

## Statue of Liberty

# Is she the only woman left on a pedestal?

By **INK MENDELSON**  
Smithsonian News Service

She could fairly be described as a classic beauty. Thick curls frame strong, yet serene, features - well spaced eyes, long Roman nose, generous mouth and clearly defined chin. Tall, full-figured and stately in bearing, the Statue of Liberty's face and form are familiar to millions all over the world.

Her curls - some of them close to eight feet long - surround a noble head that is 10 feet from ear to ear and 17 feet three inches from cranium to chin. Each eye is 2½ feet wide, her nose is 4½ feet long and her mouth measures three feet across. Liberty is 151 feet tall without her pedestal.

It is her pedestal, however, that anchors the lady firmly to old Fort Wood on Liberty Island in New York City's windy Upper Bay. The granite-faced pedestal is 89 feet high with a 65-foot-high base, making the entire statue 305 feet tall. Until the turn of the century, Liberty alone dominated the New York skyline. Today, she remains the most colossal statue in the world.

### DESIGNED BY FRENCH SCULPTOR

For almost 100 years, the classical goddess, designed by French sculptor Frederic Auguste Bartholdi and created in the image of his mother, has watched over New York's harbor. She bears a torch symbolizing liberty and wears a seven-spiked crown radiating to each of the seven continents and the seven seas. At the statue's feet are broken shackles signifying freedom from tyranny. In her left hand, she clasps a 24-foot tablet marking America's birthday, July 4, 1776 - in Roman numerals, of course.

All in all, it was quite a birthday gift that the United States received in Paris on July 4, 1884, when Ferdinand de Lesseps, president of the Union Franco-Americaine, presented the statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World" to Levi P. Morton, U.S. Minister to Paris. On that festive occasion, de Lesseps noted that France's gift represented the contributions of 180 cities, 40

general councils, a large number of societies and more than 100,000 subscribers.

"We commit it to your care, Mr. Minister, that it may remain forever the pledge of the bonds which should unite France and the great American nation." What de Lesseps didn't know then was that, by the time the statue was on her way to America, the French committee would be relieved to be rid of the 450,000-pound lady.

Liberty Enlightening the World wasn't even a gleam in her creator's eye until the evening in 1865 when Eduoard de Laboulaye gathered a small group of French intellectuals around his dinner table. Laboulaye, a distinguished jurist, academic and ardent admirer of the republican form of government, believed passionately in America. To his dinner guests, he sang the praises of that long-lived republic which stood in contrast to monarchical Europe and to a France in constant political upheaval.

### JOINT PROJECT

According to sculptor Bartholdi's account, Laboulaye speculated about a joint French-American project, a monument "to be built in America as a memorial to their independence." It would have been politically dangerous for French republicans to erect a statue to liberty in Paris in Napoleon III's Second Empire, but America was a different matter. Government at home could be more safely criticized through a statue across the sea.

Bartholdi set sail for America in the spring of 1871 in search of what Laboulaye had called a "happy idea," a plan for a monument that would "excite public enthusiasm." That summer, he traveled everywhere, making new American friends for himself and the monument. The sculptor visited the poet Longfellow and smoked a cigar with President Grant.

Bartholdi sent Laboulaye a report of his first impressions of America, right down to her peas: "Everything here is big, even the petits-pois..." As he traveled, the monument took definite shape in his mind. Liberty Enlightening the

World would be "a statue of colossal proportions which would surpass all that have ever existed since the most ancient times." Bedloe's Island in New York harbor, gateway to the New World, became his choice as an appropriate site for the American colossus.

### TOOK TIME

But monuments take time to rise and colossal monuments take lots of time. Meant for America's 1876 centennial, Liberty would not come to these shores for another decade.

Committees were formed on both sides of the Atlantic, the Union Franco-Americaine in 1875 and the American Committee in 1877. The French would raise funds to build the statue and transport it to the United States. The Americans would design, build and pay for the pedestal. Congress acknowledged the gift in 1877 and authorized a search for a site.

During the long construction period, the statue was not idle. Liberty did her part in self-promotion and fund-raising. Her right forearm and torch made a hit in Philadelphia at America's Centennial Exposition. Her head appeared at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878. And in the summer of 1882, when she was completed to the waist, Bartholdi gave a little luncheon for 20 journalists in her right knee. Tireless promoter though he was, sometimes even Bartholdi grew impatient. He wrote to his mother: "One cannot imagine all I have had to do and especially to wait, it was like the cooking of a poor crawfish."

### NEW ENGINEER

In 1879, the project's original architect, Violett-le-Duc, died, and a new engineer was chosen. "Gustave Eiffel was the logical choice for Bartholdi," observes Robert Vogel, curator of mechanical and civil engineering at the Smithsonian's Museum of American History. "Even before his famous tower, he had an excellent reputation based on his bridges - spectacular in their size, span and scope."

