THE GRANITE INDUSTRY REACHES OUT AFTER A LOCAL TRAGEDY
LACROSS MEMORIALS

Die: Medium Barre Granite
4-6 x 0-8 x 9-0
All-steeled, steel special top and ends

Wings: Jet Black
5-6 x 0-10 x 4-0
All polished, tapered ends

Base: 16-0 x 1-4 x 0-10
All-steeled base

Designed by Paul Cangelosi
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Fall 1997

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Photos by Art Edelstein: front cover photos, all article photos

On the cover: After Barre teenager Amy Hilferty died in June, 1996, the Barre granite industry worked together to produce a heartfelt memorial.
## Barre Granite Association

### Voting Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact Person 1</th>
<th>Contact Person 2</th>
<th>Phone 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adams Granite Co.</td>
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<td>Gandin Brothers, Inc.</td>
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<td>North Barre Granite Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson-Friberg Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Granite Importers, Inc.</td>
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<td>Northeast Granite Co.</td>
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<td>Buttura &amp; Sons, Inc.</td>
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<td>P.O. Box 566, Barre, VT 05641</td>
<td>Raymond Pepin</td>
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<td>800-654-5420</td>
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<td>Colombo Granite Co.</td>
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<td>Consolidated Memorials, Inc.</td>
<td>P.O. Box 394, Barre, VT 05641</td>
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<td>LaCross Memorials, Inc.</td>
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<td>Gary LaCroix</td>
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<td>800-451-3234</td>
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<td>Lawson Granite Co.</td>
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<td>800-451-5174</td>
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<td>Rock of Ages Corp.</td>
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<td>Family Memorials, Inc.</td>
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<td>800-451-4513</td>
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### Associate Plus Members

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<td>Culture Craft Sandblast Co.</td>
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<td>Rivard Granite Co.</td>
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Barre Granite Association

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continued on page 24
It's a common theme in life and business, not unique to the granite industry. In fact, without it, little in business and society would work well.

I am talking about cooperation.

As Barre Life was being assembled late this summer a theme emerged. It's a common theme in life and business, not unique to the granite industry. In fact, without it, little in business or society would work well.

I am talking about cooperation.

The granite industry in Barre is a very cooperative one. It has to be to turn raw material into world class monuments and other fine granite products. From the men who blast the granite out of the quarry, to the expert workers in the plants who shape the stone, to the monument designers, shipping companies, and eventually the monument retailers: we all rely on a spirit of cooperation to bring the product to the consumer. How else could we turn a block of stone into a world class product?

While the need for cooperation is always near the surface, this theme jumped from the pages of this issue as I reviewed the articles we would print.

We feature two local companies whose efforts in technology, using ingenuity and foresight, have helped in the design and construction of new machines.

They, of necessity, must cooperate with others in our industry to further the technological advances we all look forward to in this increasingly technological society.

You will also read of the continued effort by the BGA, along with state and federal government, to cooperate in making sure that workers stay healthy and thus remain highly productive.

With the election of a new association president, we see the cooperative effort of our board members in choosing that person. To become the BGA president, that nominee must rely on the cooperative effort of all to advance the organization for the good of all our members.

And finally, in our story of the Hilferty memorial, we see the culmination of all this cooperation, as many in the Barre granite community came together in designing and constructing a monument that reflects the memory of a young person gone before her time.

With this cooperative effort in mind, we at Barre Life extend an invitation to our readers to comment on this publication, suggest articles of interest, or share photographs of monuments present or past that are connected to our industry. You can always reach us at: Editor, Barre Life Magazine, 51 Church Street, P.O. Box 481, Barre, Vermont 05641.
Bob Couture Elected President of the Barre Granite Association

In 1955 as a high school student Bob Couture got his first taste of the granite industry. His after school job was picking up stone chips and sharpening chisels. Today, after 39 years working in the industry, he is the newly elected president of the Barre Granite Association.

