Our fall issue of Barre Life, like fall itself, offers us a chance to reflect on the year. In June, the BGA membership voted to change its membership rules and membership dues structure. In a word, the BGA received a complete overhaul. We opened membership rather than restricting it. As a result, the BGA experienced the largest influx of new members on record. We also brought back two members who had left the association: B&B Monumental Engravers and Rouleau Granite Company. And we welcomed our first artisan member, George Kurjanowicz. Each of our 25 voting members has a voice in the way the association operates and in formulating the direction the BGA will take as it enters the new millennium. This issue departs from our regular format so that we can introduce you to our new and returning voting members in pictures and words. And speaking of firsts, Judee Chatot, vice president of North Barre Granite Company and BGA treasurer, is the first woman to serve on the BGA Board of Trustees in the Association's 109-year history!

The BGA Board of Trustees, October 1998
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About Our Cover
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About Our Cover

100 years ago, on November 3, 1898, Charles P. Bailey (1840-1911), a granite cutter and Union Army Veteran, completed work on the Stowell Burial Place ledge at Montpelier's Green Mount Cemetery. Work on the steps commenced June 19, 1897.
I truly believe every manufacturer should be a member of the BGA.

Steve Bigras, President

I definitely feel we are getting something for our money.

B&B Monumental Engraving

To some, the lettering and ornamentation of monuments is just plain sandblast. Not so at B&B Monumental Engravers. Just look at the name. And that distinction is evident from “little grass markers to mausoleum walls,” says owner Steve Bigras, who is also bookkeeper, estimator and shapes roses.

The company was founded in 1968 by Steve’s father, Maurice “Moe,” a well-known finisher, cutter and machinist. Moe’s father was also a stonecutter, which makes Steve the third generation of Bigrases to work in the Barre granite industry.

Steve purchased B&B Monumental Engravers from his father in 1994, the year the firm moved from its leased space in an area granite manufacturer and purchased and renovated an 8,600-square foot facility.

The new plant, whose internal configuration Steve says was laid out in an hour by him and his father, was also renovated by the two Bigrases. Design and construction come natural to the Bigrases: In 1985, they designed and built Granite Industries of Vermont’s fully automatic veterans marker assembly line.

B&B Monumental Engravers houses one rose room, two shaping rooms and one big room. “The big room is like its own sandblast shop,” Steve says. “It can handle pieces up to 16 feet wide and 8 feet tall.” The company recently did the lettering on a huge round statue base weighing 7 1/2 tons.

For the past three years, the majority of drafting and stencil cutting has been done via computer. Some is done by hand, and some comes directly from dealer full sizes.

Steve estimates that the company engraves some 5,000-6,000 pieces per year for its customers.

As an added service, Steve warehouses his dealers’ stone right in the plant to ensure quick turnaround. B&B Monumental Engravers also provides its customers with its own design books.

In addition to the engraving business, B&B Monumental Engravers offers its customers hand-etching, bronze refurbishing and cleaning services and does some polishing of granite.

The success of the company over the years, Steve says, is simple: “We offer good service, good quality, and, of course, good prices.”
Clockwise From Top: Steve and Eric Morse, Draftsman; Susan Mowrer, Etcher; Brad Tillotson, Sandblast; Brent Bailey, Lumper, in the plant.
It's a different association now. We’ve gone back to our heritage. It's the big companies who are in the minority.

If the industry is to remain a force in the future, we’ve got to have strength in numbers.

Gerard and Joe Perrault

Joe’s Custom Polishing & Manufacturing Company

Gerard Perreault is the first to admit that the sign outside his granite manufacturing plant is somewhat deceptive: Joe’s Custom Polishing & Manufacturing Company. For starters, he isn’t Joe. He’s Gerard but goes by Jerry. Joe’s his 72-year-old Dad who started the business in 1971 and who sold it to him in 1979. Joe still does some work around the plant a couple of days a week. Also, the polishing side, which gets top billing, accounts for only about 10 percent of the total business. The manufacturing of monuments is the company’s mainstay nowadays.

But, as the expression goes, don’t fix it if it ain’t broke. And for the past 19 years, Joe’s Custom Polishing and Manufacturing Company in East Barre has been doing just fine under Jerry Perreault and his old sign.

In fact, for most of the year, Jerry’s swamped. Not bad for a company that does no advertising (he relies on word of mouth and most of his customers are repeat customers). Something must be working here; for the company celebrates its 20th anniversary next year under Jerry’s ownership.

