

MB NEWS

February 2022

MONUMENT BUILDERS OF NORTH AMERICA

DESIGN AND AWARDS ISSUE



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ON THE COVER

The judging panel selected the design on the cover of this issue of *MBNews* as the Bert Gast Memorial Trophy Winner for 2022. This Best Overall Monument of the contest was designed by Mike Faehnle with Maumee Valley Memorials in Waterville, Ohio. Read about the MBNA Design Contest winners starting on page 18 of this issue. Also featured in this issue are the Aspire Award winners.

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MBNA Is Stronger Together

By Jonathan Modlich, CM, AICA, 2022 MBNA President

To say that the past couple of years have been challenging would be a gross understatement. From shutdowns to historic order levels, followed by supply backlogs extending the timeframe needed to complete that work, it's been nothing short of a roller coaster ride. Having so many friends and connections within MBNA has been invaluable in helping to navigate this rapidly changing business climate. Whether it's someone to kick around ideas with or being able to talk through a problem and hearing the point of view I didn't see, those connections exist for me because of this association.

As I look forward to the coming year serving as your president and I think about all the amazing things that are happening within MBNA, I realize that none of it would be possible without YOU. From the amazing conventions, numerous money-saving benefits, and great educational programs being offered, it all happens because of the involvement of individuals like YOU. MBNA doesn't exist because of the board of trustees or any of these various programs; it exists because of YOU.

We are all working to improve

our businesses within this great industry, and if there is anything that being involved has impressed upon me is that we are stronger together. Together we can learn from one another; together we can all be a little better than we were yesterday; together we can raise the tide of our entire industry.

One of many great examples of learning from one another is our annual design contest. All of the winning entries in this issue include something to learn about design that can then be adapted to your own style, each improvement and adjustment making us a little better at our craft. A big thank you goes out to this year's participants, and congratulations to all the award winners.

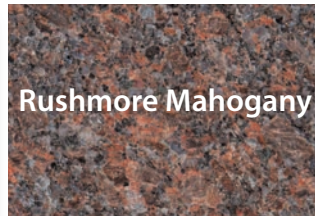
If you're looking for ways to maximize the benefits of your MBNA membership, get involved. Join a workgroup or committee—there are plenty of opportunities for providing your input and assistance. Hands down, it's one of the best decisions I've ever made for myself and my business, and I've received much more in return than I will ever be able to give. As we move forward into an uncertain future, there is no doubt that we truly are stronger together. **MB**



“ We are all working to improve our businesses within this great industry, and if there is anything that being involved has impressed upon me is that we are stronger together. ”

—Jonathan Modlich, CM, AICA

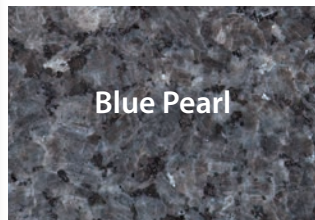
QUALITY SERVICE A PRIORITY?



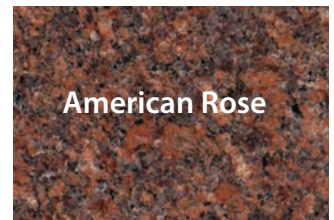
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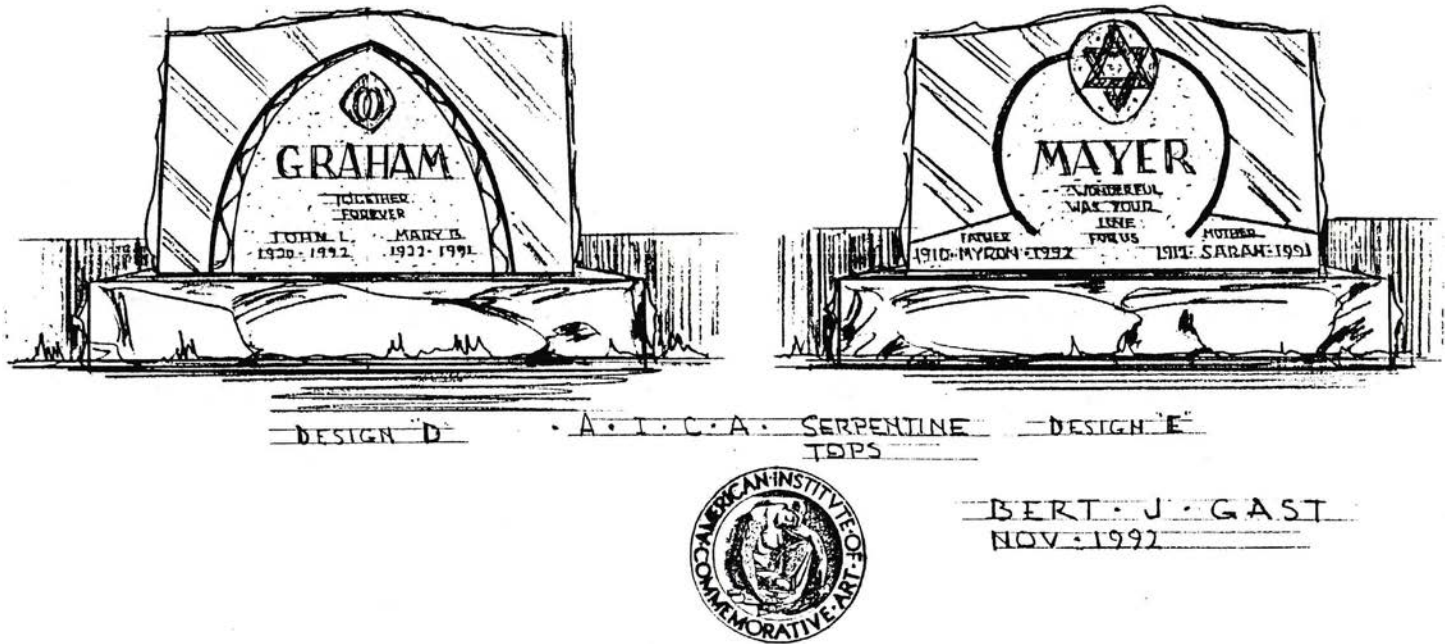
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Serp Top Designs

Contributed by Jed Hendrickson, CM, AICA

This Designer's Corner is an excerpt from AICA's January 1993 *MileStone*—it's old but it all still applies. It discusses how to make a serp top monument look good without

“ Good design of a serp top resolves itself around the middle area and will result in a balanced design. ”

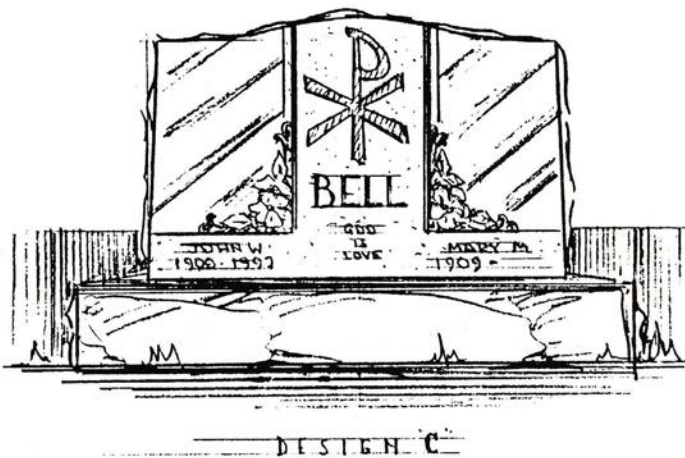
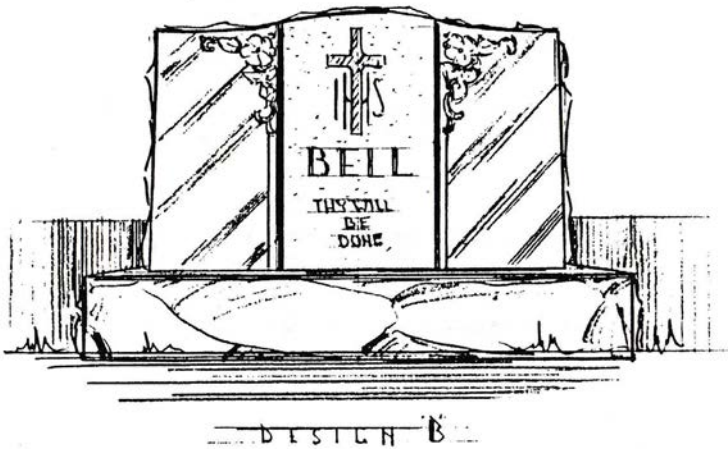
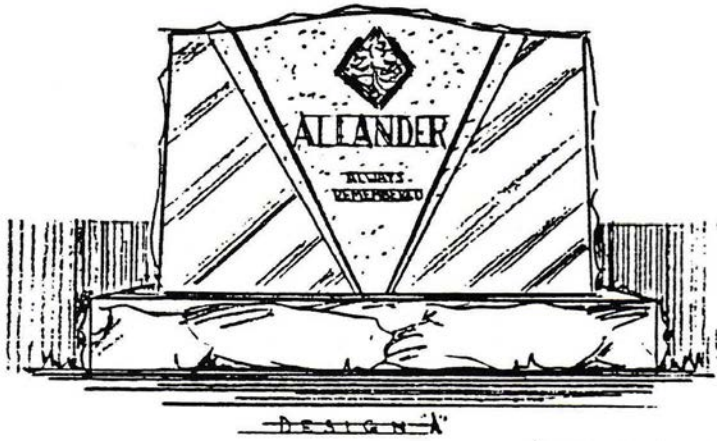
—Bert Gast, FAICA

“band-aid panels” and “cabbage corner carvings.”

