



HISTORIC BATHHOUSE METALS Hot Springs, Arkansas



Client/Owner
National Park Service

Location
Hot Springs, AR

Project Dates
2003

Materials
Ferrous and Cuprous Alloys
Nickel
Zinc and Chrome Plating

Services Provided
Documentation
Assessment
Treatment Recommendations

Hot Springs, Arkansas has been a vacation destination for a century and a half because of the perceived healthy effects of the natural hot springs that exit the base of this mountain-side site. The National Park Service-managed site includes six historic bathhouses, each built atop one of the hot springs. Mineral water from the springs was piped throughout the buildings to serve steam baths, cabinets, showers, and pools. Men and women used separate quarters which reflected the Oriental or American Indian themes of the buildings.

The constant humidity and corrosive mineral content of the atmosphere within each building has led to advanced corrosion of the metals. Conservation Solutions, Inc. (CSI) was contracted to document and assess all of the metals (exclusive of the plumbing fixtures), determine their state of deterioration, and recommend treatments during the planned restoration of the buildings.

Work included development of a survey method to document and quantify the extent of the work. An assessment grid was developed that listed and described each metal type, composition, state of deterioration, recommendation for treatment, and budgetary costs for the recommended work. These recommendations were incorporated into an overall conservation plan for the site which was used during the restoration project.