The 4,200-square foot plant and accompanying 8,400-square foot warehouse house three diamond saws, three polishers, one planer, two full-time employees and a lots of hard work.

Duplicate work and special monuments, not bread-and-butter, are what the company is noted for. That and his service and quality.

Price, Jerry says, doesn’t seem to be a concern to his customers who are located throughout the northeastern United States, Pennsylvania, Michigan and New York.

“Price isn’t everything,” he says. “In fact, 95 percent of my customers don’t even ask about the price. They are more interested in knowing that they’ll get a quality piece. On time. We seldom lose a job on price. We’re competitive — but not the cheapest.”

Unlike some of the larger plants, Jerry, the owner, is who the customer talks to. He personally handles layout and oversees every order. He also does all the books. His wife, Gala, is his trucker, delivering and picking up stone in and around Barre.

Joe’s Custom Polishing and Manufacturing Company offers African Black, Barre, North American Pink, Impala, Balmoral, Swedish Red, Blue Pearl and Canadian Pink granites.
Clockwise From Top: The main plant; Mike Peduzzi, Cutter/Finisher; Jerry with one of the diamond saws; Paul Flood, Hand Polisher/Polisher/Sawyer.
For a small guy, the BGA is more affordable now, and it saves us money.

Norm Fournier, President

Kinfolk Memorials

Norm and Maggie Fournier have what may be the most scenic location for a granite manufacturing plant: a renovated horse barn located on their 200-year-old family farm in East Barre.

And they may very well be two of hardest working people you are likely to meet — should they sit still long enough for you to meet them. For they are always on the move at Kinfolk Memorials. They and one cutter do the work of many at the 65,000-square foot facility. Maggie serves as boxer, polisher and trucker who makes the run at least once a day to Barre and back over bumpy country roads. Tad Cochran, a cutter, is their sole employee. And everything else is left to Norm.

The name Kinfolk, Norm explains, was chosen when he and his cousin, Matt Couture, established the company back in 1982. (Matt Couture sold his share to Norm and left the granite business for a while. He has since returned with his own company, Northern Granite, established in 1994 and located at the old Adams Granite Company in South Barre. Northern Granite company is also a new BGA voting member but chooses to keep a low business profile.)

When Norm purchased the plant it had last been a backhoe company. So he had to rebuild the facility, insulating the building and installing equipment one piece at a time.

Ten years ago, he built an addition to the building. Today’s Kinfolk Memorials houses a diamond saw, a polisher and a hand polisher. Splitting of slabs is done by hand.

The company also maintains a warehouse a few miles down the road where they keep an inventory of slabs.

Norm confesses that when he started the business he had little in the way of training as a stone cutter. He did work in the nearby quarries for two years. Norm says that unlike most granite companies that have been handed down from generation to generation, Kinfolk started from scratch. And he is proud of that.

Each week Kinfolk Memorials produces about 80 pieces — in Barre, North American Pink and Impala, colors Norm chose because of their popularity. Norm bases the company’s success on his service and product quality.

“What you buy is what you get.”
Clockwise From Top: Kinfolk Memorials Sign; Official Greeter; Norm and Tad Cochran, splitting a slab; the main plant.
My vision, as an artist and a sole proprietor, is to add to the collective vision of BGA members.

George Kurjanowicz
Sculpture Studio

The road that led George Kurjanowicz (pronounced: Ker-JAN-O-Wits) to become a sculptor is a circuitous one, indeed.

In 1960, during the Cold War, it brought him and his family to Reading, Pa., from his native Poland — a 7-year-old boy who spoke no English. Later, it led to Yuma, Ariz., and a three-year stint in the U.S. Marine Corps. It then took him back to Poland in 1978 during the emergence of Lech Walensa and the Solidarity Movement. There, he relearned Polish, attended art school and met his wife-to-be, Grazyna. In 1984, as a married man, the road brought him to Barre, Vt., where he has been carving granite and other stones full time ever since.

Kurjanowicz, who earned his master of fine arts from the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, Poland, is a self-proclaimed outsider. He is also the first artisan to become a voting member of the Barre Granite Association, which until June of this year was a membership category restricted to full manufacturing members of the BGA. He is not hesitant to speak about why he wanted to be a member of a club of which he had formerly been excluded. "I want to be a team player and a participant in the BGA. I want to learn the rules of the Association. My intention, however, is to be a participant and offer my point of view and that of other sole proprietors."

