

USS *Arizona* Silver Update:



In an article written for the November/December 1994 issue of *Silver Magazine*, the author provided an historical account of the silver service from the USS *Arizona*. The article indicated that, aside from the pieces typically associated with a silver service, a bronze statue of a miner was included. Except for the miner, which was considered missing, most of the silver service was housed in the Arizona Capitol Museum.

The statue has been recently found. Lorraine Marks-Haislip, the historian for the U.S.S. Arizona Reunion Association, went to the Bremerton Navy Museum on her usual quest for artifacts. She inquired whether the museum had any of the sports trophies from the *Arizona*. The reply was that the museum did indeed have one and that another group was located at the Naval Historical Center in Washington, D.C. Helen Devine, the volunteer director and curator at Bremerton, instructed Mrs. Marks-Haislip to contact the center to follow up on those trophies.

According to Ms. Devine, Mark Wertheimer at the Historical Center could help by determining the information needed to search the holdings. With Mr. Wertheimer's help, they found that twenty-two sports trophies were housed at the center. Mr. Wertheimer also indicated the center had another piece that might belong to the State of Arizona, a statue of a miner — the missing statue.

The official request to return the statue was made in 1996 by Mark Killian, the Speaker of the Arizona House, to Dr. Norman Cary, the curator for the Naval Historical Center. Mr. Michael Carmen, the director of the Museum Division, Arizona State Library, completed the request. The statue was returned by the Navy and officially unveiled to the public on 14 September 1999 at the museum in the Arizona State Capitol (where the USS *Arizona* silver service is housed).

The statue is approximately forty-one inches tall and depicts a copper miner with pick and shovel. The miner stands against a background that appears to be a representation of malachite or copper crystals. The copper miner sculpture was most likely selected as a gift

The Miner Returns

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to the *Arizona* because of the state's importance as a supplier of copper. The statue is of gilded bronze (gilding would resist corrosion from saltwater air). A very worn silver plaque on the base appears to read *Presented to the U.S.S. Arizona by the People of the State of Arizona 1916*.

The idea that the sculpture is in fact part of the original silver service gift is verified by the inscription, which matches that on the silver coffee urn. A second verifying fact is that an example of a card given in 1916 for a contribution to the "fund" for the "Silver Service" displays an image of the miner. The final and most significant piece of information to establish a connection to the silver service is that the statue is double-struck *REED & BARTON* (the makers of the silver service).

The author contacted Reed & Barton and, once again, was told the records around 1916 had been lost or destroyed. The company representative was also not aware of any foundry work having been done. The possibility arose that perhaps the statue had been cast at Gorham. However, an initial search of the Gorham records by Samuel Hough did not find any indication of the statue.

Fortunately, the author was contacted by Sherry Langrock, a researcher in the process of documenting battleship silver. Ms. Langrock indicated that according to Gibb's *The Whitesmiths of Taunton*, Reed & Barton did have a bronze foundry. She further stated that the early Reed & Barton records are housed in the library of the Business School at Harvard University. There she had seen photographs of pieces from the *Arizona* service that do not match items in the Arizona Capitol Museum's collection (possibly the missing pieces suggested in the 1994 article). Further exploration of the records now needs to be undertaken.

