

Inside This Issue

President's Message.....	1-2
Welcome, New Members.....	2
Dues Reminder.....	2
GSG Member News.....	2
GSG is on Facebook.....	3
Thank You to Booth Workers.....	3
Writing Opportunity.....	3
GSG Lapel Pins.....	3
A Word from the Editor.....	3
Virtual Presentation Committee.....	4
GSG Member Profiles:	
Leslie Brinkley Lawson.....	5
Michael Hait, CG.....	6
Billie Stone Fogarty.....	7
Speaker Contract Clauses—	
Some Alternatives.....	8
by Thomas MacEntee	
A Salute to Lieutenant Donn Overton	9
by Nancy Lauer	
SpeakerWiki Is Now SpeakerMix.....	9
Be Not Afraid of the Webinar	10-12
by Jean Wilcox Hibben	
NGS Seeks Nominations for 2012	
Genealogy Hall of Fame.....	13
Speak Policies.....	14
Membership Form.....	15
GSG Board	16

The next issue of *Speak!* will be published in early February 2011.

President's Message

I was recently asked how I find speaking engagements. The flip answer is that they find me, but trying to answer that question made me think about how I first started and how the answer changed through the years.

I was asked to give my first genealogy talk in 1997. I was a member of the board of directors for the Oklahoma Genealogical Society (OGS), so they did not have to pay me. The program chairman knew that I had researched at the National Archives and had been a teacher, so surely I could give a speech and surely I could talk about researching in Washington, DC. I must have done alright because I have spoken to that group every year since on various topics.

After I spoke at that statewide society, other societies and groups across Oklahoma started inviting me to speak. One year while attending an NGS conference I discovered GSG and decided that, since I was a speaker, I might as well join the Guild. I, like many of our members, waited quite some time before submitting information and a photo for the online member directory. I was a blank outline until Diane and Gary Smith badgered me and Debby Horton showed me how easy it is to enter my information and become a real person on the GSG web page.

Before entering information on the GSG web page, all my lectures were given in the state of Oklahoma. For most, I received compensation only for travel expenses or a modest honorarium. Out-of-state engagements started as a direct result of the GSG Directory of Members.

This year during the month of October, I gave thirteen lectures in three different states, appeared on a local television station doing a live segment on genealogy, booked sixteen lectures for 2012 in four different states, scheduled three tapings of lectures in

continued on next page

You won't want to miss

An Introduction to Webinars
a webinar about webinars

See page 4 for more details ...

President's Message

continued from previous page

a fifth state, and committed to a regular monthly genealogy segment on that television station.

I don't have exact figures, but I believe that most of those out-of-state engagements have come from a combination of referrals and my GSG listing in the Directory of Members. Seven of the lectures next year are repeat engagements from places where I have spoken before.

I have received requests for bookings from strangers I sat next to on an airplane, people I met at fundraising dinners and social functions, attendees at my lectures and students in the courses I teach, fellow church members, from calls to OGS looking for a speaker, parents or grandparents sitting in the stands watching our kids play ball—in short, anywhere the subject of what I do comes up!

Everyone from the cashier at Wal-Mart to the socialite at the television station wants to know about their family history and how they can learn more. How do I find speaking engagements? With the excitement about genealogy that is out there today, speaking engagements really do find me!

Billie

Billie Stone Fogarty
President, Genealogical Speakers Guild
billiefogarty@aol.com

Dues Reminder

For members who are on a calendar year basis (everyone who joined before August 2010 and did not change their renewal date, and members who joined in the 4th quarter of 2010), a dues notice will be coming out shortly. Payment must be received by 31 December.

To change from Q4 to another renewal date, instructions will be included in the e-mail, so please watch for it.

Welcome, New Members

We welcome the following new and rejoining members of GSG since the last issue of *Speak!*.

Caron Primas Brennan
Margaret Cheney
Marieta Grissom
Jill Groce
Debbe Hagner
Karen Heinrich
Harold Henderson
Michael Leclerc
Daniel M. Lynch
Virginia Majeske
Cat Nielsen
Donna Odom
Kimberly Powell
Beverly Rice
Harry Ross
Pam Smith

GSG Member News

Kathryn Lake Hogan, PLCGS, has completed the Professional Learning Certificate in Genealogical Studies in General Methodology (with distinction), Canadian research and England research, from the National Institute of Genealogical Studies, Canada.

The Board for Certification of Genealogists recently awarded the CG designation to **Michael Hait**. Michael is a professional genealogist and is vice president of the National Capital Area chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists. He is author and instructor of the African American Ancestors course for the National Institute for Genealogical Studies. His publications include *The Family History Research Toolkit* (CD-ROM, 2008), *Genealogy at a Glance: African American Genealogy Research* (Genealogical Publishing Company, 2011), articles in *Family Chronicle*, *Internet Genealogy*, *Discovering Family History*, *Family Tree Magazine*, *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly*, and several self-published titles.

