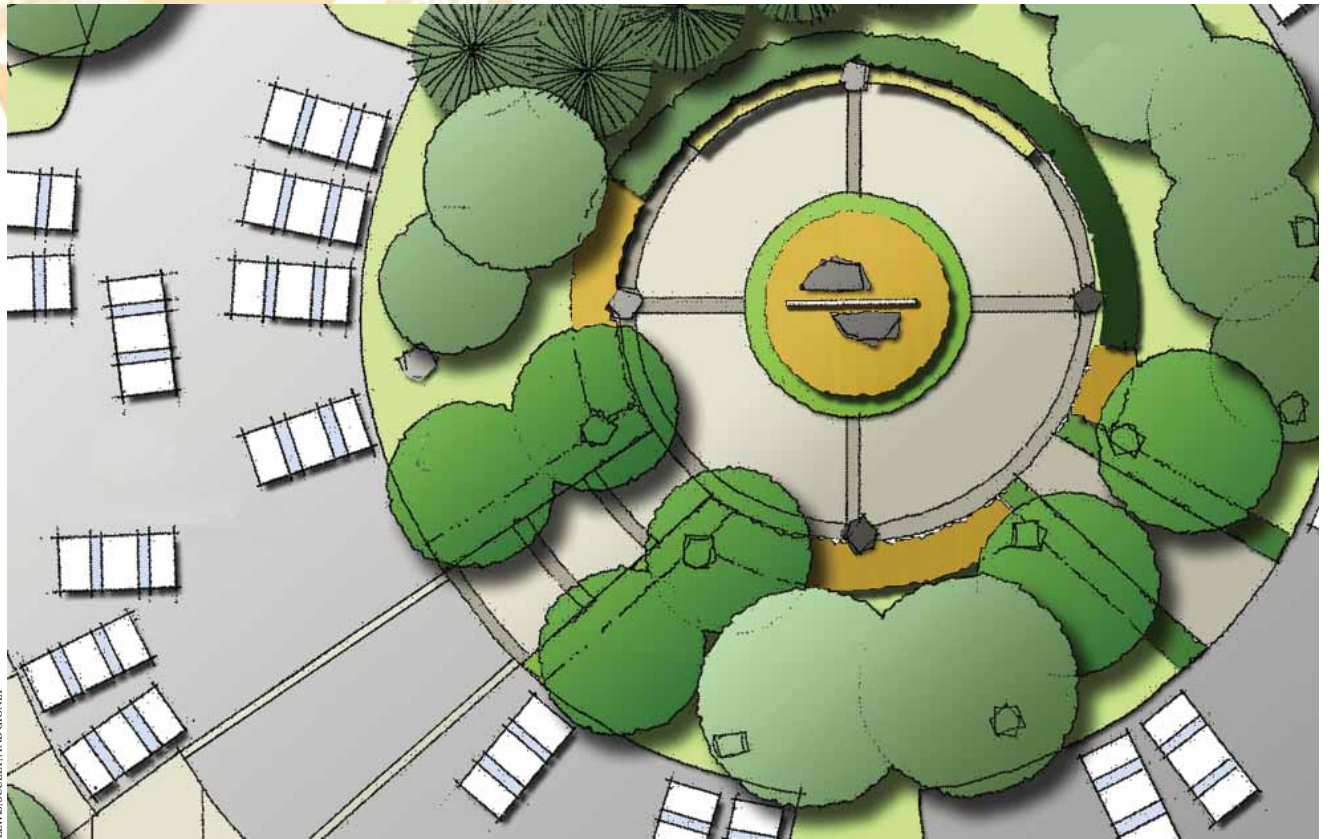


STRENGTH IN UNITY

Airline Pilots Securing Their Future Through ALPA



LEWIS, SCULLY, AND GIONEF

Circle of Honor

*My walk had purpose
My steps were quick and light
And I held firmly
To what I felt was right
Like a rock*
—Bob Seger

9/11+5

To their passengers, their families, and their union and airline comrades, the four flight crews who took to the skies on the bright morning of Sept. 11, 2001, were solid as a rock—solid and heroic.

Not that they knew they were about to face catastrophe—it was an extraordinarily beautiful autumn morning as they set out to work—but their heroism emerged from the fact that they were honorably and faithfully doing the jobs they had signed up for: the mission of carrying passengers to their destinations by air, a naturally risky proposition, though made safer over decades through the efforts of ALPA and other safety advocates.

Then, on that crystal-clear day, over New York City, and Washington, D.C., and Shanksville, Pa., everything

changed. Terrorists seized those airplanes and turned them into weapons that went careening into the World Trade Center's twin towers and the Pentagon. A fourth crashed in a Pennsylvania field, killing all aboard but sparing potentially thousands more at its intended target.