The text is from Harold J. Schaller, FAICA, then-executive director of AICA, and the sketches are from Bert Gast, FAICA, then-owner of Gast Monuments, Chicago. The piece references AICA's annual meeting that was held in Hilton Head, South Carolina, October 25–28, 1992. These sketches were a result of a design session held at that meeting.

New designers and sales associ-

ates have an opportunity to learn from the “greats” in our industry. These notes and hand drawings could be passed on to your team as a challenge to expand their knowledge and skills. Try asking your designers to recreate Bert's drawings in the CAD or design system you are utilizing and then challenge them to develop a new layout based on these notes. The layout could be passed on to the sales desk or added to an existing design book. **MB**



Serp Top Designs Submitted by Bert Gast

While the issue is still warm from Hilton Head, Bert Gast has prepared a few sketches that will work with serpentine tops. Bert states, "Because of its shape, it is all but impossible to prepare a good off-center design on the face of a serp. If we accept this statement, we must work the center of the screen. By definition, serpentine is defined as snake-like or winding or sly or treacherous. This should warn us about this form. Good design of a serp top resolves itself around the middle area and will result in a balanced design.

A polished face is part of these sketches. The most important part of the sketches as well as any other design, is that the elements are tied together. The eye is not required to wander from bandaid to bandaid and to corner cabbages. The elements are locked together." Thank you Bert!

ARTIST: EERT GAST

Marketing to Your Bent

(Making money while staying true to yourself)

By Bill Boone, CM, AICA



So, selling tombstones is not that hot ... Now, take what I did before: I was a paint peddler for Sherwin Williams ... Oh, umm, well before that ... I

“ I guess no matter what you do, as long as your heart is in it and it is true to your bent, you will find happiness. ”

—Bill Boone, CM, AICA

worked at a vault company making and setting burial vaults. So, selling tombstones really isn't that bad, is it? I guess no matter what you do, as long as your heart is in it and it is true to your bent, you will find

happiness. So, how would you answer the question, “What do you do for a living?” Whatever you say would tell me a lot about your business.

Me? I'm a storyteller. I listen to our customers, and if they choose, they tell me the story of their lives, and I find a way to carve that story into stone so that it will last forever. I am also a strong believer that if no two people in this world are alike, then why does your monument need to look like everyone else's.

That statement tells a lot about how I run my business. Now, what works for me may not work for you, and that's ok. Here is what works for me. I have four offices in south-east Ohio. In the area we service,

there are at least 15 other entities that sell monuments, not including internet sales. One company is still offering a double upright monument for under \$1,000, delivered and set in the cemetery. I know about competition, and I'll never compete going toe to toe on their level and make any money. Forget it! Having four offices means I'm not the only one that meets and sells to the customers. I haven't found a way to clone myself and frankly that would just be scary. If I sell a 3-foot P2 monument, I will make X dollars. If I upgrade and sell a P3 or P5, I can make up to 30 percent more for the same amount of work. So why don't I sell more P3's and P5's? I can and do, but

that's not me and that is what my competition is doing. So, I would still need to cut my price to beat them, right?

A storyteller needs to sell a story. A story might add 10–20 percent. If I change the shape, I can add another 10–20 percent. If I add bronze attachments that could add another 5–15 percent. All of a

sudden, I've added up to 50 percent more to my price, the customer is totally in love with it, and my competition has eaten my dust because they can't compete. I like that, and I have stayed true to my bent (design).

So how did I get there? Well, it didn't come overnight, and I'm still asking questions and still learning.

If it was just me selling, I would not need any inventory. All I would need is a picture book of my past works showing what I want to sell. That would complement my bent.

Selling starts with you and your bent and beliefs. It starts with how you answer the question, "So what do you do for a living?" Your selling area, your display, how you deco-





rate, what your customers see, and even what you wear must complement how you answer that question.

In my selling area, I have a picture board. It states, “Stories in Stone.” On that board, there are zero serp top monuments; 100 percent are special shapes, 100 percent tell unique stories, 43 percent have textures on them, 43 percent have bronze attachments, and 23 percent have photos and/or etchings. This is what I want to sell.

My display area also reflects what I want to sell. Seven percent are serp tops, 93 percent are special shapes, 20 percent have bronze attachments, 43 percent

have special textures, 7 percent show a photo or an etching, 16 percent are priced over \$15,000, and, most importantly, 42 percent are shown on a 3-foot or smaller base (to address two people on a single grave, e.g., cremation).

So, does it work? We still sell a lot of serp tops, but about 80 percent tell stories of our customers. We sell more special shapes, and our bronze sales have increased each year. Our sales people, no matter how hard I try, sell what they want and what we show on the floor (not necessarily a bad thing). The custom designs and shapes they request are an amalgamation of

what we have on the floor and the display board.

I can still go toe to toe with the competition, but I don’t need to. They don’t sell what we do. They sell stones, we sell stories. The average sales of our monuments are considerably above X. So does this work? A family came in yesterday looking for a monument for their young son. The first words out of their mouth were “we were told that you do custom stones, is that true?”

So, first answer the question, “So what do you do for a living? Then everything else follows. Stay true to your bent and have a happy and profitable new year. **MB**



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Meet Greg

Greg has been working at U.S. Metalcraft, Inc. for 40 years. He started working at Metalcraft as a junior in high school working in our vase coating department. Back then he coated the memorial vases with a manual spray gun in his hand. Greg now manages our state-of-the-art automated powder coating line between bowling league and playing drums in his band.

There are many more like Greg in our factory, and it is this type of dedicated workforce that creates each Metalcraft memorial flower vase.

When you order a vase from U.S. Metalcraft, Inc., it is die-cast, powder coated, and shipped to you from Ohio. Metalcraft vases are Made in the U.S.A. We're proud of that, and we're proud to have Greg on our team.



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YEAR-IN-REVIEW:

What Transpired in the Energy Markets in 2021

“ **While no one can predict where the energy markets (or the weather for that matter) will land in 2022, what you can do as an organization is take proactive measures to minimize budgetary risk.** ”

Reprinted with permission from AAPI Energy. The AAPI Energy Solutions Program is an MBNA-endorsed member benefit program.



The year 2021 saw an unprecedented level of volatility in the energy markets, with a variety of factors contributing. From unprecedented

weather events to increased exports of LNG, the energy markets were anything but predictable, causing businesses to take an even closer look at one of their largest expenses: energy.

HOW IT STARTED...

Early in the year, both COVID-19 and Winter Storm Uri had far-reaching effects on businesses across the U.S. The February blackout caused by Winter Storm Uri was

the largest forced power outage in the nation's history and had major financial implications for energy suppliers, many of which are also headquartered in Texas. With billions of dollars in storm-related costs coming on the heels of massive COVID losses, several energy companies began looking for ways to financially restructure, recoup lost revenues or even exit the marketplace. The final report from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission generally blamed a lack of winterization of critical equipment for both fossil-fuel based and renewable electricity generation outages. Although renewable power outages were initially thought to be

the biggest factor, nearly 58 percent of power generators that went offline were natural gas plants.

HOW IT'S GOING...

In the back half of the year, volatile Henry Hub natural gas prices – and as a result electricity prices – began to rise. Natural gas prices hit a 13-year high, more than doubling in 6 months. Henry Hub natural gas spot prices averaged \$3.25/MMBtu for the first half of the year but averaged \$5.51/MMBtu in October, a traditional “shoulder month” when less heating and air conditioning load can be expected. What’s more, the EIA predicts that the average home heating gas bill will increase by 30% this winter as compared to last year.

WHAT'S CONTRIBUTING?

Other factors contributing to prices trending upward include an increase in energy exports. Exports of natural gas and liquefied natural gas account for nearly 20% of the country’s natural gas production as prices in Europe and Asia continue to set records. With natural gas becoming a global commodity,

natural gas storage levels in the U.S. dipped below their five-year average. Thanks in part to favorable Fall temperatures, the 2021 natural gas injection season ended at 3% below the 5-year average.

Historical volatility, a measure of the magnitude of daily changes in closing prices for a commodity during a given time in the past, increased dramatically in 2021. Based on rolling front-month contracts, the 30-day historical volatility of U.S. natural gas futures prices was 29.8% for April through August of this year. In October, volatility rose to 78.3%, compared with the 2015–2019 October average of 32.7%, with daily front-month natural gas futures contract intraday prices as high as \$6.47/MMBtu on October 6 and as low as \$4.83/MMBtu on October 19. The historical volatility of the natural gas futures price at the Henry Hub in October has corresponded with high volatility at international pricing hubs in Europe and Asia.

WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON?

While we saw (and are certainly still seeing) several bullish effects

in the energy markets, a few bearish effects are in the mix as well, including mild weather throughout various points of 2021. NOAA’s seasonal weather forecast calls for above-average temperatures for the Midwest, East and South, with below-average precipitation for most of the southern half of the country. Additionally, drilling for natural gas is expected to increase in 2022 in response to higher prices for crude oil and natural gas.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

While no one can predict where the energy markets (or the weather for that matter) will land in 2022, what you can do as an organization is take proactive measures to minimize budgetary risk. What’s more, as the demand for renewables continues to trend upward, the pressure on organizations to follow suit is mounting, making this the ideal time to take a holistic look at your overall energy management strategy. APPI is here to help. Contact our team today to get the conversation started with a complimentary energy assessment: 800.520.6685 or info@appienergy.com. **MB**



MBNA ASPIRE TO SUCCESS AWARDS

MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS EXCELLENCE

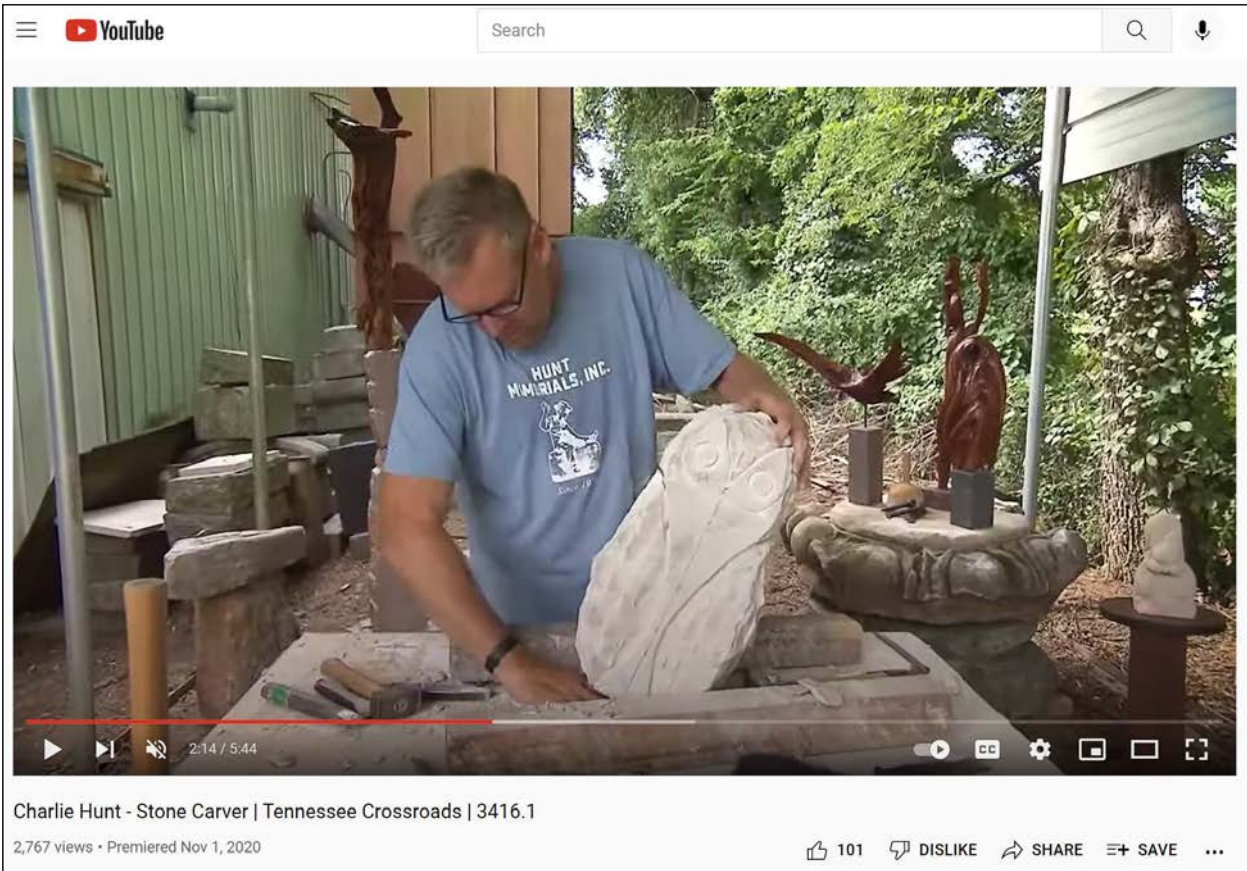
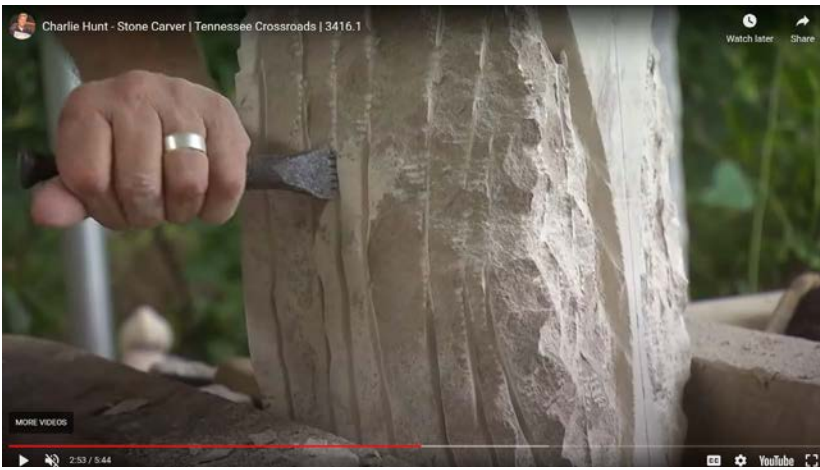


BNA's Aspire Awards recognize monument builder companies that have drawn favorable attention to their companies, and in turn, to the industry through their spe-

cialized marketing and/or public relations campaigns.

Three winners were awarded the Aspire Award. Any publicity your company received during the contest year was eligible. This includes coverage by print, broad-

cast, and/or social media of new acquisitions, company anniversaries, testimonial letters, etc.—in short, any recognition that reflects favorably on your company and the industry.



HUNT MEMORIALS, INC.
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
www.huntmemorials.com

We were honored to be featured in an episode of *Tennessee Crossroads*. For over 30 years, *Tennessee Crossroads* has traveled the roads of Tennessee, highlighting the personalities, crafts, places, food, and events that make this great state unique. They came to our shop and filmed our site, Charlie’s work,

and Charlie and Trent at work. The initial run had over 35,000 views and has had over 2.7K views on the YouTube video alone. It continues to air in reruns as well! In addition, it has had over 100 YouTube likes, which according to our producer, is outstanding, and several glowing comments!

“Here’s a **Tennessee Crossroads** story about an award winning stone artist who also considers himself to be a story teller. Well, actually he lets the rocks do most of the talking. Like his father and grandfather before him, his motto is “let the stone speak.””

-Tennessee Crossroads

LOGAN MONUMENT COMPANY

LOGAN, OHIO

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What a wonderful day today. We were at the Good Hope Lutheran Church just outside of Glenford restoring their cemetery. Over 50 hard-working volunteers showed up to help. And we were able to dig new foundations and reset 87 monuments! Wow!! Most were from the late 1800s. Some were very big.

Many thanks to all who helped, young and old, especially to the ladies in the kitchen who provided a great lunch and the nurse who kept us hydrated since the temps got into the 90s. May God bless each one of them.

These photos were part of a Facebook post that we boosted for \$10. This post received seven times our normal reach, 20 times the normal engagements, 12 times the normal likes, 125 times the normal comments, and 600 times the normal number of shares.

Backstory

We call this a “cemetery reset.” We generally do one a year. Typically, a cemetery/person calls me and asks how much we would charge to fix their cemetery. I meet them in the cemetery and usually tell them that they can’t afford me ... however, I have a proposal:

- Logan Monument will donate four men and a truck/crane for one day (almost always on a Saturday).

Cemetery will provide:

- At least 20 people to do hard work.

- #2 limestone gravel for foundations.
- Bags of cement.
- Shovels, picks, tampers, and possibly heavy equipment to move and dig holes.
- Water to keep crew hydrated.
- And most importantly, a good “feed”(lunch for all).

