Woodbury, Black Onyx trim (exterior); Bethel White columns with Prairie Green pavers; Danby Marble trim (interior); Black Onyx planter; Oconee bathroom counters.
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About Our Cover
Sunrise breaks over a hill and casts shadows in Cutler Cemetery in East Montpelier.
Photo: Patrick Timothy Mullikin
When the 50th anniversary of the Flood of 1927 prompted people to gather for “Remembering-the-flood” meetings, Patricia Belding, retired librarian and writer from Barre, decided she would start her own collection of reminiscences of longtime Barre residents. These interviews served as the basis of her new book, Through Hell and High Water In Barre, Vermont: 25 Eyewitness Accounts of the Flood of ’27, Potash Brook Publishing, Barre, Vermont (802 476-8732). Of the 25 men and women she interviewed during February and March of that snowy winter in 1977, only two—Dorothy Billi and Rose Sassone—remained in 1998 to mark the flood’s 71st anniversary and the publication of her book.

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

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

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

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

Jackson’s drowning occurred in the early evening. He had driven his roadster into a ditch on Nelson Street...
and was sitting in the car when Eldon Heath and his brother Elwin, along with two other young men came down the road, having just jumped the swollen Potash Brook. They agreed to help Jackson get back to his house, located on Tremont Street just beyond the washout. Eldon recalled, “My brother and the other two fellows jumped the brook again. I took his hand. We told him to jump and they’d grab him on the other side. Well, he never waited, he just walked right into the brook. I slid down...I caught a little bush, a fir tree, I hung on and then came up....Oh, I knew he’d gone, and we felt so bad, but he was insistent on going.”

The four Thomas boys drowned Thursday night on a street where 13 small, 1-1/2-story houses were located. Helge Carlson, a granite worker, and Sheriff Sarsfield McNulty attempted to rescue the boys in a rowboat which was no match for the Stevens Branch of the Winooski River that had inundated the avenue. Harley DeCoteau recalled in his dramatic interview, “When the boat tipped, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas went and sat down side by side on the bed....They didn’t say one word, not one word.” Carlson’s account was equally exciting as he described how he grabbed two of the boys when the boat tipped, but had to let them go when he nearly lost his own life. He was carried down the river in the darkness, ending up on a granite shed roof where he stayed for 12 hours until found the next morning.
What some people discounted as a mere pipedream, dreamt collectively a few years ago at the Barre Community Economic Retreat, continues to materialize day by day.

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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Item</th>
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Clockwise, from top left: Senator Patrick Leahy D-Vt., etches his name on a black granite plaque; Allen Coburn drills core holes during a demonstration on granite splitting; George Kurjanowiec, a voting member of the Barre Granite Association, sculpts a piece of Barre Gray granite; a couple tries their hand on identifying granites of the world.
"This is a real-life Private Ryan story, right here in Lyndurst."

Saying Private Lewandowski

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

All three brothers had grown up in Lyndhurst, N.J., and each was killed within an 18-month period. According to Amvets Post Commander John A. Scalese, who presided over the November 1, 1998, dedication ceremonies of a black granite memorial bearing the etched images of all three Lewandowskis. "A fourth brother, Ted Lewandowski, was on his way to basic training in 1945 when two military police officers pulled him off the train and told him to go home."
William Lewandowski had been killed while flying a bombing mission in Germany, the third brother to die for his country (Walter Lewandowski died on the first day of the U.S. invasion of Guam. Alex was killed in action in Germany near the Roer River.) “Two boys are buried in Europe, and one in the Pacific, and this is a way of bringing them home,” Scalese said.

“T
his is a real Private Ryan story right here in Lyndhurst,” said Philip Spanola the State’s Amvets commander. Spanola was the commander of the local post when the idea originated seven years ago to erect a memorial to the brothers.

Ted Lewandowski at the dedication of the memorial honoring his three fallen brothers rests next to an actual M-60 tank in the parking lot of the Amvets Post 20, Lewandowski Hall in Lyndhurst.

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

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

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

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

AN ETCHER SKETCH

GRANITE INDUSTRIES OF VERMONT has converted a 1,500-square foot building located next to its main facility into an etching studio. The new studio makes it possible for all five of the company’s regular etchers to work on jobs at the same time. The building had been leased to a local diamond saw company for many years. “We have some of the most talented etchers in the industry, and they all agree that the new environment provides the ultimate in comfortable and efficient working conditions,” says president Jeff Martell. “The space is well lit, quieter than the main plant, and warmer, particularly during the typical Vermont winter.”

While high-quality, hand-etched portraits, scenes, and custom art work of all kinds have been available from GIV for years, the new studio allows for faster turnaround of both the etchings and the full size drawings that each etcher produces.