When he arrived in Barre in 1984, he was fortunate to meet and work under Frank Gaylord. In January 1987, he started his own studio in rented space next to the Gaylord’s Studio. He then became the in-house sculptor at Peerless Granite Company until July 1996 when he rented space at the Desilets Granite Company in Montpelier. There he sculpted for Desilets Granite and other manufacturers, including Peerless Granite Company.

The 45-year-old Kurjanowicz is an active member of the Barre community. In 1995 he was instrumental in the creation of Centennial Sculpture Project, which featured the work of Barre’s sculptor population; he was on the board of the Barre Granite Center and Heritage Museum; and he recently hosted a student at his studio through the Folklife Center.

"As a BGA member, I don’t want to rock the boat. However, I don’t want to be ignored. If that is revolutionary, then call me a revolutionary."
Clockwise From Top: Kujanowicz’s tools of the trade; At work on a monument; Floral carving; The many styles and textures of his religious carving.
We’ve got to work together. Rouleau Granite Company is rejoining the BGA for the good of Barre. The Association is important to the granite industry. The industry’s changed. We can’t afford to be exclusive anymore. Everyone should have an equal say.

Lucien Rouleau, President

Rouleau Granite Company

While some of the larger memorial companies have drifted away from their roots, ROULEAU GRANITE COMPANY remains firmly anchored to its family tradition — remaining a family-owned and family-operated business.

The company was established in 1942 as a saw plant by Rodolphe Rouleau (1905-1990), a native of Lake Megantic, Quebec, who learned the granite industry, quite literally, from the ground up: At 18, he was as a quarryman at the E.L. Smith Quarry and later a stonecutter at the Fletcher Granite Company in Milford, Mass., and the Jurras Granite Company in Montpelier.

Rodolphe’s five sons, Lucien, Bert, Raymond, Marcel (1932-1996) and Paul have worked together over the years to keep their father’s business a success. Lucien Rouleau, the eldest brother, has been company president since 1970. He is considered by his peers to be one of the leaders in the industry, one who loves the monument business as much as he loves the thrill of competition.

With 85 employees and a manufacturing plant the covers some 100,000 square feet, ROULEAU GRANITE COMPANY is one of Barre’s larger firms. Yet, despite its imposing size and market share, the company shies from publicity.

Its success and reputation, instead, have been earned — through the quality of its product and its service. “We appreciate the fact that our customers believe in Rouleau. Our company’s success is based on the traditional retail memorialist. We’ll never forget that,” says Paul Rouleau, sales manager.

The company offers its retailers a choice of 20 colored granites. The common sizes are always in stock. Earlier this year, in response to customers’ demands, the company entered a new phase when it began importing finished black granite memorials that are carved, sculpted, lettered and etched in the plant by Rouleau artisans.

Rouleau is also well-known for its mausolea. In fact, the company was one of the pioneers of the prefabricated mausoleum.

At Rouleau, tradition and technology coexist when it comes to the manufacturing. “In order to stay competitive and to increase production, the company has and is constantly investing in new equipment,” says Ray Rouleau, plant manager.

ROULEAU GRANITE COMPANY: family owned, family operated for the past 56 years!
Clockwise From Top:
Paul, Sales Manager; Bert, Vice President/Purchasing Agent Of Rough Stock; Raymond, Plant Manager; Royce Griffith, Finisher; Mausoleum Row, Aerial view of Rouleau's huge shipping department.
If we don’t work together, there won’t be a granite industry.

James Tait & Paul Trottier

Twin City Custom Sandblast

For those unfamiliar with central Vermont’s geography, Barre and Montpelier are the “Twin Cities” of Twin City Custom Sandblast fame.

Each city is unique, each with its own style. Much like Twin City Custom Sandblast co-owners Paul Trottier and Jim Tait.

The company was founded in 1957 by Plant Manager, Paul, who got his start in the granite industry at Brusa Brothers. Back then, Paul rented space in a Montpelier manufacturing plant. In 1960, he moved the business to Barre.

(An interesting historical note: Twin City Sandblast Company’s renovated building which includes new siding, insulation and a cement floor is the site of the original Beck & Beck granite company which was built in the 1800s.)

Officer Manager, Jim, who was new to the granite industry when he joined Twin City Custom Sandblast in 1988, brought his many years of experience working for a Barre electronics firm. How did he chance upon the granite industry? “I wanted to raise my kids here, and the granite is the industry in the area.”

Both men take great pride in Twin City Custom Sandblast’s people, products and service.

“At Twin City Custom Sandblast, whoever answers the phone, answers the customer’s question,” Jim says. “We are all customer-service reps, not just salesmen.” And for one week each year, Jim and Paul take to the road to visit their customers in New Jersey, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania and throughout New England.