Like any classic beauty, the Statue of Liberty has good "bones." Her innovative iron skeleton,



### Standing tall

The Statue of Liberty stands as a constant reminder of our independence.

designed by Eiffel, is the framework which supports a fragile copper skin approximately the thickness of two quarter-dollars.

Bartholdi chose copper because it is light, strong yet easily worked, attractive and resistant to salt-laden air. Because his giant work would have to travel across the ocean, he constructed it in 300 pieces.

## Restoration begins

# Even monuments can deteriorate

By **INK MENDELSON**  
Smithsonian News Service

"Oh, oh - daylight," Paul Kinney almost whispered. Kinney, curator of the Statue of Liberty's American Museum of Immigration, was guiding another of the many millions of visitors up the steep, double-flight spiral staircase inside the statue. Along the 168-step journey from Liberty's feet to her crown, he had seen light filtering through a small hole in her copper toga - somewhere around the hemline.

After almost 100 years, even a symbol of American can wear out - especially if she is subjected constantly to salty air, high winds, air pollution and the strain of forever holding aloft a 21-foot torch. That torch was first lighted with great celebration at Liberty's dedication in New York City's harbor on Oct. 28, 1886. President Grover Cleveland spoke eloquently of liberty enlightening the world, but the statue's sculptor, Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, complained that the torch cast the light of a "glowworm."

The statue's lighting has been improved considerably over the years with ever-more-powerful electrical systems, but time has worked against Liberty in other ways. Her "bones" have become weak in places and her "skin" has rusted inside and out.

The Statue of Liberty's deteriorating condition has worried both private citizens and the National Park Service for some years. Since 1933, the Park Service has been the guardian of the National Monument, which today includes the Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island and Ellis Island, the former immigration station a half mile away.

In 1982, President Reagan announced the formation of The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Commission and named Lee A. Iacocca its chairman. The commission's goal is to raise \$230 million entirely from private sources - including America's school children, ethnic groups and large corporations - for the restoration and preservation of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island by 1986 and 1992, their respective centennials.

The Statue of Liberty is familiar to millions, but not many give much thought to how she's made or what kind of shape she's in. Her classic body is formed by a thin molded-copper exterior skin made up of 300 pieces hung independently from an interior support skeleton. This iron framework, designed by Gustave

Eiffel a few years before he created his famous tower, is basically in good condition but does require strengthening.

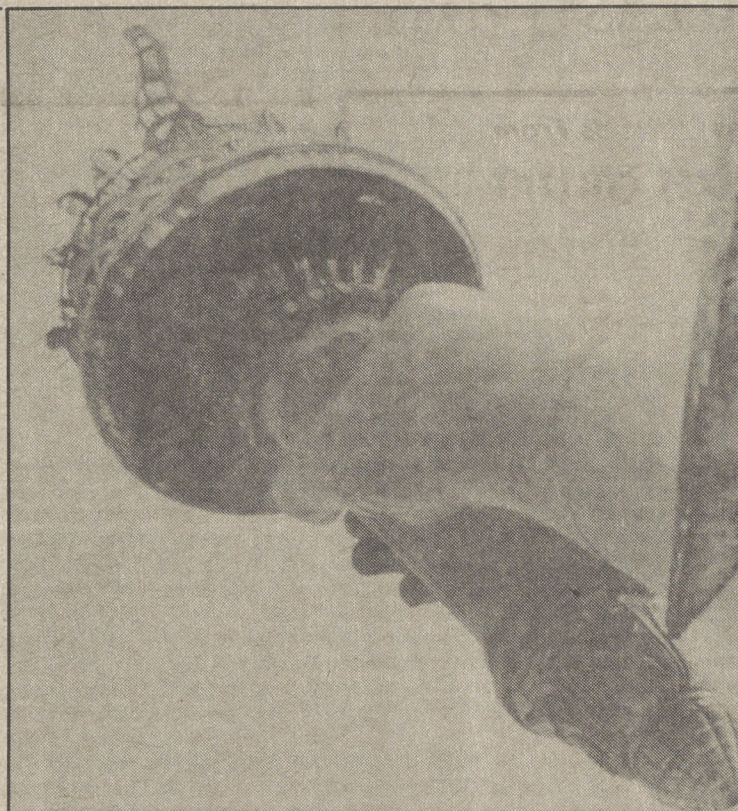
The structural connection of the upraised torch-bearing arm to the central iron pylon that is the statue's backbone is seriously weakened and must be rebuilt. Every effort will be made to repair the ailing arm in place, but testing may reveal the need to remove it.

The statue's torch, however, definitely will have to be removed and replaced. The legendary beacon is corroded and leaky and, according to joint French-American architectural and engineering team's 1983 report, is at "definite risk of structural failure." Once, visitors loved to stand on the torch balcony, but it was closed in 1916 because access was difficult. Today, ascent to the torch remains the dubious privilege of Park Service personnel. "Her torch is a little loose," Ross Holland, the director of restoration and preservation of the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, says. "It's waving about 15 inches."

