From Our President

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends, and that you are looking forward to a joyful holiday season.

We recently have had two GSG Board members resign for personal reasons, leaving vacancies. I, with Board approval, filled these vacancies with Sheila Benedict and Ann Staley for the duration of the vacant terms. Both Sheila and Ann graciously stepped in to help GSG. They will assume their positions at the next Board meeting.

New and resumed features are coming to the Members Corner on our website — we are resuming our educational webinars and adding a new blog page. Your Board sees both of these as member benefits to assist current, new, and renewing members as they grow their genealogical speaking careers. I will send an email to all members as these benefits become active.

Soon, I will be sending out requests to all GSG members asking for volunteers to help run the GSG webinars, to join committees with vacancies, and to fill the position of blog-page master.

This will be an excellent opportunity for GSG members to volunteer a little time to make our Guild even better.

And finally, SPEAK! always is looking for articles written by members. They can be short, long, or even in serial installments. An article can be about speaking, creating presentations, writing handouts, or new gadgets. The deadline for submitting an article is the fifteenth of the month before SPEAK! will be issued: 15 February, 15 May, 15 August, and 15 November.

Happy Holidays,

Margo Fariss Brewer

President, Genealogical Speakers Guild
GSG MEMBER OPPORTUNITIES

!!! WE ARE IN NEED—Number 1!!!

We need three (3) Guild members who are not Board members for the nominating committee. The President, Treasurer, and one (1) Director are elected in even-numbered years.

The duties are:
- Present at least one (1) name for each vacant position.
- Verify that all nominees are members in good standing.
- Prepare a ballot for the upcoming year.
- Be responsible for following the Election Policies and Procedures established by the Executive Board and the Standing Rules.

!!! WE ARE IN NEED—Number 2!!!

The Nominations Committee will be seeking members interested in serving the Guild.

We are all busy. Do you have some time that you can contribute to improving your Guild? Do you have expertise that would benefit the Guild and, by benefiting the Guild, benefit our members?

If you have any interest in seeking any of these positions, send your name and contact information to President@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org.

This is not the time to be shy!

NGS LUNCHEON LECTURE PROPOSAL

Put this one on your calendar! GSG is looking to sponsor a luncheon at the 2021 NGS conference and will be requesting proposals in 2020. The speaker for our sponsored luncheons must be a current member of GSG. We will be looking for proposals that encourage speakers or writers to develop their careers in a professional manner. To convey the message, a luncheon lecture needs to use humor, no slides (or very few slides), or a few props. Remember your audience will be mainly genealogical speakers and writers, and they will have just finished a nice meal.

More information and the Call for Proposals will be sent via MailChimp in early Jan 2020, but now is the time to be thinking about it. Compensation: $200 honorarium for the luncheon lecture plus the speaker's luncheon ticket.

A NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR

Let your fellow members get to know you! Whether you’re a new member or one who’s been with us for years, we are interested in learning about you!

Please contact editor@genealogicalspeakersguild.org if you would like to be the focus of a Member Profile. It’s a great way to introduce yourself to the Guild and to get your name and specialties noticed by the greater genealogical world!
KISSING COUSINS:
WRITING AND PRESENTING ARE TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

By Annette Burke Lyttle

Speaking and writing have an intimate relationship that can be exploited to power our creative process. Public communication is what we do as genealogical speakers, and producing effective public communication is difficult. So, we need every tool in our arsenal to help us craft the best presentations possible, and writing is a tool that can help us improve as speakers.

Speaking and writing are so closely related as to be a bit incestuous, and they can work in a wonderful synergy to fuel our mental processes. But writing and presenting have some differences that we can put to good use.

Two basic theories of the relationship between speaking and writing are the unidirectional and the multidirectional. The unidirectional theory says that speech is the primary form of human communication and that writing simply preserves speech. That theory has been debunked in favor of the multidirectional theory that tells us that speech influences writing but writing also influences speech in a complex soup of relations. The theory emphasizes the differences between speaking and writing and how those differences work in concert to produce communication.1

Though the creative process is messy and doesn’t lend itself well to organization, it is helpful to examine a model of the creative process to give us context for how speaking and writing work together. One model defines five steps2:

1. Preparation. Learning from the examples of other good writers and presenters.
2. Incubation. Letting ideas percolate in our brains so our unconscious minds can make connections our conscious minds aren’t aware of yet.
3. Insight. Achieving a breakthrough in understanding what the shape of our creation ought to be.
4. Evaluation. Figuring out whether the idea really is worth pursuing.
5. Elaboration. Following through and turning your idea into a product, in our case, a presentation.

It’s useful to think about our creative processes in an analytical way to see whether we can make the process work more powerfully for us, but in practice this model seems rigid and linear.

