

# Speak!

The Online Newsletter of the Genealogical Speakers Guild



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*The next issue of **Speak!**  
will be published in March 2018*

## From Our President

I hope this issue of **Speak!** finds everyone enjoying the weather and looking forward to time with family and friends.

This past year GSG has begun to move forward on several projects:

- The website redesign committee is ready to put the redesign format out for bids.
- The virtual meeting committee is working on finding the best platform for GSG to hold its annual meetings electronically.

- We started the "GSG Members Group" on Facebook and have fifty-one members.
- Our society has grown to 167 members. It has been a fantastic year.

It is simple to become part of the group – go to Facebook.com and search for "GSG Members Group," then click on the GSG logo, and click the "Join" button. Once you have answered the two questions, you will see that your request is pending. Within a day or two, if your answer to both questions was yes, you will receive notification that you are a member of the group. The administrators apologize for the need for the questions, but the group is private, and your answers help the administrators quickly determine who is a current GSG member. Once you have joined the Facebook group, help keep it active by posting your comments, questions, experiences, and anything else you think might be of interest to your fellow members.

GSG will have a booth at the NGS conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and we will be needing a Booth Attendant. The attendant will receive the full conference registration that comes with the GSG booth. In return for the full conference registration, the Booth Attendant would accept the following responsibilities:

1. Be in the Guild booth during the first one and a half (1½) hours of the Exhibit Hall on opening day. No lectures are offered during this time.
2. Fill all lunch periods and all breaks between lectures not covered by volunteer GSG members. We know you'll want to go to lectures, so be in the booth after each session as soon as possible.
3. Be available to work the Guild booth during special events in the vendor hall unless the time slots have been filled by GSG members.



If you are interested in being the Booth Attendant, please send your name and contact information to [President@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org](mailto:President@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org).

Please send any calls for presentations that are not on our website to me and to our

*SPEAK!* Editor, Lauren Maehrlein, at [Editor@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org](mailto:Editor@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org).

I wish everyone a fantastic holiday season and a happy, prosperous New Year.

*Margo Fariss Brewer*  
President, Genealogical Speakers Guild

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Gary Ball-Kilbourne, Fargo, ND

Lisa Gorrell, Martinez, CA

Michael J. Hall, Orem, UT

Susan Hill, Strongsville, OH

Cindy J. Hineman, DeLand, FL

Charmaine Riley Holley, Tullahoma, TN

Wallace Huskonen, Brecksville, OH

Mary Jamba, MD

Mary Mannix, Rockville, MD

Judy Nimer Muhn, Milford, MI

Tom Michael Perry, Salt Lake City, UT

Michael A. Ports, Jacksonville, FL

Linda Roghaar, Amherst, MA

Walter Schlomann, Tampa, FL

Barbara Shoff, Bartlesville, OK

Loelle VanFossen, North Plains, OR

## DUES RENEWALS AND NEW MEMBERS

When paying dues renewals, or joining GSG for the first time, here are a few reminders:

1. Dues can be paid online through the GSG website. Select **Membership Information** from the menu bar, then select **Membership Form**. (*Note: The link "Change Membership Quarter," is different from the membership links.*) Payments made through the GSG website will be processed via PayPal. You do not need to have a personal PayPal account and may use any credit card. Because payments are processed by PayPal, we never see your credit card information.
2. Please **do not** go through your personal PayPal account to pay GSG—the funds will not automatically come to our account, which makes it difficult to redeem the payment. In addition, YOU will pay the PayPal fee; when you use the GSG site, WE will pay the fee.
3. When paying your dues online, **always** continue from the payments page to the member information page. We use the information you provide on this page to update your membership record, and it is sometimes difficult to match payments to the correct member without it.

Any questions? Please e-mail [treasurer@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org](mailto:treasurer@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org).



## SALT LAKE CITY TO NEW ZEALAND

What is SLC2NZ? GSG member Jan Gow provides a look into a genealogical conference far from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

Here in New Zealand, we held my first SLC2NZ Research WeekEnd in 2012. And I organised my first “Hooked on Genealogy Tour” in 1992. So it took me 20 years to realise that I could bring a little of what it is like in the FHL in SLC, to NZ!! (Family History Library, Salt Lake City to New Zealand). Our next SLC2NZ WeekEnd is 19-22 October 2018. This is an attempt to create a little of what it is like at the FHL in SLC, but here in Auckland!!

