

Remarkable Ohio Handbook

Guidelines for the Ohio Historical Markers Program

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We are here to help you tell the true stories of your community! So, let's get started by submitting an application for either an Ohio Historical Marker or Ohio Corporate Limit Marker.

Ohio Historical Marker



Height: 48½ inches from the top of the Ohio outline to the bottom of the marker mounting cap.

Width: 46 inches.

Depth: Marker = 1 inch; Marker mounting cap = 5¼ inch diameter.

Weight: Marker is approximately 200 pounds; marker post is approximately 35 pounds.

Ohio Corporate Limit Marker



Height: 42 inches.

Width: 42 inches.

Depth: approximately 1 inch.

Weight: approximately 50 pounds.

More Questions? Contact the Ohio History Connection's Local History Services Department at 614-297-2360.

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INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Ohio Historical Markers Program and of its parent, the Ohio History Connection, is to spark discovery of Ohio history. The placement of markers throughout Ohio's eighty-eight counties connects Ohioans with the stories of their past, helps us understand the present, and challenges us to work together to create a better future.

Ohio Historical Markers identify and commemorate significant people, places, events, and things that have contributed to our state's rich history. Since the start of the Ohio Corporate Limit Markers Program in 1953 and the Ohio Historical Markers Program in 1957, these markers have become valuable landmarks, highlighting history where it happened.

It is important to note that the Ohio Historical Markers Program is a collaborative effort. These "histories on a stick" start with applications from local sponsors who want to share what they feel is an important part of their past. Through careful research, local sponsors and the Ohio History Connection work together to create a trusted source of information about Ohio history before casting that story and placing it in the Ohio landscape.

The program strives to uphold Ohioans' beliefs about good history through the lens of the Ohio History Connection's core values:

- [Relevance](#), addressing and communicating the significance of history with Ohio's diverse people;
- [Authenticity](#), valuing artifacts and true stories of history;
- [Inclusivity](#), appealing to all Ohioans, especially underserved audiences;
- [Stewardship](#), protecting the evidence of Ohio history;
- [Working Together](#), pursuing teamwork and sharing authority and responsibility.

The Local History Services Department (LHS) of the Ohio History Connection administers both the Ohio Corporate Limit Markers program and the Ohio Historical Markers program. The program is known simply as the Ohio Historical Markers Program – taking the name of the more widely erected marker – and is managed by the Historical Markers Coordinator.

As you begin your marker project, we hope that this handbook will answer many of your questions about the application, research, and production process.

-- Andy Verhoff and Laura Russell

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION

Markers must address at least one significant aspect of the history of an Ohio community or of the state. These stories may address such diverse subjects as natural history, pre- or post-contact native peoples, transportation, notable local buildings and architecture (or where they once stood), famous (or infamous) sons and daughters of a community, events that helped define a community, immigrant groups, and local folklore.

To be eligible for an Ohio Historical Marker, all subjects must meet at least one of the following criteria of significance:

- Be associated with events in Ohio that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of local, state, national, or international history or pre-history;
- Be associated with Ohio-born or Ohio-based persons no longer living whose lives are historically significant or who have made significant contributions to patterns of history and culture;
- For buildings, structures, and “things,” embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, style, period, method of construction, architecture, or represent the work of a master;
- Embody characteristics of the state representing significant aspects of the physical or natural history of the earth and its life;
- Represent popular stories or myths that, although not verifiable, have a history themselves and contribute to our understanding of local or state history and culture. The myth or story must be historically verifiable, although the subject of the myth need not be. For example, the legend of the “Mothman” has a long history around Gallipolis, Ohio, and would make an interesting marker even though the “Mothman” creature is not real.

Applicants — or “local sponsors” in the language of the markers program — should use the “Statement of Significance” section of the marker application to explain how their subject addresses one or more of these criteria.

RESEARCHING THE SUBJECT

Once you choose an appropriate subject based on the “Criteria of Significance” listed above, you should begin your research. A thoroughly researched subject will result in a well-documented text and an approvable marker application.

Marker subjects and historical research should be approached with the following questions in mind.

- Who was associated with the subject? Include their names, birth and death dates, chronology of the important events in their lives, and their significant contributions.
- When did the event occur? What is the subject’s period of significance?
- How did the historical event develop? What influence did the marker subject or event have on the country, state, or local community?
- Why is the marker subject important to the community or state? Why is it historically significant? Why should it be recognized and shared on an Ohio Historical Marker?
- Are all statements of fact and dates documented with footnotes or endnotes? Have superlatives such as *first*, *oldest*, *unique*, and *only* been avoided? These descriptors rarely apply. If you include these words, you need to supply irrefutable documentation using objective, primary sources.

Local libraries, historical societies, and newspapers are excellent sources for information, in addition to the Ohio History Connection’s Archives-Library located in Columbus.

For a great tool to aid in thinking about a subject, analyzing sources, and crafting a great text, see “Historical Thinking Strategies,” appended at the end of this handbook.

MARKER PROGRAM RULES AND GUIDELINES

Use of Ohio Historical or Ohio Corporate Limit Markers

The Ohio History Connection reviews and approves applications for markers that meet the program requirements. Please note:

- Ohio Historical Markers may not be used to mark sites other than those approved by the Ohio History Connection;
- No person may erect or use a marker that is identical to or misleadingly resembles the markers developed by the Ohio History Connection;
- The Ohio History Connection may require the removal of any such marker that does not meet the requirements of the Ohio Historical Markers program;
- Misrepresentations of these official state markers are legal violations and will be reported to the State Attorney General and the federal Department of Justice.

“Roadside” Markers or Not?

The Ohio History Connection offers two types of markers, and, while often placed near streets, they should not both be considered “roadside” markers.

- **OHIO CORPORATE LIMIT MARKERS** *are* intended to be read easily, and safely, from a moving vehicle. For that reason, Corporate Limit Markers have text of 15 words or less.
- **OHIO HISTORICAL MARKERS** *are not* meant to be read from a passing vehicle. With text ranging from 100-130 words on each side, Ohio Historical Markers should be enjoyed by stationary readers. For that reason, the Ohio History Connection encourages the placement of such markers in a location away from traffic where readers can safely park and exit their vehicles to read and enjoy the marker.

