Old City Cemetery
Sandersville, Georgia
a plan for revitalization
Project Name
Sandersville’s Old City Cemetery Revitalization

Location
Sandersville, GA

Description
Over the years, the Old Sandersville Cemetery has begun to show signs of deterioration. Though the cemetery is being maintained through volunteer efforts, there is need for some direction as to grave marker treatments and plant choices for the Victorian cemetery. The management committee has identified the need for additional amenities such as seating areas and a gazebo that would compliment the existing architecture.
A plan outlining revitalization and preservation strategies. The report also includes recommendations for landscaping and new site amenities.

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Roger Harrison, 158 West Haynes Street, Sandersville GA, 31082

Date of Site Visit
November 4, 2009

Students Assigned
Hazel Lewis & Gwen Wolfgang
Total Hours: 34.5 Estimated Value: $4761

Final Products
The report outlines a plan for revitalization and preservation strategies and also includes recommendations for landscaping and new site amenities.

Date Delivered
December 8, 2009
History
Established 1831, Sandersville’s Old City Cemetery is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Notable residents include Confederate Veterans and prominent members of local families. The cemetery also lies along the path of General Sherman’s 1864 march.

Materials
A substantial amount of the cemetery’s oldest markers are constructed from marble; some limestone and granite markers also appear. The headstones are a mix of greek revival and Victorian styles.

Use
Though the gates to the cemetery are open at all times, use of the site is limited by programming. While the cemetery is located within walking distance from downtown Sandersville, there are currently no benches or shelters from which visitors can take advantage of the picturesque views.
Preservation
In order to maintain the historic integrity of this site, its important features must be preserved. This will include cleaning the cemetery’s headstones and maintaining the grounds.

Landscaping
In order to present a cohesive look, landscaping within the cemetery should be compatible with Victorian-era cemetery design. Although not originally planned for the site, the mix of open areas and shade provides a nice variety of spaces within the cemetery. Overgrown and declining trees should be monitored carefully to ensure the cemetery’s safety.

Amenities
Events held in the cemetery are common and regularly face obstacles such as a need for shelter, a lack of seating, and inadequate lighting. Appropriate shelter, seating, and lighting should be included in the design and should be compatible with the historic features of the cemetery.
Methods for Cleaning Marble Headstones
The cleaning of historic marble headstones is important aspect of its restoration because the original Victorian cemetery was designed with the bright white of these stones in mind. Once restored, these marble headstones and monuments will be shine brightly in the sun, creating striking views from many places in the cemetery.

Due to the fact that chemicals can be corrosive, the best method for cleaning marble headstones is simply water and a soft bristle brush. Though this method may take some time, it will do the least amount of damage to the marble. If moss or other material resists this form of cleaning, household ammonia can be used and a wooden scraper may be used; it is important to keep the gravestone wet at all times during the cleaning.

If problems persist a professional can be consulted, however, it is important to note that power-washing and bleach or other harsh chemicals are not recommended. The cleaning of the gravestones need not be meticulous; some wear on the stones will reflect their age and give authenticity to the site. Methods may vary when cleaning limestone or granite, so proper methods should be researched before attempting those tasks.

Sources for Additional Information
http://www.gravestonestudies.org/preservation.htm
http://www.ctgravestones.com/Conservation/cleaning.htm
http://www.gravestonepreservation.info/cleangr-1.asp
http://www.tsgraves.com/relics/headstone.htm
Victorian Cemetery Design
During the Victorian Era, the garden-style cemetery became popular. Victorian cemeteries were designed to be open and the color white was dominant, to reflect an image of purity and goodness. Many historic Victorian cemeteries incorporate circles into their design, as this shape was considered a symbol of eternity and never-ending existence. Additionally, many plants have special meaning for Victorian cemeteries.

Plant Symbology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Biological Name</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flowering Dogwood</td>
<td>Cornus florida</td>
<td>divine sacrifice, resurrection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily of the Valley Vine</td>
<td>Salpichroa origanifolia</td>
<td>return of happiness, purity, humility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriental Poppy</td>
<td>Papaver bracteatum</td>
<td>peace, rest, eternal sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeping Willow</td>
<td>Salix babylonica</td>
<td>sorrow and mourning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Quercus, spp.</td>
<td>hospitality, stability, strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Cemetery Iris</td>
<td>Iris albicans</td>
<td>frailty of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daylily</td>
<td>Hemerocallis, spp.</td>
<td>majesty, innocence, purity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of these plant species are able grow successfully in Sandersville’s climate and either bloom in white or are available in a white variety, which will allow the cemetery to be consistent with traditional Victorian design.
Plant Palette
In addition to Victorian cemetery plant species, there are several white-blooming plants that are both hardy and relatively low-maintenance that can be incorporated into the site.