In June, with the fifth anniversary of that tragic day looming, ALPA pondered how to mark the event. After discussions, brainstorming, all sorts of ideas laid on the table, the thought emerged: In front of ALPA's Herndon, Va., building was a rarely traversed circle of walkway surrounded by trees and bushes. Why not erect a memorial on that spot to honor the pilots who died in the line of duty?

A presentation was given to ALPA's Executive Council. "The Council's consensus," says ALPA's first vice-president, Capt. Dennis Dolan, "was that this would be a fitting and elegant memorial to the crewmembers who were senselessly murdered in the horrific attacks of Sept. 11, 2001."

On this September 11, ALPA dedicated the memorial to the four cockpit and cabin crews (see "As We Go to Press," p. 10) in the wake of herculean efforts by designers, vendors, and ALPA national officers and staff over a very short time. As Mike Carney, ALPA's manager of real estate and facilities, said, "This is for the pilots—to honor their profession-



WILLIAM A. FORD

Stephen Phenneger, site foreman of the Ruppert Nurseries crew, maneuvers the second central stone into position in the center of the circle.

alism—and it honors all pilots, who face risks every day.”

Carney and Lisa Noyes, supervisor of Publishing Services, were given the nuts-and-bolts responsibility for managing the memorial’s creation.

“We wanted something permanent and stately and sophisticated, not manufactured—something natural and peaceful,” Noyes said. So their thoughts turned to nature itself, and to the solemnity of rocks—particularly rocks from areas near the crash sites. With the help of landscape architects Lewis, Scully, and Gionet of Vienna, Va., ALPA settled on the idea of a large central stone of several tons, supplemented by smaller stones, and enhanced by a garden of plantings. It would be a place of repose for anyone passing by, for meditation, and where pilots could come together in an evening after a day’s work at ALPA’s offices.

Noyes called the Chamber of Commerce in Somerset, Pa., a few miles from Shanksville, and they put her in touch with New Enterprise Stone and Lime Co.’s general manager, Gene Barron. Noyes said, “Gene was totally helpful. We went up to the quarry, and he had pulled some stones aside for us to look at.” New Enterprise quarries out Loyalhanna limestone, which the company primarily crushes for skid-resistant road-building material, but its nature is monumental.

Then Noyes and Carney discovered that Barron and his crew provided temporary office buildings and built an access road at the Shanksville crash site in the days after United Flight 93 went down (see “Paving the Way,” p. 36). “We knew we’d found the quarry,” Carney said. “It touched home.”

Barron showed them his piles and piles of rock. In western Pennsylvania, Loyalhanna limestone can be 40 to 60 feet thick. As Noyes and Carney shopped for their central stone, they spotted some excellent candidates, but, Barron remembered, “When my machine couldn’t pick them up completely, I said, ‘You aren’t going to get them moving down there. They’re too large to transport.’”

Disappointed at not finding their prize, but undaunted, Carney and Noyes selected 18 of Barron’s smaller, beautiful stones for the memorial, and came back home to continue the search. Noyes then contacted Luck Stone in Northern Virginia. Its stone specialist, Darlene Hanson, suggested working with one of the company’s suppliers, Dan Russell, owner of Russell Stone in Curwensville, Pa. His fabrication facility makes large finished stone, and right now is quarrying stone for the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center.

Luck Stone flew Noyes and Carney to Clearfield, Pa., and as Russell was driving them to the quarry, he told them, “I don’t mean to make you nervous, but we’ve had a real problem with rattlesnakes this year, so be careful where you step.” They were. But the rattlesnakes lay low, and then, Noyes said, “We found the perfect stone—7½ feet wide, 9 feet tall, and 3 feet deep.”

They had thought of erecting matching stones, but this ideal giant made of sandstone would be hard to duplicate. Instead, they thought to split it—not sawing it with a clean cut, but making a forced and ragged break, symbolic of what happened on the day the U.S. airline industry broke apart.

Russell performed a technique called pin and feathering on the giant rock: drilling ¾-inch holes 6 inches deep at intervals along its length, inserting two metal bars shaped like J’s (feathers) in the holes, then driving spikes (pins) into the holes, causing the stone to split in two—resembling, perhaps, wings or a tail section.

The rocks from New Enterprise, as well as Pennsylvania bluestone and other stones for the walls, arrived at the Herndon site by late August. Carney described the memorial’s design as workers from Ruppert Nurseries mixed and poured concrete under the summer sun.

