

# UPDATE



By appointment to  
The Ontario Provincial Government  
Designers and Builders of the Terry Fox Memorial,  
Thunder Bay, Ontario

September 2001

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This newsletter is published six times a year  
as a service to its members by the

# OMBA

Ontario Monument  
Builders Association

349 Weston Road, Toronto, ON M6N 3P7

## This May Be Just The Meeting You Need To Attend

All monument builders in Ontario should seriously make an effort to attend this industry seminar. If there is one meeting you should ever attend – WE BELIEVE THIS IS THE ONE.

October 28, 2001 – Ontario Bar Association – 20 Toronto Street – Toronto, Ontario. Time: 10:00 A.M.

Over the last nine months the OMBA Board of Directors and industry committee members have been heavily involved in government legislative meetings attended by monument builders, funeral directors, cemeterians, casket stores, transfer services, consumer groups, with representatives of the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services – Marketplace Standards and Services Branch.

This group first convened individually with the Honourable George W. Adams, Q.C. As a result of the initial meetings the Bereavement Sector Advisory Committee was formed and appointed. The results of these committees' dealings could seriously affect how we will or will not do business in Ontario cemeteries in the future.

In a letter dated May 31, 2001, from the Honourable Norm Sterling, Minister of Consumer and Business

Services, thanked us for participating in mediation/facilitation exercises of March 24 and 25, 2001 at the Delta Chelsea Hotel. Minister Sterling reported that he had reviewed the comments of the Honourable George Adams, Q.C. and enclosed a copy for our perusal. What is most important within this letter and is that Minister Sterling had instructed staff to convene a BSAC with a mandate, and we quote: *"the Committee's role will be to advise on options 'to create a single regime' containing 'strengthened consumer protection provisions' and 'clear rules setting out conditions under which combined cemetery and funeral home operations can be permitted.'* The proposals should also foster *'a level playing field'* for industry participants."

The seminar will cover how these meetings have progressed to date and the possible new legislation that will be drafted later this fall. Please attend and learn what your new future might be and what is at stake from these proceedings. It is imperative that every monument builder in the Province of Ontario has an opportunity to have a voice for their future.

# New Board Of Directors 2001

Special thanks go out to Gary Foster for his tireless efforts on behalf of the members of OMBA as the president. Gary stepped aside to concentrate his efforts on the legislative facilitation's that will be very important to our future within the death trade industry.

## Ontario Monument Builders Association Board Of Directors 2001 – 2002

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## A New Look

You might have noticed some changes to Update. We are hoping that you like what we've done and where we're going. What we are trying for is a clean, modern look that can be read through the traditional newsletter or online.

Our thoughts are either a download from the OMBA website with an email message telling you that it's there, or as an attachment by email. The format would be .pdf (Adobe's Portable Document File – free Reader at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)

for those who don't already have it; latest version is 5.0).

Tell us which you would prefer, or alternatives if you're so inclined. We need feedback! We also need a current listing of email addresses. Email has the most changes of any contacts (it's certainly not written in stone :) so email me with your address. Please!

Until next issue...  
Robert Youngs, CM  
Editor  
ryoungs@idirect.ca

# President's Message – Our Doors Are Open

**O**ur convention this year was a great success due to the contributions of our displayers (granite and associated products).

It is important to note that the attendance of retailers was up in numbers. My incoming President's speech stressed the importance of a strong association. Remember that the only way to get someone's ears, to voice your opinions and concerns, is



**Doug King**  
OMBA President

Builders. For this reason, we need to

by strong association representation. We are the smallest players between Cemeterians, Funeral Directors and Monument

shout louder to be heard. We need your membership support.

Remember you have a special skill that others do not; you know by your customer's reactions, when they see how you work and your finished product, that we are and can be impressive with our designs and products. Please join in and shout it out as loud as you can. Our doors are still open. Let's keep them open.

