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Press Release

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National Genealogical Society Awards Excellence in Genealogy Scholarship and Service at Family History Conference in St. Charles, Missouri

ST. CHARLES, MO, 10 MAY 2019—The National Genealogical Society (NGS) held its annual banquet on Friday evening, 10 May, at its 2019 Family History Conference in St. Charles, Missouri, to present awards that acknowledge and honor genealogical scholarship and service. The banquet speaker, David E. Rencher, AG, CG®, FIGRS, FUGA, spoke about the precarious future of tombstones in his presentation, “If Carved in Stone, Your Epitaph is Already Disappearing!” Awards Committee chair Janet L. Bailey opened the awards portion of the banquet.

Each year, NGS presents awards to organizations and individuals who have made outstanding contributions to NGS programs or have done outstanding work in the field of genealogy, history, biography, or heraldry.

National Genealogy Hall of Fame

Beginning in 1986, the National Genealogy Hall of Fame program, administered by the National Genealogical Society, has honored outstanding genealogists whose achievements in American genealogy have had a great impact on the field. Qualified nominations are solicited annually from genealogical organizations. Those nominated must have been deceased for at least five years and actively engaged in genealogy for a minimum of ten years.

Their contributions to genealogy in this country need to be significant in a way that was unique, pioneering, or exemplary. Such contributions could have been books or articles that added significantly to the body of published works, served as a model of genealogical research or writing, or made source records more readily available. Nominees could also have been a

teacher or lecturer, or a person who contributed to the field through leadership in a genealogical organization or periodical. Entries are judged by a panel of genealogists from various parts of the United States.

This year, **George Harrison Sanford King**, FASG, who was nominated by the Virginia Genealogical Society, was elected to the **National Genealogy Hall of Fame**. Born in 1914, he was a lifelong resident of Fredericksburg, Virginia. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 1935 with a chemistry degree. As a young man he developed an interest in genealogy, emphasizing a scholarly approach to research and documentation. In the 1930s he along with others lobbied the Virginia General Assembly for funds to restore deteriorating records, for which all Virginia researchers are grateful.

King was known as an expert on the complex family relationships of Virginia's Northern Neck, an area that includes what are often referred to as burned counties. Using numerous sources, he made extensive notes and transcriptions on early Virginia families. A card index to his more than 100,000 papers is available at the Virginia Historical Society and abstracts are being published in the *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy*.

Virginia did not keep early vital records. King recognized the need to find and preserve other source materials. He published record abstracts for many church parish records. He also had the foresight to collect and preserve bible records. He published articles in numerous periodicals. In 1947 he was elected a fellow of the American Society of Genealogists. He was active in many societies and was a registrar for Virginia's Order of the First Families.

King was one of the experts who assisted in the compilation of the first edition, published in 1956, of *Adventurers of Purse and Person*. This publication has been revised and expanded several times and is considered an essential reference for early Virginia families.

The NGS Fellow

Fellowship in the National Genealogical Society recognizes outstanding work in genealogy or the related fields of history, biography, or heraldry, in addition to outstanding service to the National Genealogical Society. This year's **Fellow** is **Connie Miller Lenzen**, CG®, of Portland, Oregon.

Lenzen is a highly regarded contributing author to national and local genealogical publications. She won the *NGS Quarterly's* 1995 Award of Excellence and is a two-time winner of the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors Award. From 2005 to 2008, she served as president of the Board for Certification of Genealogists.

Lenzen joined the NGS Board of Directors in 2004. That year the Society was facing financial insolvency and its future was in question. With her fellow board members, she worked tirelessly to ensure its survival. She served on the board for six years, 2004–2010. As chair of

the Education Committee, she managed and edited the revised Home Study Course, 2005 revision. By the time she retired from the Board, NGS was again on firm ground. Its membership was strong and its educational programs were flourishing.

The President's Citation is given in recognition of outstanding, continuing, or unusual contributions to genealogy or the Society. **Miriam Weiner**, CG Emeritus, was awarded the President's Citation, honoring her years of service to the field.

Weiner dedicated her career as a genealogist to discovering and publishing lists of surviving Jewish and civil records from archives throughout Eastern Europe previously thought to have been destroyed during the Holocaust. The *New York Jewish Week Newspaper* described Weiner as "The Genealogist Who Lifted the Archival Iron Curtain." In 1990, Weiner organized the first customized Jewish genealogy tours to Eastern Europe. Participants received unprecedented access to archives with family documents, toured ancestral towns, and sometimes met previously unknown relatives. An author of two books, Weiner has received numerous awards for her writing including the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies' Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Distinguished Service Award recognizes outstanding contributions to the mission of NGS. At the banquet, the Board of Directors presented the award to **Terry Koch-Bostic** for her outstanding service to NGS as she shepherded the new NGS website from its inception through its launch in October 2018.

Completely redesigned with a focus on the NGS Learning Center, the site includes new content and educational resources for genealogists of all levels and is available to NGS members and the genealogical community at large. Koch-Bostic meticulously managed all phases of this two-year project even as she continued to serve as the NGS vice president and marketing/communications chair.

