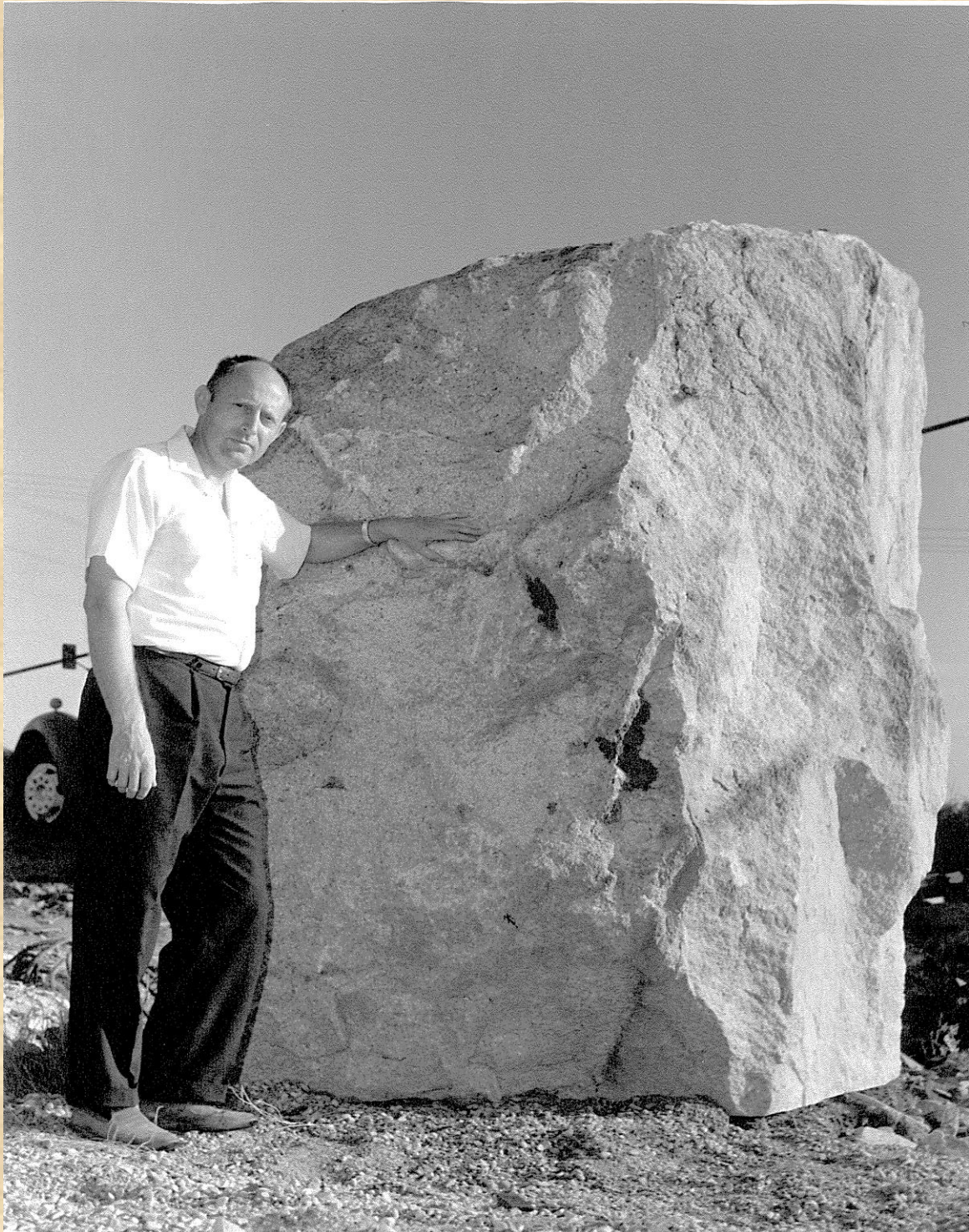


A Stone Sculpture of a Bear

By Reed L. Tyler

May 1967



Our Bear is a thesis presented to the Department of Art Brigham Young University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