To place either a Corporate Limit or an Ohio Historical Marker on or near a roadside, the applicant must get written permission of the jurisdiction responsible for the road’s right-of-way (village, city, township, county, or state). A copy of the permission letter must be included with a marker application.

Complete applications are required for all historical markers! The Historical Markers Coordinator and Local History Services are happy to address questions about potential marker subjects or serve as a sounding board for ideas for markers. No approval for a marker will be given, however, until after a complete Ohio Historical Marker application is received by the Ohio History Connection's Local History Services Department. All applications are held until the annual deadline has passed and applications can be considered as an entire group for the upcoming marker work cycle.

Applications missing requested information will eliminate the application from consideration. Such applications will be returned or discarded as incomplete and not eligible. Rather than submitting an incomplete application, use the checklist in the marker application to make sure you have included all requested items. Contact the Historical Marker Coordinator and the Local History Office with questions. They are happy to help!

Word limits. How many words will fit on one side of a marker?

- 1-inch text = approximately 100 words per side
- 5/8-inch text = approximately 130 words per side

Editing texts. The Ohio Historical Markers program reserves the right to edit all marker texts. Such editing may be done to ensure historical accuracy, to tighten meaning, or to bring the text into a uniform marker "voice." When composing a draft of a marker text for your application, try to stay within the word count, but don't worry if your draft exceeds the word limit by a sentence or two. Draft marker texts exceeding the word limit by thirty words, however, will be returned to you for revision before we begin to work on the text.

Verification of text required. Marker requests will not be approved when it is impossible to verify and authenticate information included in the marker application to the satisfaction of the Ohio History Connection. The inclusion of legible copies of your sources and a bibliography is required for all applications. Primary sources are preferred but a good secondary source shows that the applicant has looked at all available materials.

Avoid superlatives. The use in marker texts of superlatives such as *first, last, only, most, biggest, smallest*, should be avoided. While there is a first for everything it is usually not documented at the time. Events recognized as significant at the time (i.e., the first atom bomb explosion, the first battle of a war, or the first man in space) are documented by multiple sources. In local history, an event sometimes becomes *the first* simply because someone other than an eyewitness wrote it down first, or surmised so after the fact. While it is often a community's point of pride to say that it was *the first* in something, only a thorough and exhaustive search of disinterested sources can prove the superlative.

Superlatives must be proved with primary sources from the time of the event and must be proved in comparison to other similar events. In other words, do primary sources from the next-town-over agree that *your first* settler was *the first* settler in the county or do they offer a counter claim which calls your claim into question? In most cases, firsts or other

superlatives on markers will only be recognized when there are two or more primary sources from the time stating that the thing to be marked is indeed true. If the claim can be supported by additional published peer-reviewed research (an academic book, article, or study), then much the better.

Without primary source evidence, it is difficult to prove that something is the first of its kind. Perhaps what is significant and more interesting is that an event happened in your area. Instead of claiming that John Doe was the first settler in the area – and if there is evidence of American Indian habitation in the area, he was not – it is much more interesting on a marker to describe the circumstances that brought him to the area. The “pull” factors that brought John Doe to the area and the “push” factors that motivated his decision to leave where he came from might be a more interesting story to tell.

For brief explanations of primary and secondary source, see:

<http://teachinghistory.org/best-practices/using-primary-sources/19079> (Primary)

<http://teachinghistory.org/best-practices/using-primary-sources/19080> (Secondary)

Names of living people on markers. Marker texts may not include the name of the current owner of the property where the marker is erected, nor may they include the name of any living person. The purpose of the markers program and the limited space on the marker itself is to commemorate and share the history of the subject of the marker, not to aggrandize the property owner or others. The names of living people are excluded from marker texts because – except in very exceptional cases – it is difficult to assess an individual’s historical significance while he or she is alive and still making history. The best place for a local sponsor to thank individual donors is in the written program for the marker dedication ceremony.

Personal acknowledgements, dedications, or memorials. The local sponsor is welcome to include personal acknowledgments, dedications, and memorials in the program for the marker dedication ceremony. Such personal acknowledgments, dedications, and similar memorials will not be included on the markers themselves. The purpose of the markers program is to share historical information rather than serve as vehicles for personal tributes. As a program of the Ohio History Connection, whose name also appears on all Ohio Historical Markers, the Connection cannot affiliate itself with the expression of such personal sentiments.

Thirty Year Limit. The markers program welcomes topics that address the recent past. To ensure that enough time has passed to assess the historical significance of a subject, however, it must have occurred at least 30 years prior to the year of application.

Availability of markers once erected and dedicated. All markers must be accessible to the general public between dawn and dusk seven days a week throughout the year. Additionally, there should be a safe place to park a vehicle, get out, and walk to the marker.

Editorial Work Queue and Inactive marker files. While the markers program staff try hard to work through all applications in a timely manner, some applications languish in our files due to unforeseen circumstances and require us to put a time-limit on how long we will consider the application to be a valid part of the program.

Upon acceptance into the program, an application will go into our queue for review by the program's historians within ten-twelve months of acceptance into the program. We use the estimated dedication date supplied at the time of application to help order this work. If no dedication date is provided, we shall assume there is no urgency and place that application's review later in the work queue.

Once our historians have begun work on a marker the local sponsor will receive an edited marker text along with any questions about sources or other details. Upon receiving such a message, it is up to the local sponsor to respond in a timely fashion. Our goal is to complete the review process, obtain an approved text and payment, place the marker into production, and have the marker safely delivered within six months of this first editorial contact. However, if our editor has not heard from the local sponsor within three months, the marker application will be put on hold and placed in our "inactive marker" file. After one year of no contact with our office, we will consider the application "dead." At that point, the application will be recycled and the local sponsor will need to reapply to the program.

We recognize that sometimes serious health or funding issues arise. We will be happy to work with the local sponsor but cannot hold an application forever. After two years pass with no progress, the file will be declared "dead," recycled, and the local sponsor will need to reapply to admittance into the markers program. PLEASE NOTE: If an application has languished in our "inactive" files, the prices in force at the time of reactivation shall apply to the marker. The price in effect at the time of the original application will not apply.