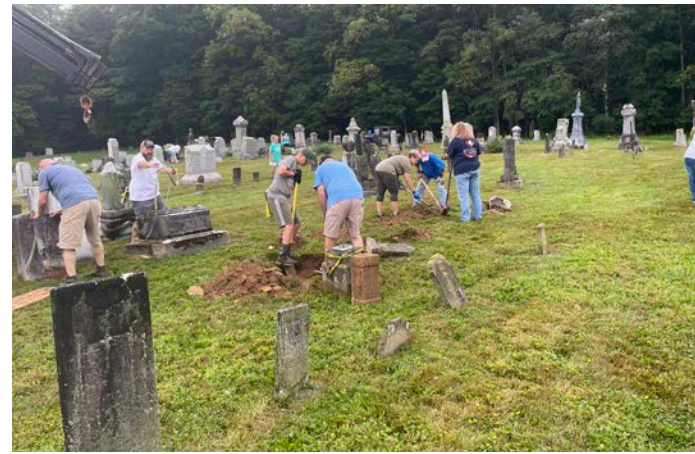
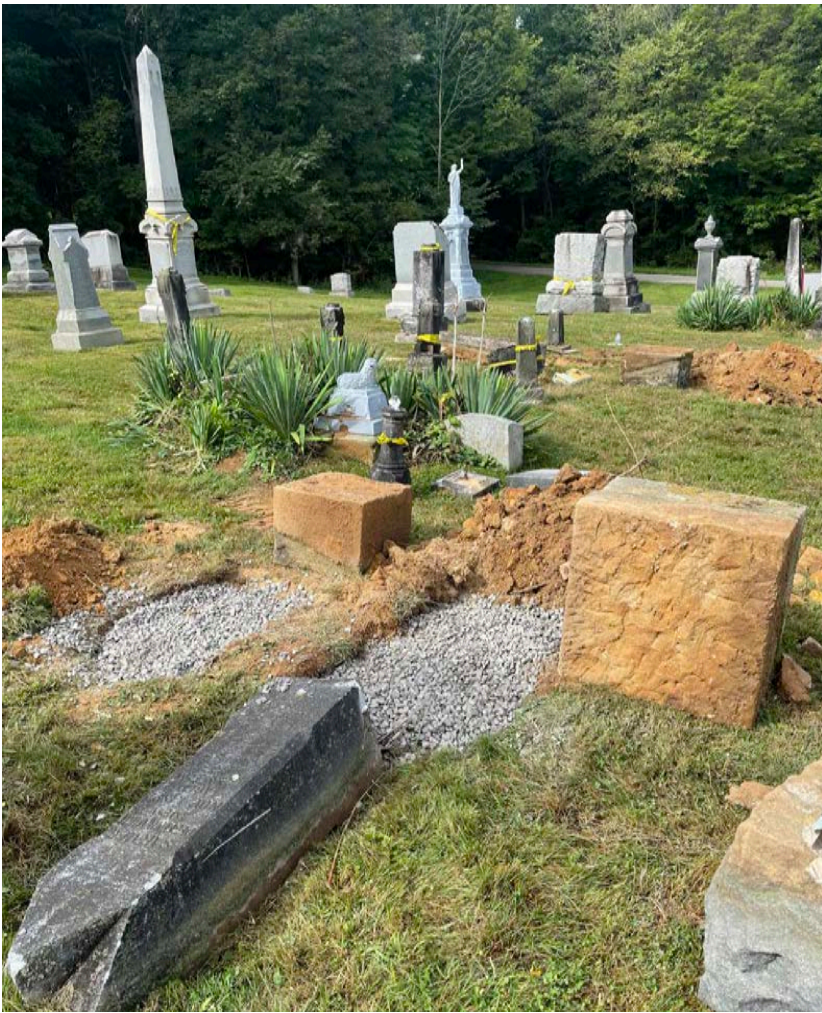
Philosophy

If you involve the community, people take pride and ownership of the cemetery and at the very least, they will be more inclined to do something next time there is a car in the cemetery after dark. Also, the people involved get to know Logan Monument in a different light.

How it works:

- I meet with the cemetery a couple of weeks prior to the date. We identify and mark the monuments that will need to be fixed. I also give them an idea how much cement and gravel they will need. By this time, they will have a good idea how many people they have committed.
- At 7:30 am, we start removing the leaning monuments and set them on ground nearby. The objective is we do all the heavy lifting and the volunteers do all the digging. Once we have a monument down, a crew of three people come in behind us to remove what foundation is there and dig a 24” hole (our frost line is 18”). Another crew comes in and fills the hole with gravel and one or two bags





of cement (dry) and tamps (compacts) it down. We call this a “poor man’s foundation.” It is much better than what was there before, and is below the frost line and can be dug and used in the same day. The more people you have, the more crews.

- When we finish removing all the monuments, we circle around and start resetting the monuments up on the new foundations. For the old 2” monoliths that were popular but often break, we had them lay the broken piece(s) level with the ground under a 12” foundation. This provides enough foundation to protect the monument from the tractors in the spring wet season.

This time, the cemetery raised

enough money to purchase at cost 5 gallons of D-2. A group of ladies went around and scraped off the moss and sprayed a good many monuments to clean them. I just ran around coordinating all crews, answering all questions, and keeping people busy. If someone doesn’t feel they’re needed, they leave. At lunch, we all went inside to the church basement and had a grand feast. By this time, we were 75% done. The pastor blessed the food and people, and we all broke bread together. I was the bad guy and reported on what was left to do. By 3 pm, we were finished, having reset 87 monuments. The cemetery had so much left over money, they were able to put gravel on the current grass roadway through the cemetery. Someone even came up

to our men and slipped them a \$50 Visa gift card as a thank you.

Over the years, we have used this formula successfully for over 15 cemeteries. It is a great Eagle Scout project. My father always taught me to “give back from which you receive.” I believe something similar is in the Bible. Funny though, every time we do this, I think we receive so much more than we give. Not just in how it makes us feel. To date we can contribute three orders from the people that were there to help and a whole new set of friends that speak highly of Logan Monument Company.

It is my hope that all of you reading this will feel free to copy this formula and make it work in your area. It’s a win-win for all concerned.

QUINCY MEMORIALS
QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS
www.quincymemorials.com

2020 brought about many changes that we fully implemented in 2021 to keep up with demand, maintain our growth as a company, and improve customer experience. One of the biggest things we realized was that we needed to be able to access our files from anywhere/anytime. We decided that Google Suite was the best option for us, as

it offers a tool that synced whatever we did on our computer to the cloud. It offers a calendar that all employees can access from their phones, laptops, desktops, and tablets. It offers live documents & sheets that we can all see changes as they happen. We use these tools to track our orders, inventory, sales, and many other aspects of the business. It also offers a video communication platform called Google Meet that did everything we needed to meet virtually with clients if necessary. We were able to advertise that we were offering remote consulting, and it was very easy to use by simply clicking a link in an email.

For years we have provided a 24-page catalog, but we wanted to revamp it for quite some time. We finally did just that and had to make it 28 pages to include all the information that we wanted in it. We started distributing to local funeral homes, cemeteries, and senior centers. The catalog follows our 10-Step Process for Designing a Memorial, just as our website does. We advertise that they are free upon request, and very often we will use them to show and sell examples as well. It is also downloadable on our website. As a fly-in to our catalogs, we also developed a one-page Design Guide with our 10-Step Guide flair, which was partly inspired by Don Calhoun after one of his very inspirational talks/webinars with MBNA. We use this to gather information during the consulting phase.

Part of our mission statement is that a Quincy Memorials customer is an informed customer. We want to make sure they understand that a custom product like a memorial

Quincy Memorials Creates Lasting Tributes for Loved Ones

Quincy Memorials Inc. is a family-owned business that has been providing Eastern Massachusetts with high-quality memorial tributes for over 70 years. Their primary goal is to make the process of choosing a proper memorial for a loved one as simple and straightforward as possible during a difficult time.

"A memorial is the link or connection from one person to another loved one that has passed. Like music can connect to memories and people we care about, the memorial is that connection for a family after a death," said Bryan J. Poirier, Co-Owner and General Manager.

There are many [reasons to memorialize a loved one](#), even if cremated. Cremation is a method of preparing a body and does not take the place of a funeral service or a proper monument. A person may choose to be cremated, but that does not mean they do not wish to be honored and memorialized. Remains can still be buried in a family plot, interred in a family columbarium or placed in a communal columbarium.

"Memorialization is a very important part of the human experience. We name streets, buildings and even towns after people so that we can remain connected to them. When someone we love dies, most people look for some way to permanently acknowledge that person's life and it is often through a stone monument or marker," said Joe Reardon, Vice President for Community Development and Advance Planning at Keohane Funeral Home.

Due to public safety protocols during the pandemic, Quincy Memorials is open to the public by appointment only at this time. Please call (617) 471-0250 to schedule an appointment to meet in person, over the phone, or via virtual meeting. Quincy Memorials is following state guidelines to keep employees and families safe. Locations include Quincy, Kingston and Abington.

"I would like to thank everyone who supported us during such a crazy year. It is tough being a small business in

this environment and people were very supportive and patient. We have worked very hard over this last year to be able to work remotely, more efficiently and still be able to serve our families in a timely manner," said Poirier.

About Quincy Memorials

Quincy Memorials was founded in 1950 by The Ricciardi Family. Thirty years later in 1979, the business was purchased by Yves and Donna Poirier. Both grew up in the Granite Industry in Barre, Vermont and Donna's father, Lucien Rouleau, and his father Rudolph were owners of the second largest granite and memorial manufacturing business in Barre.