The thesis was accepted by the arts department of Brigham Young University Aug. 17, 1966

Historical background of granite as sculptural medium:

Carving in granite has been done for centuries. Even in this modern day, granite has been used to a degree in sculpture work. Mount Rushmore in South Dakota and Stone Mountain in Georgia are excellent examples of granite carving in the United States. The supply of granite in the Salt Lake area is plentiful. Little Cottonwood Canyon is formed by huge cliffs of granite running from its mouth up into the canyon for nearly eight miles. The floor of this of this canyon is strewn with boulders of various sizes. From these granite boulders, building blocks have been fashioned for the construction of the Salt Lake L.D.S. Temple, various other smaller buildings, homes and bridges. However, to this writer, no known granite carving has been done in this area except for a few decorative symbols and designs in the granite on the exterior of the Salt Lake temple Annex. The probable reason for this is the prohibitive expense involved in handling this stone and carving it.

Need of a Sponsor

How would this stone be used for sculpture? Due to its size and the moving expense involved, it would need to have a permanent placement.

A local interior decorating firm was contacted first. They seemed very interested at the initial suggestion, but later, on the advice of their business manager, they decided it would not be worth the money spent.

The officers of the Edgemont Civic Organization of the White City area in Sandy, Utah, were next contacted to consider a granite statue in the new county park which was being planned for their community. The civic organization seemed very enthusiastic. They were willing to meet part of the expenses. They received permission from the Salt Lake County Recreation Department, and it was decided that a model of an idea should be presented at a future date and a place for the statute would be decided on then.

What should the theme of the statue be? It was felt that the type of community and the purpose of the park hold determine the subject matter. The Community was a young with all new homes. The families were mostly young. However, they would not always be young, and it must be something that could be appreciated by teenagers and adults also.

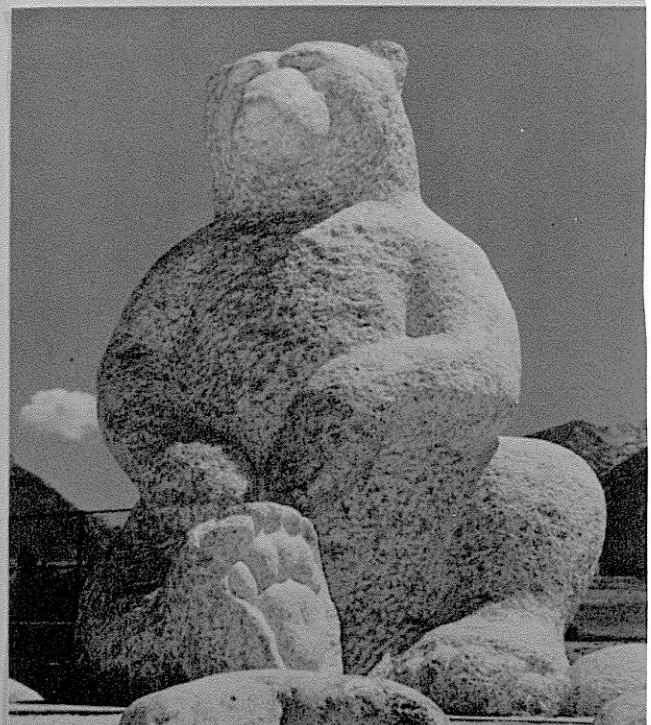
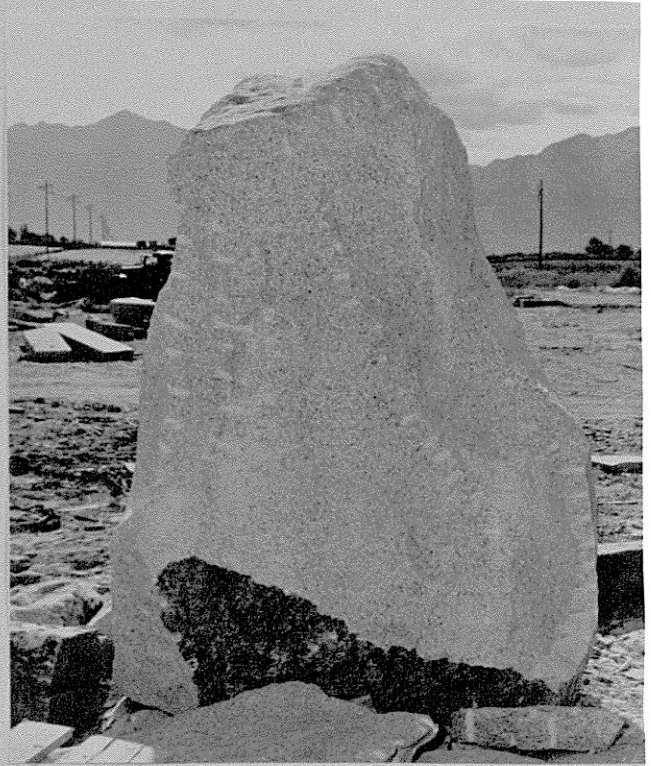
Development of the Theme

