

Operating Guidelines for the SGGEE Website Committee

Update by Jerry Frank June, 2008.

A. General

The Website Committee is responsible for the development, operation and maintenance of the Society website at <http://www.sggee.org>. Site design and content is primarily created and controlled by the Webmaster who is directly responsible to the Website Committee. This Committee is ultimately responsible for the presentation and content on the site and may veto or change content provided by the Webmaster. It welcomes input from members and other committees on improvements

The website is divided into two main areas - one publicly accessible and the other only available to members. Though the site consists of almost 1000 pages of data, the information is accessed from the main pages listed in D and E below. Part B describes the site in general. Part C references pages in other languages. Part F describes the Discussion Board and Mailing List associated with the site.

While it may be necessary to change site design from time to time to incorporate freshness and interest, the general outline given below should be retained as much as possible to ensure that viewers can consistently find or return to pages they have previously seen.

B. Common Parts of the Web Pages

Construction:

The website is built using Adobe GoLive software, a web authoring tool that is no longer available nor supported by Adobe. Other software could be used but the pages would have to be essentially recreated within that software to work properly. That software is held by the Webmaster (currently Jerry Frank) who uses it for all updates and new page creation. Any additions or changes can only be made by the Webmaster who maintains a full copy of the entire site on his own computer. Pages are uploaded by him to the server which is linked to the Internet.

A Technical Administrator (currently Matt Warner) is responsible for maintaining the system on the server, maintaining all password functions and access, and for maintaining the database search functions. Along with the Webmaster, he has full access to all parts of the site located on the server. Certain pages related to database search reports are also maintained by the Technical Administrator and do not require the use of the GoLive software. Different kinds of pages can be uploaded for viewing but they require the use of the software if their appearance is to be consistent with the majority of the pages.

Format:

All pages, where possible and practical, are created using a common template so that they have a common appearance. These include the logo, background picture, drop-down menus, and the footer with contact information. Certain features within this template (such as colours and background) can be simply changed using a CSS process built into the GoLive software. However, major changes to such things as headers, drop-down links, etc. would require a complete rebuild and upload for the site.

General Maintenance:

The server incorporates special software that checks ALL external and internal links once every 24 hours. Any problems are reported automatically by email to the Webmaster. Repairs to broken links or deletion of dead links can then be done by the Webmaster.

C. Other Languages

Portuguese and Spanish:

The site has Home pages available in both Portuguese and Spanish. These are designed solely to attract searches being done in those languages (particularly from South America). The home pages link to pages that provide a description of what SGGEE has to offer. These in turn then direct all interested to the English language pages.

German:

Significant portions of the site are translated into German and those pages are fully available to German users. Where translation is not available, links will take the German reader to an English page. The ideal would be to have the entire website available in the German language but this requires a lot of work on the part of translation volunteers.

Maintenance:

Portuguese and Spanish pages are static data which should never require maintenance. The goal should be to make all pages available in German as well as to ensure that all changes made on English pages are likewise corrected / updated on the German ones.

D. Public Web Pages

Home Page:

The Home Page is designed to be an attractive brief introduction to SGGEE. It includes a picture (changed 3 or 4 times a year) along with brief news bits related to the Society or the website. It includes the drop-down menus which provide links to all other parts of the site. There is also a Site Index link which can be used in lieu of the drop-down menus.

There are seven categories for the drop-down menus, each of which contain links to the main pages of the site. They are: About Us; Research; Communicate; Volunteer; Other; Convention; Members Only. The first six can be accessed by the public.

About Us - Who We Are:

This is primarily a text page which outlines in detail what SGGEE is and what it does.

About Us - Membership:

Provides information on how to join SGGEE.

About Us - Contacts:

This page provides contact information for all the components of SGGEE.

About Us - Sample Journal:

Gives new readers the opportunity to download a sample copy of the Journal to stimulate interest in membership.

About Us - About Members Only:

Describes the benefits of membership and lists what is in the Members Only section of the site.

