

# Reasons Why You Should Contribute to a Genealogical Publication

**C**reating a genealogical publication, specifically a society journal or newsletter, greatly benefits your genealogical research. To provide diverse content on a regular basis – through time, space, record types & sources, etc. – you vigorously look for unique records in unexpected places. To educate, you relentlessly dig into local law, history, records retention, etc. To present material that all readers, regardless of experience level, understand, you write better proof arguments. When a publication is read by thousands, high standards of presentation, source citation, proof standards, etc., are incorporated.

Specifically, I have found that the following attributes needed when creating a publication, benefit research projects:

- awareness of unique resources
- familiarity with research repositories
- familiarity with laws
- understanding record creation context
- implementing The Genealogical Proof Standard
- conducting reasonably exhaustive searches
- citing sources properly
- transcribing accurately
- writing proof arguments
- communicating effectively
- using technological tools appropriately
- managing time
- advocating for record preservation and access
- implementing public relations and social media plans

Let's further explore select benefits of genealogical journal publishing. There is no record too obscure or too hard to look through. Actively go "mining" for unusual records in repositories. Expand and diversify the research resources you explore.

Regularly consult with archivists. Any new-to-you records, explored and shared, benefits everyone. In recently working closely with several archivists, they facilitated learning about available collections, digitization efforts, and hidden gems that won't be published (or if published, won't be indexed and represent an opportunity for partnership to expand records access), etc.

Dialogue with archivists. Discussing records and history often reveals collections or record types that could be significant; something that examining a finding aid would not reveal. The intrinsic understanding of the records by archivists leads to relevant and often unexpected suggestions.

Visiting a repository? Advance preparation scouring internet-available finding aids is crucial. It creates phenomenal awareness of the gems to be found. Researching a private collection for a project is a great source of raw data for a journal and vice versa when nosing around for journal content leads to record discoveries relevant to a current research problem.

Clear and effective communication is important. Many archivists have only interacted with genealogists on a limited basis. You want to engage them to think of off-the-beaten track records applicable to genealogy. Or, when

working with volunteers, help make them feel equipped and confident in transcribing, using technological tools when submitting information to the journal, writing articles that don't necessitate extensive back and forth, and more.

Let's not forget PR-related activities. Promotion is key to getting readership for a genealogy publication. Consider the needs of professionals: seeking new clients, publications platforms, or venues where they can speak, involve promoting their skills and experience. The same is true when you need to collaborate with other family historians as you discuss research done, research strategies, DNA testing and more. On a certain level, you need to promote the benefits of collaborating to the at-large genealogical community.

Consider getting involved with a genealogical publication; it can greatly improve the many skills needed by today's genealogists, whether lay or professional. A win-win for readers and yourself!



**DIANE L. RICHARD**

has been doing genealogy research since 1987. She is currently editor of *Upfront with NGS*, North Carolina

*Genealogical Society Journal* and *Wake Treasures (Journal of the Wake County Genealogical Society)* and a professional genealogy and family historian researcher, speaker, and writer. She can be found online at [www.mosaicrpm.com](http://www.mosaicrpm.com).

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