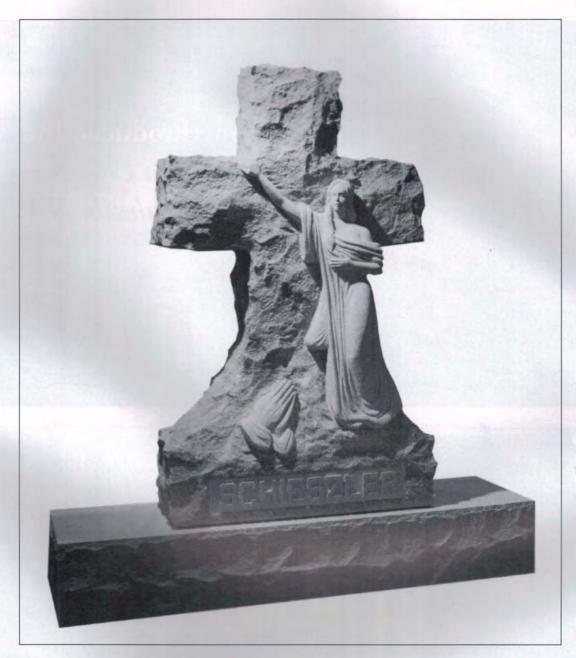
BARRE GUILD

Steeled Select Barre & Polished Jet Black Six-Piece Monument: 4-10 x 2-8 x 6-7

BARRE

Steeled Select Barre Base: 6-0 x 3-10 x 0-8

Polished & Steeled Select Barre Bench: 3-4 x 1-2 x 1-6



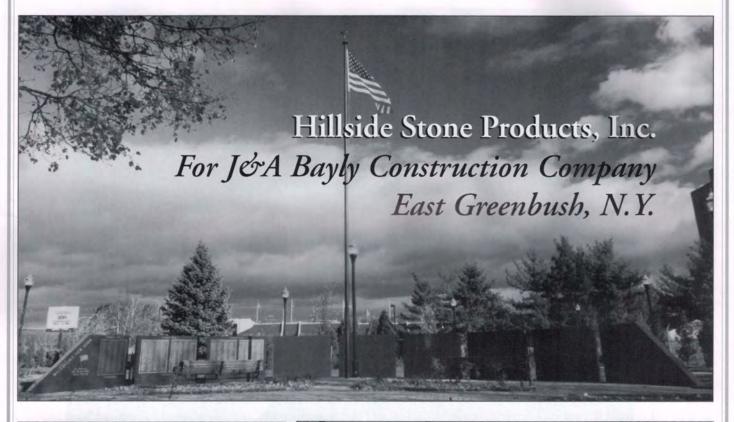
Peerless Granite Company For Mark Nierenhausen Granite, Cold Spring, Minn.

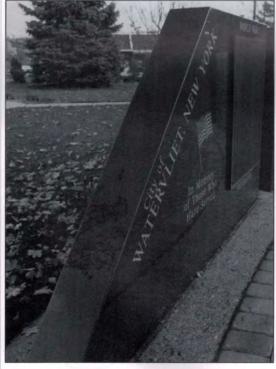
Barre Cross: 4-0 x 1-8 x 6-10

Base: 7-6 x 2-0 x 0-10

Rock Work: Jacques Boudreault • Sculptor: Dante Rossi









Watervliet (N.Y.) Veterans Memoiral, Impala Granite

Montpelier Granite Works For W.F. Benedict & Son Middletown, N.Y.

Medium Barre custom-sawed monument. Overall size: 5-0



I just received the Fall issue of Barre Life and I had to say how much I like this issue! For the first time in a long time this issue was interesting and exciting to read. Please keep the new format and give us more of the same in the future.

