The Art of Sandblasting
MANUFACTURED FOR:

The University of Vermont - Burlington, VT

This is the Health Science Research Center at UVM. Completed last year, this project contains 5000 sf of Deer Isle granite with a thermal finish at the two main entrances and along the base of the building. The trim is Red Deer Brown granite with a hone finish.
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It seems like we were just enjoying a day at the beach, and now we’re shoveling snow in Vermont. Time passes quickly these days, especially in light of the turmoil this country has endured, but Americans know how strong our country is and that strength endures.

Part of what makes our country strong is our ingenuity, perseverance, and the freedom to follow our dreams. I think of all the businesses in this country, small and large, that create our great economy. Small business makes up the backbone of our country and those businesses are often owned and operated by families.

In Barre, many of the manufacturers, who produce the beautiful monuments that you purchase, are family owned and operated. These companies have been here for many years, some dating back to the 19th century. What makes these small businesses special is their commitment to quality products and service. Barre Granite Association members do much more than produce monuments every day. All of our members are part of a greater community here in Vermont. You will find our members attending a meeting of the Granite Museum, on the advisory board of the local bank, or on the board of trustees of the local retirement home. Being part of the community means being involved with its daily life and members of the BGA, EGA, and Northwest see America as their community. When you purchase a memorial from an American manufacturer, you have the assurance of quality, service, warranty, and the knowledge that your dollar stays in the U.S.A. So when you hear “Buy American,” think of “investing in your community.”

The BGA has joined forces with the Elberton Granite Association and Northwest Monument Builders Association in a “Buy American” campaign. Buy American means investing in our country, our workforce, and our economy. BGA manufacturers stand behind every product that leaves their factory because service, reputation, and quality are of utmost importance. This has always been the philosophy behind America’s small business owner and that philosophy continues into the 21st century. Companies in Barre, Elberton, and the Northwest take pride in the memorials they produce, and support you with guaranteed American made products. Should the day come that you have a problem with a monument, you can be assured that service will be prompt.

We know from past research that a dollar brought in to your local economy will turnover an average of five times. From the worker who receives a paycheck, to the grocer, to the local gas station, to taxes paid in your community, the strength of one dollar can have a major impact on the economy. You can imagine the impact of several million dollars passing through our economy. I know that when my dollar stays in Vermont, it could mean a new computer for the local school or an extra dollar for the local senior center.

So what kind of monument do you want to purchase from Barre? Well, check out our new marketing video, “The BGA Presents: Endless Choices.” You will see it listed in the order form. The BGA took advantage of the beautiful Vermont autumn to capture some of Barre’s excellent craftsmanship. We tried to include some new designs along with some of Barre’s more traditional designs. Watching this video come together has been a great experience for all of us. From the first shots taken at Hope Cemetery through the final editing stages, I followed the production company for several weeks. I hope you will order a copy of our new video and find it a useful marketing aid when presenting choices to your customers.

Finally, and most important to me, I want to acknowledge the passing of Lynda Mureta Aldrich of Montpelier Granite Works. Lynda and her family have been long time members of the Barre Granite Association. Lynda also had a longtime involvement on the Barre Life Committee, eventually becoming chairperson. It was hard not to be drawn to Lynda. She had a wonderful smile and always made you feel that you were the most important person in the world when she talked with you. When you spoke with Lynda, it was impossible not to be smile along with her. Lynda was someone who believed strongly in the BGA and its importance to the granite industry in Vermont. She was also a wonderful friend to me and I will miss her more than I can express.

Please remember Lynda in your prayers.
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Pasquale Bagalio of Websterville died at the Barre Hospital in 1930 after being fatally hit by a flying piece of granite while working at the Wells-Lampson Co. quarry. Pasquale is the grandfather of Paul Bagalio, II. Our thanks to him for lending us these wonderful historic photos.
Two More Veterans of the Road Recognized

Bellavance & Sons of Barre recently honored two drivers who have given 25 and 30 years of service to the granite hauling industry.

Ken Blair, known as “Little Honda” on the CB, has peddled most of this granite down though western PA along the I-79 corridor from Erie south to McKees Rocks. After 20 plus years on this particular run, he changed venues and hauled directly out of Rock of Ages delivering monuments across the central plains to western states such as Texas, Utah, and as far west as Idaho. He has retired from long distance driving and works locally for Rock of Ages. To honor his 30 years of service to Bellavance, an etched granite plaque was created especially for this important anniversary. In all, Ken has driven over 2.5 million miles!

