

Smith-Hobson Foundation Grant Brings Tsarist Russian Figures To Digital Image Library



Thanks to a generous grant from the Smith-Hobson Foundation, the Russian Figures have been photographed by Peter DAprix and placed in the Foundation's Digital Image Library. The website will be the first educational application of the new Russian digital images.

The collection of nearly forty Historical Figures spans tsarist Russia from Ivan IV to Joseph Stalin. An individual web page dedicated to each Figure contains historical information and lists of reference material such as books and documentary movies.

Beginning March 22, selected Russian Figures will be on exhibit at the California Street location of the Museum of Ventura County who own most of the group.

Later this year, Mr. Stuart will utilize many of the new images in a new monolog featuring the historic Winter Palace in St. Petersburg.

Later this month, the Russians will join the English, French and Chinese on the Foundation website at—
www.galleryhistoricalfigures.com.

Stuart Gives Publications Company to Historical Figures Foundation

At year end, George Stuart generously donated the assets of Figuratively Speaking Publications to the Historical Figures Foundation.

"It was time to consolidate our activities and focus on opportunities afforded by the Foundation's 501(c)(3) non-profit status," said FSP Manager Leroy Becker. "FSP resources such as the digital image library, website and newsletter can be devoted to the Foundation." Moreover, DVDs and other documentary items are now property of the Foundation.

Although FSP comes with little cash, The estimated replacement value of the assets exceeds \$100,000.

To date activities have been underwritten by subscriptions and donations from dozens of supporters from as far away as Canada. Additionally a few avid supporters have contributed thousands of hours specialized labor.

All the cash and time were invested into completing several major projects to preserve and promote the Historical Figures. (continued on pg.4)

Figure Projects

C. Ewing McCartney Donates Video Archives, Inventories and Cash to Foundation Efforts

C. Ewing McCartney is a familiar name to many followers of the Historical Figures. Ms. McCartney has produced the two major documentaries about George Stuart and the Historical Figures. As reported in the January 2008 issue of FSP, these documentaries are available on DVD on the gallery website.

Now Ms. McCartney has donated inventories of VHS tapes and DVDs of her classic documentaries to the Foundation.

What many newcomers to the Figures may not know is that Ms. McCartney also videotaped several Stuart monologs in the early '90s. Now she is donating the original tapes to the Foundation archives.

“Our first task is to preserve the contents of these wonderful tapes,” says Leroy Becker. “This will require carefully copying the contents to modern digital storage. Then it will be possible to build documentaries from these early monologs.”

New Monologs about Famous Historical Sites Scheduled for Ventura Museum

Summer Palace in Beijing

In this monolog, Mr. Stuart shows numerous images of this extraordinary park, its endless palaces and pavilions. This complex is truly one of the wonders of the world and was named a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1999. It is the first place on the agenda for tourists, and its dramatic 700-year history is of interest to a wide audience.

Many of the subjects of the Manchu Historical Figures contributed to the building, destruction and restoration of the park. The Figures at right are on display at the California Street location of the Museum of Ventura

Winter Palace in St. Petersburg

The next monolog will study the creation of the new Russian capital by Peter the Great. The complex was the site of numerous historic dramas culminating in



These Figures played important roles in the Summer Garden's history.

it's near destruction during World War II. It is argued to be the largest royal palace in the world.



The Winter Palace—built by Peter the Great in St. Petersburg, Russia's doorway to Europe.

Historical Figures News

One Figure or More? But Who Is Counting!

Among the Historical Figures there are several sculptures that actually contain more than one Historical Figure. Not a problem to viewers, but an issue that has surfaced as we build the Digital Library. Where each Figure is recognizable, as are Tsar Nicholas and son Alexis at right, two Figures are recorded in our database. Even generic Figure groups might be parsed. Examples below—



Above— Nicholas II and Alexis
Far left— Gunter and Hagen
Top center— Generic French peasants
Bottom center— Generic Russian peasants

Lakota Warrior Adds to Native American Exhibits at Ojai Valley Museum



Sense of movement—an artistic and engineering triumph.

There are very few mounted Historical Figures. When this piece was constructed in the 1990s, it turned into a special challenge for the artist.

The entire horse and rider were required to stand on a single leg. Many sculptors attempted this feat and it is always an engineering nightmare. Note that the horse is standing on the tip of only one hoof!

Every marking and accessory are likewise complex and full of meaning. As Mr. Stuart says, “I thought the symbolism and intricacies of Chinese garments were complicated until we researched Native American practices for the Lakota Warrior and other Plains Indians!”

News & Events

John Metha

Foundation Remembers Enthusiastic Supporter

The recent passing of John Metha is a tragic loss to his many friends in the Ventura area. The Foundation lost its “go to” guy, who accomplished our special project needs. John was always ready to help.

In the last three years he transported most Figures to Peter D’Aprix in Ojai for photography. John also delivered 20 Figures to a Boston exhibition, for which he had constructed an exhibit stand.

Perhaps his most unusual accomplishment was the design of custom fixture to make the barbed wire used in the commissioned Holocaust Figure.

Mr. Stuart said, “It was always a delight to work with Mr. Metha. We will remember him always as willing to pitch in to help with Historical Figures Projects. The Figures operation regularly benefitted from his many skills and ‘can do’ attitude. He will be greatly missed as a co-worker and a friend.”

In Memory of John Metha

Donations in John’s memory can be sent to the Foundation (address below). Donors will be recognized in the next newsletter.



Holocaust Figure with quarter life size barbed wire fabricated by Metha



Exhibit built by Metha was displayed in Boston and Santa Fe.

2008 Foundation Contributors (continued from Page 1)

In 2008 Foundation assets grew thanks to “in kind” and cash donations, time contributions and newsletter subscriptions.

We enter 2009 with a bounty of legacy and education materials. If our fund raising efforts are successful, we will complete the Digital Image Library and website by year end.

Cash Donations of \$1,000 or more

Carole & Brad Johnson George Stuart
Smith-Hobson Foundation Ria & Leroy Becker

Goods and Services of \$5,000 or more

C. Ewing McCartney George Stuart
Linda & Peter D’Aprix Mary Harrsch
Ria & Leroy Becker

Full Subscriber Members at \$250 or more

Carol & Bob Lamb Donna & Eugene Langley
Adrienne & Robert Gardner Lorraine Finch
Mary Gail Reilly Jean Cinader
George G. Appel Claire Stuart
Floyd & Gordon Clawson Patricia Chase Bergen
Ria & Leroy Becker

Associate Subscriber Members at \$50 or more

Mary Ann & Bill Bang Myra Toth
Patty & Sol Grossman Shirley Randall
Christina Baker Lila Atkisson
W. C. Johnson & V. Mathews Barbara Topping
Linda Ochoa Robin Sim
Eunice Koch Barbara Evans
Ruth Beach Donna Hamer
Mariann Vancura Eleanor Rasnow
Anna Matan

Figuratively Speaking Publications

35 W Main St Ste B-155 • Ventura, CA 93001 • www.galleryhistoricalfigures.com