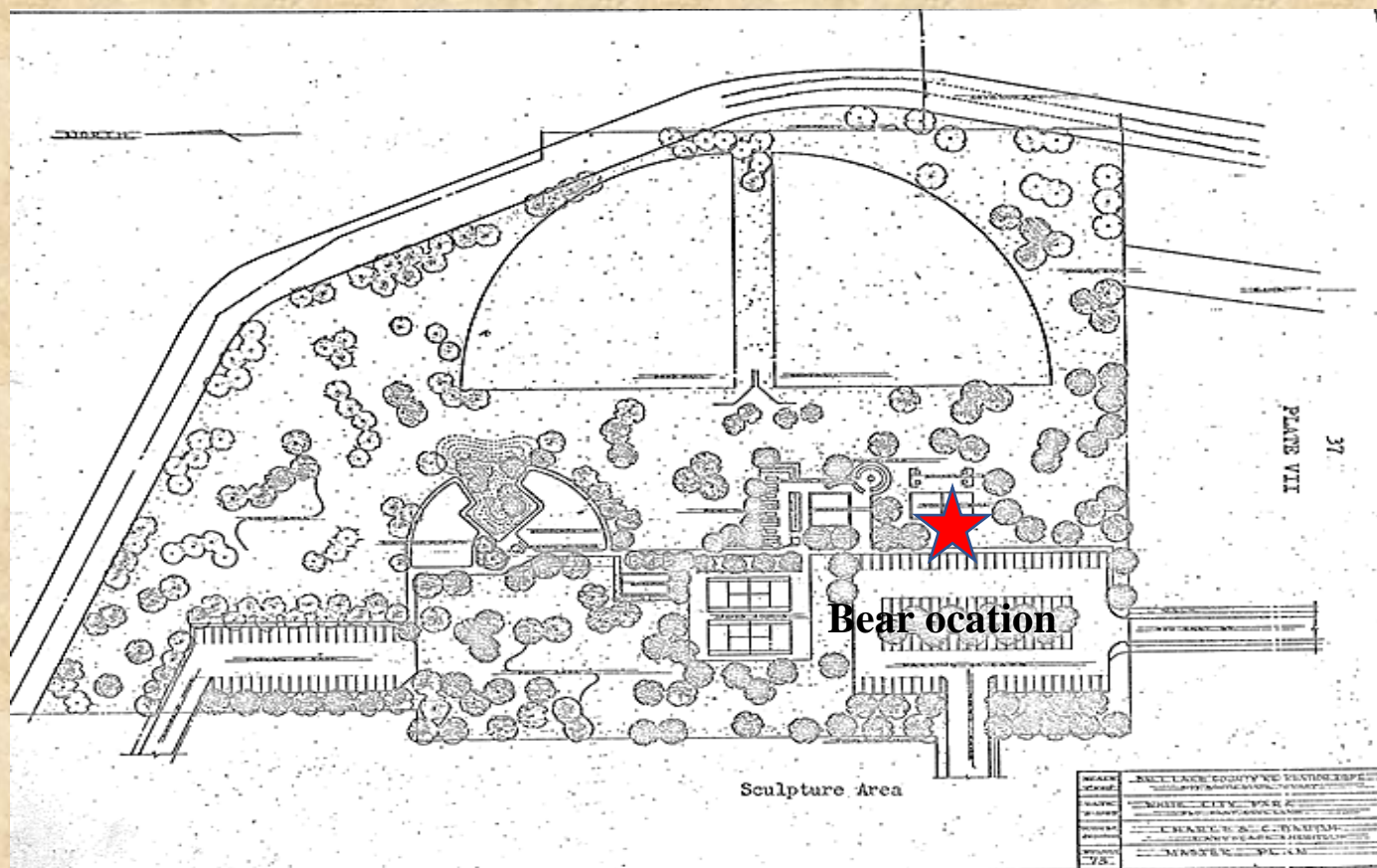
By this time, it had been decided that a bear would be an appropriate theme for the sculpture. It would be designed to attract children, but not cartoon-like so as to lose its appeal to adults. It must be in an expressive attitude that people of all ages could enjoy. Another reason for choosing this theme was that a bear's compact shape would lend itself readily to a design in granite.