Quincy Memorials began as a family tradition and continues to be a family passion with the introduction of the next generation of family members. Bryan and Jeffrey Poirier, the oldest sons of Yves and Donna, have grown up in this industry as well and have joined the company. Jeffrey with a degree in Management from the Isenberg School of Management at UMASS Amherst began working for Quincy Memorials full-time in 2005 and is currently the Vice President. Bryan earned his degree in Marketing at Bentley College and has proven to be a substantial asset to the company with his knowledge of marketing and customer care. He started full time for the family business in late 2007 and is now the current President of the company.



Quincy Memorials ten-step guide takes a person from the first decision to the last decision they need to make when designing an everlasting memorial for a loved one.

How to Choose a Memorial

Quincy Memorials has identified the steps that you need to take, decisions you need to make, and things you should know so that you have all the information and options available to choose a memorial that's right for you or a loved one.

By using their [10 KEY STEPS](#) in the process of designing a memorial, you'll be able to identify the information needed by the cemetery; choose the type, size and material of the monument; determine the shape, finish and design of the memorial, including lettering and layout; as well as choose any additional features, such as medallions, photographs and flag holders.

"The ten-step guide to designing a memorial is our easy to navigate and understand process. It takes a person from the first decision to the last decision they need to make when designing an everlasting memorial for a loved one. Our brand new 28-page catalog also highlights these steps so people can decide exactly what they like and don't like," said Bryan J. Poirier, Co-Owner and General Manager.

Along with upright memorials and flat markers, Quincy Memorials offers a range of other types of memorials, including benches, cremation memorials and columbariums, mausoleums, and bronze dedication plaques. The professionals at Quincy Memorials can help you determine what styles are allowed at your cemetery.

"There is an old adage that the most important character on a monument is the dash between the date of birth and the date of death. This is because the dash represents all the person did and who he or she was during life. Years ago, many people added identifying language to monuments like 'mother' or 'farmer' to help frame an image of the person. With today's technology, an actual photographic image of the person can be etched onto the stone for further personalization. Not every person goes to that level of memorialization, but there are many options available to really help focus on the dash that was the person's life," said Reardon.



MAIN OFFICE (on the expressway)
QUINCY MEMORIALS
 18 Willard Street
 Quincy, MA 02169

We have been working very hard over the last few years to keep up with technologies that will allow us to help families from the comfort of their own home. Our employees are able to work from home and remotely access all necessary content to help customers via phone, email, mail or remote selling via your computer.

With respect to your recent loss, some time ago we sent you some information regarding some of the beautiful memorials we manufacture. Perhaps at the time it was difficult to consider such a purchase and you have discarded the material.

Family owned and operated, Quincy Memorials strives to provide you with the highest quality memorials, unmatched convenience and customer service, and the most options for making a meaningful memorial. By contacting us now, you will have the information ready when you need it.

Call us today at **617-471-0250** for our exclusive **BRAND NEW FREE 28 Page Color Catalog with over 250 designs.**

Visit us at www.QuincyMemorials.com with hundreds more designs and ideas for you and your family. There you will be taken through our "10 Step Guide to Designing a Memorial."

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Kingston: Rt 3 exit 10, Rt 3A to Plymouth Lower level of Kingston Florist Across from Stop & Shop 175 Summer St. 781-585-5906	
Abington: Entrance of Abington High School Across from Seoane's 538 Bedford St. 781-337-9314 Also Sheehan Memorials	
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Do you want to Commemorate a loved one with a Memorial? Or do you need some Engraving to an Existing Memorial?

Visit www.QuincyMemorials.com

can take time. Especially in these times of labor shortages, supply issues and freight increases, we want to make sure our customers know what is going on and that there are delays. We include a letter with all estimates and sales that educates them on why it may take longer right now. I do this not only to educate them for their own good, but also so they are less likely to call and complain about the wait, which helps my employees as well. I plan to also include the new MBNA letter going forward.

At the tail end of 2020 we hired two individuals and two more in mid-2021. They keep up with our social media campaigns and introduced us to Instagram. They also actively ask families for online reviews, mainly on Google. We

have significantly improved our rating by just asking.

Quincy Memorials provided articles in *MBNews* about Connection, to which we used in some of our day-to-day verbiage. We re-engaged and reconnected with families, funeral homes, cemeteries, etc. We were also featured in an article by one of our local funeral homes.

Additionally, in August 2021, Quincy Memorials acquired Newton Memorial Art, combining resources and sharing best practices while also introducing us to a new market area.

Cremation Options Inside

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MBNA DESIGN AWARDS

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN MONUMENT DESIGN



BNA announced the winners of the 2021 Design Contest during the Mid-Atlantic Monument Builders in Partnership with MBNA Conference, held from January 13-15 in Baltimore, Mary-

land. The honorees selected by the judging panel were recognized in each of the contest's categories. All Retailer members of MBNA were eligible to submit entries into multiple categories, and there were 86 entries in the latest competition. The winners are featured in this

issue of *MBNews*, and MBNA will continue to showcase other entries throughout the year in the magazine. MBNA encourages its Retailer members to be thinking now of work products to enter in the 2022 contest, details of which will be announced later this year.

Overall Winner: Bert Gast Memorial Trophy

MAUMEE VALLEY MEMORIALS

Website: www.ohiomonuments.com/showrooms/maumee-valley-memorials

Designer Name: Mike Faehnle

Name or Description on Memorial: Miller–Sailboat

The Millers, at first glance, are your typical Midwestern small-town family. But believe me, there's much more to their story!

As with a lot of our clients, the Millers led very laid-back and unassuming lives. John operated a tool and die company and was known for having a sharp eye for detail, while Judith worked at a small-town bank with a strong

grasp of finance. Their most common interest, aside from their children, was their love of sailing. John's lifelong passion for adventure got him into sailing and after introducing it to the love of his life, of course, Judith was on board! They spent a great deal of time sailing on Lake Erie, but that wasn't enough excitement for John. He wouldn't be satisfied until he had





sailed his boat all over the world!

When I first met John, he showed me photos of his boat and expressed his interest in a sailboat as the main focus for the monument. My initial thoughts went to doing a Bas Relief carving of his sailboat somewhere featured on the design. After further discussion, John said to me, "I don't think you understand, I want the monument to be a sailboat made of Black Granite."

From there, we developed drawings from the photos of his sailboat, with John's attention to the finer details helping guide us. After numerous revisions and discussions, we finally came together with our final design concept. As we sent the design along to have a wood model created, John commented on how much he loved the design. He did have a concern about why the sail couldn't be the

same polished finish as the boat's hull. Even up until the setting of the monument, he would ask if I was sure it shouldn't be polished.

As he and I watched the setting of his stone at their plot in a small church cemetery, it dawned on him why the sails needed to be unpolished. Otherwise, there would have been no contrast, and the design wouldn't have worked out as well as it did.

Best Flat Marker

MAUMEE VALLEY MEMORIALS

Website: www.ohiomonuments.com

Designer Name: Aaron Faehnle, AICA

Name or Description on Memorial: Parrish Marker

It's a rare and interesting challenge to design a stone for someone you never met nor knew very much about. Such was the case with Ms. Parrish.

I was approached by a funeral director who asked if I could design a marker for a woman who'd passed. She had some funds leftover on her funeral account, and the family member that he was in touch with said he could put them towards a marker for her.

The only instructions given to me were that the memorial stone had to be of rose color to match her name and that the marker is 2-0

x 1-0 x 0-4 per the cemetery's restrictions. While this wasn't exactly a lot to go on, I saw it as an opportunity to come up with something truly original.

In addition to the rose-colored granite, I chose to feature a rose and cross prominently in the center of the design. To achieve this I had the cross and shape carved rose design raised on a hand-tooled background, creating a rich contrast. This along with the family name, are the focal point



of this piece. Splitting her first and middle names between the left and right sides respectively allowed the design to achieve a very nice symmetry.

When the family members were shown the design, they said it was better than they could have hoped for.

