

# SGGEE

## E-Newsletter - April 2005

Greetings to all Members

### 1. Candidates for the SGGEE Board of Directors

An appeal to the membership for nominations for the Board of Directors is hereby made. At the Annual General Meeting to be held in August at Minneapolis, the following Board members will have completed their 2 year term. Jan Textor of Denmark, Ursula Bachman, Earl Schultz both of Alberta, and Carol Burns of California. Carol has graciously consented to stand for reelection.

In addition, Richard (Dick) Stein of Alberta has announced his resignation after serving 1 year of his term. Dick has also served the past year as President of SGGEE. John Marsch will also be leaving the Board having served as Past President for the last year.

The following Board member's terms expire at the Annual General Meeting in 2006; Miles Ertman of Alberta, Karl Krueger of Maryland, and Ken Schultz of Alberta.

#### In summary;

Nominations are required to fill 4 Board positions for 2 years and 1 Board position for 1 year ( to complete Dick Stein's term).

The duties of a SGGEE Board member are not difficult. The primary responsibilities consist of presenting ideas and opinions for the advancement of SGGEE and voting on matters requiring a Board decision. All this is done primarily by email under the guidance of the President of the Board who is selected by the other Board members. A Board member is also required by SGGEE Bylaws to be on each Standing Committee but need not be the chair of that committee. The SGGEE committees presently have capable and experienced chairpersons. Please consider taking part in our vibrant society as a Board member to ensure a strong and healthy organization..

The names of persons nominated for election to the Board should be sent to John Marsch at [gpvjem@sasktel.net](mailto:gpvjem@sasktel.net)

### 2. Membership News

It is pleasing to announce that paid-up memberships in SGGEE for this year now exceeds 400. Considering the society was formed 6 1/2 years ago this represents an average yearly growth of 63 members a year. Membership from Germany is increasing, likely as a result of several web site pages being translated into German, a continuing project. Other initiatives have been also undertaken to ensure easier and better communication with our cousins in that country.

### 3. Convention(s)

SGGEE's 2005 convention is being held in Minneapolis MN, USA on August 19 -21. The convention is being held jointly with FEEFHS and several other family history oriented groups. This is SGGEE's first convention in the US Midwest. Please make your hotel reservations early because this will be a great event. Further details can be found on SGGEE's web site Home Page at [www.sggee.org](http://www.sggee.org) then at the top of that page click on "Convention News and Reports"

Are there any suggestions for the 2006 convention site? Edmonton AB is presently a strong contender.

#### **4. Other Events**

A request has been received from Ewald Wuschke to publicize a meeting in Edmonton AB on Sunday, May 1 2005 by the Society for Ancestral Research of Germans in Poland and Volhynia. It is this group which was formed to house and maintain Ewald Wuschke's library. The address, time and the location of the event is as follows, Place; Trinity Lutheran Church 10014 - 81 Ave. in Edmonton, Time; 2 PM. Ewald Wuschke is the guest speaker. A workshop will also be conducted at the same place on Monday, May 2.

#### **5. Web Site News**

Jerry Frank has now taken over from Gary Warner as co-webmaster along with Matt Warner, Gary's son.

Jerry had already spent a great deal of time with many others in producing an attractive new look for the web site which is what you see now. The new SGEE logo is prominently displayed throughout the web site as well. In addition to these duties Jerry continues as the moderator of the Ger-Pol-Vol Listserve or Mailing List. Immediately following are two important articles by Jerry regarding virus protection and the new look web site.

On February 27 we introduced a new look for our website. If you haven't visited for awhile, we encourage you to go have a look.

Two hints for using the new site. First, if you go to the site and still see the old style along with broken images and links, then your browser has retained a cached copy of the original page which is no longer working. In some cases, to see the new page, all you have to do is hit the "Reload" button on your browser. In other cases, you will have to go into your browser's preferences settings and clear the entire cache. You will then be able to reload the page correctly.

Secondly, for those of you that have bookmarked some internal pages, be aware that some internal links have changed. Virtually all pages from the original site have been duplicated. However, some of them have been moved into new or different folders to improve the server-side filing system. That means that some bookmarks may no longer work. The page you want is still there. Simply go back to the home page, find the page through the network of links or with a site search, and then reset your bookmark.

#### **6. Additional Web Site News**

All SGEE's databases now run using Oracle database software. Oracle is a very powerful database engine, allowing faster and more detailed searches of our growing databases. Oracle includes a feature called "full text indexing" which allows anyone who searches our databases to find any combination of letters anywhere in a given search field using a normal search. The new software allows better use of hardware resources, and will provide faster searches while virtually eliminating the crashes caused in the past that were caused by too much demand on our hardware.

#### **7. Mailing List News**

On Friday, March 18, someone attempted to use our mailing list to distribute a virus. Fortunately they did not succeed.

