

Rules of the Society of Genealogists

Opening hours

These are normally as follows:-

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays	10am to 6pm
Thursdays	10am to 8pm
Mondays, Fridays and Bank Holidays	CLOSED

The Society will be closed for the Easter, Christmas and New Year bank holidays and in addition for the first week in January. Details of these closures will be published well in advance in the Society's literature and on its web site.

Passes and security

Members must use their membership card to swipe themselves into and out of the library so that the Society can collect statistical records. Non-members will be passed through the security gate by reception staff. Everyone in the building, except those only using the shop, must wear and display their membership card, day search ticket, event ticket or visitor's pass, as appropriate. Members are asked to be vigilant and report any anti-social or criminal behaviour or infringement of the rules to the nearest member of staff.

Bags, cases, mobile phones, pens, sharp implements etc.

Mobile phones, pens, sharp implements, bags, brief cases and other containers except small handbags are not allowed in the library or lecture room, and must be left in the lockers provided, together with outdoor coats. The Society does not accept any liability for loss or damage to any items deposited in the locker room or anywhere else in the building. In the event of disagreement as to whether or not a bag is small enough to be taken into the library, the decision of the Librarian or the most senior member of the library staff available shall be final. Any person taking bags or other belongings into the building shall permit them to be searched when they enter or leave or in the event that the security alarm sounds as they pass through it.

No animals may be brought into the building except for guide dogs.

Common Room

The Common Room is intended for social purposes. Items placed there by the Society may be read there and must not be removed from that room. None of the Society's books and documents etc. from other parts of the building may be taken in there and no research work may be done there without the permission of the Library staff. Members who are professional genealogists or record agents may not use the room for interviewing clients. Groups may not use the Common Room for meetings without permission.

Refreshments

Food and drink are not to be consumed anywhere in the building except the Common Room. Those using the facilities provided are asked to clean and tidy up after themselves.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the building.

Guests

Members may bring a guest into the Society in order to give them a tour of the facilities. The guest must wear a visitor's pass obtainable from reception and remain in the company of the member at all times. The guest may not conduct research, either on their own behalf or assisting the member, unless they have first purchased a day search ticket. Members wishing to bring in more than one guest at a time or a child under 12 years must ask the Librarian for permission to do so.

Non-members: Day searchers

Non-members may use the Society's library on payment of the appropriate search fee, and on agreeing to abide by the Society's rules and regulations.

Exclusion from the premises

Any member, day searcher or visitor may be refused admission or requested to leave the premises at the request of a senior member or staff. The circumstances involved will be reported to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive as soon as possible and also at the next meeting of the Operations Committee.

Library

- All users must handle material in the library with care and report any damage immediately.
- All books, fiche, films and documents shall be returned to the appropriate shelves, cabinet or counter after use.
- No items from the Society's collections may be taken from one room to another or out of the building without the Librarian's permission.

Library loans

Certain items in the Library may be borrowed by members under the following conditions:-

- Members resident in the British Isles may borrow up to four items at one time. (eg: four books or films, or four sets of fiche, each set containing a maximum of approximately 20 fiche)
- No borrowed item may be taken or sent overseas.
- Borrowed items may be retained for not more than two weeks, or one week for registers. Loans may be renewed twice, providing they have not been requested by another member. Overdue items will incur a fine.
- Items to be borrowed in person must be taken to the library enquiry desk, where the Member must sign a loan form.
- Postal loans must be requested by letter or e-mail to registers@sog.org.uk; they cannot be ordered by telephone. The member should give full details of the item(s) required, their membership number and full postal address. There is no charge for the loan service, as such, but borrowers are required to reimburse the Society's costs in sending it to him/her.

- Items returned by post must be well packed and sent by insured post. Members are responsible for any damage to items while on loan or in transit and for consequential costs of repair, rebinding or replacement.

The Librarian's decision on whether any item may be borrowed is final. Items which may NOT be borrowed, unless the Society holds a duplicate, include:-

- Manuscripts and typescripts
- Items on digital media such as CD-ROM
- Printed items over 60 years old or in a fragile condition
- Limited editions and material published abroad
- Lists and indexes containing thousands of names eg directories and poll books
- Compilation volumes eg. Bound tracts
- Periodicals, serial publications, magazines eg. Harleian and British Record Society publications
- Essential reference works eg. Address lists, dictionaries, the Phillimore atlas, Marshall
- Items on loan to the Society
- Items listed in the Library accessions in the current *Genealogists' Magazine*

Those who break the rules governing library loans may lose their right to borrow from the Library. Members who retain any loan for three months beyond its return date will lose their right to borrow material and risk legal action to recover the item(s).

Copying material in the library

- The law of copyright and rules on copying given below and on notices by the Society's copying equipment must be followed by members, day searchers and staff. A notice announcing restrictions on copying shall be displayed in the vicinity of the equipment at all times.
- Cameras, USB memory devices etc.: Copying facilities are normally available and therefore the use of personal cameras, scanners and other copying devices is only allowed by prior permission from the library staff. Under no circumstances should a flash be employed when taking a photograph. A fee of £3.00 and the signing of a copyright agreement is required for permission to use personal copying equipment.
- Any member or day searcher who makes a copy or who orders one by post or e-mail thereby agrees to indemnify the Society fully for any claims made against the Society by the copyright owner in respect of that copy.
- Copying by members of staff in response to orders by post or e-mail shall be carried out on the understanding that the requester has not previously been supplied with a copy of the same material before, that the copy will not be used except for research or private study, that no other person with whom the requester works or studies has made or intends to make, at or about the same time, a request for substantially the same material for substantially the same purpose and, in the case of unpublished material, that the copyright owner has not prohibited copying of the work. For orders by post or e-mail there will be a charge for the work involved in locating the item to be copied in addition to a charge for the copying.
- Items which are at risk of damage if copied shall not be copied and the decision of the library staff on this matter is final.

Copying unique material in the library for other institutions

Material from the Society's manuscript or typescript collections of registers, monumental inscriptions and Document Collections etc., may be copied in response to a request from a relevant record office, PCC or family history society only under the following conditions:-

- There shall be no cost to the Society
- The copies so made shall never be substantially recopied in any form, nor sold or otherwise disposed of; if a family history society holding copies of any of the Society's transcripts is dissolved, those copies shall be returned to the Society.
- The record office and/or family history society shall be required to sign an undertaking that in the event of any dispute or litigation arising from such copying, the Society of Genealogists shall be fully indemnified for all costs or expenses arising therefrom;
- A copy of these regulations shall be attached permanently to each copy so made.

Rules of Membership

All members of the Society must abide by the rules set down in the relevant standing order.

Benefits of Membership

- Free access to the largest family history library in the UK
- Free access to a number of subscription/pay-per-view websites from within the library
- Access to free, expert help and advice on genealogical problems
- 20% extra pay-per-view units or a 10% discount on subscriptions to findmypast.com
- One free Internet access to SoG data on originsnetwork.com per quarter
- Free access to data on the Members only area of the SoG website
- The right to borrow certain material from the library
- Free *Genealogists' Magazine* four times a year
- Discount on Society publications
- Discount on lectures, courses and visits
- Discount on the Society search and copy service

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