

eGSSA Annual Report 2008

Introduction:

2008 was a typical year for the eGSSA, a year with its challenges and highlights. We progressed extremely well with some of our projects, despite some setbacks. It was a fair year as far as service delivery and the expansion of membership are concerned.

Membership:

eGSSA membership for 2008 consisted of 286 members and 154 subscribers (see Figure 1). The growth and duration of membership show that eGSSA fulfils an important role in the genealogical community and that its members show a remarkable loyalty towards it. Figure 2 shows the increase of membership vs the loss of members (no renewal), resulting in the netto growth graph. Figure 3 indicates the membership loyalty, showing the number of original members that joined in 2004 and are still members, compared to the year when our current members joined eGSSA. Figure 4 shows the balance between male and female members, whereas Figure 5 shows the language preferences of our members, and Figures 6 & 7 depict the regions where our members are domiciled. Figure 7 clearly indicates that membership growth is strong within South Africa, but also outside the RSA.

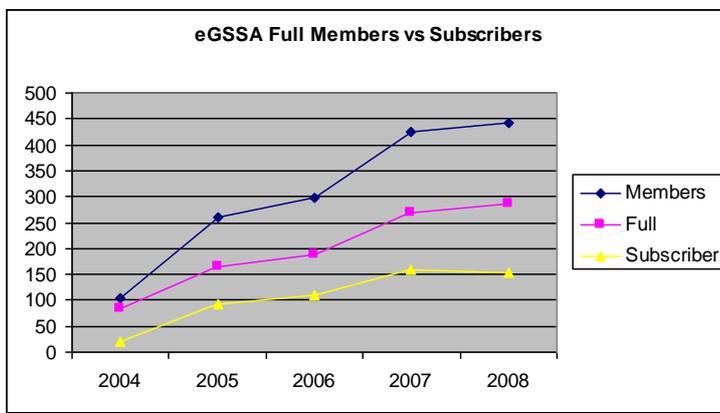


Figure 1

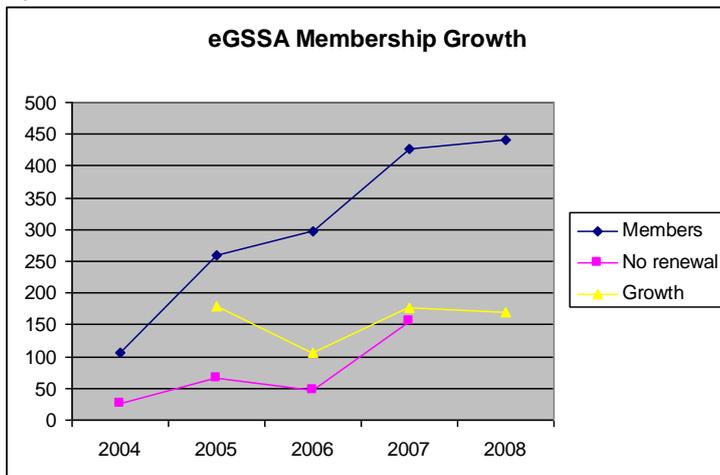


Figure 2

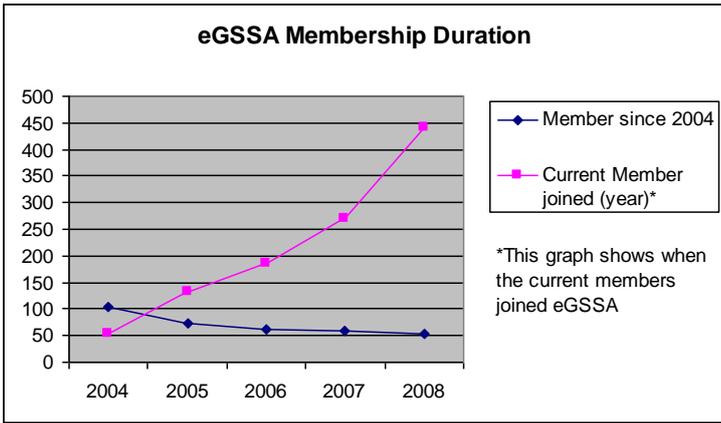


Figure 3

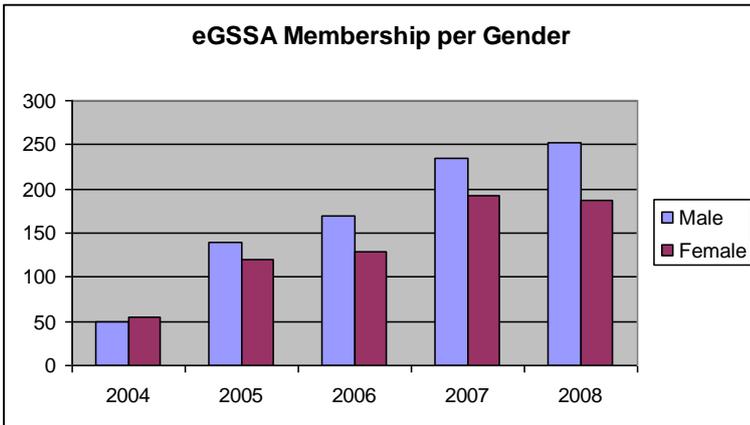


Figure 4

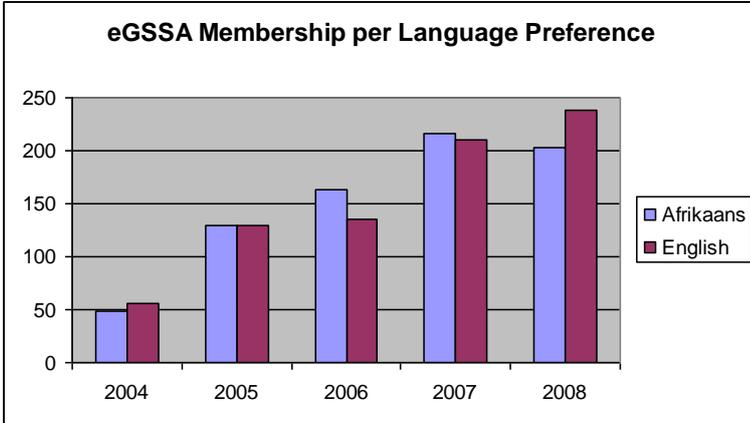


Figure 5

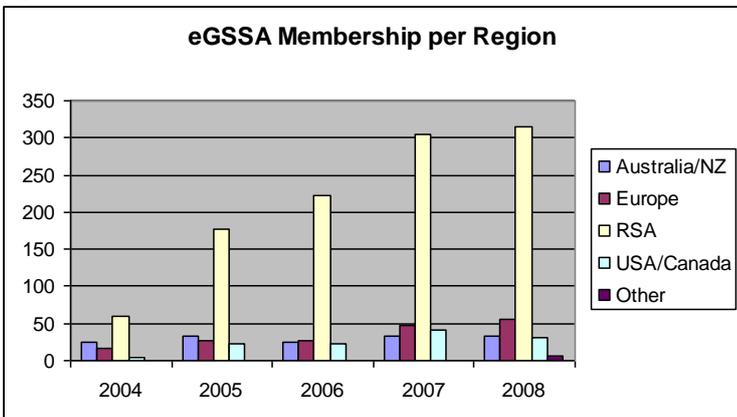


Figure 6

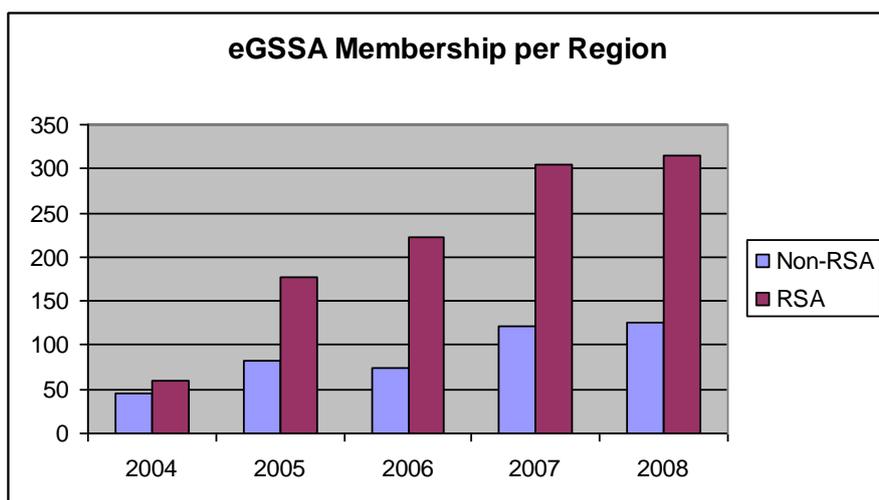


Figure 7

Projects:

Archival Documentation Project

The situation with the KAB had a negative impact on the Cape side of the project, although the TAB and VAB sides continued.