GRANTS

The Ohio Historical Markers Program currently has two grant programs to help local sponsors fund the production of new Ohio Historical Markers. They are:

1. Ohio Historical Markers Grant;
2. William G. Pomeroy Foundation Grant.

Both grants are available to applicants across the state but the Pomeroy Foundation specifically earmarks eighteen counties for ten of their twenty available grants each year.

The Ohio Historical Marker application includes a grant check-off spot to apply for these funding opportunities. If interested, please complete the entire application and be sure to check-off the grant that you are seeking. Doing so will put the application into contention for one of the available grants.

OHIO HISTORICAL MARKERS GRANT

The oldest grant program for markers is the Ohio Historical Markers Grant. Using funding from Ohio's bicentennial celebration, the Ohio History Connection established the grant program in 2006. This competitive, matching grant program defrays the cost of markers with grants of \$1,000. A maximum of ten (10) grants are available on an annual basis.

A committee will decide the winners of the annual Ohio Historical Marker grants. Marker topics with statewide, national, or international significance will be favored over those with local interest only. Incomplete marker applications will be returned and considered ineligible for either a grant or marker. Be sure to triple-check that everything on check-list at the beginning of the application has been provided.

Grants are not made retroactively for completed markers or for applications that are currently accepted into the Ohio Historical Marker program. Unsuccessful marker grant applicants are welcome to revise and resubmit applications for consideration for the next round of grants. Alternately, unsuccessful grant applicants may elect to proceed with their marker application and pay the full cost of the marker with local support. However, once the applicant chooses to proceed with the marker and pay its full cost, the marker is no longer eligible for a grant. The applicant can, however, apply for a grant for a new, unrelated marker.

Marker grants must be used in a timely fashion. Grants not expended twelve months from the date when the Local History Office sends the local sponsor a first draft of marker text for review will be reabsorbed into the grant fund for support of other grants.

Applicants who do not win a marker grant may re-apply up to two more times. Each resubmission, however, should demonstrate revisions that address the concerns of the grant committee. Marker grant applications that are not revised from the time of the last application will not be considered. Due to the increasing volume of marker applications, it is not possible to contact every unsuccessful grant applicant with detailed comments about their applications. The applicant, however, is welcome to contact the Historical Marker Coordinator with questions about how to improve their submission. PLEASE NOTE: Revision and re-application for a grant does not guarantee that a grant will be awarded. Re-applicants for marker grants will be in competition with the other applicants in each new grant round.

WILLIAM G. POMEROY FOUNDATION GRANT

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation strongly believes that historical markers are important to local historic preservation by educating the public and fostering historic tourism. To that end, the Pomeroy Foundation offers grants to fund the full cost of one standard Ohio Historical Marker (up to \$3,040). Twenty such grants are available per application cycle and may be applied for by simply checking the appropriate line on the completed marker application due on July 1.

Ten Pomeroy grants will be earmarked for the following eighteen Ohio counties: **Ashland, Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Geauga, Huron, Lake, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Meigs, Ottawa, Portage, Sandusky, Seneca, Summit, Trumbull, or Wayne.** Ten other grants will be distributed among the remaining seventy counties in Ohio.

Award Criteria

A. To be considered for a Pomeroy Foundation Grant:

- The person, place, event, or thing being commemorated must have a period of significance that falls between the years 1800 and 1900.
An individual who was born in 1899 but rose to prominence in the 1930s would not qualify. A person born in 1880 and active in 1899 (and on into the 20th century) would qualify. The same is true at the other end of the century. An event or era that begins in the late 1700s and continues into the 1800s would qualify.

B. The William G. Pomeroy Foundation will also fund markers that designate properties or districts on the National Register of Historic Places.

- The National Register-listed property must be owned by a government entity or a non-profit organization.

- Properties that are listed as contributing structures in National Register districts are also eligible, so long as they meet the other eligibility requirements of this section.
- In the case of a *National Register-listed property*, the requirement that they fall within period of 1800-1900 does **NOT** apply. *For example, if the district or property's period of significance is the 1910s, the property or district shall be eligible for this grant.*
- Individual properties under private ownership or commercial properties *are not eligible* for this grant. National Register Districts, however, that include some, but not exclusively, private and/or commercial properties shall be eligible.

To be eligible, your historical marker has to meet condition A or B but NOT BOTH.

To apply for a Pomeroy Grant, complete the entire application and be sure to indicate your interest by checking beside "Check if applying for funding through the William G. Pomeroy Foundation" on your marker application. *Doing so will put the application into contention for one of the available grants. If you are seeking grant monies be sure that you have checked this line on your application.*

As with the Ohio Historical Marker grants, Pomeroy grants are not made retroactively for markers that have been completed or for applications that are currently accepted into the Ohio Historical Marker program. Unsuccessful marker grant applicants are welcome to revise and resubmit applications for consideration for the next round. Unsuccessful grant applicants may be given the option to proceed with their marker application and pay the full cost of the marker with local support. Once the applicant chooses to proceed with the marker and pay its full cost, the marker is no longer eligible for a grant. The applicant can however apply for a grant for a new, unrelated marker.

For the most recent applications, price list, grant information sheets, and other marker details, go to the RemarkableOhio.org website and the "Propose a Marker" page.

APPLICATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS

There is only one way to obtain either an Ohio Historical Marker or an Ohio Corporate Limit Marker. Complete the application found on RemarkableOhio.org and mail it, along with supporting materials, to the Ohio Historical Marker Coordinator on or before the July 1 annual deadline.

The following are step-by-step instructions for completing the Ohio Historical Markers Application Form. **Be sure to check that you are using the most recent application form.** By using an outdated application, you may miss required information and your application will be returned as incomplete. The date that the application was updated can be found on the bottom left of the last page of the marker application.

APPLICATION CHECK LIST

This checklist can help ensure the success of your marker application!

It is especially important that applicants for markers and marker grants make sure that their applications are complete prior to mailing.

