EDITORIAL

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Speaking Frankly About Monument Selling

Do you undersell your customer? Could you have sold your customer a better monument than the one he actually purchased from you?

If you are only selling the little slant marker to a customer who would buy something better from a more capable monument salesman, then you are doing your own firm a disservice.

A cemetery full of mediocre monuments made out of inferior stone is often the legacy of incompetent retail selling. No wonder progressive cemetery directors and the public look with disfavor on some monument cemeteries.

We can point to successful retail monument dealers in every part of the country both in the city and in rural areas who are successfully “romancing the monument” to their customers and selling them a better product than they were first prepared to buy when they walked in to the display. Even where there are cemetery restrictions, the retailer must set his sights on selling the very best in stock quality, symbolism and lettering.

Too many monument salesmen think only in terms of telling the prospect all about the monuments they have to offer. The prospect is supposed to sit there and listen and then sign the order. The trouble is that it seldom works out that way.

The prospect gets bored, restless and tired of listening. Instead of signing the order he may look for some way to close the interview.

Frankly, in order to upgrade the monument sale you must be a better-than-average salesman. You have to use your skills in dealing with people. First, you get the prospect to talk to you in order to gain his or her confidence. You will then get kind of information about the deceased that will help you to suggest a design that will illustrate the sentimental attachment the family members may have.

About Our Cover Picture

The cover of this Select Barre Newsletter features a photograph taken of the famous war memorial in Barre, Vermont. It is made of world-famous Select Barre Granite, carved by Barre’s outstanding artisans and designed by C. Paul Jennewein, internationally famous sculptor and designer. The young and vigorous youth depicted in Barre Granite is symbolic of those Vermonters who gave their lives for our country in all wars.

The monument salesman who asks questions is doing two important things: (1) He is creating customer confidence which is absolutely essential to close the sale. (2) He is getting the information that will help him in making suggestions that will appeal to the customer.

If your sales approach is simply trying to “give a good deal” to your customer without thought of anything else, you are locking yourself in. You limit your ability to sell “up” and you probably will not give your customer what ultimately he would be willing to buy. In other words, you will probably identify the grave but not sell a memorial. That is bad for everybody.

Sentiment! Sentiment! Sentiment! Unless you use it to sell, you and your customer will only succeed in choosing a piece of rock for identification of a grave. But, with sentiment you can create a memorial of which the family is proud and willing to pay the appropriate amount of money.

BARRE COMPANIES REPORT PLANS FOR MIAMI MONUMENT DISPLAY


As usual, these Barre firms are planning to exhibit monuments that will be of interest to progressive retailers who want to carry the world’s leading trademarked monuments. The monument designs will be an outstanding selection of modern granite monuments produced by these leading firms.

The national convention of the Monument Builders of North America will be held in conjunction with a monument exhibit sponsored by the American Monument Association. All of the 36 companies in the Barre Granite Association are also members of the AMA.
at the Barre Guild lucky day drawing

The member-companies of the Barre Granite Association will make a gift of a new Ford Pinto automobile to the lucky winner at the national convention of the Monument Builders of North America in Miami this winter.

The “BARRE GUILD LUCKY DAY DRAWING” will take place during the banquet of the Monument Builders of North America at the Fontainebleau Hotel. Retail representatives who register at the convention will be eligible for the drawing. This will be the largest prize ever given at a national monument dealers convention.

Your Barre friends are sponsoring the “BARRE GUILD LUCKY DAY DRAWING” in order to publicize our national convention and to help make it a delightful and unique experience for all who attend. Many of the BGA member-companies will have representatives at the convention. They will be displaying Barre's usual outstanding selection of granite memorials.

This is how the “BARRE GUILD LUCKY DAY DRAWING” will work:

1. Any representative of a retail monument firm who is registered at the MBNA convention in Miami is eligible to participate in the drawing. This includes wives who register. Monument manufacturers and wholesale representatives who own retail monument firms are not eligible.

2. To register for the drawing you will fill out a card which will be given to you when you register with the MBNA at the Miami convention. You will then deposit this card at the “BARRE GUILD LUCKY DAY” Registration Desk.

3. On the morning of Monday, January 24, 1972, a total of 50 names will be drawn which will be eligible for the final drawing at the banquet. On Tuesday morning, January 25, another 50 names will be drawn which will also be eligible for the final drawing. These 100 names will be posted immediately after they are drawn so that all registrants may see them.

4. On the night of the banquet, Wednesday, January 26, the 100 names will be placed in a box and the final drawing will take place.

5. The lucky winner will receive a new 1972 Ford Pinto sedan with a large engine, automatic transmission, accent group, disc brakes, radio, and carpeting. The winner may choose the color he or she wishes. All expenses of delivery and preparation to the winner’s home town will be paid by the Barre Granite Association.
Most Fine Memorials Have a Steeled Finish

Although thousands of polished monuments are produced annually, most of the outstanding memorials over the years have featured a steeled finish. Barre designers and manufacturers have personally favored the beauty of a steeled finish for their own family memorials. The steeled process in the Granite Center of the World is considered to be the finest available.

The Morris memorial shown above is a fine example of a modern approach in design. The flush base makes it easy for the cemetery to trim the grass around the monument. The beautiful lettering complements the clean modern lines of the memorial itself.

Your Barre friends believe that modern monuments with a steeled finish will give variety to your display and add interest and attractiveness to any cemetery setting. One definite advantage of a steeled finish is the fact that the lettering is much easier to read and it eliminates the necessity of a panel blown on a polished finish in order to allow the lettering to be properly read.

Hope Cemetery in Barre, Vermont, has perhaps the most outstanding display of steeled finish monu-

ments to be found anywhere. If you haven’t visited this cemetery, make it a point to do so next time you are in Barre. A motion picture produced by the Barre Granite Association about Hope Cemetery is available for you to show in your community. It is called "Memorials Are for the Living" and is 15 minutes in length. We’ll send it if you would like to reserve it 30 days in advance of showing.

LEADING RETAILER PRAISES BARRE TRAINING SESSION

Frederick A. Davis, Boston, Mass., one of our leading monument retailers, is a member of the American Institute of Commemorative Art. During the past year he had occasion to attend one of the Monument Dealer Business Conferences sponsored by the Barre Granite Association. Mr. Davis wrote "This was by far the most interesting and most productive meeting I have ever attended. I am sure that the majority of those (monument dealers) present left there with considerable more knowledge on how to determine what their selling prices should be. If they follow this out in the future, they would be far more successful and better rewarded in later years."

Mr. Davis further stated "I believe the industry has been woefully negligent and wanting in their ability to price their merchandise and services so they would receive a fair return from their investments."

The Monument Dealer Business Conferences sponsored by the Barre Granite Association have been held in many areas throughout the United States. Its purpose is to bring together retailers for one day to teach them many of the techniques of pricing and selling Barre monuments. If you are interested in more information about this program, write to the Barre Granite Association, Box 481, Barre, Vermont.

A Leading Retailer Says:

IF YOU ARE A RETAIL MONUMENT DEALER
WHO BUYS MONUMENTS AT WHOLESALE
YOU SHOULD ALWAYS BE GUIDED BY:

WHAT YOU GET FOR WHAT YOU PAY.
DON’T BE MISLED BY THE IDEA THAT
IF IT COSTS LESS IT WILL BENEFIT YOU MORE.
INFERIOR MONUMENTS ARE
A DISSERVICE TO THE PUBLIC AND TO YOU.