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

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

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

John F. Cullis, 68, owner-operator of Cullis Memorials in Brookhaven, Pa., and a long time Barre granite representative, died June 22 at his home in Aston, Pa. He was a 1948 graduate of Chester High School and a 1952 graduate of Bethany College. Along with his brothers, George and Norman, John was a granite representative and monument designer who enjoyed traveling and reading. Most recently, he worked with his daughter, Mary Elizabeth Cullis, designing memorials. He was an associate member of the Monument Builders of North America, member of Chester Lodge No. 236, F&AM and member of Sigma Nu fraternity. Surviving are his wife of 13 years, Kathleen L. Churchville Cullis, his daughter and his brothers.

BGA HOLIDAY CHEER

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

From left: Holiday Party-goers Skip Poczobut, an unidentified guest, David LaCroix, Sue Poczobut, Nancy LaCroix and Nancy Martell.
ADAMS TURNS 65

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

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

During the fifties, sixties and seventies, Elgio Zorzi, Podskalny’s nephew, owned and operated the firm. In 1984, the company entered the newest chapter of its history when Elgio’s son, Kerry, a certified public accountant, decided to enter the monument business and purchased the company from his father. After six highly productive years, Kerry concluded that the plant that served his father and great-uncle so well had finally reached its full capacity, and he decided it was time to build a modern facility.


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

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

From left: Kerry Zorzi, owner, Rich Tousignant, sales representative, Carol Cecchini, office manager, and Joyce LaRose, administration and sales

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

WINDOWS 98

MONTPELIER GRANITE COMPANY is getting a full facelift on the outside — to benefit the working environment inside.

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

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

ROULEAU GRANITE COMPANY, who returned recently to the BGA fold, held its 10th annual pension stew feed December 18 — the day prior to the industry’s annual winter shutdown.

YANKEE INGENUITY

THE BARRE GRANITE INDUSTRY WAS THE subject of a feature story in the November 1998 issue of Yankee magazine, New England’s highly revered publication. The article entitled “Rock of Ages,” co-written by Wayne Worcester with photography by Viviane Moos and historical photographs courtesy of Aldrich Public Library, traces the development of the industry in Barre, and delves into the current state of the industry. It includes interviews with local sculptors and manufacturers, including Frank Gaylord, who arrived in Barre 40 years ago from West Virginia, and Giuliano Cecchinelli, who talks about the past masters whose remains and works rest in Barre’s Hope Cemetery.

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

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

MANUFACTURING
Adams Granite Co.
Kerry Zorz
PO. Box 126
Barre, VT 05641
800-342-1070/FAX: 802-476-3027

Brookside Memorials, Inc.
Bernie LaJeunesse
PO. Box 704
Barre, VT 05641
800-639-4024/802-476-3542

Gandin Brothers, Inc.
Ed Carbonneau
PO. Box 134
Barre, VT 05641
800-479-2508/FAX: 802-479-5438

Joe's Custom Polishing and Manufacturing
Gerard "Jerry" Perreault
395 Fairfield St.
Barre, VT 05641
800-479-9266/FAX: 800-447-9268

Kinfolk Memorials, Inc.
Norm Fournier
PO. Box 236
E. Barre, VT 05649
800-659-1423/802-479-1423
FAX: 802-476-3394

LaCross Memorials, Inc.
Gary LaCroix
PO. Box 458
Barre, VT 05641
800-451-3234/802-479-2526
FAX: 802-479-2211

Montpelier Granite Works
Joe Mureta
6 Granite Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
800-451-4513/FAX: 802-223-0525

Granite Importers, Inc.
Jake Colgan
PO. Box 712
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-5812/FAX: 802-476-7349

Granite Industries of Vermont
Jeff Martell
PO. Box 537
Barre, VT 05641
800-451-3236/FAX: 802-479-7917

Hillside Stone Products, Inc.
Ed Carbonneau
PO. Box 134
Barre, VT 5641
802-479-2508/FAX: 802-479-5438

North Barre Granite Co.
Charles Chatot
PO. Box 548
Barre, VT 05641
800-227-1045/802-476-6624
FAX: 802-479-9148

Northern Granite
Matthew R. Couture
PO. Box 585
S. Barre, VT 05670
802-479-2247/FAX: 802-479-5057

Peerless Granite Co.
Bret Mugford
PO. Box 313
Barre, VT 05641
800-654-6069/802-476-3061
FAX: 802-476-3014

Pepin Granite Co., Inc.
Raymond Pepin
PO. Box 566
Barre, VT 05641
800-654-5420/802-476-5830
FAX: 802-476-5470

Rivard Granite Co.
Robert Rivard
PO. Box 86
Barre, VT 05641
800-231-8045/802-476-3542
FAX: 802-476-6408

Riverton Memorial, Inc.
Ernest Lavigne, Jr.
PO. Box 284
Northfield Falls, VT 05664
800-643-8082/802-485-3371
FAX: 800-643-8082/802-485-6535

Rouleau Granite Company, Inc.
Lucien Rouleau
PO. Box 567
Barre, VT 05641
800-343-4199/802-476-6636
FAX: 802-476-4243