Best Small Monument

WARNER AND TROOST MONUMENT COMPANY

Website: www.troost.com

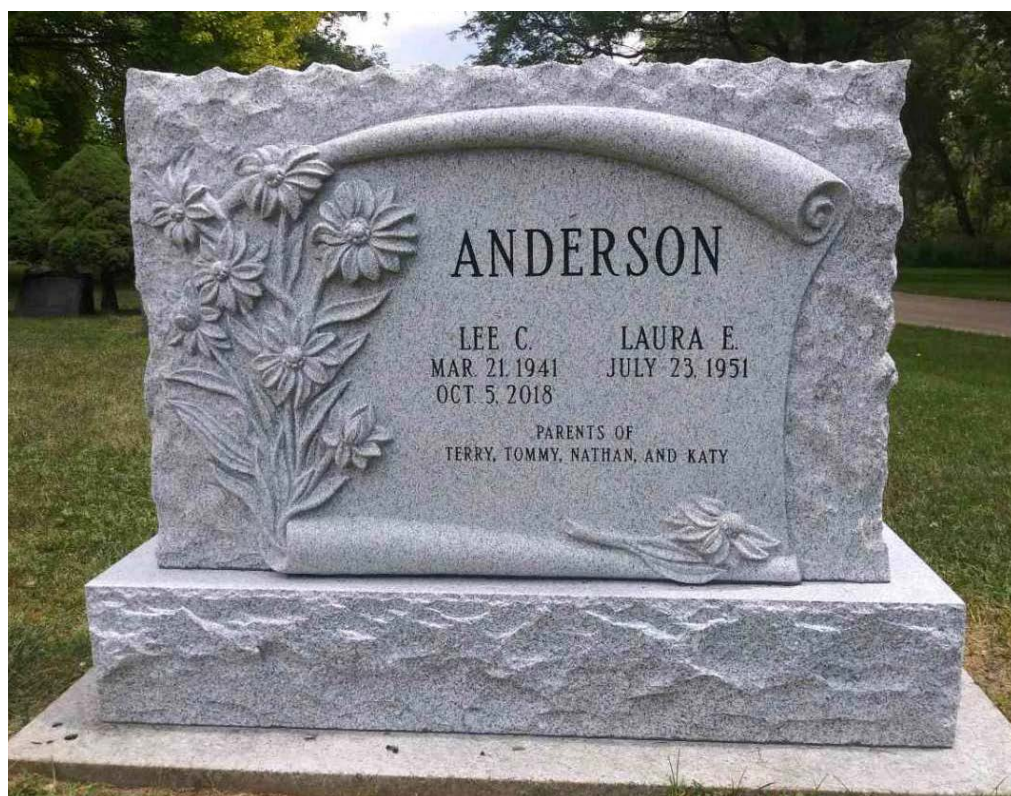
Designer Name: Shannon Marcou

Name or Description on Memorial: Anderson

Mrs. Anderson wanted to honor her husband with a memorial that looked like a classic monument, but she wanted it to be an original. Instead of roses with the scroll, we used one of her favorite flowers; black-eyed-Susans!

The monument die is all hand-sculpted and shell rocked on all sides, with sculpted flowers. The scroll face and the base top are steeled.

This was a true labor of love for me!



Best Large Monument

HUNT MEMORIALS

Website: www.huntmemorials.com/
Designer Name: Charlie Hunt, FAICA
Name or Description on Memorial: Fiveash

The Fiveash Family wanted a traditional, elegant monument for their parents. The bronze broken rose represents a life cut short. It is a clean, simple design combining the texture of the matte finish Georgia Gray and clean, elegance of the polished African Black.



Best Etching Memorial

DAKOTA MONUMENT COMPANY

Website: www.dakotamonument.com/
Designer Name: Dustin Anderson, AICA
Name or Description on Memorial: Homeless Memorial

A local homeless shelter came to us wanting to put up a memorial plaque in their new office showing their respects to the homeless and those who have passed away while homeless. The small plaque was laser etched with a prayer for the homeless, mounted on reclaimed wood from a local college, and burned with the logo of the shelter by a local artist. Even though the memorial is only 18" x 14" it tells a very powerful story.



Best Sculpture Monument

SCHLITZBERGER AND DAUGHTERS

Website: www.schlitzbergers.com/

Designer Name: Kimberly Day, AICA

Name or Description on Memorial: Stavinoha

The young widow came in and was wanting to make a memorial for her firefighter husband. She wanted an angel. After speaking to her and learning about her husband, she told me he wore St. Michael everyday on a necklace. I then started to sketch out a design of St. Michael kneeling down with the helmet on his knee. She was very happy with the end result. We blue toned the station number and the sword to give it contrast.



Best Public Memorial

BOTT MONUMENT

Website: www.bottmonument.com/

Designer Name: Drew Bott

Name or Description on Memorial: The Path of Honor

Commemorates the veterans of the Wind River Indian Reservation who served in the Armed Forces.

Native Americans served at a higher percentage (during Vietnam, it was 1 in 4 eligible Natives in the service versus 1 in 12 for non-natives) than the general population. This memorial is one of the first-ever dedicated in the United States to American Indians.

Each tablet is more than 9' tall and 4' wide. The engraving was all done by hand and the face of each tablet is recessed about 2" in some sections. It took several years to bring this project together and the unique shape of the tablets depicts

the shape of a buffalo. The red path is a symbol of courage and purposeful life.



Best Conceptual Design

BOTT MONUMENT

Website: www.bottmonument.com

Designer Name: Drew Bott

Name or Description on Memorial: Spielman

A mother needed to memorialize her young son with something that demonstrated his personality and her feelings toward him.

The monument stands just under 6' tall and features India Red granite produced in the US with Barre Gray accents. The two tablets leave negative space in the shape of a heart that also frames the beautiful bronze sculpture.

The sculpture has the son's hair cut, his dimpled chin and he's holding a heart, signifying his de-

votion to his mother and aunt. His front wing has taken some arrows and his back wing is deformed, an artistic representation of devotion and imperfection.



People's Choice Award

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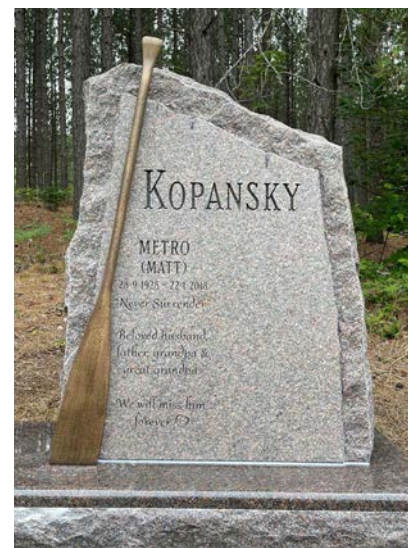
Website: www.campbellmonument.com

Designer Name: Kathleen Robinson, CMM & Trevor Howard

Name or Description on Memorial: Kopansky

The Kopansky family came to us earlier this year with the idea of creating a monument for their late father who was a great lover of the outdoors. One element that the family certainly wanted to incorporate was their father's most favorite and trusty canoe paddle. We developed several options to make the monument more "natural" and be a part of the surroundings. First, we chose to work with Ontario/Canadian mahogany and to use several finishes to represent different elements. The rough rock margin border and the

flamed surface offer a bold, rustic, and natural feel. The upper part of the monument emerges from the base, also Ontario/Canadian mahogany, with a polished top and rounded over edges, representing water. The full-size paddle has been completely recreated in bronze with details such as a worn handle, knocks, scratches, a split in the bottom of the paddle, and even the patina of use. Water ripples were sculpted into the base to show the interaction between the paddle and the water. The monument was designed to



allow for the future addition of the mother's name, dates, and verse. A bronze loon will be installed on the base when it is time to add the mother's inscription.

MBNA WEBINARS



Supply-Chain Webinars

December 9, 2021

The Ongoing Stencil Saga



SCAN THE QR-CODE OR GO TO:

<https://bit.ly/3ylbWCn>

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This webinar continues important discussions about the latest developments and announcements regarding stencil production and availability. Representatives from U-Blast Stencil Ltd. share how they are working to beef up their production of stencils. The program explores the implications of this ongoing situation, discusses options for “weathering the storm,” and offers suggestions on explaining current issues to customers.

November 11, 2021

Where the Hell Are My Supplies?!



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<https://bit.ly/3IXEZHc>

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Webinar presenter Clay Creech, corporate accounts manager at Intertape Polymer Group (IPG), provides an update on the buildup of IPG’s Anchor® brand stencil and filler products and its availability to supply product to the industry. Joining Mr. Creech is a colleague from the production side of Anchor.

September 16, 2021

Where the Hell Are My Granite & Supplies?!



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This interactive webinar addresses supply issues and roadblocks impacting the industry, and the prospects for resolution.

MBNA Benefits Webinar

October 14, 2021

Overview of Cost-Saving Benefit Programs



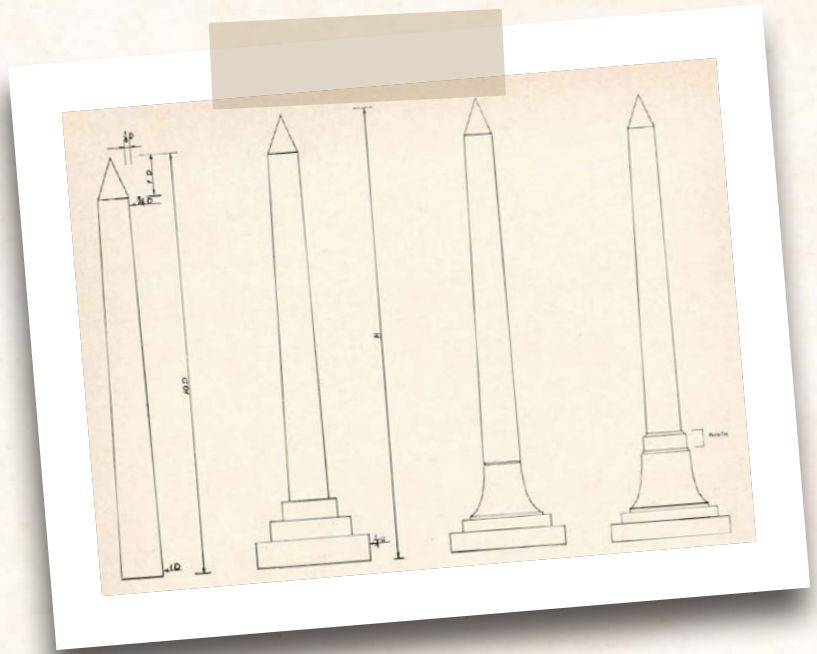
SCAN THE QR-CODE OR GO TO:

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Passcode: DMPc3K^M

This webinar provides a high-level overview of four new member-exclusive benefit programs that offer significant savings on your business operations.