Their 14,000-square foot plant features two automatic sandblast rooms, one hand-shaping and rose room measuring 10 feet wide with a six-foot rise, and one hand-blowing room.

From these rooms come a variety of custom, personalized designs in full range of colors.

“Unlike some companies, we don’t discourage customized designs,” Jim says. As a service to its customers, the company keeps Barre Gray and Mountain Rose markers and slants in stock and offers hand-cut letters, raised letters and etchings.

The firm has considered a name change over the years, since Twin City Custom Sandblast does more than sandblast. In fact, one of its larger jobs was duplicate curbing on the fountains at New York City’s Rockefeller Center.
Twin City Custom Sandblast
Paul Trottier/James Tait
32 Granite St.
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-6162
FAX: 802-476-6962

Clockwise From Top:
Gene Cote, Sandblast,
Second Cut; Tina Poulin,
Clerical; Ken Ball and
Steve Dukette, Sales
Representatives; Twin City
Custom Sandblast

FALL 1998
MANUFACTURING
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Kerry Zorzal
P.O. Box 126
Barre, VT 05641
800-342-1070/FAX: 802-476-3027

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P.O. Box 704
Barre, VT 05641
800-639-0424 / 802-479-1942
FAX: 802-479-5146

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Barre, VT 05641
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FAX: 802-584-4053

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Jake Coogan
P.O. Box 712
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-5812/FAX: 802-476-7349

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P.O. Box 537
Barre, VT 05641
800-451-3236/FAX: 802-479-7917

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Ed Carbonneau
P.O. Box 134
Barre, VT 05641
802-479-2508/FAX: 802-479-5438

Joe’s Custom Polishing
And Manufacturing
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395 Farwell St.
Barre, VT 05641
800-787-4004 / 802-479-9266
FAX: 800-447-9268

Kinfolk Memorials
Norm Fournier
P.O. Box 236
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800-659-1423 / 802-479-1423
FAX: 802-476-3394

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P.O. Box 458
Barre, VT 05641
800-451-3234 / 802-479-2526
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Barre, VT 05641
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FAX: 802-476-4243

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Barre, VT 05641
802-476-6177/FAX: 802-476-0570

CUSTOM SHOPS
B&B Monumental Engravers
Steven Bigras
25 Gable Place
Barre, VT 05641
802-479-0909/FAX: 802-476-3822

Twin City Custom Sandblast
Paul Trottier/James Tait
32 Granite St.
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-6162/FAX: 802-476-6962

ARTISANS
George Kurjanowicz
Sculpture Studio
George Kurjanowicz
P.O. Box 61
Barre, VT 05641
802-223-3161

ACCOUNTING
Salvador & Babic PC
Tom Babic
240 S. Main Street
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-8673 / FAX: 802-479-5165

BANKING
Granite Savings Bank & Trust
William McMeekin
P.O. Box 183
Barre, VT 05641
802-479-3313/FAX: 802-476-1220

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

ARTISANS
A. Fantoni Sculpture Studio
Alcide Fantoni
P.O. Box 160
South Barre, VT 05670
802-476-6053

Stanislaw Lutostanski
Sculpture Studio
Stanislaw Lutostanski
P.O. Box 265
East Barre, VT 05649
802-479-2531 / FAX: 802-479-2531

VOTING MEMBERS

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Fall 1998
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Robert Provost  
47 Main Street  
Barre, VT 05641  
802-476-4135/FAX: 802-476-3316

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14 Main Street  
Northfield, VT 05663  
802-485-5871/FAX: 802-485-7565

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R22, Box 2025  
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FAX: 603-527-5101

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Rutland, VT 05701  
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Ray Pouliot  
P.O. Box 712  
Barre, VT 05641  
802-476-5812/FAX: 802-476-7349
Gandin Bros., Inc.

Stephen Roy Monument Co.
Rochester, N.Y.

Steeled Medium Barre Gray
Roof-Top Die: 3-6 x 0-8 x 7-0
Sub-Base: 4-0 x 1-2 x 1-0
Base: 4-6 x 1-8 x 1-0
Photo: Mark Avery

Peerless Granite Company, Inc.

Steeled Barre Gray
Die: 7-3 x 0-10 x 8-0
Sub-Base: 8-0 x 1-2 x 0-6
Base: 8-9 x 2-4 x 0-10

Fall 1998
Joe's Custom Polishing & Manufacturing
For Schlitter Monuments
Danbury, Conn.

