

Rumbaugh

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century. Examples include objects such as weather vanes and signs. He has also been influenced by woodcutters of the 15th and 16th centuries. "Woodcutting was always important in Germany," says Simon. Rumbaugh has studied at Oberammergau, Germany.

"He's a very spiritual person," Simon says of Rumbaugh. "There's a kind of purity that comes through, a kind of innocence."

That spirituality is seen in the Sleeping Beauty piece that adorns the entrance to the children's wing at the Back Mountain Memorial Library. Three panels tell the story. On one side of the door, the witch looks up at Beauty, clutching her fists in anger. On the right side of the door, the prince climbs the vines toward Beauty. Above the door, Beauty sleeps. The vines tie the three characters together. The witch stands on the vines, the prince climbs them, and they wrap around Beauty's legs, ensnaring her.

The piece also has strong symbolism. Above the witch, a snake bites a butterfly, a dove flies above the prince's head, and a mouse sleeps at Beauty's feet. The sculpture is a pierced relief, meaning that the viewer can see through the vines to the other side. The three panels are mounted to a glass plate for support.

"It's perfect," says head librarian Martha Butler. "It's an inviting entryway to the children's room. It gives something magical and mysterious at a quick glance," she says. "It sets the tone for what we hope to promote through books. Everyone comments on how beautiful it is."

Rumbaugh also did a series of figurines of people he admires, including Helen Keller, Henry David Thoreau, Rosa Parks, and Thomas Merton. The Smithsonian Institute bought the sculpture of Rosa Parks, and the piece was featured in the first international exhibition of the National Portrait Gallery. The collection was supposed to go to Tokyo, Hong Kong and mainland China, but the Chinese government wanted to censor the exhibition by removing two pieces from the showing. The institute pulled the exhibition. "At first the Institute thought that my piece was one they objected to," says Rumbaugh. His piece, however, wasn't one of the two.

Rumbaugh has spent 10 years carving for churches and other commercial projects. He carved a six foot high replica of the crest of Elmira college for their theater, and he has also carved letters for the Luzerne County courthouse. A sculpture of Methodist church John Wesley sits in the Stettler Room at Wyoming Seminary in Kingston.

Although he has sold smaller pieces to private collectors in other states, most of his work remains in Northeast Pennsylvania. Lately, Rumbaugh has moved away from commercial work. "It was a big change going back to commission work," he says.

Rumbaugh has worked in other sculpting media such as clay, plaster, and stone. "Clay is additive. You can always fix your mistakes. You're always taking away with

Genealogy

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John Gager
Lifelong friend

wood." Stone, he says, is "very, very dusty."

When creating a sculpture, Rumbaugh starts with a sketch on paper. He draws the piece from the front and side, then draws those two sides onto the block of wood. He cuts out the outline, then clamps the block to his workbench and carves the piece by hand with chisels and mallets. Rumbaugh also paints his sculptures. The Sleeping Beauty sculpture took four or five months to complete.

"While most of us have gone on to do mundane things, he's stayed true to his calling," says John Gager.



POST PHOTO/BILL GOODMAN

Dorothy Knafka keeps her family history records on computer. She is publicity director for the Northeastern PA Genealogical Society.

"When we have meetings, we do share information," says publicity director Dorothy Knafka, of Shavertown. The members swap tips about sources and how to find information.

The society's main project is photographing burial records from local cemeteries. The records are photographed with a special camera, and the images are transferred to microfilm. They have photographed records from 60 cemeteries in the Northeast Pennsylvania, 10 of them in the Back Mountain.

Studying genealogy is part history lesson and part detective story. "If you like history, that's what you're studying," says Dean Sawyer. "That's what makes it so addicting," says Dorothy Knafka.

Knafka has learned much about the lives of her ancestors and living relatives in other countries. She has traced most of her family line to Slovakia. As a result of her investigations, she has traveled to Europe and met her family. She has started to learn the Slovak language, and communicates

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Northeastern PA Genealogical Society

with family members via e-mail. The Internet gives genealogy buffs 24 hour access to information, and allows far-flung family members to stay in touch.

The Society has about 300 members, both from the local area and around the country. It exchanges information with other genealogical societies and libraries. The Society exists on grants, donations, and membership dues.

The Society meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, from 7 to 7:30 p.m., at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Wilkes-Barre. They do not meet during the months of June, July and August. For information about the Society, visit their web site: www.rootsweb.com/~panepgs/ or call Dorothy Knafka at 696-3455.

Registration open for 'Sem Summer'

Registration is now open for "Summer at Sem 2000," Wyoming Seminary's extensive summer program for primary, middle school and high school students in sports, academics and performing arts.

Programs for primary students (ages 3-10) will use the brand-new theater, Macintosh computer laboratory, gymnasium and library. Primary programs will run from June 26 through July 21.

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Middle school and high school

students can live on the Kingston campus during summer programs. The Young Academics Program, also a day or boarding option, offers independent study to gifted boys and girls entering grades seven and eight.

The Blue Knights Sports Camp is a six week camp covering co-ed sports and recreation for students ages 8-14. Campers can take one, two, or all six weeks of the sports camp, which begins June 19. The Lady Blue Knights field hockey clinic will be held from June 12-16 for girls ages 11-17, basketball camp for middle school girls will take place June 19-23, and soccer camp slated for June 26-June 30.

For information contact Wyoming Seminary at 283-6086 or e-mail semsum@wyomingseminary.org.



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