- All information requested on the marker application is required.
- Missing information will eliminate the application from consideration.
- The annual July 1 deadline is firm. Applications sent to us after July 2 will be returned or held in a holding file until the next application cycle.
- If an application is incomplete, it will be returned so that the applicant may supply the missing information, and resubmit by the next deadline.
- If an application is submitted well-ahead of the July 1 deadline and is incomplete, the marker coordinator may contact the applicant and ask for the missing items. If these are not supplied by the July 1 deadline, the application will be returned and not considered for either a grant or a marker.

While submission of an application does not guarantee that a marker will be awarded, the markers program appreciates your efforts to provide the information needed. Every item requested will be used should the application be accepted and will be part of a permanent file to be consulted for decades to come.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING CHECK-OFF

This is where you apply for either an Ohio Historical Markers or William G. Pomeroy Foundation grant.

If interested in one of the available grants, please **complete the entire application but check here** to let us know that you would like your application to be put into contention for grant funds. We cannot add your name to this pool after the July 1 marker application deadline.

#1. Title of Marker

This title, or an edited version, will appear at the top of the marker and be used to identify your marker once it has been erected. It is recommended that you finalize the title *after* you draft your “Statement of Significance” and “Suggested Marker Text.” Keep titles short and interesting. Do consider adding important dates (such as birth and death dates) to your title in order to save words within the body of the marker text. Decide if your title will be the same on both sides or if you will tell two stories and therefore need two titles.

#2. Subject of Marker

Fill in this blank after you draft your “Statement of Significance” and “Suggested Marker Text.” Once you have done so, briefly summarize the subject of the proposed marker using a few key words that could be used by a search engine. Examples might include: “Historic building” or “Natural disaster.” These key words will help the application reviewer know quickly where your text will be going. To see a list of key words currently in use on RemarkableOhio, click the “Subjects” list under “Menu” in the left hand box found on every page.

#3. Location of Proposed Marker

The location of the proposed marker should show where the marker will be placed. The description of the proposed marker’s geographic location should include the name of the property, if known. The address of the location must be as exact as possible, including the number and street, city or village, and county. For rural property, include the nearest rural roads, section, township, and county. Marked or labeled photographs are required. We also ask that you include a map showing the location.

Please explain why you want to place the marker at the selected location. Is it relevant to the event being commemorated, an important community gathering spot, or perhaps an easily visible location with easy parking nearby?

Think carefully about your marker location and consider from both a visitor’s viewpoint and city maintenance requirements. Will the marker be in a safe spot to park and walk to view it? Is there a visual overload of signs in the location? Is the location vulnerable to snow plows, fork lifts, delivery trucks, vandals? Taking a few moments to practically consider such possibilities will save many headaches in the future maintenance of the marker.

Although not required, indicate the GPS coordinates of the proposed location if able. This provides the most accurate way for many people to find the marker. Please provide coordinates in the “decimal degree” format:

40.00420 **Latitude**
-82.98808 **Longitude**

The markers program uses the decimal degree format to record coordinates on the marker's website Remarkable Ohio. Decimal degrees (DD) express latitude and longitude geographic coordinates as decimal fractions and are used in many geographic information systems (GIS), web mapping applications such as Google Maps, and GPS devices. Most smartphones have apps for capturing GPS coordinates.

#4. Owner of Property

Please list the owner of the property where the marker will be erected. We keep a record of the owner's name, address, state, zip code, telephone number, email address on file. Even if the applicant owns the property, we require a letter granting permission in writing at the time of application. If the letter is not included, the application will be considered incomplete and returned.

Check the appropriate line to indicate whether property is owned by a public entity, a not-for-profit, or a private individual or company. The markers program collects data regarding the placement of markers on public versus private property.

The expectation of the Ohio History Connection is that the owner of the property on which a marker is placed will:

- A. Allow a marker to stand in perpetuity and not remove or move it.
 - If a marker does have to be moved or removed, the property owner or the entity responsible for the maintenance of the marker will contact the Local History Office of the Ohio History Connection at least two weeks before action is taken (although in cases of accidents involving markers, this would not necessarily apply).
 - The local entity should provide a date when the marker will be re-erected. If a marker simply needs to be moved and erected at a different location, the local entity must also explain why the marker needs to be moved and why the new location chosen is suitable. The local entity will provide new address, location, photographs, and GPS coordinates for the marker.
 - The Local History Office will update the RemarkableOhio website so marker enthusiasts can find markers. If a marker is removed and the local entity has no plans to replace it, that will be noted on the RemarkableOhio website and in the permanent paper file.

- B. Allow the public to stand or sit and view the marker between dawn to dusk seven days a week, 365 days a year.
- C. Notify the entity responsible for the maintenance of the marker if the marker is in need of refurbishment and allow access to the marker for the necessary work.

#5. Type of Marker

This question identifies the type of marker needed. Pricing is based on type of marker, size of letters, length of text, and the addition of art work. While the Ohio Historical Marker program is far more popular, Corporate Limit Markers are available on the same annual July-June cycle. The same application form is used for both the Ohio Historical Markers and the Corporate Limit Markers.

WORD LIMITS & ARTWORK

Ohio Historical Markers

- 1-inch text: no more than 90 - 100 words per side (without artwork)
- 5/8-inch text: up to approximately 130 words per side (without artwork)
- Ohio Historical Marker texts can be composed with larger 1-inch letters or smaller 5/8-inch letters. Marker texts can be the same on each side or have different text on each side.

Ohio Corporate Limit Markers

- Standardized text size, words on one side only
- Approximately 15 words total

Please be aware that all word counts are approximations. Word counts vary greatly depending upon the number of letters in a word and the space between words. If every word on a marker is three letters long, more words will fit. If every word is 12 letters long, fewer will fit. The title of the marker and the sponsor lines *are not* included in this word count.

Decisions about letter size and the use of artwork will determine the final cost of an Ohio Historical Marker. Smaller letters and longer texts are more expensive than those with larger letters and shorter texts. The sizes of letters in a text cannot vary from side to side. The marker can either have the same text on each side or have different text on each side but the text will be a consistent size on both sides.

