

Written In Stone

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Vandalism in Cemeteries

In striving to promote Heritage Tourism in AL and Conecuh County, it's imperative for us all to show pride and respect in our community. This action may take many forms; as in how we keep our homes and businesses up; how we conduct ourselves when among newcomers or visitors; how we protect our basic structures, historic sites and care for our dead.

Benjamin Franklin once said, "Show me your cemeteries, and I will tell you what kind of people you have." It's difficult enough we have to deal with rotted trees and damaging winds from the hurricanes, tornados & windstorms; or land erosion; improper timber management techniques or land development—all are elements of destruction to our historic homes, sites, churches and cemeteries. If that isn't enough, we then have the vicious, wanton, willful destruction by human hands in our sacred places which we're trying to protect, preserve and restore.

Our municipality maintains several cemeteries within the city limits; lawn maintenance to keep them looking presentable and police patrol to keep out vagrants, animals and now vandals from defacing, desecrating or destroying the memorials to our dead. The Code of Alabama has statutes designed to protect our cemeteries; and if you're caught doing any of the above, you can be found guilty of either a Class "A" misdemeanor or Class "C" felony, depending on the offense according to Statute 13A-7-23.1 of the Code of AL 1975.

Since the first of the year, it would seem that a party has been going on in one of our most accessible to the public cemeteries: The Old Historical Evergreen Cemetery right on US 31/Perryman Street. Evidence of pushing or shoving headstones off their bases, breakage of urns, obelisks, or general destructive behavior has been found in the oldest part of this cemetery. It will take time, effort and money to repair and restore this cemetery and others who have been the victim of this type of willful destruction. Please help us present a better face to tourists and pride in our community by watching out for the cemeteries in our county—the cemeteries are silent except for our voice. If you see vandalism in any cemetery, please call (251) 578-2670 and the local law enforcement agencies.