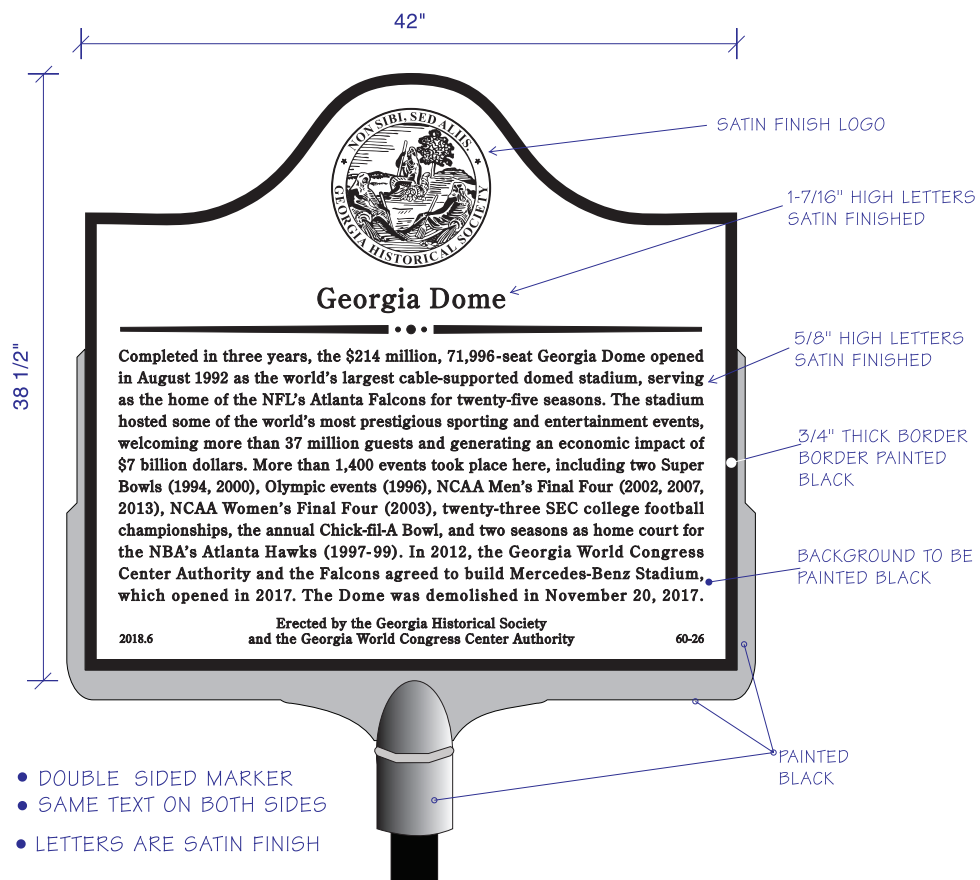


Guide to Drafting Historical Marker Text



Appearance of Markers

Since 1998, GHS has administered the Georgia Historical Marker Program for the state of Georgia using a silver-on-black plaque design with the Society's seal at the top (see example below). Marker plaques are double sided with repeating text. No imagery other than the GHS seal will be used on the marker plaque. Markers that are not part of the Georgia Historical Marker Program should not include the GHS seal or the Great Seal of Georgia.



Composing Historical Marker Text

Historical Marker Text Do's

- Construct historical marker text so that it is a point by point, chronological narrative of the subject and its historical significance.
- Each line in the historical narrative should be verifiable with resources cited in the bibliography of the historical document.
- Propose historical marker text that is 130 words or less. This does not include titles and “erected by” language.
- Place the historical marker subject in a larger narrative, showing significance beyond the local level.
 - For example, when speaking about a church, cemetery, or school, explain how the subject shows larger state-wide or national trends. Rather than saying “ABC School was established in 1950 for the education of African-American children in X County,” the text could illustrate broader significance by explaining “ABC School, established in 1920 for the education of African-American children in X County, was part of the Rosenwald school building program that matched funds from philanthropist Julius Rosenwald with community donations to build schools for African Americans during the era of segregation.”

Historical Marker Text Don'ts

- As historical markers are not intended to be monuments or advertisements, the use of overly adulatory language that departs in any way from an objective and dispassionate recounting of historical documented facts will not be approved.
- Marker texts with quotes or lists of names are discouraged.
- Illustrations may not be included on the historical marker.
- The use of “firsts” is highly discouraged unless it can be proven *without question*. Local legend or traditions will not be considered as sufficient.



Marker Grammatical Rules

The following are general guidelines from the Georgia Historical Society's *Style Guide*.

- Use Oxford commas.
 - Example: first, second, and third place
- Use commas after dates.
 - Saturday, September 1, 2018.
 - Oglethorpe landed on February 12, 1733, with 112 colonists.
- Race/ethnicity descriptors only require hyphens when used as an adjective.
 - Example: “African-American education” or “the education of African Americans”
- Numbers are spelled out if they are under twenty, but numbers 21 and higher are numerical.
- State is capitalized when referencing a governing body and not a geographic location.
 - Example: “the marker was erected by the State of Georgia in 1953” or “thousands of markers exist today across the state of Georgia.”

For other questions, refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

