

Building the Memorial's "Wing and Bayonet" Centerpiece
(Extracts of a report written by sculptor Michael S. Elliott)

The work was authorized in mid January, 2008. During the first two months I procured materials and fabricated tools, dollies, and jigs that I would need. The fabrication of the sculpture started in early March. All materials are high quality stainless steel. I made the globe first. A full sized drawing of the globe, base and center post was accurately etched on a sheet of flat metal. All dimensions for the longitude and latitude bars were taken from that drawing. The solid $\frac{3}{4}$ inch by $\frac{3}{4}$ inch square bar stock was first rolled to the required twenty-four inch diameter and then cut to fit the dimensions on the drawing. The pieces were fitted and welded around the post to form the grid for the globe. The continents were then drawn onto 14 gauges stainless steel with a fine point sharpie pen and cut out with various tools including a Beverly shear, drills bits, and a hand held grinder. I had made a large convex dolly to use in shaping the continents with a rubber mallet. Each continent is made with one piece of metal. I did have to cut and weld two notches at the top of Eurasia to keep it from puckering. The work went well and I put a randomly sanded finish on the continents because I didn't want the globe to be brighter than the wing and bayonet.

The wing and Bayonet is a separate piece with a strong frame inside. It has a smaller pipe at the bottom that fits inside the post of the globe. All pieces of the wing and bayonet were scaled up from the original plastic model. The bayonet was cut and formed by hand. The blade is made of two pieces of metal. The grip is four pieces and the hilt is six little pieces. Each feather was cut by hand with the Beverly shear then welded and finished prior to welding it to the internal frame. The welds were ground and the finish reapplied before the next feather was made and attached. I worked from the bottom up on the whole project with the final pieces being the four vertical feathers at the top. The project was finished in early October, 2008. It was crated and stored until it was installed on the center column of the memorial on Tuesday, April 20, 2010.