



HIGHLAND MONUMENT CONSERVATION

Conversation with Burke Greear

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Tell us how you got in to this business?

I believe that I knew at a relatively early age that cemeteries are sacred places and need to be taken care of. As a child, I imagined myself as a guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I remember feeling a humbling honor, even while just pretending. To protect and preserve these places has since guided my career and continues to fuel a passion for historic preservation. And the need in this area of preservation is greatly felt.

How does your business differentiate from others?



Approaching projects from the angle of historic preservation means that Highland Monument Conservation would never dream of cleaning a stone with harsh means e.g. caustic chemicals, wire brushes, pressure washers, etc. At Highland, we follow “**Do No Harm**” conservation methods utilizing a limited number of products, a bit of elbow grease, and a good amount of patience. Many folks may think that a rock is just a rock, they’re all the same and you can’t really hurt them. Nothing can be further from the truth. Stone is fragile, temperamental, unpredictable, and complex. Knowing how to take care of it properly makes all the difference, especially in the long run.

Why is it important to conserve these old monuments?

The answer to this question is as varied as the individual choosing to answer it. One may think that old cemeteries hold a treasure trove of genealogical information, and that’s important to preserve, and I agree. Others see the importance of preservation as cemeteries often reflect specific historical ties to towns, churches, families, etc., and again, I agree. Other still may also see these monuments for what they are, the last earthly remembrance of an individual life lived, and a life lived is a life worth remembering. Simply put, these monuments represent remembrance, and remembrance should be forever. The methods followed by Highland help to ensure this.



What types of businesses/cemeteries do you service?

Highland Monument Conservation is able to work with all entities, from individuals to large municipal and government-related projects. We can provide consultant services to families, property owners, funeral homes, church congregations, cemetery associations, historical societies, or any organization that has the responsibility to care for a cemetery or monument. We also offer cemetery documentation services, preservation workshops for basic and advanced methods, and free advice to anyone with a monument issue.

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