

***THE NEW ZEALAND
ORGAN PRESERVATION TRUST
INCORPORATED (N.Z.O.P.T.)***

GUIDELINES

for the

CONSERVATION

and

RESTORATION

of

PIPE ORGANS

THE NEW ZEALAND ORGAN PRESERVATION TRUST

Guidelines for Conservation & Restoration

1. To be regarded as historic:

A. Any organ or organ case in New Zealand which was built prior to 1900 may be said to be of major historic importance. For instruments of lesser age, historical importance will be based on age, rarity and the extent to which its components remain in an unaltered condition.

B. Any substantially unaltered organ built prior to 1930 which is an outstanding example of a particular style or of a particular builder's work, or is unique in some way, (eg., the only example of a particular builder's work in the country.)

C. Any organ if it is considered that it represents an important period in the builders work, or is a milestone in the development of a particular style. (Any organ which has been radically altered tonally and/or mechanically and which no longer represents the style of a period or the original builder may be regarded as having minimal historic importance even though it may still contain considerable older material.)

2. Historic organs in New Zealand should be considered the equal of those in other parts of the world, and as worthy of preservation and restoration.

3. Restoration may be defined as the process of returning an organ to its original state, (it may be prudent to only return it to the state of a previous rebuild/restoration if it is considered that that rebuild/restoration was of significant importance.) provided always that sufficient original material remains to make this feasible. In some cases a totally unaltered organ may be in such basically good condition that simple repair and cleaning will accomplish this.

If a substantial number of original components are missing and must be made anew, the process is more properly termed reconstruction.

Any work on an organ, whether it be historically significant or not, should normally be undertaken by a professional organ builder. Amateurs should be entrusted with the care of an organ only if they have the competence to carry out the required work to the same standard as would be expected of a professional. No work should be undertaken by an amateur unless the church or other authorities have entered into a contract clearly specifying the work to be undertaken and the terms under which it will be undertaken.

A Some guidelines for reconstruction contain the following:

A. In general, all extant original components should be preserved and properly repaired. Severely damaged components may be replaced by new ones if it is not possible to return them to reliable working order. Missing parts must be replaced by new ones and should conform as closely as possible to all originals both in materials and method of construction.

B. Pipework should be carefully repaired by a professional, replacement for missing pipes being made of the same material and construction details as the originals. The original means of tuning should be preserved wherever possible. An effort should be made to ascertain the original temperament and restore it. Altering of original pipework should be limited to the re-regulation and resetting of speech of the pipes. Voicing of replacement pipes must be carried out in the style of the remaining originals.

C. Keyboards, stop controls and other console fittings should be kept in or restored to their original condition. A possible exception may occur in cases where the extension of a short compass pedal board is necessary to the continued acceptance and use of an organ. Key and stop action should always be restored in such a way that any new materials conform to the original materials. (Consideration must now be given to the fact that ivory is no longer being cut.)

D. Slider and pallet windchests should be very carefully restored and checked for soundness. When replacement of pallet covering is necessary, it should be with material corresponding with the original.

E. Pitman, ventil, and other forms of tubular pneumatic or electro-pneumatic windchests should be restored using original techniques of design and construction and compatible materials and replacement parts. (see paragraph A above.) Replacement of such actions with all electric units even though the chest structure is retained, must be regarded as major alteration. Similarly, replacement of original stop, combination or player actions with ones of a different type constitutes an alteration, even though in some instances this may be necessary for financial reasons.

F. Original bellows, reservoirs, wind trunks, concussion bellows, and other components which determine the wind characteristics of an organ should always be retained and releathered. If parts are missing, they should be replaced by new components conforming to the originals. Chest mounted Schwimmer regulators should not be added to organs not originally having them, nor springs added to a reservoir which was originally weighted. Tremulants should be restored and adjusted as necessary. Feeder mechanisms, where extant, should be restored and made operable where possible. The retention or addition of an electric blower does not detract from the historical value of an organ if it is installed with as little alteration to the original winding components as possible, but it is recognised that there is a discernible difference between fan-blown and hand-blown winding systems in organs which have both.

G. If the original finish of an organ case has been altered, an effort should be made to determine the nature of the original finish and to restore it whenever feasible. The same is true of front pipes, particularly those which were originally decorated in polychromed designs but have since been painted over. In repairing damage to case woodwork, particularly in unpainted cases, care should be taken to match new wood to old.

H. In instances where financial considerations dictate that some original part of the organ be removed or left unrestored (eg. a badly damaged set of pipes, or feeders

and blowing handle) these should be packed up and stored in a safe part of the building, properly labelled as to their significance. The same applies when on the insistence of the owner, some original part (such as a short compass pedalboard) is replaced.

I. It is highly desirable that the restorer keep detailed records, measurements, photographs etc. during the course of the restoration work. Consideration needs to be given to lodging a copy of these records with a national archive also.

J. Restoration of historic organs should always be done by an experienced professional organ builder. For the sake of the owner's own financial investment as well as the preservation of the organ, it is incumbent upon the owners of historic instruments to thoroughly investigate the reputation, previous work, and any references of the prospective restorer. Quality of work rather than price should be the criterion in the choice of restorer. A fine and historic organ may be irreparably damaged or altered by an incompetent worker, but a well restored historic organ will be a musical treasure and a legacy to future generations. The aims and objectives of the New Zealand Organ Preservation Trust are to ensure that the correct decisions are made.