

Tip of the Month (TOM) Survey Results

By Howard Maynard Faulkner

For over two years I have prepared a Tip of the Month (TOM) for each monthly meeting of the Greater Portland Chapter of the Maine Genealogical Society. In late January of this year our members were asked to complete a brief survey about these TOM's. The intent was to inform our officers, members, and me the editor as to the perceived value of the TOM's. Further, I was interested in some direction from our members regarding future topics and issues to be addressed through this educational service.

Twenty eight responses were received. The results are both gratifying and instructive. A summary of the responses follow. For those interested in the *detailed responses* of each question please go to our chapter website (www.GPCMGS.org) and click on TIP's.

Especially helpful were suggestions for future topics covering a wide field of interest which I shall attempt to address in future TOM's based upon the frequency of responses. A question dealing with how to distribute future TOM's indicates you like the way it is done now, so that will not change in the immediate future.

Another question asked about interest in having occasional *guests* write a TOM. The respondents felt that would be appropriate, for which I am especially happy to comply. Before anyone changes their mind *I got right on this*. It is a pleasure to announce that the first guest will be in April and written by our own *Jerry Gower* whose topic will be ***The Maine 1790 Project***. Thank you Jerry *and to your trusted assistant Janice as well!!*

Two additional questions in this survey asked about your interests in future topics. It has always been a goal to present interesting, helpful and timely topics which would appeal to as many of our members and website readers as possible. One question asked if online resources for other countries would be of interest and if so which countries were preferred. The most requested country was the UK (England, Scotland, and Wales). So that will be the first country. Well actually it will be the second as I did *Canadian Online Genealogical Resources* in December 2008. Please watch for UK resources, likely in May 2009, followed by Germany and France in the fall 2009 or winter 2010.

Another, somewhat similar topic related to *ethnic groups*. The Irish had the most requests with 80%, followed by *to my surprise* Native Americans with 60%. I would be especially interested in having a guest author for the latter if someone in our group has specific knowledge on this important and frequently overlooked area. Please speak to me if you are interested as I will gladly share what resources I have if that would be helpful. You will have ample time to prepare and a probable target date will be in the fall 2009.

Thanks to the participants for helping to make this an instructive and helpful experience. Again to see the full results online GO TO: www.GPCMGS.org and click on TIP's.