

There was a tortoise

on exhibit at the Philadelphia Zoo with an ugly white patch at the top of its greenish shell. The patch was the result of a repair to the shell over 25 years earlier. While anyone of us would be embarrassed walking around with a stain on our coats, we could at least change our clothes. Unfortunately, the tortoise is stuck with its shell. This tortoise (call him Patches), being about 80 years old, is essentially a teenager in the tortoise world where the life expectancy is about 300 years. If Patches is anything like human teens, he would consider the blemish particularly "disgusting."



The Tortoise

1st Quarter
2002



Tony Calise and Sue Sheariss of Esschem before solving the unsightly shell patch problem of the tortoise at the Philadelphia Zoo.



The surface of the old patch is ground down and reshaped so that the acrylic system will blend in with the surrounding color and shape of the tortoise shell.



When Esschem became a Corporate Partner of the Philadelphia Zoo early in 2001, we recognized that help for Patches' problem was right up our alley. As a designer and manufacturer of custom acrylic systems used by a variety of industries where adhesion to specific substrates and carefully controlled color matching are critical, we knew we had the expertise to restore the tortoise's shell to its former glory.

Accomplishing the repair fell to Sue Sheariss and Tony Calise. Sue is our senior product developer and an applications specialist. She developed an acrylic monomer/polymer

formulation that had the appropriate properties for tortoise shell repair. Tony is our Production Manager who brought a talent for color matching to the project.

Because the original repair had taken place so long ago, the current curators could not identify what material had been used. The experts from Esschem quickly determined that an ambient curing monomer/polymer mixture could be formulated that would set up slowly enough to allow careful application over the patch but fast enough to avoid being damaged as Patches moved around his pen. After grinding down the existing patch to allow for the thickness of the acrylic to be flush with the surface of the shell, the color matched monomer/polymer was applied and allowed to cure at room temperature. While many Esschem products are designed for heat curing, baking the tortoise was not an option.

The Zoo is delighted with Patches' new look. (We have not heard what the tortoise thinks.) Knowing the excellent color stability and durability of acrylic systems, they do not expect this tortoise to need another repair very soon, but if, during the remaining 200 or so years of its life span, an accident occurs, Esschem has a recipe ready.

The repair with an ambient curing acrylic system complete, the tortoise and friend seem to be enjoying each others company. Because the remaining life span of the tortoise is over 200 years, another repair may be needed, but with the expected durability of the acrylic system, it won't be for a long time.

Linwood Receives SOCMA Award

The Synthetic Chemical Manufacturers Association (SOCMA) has honored Esschem with the organization's Responsible Care® Achievement Award. The award recognizes manufacturing facilities that have demonstrated a strong commitment to implementing and maintaining the Responsible Care Codes of Management Practices. Responsible Care is the chemical industry's voluntary initiative for continuously improving



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Mike Norquist, COO of Esschem says, "The SOCMA recognition is appreciated. Responsible Care represents our ongoing commitment to quality for our customers as do our ISO 9002 and EN46002 certifications."

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Esschem Company

Specialty Acrylics

PO Box 1139
4000 Columbia Avenue
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(1-800-POLYMER)
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Durham DH1 1TN England
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E-mail: esschem@BTconnect.com

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Fax: 610-521-4600
GM: Allen Johnston, Ph.D.
E-mail: adjohnston@esschem.com

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Fax: 813-855-1584
www.sgiglass.com
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