

Rededication of the Silent Sentry Laurel Hill Cemetery May 25, 2014

Commander-in-Chief, Waldron Kintzing Post II, was a featured speaker at the rededication of the Silent Sentry statue on Memorial Day Weekend ceremonies at the Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia. The Silent Sentry, originally commissioned by the Soldiers Home of Philadelphia, was designed and sculpted by Henry Manger, an artist and immigrant and dedicated in 1883 to watch over the Soldiers Home's Civil War veterans burial plot in Mount Moriah Cemetery. Following the closing of the Soldiers home, the care and upkeep of the burial plot was assigned to the Commandery of the State of Pennsylvania.



In the 1970's the Sentry was stolen by thieves who tried to sell it to a Camden, NJ scrap dealer. The scrap dealer alerted police, and the Sentry, although damaged, was recovered. MOLLUS arranged with the Laran Bronze foundry in Chester, Pa to repair the statue and store it where it has remained until this past year. Mount Moriah Cemetery was in a state of disrepair and lacked the security necessary for its return.

In 1988 the original granite base of the statue was donated by MOLLUS to the Gettysburg National Park where it is used

as the base for the memorial statue of General John Gibbon.

In 2011, companion Andy Waskie, A member of the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery, proposed that the Sentry be moved to the Laurel Hill Cemetery where it could again stand guard over the graves of Civil War Veterans. Under Andy's leadership over \$40,000 was raised to fund the building of a replica base and the mounting and upkeep of the Silent Sentry. It now stands guard over the GAR Civil War veterans burial plot where one of our own MOLLUS members is buried. Under the agreement with Laurel Hill Cemetery, MOLLUS retains ownership of the statue which is on permanent loan to the cemetery and under their care. Included in the care are flood lights which will illuminate the statue at night. MOLLUS Companions who were members of the Silent Sentry Project Committee were Joe Coleman, Gary Grove, Bob Lynch, Andy Waskie, Adam Flint and Jon Sirlin.

Other speakers at the rededication were Brigadier General Wilber E. Wolf III, Assistant Division Commander, PA National Guard; Richard W. Snowden, Great-Great Grandson of Colonel A. Loudon Snowden, keynote speaker at the 1883 original dedication of the Sentry; and Linda R. Duffy, local historian.