Leigh “the Iceman” Tabor has been on the same route ever since he began in May of 1976. He can tell you every turn and twist in the road from Barre down across the southern tier of NY, and through the Allegheny Mountains of western PA. Roland Bellavance presented Leigh with a gold watch and an embroidered company jacket to commemorate his 25 years of service to Bellavance Trucking. Leigh has also driven over 2 million miles!

New Faces at Adams

Don Fontana joined the team at Adams Granite as the Sales Manager this past December. Don has 30 years experience in the granite industry, primarily in sales. He is very excited to be working with Adams Granite and plans to focus on maintaining Adams reputation for high quality and exceptional service. “I want our customers to know that Adams is one of the most modern and efficient plants in the Barre district. We are here to help our customers sell our products and develop marketing tools to best serve their clientele. I am looking forward to speaking with many dealers across the U.S. and promoting Adams products and services,” added Don.

Tim Couture is also a fresh face at Adams Granite. And while he joined the team last May, he has increasingly added responsibilities to his role with the company. Presently Tim performs expediting, quoting, some sales, and customer service functions for Adams. He too worked in the sales field before joining the company and has really enjoyed his time with Adams. “The granite industry is very interesting. You truly learn something new every day and I find my job most rewarding,” commented Tim.
Another Great Year - Another Great Party

The BGA’s annual holiday party is a much anticipated celebration of our organization and industry. We get together at the end of each year not so much as competitors but friends and colleagues. Each member of the BGA plays a vital role in the success of the granite industry in Barre and the fun filled holiday party is just the ticket to cap the year. Special thanks to Judee Chatot and Charron Barney, who as the decoration committee, made the Elks Club festive and warm for all our guests. The BGA membership wishes you and your family a very happy new year.

Left: Maggie Eaton and Gwen Plante of Colombo Stoneworks enjoying a quieter moment.

Below: Jeff Martell of G.I.V. and dance partner showing the crowd how to “get down.”

Dennis Aja and friend

Our fearless leader, John Castaldo with a very spirited partner, Nancy LaCroix.

Right: Mr. & Mrs. Henry LaPerle

Middle Right: BGA President Forrest Rouelle with Jeff Martel

Bottom Right: from left to right, name unknown, Mrs. Hans Asoera, Andrea Carbonneau, Mr. & Mrs. Bob MacLeod, and Hans Asoera

Bottom Far Left: Forrest Rouelle and Heather Zorzi sharing some holiday cheer.
DEDICATED TO ALL VETERANS WHO SERVED OUR COUNTRY IN TIMES OF PEACE AND WAR AND ESPECIALLY TO THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THAT SERVICE.

MANUFACTURED FOR:
Edward Sickler Memorials - Franklin, NY
War Memorial • Light Barre over 15 feet long, 7-8 tall
MANUFACTURED FOR:

Sweet-Woods Memorials - Phoenix, NY

“BB” Barre Monument

Die: 6-0 x 1-0 x 3-0, all steeled, rabbets on top and sides of front and back, sandblast lettered two sides

Base: 6-8 x 1-8 x 0-8, steeled top, balance rock pitch
Barre Guild Releases New Video
- Production will showcase the numerous talents of BGA members -

The Barre Granite Association is pleased to introduce the latest addition to their video offerings, “The BGA Presents: Endless Choices.” This film is designed as a sales tool and shows the customer the numerous choices they have in quality memorials made in Barre, VT.

The video illustrates how details and finishing touches can enhance a memorial and many interesting and unusual monuments are featured. The images of fine memorials dissolving into the background with pleasant music and informative narration, provide a dealer’s showroom with a fabulous selling opportunity and technique for presenting the fine craftsmanship of the Barre Granite Association membership.

The showroom version repeats automatically for retailer ease and customer enjoyment. A single play version ($19.95) is also available and perfect to lend out so that a client’s family members can have input into the memorialization process.