Head Stone Photo Project

In 2008 we achieved our goal of 100 000 photos on the web and plan to reach 150 000 in 2009! On request of the NEC we joined forces with the Cemetery Recording (CemRec) project to obtain maximum commonality between the two projects. The results of the total of 997 albums are as follows:

- 267 albums are both on eGSSA and CemRec CD
 - * The album names were all checked.
 - * Spot check were done to ensure that the graves inside the eGSSA album corresponds with the CD
 - * Where cemeteries had to be split - the split was done, where names were to change - the changes were done.
 - * There is an outstanding TO DO LIST for those some of the graves that I could not place
- 610 albums are on eGSSA only
Since the cemetery names / farm names cannot be verified against the CemRec CD, the farms and districts must be located on the land surveyor's maps manually!
- 130 albums are unclassified (albums in various stages of the labelling process)

eGSSA management would like to thank all involved with this difficult task!

Photo Service

The service was impacted negatively due to the problems experience at the KAB.

eGSSA Web Page:

The eGSSA web site occupies about 27 Gigabytes of disk space, the vast majority of this being used by our picture library consisting of Gravestones, Archive documents, Bibles, postcards and some books.

The average number of visits (one session of variable duration by one user) is 212 per day.

Most visits are to the Picture libraries.

By far the vast majority of visitors are accessing the site from South Africa (60%), next are Australia (5%), Great Britain (3%), Canada (3%), USA (2%), New Zealand (2%) and the Netherlands (1%).

About 30% of the visits are for less than 30 seconds.

Of the visits lasting longer than 30 seconds, roughly 20% stay less than 5 minutes, 10% between 5 and 15 minutes, 10% between 15 and 30 minutes, 10% between 30 and 60 minutes and 20% over one hour.

Most referrals (people coming to the site via a link on other sites) come from the following:

- Google 71
- <http://www.southafrica.info/services/genealogy.htm> 34
- <http://www.onsdorp.com/stamboom/> 19
- <http://www.cyndislist.com/soafrica.htm> 16
- <http://www.southafrica.info/abroad/genealogy.htm> 13

genesis:

Articles are hard to come by - particularly articles in Afrikaans. The four issues of genesis have been produced more or less on time. The members seem to be happy with genesis. We have several members with land based branches as their main branch who subscribe to eGSSA in order to get genesis. Our main concern is therefore to at least maintain the current standard of publication.

Finances:

The past year has proven to be rather stressful in respect of the treasurer's function, as the present treasurer only took over the task on the 13th of April 2008. But the past year has also proven the need for a virtual branch in the GSSA. This is not only seen in the membership figures but also in the income accrued from eGSSA members and genesis subscribers which is slightly better than in 2007. This has enabled us to expand and update our website to accommodate the increasing number of documents available to the eGSSA members. The ban on photographing estate documents at the Cape Town Archives had an effect, as envisaged in our report last year, on our income from this service, although this is probably not the only reason why the income from this service was reduced.

The supporting financial statements are attached (see Appendix)

Sale of GSSA Products:

GSSA products are advertised on the eGSSA website and all GSSA products can be purchased online. eGSSA does not stock these products but passes on the order to the GSSA Treasurer to package and mail. Funds accrued from such sales are reconciled periodically. Sales valued at R3 945.00 were made during the year.

Sale of non-eGSSA Products:

These are products purchased from various suppliers i.e. institutions (Drakenstein Heemkring, Stellenbosse Heemkring, Huguenot Society, etc.) and individuals (Colin Pretorius, Keith Meintjes, Thys du Preez, etc.) at a pre-arranged price and resold at the same price as does the supplier. The value of these sales amounted to R21 044.00 for the year.

Budget:

The 2009 budget has been reduced and it is anticipated that the negative economic climate might also affect our business.

Hobby promotion:

Together with the Western Cape branch we got involved with various exhibitions mid 2008. The idea is to create a greater awareness for genealogy. Exhibitions were held at:-

- * Goodwood - Crafts and Hobby Expo (3 days)
- * Methodist Church Goodwood - Crafts and Hobby Expo
- * Paarl - Heritage day
- * Worcester Wiele-fees
- * Fish Hoek Crafts and Hobby Expo

We are hoping to continue with the expo's in 2009.

Conclusion:

eGSSA has again demonstrated during the previous year that it is an important role player within the GSSA, but also within the genealogical community at large. An important issue that will receive attention during the coming year, is an exercise to determine the primary and secondary functions and the allocation of resources accordingly.

On a personal note I would like to extend a sincere word of thanks to my management team, as well as to the many volunteers. Without you the eGSSA would not be able to function properly. Thank you for your hard work, perseverance and co-operation.