

Memorials and Monuments

According to stories passed down, John G. Fee was opposed to having a monument created in his honor because he felt he should not be raised up for praise over the

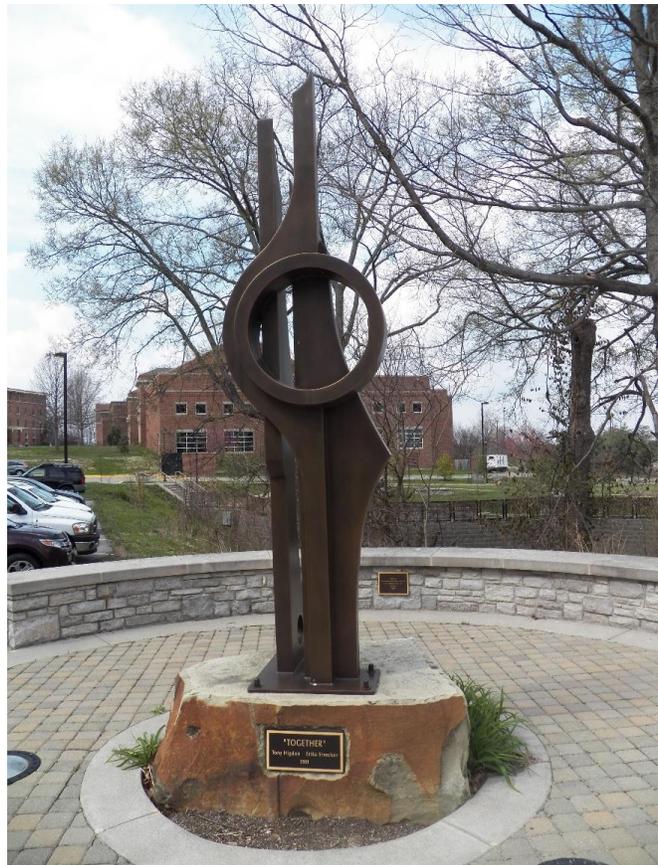


others who worked with him to found a utopian, bi-racial, co-educational school and community. However, the college and community have both felt compelled to honor him. Perhaps because of his insistence that he was part of a team, the monuments in his honor are quite unusual.

Fee Glade is a way of honoring not only Fee but also the principals of diversity that guided him and the other

founders of Berea. It is an open greenspace in the heart of the Berea College campus. Large pieces of limestone quarried in Rockcastle County are placed throughout the greenspace, and on the stones are bronze plaques with quotes from John G. Fee. Rockcastle County limestone was used for the construction of many of the Berea College buildings, so it was a uniquely appropriate material. Bronze is an ancient and durable metal, so was also considered appropriate.

The *Together* sculpture that stands at the College Square entrance to the glade was created by Erika Strecker and Tony Higdon, who also worked on the design of the glade and the stones. It is comprised of three bronze fabrications reaching upward and held together by a circle. The image of a circle binding people together is the sculptors' way of representing the



philosophy of equality that was so important to Fee. The figures are reaching upward, representing reaching up toward a higher education as well as toward a higher moral truth.

The other memorial to Fee contains more traditional bronze castings. There are five figures, again emphasizing that Fee respected the importance of the others who worked with him. The group includes John G. Fee, holding a Bible, and



Elizabeth Rogers, the school's first teacher, showing the Declaration of Independence to an African American girl, while two boys, one white and one black, watch from a bench. The Bible in Fee's hand is open to the Book of Acts, to the section that talks about Berea being a city that welcomed the gospel. This is the passage that inspired Fee to name the school he founded

Berea. Elizabeth Rogers and her husband, the Reverend J.A.R. Rogers, came to Berea in 1858, shortly after the Fees. While the men were clearing land, Elizabeth began holding classes. Fee asked the American Methodist Association to pay Elizabeth the same amount they provided for the men and they complied. In 1859, the Fees and Rogerses were forced out of Berea under the threat of violence but continued to work toward establishment of the College during the Civil War. At the war's end, J.A.R. and Elizabeth Rogers, the Fees and others returned to Berea and opened Berea Literary Institute, the forerunner of Berea College.

Whether you visit one or both of these sites, take time to consider the purposes of the memorials. Why were these individuals or groups of people considered important? What information



about them is included on the pedestal or on-site? Look at the artwork. What did the artists want to convey about the person or group? How can you tell? Listen to

the oral histories on the website. What do they tell you about the purpose of the memorials?

You might choose to do more research into the people represented in Berea's memorials or you might want to research other people or groups that you think are important. Here are some possible projects:

- Find all of the memorials that you can that are dedicated to Abraham Lincoln. Create a power point or other multi-media presentation comparing and contrasting the memorials;
- Find all of the memorials that you can that are dedicated to African American Civil War soldiers. Select one and write an essay or a poem about what it represents to you.
- Research memorials that pay tribute to soldiers from the Vietnam War, the Iraq War, or other wars or armed conflicts. Select one and write an essay or a poem about what it represents to you.
- Identify any memorials, memorial statues, or monuments in your own community. Research the individuals or groups that are memorialized and create a report or multimedia presentation
- Consider someone that you consider worthy of a memorial. This could be an historical figure or someone who has made a difference to you in your life.
 - Draw a sketch of a memorial that you would create.
 - What would be written on the pedestal?
 - Create a statue, a monument, or an abstract sculpture.
 - Write an artist statement explaining what you wanted to express in your artwork.