*President - Doug King*

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## Cemeteries Tightening Restoration Skill Requirements

**M**ore and more cemeteries are looking to the Ontario Government's Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation for leadership in restoring and maintaining older cemeteries.

Should this trend continue you might require certification and

training to allow you to do any restoration work in these cemeteries. These certification courses are two day affairs and costs are determined by the number of participants.

All interested parties should fax their name and company information to Doug King at Smith Monument

Co. at 1-416 769-5677. A sample schedule will be faxed back with a list of tools required for the course. At some point during the winter months, when our busy season is over, we will contact you to schedule a course date.

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## Special Thank-You's

**T**o Mike Yolkowski, your convention chairman for his extraordinary efforts to make our 2001 convention such a great success. Running a convention is a monumental task but becomes double the task when a new venue and a time of year change are thrown in to the equation. Well done, MIKE.

To the members of Glenmount Memorials of Port Colborne and Smith Monument of Toronto and Northern Monument services of Toronto who

donated their time to help set up and tear down the displays. To Marlene Sutton of Rediker Transport for contributing 2 trucks and drivers to deliver the displays to Niagara Falls and also to pick them up again at the end of the show. To all our manufacturers and product suppliers for a superb display and generosity in donating door prizes for all 3 days of the show. We ask that you show your own personal thanks by purchasing from your contributing displayers.

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## Reinventing the Wheel

**I**sn't it tiring to have to go back and redraw, repurpose and redo a simple stone rendering because the client wants it "just like that only different and hurry up because I have to go" instead of a series of templates? Wouldn't it be lovely to have them say "I'll take #28, when can I have it?" We think so.

The Granite Store has proposed setting up a template section for simple line art style stones at their website. Would you be

willing to share? And what format would be useful to you? Native files like CorelDraw, Illustrator or similar? Generic .eps files? Tifs or internet format picture files like gifs and jpgs?

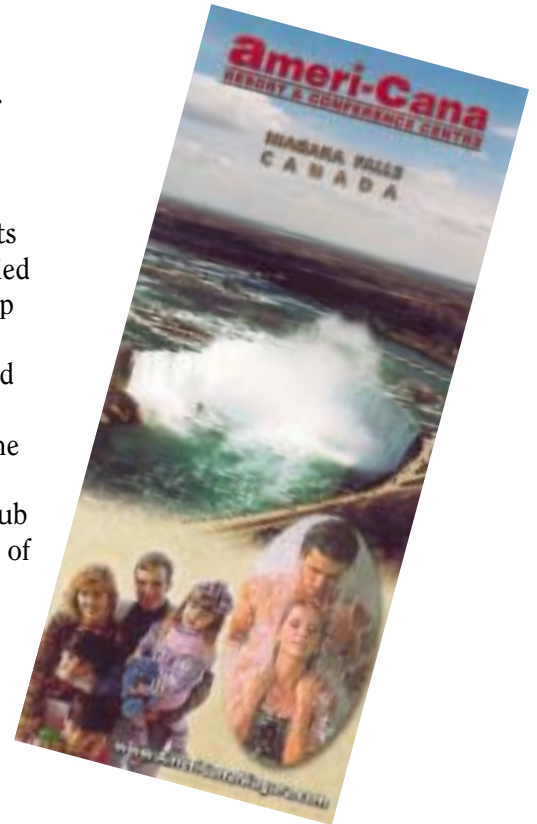
Is this a useful area to pursue? Please email Bob at [ryoungs@idirect.com](mailto:ryoungs@idirect.com) and give your opinion.

# Convention 2001 ~ Great Success

The change of venue from Kingston to Niagara Falls and the time of year change from Fall to early Spring has proven to be a successful venture.