The digitally produced video is available in the Barre Guild Store pull out section of Barre Life magazine or by calling our office. We believe your customers will enjoy viewing this informative video and knowing the extensive options of memorial design. By knowing the many possible design choices, we feel your clients will choose a memorial of higher quality.

Oops! In our Fall 2001 issue, we inadvertently said that North Barre Granite was owned by Judee Chatot and her brother Charles. In fact, Charles is her cousin, not her brother. We apologize for the error.
Lynda Mureta Aldrich died peacefully on December 29, 2001 at her home surrounded by her family, after a courageous ten-month battle with leukemia. She was 39. Born December 27, 1962, Lynda was the daughter of Joseph and Theresa Mureta of Montpelier. She graduated from Montpelier High School and received her Associates Degree from Champlain College in 1982. She married Thomas Aldrich on June 4, 1988. She was employed by Barre Sign Co. for eight years, and in 1990 went on to join her family business, Montpelier Granite Works Inc. as the bookkeeper. She became President of the Company in 2000. Lynda was an active member of the Barre Granite Association and served on the Barre Life committee. Lynda enjoyed spending time with her family, friends, and her dogs Molson and Golden. She loved music, reading, aerobics, and playing softball. Besides her parents, survivors include her husband, Thomas Aldrich, her step-children Allison and Ryan Aldrich, three brothers: Gary Mureta of California, Daniel Mureta of Montpelier and Douglas Mureta of East Montpelier and two sisters: Brenda Aiken of Colchester and Michelle Parker of Barre. She is also survived by her grandmother Ann Mureta of Montpelier as well as many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, and all of Barre, VT. Lynda was highly respected for her accomplishments in the industry and will be remembered for her zest for life, her sparkling personality, and her wonderful smile. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

The Mureta and Aldrich families wish to extend sincere thanks to everyone for the overwhelming support during Lynda’s illness.

In light of the circumstances, Montpelier Granite Works remains solid and will continue to build upon the quality reputation that Lynda so strongly valued.

Above left:
Lynda with Dennis Vachon, Sr. of Maine Memorials

Left:
Michelle, Lynda, and Tom.
MANUFACTURED FOR:
Nicoletti Memorials - Berlin, NH

Die: Jet Black, pol. (2), carved and lettered (2) sides with gold leafing
Base: Jet Black, pol. top and 2” pol. margin w/ rounded front (2) core holes
Ends & Cap: Jet Black, all rock and dusted for special contrast

This unusual monument was created as a memorial to Roger Godbout, who died in a helicopter crash (hand built by him). His wife and children's design (in the shape of a house) represents the family genealogy and Roger's legacy as an innovative, bright, and versatile inventor.
North Barre Granite

Manufactured For:
Midway Granite Company

Die: 3-0 x 0-8 x 2-0, all polished, hand carved lillies
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Granite Industries of Vermont

Manufactured For:
Peter Troost Monument Company - Hillside, IL

Dark Barre Gray monument
Back to Basics

1. Pertaining to, forming, or like a base or basis; essential; fundamental.

With the success of our “Tips and Tricks” section we are introducing a new column called “Back to Basics.”

It is our hope that this and future pieces will explain with clarity and broad understanding some of the basic language, elements, and procedures inherent to the monument industry. We welcome your comments and questions for future issues and hope this will serve you well.

In this issue, we will illustrate some lettering styles and elements. While not representative of every possible version, this should give you a good basic understanding of some of the terminology. Our thanks to Rich Tousignant of Adam’s Granite for his assistance with this piece. Rich would like to note that when one is making duplications from existing monuments, that measuring the height and depth of the lettering and artwork for orders is extremely important.

Sunk Letters

MacLellan - double lined panel (a box with two lines surrounding it), letters are sandblast sunk in a panel. This is one of the most common uses of lettering styles

Barrows – frosted (polish blown off) outline (a sunk line surrounding the outer parts of the letters)

Saylor – polished outlined letter

Hartson – polished outlined shadow (one side of the letter has an outline sandblasted wider than the other side to give the image of a shadow off of the letter)
Cecchini - sunk letters cut directly into a steeled surface

Raised Letters

Miro - polished square raised in a panel
- the "M" on top of monument, skin (very thin surface, very minor depth sandblasting surrounding polished surface) polished letter
- the inscription letters, hand-tooled "v" sunk (letter at its deepest sunk point forms a clearly shaped "v")