“Wedge-shaped stones are placed at magnetic north, south, east, and west points around the perimeter of the circle, to represent a classic navigational tool, the compass,” he said. Four bands of Pennsylvania bluestone, reminiscent of the stripes on a pilot’s uniform, lead from the points to the central stone. Rectangles of bluestone are inlaid around the circle’s perimeter, rising to envelop 25-foot sit-

Paving the Way

After United Flight 93 crashed into a field in Shanksville, Pa., on Sept. 11, 2001, all hell broke loose. Gene Barron, general manager of New Enterprise Stone and Lime, which is providing monument rocks to the ALPA 9/11 memorial, was one of the many people called upon to help handle the aftermath.

On the day of the crash, Barron responded by bringing in temporary office trailers for the FBI and other officials who were investigating the crash. Then, four days later, the FBI asked the Pennsylvania Highway Department who could do some paving right away.

"So they came to my house and got me," Barron recalled in a phone interview, "and I drove over and talked about what needed to be done. There was an old coal road that took you right to the crash site. They were in a real big panic to get it paved. They wanted blacktop, something to cover up the mud real quick. And they wanted something usable because they were going to be there for a while. So we didn't grade, we just paved over the existing areas of this old rough roadway.

"I got crews and trucks, and we started paving about



LESA NOYES

Gene Barron

mid-afternoon and had everybody work through the night. We finished up there about 8 or 9 the next morning. The FBI wanted us not to go there in daylight—they were doing surveillance there—so we waited for that area to go dark. It wasn't easy to do that at night, without any lights anywhere, but that's what we did.

"There was one area where they'd made a make-shift memorial for the families. That was the first thing we did, where they were going to have that memorial, paving an area so the families could drive in there and park and walk out and not be all over mud and stuff. They'd ask us to stop work when the families would come—they'd always come with a police escort—and that's what we did."—S. B.

ting walls on either side of the north point. Four wooden benches and some naturally arranged stone croppings will provide more seating. Sentry stones face the ALPA entrance and flank the opposite side of the circle.

On August 29, a tractor trailer from Russell Stone rolled into the ALPA parking lot bearing 24 tons of rock, including the split centerpiece, weighing maybe 10 tons in total. A dark gray band runs through the stone's break, like an artery. The rock's natural earth-tone coloring is subtle and rampant—pale gray, lichen green, rust brown, speckled like trout, stark white scars, splashes of blue. Russell donated the center stone and the others he sent, along with the labor to extract them from the quarry.

Ruppert Nurseries and Potomac Landscape Contractors partnered on the stone and foliage landscaping. Potomac provided most of the plantings—magnolias, bloodgood maples, ornamental grasses—but didn't have the manpower to do the stonework. Potomac approached Ruppert to help meet the challenge of the September 11 deadline, Carney said, and senior officials at both companies came to the decision to make it happen, "knowing what it meant. It wasn't an average landscaping job, it had meaning to it."

"All the vendors have been amazing," Noyes said. "They've gone above and beyond for us." Carney added, "We wanted to have something for the 11th, even if only a groundbreaking, but the vendors have taken a personal interest, and they've all been extraordinarily helpful, so much more was accomplished than originally expected."

On the day the center stone arrived, Stephen Phenneger,

supervising Ruppert's crew, said as his men worked feverishly with shovels and concrete and rocks and clouds of dust on a sweltering August day, "We'll get it done in time, even if we have to work on the weekends and in the rain."

Two days later, each 5-ton center stone was chained and strapped, and an enormous crane lifted them as carefully as it would a sleeping baby into the prepared hole, where Phenneger and his crew anchored them with buttresses and concrete so they will never fall. The whole procedure took several hours. The stones are staggered, the space between them bisecting the circle and facing ALPA. That same week, word came that Ironworkers Local 40 was contributing two pieces of I-beam from the World Trade Center; they were incorporated into the garden landscape.

Capt. Joseph Genovese, chairman of United Council 52 in New York, said of the memorial, "Though United and American Airlines pilots were hit hardest by the losses on 9/11, those losses were felt throughout the U.S. airline industry. I see many pilots from other airlines with ALPA's 9/11 sticker on their flight bags. This memorial acknowledges that all airline pilots, no matter who they work for or what their union affiliation, have felt the effects of 9/11."

The memorial's mighty centerpiece is as fundamental as the earth it is laid in, symbolizing a day when so many lives were broken and the airline industry was almost brought to its knees. Yet the pair of rocks stand solid, together . . .

*... standin' arrow straight
Like a rock, chargin' from the gate
Like a rock, carryin' the weight
Like a rock.*

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