The next issue of *Speak!* will be published in early February 2012

GSG is on Facebook

The GSG has another valuable resource for members (and potential new members): The GSG Facebook Page. We are doing our best to make it interactive and useful. We encourage you to post your tidbits of wisdom and short items of news about your work.



Come and visit at <http://www.facebook.com/genspeak> and be sure to click the “Like” button so all your genealogy FB friends might get in on the action. This page is a complement to our GSG website, so it will not at all replace the valuable Call for Papers and Member Directory.

*contributed by Eric C. M. Basir
GSG Facebook page moderator*

Thank You to Booth Workers

Thank you to all of those GSG members who helped staff the booth at the FGS Conference in Springfield.

Eric Basir
Margo Ferris Brewer
Casandra Brown
Bruce Buzbee
Carrie Ann Cook
Fredrea Gregath Cook
Richard Eastman
Billie Stone Fogarty
Debbe Hagner
Jean Wilcox Hibben, CG
Nancy Waters Lauer
Leslie Brinkley Lawson
Michael LeClerc
Wevonneda Minis
Donna Moughty
Cat Nielsen
Pat Richley Erickson
Diana Crisman Smith
Louise St. Denis
C. Ann Staley, CG

I tried to note everyone, but if your name was missed, please know that your assistance was also appreciated.

Hope to see all of you and more at NGS in Cincinnati next spring. Watch this space for the request for volunteers.

*contributed by Gary M. Smith
National Conference Chair*

Writing Opportunity

Are you a genealogical writer as well as a speaker? The International Society of Family History Writers and Editors (ISFHWE) annual Excellence-in-Writing competition for 2012 is available to members and non-members of ISFHWE. The competition will begin 1 February 2012 and entries are due by 3 June 2012. For full details and an entry form, visit the ISFHWE website (<http://www.isfhwe.org>) and look for the link under Press Releases. This is a great opportunity to have your writing judged by a jury of expert writers.

GSG Lapel Pins

Do you have a GSG lapel pin? The pins measure 1½” wide by approximately ¾” high and have a MAGNETIC



back—no snagging your blouse, shirt, or jacket with a jagged pin! The magnet is strong enough to hold through heavy fabric. The colors are bright (red, black, and gray on white with a gold border) and the logo will show everyone that you are a proud member of the Genealogical Speakers Guild.

The price for shipment to US addresses is only \$6.00 plus shipping and handling of \$1.50 (for a total of \$7.50). You can make payment using PayPal through the Members’ Corner on the GSG website (<http://www.genealogicalspeakersguild.org>) or by mail at: GSG, P. O. Box 38314, Olmsted Falls, OH 44138-0314. Make checks payable to GSG.

A Word from the Editor

Speak! is your newsletter and can only be better with your contributions. Take a moment to think about ideas you can pass along to the members of GSG. It need not be a lengthy expose. A few paragraphs highlighting a tip would be welcomed by your peers. If you have an idea for an article but have trouble putting pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard), send me a quick e-mail at pmziller@genwriters.com with your thoughts. I look forward to hearing from you.

*Phyllis Matthews Ziller
Speak! Editor*

VIRTUAL PRESENTATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

by Thomas MacEntee, co-chair, Virtual Presentation Committee



Survey Results

The results are in from the GSG survey concerning virtual presentations, with 64 actual survey responses. Here are some highlights:

What webinar application have you used?

- GoToWebinar – 88%
- LiveMeeting – 11%

Were you an Attendee or a Presenter?

- Attendee – 97%
- Presenter – 3%

What type of computer did you use for the webinar?

- Desktop – 52%
- Laptop – 46%
- Notebook – 3%

Which computer operating system did you use for the webinar?

- Mac OS – 11%
- Windows 7 – 38%
- Windows Vista – 33%
- Windows XP or older – 17%

Ability to download and install webinar software?

- (1) Awful – 0%
- (2) Poor – 3%
- (3) Average – 8%
- (4) Good – 28%
- (5) Excellent – 38%

Ability to view presentation slides?

- (1) Awful – 2%
- (2) Poor – 0%
- (3) Average – 2%
- (4) Good – 19%
- (5) Excellent – 75%

Ability to hear audio portion of presentation?

- (1) Awful – 2%
- (2) Poor – 3%
- (3) Average – 9%
- (4) Good – 17%
- (5) Excellent – 66%

In the next issue of *Speak!*, we will carry some of the insights and comments from the responses which will help us understand not only the issues encountered but what attendees and presenters want in webinar platforms.

