

SPOTLIGHT

Rock of Ages prepares to manufacture new monument

This monthly feature will serve to explain the efforts now under way to replace the deteriorating Civil War monument and Statue of Fame that marks the earliest days of Sewickley Cemetery.

This effort is borne by Citizens for Soldiers, a group of dedicated residents of the Sewickley Valley, but the success of this project is dependent upon the support of all of the people of the valley.

Citizens for Soldiers' drive to replace the deteriorating Civil War monument in Sewickley Cemetery is progressing nicely, as some committee members recently discovered.

John Dioguardi, owner of Rome Monument Works in Moon Township, Harton Semple, treasurer of Citizens for Soldiers, and Steve Yount, superintendent of Sewickley Cemetery, traveled to Barre, Vt., on Aug. 12 and 13 to view the preparations under way at the Rock of Ages plant.

Brian Koziar, cemetery sales manager for R.O.A., conducted the tour and pointed out the status of the project.

With the money raised to this point, Citizens for Soldiers has been able to have all the Barre Gray granite needed for the project quarried at the nearby E. L. Smith quarry.

The Smith quarry is an enormous vein of the finest Vermont granite measuring 10 miles thick and 8 miles wide. The huge blocks for the monument have been transported to the plant, and as more donations arrive, the machines and hand tools of the craftsmen will begin shaping the raw granite.

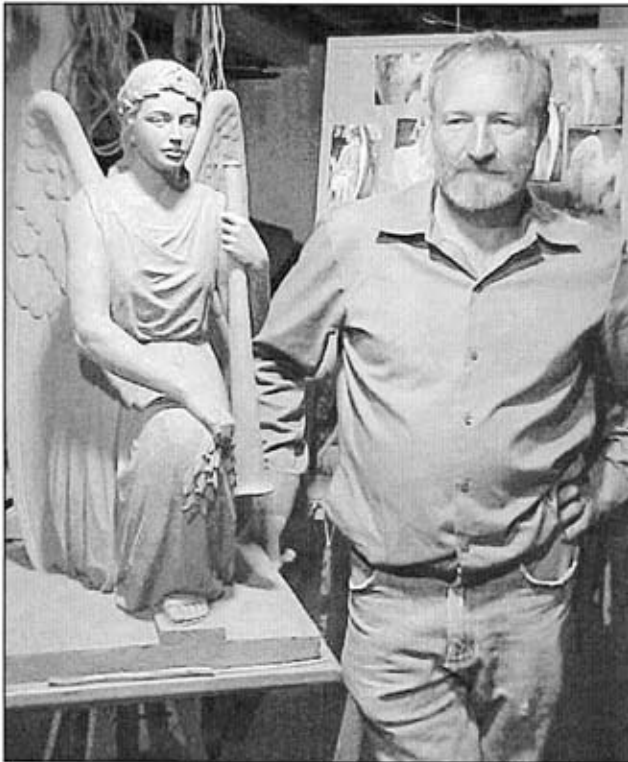
Undoubtedly, the highlight of the visit and the major reason for the trip, was the viewing and approval of a commissioned clay model of the statue of Fame.

That statue, once it is created in granite, will be placed at the top of the monument when it is erected at the cemetery.

Stanislaw Lutostanski, a master sculptor working at R.O.A., was hired to create the model and will eventually chisel the statue.

Lutostanski proudly displayed the clay model he recently completed at his home studio. The model met with the unanimous and enthusiastic approval of the visitors.

Although she is only a clay model at



THE SCULPTOR Stanislaw Lutostanski and the new face of Fame. The clay model is one-eighth the size of the soon-to-be-carved granite statue for the Sewickley Cemetery Civil War Monument.

Photos by Steve Yount

this point, the opportunity to view Fame in her entirety, undamaged and weathered for the first time in more than 100 years, touched everyone in the room, demonstrating the value and necessity of this project.

Brought to this project by John Dioguardi, Lutostanski traveled to Sewickley Cemetery in December 2003 to view, photograph and measure the statue.

Since that time, he has been hard at work on the model while also carving granite statues.

A native of Poland, Lutostanski graduated from The Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, and then spent five years

working for the government and churches. He arrived in the United States 23 years ago and quickly acquired enough work in the granite business to move to Vermont with his family.

Once in the United States, Lutostanski established himself as one of the finest sculptors in America. A quiet man who goes about his work with the skill and patience of an artist, he has created numerous statues that are displayed throughout the United States. Notable among his work is a life-size statue of Perry Como that is on display in Canonsburg, Pa.

Statues of Christopher Columbus,



Father Popieluszko (New York City), Judge Harold Cohn (New York City), Pope John Paul II (Doylestown, Pa.) are also among the more than 30 monuments he has designed and carved since 1981.

Since the face on the statue of Fame has weathered beyond recognition, and since no photographs have been found showing her original appearance, it was imperative to hire a sculptor capable of creating a face for the monument.

Lutostanski's proven ability to carve famous faces and his special love for creating angels made him the ideal choice for this important project.

After viewing the monument in December, he fell in love with the project.

"My first few years in this country, I was taking any available work," he said. "Now I take just what I like. This is what I like."

The sculptor's talent and love for this project is readily apparent in the clay model.

Donations are accepted at any time for the restoration project. Send checks to: Citizens for Soldiers Fame Fund, P.O. Box 293, Sewickley, PA 15143