Select Dark Barre
Die: 6-0 x 0-10 x 3-0
Base: 7-0 x 1-6 x 0-10

Brookside Memorials, Inc.

Polished Dark Barre
Die: 4-0 x 0-10 x 2-10
Base: 6-0 x 1-6 x 0-10
Culture Craft
Sandblast Company
For Forish Memorials
Greensburg, Penn.

Polished India Red Granite
Die: 3-6 x 0-8 x 3-0

Adams Granite Company

Dark Barre Gray
Polished Vertical Die: 4-0 x 0-10 x 10-0

Light Barre Gray
Steeled Main Die: 8-0 x 1-0 x 4-0
Steeled Planter: 2-8 x 2-8 x 2-2
Steeled Top Base: 14-4 x 2-8 x 1-0
Steeled Top Base: 16-0 x 3-0 x 1-0
Rouleau Granite Company

Stippled Medium Barre
Die: 7-0 x 0-10 x 3-0
Base: 9-4 x 2-0 x 0-6

Colombo Stoneworks, Inc.
(CSI)
For Horst Memorials
Palmyra, Penn.

All-Rock Barre Gray,
Slant: 3-0 x 0-10 x 1-6
Base: 4-0 x 1-4 x 0-6
LaCross Memorials, Inc.
For Weidner Memorials
Highland, N.Y.
Bethel White Granite Bench
(Back View)
5-0 x 2-0 x 3-0

Granite Industries Of Vermont
For Abbottsville Monuments
Arcanum, Ohio
Two-Crypt
Mountain Rose
7-4 x 8-6 x 3-6
North Barre
Granite Company For
The Hebert Family of
Barre, Vt.

Steeled Barre Gray Granite
Overall Size: 6-0 x 1-6 x 5-6

Granite
Corporation
of Barre

This 10-0 x 3-6 x 7-8 Barre Monument Was Designed
And Sold By J. B. Calcagni
To His Long-Time Friends,
The Troiano Brothers, Who
Erected It For Their Parents
In Enfield, Mass.
Twin City Custom Sandblast For The Braun Family of Barre, Vt.

Steeled 5-Piece Barre Gray Granite Memorial
Overall Size: 12-0 x 2-4 x 5-10

Montpelier Granite Works For Manchester Monument Co. Manchester, Conn.

India Red Granite Die
Hand-Tooled Family Name
Die: 3-2 x 0-8 x 3-2
Base: 5-0 x 1-2 x 0-8
CLASSIC & CONTEMPORARY

Riverton Memorial, Inc.
For A. Sciolto & Son, Inc.
Cranston, R.I.

Virginia Mist Granite
Die: 2-8 x 0-8 x 3-4
Base: 3-0 x 1-4 x 0-8
Carving By Gary Sassi

Pepin Granite Company, Inc.
For Venezian
Monumental Works
Springfield, Mass.

North American Pink
Polished Die: 3-8 x 0-10 x 5-2
Base: 5-0 x 1-4 x 0-10
Hand-Carved Pieta
Family Memorials, Inc.

All-axed Barre Gray Granite Memorial
For Holyoke Memorials,
Holyoke, Mass.

George Kurjanowicz
Sculpture Studio

Meso-American Barre Scultpure
Donated To Barre City School
As Part Of the 1995 Centennial
Sculpture Project
### Item Letter | Product Description | Price Each | Quantity | Total
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
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)

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**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

**Merchandise Total**
Add 5% sales tax on Vermont orders
Add Shipping Charges
TOTAL

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**Payment Method:**

- [ ] Visa
- [ ] MasterCard
- [ ] Check/ Money Order

Card Number________________________
Expires _______/_______
Signature__________________________
FAX:__________________________

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

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**FALL 1998**
**White Water Scandal II:** Who says monument manufacturers live dull lives? In early August, the crew at Granite Industries of Vermont (from left: Norm Campo, Jeff Martell, Paul Bagalio and Forrest Rouelle) negotiated the rapids of the Kennebec River in Maine. According to survivor Norm Campo, the other people shown on the raft are prime pre-need candidates.
Fabricated the 900 square feet of Columbia Pink granite monolithic steps and balustrades, paving border, accent stone for carved centerpiece, wall cap, steps leading to the ocean, split ashlar for cheek walls at steps and circular steps at doorways used in the landscaping and restoration of this 1930s-vintage Maine home.

Steps and balustrades designed by Bruce John Riddell & Associates, Bar Harbor, and installed by Ralph Richardson of Dennis King Masonry, Hancock.