Couture recently succeeded Jeff Martell in this post. His mission, he says for this one year term, which ends June 1998 — “is to reevaluate the BGA’s status.”

Bob Couture, age 58 and a Barre native, is an unassuming, shirtsleeve businessman whose quiet demeanor has made him a strong consensus-building voice at the BGA.

One of three brothers, Bob along with Roger and Armand owns Family Memorials. While his brothers run the company’s production facility, Bob and wife Mary Ann head the administrative side of the company.

Family Memorials was founded by Romelus and Adreanne Couture in 1945 after they purchased the Mascitti Granite Company. “We specialize in monuments in a variety of styles and do a lot of ‘duplicate’ and finish work,” says Bob.

Experience in the industry is at the core of Couture’s presidency. After graduating high school in 1957 he went to the now-defunct Memorial Arts School in Barre. In this one year course he learned monumental design and drafting. “Stone cutting didn’t appeal to me,” he admits.

In 1958 he began working in the family business and has 39 years of experience under his belt.

Couture is an avid hunter, fisherman, gardener and church goer. He spoke with Barre Life just hours before departing for a fishing trip to Labrador.

Couture has seen the granite industry in Vermont undergo extensive and important change. “Modern machinery for a small company like ours,” he says. Family Memorials is representative of many companies at the BGA. “We are trying here to work a balance with machinery,” says Couture.

With his long involvement in the industry, Couture can clearly see the forces and trends that are shaping the end of the 20th century in granite. “We’re affected by the merging of retail monument dealers,” he says noting the consolidation in the retail end of the business.

In the area of international and national competition, Couture sees strong economic forces emanating from Beebe, Quebec and Elberton, Georgia. He also sees the positive effects this brings to the Vermont sector of the industry. “It forced Barre into plant modernization and now we have as good equipment as anyone in the industry,” he observed.

Couture says keeping the competition out through new trade laws and regulations “doesn’t work.”

“The key is to become more efficient at what we do,” he notes.

For the granite industry to strengthen, he believes companies need to “build excellent rapport with customers.” He says in his dealings with customers he “explains that price isn’t the only consideration. Quality is important.”

What are the industry challenges Couture finds utmost for the near future? He sees government environmental regulations as a leading issue. Competition from outside Vermont and within the Barre area are also issues to consider. Finally, he says, “we are all capable of a higher volume of work.”
"I think it is important to educate workers, and to insist that workers take the personal responsibility to manage this workplace health issue for their own benefit."

As manager of member services for the Barre Granite Association, I wear many hats. I am involved in insurance and pension issues, regulatory compliance programs, safety and health matters, and labor contracts and relations. For this issue of Barre Life I'd like to review the safety matter of respiratory protection for workers. Comprehensive regulations are sometimes overlooked by small businesses. I hope this gives you a prod to address this safety issue as it applies to your business.

Concern About Silica Dust

We in the Barre granite industry have dealt successfully for decades with the health threat caused by silica dust which results from the cutting and sandblasting of granite. Silicosis is a potential health problem caused by long term exposure to silica dust. Excessive exposure to "respirable crystalline silica," over prolonged periods, is a recipe for silicosis, a lung disease that still has no cure and can be fatal. We all accept the fact that the disease silicosis has been beaten for years in the Barre granite industry because of the engineering controls and personal protective equipment being used by our work force.

However, silica dust remains a threat to worker health if workers do not diligently use the protections provided to them "as they were designed to be used." There are clear concerns that this health problem has not been managed effectively in other industries. In recent years, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) issued ALERT Bulletins on Preventing Silicosis and Death in Construction Workers and Rock Drillers. OSHA has made silica dust control and worker education a priority in Elberton, Georgia, where this health issue has not received the same degree of attention and success as in Barre.