Another way to look at the process is this:

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• Have an idea.
• Apply some words to it.
• Let it percolate.
• Apply more words to it.
• Begin to organize it.
• Apply more words.
• Have more ideas.
Keep going on around in the circle until we have a finished presentation.

Beyond rehearsing our presentations aloud, we can also magically tap into our thoughts and clarify them by speaking them aloud as we’re putting the presentation together. Though talking to ourselves has a bad reputation, “as we talk, we hear ourselves express feelings and information that have not been expressed before. It is this experience of hearing ourselves that allows us at times to suddenly think of what to do. A solution pops into our mind.”

The benefits of self-talk for tapping into our thoughts are:

- Stopping to speak out loud to ourselves slows us down and makes us more deliberate.
- It gives us a chance to think about our thinking and ask ourselves questions.
- We can summarize an idea in our own words, a simple but powerful act that helps us figure out what we’re thinking.

A key to the synergy of thinking, writing, speaking is this: “Ideas take different shapes when you are thinking about them, talking about them, and writing about them.”

In order to develop our ideas thoroughly, we must think about them, write about them, and speak about them, bringing all the different shapes of our ideas into focus. In crafting a presentation, we should not only write our main points on slides and rehearse our talks aloud, we should write our presentation as an article or a script in order to harness the power of those “different shapes” our ideas take when we write about them.

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gives us further understanding and fleshes the idea into something we can communicate to others.
It’s not a linear process, though. In order to harness the power of both writing and speaking about an idea in its formative stages and to carry it through to a finished presentation, we think, speak, and write over and over until we have a compelling and clear presentation.

We can use the differences in the way speaking and writing tap into our brainpower in concert to unleash the potential of our creative process and produce strong and effective communications.

Additional Resources

GSG/ISFHWE LUNCHEON AT NGS 2020
GSG President Margo Fariss Brewer is pleased to announce that Jean Wilcox Hibben, PhD, MA, will be our speaker for the GSG/ISFHWE luncheon at the National Genealogical Society’s 2020 conference in Salt Lake City, Utah.
Open to GSG and ISFHWE members and anyone interested in hearing a talk by a first-rate speaker, it will be Wednesday, 20 May 2020. Sign up for this luncheon as soon as possible, as it will sell out quickly.
Jean, a national speaker and author with 40+ years of research experience, will provide the presentation Difference Between “Lectern” And “Podium”: Words of the Trade. Many terms come from the world of public speaking and performing—here we'll have some fun with them and maybe learn a little, too.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

26-29 Feb 2020, RootsTech Salt Lake City, Salt Palace Convention Center https://www.rootstech.org/salt-lake
CALLS FOR PAPERS

The following is not a comprehensive list of speaking opportunities. Please send information regarding Calls for Papers to the editor at editor@genealogicalspeakersguild.org

DEADLINE 1 Mar 2020

16th New England Regional Genealogy Conference 2021, “Springing from the Past into the Future.” Lecture proposals are now being accepted for the 2021 NERGC Conference, which will be held 14-17 Apr 2021 at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA. You may submit up to six lecture and/or workshop proposals. For full details, guidelines, and compensation, please visit the Call for Papers at https://nergc.org/2021-conference-2/call-for-papers/

DEADLINE 1 Apr 2020

NGS 2021 Family History Conference, “Virginia: The Deep Roots of a Nation” Lecture proposals will be accepted starting 7 Jan 2020. The conference will be held 19-22 May 2021 14-17 Apr 2021. You may submit up to eight proposals. For full details, guidelines, and compensation, please visit https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/call-for-proposals and https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/speaker-compensation-details

DO YOU HAVE A BUSINESS BROCHURE?

Now is the time to create your brochure, or update it, before the rush of conferences start next year.

Not sure how you want your brochure to look? Think about:
   Picture or NO Picture?
   Graphics?
   Paper stock – Color? Pattern? Glossy?
   Tri-fold or single panel?

Also, think about its size. Brochures displayed in the Guild's conference booth need to be either a trifold or no larger than 3.75" x 8.5" to fit in the display holders; we no longer display business cards and odd-sized material.

Having your brochures displayed at the national conferences is one of your membership benefits. Take advantage of it by planning that brochure – or updating the one you have – today.

We thank all members who have contributed to Speak! and/or have volunteered for the GSG in 2019.

We wish everyone a wonderful and prosperous 2020!
MISSION (NEARLY) IMPOSSIBLE!
CREATING AND TEACHING AN INSTITUTE COURSE

By Tim Pinnick

Speaking gigs can come in all shapes and sizes. They will have some commonalities and some distinct differences. Some can be online in the form of webinars, while most follow the conventional model where we are face to face with our audience. And then there are the headliner jobs, comprised of two presentations in the morning and two in the afternoon. But how many of us would push, or have pushed, things to the ultimate brink?