Highlighting Historical Treasures From the MBNews Archives



DON'T GIVE YOUR CUSTOMERS THE SHAFT!
This month's "Blast From the Past" is taken from MBNews March 1964. We start out with a little history lesson, which is followed by the proper or "generally accepted" rules of proportion that govern the correct execution of the obelisk form. In my opinion, these rules are ignored far too frequently, and for no good reason. Perhaps the perpetrators just didn't know what they didn't know. Well, you readers can't use that excuse any longer. Hope you find this information interesting."

—Michael Johns, CM, AICA
MBNA Past President

Good Design and You The Obelisk

When we compare our modern production and handling equipment with that of the ancient craftsmen who had little more than the know-how and a will to work, at times we wonder just how capable we are as stone craftsmen.

We look with awe at a piece of granite or marble from which a column 25 or 30 feet long will be made, and yet there are in existence numerous obelisks with monolithic shafts which greatly overshadow any thing being produced in this country today.

The largest obelisk known is that which was brought from Heliopolis to Alexandria by Emperor Constantine and which was later transported to Rome. The height of the monolithic shaft is 105 feet, 7 inches. It is 9 feet, 8 inches square at the bottom. In other words, based on 180 pounds to the cubic foot, the shaft alone weighs 753 tons.

The engineering and planning involved in taking the shaft down at Heliopolis, moving it to Alexandria and setting it; taking it down and transporting it across the Mediterranean to be transported for miles overland and reset at its final location in the Circus Maximus in Rome these things defy the imagination of most people today.

Of all of the ancient styles or types of design, there is none which has been copied so often. Practically every city in the South has its Confederate Memorial-obelisk in form

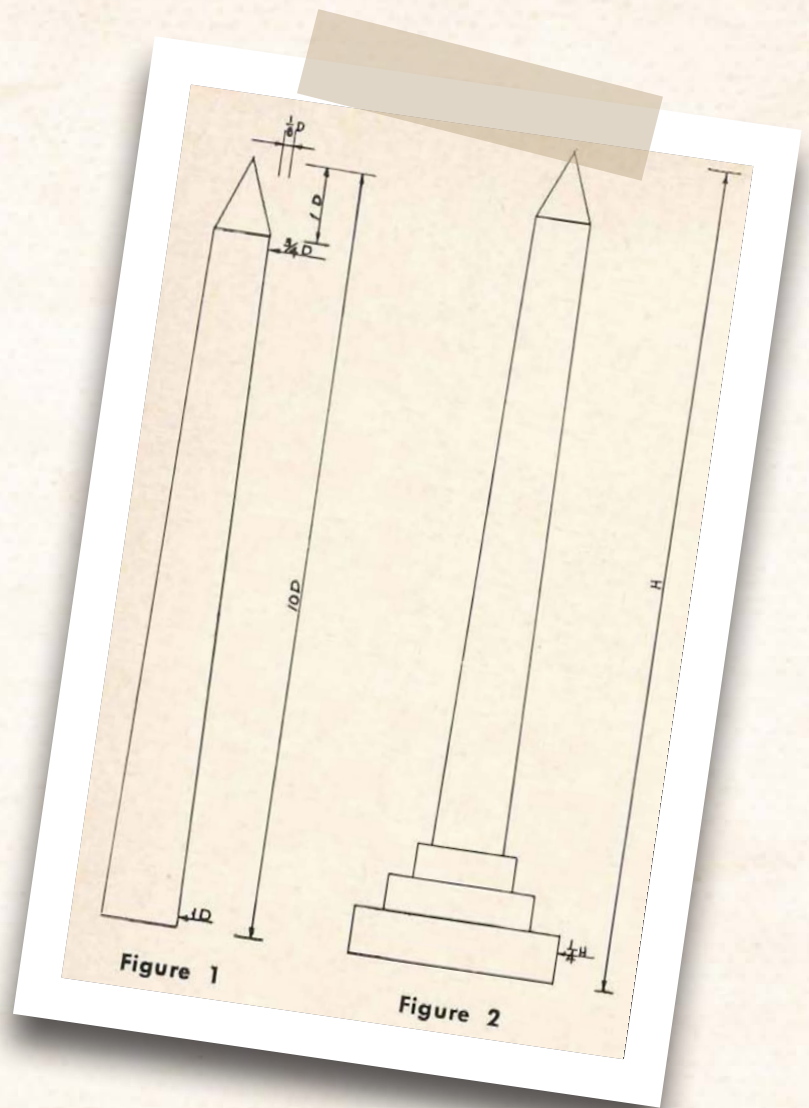
and surmounted by the figure of a Confederate soldier. Often these have very ornate dies with much carving and lettering. There are also many such memorials in the cities of the North and in our National Cemeteries.

The San Jacinto memorial in Texas is surmounted by a large star symbolizing the Lone Star State, and the Washington Monument in the District of Columbia is patterned after the Egyptian obelisk in design and proportions. Adaptations of the obelisk made for cemetery memorials are of various sizes, but the larger sizes are much more pleasing.

Most of the original Egyptian obelisks were made of red granite. There are a few of smaller dimensions which were made of sand stone and basalt. The oldest examples were placed in pairs at the entrance of a temple or court and most were commemorative pillars recording the title and achievements of the King or Pharaoh who had them erected. The faces were adorned by hieroglyphical inscriptions depicting the religious, cultural and military life of the ruler and his court. But more especially, the inscription gave the ruler credit for having built the temple or court and succeeding rulers who made additions or improvements to the original building were, in turn, accorded the privilege of adding their own inscriptions to the original ones. Some of the older examples have inscriptions of several rulers of succeeding generations and even, succeeding centuries.

The obelisk in the Circus Maximus in Rome, mentioned previously, bears the name of Thohtmes III and also Thohtmes IV, both of the 18th Dynasty of the 15th century B.C. The two obelisks at Luxor were erected by Ramses II in the 19th Dynasty, about 1300 B.C. The obelisk at Heliopolis bears the name of Osirtasen, dating back to about 2020 B.C., and is the most ancient. The many obelisks standing in Alexandria today were transported there more than 2,000 years ago.

Some years ago Ismail Pasha presented one of these ancient obelisks to the United States. It is standing in New York, and is referred to as "Cleopatra's Needle." This monument of antiquity is a treasure of inestimable value. It bears the name of Thohtmes III. It is 70 feet high and measures seven feet, seven inches at its base. We can hardly appreciate the fact, but we have in this country a relic of antiquity once looked upon by Moses and Aaron—Ramses the Great has his knightly banner carved upon it—Darius, Cambyses, Alexander and Augustus knew it—it was equally well known by Pythagoras, Herodotus and Strabo—a long list of the most illustrious of the Crusades and the Middle Ages passed before it. A monument



of such antiquity and importance should be cherished by everyone.

