

ART CONSERVATION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Re: Helen Martins

Nieu Bethesda
South Africa

MYRNA SAXE

Rozelle Vogelman
25 Westminster Mansions
Highland St., Highlands
2198 Johannesburg, S.A.

15 February 1982

Dear Rozelle;

Now that the holidays are over and I've caught up with the work that piled up during my absence, I would like to review my suggestions for care of the sculptings in New Bethesda.

The sculptings were constructed over a period of twenty years ending in 1976. They were made of cement and some were embeded with glass shards. The interior reinforcement and support systems are unknown. In 1980 the objects were coated with a salt and cement mixture in an attempt to cover crumbling and cracking of original cement.

For immediate care, the objects should be kept as dry as possible to prevent the salts from dissolving and penetrating deeper into the original cement. A waterproof roof should be constructed over the entire area. This would also mitigate temperature extremes and freeze/thaw cycles.

It is very important that the objects receive no treatment of any kind until a complete treatment procedure is planned. Any water repellent application would preclude salt removal. All treatments should be supervised by a professional conservator of outdoor art works.

Although I have treated several objects that have undergone similar well-intentioned prior mistreatment, I would still require an inspection to determine the extent and nature of damage of these particular objects. At that time I could also search out and order the materials that would be needed to treat the objects.

I believe that one or two weeks would be sufficient time for an inspection and preparation of a treatment plan. I have no idea what the cost of treatment would be as that depends greatly upon the results of the inspection and the analysis of the condition of the materials as well as a determination of the possibility of using the labor of local volunteers.

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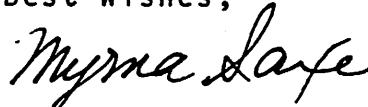
4544 Tobias Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403, U.S.A.
Telephone (213) 273-3161

If you have not had success in finding funding you might consider the Public Relations Department of the Flour Corporation.

In the meantime, I would appreciate receiving copies of the magazine article about the sculptings, photographs of the area and details, and the monthly rain and temperature charts.

Good luck and,

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Myrna Saxe".

MYRNA SAXE

p.s. Deanna (Chooky) Stevens may also have some ideas for you regarding fund raising. Her telephone number is (011) 725-3630.