Many of us are familiar with the old McDonald’s marketing campaign in which the customer asks the order taker to “Supersize me!” It was a pitch to get folks to buy the largest version of items on the menu and beyond what was then considered the normal-sized meal. And most of us now recognize something called extreme sports—representing over-the-top athletic activities. I have discovered the genealogy world equivalent to this envelope-pushing behavior. I don’t remember when I first heard the phrase, “Be careful what you ask for, you just may get it!” but it rang true for me as I chased a dream that finally came to fruition this summer.

The Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR) is a four-and-a-half-day educational experience currently located at the beautiful campus of the University of Georgia. Participants can pre-register for a wide range of course offerings. In 2004, I attended the institute for the first time in its previous location, Samford University in Alabama, as a student in the inaugural “Researching African American Ancestors” course. After the success of the course, it was put into the rotation on a biennial basis, and I have been fortunate to be an instructor every year since 2006. The course coordinator was the venerable Frazine Taylor who presided over the reference department of the Alabama Department of Archives and History and is a foremost expert on state records.

Institute courses typically follow the pattern of a coordinator (who teaches as well) and four or more instructors. I recall one year, around possibly 2010 or 2012, seeing Paul Milner teaching a course titled “Tracing Your English Ancestors.” When I looked at the course design, I could see he was essentially teaching the course by himself and thought that he was insane. I’d never do that, I thought to myself, but in hindsight I realized I was looking at it through the lenses of the standard institute course, and more broadly, the norms I had embraced in the genealogical teaching community. It is amusing how I quickly forgot my previous life as a public school teacher in which I taught close to six hours a day. And in my final years, I was teaching in what was called a block schedule in which classes ran 90 minutes!

The more I taught in the African American track and attended courses at IGHR and other institutes, the more I felt the need and desire to put a new course together that focused on record discovery and hands-on activities. After the completion of IGHR in June of 2014, I requested a meeting with the IGHR Director, Lori Northrup, and Kim Herndon, Dean of Samford University Library, to share my vision for this unique course. After their enthusiastic endorsement, I began a proposal work file later that month.

A little over five years later on 22 July 2019, Course Ten, “Building an African American Research Toolbox” was being introduced to the genealogical community. I taught every session...
except for the final one. It was a long road that took a large amount of energy and effort, but was in the end satisfying and worth the challenges. Here are several important takeaways from the experience.

- Follow your dreams. I have spent decades accumulating a rich trove of unique material relating to the African-American experience, mainly from university libraries across the country. Along the way, I was able to parlay some of the research into genealogical presentations, but most of it sat dormant and unorganized. It was gathered because of its inherent value and the belief that it needed to be shared with other genealogists. I had faith that the opportunity to do so would come along.

- Exercise patience and build successful relationships. Big dreams rely on a solid set of goals and a reasonable plan of action to become a reality. They usually involve the help and input of others: a factor that you often cannot control—hence the patience component. However, when you establish yourself as a person who is personable, knowledgeable, dependable, driven, and accountable, you will attract the right people into your circle and therefore have the personnel required to build a winning coalition. Laura Carter, who was a classmate of mine in the first IGHR African American course, was the institute director when it moved to Georgia. She was instrumental in guiding and encouraging me through the proposal process and beyond. As I put together the technical side of this endeavor, I had the support and expertise of Shamele Jordon. I could have never completed the course on time without her invaluable assistance.

- Believe in yourself and be creative. When you meet people who trust in their vision, and believe in their abilities, you often discover that they are also passionate. It is a quality you see frequently in the business owners on the popular television show Shark Tank. Although I can be found doing the standard 50-minute presentations, my passion is teaching others through workshops or any type of activity that thrives on the physical engagement of the participants. That is my motivation to vie for those coveted two-hour workshops at various conferences, and it was central in my creation of the toolbox course. In the case of IGHR it was a bold move. It required me to take their standard 75-minute blocks of time and subdivide them into three 20-minute sessions, coupled with a 15-minute activity/review period. There was no previous model to work from so it took passion and creativity to design the curriculum and forge a new path.

Hopefully you are motivated to move forward with that unique subject area that gets you excited. Setting a goal of creating a week-long genealogy institute course may be a bit too ambitious for you, but producing a multi-day workshop for a local archive, genealogical/historical society, or library may be just the place to make your mark!