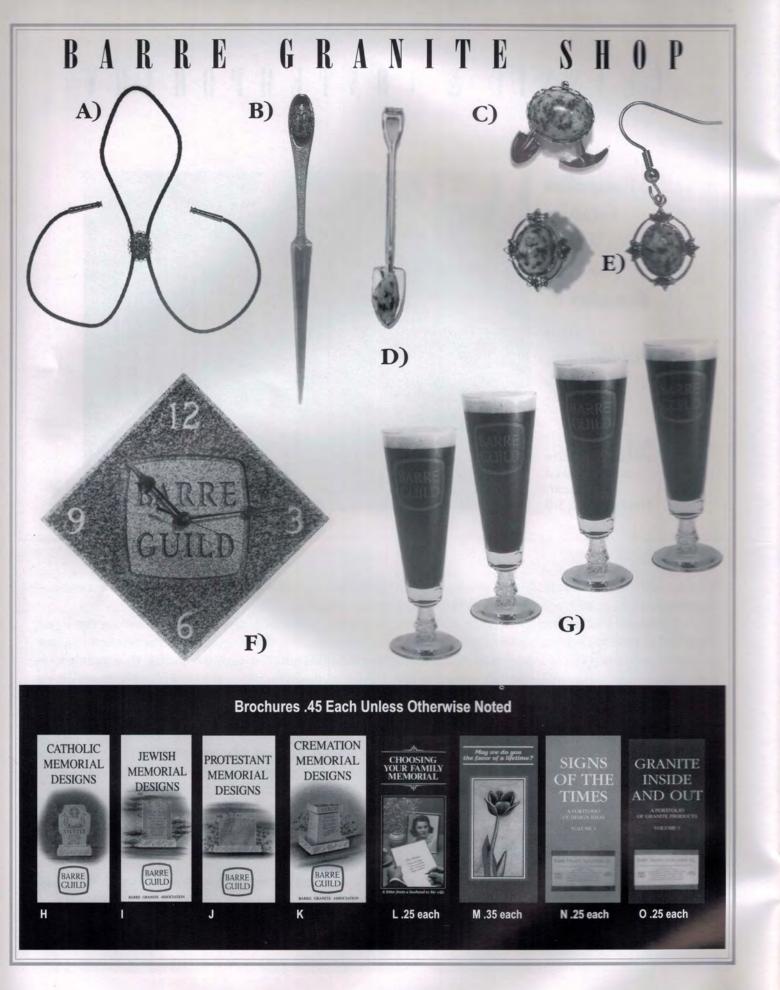
I am pleased to see that things are coming around in Barre. The BGA finally seems like it is heading in the right direction. Here at Gerry Granite Works we have for a long time considered ourselves to be artisans. In this issue, instead of being one big advertisement for the big glossy production-line companies, I get the feeling that the old fashioned skill and craftsmanship is still up there, as it should be. There is a niche for the smaller companies, and you are on the right track in presenting to your readers exactly who you folks are and why we should be interested in you. It all comes down to stonecarving skills and craftsmanship. Almost all of my customers want to know who exactly is making their stone, what that person is like, and what their skills are. It does matter to the buying public, especially since selecting and placing the monument is such a major part of grieving. If customers are only presented with one option, namely having to pick from production companies with no feeling of an identifiable stone carver, then they are just going to consider the monument to be a necessary item and shop for price. But, if that same customer sees and feels the individual craftsmanship, feels a bond with its maker, then the customer views the stone with his emotions, they are not just buying an item, they are placing something permanent in the cemetery that is the last personal gift they can give to the person they lost.

This is in fact true, they are purchasing us and our craftsmanship along with that stone. So, if we all want to insure our future we have to keep our sight tuned in to what got us here in the first place, our history of skill and craftsmanship. We all go to Wal-Mart to shop for the lowest price if we want an item and it's going to be the same item no matter where you go. But if we're looking for something special then we seek out the best source for that special item, and we are willing to pay a fair and honest price for it.

So, please keep turning out the stories of who you are and what you do, and why we should be interested. Feature the small shops, the artists, and craftsmen, what they're doing, and how they're doing it. Everything in life goes full circle, and it's come around again to where Barre has to reinvent itself by going back to its beginnings.

Keep up the good work,

Rebecca A. Gerry, Proprietor - Gerry Granite Works, Gardner, Mass.



BARRE GRANITE SHOP



P. The Story of Granite .25 each



Q. Barre Granite Heritage \$4.95

- A. Bolo tie with leather-look cord, \$15
- B. Letter opener, \$15
- C. Pick and shovel granite tie pin, \$5
- D. Shovel granite tie clip, \$5
- E. Leaf-mount granite earring set with either surgical steel French hooks or posts (specify on order form), \$12.
- F. 8" x 8" Barre Gray granite clock, \$40
- G. Set of 4 BGA Pilsner glasses, \$20

Other Publications

R. What Every Cemeterian Needs to Know About Barre Gray Granite Memorials, \$4.95 (All jewelry items are rhodium-plated, with a cabochon of Barre Gray granite)

Color Posters

S. How to Customize Barre Memorials, \$1

Videotapes (\$10 each, 5 for \$40)

- T. New Technology in Barre
- U. Artistry in Granite
- V. Quarrying and Manufacturing
- W. The Story of the Barre Granite Industry
- X. The Stone Whistle: Tour and explanation of the Barre granite industry, with John Forsythe.

tem Letter	Product Description	Price Each	Quantity	Total
Free		Me	rchandise Total	
Free! Barre Guild window decals. Specify quantity on order form	Shipping Charges Orders to \$ 15.00: add \$ 4.50 \$15.01 to \$ 50.00: add \$ 6.50 \$50.01 to \$100.00: add \$ 7.50 Over \$101.01: add \$11.00	Add 5% sales tax on Vermont orders		
		Add Shipping Charges		
		TOTAL		

Write, Call, FAX: Barre Granite Association, P.O. Box 481, Barre, VT 05641 • 802-476-4131 • FAX 802-476-4765

Name	Payment Method:
Company	□Visa □MasterCard □Check/ Money Order
Address	Card Number
City	Expires/
StateZip	Signature
Phone	FAX:

FINAL WORDS



DESTINATION: DEAD LETTER OFFICE

his full-size Barre Gray granite mailbox was originally part of the Barre Centennial Sculpture Project held in July 1995. It resurfaced recently in the capital city of Montpelier as part of an exhibit of the works of area sculptors and artisans. Not visible in this photo is an envelope from the sculptor that is addressed to the *Eternal Revenue Service*.

Rouleau Granite Company For D. Wesche Monuments, Center Moriches, N.Y.

Twa Flight 800
Mountain Rose
Memorial. The center
piece, dedicated on the
first anniversary of the
crash, features an
etched panel with a
design by a Twa flight
attendant; the names
of the 230 victims are
sandblasted on the
sides. The archway was
erected on the second
anniversary says
Rouleau Salesman Brad
Jones who oversaw
production of the
memorial.

