

Written In Stone

By Sherry Johnston

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Cemetery Care and Restoration

Over the past few weeks, I've had several persons contact me about the approved techniques for cleaning and restoring cemetery headstones and/or cemetery statuary. We have some great links to Cleaning Techniques on our ACPA Website, and other sites that I would highly recommend, as well as handouts available in the Genealogy Section of our local library. Some of the websites to visit would be our own ACPA site at <http://www.alabama-cemetery-preservation.com> or the Chicora Foundation at <http://www.chicora.org/cemetery.htm> and also the Alabama Historic Commission at <http://www.preserveala.org>. Any of these sites can give you information on how to conduct approved methods of cemetery preservation techniques to ensure that the markers of yesterday still be with us tomorrow. A tip I would tell you right off is that most of the cemeteries that we need to preserve and protect can be helped a lot by applying a little water and elbow energy! We do not recommend using chemicals such as Clorox or muriatic acid to clean granite, cement, marble or concrete. If you need repairs done of broken markers, please contact me for a listing of certified masonry repairmen. Another on-going project for Conecuh and all 67 counties in Alabama is the University of Alabama's Atlas of Cemetery Locations by County that is currently being updated for future re-publication. We have both this book and the Historical Locations by County, available for your viewing in the Lucy C. Warren Heritage Section of the library, and would encourage you to come by and see if there is a cemetery listed that you may have information on; or if there is one omitted that you could give us information about. I would also encourage you to visit our Canebrake Genealogical & Historical Society website at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~alcs> and see for yourself some of the history of our county; as well as cemeteries, churches, and schools listed. We have several Canebrake Society members submitting their family information and we're constantly updating the site; so we would encourage you to do that too.

Many of the cemeteries we need information on would include some that according to the Atlas were 'unplotted'. These include Brantley-Thompson; Andrew J. Ellis; Grace; Horton; Jacob; Jerusalem 1 & 2; Jones; Kyser; Lee (there are three listed); Mancill; Melrose; Old Bethel; Old New Hope; Pilgrims Rest; Reeves; Salter; Sardis; Spence; and 7 that are listed only numerically with no known name attached.

For more information about cemeteries in Conecuh County, please contact me at canebrakesociety@yahoo.com and let's get busy preserving cemeteries for future generations. If you'd like to schedule a program about cemetery preservation, whether it's through a community service organization or church-wide event, please give me a call at (251) 578-2670 or email the above address.