How to Prevent the Problem

In order to prevent respiratory problems due to silica dust in the workplace, everyone involved should...
understand both the hazards and solutions. It is important for employers to identify how the dust hazards generate and, in particular, to ascertain the levels of silica dust exposure through directly sampling the environment as the worker experiences it routinely. Your workers’ compensation insurance carrier or your state health department or OSHA program can assist you.

I think it is important to educate workers, and to insist that workers take the personal responsibility to manage this workplace health issue for their own benefit. Some workers have assumed that silica dust is not a problem because they have not experienced its effects in the short run. That could be a costly assumption, since the health problem may not show up until after long term exposure. Of course, at that time it may be too late to counter the harmful effects.

Next, it is important for the company to provide appropriate personal protective equipment to employees and to maintain effective engineering controls to bring exposure to acceptably healthy levels. It is the responsibility of both the employer and the employee to know which dust masks and filters are designed for the hazardous substances, since one filter does not handle all respirable problems. You can easily obtain this information from your protection equipment supplier. When using a dust suction device, know how close it must be to the work to be effective in removing the hazardous dust. Keep in mind that with silica dust, the dust you see in the air is not the hazard you are working to control. The dust that scars the lungs is smaller than can be seen by the naked eye.

That’s also why a good fit is critical. Beards and ill-fitted respirators can allow a steady stream of harmful substance to enter the lungs undetected. Fit testing procedures are spelled out in OSHA regulations, and suppliers make the process easy with kits and instructional videos.

Workers must be trained in the proper fit, use, cleaning and storage of personal protective equipment. Without proper training the equipment may not be used in a manner that is ineffective, giving a false security to the employee and the company.

Keep dust collection systems in tip-top shape. The equipment is only as good as its maintenance record. But don’t feel that just because you are using safety equipment all is well. Make sure that the equipment is used properly! I like to say, “Safety is everyone’s business!” because if everyone isn’t working to maintain a safe environment, then someone’s working against it.

To recap: 1) Educate the work force to the hazards; 2) provide appropriate safety equipment; 3) train in proper use; 4) maintain the equipment; and 5) work together to comply with safety practices. Remember, you are protecting the company’s most valuable assets—its employees.

Did You Know?

NIOSH has a long-standing recommendation for OSHA to adopt a very restrictive standard that would be a heavy economic burden on any silica related industry, not just the granite industry. The standard for allowable exposure to respirable crystalline silica is now 1 microgram per cubic meter (measured gravimetrically) and NIOSH is recommending 0.5 microgram per cubic meter. The bag house dust collection systems, predominantly used throughout the industry, have proven effective in eliminating harmful dust necessary to maintain a healthy work environment. But these systems could not meet the proposed standard. I do not believe such a change is warranted based on the health experience in Barre.

Typically, a healthy worker does not experience a health problem with exposures at the current standard. Many years of research have shown tobacco smokers can have serious lung problems that are exacerbated by any dust exposure.

Another concern looming on the horizon is the controversy in the medical research field of the possibility that silica dust may be a carcinogen, i.e. something that under certain conditions could cause cancer. At present, the lung experts are greatly divided on the issue, and that’s probably a positive thing. Many experts do not find credible evidence to support this assertion. You will certainly hear about it if this position changes.

Proper use of a protective mask is as important as the mask itself.
The Barre Granite Association has helped turn a local tragedy into a healing community event.

Amy Hilferty was an exuberant, attractive, popular and athletic young woman eagerly awaiting her high school graduation when calamity struck. Just two days before her graduation day, June 13, 1996, Amy and her woman’s summer league softball team were playing an early evening game when lightning struck the field. Amy was instantly killed by the bolt. Her bizarre and untimely death shocked a community awaiting an inspiring graduation ceremony.

“I was 20 feet away when the bolt of lightning hit her,” said her father Bob Hilferty who worked in the granite industry at Beck & Beck for many years. As a result of the accident, with help from friends in and
out of the granite industry, a special monument was created for Amy.

