

**Update on the IGHR 2020 Institute – IGHR 2020 is not canceled!**

In my email of March 17, 2020, I indicated that the IGHR Advisory Council and IGHR Steering Committee have been monitoring the developments with COVID-19 and working to plan appropriately for the institute in July.

We received suggestions from attendees offering options for IGHR 2020 as they were uncomfortable traveling due to the circumstances. We reviewed these and many other options on whether to cancel the institute in 2020 or to think outside-the-box for a new IGHR experience. Based on the ever-changing guidelines with COVID-19, as well as University of Georgia (which currently includes the closure of all libraries on campus) and State of Georgia actions, and after consulting with all the course coordinators (who in turn talked with their instructors), we have opted for a new IGHR experience for 2020 ensuring that we continue practicing social distancing to protect the health and safety of our attendees, instructors, and volunteers. We have made this decision in the best interests of everyone attending IGHR.

With so many genealogy events being canceled or postponed, we still wanted to offer IGHR this year. For the first time in IGHR's 58-year history, we will be holding the institute sessions virtually for the entire week with the same quality of instruction.

- Learning environment: Yes – that means changes for the way instructors will be presenting their sessions and for the way you (the attendees) will receive instruction, interact with other attendees in your course, and access the attendee handbook, course syllabus and other handouts online.
- Technology: We will be using virtual and online technology to provide top quality courses and each coordinator will share how their course will be conducted. For example, Zoom, Google Classroom, Vimeo, etc. As an attendee, you will need the following:
  - Internet access
  - Computer (Windows or Apple) or tablet / mobile device (Android or iOS). (Note: Webcams are recommended but not required.)
  - Audio: built-in speaker and microphone, headset with a microphone, external speaker and microphone, or phone
- Technology support: Going online this year will require instruction for everyone. We are here to provide information concerning your connection to the virtual technology, to provide training sessions for each course once course registration closes on July 6<sup>th</sup>, and to answer your questions. Many of our instructors already use virtual and online technology and have been helpful in thinking how we can adapt IGHR 2020 to a successful virtual event.
- Daily start / end times: Start – 10:30 am (ET) / End – 6:30 pm (ET)
- Classroom monitors: Additionally, this year we will have technology facilitators to assist the instructor during class. We will have training sessions for those interested as well as practice with the instructors before IGHR begins.

If you are interested in being a technology facilitator for your course, please contact me at [ighr@gagensociety.org](mailto:ighr@gagensociety.org) for more details on this opportunity and email me with your virtual technology experience information. Those selected to be technology facilitators will receive a priority registration for IGHR 2021 and either:

- the GGS member tuition discount for 2021 (if you are not already a GGS member), or
- a GGS individual membership 1-year extension (if you are currently a GGS member).

- Other activities related to IGHR will remain, except with a virtual twist. We will still have:
  - Orientation
  - Interaction between attendees in your course
  - Interaction with your friends who are registered for other courses (in your free time)
  - Course completion certificates
  - Course pictures
  - Finding Your Relatives at IGHR
  - Books & Things Bookstore (online): <https://www.mygenealogybooks.com/>
- What will we lose? The FamilySearch Genealogy & History Expo and the Evening Sessions will not be held. Nor will we have any in-person social activities around our other favorite activity – eating (breaks, lunches, or dinners.)

Please be patient as we work through all the details to ensure that you have a wonderful IGHR 2020 experience. We wanted to get this information out early so you can adjust your travel plans while staying in the comfort and safety of your own home.

We will be sending out more emails than normal as we begin to implement needed changes in advance of our orientation on July 26th.

### **IGHR 2020 IS NOT CANCELED!**

We are not cancelling IGHR 2020, we are only changing the way it is delivered – from in-person to virtual. Thus, our current cancellation policy and penalty will remain in effect. Please refer to our [Policies and Deadlines](#) – Payment and Refund Deadlines web page.

If you have paid for meal tickets and / or a printed syllabus, you will automatically receive a full refund for these items, either by PayPal or a check (depending on your initial method of payment).

### **Reminders:**

Please let your friends know we have gone virtual! Some people who could not attend in-person may be able to attend virtually. This is a good way to get them acquainted with IGHR. We still have space available in all courses.

Although we are going virtual for IGHR 2020, we are continuing to plan for IGHR 2021 to be in-person at the University of Georgia in Athens.

Finally, don't forget to cancel your hotel reservations that you made for the institute if they were made at the SpringHill Suites or another Athens area hotel. Reservations at the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education & Hotel will be canceled automatically on your behalf.

I look forward to meeting you virtually in July.

Karen Molohon  
Director