

A fountain of history

Bus-C Santa Cruz company creates the inner workings of new FDR Memorial *5-2-97*

By JENNIFER PITTMAN

Sentinel staff writer

AS AMERICANS VIEW the massive \$48 million Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial to be dedicated today in Washington D.C., up to 20,000 gallons of water will rush through its seven fountains each minute, cascading down walls, spouting through fissures and settling in contemplative glassy pools — courtesy of a small Santa Cruz fountain company.

CMS fountain consultants, with offices in Carmel and Twain Harte, are experts in the art and science of water who have helped build fountains all over the world. Although not the

biggest or most complex project, a CMS associate said this week he considered the Roosevelt monument a crowning work for the company.

"This is one of the things we're doing, more than anything else that's part of history," said Roy Kaplan, CMS associate. "It will outlive all the other stuff we do."

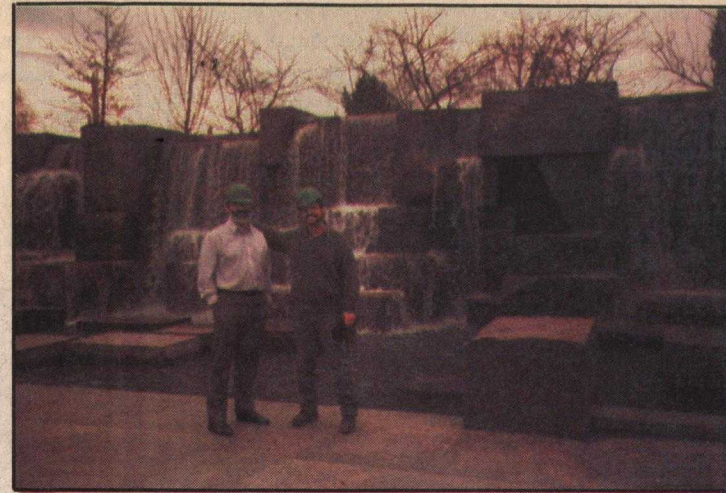
CMS does not design fountains, but the water conduits and the electrical mechanics that make an architect's vision work. They make sure the water runs quietly down a channel, in vertical chutes or into placid ponds.

"We did the part you don't see," said Kaplan, who was excitedly pulling last minute details

together at the Felker Street office. Most other employees were already on their way to Washington, D.C., for President Clinton's dedication. It would be a proud day for the small group of fountain consultants who have worked for decades, with some of the country's leading architects to build corporate, government and large private monuments.

CMS worked on the Moscone Center's Yerba Buena Gardens fountain, and the fountain in San Francisco's Levi Strauss Plaza. While California was suffering through droughts and economic recessions, CMS was working on large

Please see FDR —A9



Courtesy CMS Collaborative
Richard Schuder and Roy Kaplan of CMS Collaborative at the FDR Memorial fountain.

FDR

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water projects in Asia, Australia, Hong Kong, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Singapore, among other places.

Providing some of the country's best architects with the customized "mechanical and electrical guts" of a project, CMS is not a company likely to help with a backyard garden fountain, unless, it's the backyard of New York City's Citicorp headquarters, the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, the Boston John F. Kennedy Memorial or the Church of Jesus, Christ of Latter-day Saints office building in Salt Lake City.

The Roosevelt Memorial, designed by prominent San Francisco architect Lawrence Halprin, is a historical narrative of the 32nd president's four terms in office from 1933-1945. Located on 7.5 acres along Cherry Tree Lane, the Tidal Basin is on one side; the Potomac River on the other. Constructed with 6,000 tons of light South Dakota granite and 31,000 pieces of stone, the memorial features four prominent outdoor walk-through rooms, each one symbolizing a presidential term.

Sculpture from Leonard Baskin, Neil Estern, Robert Graham, Thomas Hardy, George Segal and stone carver John Benson adorn the memorial as well as narrative quotations by Roosevelt.