"I was flabbergasted by the outpouring," said Hilferty. "My wife and I look at the monument and it’s more than (a monument) to my daughter. It’s the people’s monument. It shows that love still exists and how lucky we are."

The Hilferty monument was dedicated June 16, 1997. Over 200 people attended, including granite industry manufacturers who had helped on the monument, and many of Amy’s friends who grew up with her.

How the monument came to be is an interesting tale, for sometimes fate works in strange ways. During 1996 sculptor Giuliano Cecchinelli began carving a statue of an angel carrying a teenage girl off into the clouds. After Hilferty’s death, as Cecchinelli continued to work on his sculpture, he realized that the work would be a fitting tribute to the dead teenager.

During the winter of 1997, at the same time that Cecchinelli was working on the sculpture, the BGA under former-president Jeff Martell began making plans to create a monument to Hilferty.

Amy’s father, Bob, had worked in the industry for years, most recently at Beck & Beck where he was plant foreman. The BGA decided to help one of its own.

The BGA had gotten involved in the Hilferty Memorial as the result of the work of Gerard Cormier a friend of Hilferty. He, along with Martell, eventually worked together to coordinate the project.

"Bob is a nice guy who bent over backwards for everybody," said Cormier. "I cried on his front lawn with him the day after Amy died."

"If I saw after a few months there was no monument and decided to help," he added.

"Both Jeff Martell and I spoke to the Barre area granite manufacturers and the word got out to the industry and everybody wanted to work on it. We didn’t have to ask twice," he remembered.

"Even company employees said they would not charge their companies for the work they did on the monument," he said. "It really involved a lot of people in the industry."

Back to Cecchinelli. He had read in the Barre-Montpelier Times-Argus of plans to create a Hilferty monument that would feature a life-sized angel. He contacted Martell. According to a news report in the Times Argus dated February 24, 1997 written by reporter David Delcore, Cecchinelli said: "Gee. I got the darn thing here."

The Times Argus also reported Martell as being, "awestruck by the nearly complete four-foot tall statue." Cecchinelli was working on. So was Cormier.

"I was blown away when I saw it," Cormier said of the sculpture, "It really is perfect," the article continued.

The only problem with the statue was that sculptor Eric Oberg had already offered to carve a life-sized angel for the monument for half the cost of the four-month project. But Oberg agreed to let the Hilferty family make the final decision. "...the Hilferty family decided to abandon the design of an angel that would have Hilferty’s face in favor of Cecchinelli’s inspirational sculpture," reported the TA.

And so with many people helping out the Amy Hilferty monument was completed. The final cost of all aspects of the monument is estimated at $20,000 by Martell.

"Barre is small town America and this could only happen in a small town," reflected Hilferty.
Consolidated Memorials has installed two new saws at its Boynton Street plant, making this one of Barre's most technologically advanced sawing and polishing facilities.

Since February, a Pellegrini DF2500 diamond wire saw and Loeffler 11'6" diamond blade have been operating. The Pellegrini saw was manufactured in Italy and the Loeffler in Germany.

Together, the upgrading of Consolidated's facility cost nearly $500,000.

Both machines are state-of-the-art, computer controlled and programmable. "We're one of just two plants in Barre with this specific setup," said plant general manager Bob Morton.

"We installed the new machines because we wanted to be more efficient and more productive in our operations," said Morton.

"The new machines," he continued, "require less labor and have the ability to run 24 hours a day. They are able to run even at night when the plant is unoccupied."

Consolidated planned the upgrading of their sawing equipment for several years before the installation last winter.

"The new saws," said Morton, "benefit our member manufacturers by improving the service we're able to provide them. We have sped up turnover time and increased efficiency."

Consolidated employs 13 workers and now has five saws in operation. It is one of Barre's largest processing saw plants.

Reflecting on the role of technology in the granite industry, Morton said, "It is important that we in the industry continually upgrade our technology to keep up with the needs of production. At Consolidated, we are dedicated to doing this."