Introduction to Webinars

9 November 2011

The Virtual Presentation subcommittee of the Genealogical Speakers Guild is proud to present *Introduction to Webinars*, a webinar—about webinars!—on **Wednesday, 9 November 2011** at 8:00 PM (EST). This is the first in a series of webinars. GSG member Thomas MacEntee will offer an overview of how webinars work from both the attendee and the presenter perspective. He will also answer your questions about webinars, including best practices and webinar platforms. Current GSG members, as well as prospective new GSG members, with an interest in genealogy speaking are encouraged to attend.

Over the next few weeks and months, the Virtual Presentation subcommittee will provide similar webinars featuring specific platforms such as GoToWebinar, LiveMeeting, ReadyTalk, and more. The goal is to offer as many choices and as much information as possible so that GSG members can make informed decisions about webinars as a possible method of presentation.

As our lives get busier and technology gets better, producing and presenting genealogy talks virtually makes sense. Learn how you can reduce travel costs, increase your potential audience, and provide educational content to genealogical societies and conferences. Learn how you can expand your genealogy speaking opportunities to include virtual presentations from the comfort of your home or office.

Space is limited. Reserve your webinar seat now at: <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/314891318>. After registering you will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the webinar.

GSG Member Profiles

A new feature is being introduced with this issue of Speak!—Member Profiles. Get to know your fellow GSG members as several are interviewed each quarter. The profiles will share how members find speaking engagements as well as pitfalls and successes.

The three speakers profiled in this issue have one thing in common: their grandparents played a pivotal role in developing their interest in genealogy and family history. Are you sharing your family's history with the younger members of your immediate and extended families? That seed planted in a child can grow into a full-time obsession and profession. Sit back and enjoy the success stories from the seeds three grandparents planted.

Leslie Brinkley Lawson

Leslie was introduced to her family's history when she was a child growing up in Truckee, California. When people ask how she became interested in genealogy, she replies, "My grandmother did this to me. She took me to the cemeteries where my ancestors are buried in Shasta County, California, and made sure I understood how I was related to all those folks. Then she told me their stories and I was hooked. She told me that I must remember where they were all buried because after she was gone, I was to become 'the keeper of the stones.' I go back home every few years and make sure the stones are still on level ground and don't need to be reset or repaired in any way. Sadly, there is no one following my footsteps."

The seeds that her grandmother planted have blossomed into a profession that Leslie is passionate about: forensic genealogy. She is the owner of Lawson Research Services, LLC, and has more than eleven years experience in the forensic genealogy field. Now a resident of Aloha, Oregon, a suburb of Portland, Leslie speaks locally as well as throughout the Northwest. Along the way, she has received encouragement from Beverly Rice, Connie Lenzen, and the Oregon APG chapter to which she belongs.

Leslie's first speaking opportunity, nearly ten years ago, came from a request to create a talk about how to research old newspapers. "I love old newspapers. My handout is nine pages and I just keep adding to it." Leslie's specialty is working within the last one hundred or so years. Her lecture topics reflect that focus: "Getting From Then to Now: Locating People in the Last Century," "On-site Research: Going There, Walking Their Ground," "Online Cemeteries: Keeper

of the Stones," and "Newspaper Research: Find it in the Past, Preserve it for the Future." Many of her lectures were created because there were people locally who wanted to know "how to ..."

She also creates lectures by request for an organization if she feels it will fit with her other lecture options.

What tip does Leslie wish someone had given her? "If you get good at this you'll get the opportunity to travel with all (or even some) expenses paid. I love to travel."

Leslie relies on her website and contacts made through volunteer work at her local society to secure speaking engagements. She also has listings on several state organization websites. She has been a member of GSG since 2005 and is a member of APG, NGS, the Genealogical Forum of Oregon (GFO), the Genealogical Council of Oregon (GCO), and other smaller societies.

Leslie can be found online at <http://www.LawsonResearch.net>. She also has a personal blog (<http://lesliebrinkleylawson.blogspot.com>) where she posts photos to encourage discussion and comments by her family.



Michael Hait, CGSM



Growing up in Prince George's County outside Washington, DC, Michael Hait spent many hours, looking at old family photographs with his grandmother. "She was not a researcher by our definitions, but was

always excited to learn about my discoveries about our family. She had collections of old photos and loved looking through them, and the two of us would spend hours trying to identify all those *orphan photos* she had inherited from my grandfather's family." As Michael's research progressed, two books inspired him to raise the quality of his work to the next level: *Evidence!* by Elizabeth Shown Mills and *The Genealogical Proof Standard: Building a Solid Case* by Christine Rose.

Currently a resident of Harrington, Delaware, Michael's roots lie in Connecticut, New York, and Virginia. His research focus includes those states as well as Maryland. He also does a significant amount of African American research in various areas around the country.

Michael's first speaking engagement was at the Mid-Atlantic Family History Conference in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, in 2009. While most of his speaking engagements have been in Maryland, he has also spoken in Washington, DC, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. In the coming months, he will be speaking in Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, and Ohio.

