

# SCSL Digital Collections

## Monumental issues

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# Monumental Issues

## Chicora Treats Biloxi National Cemetery Monument

### Inside this issue:

- Chicora Treats Biloxi National Cemetery Monument **1**
- Water Problems Expected to Continue **2**
- Irrigation May Actually Harm Stones **2**

### Upcoming Talks & Workshops

- November 6, 2010—9th Annual Cemetery Preservation Workshop, Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance. For more information contact Mr. Ted Urquhart at ted.urquhart@cox.net.
- March 26, 2011—Cemetery Preservation for Churches. A 1-day workshop. For information contact Mr. Brian McKown, bryan@scdah.state.sc.us.
- April 12-14, 2011 — Cemetery Preservation: Making Good Choices (3 day workshop) in Columbia, SC. Contact NPI at info@npi.org for more information.

Chicora Foundation was chosen by the National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs to conduct

in March 1934, but was initially reserved for veterans who died in the adjoining medical center. In 1973 it was opened to all

cleaning, as well as repointing of some mortar joints and the repair of several damaged areas.



**Beginning at the bottom and working up, the Chicora team completely cleaned the monument using D/2.**

conservation treatments on the Biloxi National Cemetery Monument. This work was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The Biloxi National Cemetery is about five miles west of the center of Biloxi on the grounds of the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center and adjacent to the Keesler Field Air Force Base in Mississippi. The cemetery was established

honorably discharged veterans and their dependents, active duty personnel and their dependents. The cemetery is today 54 acres.

The Biloxi National Cemetery Monument is approximately 30 feet tall and 10 feet in diameter; it was erected in May 1941 to commemorate all who have served their country. An assessment of the monument revealed the need for a thorough

The work was undertaken by Chicora conservators in April. Because of the height of the monument an aerial lift was required. The monument was thoroughly cleaned using D/2 Biological Solution from Cathedral Stone and potable water. Afterwards, mortar joints were cleaned and repointed using NHL mortar from Virginia Lime Works. In several areas the limestone monument was patched using Jahn M-70 Mortar.



**Shaping the Jahn patch.**

## Old Shiloh Cemetery is Assessed



**Old Shiloh Cemetery**

The history – and even ownership – of the Old Shiloh Cemetery is uncertain, although stones reveal burials to at least the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is located in Grover, NC but extends across the border into SC.

We were asked by a descendent to visit the cemetery and provide recommendations to improve the cemetery’s care and help ensure its future.

Maintenance efforts for at least the past decade have been conducted entirely by volunteers. While they have done an excellent job, this volunteer effort cannot be sustained over the long-term and more permanent maintenance arrangements are

of critical importance. One of the most significant landscape related issues is the need to eliminate the poison ivy that is overtaking the cemetery.

Usually we don’t recommend herbicides because of the damage they can do to stones. In this situation, however, we decided the judicious application of the herbicide Garlon 4 (triclopyr) – followed by mulching – was the only cost and labor effective means of controlling the poison ivy problem. In addition, we recommend the removal of some diseased or weakened trees.

We found significant damage to a broad range of the stones in the cemetery. Many of these stones also exhibited inappro-

priate repairs that had been made over the past 30 years in an effort to maintain the burial grounds. A number of stones were found out of the ground – these “orphan stones” should be reset to prevent their loss or damage by mowing.

The Old Shiloh Cemetery exhibits many of the problems seen at almost every rural church cemetery. The resulting preservation plan can help those caring for the cemetery better prioritize their efforts and develop a long-term strategy to preserve the cemetery. If you’d like to read the assessment to get ideas for your cemetery, it is on-line at <http://www.chicora.org/pdfs/RC526%20-%20Old%20Shiloh.pdf>.



**The cemetery’s stones are beautiful, but many are broken and some – like this example – are certain to suffer additional damage if not properly repaired.**

## Water Problems Expected to Continue

There is no expected improvement in the water shortages that have plagued much of the country. The problem at cemeteries where irrigation is in use is huge. But several cemeteries have found alternatives.

The 300 acre Forest Lawn Cemetery in Glendale recently solved their water problem by

tapping into a new recycled water pipeline. This water would otherwise be channeled into the ocean.

The Belview Memorial Park in Ontario, which uses 160,000 gallons of water a day, is also using recycled water on their lawns and gardens.

As early as 2007 the Bay Pines National Cemetery in Florida began recovering shallow groundwater under the cemetery to use for watering. The 45,000 gallons of water used to water the cemetery is now recaptured in wells and reused – saving \$120,000 a year.



**Dissolved minerals are coating this stone, obscuring the porcelain photograph.**

## Irrigation May Actually Harm Stones

While we generally think of irrigation as a drain on the environment, under some circumstances it can actually harm the stones.

This is a particularly serious issue in the southwest where often water is pulled from relatively shallow wells where the water is loaded with dissolved minerals.

The minerals are deposited on

– and in – stones as a result of irrigation. The results range from disfiguring monuments to the actual spalling of stone – even granite.

Solutions include curtailing irrigation, using flood irrigation, seeking new sources, or eliminating irrigation entirely.

**Here the deposits are causing spalling of a granite monument.**

