



**THE ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
HISTORIC ORGAN CITATIONS COMMITTEE**

CHECKLIST OF DESIRED APPLICATIONS MATERIALS  
February 2004

The Organ Historical Society has established and continually supports the Historic Organ Citations program which grants recognition to historically significant pipe organs. The following checklist is designed to assist individuals and institutions interested in nominating an organ for a citation in preparing an application for consideration by the Historic Organ Citation Committee. If your organist, organ curator, tuner, or historian cannot provide this information with completeness or accuracy, please contact the Committee Chair. There is no standard form to fill out. Items supporting an application may be submitted electronically or by mail, as appropriate.

- 1) Please provide your name, complete mailing address, voice telephone number(s), fax number (if appropriate), and e-mail address (if appropriate).
- 2) Please provide the full name, street and mailing address, and telephone number of the organ's location, including the name and title of the appropriate contact person (e.g. clergy, organist, committee chairperson, etc., if not the same as #1 above).
- 3) Please provide a description of the organ, including, but not limited to:
  - a) name and location of builder (usually on the nameplate, if it survives);
  - b) year built (occasionally on the nameplate, or obtain from local records);
  - c) opus (or serial) number of the organ, if known (sometimes on the nameplate);
  - d) type of action (e.g. tracker [mechanical], electro-pneumatic, tubular-pneumatic, tracker-pneumatic, all-electric, or electric-slider);
  - e) number of manuals, speaking stops, and ranks;
  - f) a full specification, not just a stoplist (i.e., all stop names, plus couplers and mechanical accessories, preferably copied from or verified from the engravings on the stop faces at the console/keydesk, plus manual and pedal compasses, etc.). Ideally, including a pipe count by rank, indicating short-compass stops, borrows or unification, etc. would be most helpful to the committee;
  - g) a description of the casework or installation as appropriate (i.e. its style, such as Gothic or Greek Revival, its materials, such as oak with walnut trim, for example), any unusual design features, and placement of the organ in the room; if the organ is installed in a chamber, please indicate;
  - h) a summary of its current condition -- is the organ playable and still in use, is it restored or unrestored, is it altered in any way mechanically or tonally, etc. Include the names of firms or individuals who did any major work on or alterations to the organ, their locations, and the dates of the work, if this is known;
  - i) if the organ has been restored after previous alterations have been made to it, indicate if the restoration work was consistent with the Organ Historical Society's Guidelines for Conservation & Restoration (available from the internet at <http://www.organsociety.org> or by requesting this item from the Historic Organ Citations Committee Chair);
  - j) any unique or unusual local, geographic, or physical aspects of the organ or its musical associations (e.g. the last surviving 19th-century organ in a particular city, the largest

surviving instrument of a given builder, an organist who became famous was employed to play this instrument, etc.);

k) if the instrument is in its original location, or if it was moved from elsewhere (provide details as appropriate and as known), and;

l) any other information that you feel would be helpful for consideration by the Historic Organ Citations Committee.

4) Please provide an historical description or profile of the organ if such is available -- for example, contemporary accounts of its dedication, historical personages involved with it, copies of the contract and/or correspondence with the organbuilder if available, etc. Please include copies of any periodical articles about the organ if available.

5) Provide a clear warning to the Committee if the organ is in any danger, such as ongoing or planned alteration, sale, or destruction. If so, please elaborate and/or document.

6) Please provide a clear, sharp photograph (preferably in color; black-and-white is acceptable) of the organ suitable for reproduction. Digital photographs are acceptable (please be sure they are of sufficient resolution for print reproduction). If a photograph is not reasonably available, please submit copies of printed material that illustrate the organ as best as possible. If an organ is awarded a citation, the photograph undoubtedly will be used in announcing citations from time to time in the Society's journal, *The Tracker*. Please provide information necessary for the OHS to reproduce the photograph, if necessary. Submission of photographs signifies permission for the OHS to publish [acknowledging appropriate credit where applicable] the photographs as it deems appropriate.

7) Is there a particular timeframe in which you wish to receive a decision, such as for the scheduling of a program or recital? Please note that a reasonable amount of time must be allowed for the application to be processed, voted on by the committee, and, if the citation is granted, for a custom-made plaque to be prepared. This ordinarily cannot be done in less than two to three months from the date a submission is considered complete and ready to be sent to the committee for consideration.

*Please note: if you have questions or issues regarding compiling the above criteria, contact the Chair of the Historic Organ Citations Committee. A member of the Committee will be happy to advise you to the best of his or her ability as to how to proceed.*

As further assistance in preparing a nomination, please consider the following points. The committee uses a range of criteria to make decisions in awarding a citation. Generally, any organ that is at least 50 years old is considered for a citation, although exceptions have been made for instruments built within the past 50 years that have proven to be historically significant for various reasons. The Society has awarded citations to organs of all actions, including tracker (mechanical), tubular, and electro-pneumatic, by a wide range of builders from colonial period builders to twentieth-century theatre organ factories.

While consideration of issues such as local significance to the community, geographical uniqueness, relative rarity of surviving work by the organ builder, age of the organ, and its current status are important, the most significant factor in evaluating the organ is how close it is to its original state. An organ need not be restored and/or be in excellent mechanical condition to be considered for a citation. Indeed, at times, an OHS citation has been the impetus for an institution to embark upon a restoration of the instrument.

Please note, however, that tonal or mechanical alterations, poor restorations, and changes in appearance can affect the historic value of an organ. *Changes that have been made to how the organ was originally constructed are factors that are weighed very heavily.* While some alterations may be acceptable or understandable such that the organ is still deemed sufficiently historic to deserve a citation, the more substantial the alterations, the less likely the organ is to receive a citation, even if the Society acknowledges that there is some historic value to the instrument. It is therefore very important that nominations describe as completely and as accurately as possible the nature of any alterations to the instrument and any restoration work carried out, if applicable.

If a citation is granted, you will be contacted as to the timeframe for preparation and delivery of a plaque, consisting of a professionally-framed certificate with custom calligraphy. If other than the original nominator, please provide instructions as to whom the plaque should be sent. If a citation is not granted, your materials will be returned with a summary of the reasons for the denial.

If you have any questions or need further assistance or advice in preparing an application, please contact the Chair of the Historic Organs Committee:

Stephen Schnurr, Chair  
OHS Historic Organ Citation Committee  
c/o Saint Paul Catholic Church  
Post Office Box 1475  
Valparaiso, Indiana 46384-1475  
Office: (219) 531-0922  
Fax: (219) 464-4833  
e-mail: [stephen.schnurr.mus.95@aya.yale.edu](mailto:stephen.schnurr.mus.95@aya.yale.edu)