Research - Parishes:

This main page provides links to other pages which provide parish information (primarily Lutheran, Baptist, or Moravian Brethren) in both Russian Poland and Volhynia. This information can consist of histories, access to records, photographs, or any other parish related information.

Research - Archives:

Contains links to any Archives known to hold information relevant to SGGEE concerns and research.

Research - Research Aid:

Primarily a text based page that outlines starting steps for research.

Research - Translation Aids:

Tools and links for helping with translation of Polish, Russian, and German documents.

Research - Villages and Maps:

Links to maps and tools to help readers in finding villages of origin, especially in Russian Poland and Volhynia but also other parts of Poland as well.

Research - Database Links:

Links to a wide variety of database resources worldwide that are relevant to SGGEE research. In particular, the search utility for the St. Petersburg files offers more advanced functionality than the search capabilities provided by the Odessa Digital Library.

Communicate - News:

Previously installed news pages were not effective at distributing and sharing current news events. Some of these are now included on the Home page. The News page is now relegated to reporting website changes that have occurred over the past year.

Communicate - Mailing List:

This page describes the purpose of the Mailing List along with guidelines for use. See also Section F.

Communicate - Discussion Board:

The link goes directly to the Discussion Board system which operates independently of the site. See Section F.

Volunteer - Job Central:

This page is a listing of all significant projects underway by volunteers of SGGEE. It is the main location of parish listings being extracted by volunteers.

Other - Related Societies:

This page provides links to other societies whose research and interest overlap or compliment that of SGGEE. Brief descriptions are also provided if available.

Other - Other Sites of Interest:

Provides links to numerous other sites, especially many which are personal websites of individuals who have a direct interest in regions, history, and genealogy related to SGGEE interests. Most are provided by readers or members who have discovered them through their web searches.

Other - Technical Issues:

Comments regarding technical issues for the website, along with links to software needed for some of the content, are provided on this page.

Other - Software:

This page provides a link to a comparative presentation of three brands of genealogy software.

E. Member Only Pages

General:

Seven select pages can be accessed directly from the drop-down menu. Other pages within this section require the use of the first link, "Members Only Index".

Membership Data:

Contact information for all past and present members of SGGEE.

Journals and Newsletters:

Sub-pages lead to links for downloading these items.

Job Central Part B:

Further listings of volunteer projects which are more appropriately limited to member viewing.

Maps and Villages:

Access to special maps and indices for Russian Poland and Volhynia maps.

History Books:

This page leads to a database of surnames extracted to various local history books in communities where Russian Poland and Volhynian Germans were prominently living.

Parish Records Indices:**Pedigree Databases:****St. Petersburg Databases:****Village Locator System - St. Petersburg Databases:****St. Petersburg - Podolia:**

All the above pages lead to a variety of databases created and maintained by SGGEE volunteers.

German Residents of Galicia:

Special database for this region which is complimentary to the regions covered by SGGEE and maintained by an SGGEE volunteer.

SGGEE Library:

Listing of the contents of the SGGEE Library.

Luzk Land Appropriations:

Database covering land appropriations that occurred during the communist takeover in Volhynia.

Ship Passengers:

Database of Russian Germans arriving on the east coast of the USA.

General Society Information:

Minutes and other Society information for member perusal.

Directors Area:

Within the Members Only section are some hidden pages and documents for the exclusive use of the SGGEE Executive and Directors. They are kept in this password protected area so that they cannot be accessed by mainstream search engines. They are not linked from any of the regular site pages. These pages require minimal maintenance, usually involving once a year updates as required.

F. Discussion Board and Mailing List

General:

These two items are part of the website. Technical aspects of their operation are maintained by the Technical Administrator while the Webmaster maintains day to day operation. Both devices require separate software to operate and neither is associated with web design or authoring tools.

Discussion Board:

This system operates with the phpBB Open Source freeware software system. Little system maintenance is required but because of the threat of spammers, all user applications must be manually approved by the Webmaster.

Mailing List:

This system operates with the Mailman Open Source freeware software system. Little system maintenance is required. Significant input from the Webmaster is required to delete spam attempts and to deal with subscribers who do not use the system correctly.