There was an increase of numbers in manufacturers, suppliers and in retail visitors. As well, we were honoured to have many American visitors. Monument Builders, Suppliers and their families were treated to three days of excellent displays, a most informative seminar by Peter Troost, and abundance of fun and excitement aside from the convention itself. There were trips to Niagara-on-the-Lake and shopping for some of the wives. For those of you who dared to take a trip to the Casino Niagara, the Casino thanks

you for leaving your contributions. For others there was some wild dancing at the local watering hole. On the business side, displayers presented new designs and products and made new contacts and solidified old contacts. A general membership meeting elected a new board of directors, reviewed the finances and were brought up to date on the industry committees ventures of the past year and received a report on membership. Yuk Yuk's comedy club presented us with another evening of humour.



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## OMBA Survey Results

A survey was sent shortly after the convention to find out how successful the convention was and how we might improve it. We apologize to those people who received the wrong survey. The results of the survey indicated that Niagara Falls was a more popular venue than Kingston and that Spring was more popular than Fall. It is impossible to find the perfect time or place for a convention. However, we feel that whenever or wherever it is, you should consider attending. The stronger an association we build the better the services we can offer you. Our convention will return to Niagara Falls in 2002 and we look forward to the return of the many retailers from other parts of Canada

and the U.S.A. that joined us this year. The information on 2002 convention will follow soon.

A comment that came from the survey results was that the cost was perhaps a little too much. If you divide the cost by the 365 days in the year you will find this is a small investment, per day, to help improve your business and strengthen your association. The displayers have expressed a desire to tender out the set up and tear down of the displays. All interested parties should submit their names to Mike Yolkowski or Doug King before the end of December 2001.



# NEWS FROM MBNA

**A**s many of us probably already know, Monument Builders of North America is the national association that speaks for all monument builders in North America. Many firms in Ontario are members of MBNA as well as our own OMBA. With this issue of UPDATE and others to follow, we will try and provide current events from MB NEWS that might be of interest to our members.

MBNA encompasses 20 different districts throughout North America and in our case District 20 is reserved for Ontario. There is a district trustee from each area that sits on the Board of Trustees for MBNA. The Board of Trustees meets annually, usually at the MBNA Convention time, to hear the various reports and to take whatever appropriate action might be required. There are a number of committees that also oversee the work of MBNA and they are always active. Ontario is represented by Bob Youngs, CM. Any questions that you might have in regards to MBNA are always welcomed either at headquarters or directly to the Trustee.

**MBNA NOMINATIONS** are currently underway as this issue comes to press and you should refer

to MB NEWS for additional information. Nominations will close on October 1, 2001 and then referred to the Nomination Committee. All current members of MBNA are eligible for nomination.

The **CONSUMER ADVOCACY COMMITTEE** is one of the most active committees of MBNA and works closely with Carolyn Jacobi. Anyone who has seen Carolyn at one of the MBNA conventions can readily testify to her determination to make sure that the consumer in North America is treated fairly. She is a great advocate for the consumer. We are fortunate to have her services. When Carolyn started a few short years ago at Indianapolis, our voice in these matters was but a lone cry in the wilderness. Now, it can be stated that there are very few areas that Carolyn's voice has not been heard. From the North to the South and from the East to West, Carolyn has been out in full force to help and aid the consumer as well as many, many monument builders.

To contact the MBNA, write to 3158 South River Road, Ste. 224, Des Plaines, Illinois 60018. The website is [www.monumentbuilders.org](http://www.monumentbuilders.org) and toll free phone: 800-247-6358.

## UPCOMING MBNA MEETINGS

**October 12 – 13**

**Illinois Monument Association**  
Paradise Hotel and Conference Centre  
East Peoria, Illinois

**2002**

**January 17 – 19**

**Mid-Atlantic Monument Builders**  
Marriott Waterfront Hotel,  
Baltimore, Maryland

**Knowledge Quest 2001**  
Marketing and Public Relations  
by Paul DiMatteo

**January 27 – 30**

**Monument Builders of North America**  
93<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention and Booth Exhibit  
Kingston Plantation,  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

**March 7 - 9**

**Ontario Monument Builders Association**  
To Be Confirmed  
Annual Meeting – Industry Display and Seminar  
Ameri-Cana Hotel,  
Niagara Falls, Ontario

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## Peter Troost Speaks To A Sell Out Audience

**I**n one of the most impressive displays of attendance for a two-day seminar, OMBA members were treated to one of the most captivating seminars presented in recent memory.