- Quercus, spp.
- Salix babylonica
- Magnolia grandiflora
- Cornus florida
- Abelia x grandiflora
- Papaver bracteatum
- Salpichroa origanifolia
- Iris albicans
- Hemerocallis, spp.
Allées
An allée of trees can be useful for framing views and orienting visitors within a site. Possible locations for this type of feature include the main road through the cemetery and the crossroad that could include a pavilion. A flowering understory tree (such as a dogwood) is an appropriate choice in terms of plant material.
Seating Areas
Landscaping around formal seating areas is particularly important, as visitors are likely to linger in these spots. A combination of shrubs, small trees, and perennials will provide plants with a variety of interests for visitors.

Before

After: Addition of bench and surrounding plants
Reinforced Turf
Modular grass tiles can be used to create a surface that has both the appearance of lawn and the durability of a road. This treatment is recommended for the drive that wraps around the cemetery. This system will allow easy access for visitors in cars, while maintaining a more pleasant aesthetic.

Reinforced turf shown (clockwise from upper left) in detail, at installation, and in use.
Pavilion
The most appropriate place for a structure in the cemetery is in the northern-most clearing of the cemetery, at the site of the old church. This is the space which currently accommodates the tent that is usually required for various functions. Special attention should be paid to the dimensions of this structure in order to allow vehicular to at least one side; this facilitates access for maintenance and emergency vehicles.

In keeping with the Victorian Cemetery color palette, the suggested hue for any future structures is either white or black (to match the existing fence). These structures are typically made of pressure-treated wood; inexpensive metal shelters are not recommended because they would detract from the authenticity and compromise the aesthetic value of the site.

The old church site or the north entrance to the cemetery would also be an appropriate place for any historic markers the city may wish to erect.
Seating Areas
Providing areas for rest and reflection within the cemetery has the potential to attract more visitors. There are several appropriate spaces within the cemetery for this type of amenity. It is important that these seating areas be placed in a variety of spaces (sun and shade, high and low). One possible location is shown below; it is recommended that the cemetery include at least three of these seating areas.

Suggested benches for these seating areas are cast iron, a material that was heavily used during Victorian times and one that appears throughout the site as exterior fencing and as low fencing around family plots.
Trash Receptacles
With improved amenities throughout the cemetery, there is likely to be an increase in the number of daily visitors. These visitors may engage in a variety of activities, from walking through the cemetery to having lunch. For those visitors who may choose to eat in the cemetery, trash cans will be an important amenity to mitigate litter throughout the site. These receptacles should coordinate with other landscape features.

Lighting
Street lamps are appropriate for the exterior of the cemetery, but bringing these elements into the interior would detract from the historic integrity of the site. One option to improve illumination is to include subtle uplighting of key monuments or specimen trees. Uplighting and pathway lighting will adequately brighten the cemetery at night without distracting from the natural beauty of the site. A detailed guide to uplighting is available at http://www.garden-lighting-tips.co.uk/HELP SHEET8.htm
Pavilion
Due to the fact that the desired pavilion is larger than most pre-fabricated structures (which typically range from 12-15 feet in diameter), it is recommended that a custom structure be designed and built for this space. The base of this pavilion should consist of a raised platform in a circular shape, potentially finished with a brick base. The majority of this pavilion should be constructed from either black wrought iron or white wood with detailed Victorian-style metal or woodwork. It is important to note that the roof structure should have a steep pitch in keeping with Victorian architecture; low-pitched, shingled roof styles that are reminiscent of backyard gazebos should be avoided. Material choices for the roof include metal or a shingled roof.

Suggested Style

Inappropriate Style

Benches
Benches should coordinate in style and detailing with the pavilion. These benches could either be white, to coordinate with the pavilion, or black wrought iron in order to match with fence.

London Bench
from Herwig Lighting
call 800-643-9523 for pricing

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS
Trash Cans
Trash receptacles should mimic the wrought iron design of the fence and benches. These styles are quite popular and can be found through a number of retailers.

Meadowcraft Trash Can Cambridge 30-Gallon with No Lid
$842.39 from VGS Country Club Supply
http://www.virtualgolfswing.com/meadowcraft-trash-can-cambridge-30-gal-no-lid-p-3955.html

Lighting
Solar lighting can light pathways and uplight special features without having to run electricity to the site. These elements should be discrete, so as not to distract from the cemetery.

Hampton Bay 3-Tier Metal Solar Light in Traditional Black Finish
$44.97 from The Home Depot
http://www.homedepot.com/h_d1/N-5yc1vZ1xr5/R-100026060/h_d2/ProductDisplay?langId=-1&storeId=10051&catalogId=10053

Solar LED Spotlight Black
$19.97 from The Home Depot
http://www.homedepot.com/h_d1/N-5yc1vZ1xr5/R-100649215/h_d2/ProductDisplay?langId=-1&storeId=10051&catalogId=10053

Solar LED Outdoor In Ground Up Light
$78.99 from RE Williams Contractor Incorporated

NOTE: Prices appearing in this report are not guaranteed and are subject to change.