Sometimes an image, map, or etching on a marker is worth a thousand words. Because the inclusion of artwork will reduce the number of words on a marker, the program will address word-length limits on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, the inclusion of either a metal or etched plate image adds to the cost of a marker. The markers program is not equipped nor

able to provide image modification or design services. If interested in adding artwork to the marker, please consult us about the “camera ready” specifications for your image. Art work is at additional cost, must be “camera-ready,” and will increase both the marker’s cost and time for production. The image that you provide to the marker program is the image that will be reproduced on the marker. Color images, however, will be reproduced in black-and-white.

#6. Funding Sponsor of the Marker & Tax Exemption

The organization named in this section will be listed on the bottom of the marker as its lead or primary sponsor, unless your marker received a William G. Pomeroy Foundation grant. If more than one organization is to be credited, please list the names of the organizations under “Additional funding sponsor” on the application.

Space limitations at the bottom of marker mean that no more than four sponsor lines can be listed. The Ohio History Connection will always appear as the fourth or bottom sponsor line. Your marker could look like this:



The local sponsor is responsible for all costs related to a marker as well as all required research. When payment for the marker is due, the invoice will be addressed to the local sponsor and will be the entire price *minus* any Ohio Historical Marker or Pomeroy Foundation grants awarded. Additionally, the cost and installation of the marker are the sole responsibility of the local sponsor.

Markers are sponsored and paid for locally by a variety of organizations, including:

- Civic groups and service organizations (Kiwanis, Rotary, etc.);
- Veterans organizations (American Legion, VFW, etc.);
- School alumni groups;
- Anniversary committees;
- Village, city, county, and township governments;

- Community and county historical societies;
- Historic preservation organizations;
- Private donors. *Note our rules about listing **Names of living people on markers and Personal acknowledgements, dedications, or memorials**, on page 9.*

If your organization or your funding sponsor is tax exempt, you should indicate a tax-exempt number. Without a tax exemption number, you will be charged the current Franklin County tax rate.

To estimate the price of a marker, consult the current price list posted on RemarkableOhio.org. **Please note:** When planning, presume the highest priced marker. We cannot give an exact price until all details, including text and artwork, are agreed upon as final by both the markers program and the local sponsor.

#7. Maintenance of Marker

Please designate an individual or organization that will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of the marker. Provide their contact information on the application and submit a formal letter of consent stating that they have agreed to the following:

- To be responsible for long-term maintenance and care of the marker;
- To report to the Ohio Historical Marker Coordinator if the marker is missing, damaged, stolen, moved, refurbished;
- To bear the responsibility for the full-cost of refurbishment and/or replacement of the marker should it be damaged or stolen.

Without such letter, the application will be considered incomplete. This information will be kept on file and should the Ohio History Connection be contacted about a marker we will contact the responsible party indicated in this section.

To maintain a marker in good condition:

- Clean the marker twice a year with water and mild soap using a non-abrasive rag or sponge;
- As needed, remove bird droppings or other contaminants that may degrade the marker's finish;
- Care for the marker as you would any other painted object you value.

In 5-10 years, depending on location, the finish on the marker will weather to an even flat-brown color, as shown→



Members of the public may report a weather-worn, damaged, or missing marker to our office by completing one of the forms found on the RemarkableOhio front page or by phoning our office at 614-297-2360.

#8. Shipping Address

The shipping address and contact information is required for the foundry to ship the marker. A few things to consider when deciding upon a shipping address:

- Shipping regulations often restrict trucks in residential neighborhoods. We strongly recommend that you use a commercial address that has an office or shop that is staffed and open between 8 am–5 pm, Monday–Friday.
- The delivery truck will need a location with loading access or curbside service. Any other location is subject to additional charges.
- The marker will be in a large crate weighing approximately 250 pounds. Recipient is responsible for unloading the crate from the truck. Please have several strong people ready at the time of delivery.
- Unloading service *does not* include unloading equipment such as a forklift or hydraulic lift.
- In all cases, you should inspect the marker at the time of delivery. Do not place the crate in storage and inspect days, weeks, or months later. Should the marker be damaged in delivery, claims to the freight company must be made at the time of arrival.

#9. Statement of Significance

The statement of significance is the most important section of the historical marker application and should be tackled before writing your suggested marker text. Think about beginning the first sentence of your statement with “*This subject merits recognition of an Ohio Historical Marker because...*,” and then explain why the marker subject is significant to history and how it meets the criteria listed on page 5. If applicable, be sure to document the subject’s importance on a local, state, and national level.

Keep in mind that the subject does not have to be significant on a state or national level to be worthy of a marker. Markers about locally-significant topics help readers understand why a place is the way that it is!

The information in the statement of significance should relate directly to the marker subject. You should research the marker subject so that you can answer these questions in a one- to two-page statement:

- Why is the subject of the marker important or significant?

- Who was associated with the marker subject?
- What significant thing happened at the proposed site of the marker?
- When did the marker subject occur?
- Where did the marker subject occur (if different from above)?

Be sure to support all statements of fact with credible sources. Sources from the time of the subject (primary sources) are strongly preferred over those that describe the subject years after the fact (secondary sources). For brief descriptions of primary and secondary sources, and the difference between the two, go to:

Primary sources: <http://teachinghistory.org/best-practices/using-primary-sources/19079>

Secondary sources: <http://teachinghistory.org/best-practices/using-primary-sources/19080>

Document all statements of fact in your statement of significance with **footnotes**¹ or **endnotes**. We ask that you document your facts so that we can verify your sources and support the facts stated on the final marker.

Please limit the statement of significance to one or two 8.5 x 11 pages (not including footnotes or endnotes). Attached the statement to the marker application form.

#10. Suggested Marker Text

You should draft a preliminary marker text, keeping in mind that it needs to be concise, accurate, and compelling. In general, marker texts should be confined to facts that answers the questions of *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, and *how*.