Peter Troost of Chicago, Illinois,

one of the largest retailers in North America, held everyone's attention with a most informative lecture on how to operate a business profitably.

Peter showed actual numbers; methods to analyze costs; how increase profits and how to outsell

the competition. His combination of serious business talk and humorous stories captivated a full house for two days. This was the most productive seminar ever—if you missed this, you missed a great presentation.

Thank-you Peter Troost.

# Brian O'Brine Retires

In early August of this year, Brian announced in the St. Catharines Standard that for health reasons he had sold his interests in the family firm, Kirkpatrick and O'Brine, to Mr. Michael R. Law. On behalf of his grandfather, Mr. L. A. Kirkpatrick, and his father, Mr. E. C. O'Brine, he thanked the many families who, over 72 years, entrusted their memories to their collective skills in stone.

Brian started to work full time in the family business around 1973 after a stint with Union Carbide. He recalled how at the age of 5 he used to play around the old compressor and helped around the shop. After 1973, the first order of the day was the sales, then the work to finish the memorials and finally the delivery and set-up in the cemeteries. Saturday was left to clean up the shop and the equipment to be ready for the next workweek.

Brian eventually joined the Ontario Monument Builders Association as a regular member and then was elected to the Board of Directors. At the same time, Brian was also involved with the Monument Builders of North America becoming President of MBNA in 1989 to 1990. He was also the President of OMBA at the same time completing his second term of office. This was a very active time in



Brian's life not only from the standpoint of the Association work that took a great deal of his time for he also decided to run for office in the Provincial elections representing the Welland-Thorold riding as the Progressive Conservative candidate.

During this same time period, OMBA was heavily involved in lobbying Queen's Park on behalf of the Monument Builders in Ontario. In fact, one of Brian's recollections, during our conversations, reminded both of us about the famous quotation in the Toronto Star from a long time Queen's Park observer who noted that the lobbying efforts of OMBA was "the fireiest and most intense lobby in living memory." Brian also stated that he was personally proud of the fact the members of OMBA raised a considerable amount of money through its MYTTEO campaign to

assist the work done on behalf of the Monument Builders in the Province of Ontario. As we all know, the work continues, as noted elsewhere in this issue of Update.

O'Brine was involved in many fine memorial projects during his career notably the Canadian Diabetes Association Memorial and his contact with the Honourable Robert Welch in regards to the Terry Fox Memorial in Thunder Bay. It was through Welch's contacts to the Honourable George Snow that paved the way for the project completed in 1982.

Brian continues to live in Welland with his wife Karen where his two grown and married daughters visit with the one grandchild. He is a member of the Masonic Order and a past member of the Royal Arch.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish Brian well and much happiness in his retirement. Brian, enjoy your retirement and may the pursuits of your endeavours bring you great joy and as many happy memories as we have of you from all your efforts and work that you accomplished. On behalf of the Ontario Monument Builders Association and the Monument Builders of North America, thank you.

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## Executive Director Resigns

It is with deep regret that we announce that Len Domino has resigned as the Executive Director of OMBA. Domino and Associates have been an intregal part of OMBA's growth over the last number of years. Len will continue on a temporary basis to advise us

during the ongoing legislative meetings. Special thanks go out to Len and his staff for their years of service. We wish Len great success with his future endeavours.

For the time being any inquiries or problems should be directed to your board of directors. If possible use fax

or e-mail messages when possible. All update magazine communication should be directed to Doug King or Bob Youngs, CM. All legislative concerns should be faxed to your Industry Chairman, Don Sanderson, or your meeting representatives, Bob Youngs, CM and Gary Foster.