



GSNJ President's Message

21 December 2023

Dear GSNJ Member,

As we approach 2024, I'd like to share with you some thoughts I've had on the future of GSNJ and the value that the Society hopes to bring to members. Since its founding in 1921, GSNJ's mission has always been to discover, promote, preserve, and publish information pertinent to New Jersey genealogy. In recent years, we've found new ways to share information with our members, and at the same time have discovered that preferences for how members prefer to receive information from GSNJ have changed.

Since 2016, GSNJ has expanded the programs and services it offers and is working diligently on several projects that will continue to add value for members. In 2021, GSNJ launched a monthly webinar series, which is free and open to the public, with recordings available only to GSNJ members. We also have monthly Members-Only programs, including GSNJ Office Hours, where members can ask questions to GSNJ trustees; and Noontime Knowledge, where a topic is presented about a New Jersey collection or repository. We've also been able to hold several programs completely virtually during the pandemic, engaging with more of our members who do not reside in the New Jersey area. Our digital eZine, *NewsBrief*, shares pertinent news with members, and the *GSNJ Newsletter* brings articles about sources and methodology to the membership.

Additionally, for almost a century, GSNJ has published the society's scholarly journal, the *Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey (GMNJ)*. The society was fortunate for many years to have contracted the services of Jane Fletcher Fiske, FASG, who served as editor of *GMNJ* from 2009 to 2022. Today, the magazine is under the editorship of Deanna Korte, who assumed the editor's role in 2022. Keeping the journal in the hands of a highly skilled editor was an important goal for GSNJ as we made this transition.

Over the past several years, we've also had some challenges, particularly as the costs for printing and mailing the society's publications and communications have increased. For many years, GSNJ has received a grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, which helps defray a portion of the Society's expenses. This grant, along with the annual

income from membership dues and publication sales, funds *GMNJ* publication, programming, and services. However, as of recently, costs have increased significantly enough that we are no longer able to sustain large runs of printing and mailing *GMNJ* while also continuing to provide quality programming and services to our membership.

As the Board of Trustees was faced with looking at increasing membership fees, we surveyed the membership and found that many members had a strong preference for receiving GSNJ's publications and communications in digital format. For the first time since 2012, GSNJ will increase dues for the 2024 membership year, while at the same time allowing members to choose how they receive GSNJ publications and communications. The new delivery options for memberships include:

- **Digital Only:** All publications (*GMNJ*, *GSNJ Newsletter*, and *NewsBrief*) and society communications sent digitally only.
- **Print *GMNJ* Only:** *GMNJ* sent in print only; *GSNJ Newsletter*, *NewsBrief* and all society communications sent digitally only.
- **Print Only:** All publications (*GMNJ* and *GSNJ Newsletter*) and society communications sent in print only (*NewsBrief*, a digital only publication, is not included with this delivery option).

The combination of increasing dues and adding delivery options that reduce printing and mailing costs will help GSNJ continue to provide quality publications and programming to our members. GSNJ's trustees will actively continue to pursue additional opportunities for fundraising and will work to keep costs low for the Society. Please visit www.gsnj.org/membership for additional details and to renew your membership.

GSNJ thanks all of its members for their support and dedication to GSNJ and New Jersey genealogy, and for ensuring that the Society continues to thrive and fulfill its mission. We love hearing from you—please reach out via president@gsnj.org if you have comments, questions or feedback for the GSNJ.

Sincerely,

Melissa Johnson, CG
GSNJ President