If the marker application is approved, you and a representative of the markers program will work together on the text until a final version is mutually agreed upon. Most marker texts go through 2-3 drafts and the revision process can go swiftly if both parties are timely in

¹ This is a footnote. Please make sure each note includes the following information: AUTHOR of source, TITLE, PLACE OF PUBLICATION, DATE OF PUBLICATION, and PAGE NUMBER. This format, for example, is the one typically used in historical writing: Charles Van Tassel, *Story of the Maumee Valley, Toledo and Sandusky Region* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1929), pp. 18-19.

Format isn't critical, but the markers program needs to know the sources that you used to establish your facts. Whatever format is used, a good footnote/endnote answers these questions: "What is the source of this fact?" and "What source must I consult to find this fact for myself?"

If the source is a web page, please include the link in your footnote, for example: "Ohio City (City of Ohio)" Encyclopedia of Cleveland History at <http://ech.case.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=OC1>

It is not necessary to repeat information if you refer to the same source many times throughout your suggested text, just include the author, title, and page number. Using the example above: Van Tassel, *Story of the Maumee Valley*, p. 28.

their replies. Occasionally, marker texts can take many more months and revisions before a final text is agreed upon by both the local sponsor and the markers program.

The number of words on an Ohio Historical Marker is limited by the size of the lettering. Most texts are approximately 80-130 words in length per side. Suggested texts in excess of 160 words per side may be returned to the local sponsor for further editing before review by the markers program. Suggested texts for Ohio Corporate Limit Markers should not exceed 12-15 words.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please do not expect that your marker text will automatically be accepted as initially submitted on the application. ALL suggested marker texts are subject to revision at the discretion of the markers program to ensure historical accuracy, economy of expression, readability, and relevance to a wider audience of future readers.

Like you, our first priority is to ensure that the text is historically accurate and that it represents the truth about the person, place, event, or “thing” represented on the marker. This is why we require footnotes/endnotes, a bibliography, and copies of the sources that you used in your research.

Additionally, we work with you to make sure the text is a “good read.” A writer should not be so married to his own turn-of-phrase that our historians and editors cannot do their jobs. It is difficult to put large and important stories into a paragraph of 80-130 words per side. It is our aim to make every word on your marker work together so that future readers easily and completely understand the story you want them to know. If we cannot arrive at a mutually agreed-upon text, the marker application may languish and ultimately be dropped from the program. Be sure to read the rules and guidelines on page 10 regarding our editorial queue and inactive files.

Several things to consider while writing your suggested marker text:

- Your marker will be enjoyed by readers who are not familiar with your subject.
- Drafts of texts should assume no extensive prior knowledge of your subject, area, or even the larger national story.
- Marker readers favor shorter sentences over long and convoluted ones.
- Your marker will stand for many years and you should strive to make sure your story is understood by both present and future readers.
- A fact is better than a vague feeling when telling a short history story. Instead of “early pioneers were happy in this area,” use “Founder John Chase chose this location for its rich farmland and plentiful waterways in 1801.”
- If your property is on the National Register of Historic Places or a designated National Historic Landmark, you must mention that in the text. A sentence such as “The XYZ house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2010,” will suffice.

Just as with the statement of significance, we ask that you document *every statement of fact* in your suggested marker text with **footnotes** or **endnotes**. Please note that these citations will NOT be included on the finished marker but WILL be held in the permanent marker file for future generations to reference.

#11. Sources and Bibliography

Attach to your application a separate piece of paper that lists the publications or other references cited in the footnotes/endnotes in questions #9-10 above. Also attach to your application **legible** photocopies of the relevant pages (we do not need the entire book). Photographs that document the marker subject should also be included with the application. These supporting materials become a permanent part of the marker file and are a trail for future researchers about the final marker text. Please do not submit your original documents or one-of-a-kind photographs.

Please note that the markers program is more concerned with knowing the sources of the information you used rather than the format of your bibliographic entries. While the markers program uses the *Chicago Manual of Style* as a guide, we will accept far less formal bibliographies on the application. What we ultimately need to know is where you found your information and how can we find it ourselves.

For every statement of fact, we need a bibliographic entry that answers these questions: “What is the source of this fact?” and “What source must I consult to find this information for myself?”

For each reference, give the:

- Name of the author;
- Title of the source;
- Place and date of publication;
- Publisher;
- Page numbers;
- A way to match the footnote/endnote with the attached photocopied source.

Example: Van Tassel, Charles. *Story of the Maumee Valley, Toledo and Sandusky Region* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1929), pp. 18-19.

If the source is a web page, please include the link in your footnote, for example: “Ohio City (City of Ohio)” Encyclopedia of Cleveland History at <http://ech.case.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=OC1>. Accessed January 10, 2015.

If it is impractical to photocopy a source material, please indicate where it may be found so that it may be consulted when this application is reviewed. **Applications missing sources and a bibliography will be incomplete and returned.**

The Ohio Historical Marker program has been in place since the early 1950s. We maintain a paper file on every marker produced. **Please honor our request for paper submissions** and not send us a series of links expecting us to print out all your sources!

#12. Tentative Marker Dedication Date

Due to the number of applications the program is working on at any one time, applicants should allow a minimum of twelve months for the review, manufacture, and delivery of a marker. The twelve months starts from the time the Local History Office acknowledges acceptance of an application into the program (typically late September of the year the application was submitted).

We ask for a “tentative” marker dedication date to help order our work throughout the year. Enter a month and year that you envision for the marker dedication. Advance knowledge of an upcoming anniversary date or special event that would serve as the perfect time to unveil a new marker, helps the marker program meet your expectations and ensures that you will receive your marker on time.

However, do not expect to submit your application in July and have a new marker delivered a few months later. If you have a specific anniversary, we suggest you begin working on your marker application at least 2 years prior to the event you hope to commemorate. Applications can take many months to compile, funding may take time to obtain, the committee review process takes another few months, and Ohio History Connection historical research and editorial process can take many more months after acceptance into the program. The actual production of a marker can then take another 3 months. To be considerate of everyone’s workload, we ask that you honor this 2-year expectation.

While we ask for a tentative date on the application, it is advisable to set a firm date for a dedication ceremony **only after** a delivery date has been confirmed or the marker has been delivered and inspected.

