

About the Guild

The Guild of One-Name Studies is the premier genealogical society for one-name studies. A one-name study is a project researching facts about a surname and the people who have held it, as opposed to a particular pedigree (ancestors of one person) or descendency (descendants of one person or couple).

The Guild is a charitable organisation dedicated to promoting the public understanding of one-name studies and the preservation and accessibility of the resultant information. Founded in 1979, the Guild now has over 2000 members spread across the world, studying over 7500 individual names.

What can the Guild offer you?

As a family historian

If you have a surname in your family that is being studied by a Guild member then he or she may well be able to provide you with valuable information and insights about the name and perhaps your own connection with it. You can find out which names are being studied from another of our leaflets, the Register of One-Name Studies or from our web-site.

As a Guild member

If you have an interest in surname studies, are carrying out a one-name study or are considering starting one, then there are many benefits to joining the Guild. These include:

The **Journal of One-Name Studies**, issued quarterly to members with news, articles and ideas on this branch of family history.

Seminars & Conferences held in many parts of Britain with speakers on topics of relevance to one-name studies.

Publications of the Guild, including the **Handbook** issued to all new members.

The **Register of One-Name Studies**, listing the surnames registered by members, together with their names and addresses.

The **Guild Forum**, a worldwide e-mail discussion group where members share experiences and learn from each other.

A **Guild E-mail Address** of the form yourname@one-name.org, which stays the same as long as you remain a member, even if you change your Internet Service Provider

A range of web-based facilities, such as the **Guild Archive** (for storing your data), the **Guild Marriage Index** and **Web Profiles** (to assist in publicising your study).

Discounts on specialist books and computer products suitable for one-name studies.

But more than anything else, as a member you have the opportunity to learn from others engaged in this specialist field of genealogy.

What would I get from carrying out a one-name study?

People often start one-name studies when they get stuck on part of their own ancestry and believe that if they were to collect all references they find to the surname, then this will lead to a 'break-through'. However, having collected this data, you start to become an expert in what might be quite separate family groups to your own. These in themselves may be fascinating and you will often end up helping others who have a more direct interest in them.

While one-name studies can be quite arduous in terms of data collection, they can also be immensely rewarding, both in your ability to offer new insights into the surname and in being able to assist other family historians around the world.

How do I start a one-name study?

You may find it useful to start by finding out how rare or how common your name really is, and how it is distributed across the country you live in and where it occurs elsewhere in the world.

You then need to start collecting information on a systematic basis. Many of the sources you will use are the same as those used by other genealogists. However you will be undertaking a more structured and detailed search. You will need significant commitment for this.

The Guild recommends that new members **do not** register a name unless they are already experienced in the principles of general family history research, and have already collected a reasonable body of data on the name, including:

1. A survey to establish the size of the proposed study, the countries that will need to be considered and relevant surname variants.
2. A significant collection of birth, marriage and death references from civil registration sources or equivalent data from church sources.
3. A significant collection of entries from the worldwide International Genealogical Index (IGI) and other sources available at FamilySearch.org
4. Entries from available indexes to national censuses.

The Guild can recommend appropriate sources for a range of countries.

What next?

One-name studies aren't just about collecting data. A one-name study may concentrate on aspects such as geographical distribution of the name and the changes in that distribution over the centuries, or may attempt to reconstruct the genealogy of as many lines as possible bearing the name. A frequent aim is to identify a single original location of the name, especially if the name appears to derive from a place name. Ideally, you will publish your conclusions. You'll no doubt also publicise your study and of course be responding to those who send enquiries to you. Over time, you will become the global expert on your name and make new friends around the world.

We would ask those interested in registering a surname to consider seriously whether they have the resources, especially of time, either individually or as a member of a group, to gather, store and collate the necessary material and to respond to a possible multitude of enquiries.

How do I join?

Simply complete the MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM, which shows the current fees, and send it to the Guild's Registrar with the amount of your first year's subscription. You don't have to register a surname at the time you join. Instead you can join as a regular member and still gain from the Guild's services and benefits.

How do I register my one-name study?

After joining, you may register initially one name and up to five variants. Subsequently you may then register one or two more names, bringing the number registered to you up to the maximum of three names. For each surname you register, you pay a once-only Registration Fee.

Your surname and your contact details (postal address and e-mail address if you have one) will then appear in the Register of One-Name Studies. This circulates widely in its paper and on-line versions, amongst genealogists of all kinds, not just one-namers. This enables those with an interest in your registered surname to contact you.

When you register a surname, we will ask you to agree in writing to the two conditions shown here:

You must agree to collect all references to your registered surname(s) on a worldwide basis, and strive towards the goal of establishing a substantial body of worldwide data, in particular for countries where the name is relatively significant and where sources are readily available. (A study restricted to one country, part of a country, or the descendants of a particular individual, does not meet our criteria).

You must agree to deal with all reply-paid enquiries and e-mails that you receive relating to your registered surname(s).

How do I pay?

Payments to the Guild must be in UK currency, but you may pay by credit card.

Where can I find out more?

Other leaflets available from the Guild include:
Registered Surnames
Application Form

For further copies of these free leaflets, or if you have any enquiries, please write, enclosing a reply-paid envelope or two International Reply Coupons, to the Guild's address below. Copies can also be downloaded from our website.

There is more information on our website at

<http://www.one-name.org>

This includes a fully searchable edition of the Register of One-Name Studies, which is updated regularly.

Our postal address is:

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Registered as a Charity in England and Wales No. 802048.

PL1—Issue 28

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Introducing the

Guild of One-Name Studies



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