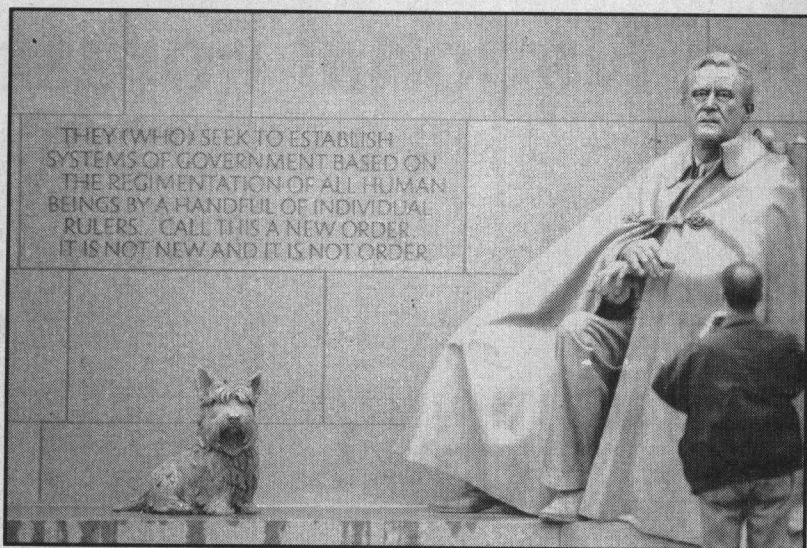
The project dates to the establishment of a memorial commission in 1955. But it wasn't until 1978 that a design was approved. Another 13 years passed before the groundbreaking in 1991 and construction began three years later.

CMS partner Dick Chaix, who is based in Carmel and has been with the company and its predecessors since 1964, was unavailable for comment. Nor was partner Tom Mallonee, head of the Santa Cruz office. Richard and Diane Schuder are also partners who head the office in Twain Harte. Nemec said they saw plans through many different design phases.

CMS was first contacted by Halprin 18 years ago. Ten years later, prospective design plans were submitted.

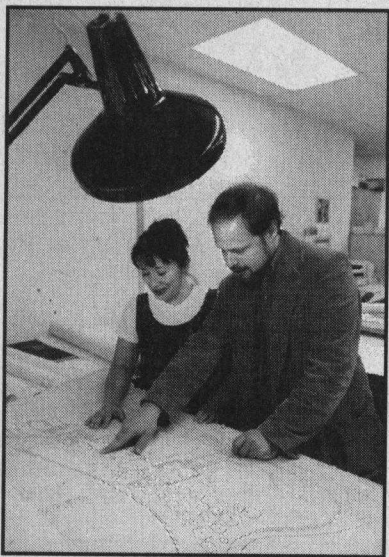
"It's got a neo-classical, naturalistic feel to it," said Nemec, who described it as "maybe more beautiful than most things."

Historians recount that water was an integral part of Roosevelt's life. He grew up with a love of boating, served as undersecretary in the U.S. Navy, convalesced from polio in Warm Springs, Ga., and



The Associated Press

A statue of FDR, with his dog Fala, is the centerpiece of the monument, which will be dedicated today.



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

CMS Collaborative designer Nadine Nemec and associate Roy Kaplan go over drawings of the FDR Memorial.

conducted many of his major meetings with world leaders on ships sailing the Atlantic.

Although Roosevelt once suggested a monument to him be no larger than a chair, the first thing a visitor sees is a nearly 20-foot wide vertical face of white water. It pours into a series of long, rectangular step pools. The visitor sees a life-size bas-relief of Roosevelt, waving from an open car during the parade after his first inauguration.

The largest of seven fountains circulates about 10,000 gallons per minute. Pumps are controlled by microprocessors programmed by

Kaplan. About 50 underwater lights illuminate the fountains and surrounding accent pools.

One fountain depicts an abstract rendition of a ship bombed in the war, a chaotic display of water pumped through dramatically fragmented pipes and fissures in the rocks. An inscription reads: "I have seen war. I have seen war on land and sea. I have seen blood running from the wounded ... I have seen the dead in the mud. I have seen cities destroyed ... I have seen children starving. I have seen the agony of mothers and wives. I hate war."

In another fountain, located in a wide plaza area, water tumbles from pools at the top of a rock structure almost two stories high over angular chiseled rock blocks. "It is a summation of how things were pulled together," Kaplan said.

CMS engineers and designers know the science and artistry of water, what makes placid pools, rushing sounds, glowing streams and swirls. They were asked to build it to last for 100 years. Kaplan said it wasn't something anyone's done before.

"It's not something you learn in school," Kaplan said.

The awesome project has brought a definite prestige to the eight-person office. Kaplan said the phone was ringing off the hook. A plan for a fountain at Microsoft headquarters was under consideration.

"In some sense we feel we've contributed to part of the history of our country in a way that Disneyland doesn't get you and we're real proud of it."

Sentinel wire services contributed to this report.