Ben - roman square raised letters (letters without serifs - the little tails on letters - roman typeface, fully raised off of stone, with well defined edges) in full relief, all steeled (no polish)

Leith - roman square raised letter with sunk center (the middle of the letters "sinks" into the stone)

Martin & Robinson - round raised (smooth, rounded edges) letters in full relief (no panel), with hand sculptured ornamentation

Monty - round raised letters in a sunk panel

Righini - raised rustic (the style of typeface) lettering
Manufactured For:

New England Granite - Westfield, MA

Monument for 104th Fighter Wings at Barnes Airforce Base • Westfield, MA

Center: 5-0 x 0-3 x 5-0, all steeled, Barre Gray

Wings: 6-6 x 0-3 x 5-0, all steeled, Barre Gray

Posts: 0-8 x 0-8 x 6-6, all steeled, Barre Gray, slotted at ends to receive signs
Attaching A Sign Panel To A Concrete Wall

1. When planning the size and depth of a sign, you must keep in mind that you need a minimum of \( \frac{3}{4} \)" of stone behind the letters to hold an anchor. The minimum recommended thickness for exterior applications is 1 \( \frac{1}{2} \)". If you are planning on cutting into the face of the stone any deeper than \( \frac{1}{2} \)", you will need to go with a thicker panel.

2. A minimum of four anchors should be provided for panels up to 12 square feet, with two additional anchors for each additional eight square feet of surface area. All metals contacting the stone must be stainless steel types 302 or 304.

3. Place bolts in slots drilled into the back of the panel as shown. Bolts should be protruding approximately 4" from the back of the panel. Screw a threaded stressless disc onto the bolt until hand tight against the stone. Position nut at the outer end of the bolt.

4. Drill \( \frac{3}{8} \)" diameter holes into concrete walls. Fill holes with cement base non-shrink grout and insert bolts into the grout leaving 3/8" air space between the wall and the sign. Support the sign until the grout is set (following manufacturers recommendations).

5. Caulk the 3/8" joint around the edges with expansion joint sealant. Generally, urethane sealants are recommended for expansion joints because of their resistance to abrasion and penetration. All sealants should be tooled to insure maximum adhesion to the contact surfaces.

6. Provide weep holes in the caulking at two locations along the bottom edge to allow for moisture to escape.
a rose
BY ANY OTHER NAME

BARRE LIFE LOOKS CLOSE UP AT TWO SANDBLASTING OPERATIONS IN THE HEART OF BARRE, VT. A TRUE ARTFORM, SANDBLASTING TAKES PATIENCE, PERSEVERANCE, AND A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK.

Paul Trottier is a tall warm figure whose French-Canadian heritage is evident in not only his voice, but by many of the employees by whom he is surrounded. He is a master sandblaster and known by many as one of the best in the industry. The co-owner of Twin City Custom Sandblasting has been practicing his craft for nearly 47 years and in the process, training generations of sandblasters to follow.

“Over the years, I would guess most of Barre has passed through my shop at one time or another. We are one of the few places that will train someone how to do this art without having had prior experience. Frankly, I would rather teach someone this way as they are able to learn our techniques and styles without any preconceived ideas or methods.”

- continued on page 24 -
Manufactured For:
Swenson Granite Works - Concord, NH

Sign: Woodbury Gray, 6-6 x 0-7 x 4-4, steel 2, balance rock pitch, engraved with multi-colored litho
Base: Woodbury Gray, 8-0 x 1-0 x 0-7, steel top, balance rock pitch
The FIRST company to create Laser-Etchings for the Monument Industry, now introduces

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**Cochran's Inc., Barre, VT 802-479-1035 Fax:802-479-103**
Sandblasting takes dedication and persistence. An apprenticeship can take from two to three years with many seasoned sandblasters saying they are always trying to make their work better and better.

Bill Dickinson is only 25 years old but has been working for Twin City since he was 19. One of the youngest sandblasters in the company, he is extremely talented and innovative. His self-deprecating manner beguiles his skill and commitment to make each piece better than the last. “I have yet to produce the perfect rose, but then again, it is really an impossible goal. Each one I make is better than the last, but the rose is one of the hardest design elements in sandblasting. It took me three years before I was ready to produce a rose on a commercial piece, and even now, I continue to try and perfect them with subtle variations and new techniques,” says Bill. “He has really learned a lot over the years here and is quite an accomplished sandblaster. We are even teaching him some French, just to round him out,” added Paul.