Michael's lecture topics include the Civil War, African American genealogy, the Genealogical Proof Standard, and online genealogy. He currently has several other lectures in development on various aspects of research.

How does Michael find speaking engagements? In the past he has e-mailed the program directors of

local genealogical societies. The majority of his speaking engagements, however, have been recommendations from other speakers or from audience members in one society that are officers in another society. He has also answered several calls for papers for national conferences and will be presenting two lectures at the 2012 NGS Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Michael was employed in the audio-visual industry for ten years, working with speakers and witnessing lectures, conferences, and other events in Washington, DC, in many different fields. This experience taught him many lessons about what works and what doesn't work when speaking in front of a live audience, from the use of A/V technology, including PowerPoint, to how to stand, body language, etc. He has taken his technical knowledge and entered the world of genealogy webinars. Michael was a speaker on a webinar hosted by the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania in February 2011. In the following spring, he hosted several webinars independently. "I am definitely interested in participating in more webinars in the future."

Michael's tip: Keep an eye on the time. If time is tight, you may have to ask that questions be held until the end of the lecture.

His most unique and interesting lecture was part of a traveling exhibit by the Smithsonian Institute called *Between Fences*. The exhibit was visiting Montpelier Mansion in Laurel, Maryland, and his lecture was co-sponsored by the Mansion and the Laurel Historical Society. "What made this interesting was that the focus of the exhibit was immigration, and I was being asked to speak about African American genealogy—*forced immigration*. I was given a two-hour slot to speak, so I gave one of my one-hour presentations on general African American research and added a second hour about whether or not it is possible to trace back to Africa, and how."

Michael has been a member of GSG for a little over a year. He is also a member of the APG, ISFHWE, NGS, Maryland Historical Society, Maryland Genealogical Society, and Prince George's County Genealogical Society. He can be found online at <http://www.haitfamilyresearch.com> and <http://michaelhait.wordpress.com>.

Billie Stone Fogarty

Billie Stone Fogarty grew up in Guthrie, Oklahoma, a mid-sized town that was the territorial and original state capital of Oklahoma. Located about thirty miles north of Oklahoma City (where Billie now lives), Guthrie looks much like it did in territorial days with its two square miles of historic Victorian buildings and an entire downtown that is on the National Register of Historic Places. Guthrie is often called “the Williamsburg of the West.”



Billie was first introduced to family history by her grandfather when he shared a small booklet of the CORNWELL family. The booklet traced the ancestral line of her Grandad Cornwell back to Peyton B. Cornwell who was born in 1774 in Virginia. “I had been studying the American Revolution in fifth grade and, realizing that Peyton was alive then, wondered if the Revolution affected Peyton. I was fascinated by the book and the question. I did not act immediately on genealogy specifically, but I studied and taught history.” Several years of genealogical research and a research trip to Richmond later answered the question about the effect of the Revolution on her Peyton when Billie discovered his father, John, through a pension granted to his mother because John had died as a soldier in the Revolution.

Billie’s husband’s career led her to Washington, DC. While there, her mother called one day to request a lookup at the National Archives. Billie dutifully found a babysitter and trekked to the archives. She’s been hooked on genealogy ever since. Her career as a history teacher translated naturally into a second career as a genealogical speaker. Although her research clients often focus on Native American ancestry, she considers herself a generalist and lectures on a wide variety of topics. Because of her history education background, her lectures incorporate historical context into each topic being covered. A genealogy speaker since 1997, Billie has spoken to numerous groups locally,

regionally, and nationally. She has also had the pleasure of mentoring several speakers.

One of Billie’s most interesting speaking assignments occurred when she was asked to do an introduction to genealogy at a national wrestling event. “I told them I needed a screen or light-colored wall to project onto, access to an electric plug, and a table or other surface on which to put my computer and projector. When I arrived there was no screen and no flat wall surfaces, much less a light colored one. The

room was a bar and there was a, shall we say, ‘fashion’ show following me—make that shoving me—out of the way to do their thing. Perhaps a ‘lesson learned’: charge big bucks for unusual venues.”

The majority of Billie’s speaking engagements come to her through her member profile page on the GSG website. She also submits papers for speaking at conferences and gets referrals from friends, acquaintances, and other speakers. Her most unique speaking assignment came when she was asked to do a “how to” genealogy segment on live television, and they only wanted five minutes! Her first appearance was well received and she continues to do a genealogy segment on a regular basis. An added bonus is that Billie usually picks up a potential client for genealogy research services in the holding room from others waiting to go on the live show!

Billie has been a member of GSG for about seven or eight years and currently serves as its president. She belongs to several genealogical organizations including APG, ISFHWE, NGS, UGA, NEHGS, the Oklahoma Genealogical Society, Logan County (OK) Genealogical Society, and is an FGS delegate. A little-known fact about Billie: She plays English handbells in her church choir.