- We will have helpful facilitators
- We will have free access to many sites
- We will look at organising our research
- We will learn how to “work” the sites we subscribe to
- We will have “short, snappy” lectures
- We will have collaborative research where we all research one family - each person will have a turn
- We will have a webinar straight from the FHL just for us
- We will NOT have the 24 hour travel!!

So - what does this have to do with the Speakers Guild I hear you asking?

1. Guild members living close together could get together to organise this WeekEnd. We start Friday lunch time and finish Monday afternoon (‘tis a public holiday on the Monday). This will give you a good organising background which will help when you are asked to speak at an Event. You will know the questions to ask to help the Event run smoothly, especially for you as a speaker. This will also help you find other Guild members whom you could work with and perhaps offer a team speaking proposal.
2. We try to have one facilitator to two attendees or less - one to one is best. We limit attendance to 15, but this would depend on the number of facilitators (Guild Members) available and the venue etc.
3. We try to look out for younger facilitators (being mostly silver citizens ourselves!). These are all potential Guild members!!
4. Our events are run on a cost-recovery basis, so no one receives any financial recompense. But you could decide otherwise. We hold the event at a motel with conference rooms. We do try to cover accommodation for our facilitators. We find that the opportunity to HUG new-found “soul mates” is beyond any financial consideration.
5. Each facilitator can nominate their favourite websites for their “short, snappy” lecture. Remembering that, whilst attendees are researching (all excited after listening to the lecture), each will have a facilitator beside them, guiding them through their research.
6. Each facilitator (Guild Member if possible) will have had the experience of preparing the ‘short, snappy’ lecture. [Am sure you have heard the story of the person, asked to give a presentation, firstly needed to know how long? Because if it was for an hour, he could do this easily — anytime — but if it was for five minutes, he needed lots of time to prepare this.]
7. Training is an important word — keep your antenna alert, watching for a) possible new Guild members and/or b) good organisers — people you could call on another time and/or c) people to help run the next year’s Intense Research WeekEnd. [I already have three people who have asked to go on my Facilitators List for Oct 2018]. You might even find some good workers for your genealogy society!!! Those of us in the silver citizens age group need to be watching out for younger genealogists to take over!!!
8. If you would like more info on how we organise our weekend, please e-mail me at [jangon@genealogy.net.nz](mailto:jangon@genealogy.net.nz).

## MEMBER PROFILE

By Mary Kircher Roddy

*Speak!* is pleased to provide a forum for members of the GSG to introduce themselves to one another. In the June 2017 issue we featured a profile of Dana Ann Palmer, CG.

In this issue we visit with Ron Arons, who, upon learning of the criminal record of his great-grandfather, never tried to deny his connection to the man or his deeds. Instead, Ron chose to embrace him and his history which ultimately led to a new career in researching and lecturing on the penal system and its genealogical applications.

If you are interested in having your profile featured in an upcoming issue of *Speak!* please contact Mary at [MRRODDYN3@msn.com](mailto:MRRODDYN3@msn.com).



### RON ARONS

Ron Arons got into genealogy for all the wrong reasons. For him it was therapy to deal with an 18-month stretch of loss – loss of both his parents, two jobs, and a significant relationship. He completely shut down for six months, but then began to scratch his way back, picking up the family tree his father had created. When his father first showed college-student Ron the research, he wasn't the least bit interested. But after the series of devastating losses, he wanted to discover who he was and where he was from. He had no idea his “therapy” would turn into a second career.

He grew up in Rockville Centre, Long Island, not far from his grandparents' apartment in Brooklyn. Once he started on his research path, Ron became fascinated with his great-grandfather, a man with a closet full of skeletons. He had three first names, three middle names, and was a two-time bigamist with four wives. His criminal activities and persistent lies simultaneously fascinated, confused, and inspired Ron, but single-handedly taught him more than his parents, and some excellent professors, did. Though he died nine years before Ron was born, understanding this man and his life has been Ron's obsession for many years.

Ron specializes in Jewish/Eastern European records, technology, and methodology. His first big speaking engagement was in 2001 in London for the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies' conference. He's given more than 450 presentations locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, including at SCGS Jamboree, RootsTech and *Who Do You Think You Are? Live!* in England. Early in his career, before the internet, he found speaking engagements by sending out press kits, but by now has done enough speaking that people seek him out after talks or in the exhibit hall of a conference to book future lectures.

His most unusual assignment was being an expert for the PBS series “The Jewish Americans.” After a limo ride from his aunt’s apartment to the filming location in Manhattan, he answered a series of questions on Jewish criminality on the Lower East Side. An amazing experience!