Some viruses are distributed unintentionally from people who do not know that they opened an infected file. This case appears to be a deliberate attack by someone attempting to use our mail system to distribute the virus quickly. We believe this was the case because the message contained information that was very specific to mail system use and it included a legitimate link to the SGEE website. Our Mailman software uses several procedures to prevent spam and the spread of viruses. The most important of these is that we do not allow attachment distribution through our system. The vast majority of viruses are spread via email attachments. Others come with downloads from unethical websites. By stripping all attachments from messages, even the accidental distribution of a virus by a member is prevented. In Friday's incident, this system worked to ensure that no viruses reached the computers of our subscribers.

Even with protection systems in place, it is not possible for us to offer a 100% guarantee that a virus cannot get through our system. We ask that you always practice safe computing.

1. Install and maintain a good quality virus checker on your computer.
2. Do not open attachments or click on links in messages from people that you do not know.
3. Consider the language, spelling, and grammar of the message that has the attachment. Would the source write this way? In the case of the message supposedly from SGGEE, there were numerous spelling and grammar errors suggesting it was sent by someone not totally conversant in the English language. Would a legitimate sender really write that way?
4. If you get an attachment from someone you know, THINK before clicking and ask yourself some questions. In the case of our SGGEE problem, why would they send the instruction in an attachment rather than just stating what to do in the email message? That doesn't make sense so be suspicious. What is the purpose of the attachment? Does it make sense to have an attachment for that purpose?
5. If there is any doubt, write back to the originator of the message to see if they really sent you something that should be opened. Some of you did that, writing to me and asking what this was about. The originator can respond by advising if they sent it, if their address was illegitimately spoofed by someone, or if someone is misusing a distribution system as was our case.

## **8. GEDCOM File Submissions - Things to Consider**

Gary Warner remains the Pedigree Database manager, a massive job in itself. To make things much easier for Gary, please read, and so far as possible, comply with the details he has written below. It might be a good idea to retain the suggestions as a hard copy or as a computer file.

The following are some basic things to consider when preparing a gedcom file for submittal to SGGEE. It is intended to cover only some data formatting issues, and not the specifics of how to prepare a gedcom file, which is different for each genealogy program. How easily you accomplish this formatting of data will depend on which genealogy program you use to do that.

As a member of SGGEE, you have the ability (some might say the obligation) to share your family data, at least the German part, for inclusion in the main SGGEE Pedigree database. If you do so, your data will be merged with the main database to see if there are any match-ups of your data with the data submitted by others, including a match against a very large portion of the database that is directly from original records in Poland. If we find match-ups of data, we will send you a file back that includes everyone who we could determine is directly related to you, as well as the spouses, children and parents of those related to you. There are no guarantees that we will find any match-ups of your data, but you will never know for sure unless you submit some data to SGGEE (the current record for increase in member file size is a submittal to us of 10 names, with over 5000 names sent back from us). One thing is sure, however, we can find the matches much more completely than you can find them by just pursuing the same data on our website, because we also match up the data for living persons that you cannot see on the website. We can also discover exactly who your cousins are in SGGEE, if each of you has submitted data to us.

Every record in our database is unique, and with currently over 265,000 names, all linked together into families, our database is starting to create some pains during the merging of new data with that database. Those pains can be markedly reduced, if each of you will help the problem go away. Here are some suggestions that will make your data file better, make the match-ups more certain, and make life easier for all of us during a merge:

- a) Make sure that you, the submitter of your data, are in the database you send to SGGEE. If you are not in it, we will not be able to tell who your relatives are, and we also will not be able to send you back any data on your relatives. If you are worried about privacy, then you do not need to give us your: date of birth; place; marriage date; or marriage place, but we MUST have your name, and how you are related to others in the database.
- b) If you do not want someone in your data to show up on the website, then you MUST give us a birth date for that person that is less than 80 years ago (all persons over 80 show, whether they are alive or dead), even if it is not real. For instance, you could make the birth date 2000, even if you are 50 years old in 2005. Your privacy is a large concern to us, however, so you need to know that we do not sell or give away data on living persons, and also that only a very few of us in SGGEE have access to the

database with full dates of living people under 80 years of age.

c) If you have a genealogy program that uses a single field to input a name (like Family Tree Maker and PAF), make sure you put in the appropriate delineators in the name, ESPECIALLY if a person in the file has only has a first name and no surname, OR if the person has alternate surnames- see your program help file for how to do this. The reason that you must do this is that if you do not have the delimiters (\ or / depending on the program) bad things will happen at our end. PAF will help you with this problem automatically by asking you where you want to place the delimiters between the names as you enter the data. Family Tree Maker, and perhaps other programs, will not help you out, and Family Tree Maker always automatically assumes that a single name is a surname, unless you manually add ""\" after the single name. If your genealogy program that has single a single name field and you do not use the delimiters, then when we import your data into Legacy (the program we use to manage the master Pedigree database), given names like ""Rosalie"" will all become someone with a surname of ""Rosalie"", unless the name is entered as ""Rosalie \". The same holds true for alternate surnames, since without the delimiters, the last shown name is by default the surname. Thus, for alternate names without delimiters, a name like ""Rosalie Schwarz (=Czarnecki)"" would become ""Rosalie Schwarz"" for the given names, and ""(=Czarnecki)"" for the surname. This is not a good situation when trying to match up data in a merge.

