

Standard-Speaker
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Memorial dedication a real big 'Wow!'

By JOHN E. USALIS
Standard-Speaker Staff Writer

SHENANDOAH — If there is one word that could be used to describe the completed Pennsylvania Anthracite Miners Memorial, and the crowd that filled the street for Sunday's dedication, it was the first one from committee Chairman Theodore "Ted" Souchuck at the podium.

"That word is 'Wow!'"
"I said a prayer last night asking the Lord for a good day, and He really answered me," Souchuck told the crowd. "I welcome everybody here to this dedication of the miners memorial, dedicated to all of the anthracite miners. I hope we have done a good job."

The memorial project started over three years ago, and though there were people who said it could never be done, the committee and all the supporters proved the detractors wrong.

The Greater Shenandoah Area Chamber of Commerce was also involved in the project.

The memorial in Girard Park contains three bronze panels sculpted by Zeno Frudakis, a world-renowned artist and sculptor. The panels depict the



Shenandoah Miners Memorial sculptor Zeno Frudakis, left, and committee chairman Ted Souchuck reconsecrate the memorial in Shenandoah Sunday afternoon.

lives of miners, including one panel which was inspired by a 1891 photograph of South Rock Street (now West Street) in

Shenandoah. "I feel like this is the second time today that I'm making remarks. The first time is

there," Frudakis said, pointing to his sculptures. "Those remarks will be heard for thousands of years. I hope, so I'll

keep this a lot shorter. "It's been an honor and a privilege for me to be involved in this project. It meant a lot to me

because my father was a miner, and he was actually injured in the mine, so I had a lot of feeling for this project. My wife is from this region and her father was a doctor who treated men who had black lung disease," Frudakis said.

Frudakis said that there were many people who helped provide him with artifacts and information to make the sculptures historically correct and faithful to the heritage depicted there.

"I think this monument is not just one to the miners, but it is also a monument to this community which was able to come together to honor their heritage and history this way," Frudakis said.

Mark T. Major, executive director of the Schuylkill County Visitors Bureau, presented the historical tribute.

"I stand here as a son of the anthracite region, proud of a heritage experienced to date by eight generations of my family. I appreciate and respect those who made this community, this county, this region, my special home," Major said.

He said the real industry was the most significant aspect of

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Delano's history filled with railroad yarns

By RICHARD W. FUNK
and FRANK ANDRUSKAVAGE
Standard-Speaker Staff Writers

While a railroad town is made of many things, it just doesn't seem complete without stories of those who worked on the iron road.

For three days and nights, the storm raged while wind drifted the snow into huge mountains. Near Delano, on the Hazleton line, Malone's Cut, filled all the way to the top with snow. While most residents stayed in their homes, three train crews from Delano were called to man their Consolidation-type locomotives, their mission to open the cut so traffic could move.

History relates that the drifts were higher than the engines and, although they tried to ram their way through, the only result was the snow packing tighter.

It is not recorded how or when the cut was eventually cleared, but probably crews with snow shovels done the job; the locomotives could not.

One of the railroad stories that went down in local history was that of an engineer named Ollie Mason. Working out of Delano, Mason had just started his train across the high bridge

near Saint Clair when the main driving axle on his engine snapped.

Through either luck, skill, or a combination of both, Mason was able to keep his passenger train on the tracks and brought it to a stop on the other side of the span.

One of the most popular locomotives during the age of steam was the "camel-back," which had the cab centered and the firebox in the rear. Working

on this type of engine must have

near Saint Clair when the main driving axle on his engine snapped.

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The Delano Fire Co., above, and its nearby modern playground, serve as one of the focal points of the Schuylkill County community.

Our TOWNS

Once a major center of rail activity in the anthracite region, Delano is home to many of those old, entertaining yarns from the days when railroading led the transportation pack.

As more and more freight and coal moved by rail, train crews working out of Delano began traveling to places like Wilkes-Barre, Mauch Chunk (now Thorpe), Mount Carmel, Shamokin, and the Pennsylvania Railroad connection at Tomhicken.

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Dr. John P. Degenhart
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