

Creating Foil Impressions

Foil impressions require more time to create than traditional rubbings on paper, but can capture depth of carving and other design detail. Also, there is no risk of inadvertently damaging stones because the impressions are created without using paint, crayon, or wax in the cemetery.

Supplies Needed:

38 gauge tooling foil (Sources-www.dickblick.com, Amazon and www.mercartusa.com)

Wooden or plastic tools for metal/leather tooling

Popsicle sticks, Q-Tips, orange sticks (used for pushing fingernail cuticles back) and other wooden devices of different thicknesses and sizes and pencil erasers work too – any tool that won't rip the foil.

One square of flannel fabric

It may also be helpful to bring an old towel or blanket to kneel on, and a hat and sunscreen are nice for hot, sunny days in the cemetery.

Here are some simple instructions for creating a foil impression:

1. Choose a gravestone that is structurally sound. Do not choose a stone that is damaged (leaning or recently repaired). Also, make sure the stone has not started to weather – old sandstone and marble gravestones often weather badly, and have a “sugary” appearance. These stones are not good for rubbing because the impressions may come out too grainy, and because rubbing may do further damage to the monument.
2. Place the foil over the symbol you wish to use for the impression. You may use masking tape (not scotch tape) to secure the foil to the stone. Be sure to place the tape along the edge of the foil so it can be easily removed, and so it won't interfere with your impression.
3. Use the flannel cloth to rub over the symbol. You will start to see the impression in the foil. Once the symbol is visible, use the wooden tools to make the image stand out even more.
4. Once you are satisfied with the impression, carefully remove the tape from the gravestone and the foil.

Further ideas:

5. You can use black acrylic paint (or other colors of your choice) applied with a sponge or old pantyhose to make the impression have a more antique look. The impression can then be matted and framed.
6. You can also use the finished impression as a mold to make plaster castings. Simply fold the edges up and fill with plaster. Let dry, then peel the foil off. The casting can be painted.

Information kindly provided by Beth Santore:

www.graveaddiction.com

To purchase pre made casts to create further foil impressions:

<http://gravestonegirls.com/>

For further training and ideas, as well as membership: Association for Gravestone Studies:

<https://www.gravestonestudies.org/>

Further Gravestone Artist Resources

Gravestone Artwear and Rubbing Supplies

<http://www.gravestoneartwear.com/>

<http://www.gravestonerubbing.com/>

Books

"New Jersey Cemeteries and Tombstones-History in the Landscape" by Richard F. Veit and Mark Nonestied

"Stories in Stone-A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography" by Douglas Keister

"Tomb and Gravestones of the Eighteenth Century" by J. David Gillespie

"Making Paper and Fabric Rubbings" by Cecily Barth Firestein

"The ABCs of Gravestone Symbols-Every Gravestone Tells a Story" by Teresa Straley Lambert

Stonecarvers featured in our workshop

David Gillespie

<http://www.pumpkintownprimitives.com/>

Karin Sprague Stone Carvers LLC

<http://www.karinsprague.com/>

Kerry O.Furlani

<http://www.kerryofurlani.com/>

Casey Winningham

<http://www.pasttimesremembered.com/>

Kevin Duffy

<http://www.duffysculpture.net/>

Photography featured in our workshop

Cheryl Jackson

<http://www.cheryljacksonoddphotog.com/>

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