



Chicora Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 8664, Columbia, SC 29202

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Monumental Issues

Chicora Conducts Assessment of South View Cemetery in Atlanta

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The African American South View Cemetery in Atlanta, Georgia was organized by former slaves in 1886 to help ensure by Atlanta's blacks would receive a decent burial. Today the cemetery includes over 100 acres.

Chicora was retained by the South View Preservation Foundation to conduct a detailed assessment of preservation issues affecting the cemetery, including especially lawn care and landscape concerns.

The work was conducted by the Foundation's Director, Michael Trinkley, and Conservation Administrator, Debi Hacker in March 2008. The resulting 138

page report was recently completed and is being carefully reviewed by the Foundation to determine changes that need to be made in the care of the historic section of the cemetery.

As is often the case with older cemeteries, major issues included the gradual decline in the condition of the landscape — including turfgrass, trees, and shrubbery. Another major concern is the condition of the cemetery's monuments. South View is also unique in the very large number of beautiful rock walls that form plot terraces across the landscape.

Chicora developed specific recommendations for improving landscape care, as well as

recommendations on conservation treatments for the stones and walls in the cemetery.



The historic section of South View (above) and an example of a damaged wall (below).



Upcoming Talks & Workshops

- Jacksonville, Florida, September 15-27, 2008, NPI Cemetery Preservation 3-day Workshop
- For more information, visit http://www.chicora.org/preservation_workshops.htm
- To schedule a workshop in your community call us at 803-787-6910. We have 1-3 day programs.

Think Carefully Before Replacing

When part of a monument is damaged or lost, sometimes there is an urge to make a replacement — and too often we get results like shown here. The replacement angel is entirely too small, making the monument appear off balance.

In such cases it is better not to make replacements. Remember that the Secretary of the Inte-

rior's Standards for Preservation (http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/preserve/preserve_standards.htm) specify that original fabric is to be respected and the character of the monument will be preserved. It's better to have a damaged marker than one that is no longer historic.





Example of relatively minor cement burn resulting from working with wet concrete without PPE.

OSHA Warns of Cement Dangers

OSHA has recently issued guidance to workers using or exposed to Portland cement, especially when wet. There are three broad areas of concern:

Wet Portland cement can cause caustic burns, sometimes referred to as *cement burns*. Cement burns may result in blisters, dead or hardened skin, or black or green skin. In severe cases, these burns may extend to the bone and cause disfiguring scars or disability.

Skin contact with wet Portland cement can also cause inflammation of the skin, referred to

as *dermatitis*. Signs and symptoms of dermatitis can include itching, redness, swelling, blisters, scaling, and other changes in the normal condition of the skin.

In addition, hexavalent chromium (Cr(VI)) can cause an allergic form of dermatitis (allergic contact dermatitis, or ACD) in *sensitized* employees who work with wet Portland cement. When an employee is sensitized, that person's immune system overreacts to small amounts of Cr(VI), which can lead to severe inflammatory reactions upon subsequent

exposures. NIOSH also considers all Cr(VI) compounds to be potential occupational carcinogens.

Several OSHA standards require employers to take steps to protect employees from hazards associated with exposure to Portland cement. These include proper sanitation, providing personal protective equipment (PPE), and compliance with the hazard communication plan. For more information visit <http://www.osha.gov/dsg/guidance/cement-guidance.html>.



A properly secured gate will make theft more difficult, perhaps protecting your ironwork from becoming a statistic. It is also almost invisible — and it requires only \$20 per gate.

Securing Gates

We've all seen the problem — a beautiful iron fence, but its gate has been stolen. Such thefts are increasing and “nice” gates can fetch anywhere from \$500 to \$1500.

In some cases the thieves do the work themselves — other times they pay the homeless a few dollars per gate, shifting the risk. Either way, irreplaceable ironwork is lost.

Cemeteries can protect themselves by hardening the target — making it more difficult and time consuming to steal gates. Like any thief, they want to get in and get out quickly.

We've advocated using woven stainless steel cable to attach gates to their hinge posts. The woven wire is tough and hard to cut. It'll prevent thieves from just picking up the gate — they'll have to spend 4-5 min-

utes cutting through the wire — assuming they have the correct tools. Chances are, they'll leave and go where the picking is easier.

For more information either contact us or read the article that we're written about preventing cemetery thefts — go to <http://crm.cr.nps.gov/archive/25-02/25-2-15.pdf>.



A typical “simple” epoxy repair that was doomed to failure. This inappropriate repair will make a correct repair more time consuming — and costly.

Why We're Opposed to “Simple” Epoxy Repairs

“Simple” epoxy repairs — you see them described everywhere as a solution for broken stones. Get some epoxy and “glue” the stone back together.

The problem is that these simple repairs usually don't work. And when they fail, they cause catastrophic damage.

First, simple epoxy repairs can work, if the object bears no

structural weight — a small corner with a good fit, for example.

But attempting to re-attach a typical marble ground break with only epoxy isn't going to be a long-term solution. While the epoxy is very “strong,” the stone isn't, and the repair fails just above or below the original break. The monument falls, often breaking into more frag-

ments.

Another problem is that continuous epoxy joints are impermeable. This creates an area where moisture contributes to failure.

The only effective solution in most cases in a more complex blind pin repair, which requires the training of a professional stone conservator.