#13. Application Submitted By

By completing this section, the applicant agrees that he or she:

- Has verified that the information in the application is complete and accurate to the best of his or her knowledge;
- Is authorized to commit the person or organizations named above to fund and maintain the marker;

- Will serve as the contact person between the local sponsor(s) of the application and the Ohio History Connection's markers program;
- Will inform the markers program should they need to step down as the official contact and supply the name and contact information for the newly authorized contact.

You must sign and date the form and include all contact information. By doing so, you agree to become the Ohio History Connection's point of contact for the marker throughout the application, editing, and production process.

Current Application Date

The application form for an Ohio Historical Marker changes from year-to-year. Please make sure you are using the current form before mailing it. By using an outdated application form you may be missing required information. Current forms may be obtained by downloading a copy from Remarkable Ohio (look on the "Propose a Marker" page) or by requesting a copy from the Ohio Historical Markers Coordinator. To determine if you are using the most recent application, please look at the [blue date found on the bottom left corner of the final page](#) on the Marker Application. It should have a date within six months of the next deadline and have a name such as "Ohio Historical Marker 2020 Application" indicating the year that the application is due.

Congratulations! If you have gathered everything required in the marker application, it is time to mail it to the Ohio Historical Markers Coordinator, c/o Ohio History Connection, Local History Services, 800 East 17th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211-2497.

AFTER APPLICATION SUBMISSION

What to expect and timing of the process?

The Ohio History Connection accepts applications throughout the year, but only considers them after the annual July 1 deadline. Upon receipt of your application, our office will acknowledge receipt via email. If you do not hear from us, please phone or email to confirm that your application has arrived and is complete.

Applications that arrive prior to the next July 1 deadline will be placed into a holding file for the next application cycle.

Application Decisions, Notifications, and Editorial Process

The Ohio Historical Markers Program understands that every marker project is important and we work hard to be as fair as possible in making decisions regarding marker applications. As the program increases in popularity and the number of applications expands, the careful review of applications becomes more critical. It is no longer a given that every application will receive a marker and/or a grant. For that reason, this handbook will attempt to give an overview of the process.

Once the annual July 1 deadline arrives, all applications are carefully checked to make sure they are complete. Incomplete applications are set aside to be returned to the applicants and will not be forwarded to either the reviewers or the subsequent grant committees. This is why we emphasize that the checklist provided on page 2 of the application be used throughout the process of compiling an application.

During July and August internal reviewers at the Ohio History Connection will carefully read through every application using an Evaluation Rubric (posted on Remarkable Ohio) to weight the applications and make an initial decision about the number of applications that will be accepted and what applications should move forward to outside reviewers. In doing so, the reviewers strive to represent all the stories across the state and to uphold the Ohio History Connection's core values of **relevance**, **authenticity**, **inclusivity**, **stewardship**, and **working together**.

During late August and early September, external reviewers will read the applications again using the evaluation rubric and the lens of the Ohio History Connection's core values. The committees will meet with the markers program staff in early September to make decisions about the next round of markers as well as the awarding of marker grants. After a decision has been made about that year's round of marker applications, the Historical Marker Coordinator will notify the contact person that submitted the application.

If the application is not successful, it will be returned to the local sponsor with some feedback. We encourage resubmissions, but hope that subsequent applications show

improvements. Applications may be submitted up to two more rounds (a total of three submissions). The sheer volume of applications means that feedback cannot always be detailed. However, we truly want to help every application become a marker and welcome phone calls or emails about strengthening applications.

If the Ohio History Connection approves the application, you and the Local History Services Department will work together to draft the final marker text for inscription on the marker. Depending upon your suggested dedication date, your application may wait in the editorial queue for 6-12 months after notification of acceptance in the program. You will be contacted once your marker is under historical review. If concerned, please do not hesitate to check-in about the progress of your marker.

When the final version of the marker text is agreed upon that text will be sent for your signature of approval along with an invoice for the marker. Payment is not due until an invoice is sent out with the final text for signature. Once payment has been made and the signed text has been returned, the historical marker will be ordered from the foundry. No marker will be ordered until both this signed text and payment are returned. We are particularly careful about this signature “on the dotted line” as this is the text that will be used to create the marker.

All Ohio Historical Markers and Ohio Corporate Limit Markers are manufactured by Sewah Studios in Marietta, Ohio. Once the marker has been ordered and Sewah has given an estimated delivery date, the Historical Markers Coordinator will send information about the delivery of your marker and its installation.

The entire marker process usually takes twelve months, dating from the time the Historical Marker Coordinator sends you notification that your application has been accepted into the program. We say “usually” because we will not be held responsible for slow responses on the part of the local sponsor or other delays in payment. When delays occur, they usually occur during the text approval process and after payment is invoiced. Local sponsors should be ready to review drafts of texts shortly after they are forwarded marker text for review and ready to pay for the marker when the invoice arrives.

Marker Dedications

The Ohio Historical Markers program encourages all local sponsors to hold marker dedications. It is never too soon to begin thinking about your celebration. The marker application asks a local sponsor to note a tentative dedication date. Although this date may change, having a tentative date helps us schedule our work throughout the year. The markers program, however, suggests that the local sponsor not solidify a date until a marker is in production. Typically, once an order has been placed for a new marker, the foundry will let us know an estimated delivery date that we will send along to the local sponsor. Plan on production taking 2-3 months once an order is placed.

Dedication celebrations are a popular way to generate interest in and proclaim your new marker. These happy occasions can take place as part of larger community events or as stand-alone programs. They can be big affairs with hundreds of celebrants, or small ones with 10 – 20 attendees. The point is to let the community and the world know that yet another part of Ohio’s rich history is shared on your new Ohio Historical Marker.



If you are planning a dedication ceremony a member of the Ohio History Connection’s staff will be pleased to represent the Connection and bring a cover for the unveiling. Be sure to let the Historical Marker Coordinator know your plans as soon as possible so our representative can put the details on their calendar.

We encourage you to invite local dignitaries as well as county, state, and congressional elected representatives.

Marker dedication celebrations usually last from 30 minutes to one hour.

