

SGGEE E-Newsletter - February 2007

The Role of the Membership Roll - John Marsch

A brief explanation is in order for SGGEE members to understand the varied uses of the Membership Roll. To begin with, it must be emphasized that the SGGEE membership information is only available to paid up members. It is not distributed to other organizations or individuals for any reason or purpose.

Membership Roll content is used to communicate with members such as with this E-Newsletter, but to do so a viable email address for each member is essential. It is therefore extremely important that email address changes be communicated to membership@sggee.org as soon as possible whenever they occur. If an email address is not viable, it is necessary to resort to a phone call to the member to determine the problem, a procedure to be avoided because of the additional expense and bother. The Roll is also used to record those having the Journal be sent to them via postal mail or electronically.

The Membership Roll is used also to control membership access to the SGGEE website. *For example, on the last weekend of February, those who have not renewed their membership for the current year will have their access to the website denied.* This is done by the Membership Committee via a "Disable List" applied to the membership records on the website.

It is possible, indeed members are encouraged to check on their own membership status periodically for information regarding membership expiry, and to obtain contact information for other members and former members by accessing this URL http://www.sggee.org/members/member_data. Enter known information in the search blocks that appear. This searchable website version of the Membership Roll is updated every few days in order to post changes to members' contact information, to re-instate access for members who renew their membership and to add those newly enrolled.

Master Pedigree Database - Gary Warner

As we continue to try to merge all of the data submittals with the Master Pedigree database, it has become necessary to amend the given names in that database so that they can be matched up better (The first 6 letters of the given name need to match in order to be compared in a merge). That means that we are also amending your data when it is submitted to us. We have tried not to remove any of your data, but instead add a more common German given name, if there are common German alternates. You will note on the website that this process is in process, although it is not yet complete. Accordingly, we are making all people with a given name of John into Johann or John, Bertha into Berta or Bertha, etc.

In addition to changing the given names, we are also amending surnames, but to a lesser extent, since we are now doing Soundex merges of the surnames. The only changes to surnames are therefore ones that make them sound the same.

You can assist us greatly by making the above changes in given names and surnames before you submit data. Do not withhold data because you have not made such changes, however- we will continue to change it if you have not. Also be aware that once we make the changes, we will send it back to you in the changed format, assuming that we have data to send to you of name matches and relationships as a result of the merge of your data into the Master Pedigree Database.

Member Research Database - John Marsch

The SGGEE Board of Directors has voted in favor of discontinuing the **Member Research Database**. This is the database that listed members' surname and place names being researched. The large amount of website space required and the limited benefit to SGGEE members were reasons for this decision among others. Other reasons considered were the availability of hundreds of thousands of names already in the searchable Master Pedigree Database on the website and the recently innovated "Roll Call" email system on SGGEE's Ger-Poland-Volhynia mailing list.

Effective immediately it will be no longer necessary to send names and places you are researching except on pedigree submissions of course. The existing database will be removed from the website and the Membership Application together with the Membership Renewal form will be amended accordingly.

Progress on the Lublin Front - Karl Krueger

In our last E-Newsletter we informed you that SGGEE had just made an agreement with the Lutheran church in Lublin to assist them in indexing their recently digitized archives. Since the last newsletter the church has decided on the custom-made computer they would purchase within a budget specified by SGGEE. We have now wired money to the church and installation of their computer with printer and scanner should be completed soon. At that point they will then have the ability to make copies of the DVDs containing digitized records to send to us for indexing.

Eleven people have volunteered to assist in the large effort to index these records. Most of the records are expected to be in Cyrillic. To facilitate training volunteers in translating Cyrillic records our Translation Aids section online under the Research menu item will soon have some useful pages added. While this is primarily intended to benefit the volunteers on this project, using records from Lublin as examples, this resource will help all in their efforts to translate Cyrillic records.