The Shirley Langdon Wilcox Award for Exemplary Volunteerism recognizes a volunteer whose generosity of spirit and time has greatly benefited the National Genealogical Society and the genealogical community in general over a period of years.

Ann Fleming, CG, CGL, FNGS, of St. Louis, Missouri, is this year's award recipient. Fleming, who has spent the past two years planning the 2019 NGS Family History Conference, has in fact chaired more than six conferences for NGS as well as numerous events for other societies over the years. Active in local and state organizations, she served as president of the St. Louis Genealogical Society, where she was involved in helping with the creation of the Julius K. Hunter and Friends African American Research Collection established at the St. Louis County Library. She has served NGS as president, vice president, and secretary and was instrumental in preserving the NGS Book Collection by negotiating its move to the St. Louis County Library.

The Award of Merit is presented to an individual or non-profit genealogical or historical organization to recognize exceptional contributions to the field of genealogy over a period of five or more years, which have significantly aided research or increased interest in genealogy. This year the NGS Board of Directors presented awards to three winners.

In recognition of their efforts during the past sixty years, NGS awarded **The Florida Genealogical Society**, Tampa, Florida, with the **Award of Merit**.

Founded in 1958, the Florida Genealogical Society is the oldest genealogical society in the state of Florida. It is celebrating sixty years of service to the genealogical community. In addition to monthly educational programs and an annual seminar, the Society has worked on projects that have made genealogical and historical information available to the public. Some of these projects include the digitization and indexing of naturalization records; photographing more than 500 graves; collecting and uploading over 115,000 county cemetery records to FindAGrave; and sorting and indexing 16,000 Burgert Brothers historical photographs depicting Tampa life between 1899 and the 1960s.

The North Carolina Digital Heritage Center, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, received the Award of Merit in recognition of its exceptional contributions to researchers.

The Center brings together collections from more than 230 libraries, archives, museums, and other institutions into a single, searchable website, DigitalNC. Unlike other genealogy sites, DigitalNC's locally focused content is chosen by community-based librarians, archivists, and curators. The thousands of yearbooks and newspaper pages are just part of this ever-growing archive.

The third Award of Merit was presented to **Carolyn Carter** of Detroit, Michigan, in recognition of her significant efforts to increase an interest in genealogy.

Carter is a professional genealogist and academic instructor in genealogy at the Wayne County Community College District in Detroit, Michigan. For the past six years, she has designed and taught research methodology and family history techniques to the students in the college's downtown campus. She helped to maintain and grow the students' enthusiasm by creating a student genealogy club and by providing opportunities for them to attend genealogy conferences (most recently at the 2018 NGS conference in Grand Rapids) as well as research field trips to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, and the Allen County Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Awards for Excellence are presented for a specific, significant single contribution in the form of a family genealogy or family history book, a publication discussing or demonstrating genealogical methods and sources, or an article published in the *NGS Quarterly*. Entries serve

to foster scholarship and/or otherwise advance or promote excellence in genealogy.

Award for Excellence: Genealogy and Family History Book

This year's recipient is **Henry B. Hoff**, CG, of Burke, Virginia. The title of his book is *Ancestors and Descendants of Robert Alfred Sands and Kate Van Volkenburgh: Enduring Relations*.

Award for Excellence: Genealogical Methods and Sources

Scott Andrew Bartley of West Roxbury, Massachusetts, is this year's recipient. The title of his entry is *Early Vermont Settlers to 1771, Volume 1—Southern Windsor County*.

Award for Excellence: National Genealogical Society Quarterly

Worth Shipley Anderson, JD, of Vienna, Virginia, received the Award for Excellence for his article, "John Stanfield 'as he is cald in this country': An Illegitimate Descent in Eastern Tennessee," published in the June 2018 issue of the NGSQ.

The Rubincam Youth Award was established in 1986 to encourage and recognize our youth as the next generation of family historians. It honors Milton Rubincam, CG, FASG, FNGS, for his many years of service to NGS and to the field of genealogy.

Adriana Sela of Miami, Florida, is the winner of this year's **Senior Rubincam Youth Award** for students in grades ten through twelve. Ms. Sela's paper documents her maternal ancestry from Ecuador to Miami.

Andre Galistinos of Ridgefield, Connecticut, is the winner of the Junior Rubincam Youth Award for students in grades seven through nine. The title of his entry is "An Unexpected Surprise."

Honorable mentions were presented to **Wyatt Anderson Taylor** of Long View, Texas (Senior) for his paper, "The Walkers: A Sawmill Family," and **Tyrone Kearse** of New Castle, Delaware (Junior) for his paper, "A Biography of Irving S. Young."

Founded in 1903, the [National Genealogical Society](#) is dedicated to genealogical education, exemplary standards of research, and the preservation of genealogical records. The Falls Church, Virginia, based nonprofit is the premier national society for everyone, from the beginner to the most advanced family historian, seeking excellence in publications, educational offerings, and guidance in research. It also offers many opportunities to interact with other genealogists.

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