Dedication events often include:

- Welcoming and introductory remarks by a master of ceremonies;
- Background on the history chronicled on the marker, usually by an expert on the topic;
- Congratulations and brief comments about the markers program by a representative of the Ohio History Connection;
- Remarks by dignitaries, such as local elected officials, and state representatives and senators;
- The last item on the program is usually the unveiling of the marker;
- A small reception or tour following the unveiling gives people time to mingle, take photographs, and enjoy the event.

Preparation for marker dedication celebrations usually include the creation of a written program that is distributed to attendees and held by sponsors as a memento of the event. The Ohio Historical Markers Program has a template for both a “Save the Date” postcard and a dedication day program. You are welcome to use these or to create your own! Think about including the following information on your program: date, time, and location of event; address or location of the marker; final text of the marker; a list of speakers and their affiliations; and acknowledgements such as a list of donors, the writers who drafted the text, the people who unloaded or installed the marker, and everyone or anyone who helped along the way from application to dedication.

Marker Dedications are a great way to celebrate the long and arduous journey from application to dedication! Don't forget to mark this special achievement for your community.

[RemarkableOhio.org](http://www.remarkableohio.org)

The Ohio Historical Marker program has its own website www.remarkableohio.org, that is a part of the family of websites maintained by the Ohio History Connection. Remarkable Ohio went live in 2006 and was developed in partnership with the Ohio Government Telecommunications, which administered the site until 2015. Today, it is under the auspices of the Ohio History Connection and the Local History Services Department.

Known commonly as "Remarkable Ohio" or "RO," the site contains an up-to-date list of every Ohio Historical Marker that is organized by county, marker title, and marker number. The current application, price list, grant criteria, and this handbook are available on the "Propose a Marker" page. We have tried to answer many of the frequently asked questions on the "About" page. While we hope that you will find Remarkable Ohio to be a useful cache of information about the marker program, we welcome phone or email inquiries.

Marker Condition Reports

Marker maintenance is an increasingly important aspect of obtaining an Ohio Historical Marker. The two marker programs are over 60 years old and approximately 300 of the extant markers are now moving towards a genteel "middle age." While we hope that Ohio Historical Markers will stand in place to tell their stories in perpetuity, we recognize that events or accidents happen that cause a marker to be moved or removed.

The Ohio Historical Markers program collects information on the condition of markers and uses this information to identify markers in need of refurbishment or repair. Original sponsors and their organizations die or dissolve. Should you have a question about the disposition of an older marker start with the local historical agency or governmental entity and give our office a call. We maintain a permanent file on every marker but depend upon the local community to keep us up-to-date on their markers.

If a marker is missing or damaged, please let us know so that we can notify the local entities responsible for the ongoing maintenance of markers and post updates on Remarkable Ohio. If a marker needs to move, please let us know that too. Reporting forms are available on the front page of our website or by requesting copies from the Historical Marker Coordinator.

CONCLUSION

The Ohio History Connection appreciates your interest in the Ohio Historical Marker program. We love being able to tell the stories that make Ohio's history so rich, diverse, and rewarding. We look forward to partnering with you to mark your important story and to share it with all Ohioans.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions regarding these guidelines or any aspect of the marker process:



Ohio History Connection
Local History Services Office
800 East 17th Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43211

Laura Russell, Historical Markers Coordinator
(614) 297-2360
lrussell@ohiohistory.org

Andy Verhoff, Team Lead LHS
(614) 297-2341
averhoff@ohiohistory.org

APPENDIX 1

SEWAH SHIPPING POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS

Sewah Studios products are sold **“freight prepaid”** delivery to a commercial location via LTL freight carrier. Orders sent to a non-commercial address, deliveries requiring special handling, or orders submitted with errors which require reconsignment are subject to additional charges.

- **Commercial Address**
Freight is prepaid to a commercial location with loading access or curbside service. Any other location such as: apartment, private residence, estate, farm, school, college, church, rectory, day care, camp, public storage facility, government site, construction area, parks, or high-cost delivery regions are subject to additional charges.
- **Delivery/Unloading Service**
Unloading service does not include furnishing or use by the driver of any special unloading equipment such as a forklift or a hydraulic lift gate. Additional charges will be applied if any other service is requested at the time of delivery.
- **Shipment Notification**
Upon request, Sewah will notify the customer when their product has been shipped. This notice will allow 24 to 48 hours before the customer can expect the shipment. The carrier will not notify the customer prior to delivery unless difficulty finding the location should occur. Delivery by appointment can be arranged at an additional cost.
- **Address Quality**
Please understand that the shipping address is vitally important to the freight company. If the customer gives incorrect or inaccurate information the shipment will be delayed and additional charges will be applied.

Sewah reserves the right to bill customer accounts for freight costs that exceed our normal “prepaid delivery” amount. If you think the address provided will cause additional charges, please contact Sewah for instructions and/or options to minimize this charge. Sewah Studios will continue to provide “prepaid freight” services to all addresses which qualify. Thank you!

APPENDIX 2

Historical Thinking Strategies

Analyzing Primary Sources	Who is the author? What do I know about the author? What is the time period? What do I know about this time period? What type of source is it? Did it come from a reliable place? What can I learn from this source? What questions do I still have?
Understanding Historical Significance	Why is this source, event, person, place, issue, concept significant? Who has decided that it is significant? Was this significant at the time? Has it become more or less significant over time? What are the elements surrounding this that maybe more or less significant but enhance our understanding?
Cause and Consequence, Change and Continuity	Does this [] represent a change or continuation of the status quo? What is the cause? What is the result? What other [] does it set in motion? Who does it affect and how does it affect them? Is it mundane or exciting and who decides?
Taking Historical Perspectives	What is my bias? Why do I have this bias? How does my bias affect my perspectives? Do I have the evidence to back my position? Have I considered all the varied opinions and perspectives? Has my perspective evolved over time?
Understanding the Ethics of Historiography	Did I cite my sources properly? Am I honoring and respecting the stories and experiences of the people I am researching? Am I respecting the work of fellow researchers, teachers, and historians? Am I acknowledging and fore fronting my bias?

Courtesy the Creative Learning Factory: <http://creativelearningfactory.org/>