

Lady Liberty

Mapei's products helped update the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor.

*Text by Diane Choate,
photos by Carolyn Ryan, Mapei Corp.*

The Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor was closed to the public in response to the terrorist attack on World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Although Liberty Island re-opened on December 20, 2001, the Statue still remained closed due to security concerns until August 3, 2004. Meanwhile, grants totalling seven million dollars made it possible to carry out several works to improve the monument's security, including the opening of new exit ramps providing additional access for handicapped visitors. Since August 3, 2004 visitors have had access to the Statue's pedestal observation deck, promenade, museum and the 11-point star-shaped Fort Wood, the Statue's underlying structure built in 1810. The Statue's crown and torch are still not open to the public: this has caused much dissatisfaction among visitors, who are denied access to the highest point of America's most famous monument.

The Long History of the Statue of Liberty

Lady Liberty is a gift that was given by the people of France to the people of America in 1886 in recognition of the friendship established during the American Revolution. Over the years, the Statue of Liberty has grown as a symbol of freedom and democracy as well as this international friendship. In visitors' eyes it also symbolizes New York and the United States, as the statue has welcomed thousands





Photo 1.
The Statue of Liberty
raising the Liberty
Torch in New York
Harbor.

Photo 2.
Inside view of the Ellis
Island Immigrant
Processing Building,
where immigrants
entering New York
Harbor first came
ashore to start the
immigration process.
The island is now part
of the Statue of Liberty
National Park.

Photo 3.
Inside of the base of the
Statue of Liberty before
the restoration began.

Photo 4.
The renovation project
included the building
of a new handicapped-
accessible exit ramp.

Photo 5.
Installation work is
completed.

of immigrants and tourists upon their arrival in the USA for more than a century.

The Statue's story goes back to 1865, when the liberal intellectual Edouard René Lefebvre de Laboulaye and the sculptor Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi of Paris decided to build a monument embodying the American ideals of political and ideological freedom and give it as a present to the fabled "Land of Opportunity". Bartholdi was commissioned to design the sculpture; and, since he required the assistance of an engineer, Alexandre Gustave Eiffel (the famous designer of the Eiffel Tower) was commissioned to design the monument's massive iron pylon and secondary skeleton framework.

The Statue was built in France and then shipped to the United States and assembled on Bedloe Island (later renamed Liberty Island). The American people were responsible for raising funds for the building of the pedestal. On October 28, 1886 the dedication of the Statue of Liberty took place in front of thousands of spectators, including U.S. President Grover Cleveland. In 1965 Ellis Island, an island in the New York Harbor facing Manhattan, was incorporated as part of the Statue of Liberty National Park. The island was the place where immigrants entering New York Harbor in the late 19th and in the 20th century first came ashore to begin the immigration process. The main building on Ellis Island is now a museum



Projects

Photo 6.
Gordon Emslie of
Phillipsburg Marble
sets granite tiles in the
floor.

Photo 7.
Close-up of the
completed ramp.

Photo 8.
Granite tiles were
installed on the stairs.



Photo 9.
Robert Barron of
Phillipsburg Marble
stands near the
completed ramp.

Photo 10.
The updated exit at the
base of the Statue is
now ready to welcome
visitors.



dedicated to the history of immigration. Today, tourists visiting the Statue of Liberty travel on a ferry boat that carries them first from the mainland to Ellis Island and then from Ellis Island to Liberty Island.

In 1984, a major remodelling of the Statue took place. The work included the replacement of the old damaged torch (now exhibited in the museum), which was substituted with a new one of solid copper. On July 5, 1986 the newly restored Statue of Liberty re-opened to the public. Since then, visitors have been able to walk onto the Statue's observation deck to see the panoramic views of New York City and the harbour and view the Statue up close from her promenade and Fort Wood.

Works Carried out Using Mapei Products

Sometimes a job is more than just a job. When the work involves helping update the base of the Statue of Liberty, it becomes a matter of pride. Mapei, thanks to the technical assistance provided by its American subsidiary Mapei Corp., contributed to the work supplying self-levelers, mortar and grout products, which were used by Phillipsburg Marble Company Inc. in their refurbishment of floors, walkway and walls of the entryway to the Statue of Liberty. Much of the work was done on the third level within the base, which leads to the Fort Wood upper level.

A new handicapped-accessible exit ramp was part of this Life Safety Upgrade Project, which began on April 15, 2004. Stone workers and other employees from Phillipsburg Marble spent several months working on the installation of the granite in order to be ready for the Statue's reopening on August 3, 2004. The materials used in this update had to match those used during the remodelling of the Statue in 1986. An iridian (salt-and-pepper coloured) granite and dark pearl granite were set using GRANIRAPID SYSTEM* and KERACOLOR* grout. But before the granite could be installed, the existing concrete floor had to be repaired and levelled. For this part of the job, the workers used ULTRAPRIME L* acrylic latex primer for concrete and ULTRAPLAN 1* self-



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Photo 11.
The original Liberty
Torch, replaced in 1986,
is now exhibited inside
the base of the Statue.

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levelling underlayment.

Robert Barron, president of Phillipsburg Marble, chose to use Mapei products because his company has worked with them frequently in the past and has always achieved excellent results. Once Secretary of the Interior Gail Norton announced that final plans had been approved to allow the public to once again enter the Statue's base, the project moved onto a very fast track Using GRANIRAPID SYSTEM* as the mortar allowed the installation crew to set the granite tile and wall panels without delay.

When asked about his overall impression of working on the Statue of Liberty, Barron said: "When Joseph Natoli (of the Joseph A. Natoli Construction Corp. - the project's general contractor) selected us to do the stone and granite installation, we were proud to play even a small role in helping to once again make the Statue available to visitors. My crew tells me that there was a strong collaboration between all the trades working on the project. Everyone realized that it was a fast-track job; and they were very excited to work on our national monument. It helped everyone come together with pride in the work."

Mapei is likewise proud of the role its products played in helping update the base of America's national symbol of freedom and opportunity.

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TECHNICAL DATA

Base of the Statue of Liberty, New York (USA)

Works: repair of the existing concrete floor and installation of granite tiles on the third level within the base and on a new exit ramp

Year: 2004

Project: Highland Associates, New York

Contractor: Joseph A. Natoli Construction Corp., Pine Brook, New Jersey (USA)

Installation Company: Phillipsburg Marble Company Inc., Phillipsburg, New Jersey (USA)

Materials: granite tiles by Cold spring Granite Co.

Mapei Distributor: Phillipsburg Marble Company Inc.

Mapei Co-ordinator: Ed Parma, Mapei Corp.

***Mapei Products:** Granirapid System, Keracolor S, Ultraplan 1, Ultraprime L.

The products referred to in this article are manufactured and distributed in America by Mapei Corp. (USA) and Mapei Inc. (CDN). For further information see the web site: www.mapei.com.