Consolidated plant manager Bob Morton
Rock of Ages Acquires Gantry Saws

Two Gantry Diamond Saws built by supporting member Dessureau Machines of Barre (DMI) were installed at the Rock of Ages cutting plant in March. The two saws are each 21 feet high by 34 feet long and 11 feet wide, and weigh 78,000 pounds. They use an 11-foot diameter circular blade. Both machines were designed and fabricated by DMI. Mark Dessureau, DMI vice president, designed the machines using CAD design software. The electronic computer controls for the machines were designed by Rock of Ages.

"These are heavy duty, high production machines," said DMI president Art Dessureau. Rock of Ages ordered the machinery in October of 1996 and DMI had them installed within six months.

DMI is in its third generation of family ownership. The company, which began in 1940, employs 15 workers in a variety of machine designs and tooling.

Barre Granite Clock Ticks For Al Gore

No one knows for sure, but it is possible that when Vice President Al Gore needs to know what time it is, he consults a clock made of Barre granite.

On May 27, Gore, along with Governor Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire and other dignitaries, attended the opening of the Oracle New England Development Center in Nashua. Oracle is a leading software developer.

At the ceremony Gore and others were presented with a Barre "core" clock. These granite desk clocks are fabricated from a three inch diameter core that is cut into slices, polished and fitted with a quartz clock mechanism.

Initially, the Rock of Ages Visitors Center was contacted by Oracle to provide several hundred granite paperweights and granite desk clocks in celebration of the opening. Oracle was so pleased with its initial order of core clocks that it placed another substantial order for them. The core clocks are available at the Visitors Center in Graniteville, Vermont.
The Barre Granite Association
Board of Trustees

From left to right:

Brice Mugford, Peerless Granite Co.
David LaCroix, LaCross Memorials
Mark Gherardi, Rock of Ages Corporation
Bob Couture, Family Memorials
Randy Carbonneau, Hillside Stone Products
Kerry Zorzi, Adams Granite Co.
A selection of monuments and products crafted by members of the Barre Granite Association
GANDIN BROTHERS, INC.
Manufactured for South Bound Brook Monument Company, Stirling, New Jersey.
Die: Dark Barre granite, 3-6 x 0-10 x 6-6,
polish (2), balance steeled with bottom of die set back 6" on each end and 1" on front.
Base: Medium Barre granite, 4-10 x 1-8 x 1-0, polish flat top, slanted ends.
PEPIN GRANITE COMPANY
Produced for R. H. Kelly & Sons, Hastings, Pennsylvania

Die: 5.0 x 0-10 x 3-6. All steel, Select Barre granite.
Base: 7-0 x 1-4 x 0-10. Steel top, balance rock pitch.
ANDERSON-FRIBERG COMPANY/ DIVISION OF ROCK OF AGES

Wausau Red memorial on a Light Barre base, produced for Gawet Marble & Granite Company of Rutland, Vermont, and installed in Monticello, Indiana.

Rock of Ages faithfully reproduced the demanding details and sizes of the same design from a memorial erected about 85 years ago for another generation of the same family.
BUTTURA & SONS, INC.

Designed by Sonny Frost

Die: 3-0 x 0-8 x 2-6. All steel, sandblast carved and lettering.
Base: 4-0 x 6-0 x 1-2 x 0-8. Steel flat top, steel slant front, balance rock pitch.
NORTH BARRE GRANITE CO.
Manufactured for Presbrey-Leland, Inc., Valhalla, N.Y.
Die: Barre granite, 13-5 x 1-4 x 2-8, all polished with steel raised radial columns.

FAMILY MEMORIALS, INC.
This Barre monument was recently placed in Barre's Hope Cemetery for the Pinchetti family, long time acquaintances of the owners of Family Memorials. The sandblasting was done by Culture Craft Sandblast Company, a BGA Associate Plus member.
PEERLESS GRANITE COMPANY, INC.