Tim is an author of both articles and books, and is a national speaker. He has more than 30 years overall research experience including at all major U.S. repositories. Since 2008 he has been an associate instructor in the biennial “Researching African American Ancestors” course at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research. He is at the intersection of history and genealogy having presented historical papers at four large conferences and has served on the boards of the Association of Professional Genealogists and Federation of Genealogical Societies.
Society Column:

Societies and Speakers: Goals and Expectations

by Annette Burke Lyttle

Societies and speakers need each other, and much of the time our goals and expectations line up nicely. As someone on both sides of the relationship—as a speaker, as vice president of The Villages Genealogical Society in Florida, and also on the team that puts together the Florida State Genealogical Society webinar series—it’s clear that on some important aspects of the society/speaker relationship, there is room for misunderstanding.

Areas of agreement

Vice presidents, program chairs, whatever title we use, are focused on providing the highest quality education programs that their budgets will allow. They want a balance of different topics and voices, a balance of beginner and more advanced presentations, a balance of formal and informal programs. They may want a certain number of programs a year by speakers who have name recognition (nationally, regionally, or locally) in order to attract more people to their meetings.

Speakers focus on providing the best possible content on topics of interest to societies. Experienced speakers will have a selection of different topics to choose from and will make their presentation titles and descriptions, as well as their speaking experience, easily available where program chairs can find it. They may also offer hands-on workshops in addition to formal lectures. They work to make a name for themselves among the societies in the area where they’re willing to travel.

So far, so good. Those are important areas of agreement and a good base for our society-speaker relationships. But there are other factors that affect the relationship. Most can be covered by clear communication, but some can make for unfulfilled expectations on one or both sides.

The money factor

Societies have budgets, speakers have expenses, and geographical areas have different customary compensation levels. Societies should attempt to pay speakers what is customary in their area and to provide mileage reimbursement. But they should also review their budgets regularly to see if they can increase their customary speaker honorarium. Quoting a usual honorarium figure when the speaker is invited can save misunderstandings on both sides. Speakers should set their fees with customary local compensation levels in mind. Speakers who are in demand because of their expertise and their excellent presentation style may be able to charge more. But a speaker can price him—or her—self out of the local market. Busy speakers make their money giving their presentations repeatedly to different groups, rather than trying to recoup the time spent preparing a lecture in a single honorarium.

The organization factor

Both sides have to be organized and responsive to the other. The best situation involves the society providing the speaker with all the information he or she needs well ahead of time and in detail: due date for handouts, time and place of the meeting, equipment supplied by the society and by the speaker. The speaker then needs an organization method for tracking due dates, travel times, what to bring, and other important information elements. Both sides provide cell phone numbers in case of last-minute problems.

The dependability factor

We need to be able to count on each other to work as a team to produce the best result. The society provides a suitable venue with necessary
equipment in good working order and someone who is knowledgeable about operating it. The speaker brings a projector and cables as backup. The speaker provides content that matches the description the society based its decision on. The speaker routinely reviews and updates presentations before giving them, tailoring them appropriately to the audience. Both parties respect the conventional timeframe of 50 minutes of lecture and ten minutes of questions, unless a special arrangement is made.

**The hospitality factor**

The speaker lets the society know if a spouse or friend will be coming along, especially if a meal is involved. The society has someone meet the speaker to take him or her to the meeting room to get set up.

**The “good sport” factor**

If something comes up, we work with each other. If the society loses its venue for a scheduled meeting (this happens now and then with libraries), the speaker works with the society to set up a new date. If the speaker has to swap dates for some reason, the society does its best to accommodate the speaker.

**Points of friction**

For the society, speakers who:
- Don’t answer emails in a timely fashion
- Need to be chased to get their handouts in
- Don’t show up on time (and don’t call)
- Run too short or too long
- Don’t know how to use their equipment
- Assume instead of ask

For the speaker, societies that:
- Don’t answer emails in a timely fashion
- Don’t provide details of the speaking engagement until the last minute
- Don’t say when they want the handout
- Don’t provide the equipment they said they would or don’t have the proper cables
- Don’t know how to use their equipment
- Assume instead of ask

The society/speaker relationship is an easy one to manage if both sides remember to clearly communicate their goals and expectations, anticipate points of friction, and remember to be professional and flexible.

Annette Burke Lyttle may be reached at annette@heritagedetective.com

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**DUES RENEWALS / NEW MEMBERS**

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

1. Pay dues online through the GSG website. Select **Membership Information** from the menu bar, then select **Join** or **Renew**. Payments made through the GSG website will be processed via PayPal. You do not need to have a personal PayPal account, and 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. 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, you will receive a letter from the Guild president. When renewing, please **fill out the Membership Contact & Survey Form** (opens in the GSG website - you don’t have to log in) to ensure that we have your latest contact information.

Any questions? Please e-mail **treasurer@GenealogicalSpeakersGuild.org**
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), 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.