



# The Surname Society

Minutes of Committee Meeting held online on Tuesday 6 January 2015 at 12 noon GMT

Present: Mandy Blake (Secretary, UK), Jennie Fairs (Social Networking Co-ordinator, Australia), Kirsty Gray (Chair, UK), Linda Hauley (Treasurer, Canada), Colin Spencer (Webmaster, Spain), Steve Williams (Vice Chair, UK).

Apologies: Elizabeth Kipp

## ACTION

1. KG welcomed everyone.
2. Minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed.
3. Actions arising – MB has created a spreadsheet for keeping action points up to date and KG has set this up in Google Drive. It can now be updated by any member of the team at any time. Actions 2014/006, 2014/012, 2014/017 now complete. Actions 2014/021, 2014/032 and 2014/037 complete but may be repeated/ongoing. Action 2014/022 ongoing (KG to check with EK). Actions 2014/024, 2014/038 and 2014/039 still ongoing.
4. Chair's report: See Appendix A. KG will get back to Paul Carter and inform him that we are pleased with his design for our advertisement in *Inside History* magazine. KG (2015/001)
5. Vice Chair: Nothing to report.
6. Webmaster's report: See Appendix B. Under 'Next Steps' heading, the redesign of study registration functionality to allow user edits is now 99% complete. CS advised that the website will need to be out of action for around two hours whilst he implements this functionality. He will find a time to suit, then announce it in the Facebook group and on Google+, and put up a maintenance page on the website. Under the 'Commentary' heading; with reference to the forum being underused, KG suggested using the Facebook group as a means to getting people across into the forum and MB suggested a mailshot reminding members about the existence of the forum (plus any other news). JF asked about YouTube links and CS advised that these can legally be posted directly into the forum rather than having to go across to YouTube. CS (2015/002)

7. Social Network report: See Appendix C. Under the third point, MB mentioned that only a small percentage of requests to join the Facebook group might be genuine as she had been subject to the same issue with another Facebook group. There seems to have been either a Facebook glitch or lots of account cloned over the Christmas period. Under the fifth point, CS suggested that KG speak to Paul Carter regarding a template for the presentation. Under the eighth point, KG suggested that JF offers Alan Phillips of Gould Genealogy a talk on the UTP cruise and she will assist with this. KG also suggested speaking to Paul Carter about flyers for handing out on the cruise. Under the ninth point, t-shirts with logos were discussed but thought to be cost-prohibitive. However, CS advised that special paper is now widely available (and very cheaply) that will go through a home printer and then iron onto a t-shirt, etc.  
KG  
(2015/003)  
KG  
(2015/004)
8. Secretary's report: See Appendix D. CS asked if we should now be publishing our minutes online. It was agreed that minutes from early November (ie when TSS went live) should go on the website once they have been agreed and signed. MB asked who should do the uploading; CS advised that he will do it for the time being but he is going to do some work to enable all committee members to have access rights, and once this is complete then MB/Secretary will upload the minutes. There are still five people who have paid their membership fee but have not activated their accounts, despite regular reminders from both the Webmaster and the Secretary. MB will attempt to find phone numbers for those in the UK, and will also liaise with LH who will contact any members in Canada/USA.  
MB & LH  
(2015/005)
9. Treasurer: Nothing to report although both the Barclays bank account and the PayPal account have healthy balances.
10. Newsletter Editor: No report. KG referred to EK's email of 21 December regarding newsletter content and asked committee members to respond.  
All  
(2015/006)
11. Postal address: KG emailed her contact at Devon Heritage Centre last month but she was off sick so KG forwarded the email (as per the automatic response) to another relevant person but has not yet received a reply. KG will contact her again now that the Centre staff are back at work. MB hasn't had any further response from the Director of the Wiltshire A&NH Society so she will contact him again. If we still have no luck with any of those, we will have to resort to using the Secretary's home address, even though this isn't ideal.  
KG & MB  
(2015/007)
12. School of Surnames: The plan which has been circulated by SW is excellent. Now need to look at implementation and methods of doing that. CS will create website page/s as soon as he receives content. We need to invite submissions  
SW & CS  
(2015/008)

for the School from members; we have a lot of people who are experienced surname studiers despite never having belonged to a surname society. Be specific about what we need – perhaps even write to specific people and ask them for something. SW will get straight on with first item/s for action. He will circulate to other committee members for proof-checking, etc.

13. Surnames Database: EK absent, defer discussion until next meeting.
14. Marketing: KG suggested that we could do with a dedicated marketing person (not a committee member). Paul Carter designed the TSS logo and also an excellent TSS advert for a genealogy magazine. KG asked if she should approach Paul; **CS proposed, MB seconded, agreed unanimously.** KG (see 2015/001)
15. AOB: CS mentioned that our events calendar currently only has TSS hangouts, perhaps we could get other organisations to contact us with relevant events and dates. JF to put in Facebook group. JF (2015/009)
16. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 3 February 2015 at 12 noon GMT.