Barre granite
Two crypt
walk-in mausoleum

RIVERTON MEMORIAL, INC.

Die: 2-10 x 0-8 x 2-4, steel 2 oval top, shell rock border.
Base: 3-0 x 1-0 x 0-8, steel top, balance rock pitch.
Created for Newton Memorial, Newton Center, Massachusetts.
GRANITE INDUSTRIES OF VERMONT
Manufactured for M. J. Judge Monument Company of Wilkes-Barre Township, Pennsylvania.

Medium Barre granite. Die: 5-0 x 0-10 x 3-6, steel 2, dusted special cut top and ends.
Dusted rabbet front and ends. Hand-tooled background.
Base: 6-6 x 1-4 x 0-10. Steel top, balance rock pitch, dusted margin 4.
BROOKSIDE MEMORIALS, INC.
Sold to Bristol Monument Works,
Bristol, Connecticut.
Designed by and produced for C. Robert Vigezzi.
Barre gray cross, 1-4 x 0-8 x 7-0.

LAWSON GRANITE COMPANY/
DIVISION OF ROCK OF AGES
Select Light Barre granite.
“All rock” memorial manufactured for Woodlawn Memorials,
Everett, Massachusetts
Barre Granite Shop

All jewelry items are rhodium-plated with cabochon of Barre gray granite.

A. 8" x 8" Barre granite clock. $40.

B. Set of four Pilsner glasses. $20.

C. Letter opener with Barre granite. $15.

D. Leaf-mount granite earring set with surgical steel French hooks. $12.

E. Pick and shovel granite tie pin. $5.

F. Leaf-mount Barre granite earring set with surgical steel posts $12.

G. Granite bolo tie, leather look cord. $15.

Brochures

CATHOLIC MEMORIAL DESIGNS

JEWS MEMORIAL DESIGNS

PROTESTANT MEMORIAL DESIGNS

CREMATION MEMORIAL DESIGNS

CHOOSING YOUR FAMILY MEMORIAL

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

How to choose symbols for your family memorial.

H. 45¢ each

I. 45¢ each

J. 45¢ each

K. 45¢ each

L. 25¢ each

M. 25¢ each

N. 25¢ each

O. 25¢ each
Barre Granite Shop

Other Publications:

P. The Story of Granite
$25.00 each

R. What Every Cemeterian Needs to Know About Barre Gray Granite Memorials: A guide to selecting and maintaining upright granite memorials. $4.95

S. Granite Inside and Out. 25¢ each

Color Poster:

T. How to Customize a Barre Granite Memorial. $1.00 each.

Videotapes:

U. New Technology in Barre

V. Artistry in Granite

W. Quarrying and Manufacturing

X. The Story of the Barre Granite Industry

Y. The Stone Whistle: Tour and explanation of the Barre granite industry, with John Forsythe.

Videos are $10 each, or all five for $40.

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FREE!
Barre Guild Logo Decals
- 3 1/2" window size
- 12" truck door size
Specify how many of each on order form

**SHIPPING CHARGES**

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| $101 to $500:     | add $7.50  |
| Over $501:        | add $10.00 |

Merchandise total

Add 5% sales tax on Vermont orders

Add shipping charges

TOTAL

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Card number ______________________

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Mail to: Barre Granite Association, P.O. Box 481, Barre, VT 05641

TO ORDER CALL 802-476-4131 • FAX: 802-476-4765

Fall 1997
Barre Granite Association

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Sealmark blue gray unit designed and manufactured for Dickson Monument Co., Dickson, Tennessee.
MONTPELIER GRANITE WORKS
Die: Jet Black, 3-0 x 0-8 x 2-0, polish
   3 Serp top, balance rock pitch

Base: Jet Black, 5.0 x 1.2 x 0.8
   Top balance rock pitch

BARRE GRANITE ASSOCIATION, INC.
51 Church Street, Box 481
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Address correction requested