

GSV Writing Prize

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GSV 2021 Writing Prize

The GSV is pleased to announce details of its 2021 Writing Prize Competition.

Purpose of the Prize

- to encourage the writing of family history
- to provide an opportunity for recognition and publication
- to publish the winner as an example of quality family history writing

Eligibility

The competition is open to GSV Members and all members of GSV Member Societies. Individuals may only submit one entry.

Members of the *Ancestor* Editorial Team, the judges, GSV staff and the winner of the previous year's prize are not eligible to enter.

Announcement and Publication

The winner will be announced at the GSV's Annual General Meeting in October and the winning article will be published in the December 2021 issue of *Ancestor* magazine

At the judges' discretion, one or more of the submitted entries may be published in subsequent editions.

Conditions of Entry

The article should:

- have a family history / genealogy theme
- be the author's own original work
- not have been previously published in any format, or be under consideration or accepted for publication by any other publication
- be between 1200 and 2400 words (not including title, image captions, endnotes and sources)
- contain appropriate citations of sources
- a separate bibliography is not required

Accompanying images are desirable but are not part of the judging criteria. Up to four high resolution images (minimum 300 dpi) may be submitted. Images must be in the public domain, or the author's own, or have the owner's permission to publish. Please see the advice on the *Ancestor* Journal tab under Submit an Article – the Submission of Images.

Judging

The winning article will be that which, in the opinion of the judges, is the most interesting, well-written and researched, and appropriately referenced.

Entries will be judged anonymously by a panel consisting of:

- three members of the *Ancestor* Editorial Team
- the President (or a past or present member of Council nominated by the President, who is not a member of the Editorial Team or the Writers Circle)
- one other judge who is not a member of the *Ancestor* Editorial Team, the GSV Council, or the GSV Writers Circle

The judges reserve the right not to award the prize if the entries are not considered to be of sufficient merit, or there are insufficient entries.

The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

How to enter

Submit your article as a Word document by email to writingprize@gsv.org.au or on disk to the front desk at the GSV. Use a plain font, preferably Times New Roman, 12 point. Number your pages and include the title in a header. Do not put your name on the pages of the article, but include a separate cover page with your name and other details (see below). Do not include images with the text but send them in separate jpg or tiff files scanned at 300 dpi. Include the title of the article and a caption for each image. Hard copy will not be accepted. As disks will not be returned, please be sure to retain a copy.

Closing Date

The closing date is 4.00 pm on Friday 27 August 2021 and articles received after this time will not be considered.

The cover page should include:

- Author's given name and surname
- Email address
- Telephone number
- GSV member number or name of GSV Member Society and membership number of that society
- Title of article
- Word length
- Declaration that it is the author's own original work and has not been previously published in any format and is not under consideration by any other publication
- Captions for images supplied

- Declaration regarding the images – in public domain, or the author’s own, or by whose permission they can be published.
- Permission to publish the article and the images in Ancestor
- Permission to publish the author’s email address

Winners of the GSV Writing Prize

The Prize was first awarded in 2013

- 2013 Kath McKay: *Finding Shakespeare in family research*
 2014 Anne Cavanagh: *Elizabeth and the Doctor elope: the story of Elizabeth Ware*
 2015 Marilyn Fordred: *Every photo tells a story*
 2016 Emma Hegarty: *Finding Mary Jane*
 2017 Helen Pearce: *Thomas Owen: the skeleton in the family’s closet*
 2018 Helen Pearce: *Daniel Elphinstone: his son’s secret exposed*
 2019 Louise Wilson: *Masters of the Road*
 2020 ‘Tom were the naughty lad’: *Brian Reid*

Judges’ report on 2020

GSV writing prize

The judges met on 7 and 21 September, first to choose a short list from the 12 entries, and then to decide the winner and runner-up. The five judges appointed by the GSV committee were: Dr Gary Presland, guest judge; Joy Roy, representing the GSV President; and three *Ancestor* team members, Tina Hocking, Margaret Vines and Bill Barlow. Leonie Elliss, from the *Ancestor* editorial team, received entries, provided anonymous copies to the judges, and facilitated the judges’ meetings on Zoom, but took no part in the judging process.

The winning entry was ‘Tom were the naughty lad’ by Brian Reid. This lively and engaging account of the exploits of the author’s ancestor in rural Cumbria combined sources from oral and written history. A strong story line was well supported with research and referencing which threw light onto an intriguing rural custom and the operation of the class structure in rural England at the time.

The runner up was ‘Webster Soda Water’ by Susan Wight. This is a readable and well researched tale of a family business producing and selling soda water in various locations around country Victoria, beginning on the Ballarat goldfields in the 1850s.

It illustrates the often peripatetic nature of such early industries, the difficulties, dangers and the competition they faced.

The judges were pleased with the quality and diversity of the entries, which included stories about the theatre, about seafarers, convicts, Irish settlers, WW2 Germany and the Chinese in Queensland. They found unusual content created interest and remind entrants, when selecting a subject and writing about it, that their audience is *Ancestor* readers. Entries were generally well researched though some entrants needed to check style manuals like the *Ancestor guidelines* on citation. Authors are encouraged to consult and get assistance with writing, proof reading, and citation for their entries, and to plan far enough ahead to avoid a last minute rush.

The judges thank all the entrants, encourage them to continue their research and their writing and hope they will enter again next year

From the Ancestor Editorial Team

We thank historian Dr Gary Presland for being willing to act as our Guest Judge and for participating so helpfully in the assessment process. We also thank Ms Joy Roy FGSV for representing the GSV President in the judging team again and contributing her considerable knowledge of family history and editing.
