



# Monumental Issues

## Trinity Box Tomb Transformed

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Chicora has completed the second phase of work at Trinity Cathedral in downtown Columbia. Conservation treatments included the disassembly and repair of a large pedestal tomb, as well as the repair and application of new stucco to a box tomb.

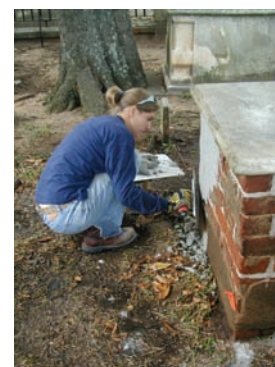
Stucco is a wonderful material, serving to protect the underlying brick work, as well as making a relatively simple monument appear much more impressive. But in spite of its protective features, it has to be periodically renewed.

Unfortunately, the Mary Hampton tomb had been ignored for years and much of

the stucco was in very poor condition or had already failed. The underlying brick, while sound, suffered extensive damage to the soft lime mortar. And the ledger itself was discolored by biologicals and atmospheric pollutants.

The first step was to gently remove all of the loose and failing stucco. We found most of this to be composed of an inappropriate hard Portland cement. Areas where the original stucco could be found suggested that it was much softer.

Afterwards it was necessary to repoint the brick using a lime putty mortar. Some brick that was badly spalling had to be



Nicole Southerland applying Jahn stucco to the Mary Hampton box tomb.

removed and replaced with matching brick in better condition. This work had to cure for a month before new stucco could be applied.

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### Special points of interest:

- Jahn M60 Stucco was the product chosen for the treatment of the Mary Hampton tomb.
- Prior to any stucco application it is critical that the brick and mortar joints be carefully cleaned and repaired.
- For most box tombs the mortar should be high lime, often a lime putty.

## Exploring the Macedonia Baptist Church Cemetery

Chicora has conducted a penetrometer survey for the Macedonia Baptist Church in Cherokee County, South Carolina, finding 134 unmarked graves.

The church was organized in

1820 with the burial grounds beginning shortly thereafter. Today the cemetery covers about 1.6 acres and contains about 600 marked graves.

Since the church has no map or records for the cemetery, we

were asked to conduct the study to determine areas that should be avoided in the future.

Our study also provided information on how to improve cemetery maintenance, including the need for a map.

## Trinity Box Tomb Transformed, cont. from pg. 1



Julie Poppell and Nicole Southerland with the Mary Hampton almost completed.

The stucco chosen for this project was Jahn M60. Available from Cathedral Stone, this is a single component, cementitious mortar that is compatible with the substrate and allows ready movement of water vapor.

No color matching was chosen since the stucco was going to be colored with Silin® Lasur mineral stain to replicate white-wash, but provide greater dura-

bility and less maintenance (this final application has yet to be applied since we are waiting for warmer weather).

This is the second phase of on-going repairs and conservation treatments to the historic Trinity Cathedral churchyard in downtown Columbia.

While the current church dates to 1847

the cemetery, under ancient oaks and magnolias, dates from at least 1814.



## Work Begins at Historic St. Elizabeths

*"I propose to survey a small secluded plot of ground in that part of our woodland which lies west of the hospital edifice, where there is a gentle slope toward the setting sun, and set it apart as a place of interment for friendless patients"*



Although an aluminum tripod such as this can make moving heavy monuments easier, it also requires additional safety practices.

St. Elizabeths Hospital was in operation, caring for the mental illnesses of the military and civilians in the District of Columbia by 1855. During the Civil War portions of the hospital were taken over by wounded troops.

A small cemetery used initially by the patients was expanded

as the number of war deaths increased. By 1873 a larger cemetery was created and the smaller cemetery was largely forgotten.

In 2001 the west campus was declared excess property and turned over to the General Services Administration (GSA).

Chicora was retained by the GSA in 2006 to conduct additional historical research, evaluate the needs of the cemetery, and offer long-term preservation recommendations.

Look for additional information in a future *Monumental Issues*.

## Working Safely in Cemeteries

It isn't enough to just do great work, you also must make certain that everyone goes home safely. That's why Chicora has developed strict safe work policies.

A case in point is the use of aluminum tripods and gantries for the movement of heavy

stones. Both are used at Chicora, depending on the space involved and the weight (our aluminum tripod is used for stones up to 1 ton, while our gantry is rated up to 2 tons).

Steel toed boots are a must. But so, too, is an understanding of how to inspect the rigging and

hoist for damage; understanding load limits, and being able to prepare the load for lifting.

One of the most important issues is estimating the weight to be listed. Granite weights about 170 pounds per cubic foot, sandstone only about 140.