ASSOCIATE PLUS
Culture Craft Sandblast Co.
Adelard Benoit
PO. Box 645
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-7351/FAX: 802-476-6557

Granite Corporation of Barre
Joseph B. Calcagni
PO. Box 633
Barre, VT 05641
802-476-6177/FAX: 802-476-0570

CUSTOM SHOPS
B&B Monumental Engravers
Stephen Biggs
25 Gable Place
Barre, VT 05641
877-479-0907/802-479-0909
FAX: 802-476-3822

Twin City Custom Sandblast
Paul Trottier/James Tait
32 Granite St.
Barre, VT 05641
800-672-9900/802-476-8716
FAX: 802-476-6962

ARTISANS
George Kurjanowicz
Sculpture Studio
PO. Box 61
Barre, VT 05641
802-223-3161/FAX:802-223-8904

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

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

ARTISANS
A. Fantoni Sculpture Studio
Alcide Fantoni
PO. Box 160
S. Barre, VT 05670
802-476-8053/FAX:802-476-8053

Stanislaw Lutostanski
Sculpture Studio
Stanislaw Lutostanski
PO. Box 265
E. Barre, VT 05649
802-479-2531/FAX:802-479-2531

BANKING
Granite Savings Bank & Trust
William McMeekin
PO. Box 483
Barre, VT 05641
802-479-3313/FAX:802-476-1220
North
Barre
Granite
Company
For
Brown
Memorials,
Inc.
Florence,
S.C.

Barre Gray
Celtic Cross
& Two Bases
Overall Height: 9-8
Ledger: 6-6 x 2-10 x 0-8
LaCroix Memorials, Inc. For Jones Monument Company Port Huron, Mich.

Medium Barre Gray Celtic Cross, Cap & Two Bases Overall Height: 8-2
Granite Industries of Vermont, Inc.
For Beij, Williams & Zito Hartford, Conn.

Barre Gray Obelisk, All Hand-Axed Height: 22-0
Gandin Brothers, Inc.
For Lupinacci Memorials
Stamford, Conn.

Impala Black Obelisk,
All Polished
Height: 10-0
Pepin Granite Company

For Clicko, Inc., Erie, Penn.

Steeled Select Barre & Polished Jet Black Six-Piece Monument: 4-10 x 2-8 x 6-7
Steeled Select Barre Base: 6-0 x 3-10 x 0-8
Polished & Steeled Select Barre Bench: 3-4 x 1-2 x 1-6
Peerless Granite Company

For Mark Nierenhausen Granite, Cold Spring, Minn.

Barre Cross: 4-0 x 1-8 x 6-10
Base: 7-6 x 2-0 x 0-10
Rock Work: Jacques Boudreault • Sculptor: Dante Rossi
Hillside Stone Products, Inc.
For J&A Bayly Construction Company
East Greenbush, N.Y.

Watervliet (N.Y.) Veterans Memorial,
Impala Granite
I just received the Fall issue of Barre Life and I had to say how much I like this issue! For the first time in a long time this issue was interesting and exciting to read. Please keep the new format and give us more of the same in the future.

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

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

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

Keep up the good work,

Rebecca A. Gerry, Proprietor - Gerry Granite Works, Gardner, Mass.
**P. The Story of Granite**

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

**Q. Barre Granite Heritage**

...(All jewelry items are rhodium-plated, with a cabochon of Barre Gray granite)

**Color Posters**
S. How to Customize Barre Memorials, $1

**Videotapes ($10 each, 5 for $40)**
T. New Technology in Barre
U. Artistry in Granite
V. Quarrying and Manufacturing
W. The Story of the Barre Granite Industry
X. The Stone Whistle: Tour and explanation of the Barre granite industry, with John Forsythe.

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<td>Letter opener, $15</td>
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<td>add $4.50</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Pick and shovel granite tie pin, $5</td>
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<td>D</td>
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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

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<th>Add Shipping Charges</th>
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<tr>
<td>$8.00</td>
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**TOTAL**

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

Name__________________________________________

Company________________________________________

Address________________________________________

City____________________________________________

State__________________Zip_____________________

Phone__________________________

Payment Method:

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

Card Number_____________________________________

Expires _______ / _______

Signature________________________________________

FAX:__________________________________________
This full-size Barre Gray granite mailbox was originally part of the Barre Centennial Sculpture Project held in July 1995. It resurfaced recently in the capital city of Montpelier as part of an exhibit of the works of area sculptors and artisans. Not visible in this photo is an envelope from the sculptor that is addressed to the Eternal Revenue Service.
TWA Flight 800 Mountain Rose Memorial. The center piece, dedicated on the first anniversary of the crash, features an etched panel with a design by a TWA flight attendant; the names of the 230 victims are sandblasted on the sides. The archway was erected on the second anniversary says Rouleau Salesman Brad Jones who oversaw production of the memorial.