Jean Marc Cote is also a French Canadian whose quiet nature is equally matched by his warm smile and rich accent. He has been with Twin City for 37 years and has seen many innovations that have eased the time constraints and physical demands on sandblasters. “Computers and new technology are the biggest things to change how we do work here. Computers are now able to cut stencils, and do drawings for us; where we once had twelve men doing the same work we now have eight. Without computers, that would not have been possible,” noted Jean. Paul readily agrees adding, “Computers have allowed us to speed up elements of production while helping us control costs. As well, a big step forward for sandblasting was the creation of rubber sheets for stencils rather than having to use poured rubber. It is now such an easier and cleaner process.”

Jim Tait makes up the other half of the Twin City partnership and runs the office operation. He started in sales in 1989 and bought in as partner in 1996. As with many similar businesses, Jim and Paul have a nice balance of responsibilities with one handling many of the issues in the plant and the other dealing with the daily operations in the office. There is a great sense of camaraderie throughout the company, and even though Jim can’t speak French, he is well liked, respected, and an important key to Twin City’s success and future.

Starting Over

One usually wouldn’t think a fire wiping out an entire business as the dawn of a new day, but that is exactly what took place for Mark and Barry Duquette of Ron’s Custom Sandblasting. Three years ago, a devastating
fire swept through their former plant reducing it to smoldering embers and ash. A couple pieces of equipment were all that could be salvaged and they were faced with some hard choices.

"Were we going to close down and pursue other options or start over again?" said Mark. It didn't take long for them to decide and soon the plans were being drawn up for a new streamlined and efficient plant.

Take a tour of this new building and one can immediately recognize that a great deal of thought went in to every detail of its design. "We asked everyone how they wanted their stations and spaces to be designed, what was going to work best for their comfort and efficiency. The men came up with some great ideas which added immensely to the overall design of our new facility." noted Mark.

Radiant heated floors, pitted sandblast room floors, specially designed ceilings, and state of the art equipment all added to Ron’s ability to dramatically reduce the cost of utilities, materials, and supplies compared to their former plant. "We spent about $3000 in heating our 8800 sq. ft. facility last year. It probably cost us four to five times that before." added Mark. "Because of how we laid out the conveyor belt paths, we are able to do fewer transfers of the stone from one end of the facility to the other. It is all very contained and much more time and labor efficient."

Ron’s Custom Sandblasting was started by Mark and Barry’s father, and still bears his name. Working in the family business was the last thing Mark, who now runs the office operation, wanted to do when he graduated from high school. He went off to college in Massachusetts and received his B.S. in Business. It wasn’t long before he was drawn back to Barre and began working at Rock of Ages in their management training program. There he learned most every aspect imaginable of running a granite operation and stayed there for nearly four years. He worked for a couple other manufacturers in the sales end until finally coming back to help his brother Barry run the family business. "My dad was not in good health and he needed to step back from running the business if he was to get well. Barry had been working here steadily since high school, so as far as I was concerned it was his business. But he said that we should run it together as partners and that has been the arrangement ever since. Basically anything that happens upstairs (the office) is my responsibility and anything before that first step is his job. It works really well for the both of us," explained Mark.

And while Twin City and Ron’s are very different in their plant design and age, they both agree that sandblasting is one of the few professions that isn’t as affected by the flood of imports that has hurt other domestic granite manufacturers. "No matter where the granite came from, it will need the same kind of process to be sandblasted," pointed out Paul. "We are fortunate to not be hurt by this new trend in granite memorials."

What does hurt them though is the high cost of utilities and health insurance. As well, the labor pool continues to shrink and both businesses feel very strongly that something has to be done to bring new blood and talent into this industry. "If we don’t start getting more young people interested in our craft and business, then everyone around the country will be facing a real crisis in the coming years. To become an accomplished sandblaster it takes from three to four years to learn the craft and the labor pool continues to shrink. It is one of your most serious challenges today," concluded Mark.
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Barre Granite Museum
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Webstervile, VT 05678
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