

Utah Genealogical Society *Crossroads* Writers Guide

For more information on writing for *Crossroads*, email Eva Holmes, eva@blindhopes.com

Crossroads is published four times a year –Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall. The journal features articles on genealogical methodology and technology, how-to articles, family histories, Utah history, news items, and book reviews.

UPCOMING DEADLINES:

Fall: Articles due by 1 July
Winter: Articles due by 1 October
Spring: Articles due by 1 January
Summer: Articles due by 1 April

AVAILABLE COLUMNS:

Records Research & Collections: Length 1500 – 3000 words

This column features tactics for working with specific record types and collection research tips. Past issues have included: marriage records, death records and pandemics, how to obtain mental health records, pre-1850 census records, post-1850 census records, etc. Length should be 1,500 – 3,000 words.

Research Skills: Length 1500 – 3000 words

This column features skill-building articles that provide actionable instruction on building specific skills related to genealogy. Past issues have included: research plans, Leeds Method, citations, analysis, adding historical context to your writing, etc.

Research & Travel: Length 1500 – 3000 words

This column features adventures and discoveries that genealogists have experienced during their research travel trips. Past issues have included: Salem, Massachusetts; Ireland, Italy, domestic cemetery visits, etc. Length should be about 1,500 words.

Utah Pioneers: Length 500 words

This column is assigned by the UGA First Families program and features a Utah Pioneer that has been accepted into the First Families program. For more information on having your Utah Pioneer submitted, please contact Bonnie Anderson.

DNA:

This column covers DNA related topics. Past issues have included what to do with your DNA test, understanding throlines, etc.

Social Media / Internet / Technology: Length 750 – 3000 words

This column features the latest in social media and online. Past issues have included: Gen Z Genealogy and their use of social media platforms to connect with other genealogists, genealogy and virtual reality, review of new genealogy website archives, etc.

Book Reviews: More information can be found in this document surrounding book reviews.

Books are pre-selected for the reviewer.

SLIG: Length 1500 – 2000 words

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This column features topics that surround the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. Topics are pre-selected by the SLIG team for the writer.

NEW! UTAH SPOTLIGHT: Length 750 words

This fun column features “10 Things” about a specific topic. Past issues have included: Utah genealogy haunts, DNA tests, military records, etc. This article should be about 750 – 800 words.

FORMATTING:

Please do not include extensive formatting in your articles. Articles should be prepared in Microsoft Word. Articles may not be submitted as a .pdf.

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Accompanying photographs must be high-resolution, in a .png or .jpeg file type. Photography credit must be submitted.

SUBMISSION:

The editor will provide you with a link to a digital form, where you can upload your article, biography, head shot, and accompanying photographs. Once an article is submitted it will be reviewed and edited by our staff.

COPYRIGHT:

The author retains copyright over the published article and may use the article six months after the publication date. A citation to *Crossroads* is requested with each subsequent publication of the article.

LANGUAGE:

Currently *Crossroads* is only able to accept articles in English. American spelling and grammar rules are to be used.

STYLE:

Articles should be prepared in jargon-free, plain, and concise language.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

If abbreviations are used, ensure, and double-check that all readers are able to follow them. Spell out all acronyms on first use, indicating the acronym in parenthesis immediately thereafter. Use the acronym for all subsequent references (e.g., “Utah Genealogical Association (UGA) believes...” Abbreviations should be in capital letters without full stops (i.e., UGA not U.G.A.). Common abbreviations (e.g., i.e., etc.) do not follow this rule; they should be in lower case and include full stops if appropriate.

NUMBERS:

The numbers zero to twelve should be spelled out. Use figures for numbers 13 and higher. Either words or figures should be used to represent large whole figures (e.g., one million or 1,000,000). If a sentence starts with a number, it must be spelled out (except for year dates). Maintain consistency with the numbers throughout your writing.

Utah Genealogical Society
***Crossroads* Writers Guide**

DATES:

Dates should be presented in Day-Month-Year format, e.g., 2 December 1900.

LISTS:

For nonhierarchical or unordered lists, use bullet points. If the list represents a specific sequence, use numbering. Lists should be used sparingly.

FIGURES:

Figures, including graphs and diagrams, must be presented professionally and clearly. The function of these is to strengthen the argument or illustrate the article substantially. The authors are responsible for clearing permissions and copyright issues. If a figure is not easy to understand or does not appear to be of a suitable quality, the editor may ask for it to be re-rendered or omitted entirely. All figures must be cited within the main text in consecutive order. Each figure must have an accompanying descriptive caption that clearly and concisely summarizes its content and/or purpose. Figure titles and legends should be placed within the text document after the paragraph of their first citation. Photographs must be credited.

TABLES:

Tables must be created using a word processor's table function, not tabbed text. Tables should be included in the manuscript and cited. Each table must have an accompanying caption that clearly and concisely summarizes its content and purpose. The table title and legend should be placed beneath the table. Tables should not include rotated text, colors, images, multiple parts.

FOOTNOTES / CITATIONS:

Sources should be cited for any fact that is not public knowledge. *Crossroads* has adopted the latest edition of *Evidence Explained (EE)* as the standard for footnotes and citations. For accurate composition, make sure your citations conform exactly and consistently to EE's standards. Articles with divergent citation styles or sloppy referencing will be rejected.

BOOK REVIEW TIPS

When writing a book review, actively read. Keep a pen and paper handy, and note statements, arguments, etc. and describe your own responses or reactions as you read.

Book Review Structure:

- Paragraph 1: The thesis, and whether the author achieves the purpose of the book
- Paragraph 2: The books strengths
- Paragraph 3: The books weaknesses
- Paragraph 4: Your assessment of the book

Things to consider:

- Does the book deliver what the book title suggests it is going to deliver?
- The preface – it is often the richest source of information about the book.
- The index – is it accurate, broad, deep, shallow?
- What is the books' purpose or argument?
- Is the book well-written?
- How accurate is the information presented (footnotes, bibliography, dates, etc.)?

Utah Genealogical Society
***Crossroads* Writers Guide**

- Are the illustrations, if any, helpful? If no illustrations, should there have been?
- Who would benefit from reading the book?
- How does it compare to other books that are similar?
- Who should read the book?
- Does the book contribute to the field of genealogy?
- Will the book add to our knowledge?

When preparing the book review:

- It can be worthwhile to do an online search to learn about the author, other books, history, education, background, etc.
- The book review should be about 600-800 words in length.
- Outline the book review before writing it
- Remember to judge the book by its intentions, not yours.