## APPENDIX A



# The Surname Society

## Report from Kirsty Gray (Chair)

### to The Surname Society Committee Meeting – 6 January 2015

Top level action update since last meeting:

#### General items

- Planned and arranged hangouts for January – TNG on 24 January (Darrin Lythgoe)
- Christmas message sent to all members
- Feedback provided on School of Surnames planning document and presentation
- Contacted Devon Heritage Centre re: postal address and redirect. No reply to date

#### Online presence

- Assisted with Society social media channels (Facebook and Twitter)
- Attended Hangout with Jane Taubman on Family Historian Version 6 (11 December)
- Proposed the #52Ancestors Challenge concept on Facebook – several blog posts already coming in which will set up our blogging platform well in 2015

#### Marketing

- Provided 'interview' quotes to Diahna Southard (Your DNA Guide), writer and podcaster for Lisa Louise Cooke's Genealogy Gems
- Arranged free advertising in *Inside History* for TSS and worked with TSS member, Paul Carter, re: design
- Confirmed: delivering a workshop at the Ontario Genealogical Society Conference (2015) programme on Surname Studies! (as well as being Keynote Speaker!)
- Requested (and achieved) an update to the 'one-name study' page on UKBMD

#### Outstanding items

- Third bank signatory and access still to be resolved

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Gray'.

Kirsty Gray  
Chair: The Surname Society  
2 January 2015

## APPENDIX B



# The Surname Society

[www.surname-society.org](http://www.surname-society.org)

## Webmaster Report December 2014

### Completed:

- New Members menu
- Archive and Members study database
- The School of Surnames page created
- Page for YouTube videos
- Page for presentations

### Next Steps:

- Redesign study registration functionality to allow user edits (now 99% complete)
- Start work on Cardinal Points database (awaiting sample file from Mary Rix)
- #52Ancestors page creation and story entry (completed available 5 Jan 2015)

### Commentary:

- Disappointed with the lack of use of the Archive/members study database; so far, only three members, including me, have submitted data
- Disappointed with the lack of content from members for SoS and the Wiki
- Membership continues to grow although we still have five members who have not confirmed their membership accounts, despite repeated contact attempts by the Secretary and Webmaster
- Chat room not used at all and the forum is not used by many

## APPENDIX C

### Social Networking Report for 6 January 2015

- Since our last meeting, I have emailed a further 120 US genealogical societies and 47 Canadian societies with our Press Release, also advising them that we now have over 200 members since our official launch on 3 Nov 2014
- Latest publicity I've seen has come from The Foundation for Medieval Genealogy, which has mentioned our society in their current FMG News
- Re Facebook – I'm disappointed that, of the 69 FB members who have so far wanted to join our FB group since changing our status from Closed to Private, only one person has actually joined the society. On the other hand, because I have private messaged all of them regarding how to join, I also have to say that several of the requests don't appear to have anything whatsoever to do with genealogy, so that is probably a good thing
- I've been very slow over the Christmas and New Year period with tweeting – mostly because there really hasn't been anything worthwhile tweeting as many societies, etc, are on holidays. I don't think we should be tweeting just for the sake of it – I feel that our tweets have to have substance
- Since the last meeting, I have been working on a simple surname study presentation and Excel hint presentation which you should all have received a copy of and I hope that they can be added to the SoS
- I have received several articles for inclusion in the SoS which I think I forwarded to Steve but, looking through my 'sent' box, I'm now not so sure I sent them on
- Since announcing the #52Ancestors challenge, I have received three articles and have since contacted all three members to see if they are ok with their stories going public, of which I have received one affirmative back so far
- Not specifically social networking but I look like attending the Unlock The Past cruise from New Zealand to Australia in February 2016. I'm happy to represent the society at this even but not sure what is the best way:
  - Do I just hand out flyers?
  - Should I give a talk?
  - If I give a talk, how do I get the organisers to want me?
  - If I give a talk – help! I need some material to use
  - Any other suggestions on publicising the society – I'll be 18 days at sea
- Publicity: Is it worthwhile getting some t-shirts made up with the TSS logo and a snappy quote that committee members could wear to 'genie' places? If they were snappy enough, we might even be able to sell them for revenue raising!
- Finally, our stats show that 51% of our membership do not already have a registered surname study.

## **APPENDIX D**

### Secretary's Report for Committee Meeting Tuesday 6 January 2015

- Since the date of the last meeting, we have had 23 new membership applications, although some of these might not have activated their accounts yet. We have had our second membership payment by USA cheque but, fortunately, our UK bank accepts these
- All cheques received to date have been paid into the bank
- There are no member queries outstanding
- All committee meeting minutes are now in Dropbox and all but the latest set have had the Chair's signature added. The Secretary's filed (hard) copies have also had the Chair's signature added to them
- There are now two spreadsheets in Google Drive for all committee members to access and alter as necessary; one for keeping meeting action points up to date and the other for hangout/meeting attendance/absence.