Billie can be found online at <http://www.heritagetracker.com>.

Speaker Contract Clauses—Some Alternatives

by Thomas MacEntee

Over the past few months, luckily I've seen an increase in the number of requests to speak at genealogy society meetings, events, and conferences, including virtual or webinar appearances. I insist on using a speaking agreement for each and every potential engagement, and more often than not, I use my own agreement to start the process of confirming a speaking engagement.

I try to be as flexible as possible when it comes down to the individual clauses that make up the agreement. I think the society or event organizer appreciates this and it demonstrates a willingness to work together.

Here are some clauses you might consider using depending upon your specific situation.¹

Presentation Method: With the requests for webinars increasing, I find I need to spell out whether I will appear "live and in person" as opposed to via a webinar platform. I also spell out whether the speaker or the society is to provide the webinar platform.

- ▶ **For live appearances:** Speaker will appear "live" and "in person" at the Event Site.
- ▶ **For webinars:** Speaker will deliver a presentation virtually using a web-conferencing platform selected and administered by Society (currently [name of webinar platform]). Speaker shall have full access, in the host or presenter role, to the web-conferencing platform at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the presentation.

Facilities: While I don't like having to "spell it out," I've had too many situations where conditions were not "ideal" or conducive to learning.

- ▶ **Facilities.** Society shall be responsible for selecting and preparing Event Site. The seating capacity of the facility should consider the number of expected attendees. Seating arrangements should insure that no attendees have their backs to the speaker or to the screen upon which presentation slides are projected. Lighting should

permit comfortable viewing of presentation slides without excessive darkness or screen washout caused by sun glare. Acoustics should be tested by Society in advance.

Cancellation Clause: Protection against cancellation is the biggest reason why I use a speaker contract. I've had too many situations where a date is reserved, and I turn down one or more opportunities only to have the society change its mind. I require a 50% deposit of the speaking fee at the time the agreement is signed. The clause below makes it clear under what circumstances the event can be cancelled without penalties or fees.

- ▶ **Cancellation Clause.** This agreement may be canceled if: a) a natural or public disaster should render the event unfeasible; b) Society deems there will be insufficient attendance (at least __ business days prior to Event Date); c) serious illness or family death should incapacitate Speaker. If a natural or public disaster requires cancellation, Society shall not be responsible for Speaking Fee but shall reimburse Speaker as a preparation fee. Should Society elect to cancel the event or wish to void this contract for any reason (other than natural or public disaster), for example, insufficient attendance, (the latter determined at least __ business days prior to Event Date), the Society shall reimburse the Speaker of Speaking Fee as stated in this agreement unless written notification is received and acknowledged by Speaker at least thirty (30) days prior to Event Date. If the thirty (30) day condition is met, no penalty fee shall apply except that Society shall reimburse Speaker any advance sums Speaker may have expended for transportation. In the event that Speaker should be unable to fulfill the obligations set forth in this agreement, Speaker agrees to assist Society in finding a comparable replacement and will not expect reimbursement from Society for any advance sums Speaker may have expended.

¹ Note: The above information for speaking agreements and contracts is not to be construed as legal advice. Please consult an attorney or legal representative if you have specific questions pertaining to contracts, especially for your city, state, or jurisdiction.

In honor of Veterans Day on November 11, Nancy Lauer contributed the following piece about her cousin.

A Salute to Lieutenant Donn Overton

Donn Overton was my father's cousin and his best friend. Donn was the only son of Irma Hughes and Willard Overton. Donn held me when I was a baby. Donn was a chemistry major at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. He was a Lieutenant in the 22nd Infantry Regiment of the 4th Division. Donn was killed by a sniper in Germany on 13 February 1945, at the age of 21.



All my life I heard about what a shame it was for him to die so young. "His life was wasted" was a phrase often repeated. Aunt Irma never recovered from the loss of her only son.

Each time I place fresh flowers on his grave, I thank him. I thank him for the ultimate sacrifice so that I can live in freedom. His life wasn't wasted; it made a difference. He lives on in the memory of those who knew and loved him.

Donn, gave his life to eliminate tyranny and preserve freedom so that we can live the dreams of our ancestors.

SpeakerWiki Is Now SpeakerMix

For those members of GSG who have used the website SpeakerWiki, you might want to check out the newly-designed site which now goes by the name **SpeakerMix**.