The theme of this statue was considered carefully. The purpose of the statue was to enhance the appearance of a community park. It was designed to appeal to the children and adults of this area, but especially to children. This theme was to be a bear sitting in an environment of boulders.

Deseret News Friday, April 29, 1966

Steve Hale's People.....Cutting Away.....Children are crawling all over Reed Tyler's thesis for his master's degree. It's a granite bear that he's chiseling in the park site at White City. The bear weighs 4 ½ tons, stand six feet seven inches tall, and isn't finished yet. So far Mr. Tyler, an art teacher at Churchill Junior High, has worked about a 1,000 hours on the bear. It counts as his master's thesis. Children at the park often climb up on the bear's head and jump off its nose, causing some consternation. If that nose broke off, it might hurt Mr. Tyler's grades.





Sandy Student Is Really Chiseling Out His Degree



Reed Tyler chinks away at the granite block that will become a sitting bear if the sculptors arms, hands and time hold out. Bear will be placed in the new White City park.

THE MIDVALE SENTINEL

Friday, August 20, 1965

Chiseling their way to a Master's Degree may not be the way most people would go about it. But to Reed Tyler, 9710 Amber Lane, Sandy, it is undoubtedly the best way.

Mr Tyler is earning his master's degree from BYU by chipping away at a 14 ton piece of granite at the Hansen Stone Works, 8809 South 600 West, Sandy. Eventually the huge chunk of the Wasatch mountain will take the form of a sitting bear and the experience and knowledge gained from the making of the bear will be the

basis for a thesis which will conclude six years of patient study for the advanced degree by Tyler.

At the completion of the work Tyler hopes to place the sculpture in the new White City Park.

The finished bear will weigh somewhere between five and six tons.

The big pieces of stone that had to be removed from the original block of granite were removed by use of air hammers and drills. After the big pieces were taken off the arduous task of beginning to make the bear take shape were started with a three pound hammer and an eight inch carbide tip chisel.

What does it feel like to wield a three pound hammer for a few hours? According to Tyler its not too bad until he stops, and then cramps set in and there is no relief until he picks up the hammer again.

How long will it take to finish a six ton bear? He's been at it for a little over five weeks now and school will start in the Granite District (where he will be an art instructor at the new Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) on Sept. 7. Whenever Tyler doesn't have his fingers wrapped around the hammer they're crossed in hopes he will make it on time.

What happens if too much rock comes off at the wrong place with a single bite of the chisel? "A typical question of the layman" says Tyler as he points out several places where just that thing occurred. One was a place which caused the sculptor to lower the head of the bear by several inches.

Whatever the time it takes to finish the project, the White City park will be assured a piece of sculpture which should enhance the park.

DESERET NEWS

Friday, April 29, 1966

Steve Hale's ... People



Bear ocation

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Correction: "... an art teacher at Churchill Junior High," (not Wasatch Junior High).