He’s done a number of webinars, mostly for the Legacy Family Tree series and was initially unnerved speaking by himself with no audience feedback. He’s more comfortable with the process now, but only with talks he’s given previously. Without the memories of audience reaction to the material, their laughs, nods, and groans, he’d be hard-pressed to present as a webinar a talk he hadn’t already given to a live audience.

Ron’s lecture topics include methodology, technology, family dynamics, creative thinking, and data visualization. He finds it helpful to ask a set of questions at the beginning of a talk to better understand the audience. What are their preconceived notions about the topic? What is their research expertise level? How technical are they? Armed with this knowledge, he can adjust how much detail to go into on various parts of the talk. He advises speakers to be positive and passionate but to be themselves.

In addition to his membership in GSG, he’s a member of APG and several Jewish genealogical societies around the country.

You can find out more about Ron on his website, [www.Ron.Arons.com](http://www.Ron.Arons.com).

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## CALLS FOR PAPERS

Please send information regarding Calls for Papers to the editor at [editor@genealogicalspeakersguild.org](mailto:editor@genealogicalspeakersguild.org)

### DEADLINE 31 MAY 2018

**The Ohio Genealogical Society** (OGS) announced a request for lecture proposal for its 2019 conference, “Building a Heritage,” to be held 1-4 May at the Great Wolf Lodge in Mason, Ohio. Details on topics and submission instructions can be found at <https://www.ogs.org/conference2019/call.php>

### DEADLINE TBD 2018

**The Fairfax Genealogical Society** began accepting speaker proposals for its 2018-19 programs on 15 November 2017. Proposals will be accepted for monthly general meetings September 2018 through May 2019; monthly education classes September 2018 through May 2019; a one-day fair to be held 27 October 2018; and a two-day conference to be held 5-6 April 2019. Please check their website for additional information. <http://fxgs.org/cpage.php?pt=51>

### DEADLINE 31 MAY 2018

**The Conference on Illinois History** is accepting lecture proposals for its 4 October 2018 conference, “Building a Heritage,” at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois. For complete information on topics and submission requirements please contact [Christian.mcwbirter@illinois.gov](mailto:Christian.mcwbirter@illinois.gov)

## **SOCIETY CORNER**

*By Katherine R. Willson (moonswings@gmail.com)*

### **UNEXPECTED PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS**

Societies and speakers never plan to cancel a monthly program, workshop, or seminar, but situations can arise that are beyond control. Preparing in advance for an unexpected cancellation by either the society or the speaker can protect the financial interests of both parties.

Societies and speakers are encouraged to utilize contracts that address the following:

When the society must cancel:

- What is your society's cancellation policy if a paid event doesn't reach the minimum number of registrants? Does the society's contract include a clause specifying how many days in advance the society can withdraw the speaker's invitation? Does it specify whether the notice must be in writing?
- Does your society's contract include a clause specifying acceptable reasons for cancellation (acts of nature, a venue's loss of electricity, heating/cooling failures, flooding, etc.)?
- If the speaker has incurred non-refundable travel expenses, does the contract specify your society's reimbursement policy?
- Does your society's contract specify whether the society will try to reschedule the speaker for another date?

When the speaker must cancel:

- Does the speaker's contract include a clause specifying acceptable reasons for cancellation (illness, family emergency, travel complications, etc.)?
- If cancellation is being considered due to travel complications, does the speaker's contract specify whether s/he would be willing to deliver the presentations electronically (via GoToMeeting/GoToWebinar, Google Hangouts, Skype, etc.)?
- Does the speaker's contract specify his or her responsibility in assisting the society to procure a replacement speaker?
- Are there other genealogical speakers in the area who could fill in at the last minute? Is there an online list that's easily accessible by society leadership, detailing area speakers' topics and contact information?
- Are there members within your society who could fill in for the cancelled speaker at the last minute? Is there an online list for them, as well, that's easily accessible by society leadership, detailing their topics of expertise and contact information?

Having a back-up plan:

- Has your society chosen a couple of webinars from the free offerings at Legacy Family Tree Webinars ([familytreewebinars.com/archived\\_webinars\\_free.php](http://familytreewebinars.com/archived_webinars_free.php)) for viewing in the event of a canceled speaker? (See Legacy's policy for societies at [familytreewebinars.com/innerpage.php?id=19](http://familytreewebinars.com/innerpage.php?id=19))
- Has your society considered holding a Q&A session or impromptu panel discussion as a monthly program in the event of a canceled speaker?
- Does your society's pre-registration process for larger events collect e-mail addresses and cell numbers for quick notification of a cancellation via electronic means?

