

FOR the Michigan Genealogical Council

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Finding & Working With Genealogical Speakers

In the search for quality programs and speakers for genealogical, historical and lineage societies, there are a variety of sites that offer information about potential speakers and the topics they might offer. This session offers suggestions of the ways to proceed and find what will benefit your society's members.

Strategizing Your Society's Year

- It can be potentially easier to develop a year of programs if there is a direction for the development. Some societies create surveys of their members to determine what topics, geographic, ethnic, timeframe or other areas of research that members might be interested in.
 - Topic-based: Writing your family history, blogging as "cousin bait", using social history to enrich family stories, etc.
 - Geographic/locales: Researching in Ontario, How to Find Michigan Farming Records, Learning About Records in County Courthouses, etc.
 - Ethnic: French-Canadian Migrations to the USA, The African Diaspora in the US South, Eastern European Jews in New Jersey, etc.
 - Timeframe: The Records of the Civil War, How Epidemics in the 1900s Impacted Families, Where Were My People in the 1950 Census, etc.

Sources:

- FREE FamilySearch.org – The FamilySearch Wiki is a source of topics, particular geographic areas (countries, states, counties, and localities) is the free online compilation of records by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints ("Mormon"). Scanning topics here can give rise to ideas for genealogy presentation topics.
- Genealogy society national and regional conference syllabi or program lists to encourage registration – The topics offered in these publications and lists can not only provide ideas about areas that members might like, but also provide the names of speakers who provide these lectures. The benefit of this is that the speakers have generally been "vetted" so that you know they will offer high-quality presentations.
- Other society calendars and offerings – looking around the country can provide ideas of both topics and speakers.

Sources for Speakers

There are compiled lists of speakers from a variety of sources:

Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) -

https://www.apgen.org/directory?current_page=1&sort_type=featured&asset_type=company_user&display_type=default APG focuses on the development of genealogy professionals who

work often as self-employed practitioners (some work for organizations such as Ancestry, FamilySearch, etc.) through professional management courses/conferences in developing a business, creating specializations and business products, and offers members conferences with sessions about business development, improving genealogical research skills, and practical tools to support business management.

Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG) -

https://bcgcertification.org/directory/?wpbdp_view=search This organization has created a set of criteria through which it evaluates the competency of a genealogist for certification. And the certified professionals are listed by their specialties and whether they offer public presentations. These certified professionals use the post-nominal "C.G." for certified genealogist. This organization attracts those mostly being from beyond the Mormon (Church of Latter Day Saints) systems/structures.

GeneaBloggers – www.GeneaBloggers.org – An organization that focuses on writing (blog postings) about family stories, the structure of writing blogs, and utilizing blogs for sharing family lineages that will encourage cousins or other researchers looking for families in the same areas. Members of the group write about their specialty areas, new finds that explore a particular record group or population with a locality, etc.

Genealogical Speakers Guild - <https://www.genealogicalspeakersguild.org/> - This organization has a directory of those who are welcoming contact from organizations, societies, historical societies and more for the opportunity to present their content. Helpful on this website is: <https://www.genealogicalspeakersguild.org/hiring-a-speaker/> Information about the necessary roles played by the speaker and the society/organization wanting to hire them.

International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGen) - <https://www.icapgen.org/professionals/> This organization is similar to BCG in that they certify genealogists through a series of competency measures and the certified professionals in this group use the post-nominal "A.G." for accredited genealogist. This organization "tends" to be more oriented to people working within the "Mormon" or Church of Latter Day Saints structures and systems, though not exclusively.

Michigan Genealogy Research Network -

<https://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/public/family-history/family-history-resources/michigan-genealogy-research-network> The Library of Michigan provides a list of the genealogical societies around the state and the names of professionals willing to provide research services for a fee.

The Michigan Genealogical Council's Speakers List – Updated yearly. <https://mimgc.org/about-us/> Speakers listed provide information about where they have presented within Michigan and what topics they have available as well as whether they are willing to offer in-person and/or online (Zoom) content. Member societies can request the list, and each time it is updated, society members are notified of the lists' availability. A request for a current copy of the list is always welcome!

SPEAKER CONTRACTS

It is STRONGLY recommended that societies create a contract with speakers. Included with this handout is a "sample" from one society and many others are available from a number of societies.

Generally, speakers are required to meet a deadline for a handout, creating a handout (that includes guidance from the flow of the presentation, online links referenced and more), and agreeing to make themselves available before the meeting begins to offer time for tech checks. Pricing is agreed to through the contract, and whether a speaker agrees to be recorded and/or share the content of their handout after the session is over.

MOBILE RESEARCH TOOLS ARE HELPFUL TOO!

USING SOCIAL MEDIA

The benefits of using Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and more can be impactful. A worldwide network, these work best when customized and approached from geographic, surname-specific, and categorical criteria.

For THOUSANDS of genealogy-related Facebook groups, check out Katherine Willson's website (Social Media Genealogy) at <https://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list/> (now being transferred to Cyndi's List).

SAMPLE CONTRACT

Michigan Genealogical Council

P.O. Box 80953
Lansing, Michigan 48908-0953

Program Coordinator:
Telephone:
E-Mail:

I agree to give a presentation titled: "~~xxxx~~"
Brief Summary of topic (2-3 Sentences): ~~xxxx~~.

At the following location: **Virtual**

On the following date and time:

Agreed upon fee: \$

We currently do not tape or record presentations but may choose to do so in the future for archival and other non-profit purposes.

Please check one: I give my permission for my presentation to be taped or recorded.
 I DO NOT give my permission for my presentation to be taped or recorded.

Please check one: I give permission for my presentation handout to be uploaded to the MGC Website, member only section.
 I DO NOT give permission for my presentation handout to be uploaded to the MGC Website, members only section.

I agree with the above:

Name:

Signature: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (Cell) _____

E-mail: _____

- Please e-mail one copy of any handouts for your presentation at least 2 weeks prior to the presentation. We will provide copies to our members.
- Please include a brief biography to be used for publicity and your introduction with your reply.
- Please add any comments, requests or questions not covered in this contract.
- Please sign one copy and return to us and retain one copy for your records.

NOTES: