

Academy Hill Monument
Stratford, Connecticut

December, 2016

Conservation Treatment Report

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General Information

Object: Sculpture/Monument
Title: Academy Hill Monument
Materials: Sand-cast zinc
Fabricator: The Monumental Bronze Company
Date: 1889
Dimensions: Base dimensions: 42 ½" square in plan
Top dimension: 16" square in plan
Four primary leg angles, continuous: 3" x 3" x 3/8"-thick in section
Secondary horizontals: 1" x 1" x 1/8"-thick in section
Diagonals: 3/4" x 3/4" x 1/8"-thick in section

Location: Stratford, Connecticut

Conservation Treatment Performed

- A. All sections were disassembled.
- B. The existing stainless steel tower was cut during disassembly to enable removal of the upper sections. The lower portion of the tower was preserved in place.
- C. The existing concrete slab was partially demolished.
- D. The foundation was inspected and evaluated for stability.
- E. A new internal supporting system was designed re-using the existing stainless steel tower elements and adding new elements to create a functional and safe armature. The goal was to re-distribute the load of the structure to minimize zinc creep and cracking of the materials, make sections entirely independent of each other when supporting load and pressure, and fulfil current building code regulations.
- F. Section 1 was partially repaired off site. The bent and disfigured portions of metal were straightened and aligned.
- G. Section 1 was re-installed and the remaining repairs were completed.
- H. The remaining sections were re-installed while the upper portion of the original steel tower was welded to the lower portion.
- I. All remaining tears and cracks in metal were repaired by welding using lead and zinc rods. Micro cracks were filled with lead wool.
- J. The missing plaque was installed in place of the previously existing plywood.
- K. New rosettes were fabricated of galvanized steel, based on the design of the existing rosettes in the top portions of the monument.
- L. The entire structure was cleaned using conservation detergent Orvus and Architectural Biocide, D/2.



Figure 1 Before treatment, general view

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Figure 2 The monument after treatment, general view

Maintenance Recommendations

The monument should be inspected periodically at least twice a year; once in the spring, and once before winter. New changes should be noted especially involving new cracks. Considering the sensitivity of the original materials to cracking and structural instability, professional conservator and structural engineer should be consulted on a regular basis.

The metal should be regularly cleaned of accretions and pests. Surface dirt can be washed out using Orvus soap in aqueous solution, 1 tablespoon of soap per each gallon of water, at garden hose pressure.