- Does your society have contact information for someone at the venue who will post cancellation notices outside the entrance?
- Has your society designated a member who will immediately post a cancellation notice on your society website and social media accounts?

Again, societies and speakers never plan to cancel, but when the unexpected occurs, having a plan in place ensures a smoother response from all sides, and contributes toward continued positive professional relationships in the genealogical community.

For more detail regarding contracts between societies and speakers, see:

- The Genealogical Speakers Guild webpage, “Hiring a Speaker” at [genealogicalspeakersguild.org/hire.php](http://genealogicalspeakersguild.org/hire.php)
- Pat Richley Erickson’s “Sample Contract for Speaking Engagement” at [DearMYRTLE.com/Sample%20Contract%20for%20Speaking%20Engagement.pdf](http://DearMYRTLE.com/Sample%20Contract%20for%20Speaking%20Engagement.pdf)
- George G. Morgan’s article, “Surprises Happen: Protect Yourself Legally” in the December 2017 issue of the *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly* (pages 35-39)
- Katherine R. Willson’s Society Corner column in the June 2017 issue of the Genealogical Speakers Guild newsletter, *Speak!* (pages 6-7)
- Thomas MacEntee’s article, “Speaker Emergencies: When the Show Can’t Go On” in the June 2015 issue of the Genealogical Speakers Guild newsletter, *Speak!* (pages 9-11)
- Patricia Gilliam Hastings’ chapter, “Executing Contracts” in Elizabeth Shown Mills’ book, *Professional Genealogy: A Manual for Researchers, Writers, Editors, Lecturers, and Librarians* (published 2001, pages 101-122)
- Desmond Walls Allen and Marsha Hoffman Rising’s article, “When Your Speaker IS Your Program” in the October 1999 Federation of Genealogical Societies’ *Society Strategies Series*, Set VI, Number 4 at [fgs.org/upload/Society\\_Strategy\\_Series/SSS-VI-4-CI-Speaker.pdf](http://fgs.org/upload/Society_Strategy_Series/SSS-VI-4-CI-Speaker.pdf)

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## NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

Introducing: **Tar Heel Discoveries:** Guided North Carolina Genealogical Research.

GSG member Diane L. Richard and Victoria P. Young announce the formation of their business venture offering individuals the opportunity to maximize results when researching their North Carolina ancestors.

Designed to accommodate genealogists with varying levels of research experience, Tar Heel Discoveries offers personalized, individualized support and instruction over five days at the North Carolina State Archives and Government & Heritage Library in Raleigh. Two week-long sessions (15-20 April and 14-19 October) are offered in 2018. Registration is now open!

Diane and Vickie have over 25 years’ combined experience as full-time professional genealogists specializing in North Carolina research and are members of a number of industry organizations, including the national and local chapters of the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG), the North Carolina Genealogical Society (NCGS), and the National Genealogical Society (NGS).

For details and information, visit [www.tarbeeldiscoveries.com](http://www.tarbeeldiscoveries.com) or e-mail us at [info@tarbeeldiscoveries.com](mailto:info@tarbeeldiscoveries.com).



## GSG WEBSITE RESOURCES FOR PROGRAM PLANNERS

*www.GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org*

### Directory of Members

All members of GSG are entitled to an individual web page in the Directory of Members on the GSG website. Members are encouraged to add information about their speaking business and themselves, including awards, specialties, lecture topics, and previous engagements. Many speakers also include a short bio and a photo. The GSG Directory of Members is a great place for program planners to search for a speaker for their next lecture, workshop, or seminar. Members, be sure your member page is up to date. Program planners, utilize the Directory of Members in your search for a speaker for your next event.

The Directory of Members is searchable by name, city, state, county, or by keyword.

### Members' Calendar

The Members' Calendar can tell you when and where GSG members are currently speaking or planning to speak. Maintained by the speakers themselves, the Members' Calendar can be searched by speaker name (first and/or last name) and date of program. Program planners can learn what speakers will be in their area.

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## BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE: LET YOUR GSG WEB PAGE WORK FOR YOU

*(FREE Advertising)*

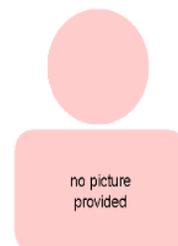
Every active member has a personal page on the GSG website ([www.genealogicalspeakersguild.org](http://www.genealogicalspeakersguild.org)). The instructions for updating are sent to new members with their logon credentials, have been published in *Speak!*, and are in the Members' Corner on the website.

