



Mara Lavitt/Register

The Angel of Peace returns to its perch at the summit of East Rock Park in New Haven Wednesday.

Angel: Back where it belongs

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up close," Miller said. "We had descendants of the original masons and from the original parade" when the monument was dedicated in 1887.

The statue was restored on the Green because a 7-year-old boy asked his dad why all this work was to be done without anybody getting a good look at the face of the angel.

Spencer Lockhart of Madison was riding down Interstate 95 with his father, Bruce Lockhart, when, like millions of others, he looked over at East Rock and wondered about the statue. It had been surrounded with scaffolding for the restoration.

Bruce Lockhart recounted the conversation Wednesday.

"Why are they taking it down?" Spencer had asked.

"They're going to fix it," his father replied.

"What will they do with it when they're done?" Spencer asked.

"Put it back on top of the monument," his father answered.

"But we won't be able to see it while they're working on it," Spencer protested. "Why don't they put it somewhere that people can see it?"

Deciding the public indeed deserved an opportunity to view the angel up close, Lockhart discussed it with Mayor John DeStefano Jr.

DeStefano agreed, and decided the Green was the best location.

The next phase of the \$1 million project will be repairing the interior staircase for eventual public access.

While workers from G&L Capasso Restoration on Monday prepared for the angel's lift-up, a time capsule was tucked into the base, to be opened in 100 years. Its contents included residents' wishes for world peace, photos of the restoration, newspaper clippings and the shoe that workers put inside the statue in 1887 to ward off evil spirits.

Mary Louise Harris, who was among the small crowd of residents on hand for the ceremony, clutched two photos of her grandmother, Estella Emma Upham, depicting her in the dress she wore for the commemoration parade and another she donned for the evening dance.

Copies of those photos were put in the capsule.

"I think she (Upham) would be pleased to see (the statue) cleaned up and restored," Harris said.

Asked how she herself felt about the sight of the rising angel, Harris said, "I'm very proud."

The harmonious spirit was broken briefly. After New Haven Peace Commission Chairman Alfred Marder declared, "We don't want war no more," the follow-up speaker, retired Army Lt. Col. Edward Giering, said, "This wasn't built for peace purposes. It was to remember the guys who went to war, fought and died. You don't step ahead of anything by being a peacenik."

Giering added, "Anybody who doesn't support our troops is not a true American," prompting a boo from the crowd. Giering called the heckler a "communist."

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