SpeakerMix (<http://speakermix.com>) is a free resource for professional speakers that allows you to create a profile as well as solicit reviews from colleagues and attendees at your recent talks. SpeakerMix enables you to extend your reach as a speaker outside the genealogy and family history community. Some of the recent changes include:

- ▶ **Account creation and access:** Users can only access their accounts using either Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter. Why? SpeakerMix works with social media to help get the word out about your speaker profile and engagements.
- ▶ **Add events:** Once you are logged in, click **Edit** in the upper right corner and you can add upcoming speaking engagements. This will appear on your SpeakerMix profile and also on the SpeakerMix "badge" embedded on your blog or website.
- ▶ **Categories:** SpeakerMix now offers more categories, including geographic, speaking style, and languages.
- ▶ **Badge (aka "lanyard"):** The process of adding a badge to your blog or website is now easier with only one badge available.

contributed by Thomas MacEntee



Be Not Afraid of the Webinar!

by Jean Wilcox Hibben, PhD, CGSM

When I first heard the term *webinar* my mind conjured up images of some gnarly beast with webbed feet and claws, ready to tear my business to shreds. Obviously I watched way too many horror movies in my younger days (*The Giant Gila Monster* and *The Tingler* were two particular favorites). But I was so wrong. Like many other terms (back in the 1980s, the English language began to be overtaken by words that were invented or re-invented with the advent of computers—and this was prior to the Internet), *webinar* is simply a combination of *web* (as in “the world wide . . .”) and *seminar* (in which the *sem* is removed). Actually, a *seminar* is simply the Anglicized version of *seminarium*, Latin for “seed plot.” (Interestingly, other words that come from the same root word *seed* include *semen* and *disseminate*.¹) So a seminar is where it is expected that seeds of knowledge will be disseminated (pardon my redundancy). With that reasoning, a *webinar*, then, should be where, um, webs are disseminated? (See what happens when an etymologist is asked to write about webinars?)

Actually, that presumption may not be far from the truth. After all, the word *web* has been around a lot longer than the Internet and often refers to a complicated netting or something woven.² When we put together a webinar, a great amount of information is woven together to arrive at the final product which, hopefully, will not tie up the attendees’ brains in a complicated series of threads. So perhaps *webinar* is the perfect term for the Internet-hosted seminar.

All that said, I shall share a little of my webinar experience of Saturday, 31 March, when I was

involved in the Utah Genealogical Association’s Virtual Chapter’s very first, inaugural webinar. (Here’s where the virtual fireworks go off.) Actually, the beginning of this experience was when a representative of the newly formed Virtual Chapter (how do you know who is really a member?) cornered me in St. George, Utah, after hearing my very intense, though often funny, presentation “Clue to Clue: Tracking a Family over Time and Miles.” She thought it would be a perfect candidate for their first attempt at a webinar. It sounded like fun to me and, if anything went wrong, we could use the decades-old excuse “there were technical problems” and I would not be to blame.

Of course, no one wants to have any glitches in the process so the next step was to organize a run through of the equipment and system that would carry my PowerPoint slides magically into cyberspace and to many computers, all at the same time as I was operating them on my own computer. (A moment of silence to respect the computer gurus who make these things happen, please. . . . That’s enough; they need to go back to work.) We had just over a month between the time I was booked and the date of the debut, so finding a time when I was available, the two wonderful operators (each had a role, but I confess I don’t know who did what)—Janet Hovorka and Suzanne Curley—were available, and the appropriate technician was able to be contacted on a moment’s notice was not easy. But we did find a single hour (accounting for the one hour time difference from Pacific to Mountain Time) that we could all “meet” (and, in all seriousness, I am not giving credit to the horrendous amount of time that was spent with Janet, Suzanne, and one or more

¹ <http://www.word-origins.com/definition/seed.html>

² <http://www.word-origins.com/definition/web.html>

continued on next page

Be Not Afraid of the Webinar!

continued from previous page

techs to get the preliminaries arranged for our hour run-through, none of which involved me.

Aside: Gena Ortega arranged for me to do a webinar about two years ago, which probably means it was closer to four years ago, and we had some difficulties with slide transference. That is not a psychological term where I imagine myself in love with my slides. It simply means that my PowerPoint slides did not convert to the system that was used; at least, not as well as I would have liked. And I am not one to use just a few slides; I use a lot and many of them employ motion. My biggest fear with this experience was that the slides would malfunction or that the material on them would not be compatible with the viewing program.

The run-through was a perfect idea. We had a little trouble getting my 87 slides (don't gasp) to load so we devised a couple of backup plans.

Hint #1: Have at least one backup plan for anything involving technology or availability of necessary human intervention.

We discovered that my 2003 WordArt (which transferred into my 2007 PowerPoint without a hitch) did not like the system that was to be used. I made a note of all slides using WordArt and spent the next couple of days making alternative displays for them. Not a big problem.

We had some sound difficulties and discovered that the system over-rode the volume control on our computers! (Very strange: my volume was on "mute" and I was hearing myself—as an echo—over the computer.) We discovered that sound needed to be controlled on the system.

Hint #2: Be sure to check all your controls in advance so you know where they are when "the heat is on."