Do not forget to keep your web page and calendar listings on the GSG website up to date. These are valuable member benefits since they give you a (free) channel to show off to the world.

### *Who Are You?*

Is your web page up to date?

- Is it cross-linked to your personal web page?
- Is it cross-linked to other personal pages, i.e., ISFHWE, APG?
- Is your Contact Information up to date?
- Are your Lecture Topics current?
- Is your Bio current?
- Have you added your coming engagements to the Lecture Calendar?



- Do you have a photo on your page? Be sure your page has a picture so program chairs can put a name with a face.

*Instructions on updating your page can be found on the GSG website in the Members Corner.*

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## ***Do You Have Brochures?***

Part of the fun of the GSG booth at conferences is looking at each other's brochures for ideas to improve your own. Not sure how you want your brochure to look? Come compare your fellow Guild members' brochures and see what style will work best for you!

The best part is you have the opportunity for conference planners from around the country to see your brochure, whether or not you are able to be there.

After each conference, members will receive an updated inventory of their brochures. If you cannot make it to the next conference, mail a supply as instructed in the letter, and we will display them at the conference for you. This is one of your membership benefits. Take advantage of it.

### **Questions:**

Gary M. Smith

GSG National Conference Coordinator

[Conference@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org](mailto:Conference@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org)

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## **GSG/ISFHWE LUNCHEON AT NGS 2018**

GSG President Margo Fariss Brewer is pleased to announce that *The Legal Genealogist*, Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL, will be our speaker for the GSG/ISFHWE luncheon at the National Genealogical Society's 2018 conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Open to GSG and ISFHWE members and anyone interested in hearing a talk by a first-rate speaker, it will be Saturday, 5 May 2018. Sign up for this luncheon as soon as possible as it will sell out quickly.

Judy's lecture is entitled *Paths to Your Past: Storytelling to Bring Us Together*. Storytelling is both art and science: science to help us understand why stories are memorable; art to tell the stories that bring us together.



## *Speak!* Policies

*Speak!* the quarterly newsletter of the Genealogical Speakers Guild, is published in March, June, September, and December. The deadline for submission of articles and other material for the newsletter is the 15th of the prior month (15 February, 15 May, 15 August, and 15 November).

As stated in Article II of the Bylaws of the Genealogical Speakers Guild (as amended and restated May 2004), the objectives of GSG shall be

1. To provide a unified, effective voice to promote speakers' interests by providing a forum for the discussion of topics of concern to genealogical speakers;
2. To broaden the speaker base by identifying, educating, and assisting promising speakers;
3. To raise professional lecture standards; and
4. To aid speakers in understanding and fulfilling their obligations to program planners and to audiences.

**Guidelines for Submitting Feature Articles** Prior to submitting a feature article, authors are requested to review the newsletter guidelines outlined in this document ( *Speak!* Policies) and submit article topic to *Speak!* editor, Lauren Maehrlein ([editor@genealogicalspeakersguild.org](mailto:editor@genealogicalspeakersguild.org)), for approval. Unsolicited articles will be returned to the author along with a copy of *Speak!* Policies.

- Articles must address a topic directly related to genealogical speaking.
- Articles should be no more than 2,000 words.
- Book reviews should be no more than 750 words.
- The editor retains the right of acceptance of all articles, news, and announcements.
- The editor retains the right to edit articles for accuracy, clarity, and length. Articles will be edited to conform to the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*.
- Authors retain their copyright.
- First-time submissions should be accompanied by a short (75 words or fewer) bio of the author and a photo. Both will be printed with the article when published.
- Not all articles submitted may be accepted for publication.
- Articles may not be published in the order in which they are received. The editor will balance content and topics throughout the year.
- Articles by non-members will be considered when space permits.

*These guidelines do not apply to member news, calls for papers, or other notices and/or announcements submitted by GSG members. Adopted November 2010; updated January 2015.*

### **GSG BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President: Margo Farriss Brewer, 2018

Vice President: C. Ann Staley, CG, 2019

Treasurer: Diana Crisman Smith, 2018

Secretary: Katherine R. Willson, 2019

Director: Jean Wilcox Hibben, PhD, CG, 2019

Director: Luana Wentz Darby, 2018

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