

Who is Taking Care of Grandma's Grave? The Basics of Cemetery Care

Trailing Questions

Sara Brower [Philadelphia, PA]: Do you know about the product "Wet and Forget" and how do you feel about using it on all cemetery media?

Linda Ellis [Lyndhurst]: We are seeing more about Wet & Forget however we know that NCPTT did not include it in the studies that were done at the time, so if you have any opinion on Wet & Forget based on your experience using it, please share with us. Thank you so much.

Debby Mullins [Owings, MD]: My husband used Wet & Forget at the pet cemetery. Worked quite well. But it was recent, so I can't say anything about long term issues. **Jason Church** :*Yes, NCPTT has not had the chance to test Wet & Forget at this time.*

Tina Utter [Mt. Upton]: who in the country is available to apprentice under to learn cemetery conservation? It depends on where you live. **Jason Church**: *Contact me directly or email the Association for Gravestone Studies. <https://www.gravestonestudies.org/>*

Tori Mason [Nashville TN]: What is OK for us, as lay people/untrained professionals, to do, and what isn't as far as laws are concerned? **Jason Church**: *Untrained people are great for documentation, landscape maintenance, and cleaning. You should always have permission from the owners before doing anything in a cemetery.*

Debra Heathman [Martindale, TX]: You talked about home-made markers early on, Jason. I recently came across a one that was actual poured cement onto the ground and wrote out the information. What would be the best way to preserve this marker for the future? Especially, since it was already settling into ground and being naturally buried/ground covered. **Jason Church**: *I would dig this one out and reset it in a sand/gravel bed to help with settling.*

Debra Heathman [Martindale, TX]: Do funeral homes also keep records of those Funeral Plaques? **Jason Church**: *Maybe not, many years ago, however, in more recent years record keeping might be more complete. A good funeral home will keep record with all of the necessary information. Most will only list the cemetery where the body is buried not the specific grave number, location etc.*

Mary Hynes [Champaign]: I came in a little late so not sure if this was asked. How do you know if a cemetery has already been surveyed/recorded or which ones need this work done? **Jason Church:** *You should contact the cemetery owners, cemetery caretakers, check the local genealogy library, ask the local preservation organization, etc.*

Lee Dobratz [Hays, KS]: In relation to cribbing and curbing, what about cornerstones for a plot? **Jason Church:** *These are still an important feature and contribute to the historic landscape.*

Linda Ellis [Lyndhurst]: Is that curbing or coping? **Jason Church:** *Curbing is the stone or concrete surround around a plot or area. Cribbing is around a single grave.*

Donna Crisp [Norfolk VA]: What do you recommend for green circular mosey growth? **Jason Church:** *Use a biological cleaner such as D/2. <http://www.d2bio.com/>*

Eleanor Hadden [Anchorage, AK]: We are from a small isolated community in Alaska that is situated in a temperate rain forest, we get lots of varieties of moss - what should we use? **Jason Church:** *Are you trying to remove the moss from the stones? I would use a cleaner containing a biocide such as D/2.*

Mimi Chu [Hillsborough, NJ]: Do you have suggestions on finding out what happened to cemeteries that were relocated for dams or lakes? How do you find out where those stones may be? **Jason Church:** *Typically the stones are left in place, so you now have an underwater cemetery. You can contact the dam builders to find out, for example; Corp of Engineers, Tennessee Valley Authority, etc*

Andrea Carswell [Kitchener]: What tools/process do you use to lift stones from the ground (when they are laying flat)? **Jason Church:** *Use a tripod or gantry hoist and nylon lifting straps.*

Jennifer Moss [Walhalla]: What about repainting paint-filled letters? **Jason Church:** *Personally, I am not a huge fan of re-painting letters, it always weathers away again. However, if that was the original look and intent... Originally most stones were done with LithaChrome which weathers well but is a nasty toluene based paint and quite toxic.*
(http://www.bondedmaterials.net/assets/data/scofield_chemstain.pdf)

Jeff Scholz [Houston]: How do you find (and what questions do you ask) to find someone to restore damage—or to replace a part of the stone that's missing? (For example, what about a missing urn on top of a crooked multi-layer stone?) **Jason Church:** *A conservator can rebuild that with a restoration mortar or patching mix. There are several great restoration mortars available available such as Jahn (<http://www.jahn-international.com/en/products>) and Lithomex (<http://www.limeworks.us/lithomex-more.php>).*

Stephanie Mahan [Phoenix, AZ]: What was the word you used to describe the hollow sound in a stone? **Jason Church:** *It occurs when the stone is delaminating or spalling.*