d) There are many place names in a database, both yours and ours, that are the same place for many members of any given family. For instance, you might have many members of your family that have been born, married or died in Detroit, Michigan. In the master Pedigree database there are currently nine different versions of the spelling of that place- some with the town and state, some with the town and county and state, some with commas to separate the parts of the place name, and some without. All of these variations in place name spellings need to be accounted for if there is a match-up of your data and that from someone else. To keep the time to a minimum in a merge, we ask that you please make all place names that are the same truly the same- and PLEASE do not guess at the spelling of names or abbreviate them. This is a formidable undertaking with programs like PAF and Family Tree Maker, since neither have a master list of locations. It can be done, but will take some time with those two programs. You might want to consider Legacy as your genealogy program, if for no other reason that you can make all of the places spell the same in the space of a few minutes. One final thought on this subject- the worst possible thing you can do to make us spend time in a merge is to send us place names with no commas separating the parts of the place names- PLEASE DO NOT forget to add commas, and please do not remove them. We do not have lookup places for all of the world yet identified, but: For USA place names, including unincorporated places, see [http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnis/web\\_query.gnis\\_web\\_query\\_form](http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnis/web_query.gnis_web_query_form) For Canada place names, including unincorporated places, see [http://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca/search/search\\_e.php](http://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca/search/search_e.php)

e) Perhaps the most important thing you can do in preparing a gedcom file to send to us, is to first merge your data against itself. The merge process is especially important if you are sending us an update file after we have sent you a file of match-ups of your data with the main Pedigree database. If you do not MERGE that data we send you with a copy of your data, there are sure to be differences in the data you send back to us that do not match what we sent to you. You will need a good genealogy program- one that has a superior merge routine to do this. Again, we highly recommend Legacy to complete that task. PAF will do a passable merge, but Family Tree Maker will do a very poor job of merging data, and it is difficult to do a merge with the later program. Only a merge can find ALL differences in data that is merged. During a merge, you either need to accept our data fields, or let us know what is wrong with our data, so that we can change our data. You can download Legacy for free at <http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/Download.asp>

## 9. Luzk Property Appropriation Database

Jerry Frank has put the finishing touches to a database of 1149 entries containing details of property seizures in the Luzk region of Volhynia in 1915. Members may access and search the database at [www.sggee.org/members/LuzkApp/LuzkAppIndex](http://www.sggee.org/members/LuzkApp/LuzkAppIndex) The original list (in Russian) was obtained by Howard Krushel and George Maser during one of their tour visits to Ukraine several years ago. A number of SGGEE members have worked on this list, translating it from Russian to German and finally to English. Among these were Kurt Arndt, Henry Broderson, Bill Fife and finally Garnet Marshall who

completed the translation and did the input work and of course Jerry Frank and Gary Warner. Thank you to all.

It is emphasized that this list of appropriations is for buildings seized on leased or rented land only. Copies of the original Russian language document and the subsequent German and English translations will be kept in the SGGEE library.

## **10. Contacting and Identifying SGGEE Members**

When viewing the Pedigree database, members have asked, for example, who or what is M001 or F00# which may be shown as a source. These are SGGEE membership ID numbers which are easily identified as to the "owner" by opening the Member-Only Start Page. Then click on "Database links" on the left side of the page to arrive at the "Database" page. Once on the Database page scroll down to and select 3. Members Research Database where you can do a search for SGGEE members contact information. Entering one of the examples above, M001, into the correct block to conduct a search, will produce the information that the ID number is that of John Marsch and his contact information. Or if you know a person's name you can enter that and find their ID number and contact information such as an email or postal address. This database is *updated on a weekly basis*, sometimes more frequently.

Alternately, by selecting the next item on the Database page which is 4. Member Contact Info Database you will be able to scroll and view the entire SGGEE Membership Roll in .pdf format. This database is not searchable and is only updated every three months or so. Because of the less frequent updating, the contact information may not be accurate, however the membership ID is correct because it never changes and is unique to that member.

## **11. From the Research Corner — Rose Ingram**

A follow-up on the November 2004 Newsletter report,

Lowicz:: All copies of available birth, marriage and death records from 1838 to about 1865 have now been received. Transcription continues and will be added to the Pedigree Database in due time.

Indexing. We are still waiting for an official written letter from the Polish State Archives allowing us to list the names from microfilmed church records. This is taking longer than we hoped, but once we have this in hand, our Parish Records Index database will be then be made open to the public. In the meantime, volunteers continue their diligent work on selected parishes, but it has been a little slower over the winter.

In the past we have shown only the basics on the website search, name, year, parish and film number. This year we will be starting a "new method" by adding more information for births and deaths such as names of parents or spouse, village of event and the date, if possible. This means volunteers will have to work a little at their favorite Family History Center transcribing directly from the microfilms, instead of photocopies of the handwritten. If anyone is researching some parish records that are not listed on the Job Central B, and would like to contribute, please contact us at [databases@sggee.org](mailto:databases@sggee.org).