The torch and balcony will be rebuilt and their replacements constructed according to the sculptor's design. The present internally lighted torch flame made of copper and hundreds of pieces of amber glass will be replaced with a gilded solid copper flame like Bartholdi's original creation. New external lighting will enhance the torch's golden glow.

The structural report shed light on another, rather startling fact - Liberty's head is two feet off center. Apparently, there were slight miscalculations in reassembling the great gift from France after she arrived from Paris in 214 crates. "She looks beautiful," Holland says, "and since this isn't a structural problem, we won't do anything about it."

Other external work to get Liberty in shape for her centennial includes replacing with modern



### First to go

The Statue of Liberty's torch was lower to the ground last week on the Fourth of July and will be replaced with a gold replica in 1985.

straps the corroded interior from strapwork supporting the copper skin; replacing worn parts of the skin with pre-patinized (green) copper; reshaping skin portions distorted from corrosion, and bathing the entire statue in a mild detergent to remove stains, pollution and other foreign materials.

Beauty may be only skin deep, but Lady Liberty will get a number of practical visitor improvements as well. One new feature will be closed-circuit TV cameras that will allow those unable to make the

arduous climb to her crown to get a good look at the inside of the statue. However, after years of experience, David Moffitt, superintendent of the Statue of Liberty National Monument, knows what a magnet that steep and narrow spiral staircase is.

"Once, I was climbing the stairs behind a visitor, a bit impatient at his slow pace. When I got to the crown, I saw that the man was blind. From that moment on, I realized that people climb the Statue of Liberty for more than the view."

No part of Liberty's shell rests directly on the parts below; each is hung independently on the iron skeleton, foreshadowing the development of the skyscraper in the late 19th century. Thanks to the genius of Eiffel's design, the statue has been able to adjust to temperature and atmospheric changes and to resist the strong winds that buffeted her.

### WITHSTANDS WEATHER

Liberty has withstood the winds of adversity and change as well. After her formal presentation to the American envoy, she stood for months in lonely majesty, towering over Paris rooftops, in back of Bartholdi's workshop. She then spent long months on French docks packed in 214 custom-made crates marked for reassembly in New York's harbor. Liberty lacked the promised American pedestal still on the drawing board of its designer, Richard Morris Hunt, dean of American architecture. There wasn't enough money to start the job.

Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis, Minneapolis and Baltimore newspapers editorialized that their cities would raise the money in no time should the statue be offered to them. The New York Times expressed moral outrage: "This statue is dear to us, though we have

never looked upon it, and no third-rate town is going to step in and take it from us."

It took another New York paper to act. Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of the New York World, began a relentless "people's campaign" that didn't stop until the necessary amount remaining for the pedestal's construction, \$100,000 had been raised. Daily he recorded every contribution, no matter how small, and printed letters like this one: "I am only a sewing girl but I am in full sympathy with your effort." She sent 50 cents.

### DEDICATION DAY

On the great day of Liberty's dedication, Oct. 28, 1886 - a day so wet and foggy that the fireworks had to be postponed - it is unlikely that President Cleveland, Bartholdi or any of the dignitaries and guests gave any thought to the hundreds of immigrants unloading their scanty belongings at Manhattan's Battery. They certainly in no way connected the immigrants with the statue. But two poets foresaw what Liberty would come to mean to the millions of immigrants who came to America in great waves from the year of her dedication until the mid-1920s.

Emma Lazarus, a young poet with a growing literary reputation, had written an ode to Liberty to help raise money for her pedestal. In Emma's poem, the Statue of Liberty became the "Mother of Exiles." Famed poet James Russell Lowell wrote to Emma, "Your sonnet gives its subject a raison d'etre" - literally, a reason to be - "which it wanted before."

### NATIONAL MONUMENT

In an irony of history, the Statue of Liberty became a national monument in the same year, 1924, that the National Origins Act set a ceiling on immigration and established a national origins quota system. Once again, Liberty's meaning was transformed. The tide of immigration ebbed, and, in two world wars, American men sailed to battle. Most of them came home - to the Statue of Liberty's welcome.

And so it came to pass that Lady Liberty - a handsome Parisian immigrant - became the symbol of America herself. Even in this day of women's liberation, she is one lady everyone wants to keep on her pedestal.

## Bank officials discuss merger

Board members of First Eastern Corp., Wilkes-Barre and Scranton National Bank have concurrently agreed to amended terms of a proposal that would result in a merger of the two financial institutions.

The announcement was made jointly following board meetings of the two organizations by Richard M. Ross, Jr., president of First Eastern and Scranton National President Robert V. Horger.

Under the amended proposal Scranton National shareholders would receive two and one-quarter shares of First Eastern stock for each share of Scranton National stock. That figure represents an additional one-quarter share from the two shares in the original merger agreement. In addition, board members of First Eastern agreed that Horger would become vice chairman of First Eastern Bank upon consummation of the merger.

Ross said he felt the amendment was warranted following a reappraisal of Scranton National's recent progress.

First announcement of a proposed merger between First Eastern and Scranton National came in February of this year.

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