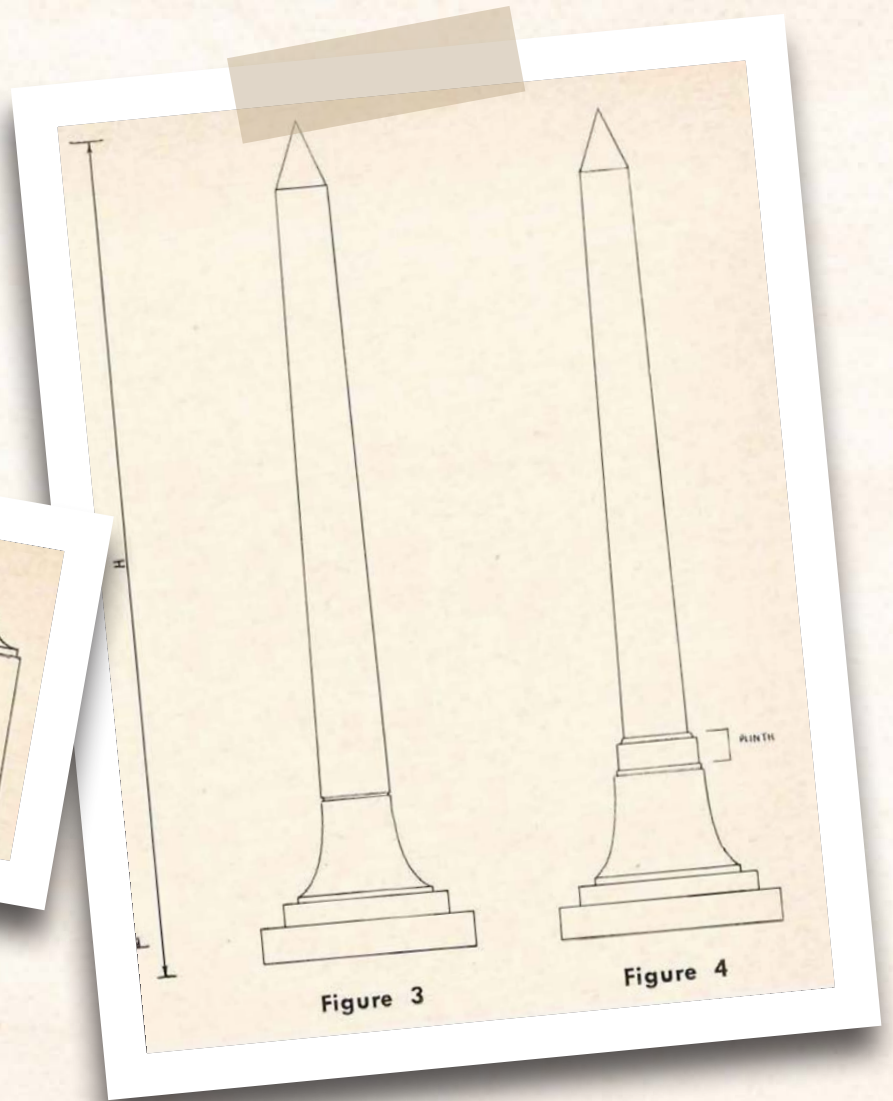
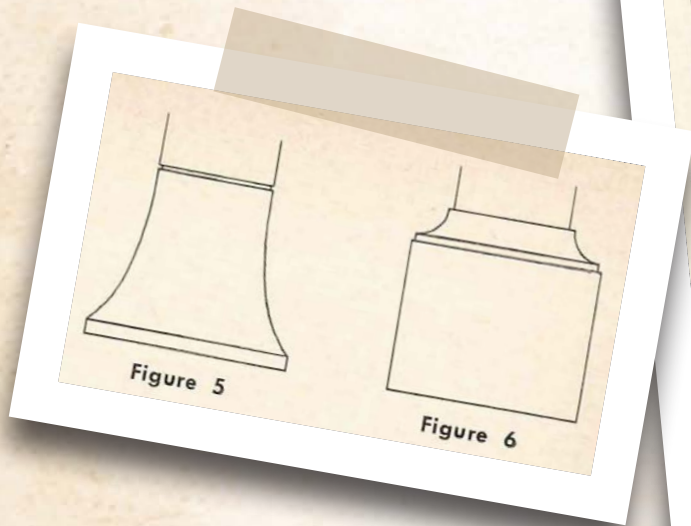
The most photographed and certainly the one seen by the most people is the obelisk in front of St. Peter's in Vatican City, Rome. This was brought to Rome by Caligula. It is 83 feet high.

There are 13 obelisks of various sizes in Rome today, all of which were transported there by Augustus, Constantine and Caligula when Egypt was a province of the Roman Empire.

In Cincinnati's Spring Grove Cemetery, there is one of the finest memorials of this type in America. From a purely academic standpoint, any design to be good should closely follow the scale and proportions of the original examples. This Mulhauser obelisk follows the example and dictates of the ancient crafts men to the closest margin.

Most ancient examples show rather strict adherence to the rule of making the monolithic shaft at least ten times as high as the width of the shaft at the bottom, the width of the bottom base being equal to one-fourth the total height of the memorial. The Mulhauser base is 14 feet square and the total height of the memorial is 56 feet.

Highlighting Historical Treasures From the MBNews Archives



Each face of the shaft should be battered to the top one-eighth of the base width, to a pyramidian top which should be one diameter in height, that is, it should be as high as the width of the shaft at its base (Figure 1).

The shaft is usually set upon a series of bases (Figure 2) or upon a die, which in turn is set upon two or more bases (Figure 3). In either case the proportions of the shaft and the relation of base width to the total height should be closely followed for pleasing effect.

On some of the ancient examples we find a plinth between the shaft and the top of the die. This plinth was usually elaborately ornamented with intaglio carving (Figure 4).

The die blocks should be considerably larger than the shaft and should have concave faces (Figure 5). Following the Egyptian period, the Greeks and Romans often used dies with vertical sides (Figure 6), but these never equalled the Egyptian examples in design or magnitude.

For centuries following the fall of the Pharaohs, the

Greeks and Romans attempted to copy the obelisks as a memorial form. They were unsuccessful because they did not have a stone which could be quarried and produced in the great sizes possible with red Syene granite. They lacked the subtle touch of ornamentation found in the creative and superstitious minds of the Egyptians. They also lacked the inventiveness of the Egyptians who could place a huge obelisk in the center of a circular court and use it as a gnomon of a sundial, telling time by the shadow cast under the bright sun of that arid land.

The ancient Egyptians had many Gods and every temple or court was dedicated to one or more of these Gods. The obelisk was dedicated to the Sun God, Ra, symbolizing the power of re-creation of this God. Because its original symbolism was pagan, many people object to the use of the obelisk as a memorial form.

While it contradicts and defies the true Christian interpretations of symbolism, nevertheless, it is one of the most effective and impressive forms of memorial design. **MB**

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Dublin, CA

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22–25 March 2022

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Las Vegas, NV

www.iccfa.com/annual

23–25 June 2022

**SOUTHERN MONUMENT BUILDERS ASSOCIATION
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For more information, contact Sammie Peters at smonumentbuildersa@gmail.com or 817.332.2689.

8–10 September 2022

**MONUMENT BUILDERS OF THE CAROLINAS,
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www.mbc Carolinas.org/events

22 September 2022

**CATHOLIC CEMETERIES CONFERENCE
CONVENTION & EXPOSITION**

Palm Springs, CA

3–5 March 2023

MBNA 2023 INDUSTRY TRADE SHOW

Memphis, TN

MEMBER NEWS

Martha Josephine Gelsomini, 89, passed away recently at her home surrounded by family. Martha was born February 22, 1932, in San Francisco. In 1957, she married Silvano, the love of her life. Together they were able to purchase the business Memorial Art Company in 1962,

which they owned and operated in Modesto for 40 years. After retiring in 2002, she still helped in the office after her daughter (Regina) and son-in-law (Mike) took over the business. Memorial Art Company has been an MBNA Retailer member for 47 years now.



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Classified ads are limited to Help Wanted, Used Equipment For Sale, and Businesses For Sale. All other ads will be considered Marketplace.

CLASSIFIED RATE

\$35 per ad (one-time publication) with a maximum of 50 words. Each additional word is .25 cents.

MARKETPLACE RATE

\$80 per ad with a maximum of 50 words. Each additional word is .30 cents.

CONFIDENTIAL REPLY

Additional \$5 charge for postage and handling.

Note: When responding to an ad with a box number, please write the box number on the actual letter you send AND on the outside of the envelope.

**ALL CLASSIFIED & MARKETPLACE ADS
 MUST BE PAID IN ADVANCE**

All ads must be received at least three weeks prior to publication date, with a check for the amount due made out to MBNews.

Mail to:

MBNA, MBNews Classified
 1300 Piccard Drive, Suite LL 14
 Rockville, MD 20850
 +1 (800) 233-4472
mbnews@monumentbuilders.org

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POSTMASTER – Send address changes to MBNews, 1300 Piccard Drive, Suite LL 14, Rockville, MD 20850.

Telephone: +1 (800) 233-4472

Fax: +1 (301) 990-9771

info@monumentbuilders.org

www.monumentbuilders.org

Closing date: Four weeks preceding date of publication. We reserve the right to accept or reject any advertising or editorial material. Subscription rate is \$70 annually for members, which is included in the annual membership dues. The rate for nonmember subscriptions or additional subscriptions requested by MBNA members is \$125 a year. Single issue price is \$12.

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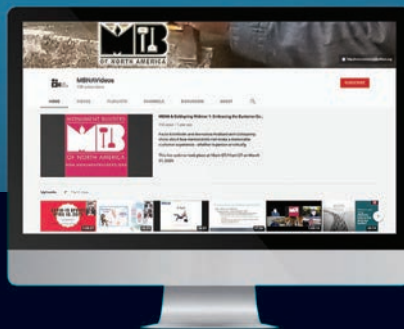


As the saying goes, “content is king” when it comes to marketing yourself. But many MBNA members don’t have the bandwidth or expertise to create this content. That’s where your MBNA dues can pay off. As an MBNA member, you have access to our full library of MBFilms that are designed to educate your customers about the art, craft, and value of memorialization as well as provide some great industry training for your staff. You can load the films onto your website and share them out on social media—for free.

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