There was a week between the run-through and the "Show." I sent out copies of the very nice flyer UGA put together and also contacted my mailing list of followers so they would know about the event. I was careful to remind everyone that the time on the flyer was MDT, not PDT. I must have checked my watch and surrounding clocks a dozen times, re-computing the time so that I wouldn't be

late to my own party. As planned, Suzanne, Janet, and I "met" on line about 90 minutes before show-time so we could do another run-through of the slides. (I had sent them a revised copy of the slides, with the converted WordArt.) The slides wouldn't load from their end. So I tried from my end and, while I couldn't get them to load the week before, they all just jumped on board with my second attempt. (See, a backup plan is a nice thing to have.) Whereas during the run-through the week before my slide transitions sometimes would get hung up, we went through all of them an hour before the program and everything went smoothly. (I hoped that the slides would cooperate again once I got "on the air.")

Some webinars are handled with a headset/microphone plugged into the computer (that's the arrangement I had with Gena's program a few years ago and it went very well), but this system was setup for the speaker to call in on a telephone (it was an 800 number so there shouldn't be any unexpected billing surprises) and then talk on the phone while everyone else listened on their computers. (Janet and Suzanne were also on telephones, in "control" positions, so they could talk if something happened to my connection, voice, or both.) The screen setup showed my photo and the logo for the Virtual Chapter of UGA in the left lower corner, the "roll call" (who signed in) in the left upper corner, and all of the center and right side of the screen was for slide viewing. No chat box window was open so I would not be distracted should anyone try to ask questions or make comments during my presentation. I also was unable to hear anyone but Suzanne and Janet.

Telephone batteries have only so much life. I gathered four of my cordless phones (all sharing the same line) so I could switch to another as needed (and made sure all were fully charged before we began). I had to make one phone switch about halfway through the program.

Hint #3: Have extra, charged phones available.

continued on next page

Do the Written Words Support and Describe the Spoken Ones?

continued from previous page

I also elected to use a headset plugged into the phone for convenience in working with my computer.

Hint #4: Consider investing in a headset.

Everything went smoothly. And it was fun, as well. But not hearing feedback was disconcerting (especially since most of my programs use humor and the laughter fuels my enthusiasm). Janet and Suzanne were very polite and neither said a word (nor did they laugh—hmmm), so at times I thought I was broadcasting into outer darkness. That's weird.

I watched my time very carefully and while they said the timing was not super crucial, I wanted to be done with my part of the program within the prescribed hour and then, if people had questions, we could use whatever time people wished.

Hint #5: Have a clock available.

Following my program, I invited questions and the first four or five statements were “thank you” and “great job” (I needed those; thanks, folks). I got only about three or four actual questions. They came in written form in the “chat” window, but I replied orally since I was still hooked up to do so. Had I tried to respond in the “chat,” I would have ended up with my answers and the questions/comments overlapping each other and it would have been very confusing.

Hint #6: Respond to chat questions orally, if possible, and clarify what question you are referring to.

The webinar experience was really a positive one for me. I had been asked if I wanted to do it on a live video feed as well and said “no” because I wanted to be comfortable and I think I would have been self-conscious otherwise.

Hint #7: Think very carefully before agreeing to be on a live video feed during your webinar.

Another element that was of great concern was incoming phone calls. Since I called into the

webinar system, I turned off my “call waiting” before dialing the 800 number.

Hint #8: Use a phone without “call waiting” or turn off that service before starting.

I also was worried about the dogs, husband, and houseguests, so I made sure everyone understood that I was not to be disturbed and arranged for the dogs to be locked at least two walls away from me. But if there was an emergency of any type, I wanted to have a way to be contacted, so I put my cell phone (on vibrate) close by to cover that contingency.

Hint #9: Communicate with others in the home so that there will be no disruptions.

Have an emergency contact option. That ended up being very necessary when I did the earlier webinar with Gena when I got knocked off line and had to call her to get back on.

Hint #10: Have an emergency contact option.

So, Fear Not the Webinar—it can be a really interesting and fun experience. For people who do family history but cannot (for whatever reasons) attend seminars and/or genealogy meetings, this provides an alternative that keeps them up to date. For you, the speaker, it allows you to present without the cost and time to travel to another location (not to mention the freedom to wear whatever is comfortable).



Jean Wilcox Hibben possesses a doctorate in folklore and bachelor's and master's degrees in speech communication, theory and process (with an emphasis in interpersonal communication and rhetoric—including public address and argumentation). She is a retired college professor and current national speaker and Board Certified genealogist and serves as secretary for the Genealogical Speakers Guild. More information can be found on her website: <http://www.circlemending.org>.

National Genealogical Society Seeks Nominations for the 2012 Genealogy Hall of Fame

Would your society like to honor a genealogist whose exemplary work lives on today? Perhaps there was a notable genealogist in your state or county whose name should be memorialized in the NGS Hall of Fame. If so, the National Genealogical Society would like to hear from you. NGS is seeking nominations from the entire genealogical community for persons whose achievements or contributions have made an impact on the field. This educational program increases appreciation of the high standards advocated and achieved by committed genealogists whose work paved the way for researchers today.



Since 1986 when Donald Lines Jacobus became the first genealogist elected to the National Genealogy Hall of Fame, twenty-four outstanding genealogists have been recognized for their contributions. The 2012 honoree will join this select group of distinguished members. This year's selection, and the society that honored the nominee, will be feted at the 2012 NGS Family History Conference to be held in Cincinnati, Ohio 9-12 May 2012. Nominations for election to the Hall of Fame are made by genealogical societies and historical societies throughout the United States.

Guidelines for nominations:

- A nominee must have been actively engaged in genealogy in the United States for at least ten years,
- must have been deceased for at least five years at the time of nomination, and
- must have made contributions to the field of genealogy judged to be of lasting significance in ways that were unique, pioneering, or exemplary.

The National Genealogy Hall of Fame is an educational project in which the entire genealogical community is invited to participate. Affiliation with the National Genealogical Society is not required.

The National Genealogy Hall of Fame Committee elects one person to the Hall of Fame annually. Those elected are permanently commemorated in the Hall of Fame at Society headquarters, Arlington, Virginia.

Nominations for election to the Hall of Fame are due by 31 January each year. Official nomination forms are available from our website, <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>, Awards & Competitions, or by contacting the National Genealogical Society, 3108 Columbia Pike, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22204-4304 or by phone 1-800-473-0060.



Speak! Policies

Speak!, the quarterly newsletter of the Genealogical Speakers Guild, is published in February, May, August, and November. The deadline for submission of articles and other material for the newsletter is the 15th of the prior month (15 January, 15 April, 15 July, and 15 October).

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.

Speak! is a newsletter by and for the members of the Genealogical Speakers Guild. All members are encouraged to submit articles and newsworthy items for consideration.

Articles by non-members will be considered when space permits. Prior to submitting an article, non-members are requested to review the newsletter guidelines outlined in this document (*Speak!* Policies) and to submit their article topic to the *Speak!* editor for approval. Unsolicited articles will be returned to the author along with a copy of *Speak!* Policies.

Speak! is distributed to GSG members (not to the general public). Non-GSG members who have an article published will receive one electronic copy of the newsletter issue in which their article appears.

Writing guidelines for feature articles for *Speak!*: These guidelines do not apply to member news, calls for papers, and other notices and announcements.

- Articles must address a topic directly related to genealogical speaking.
- Articles should be no more than 2,000 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 (100 word or less) 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.

adopted November 2010



Genealogical Speakers Guild Membership Form

Annual Dues are \$40 (Individual) / \$45 (Family)

Please remit in U. S. funds only, please.

Annual Membership Expires on the last day of the Quarter Joined

Please fill out the form completely and **legibly**.

Check here if any of the information below is a change from last year

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Please subscribe me to the GSG Members-Only Website	Yes	No
Please include my information in the online membership roster	Yes	No
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The *Speak* newsletter will be e-mailed to you.

Mail the **completed** form with your payment (if paying by cash or check) to:
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GSG Lapel Pin \$6.00 at the conference
 GSG Lapel Pin \$7.50 by mail

[HTTP://WWW.GENEALOGICALSPEAKERSGUILD.ORG/](http://www.genealogicalspeakersguild.org/)

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GENEALOGICAL SPEAKERS GUILD

The Genealogical Speakers Guild is a nonprofit organization formed in 1991. The Guild is dedicated to serving the needs of genealogical speakers by

- ▶ providing a unified, effective voice to promote speakers' interests by providing a forum for discussion of topics of concern to genealogical speakers;
- ▶ broadening the speaker base by identifying, educating, and assisting promising speakers;
- ▶ raising professional speaking standards; and
- ▶ aiding speakers in understanding and fulfilling their obligations to program planners and to audiences.

GSL-L@rootsweb.com

The Guild offers an e-mail listserv exclusively for members where they can communicate with each other regularly regarding a variety of subjects, such as educational opportunities, creating proposals, handouts, visuals and overheads, accommodations, travel tips, compensation, and many other topics.

www.GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org

This is the place for members to present information about themselves, their lecture topics and titles, and links to their e-mail and home pages. The Members' Corner (restricted to members) includes access to calls for papers, sample contracts, and other helpful information for speakers

The next issue of *Speak!* will be published in early February 2012

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Membership in the Guild is \$40 annually for individuals, \$45 for a family of two.

Send fees and correspondence to:

Genealogical Speakers Guild

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Speak!, the newsletter of the Genealogical Speakers Guild, is published quarterly in February, May, August, and November.

Submit articles, photographs, comments, and suggestions to the editor, Phyllis Matthews Ziller, at pmziller@genwriters.com and be sure to include GSG in the subject line.

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