



CHRISTIAN & BARTON, LLP  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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June 7, 2018

**VIA NEXT DAY MAIL and EMAIL to [info@virtualgensoc.com](mailto:info@virtualgensoc.com)**

Virtual Genealogical Society  
Attn: Katherine R. Willson, President  
2470 Nottingham Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-5003

Re: Trademark Infringement – Use of VGS

Dear Ms. Willson:

This firm represents the Virginia Genealogical Society, a nonprofit organization founded in 1960 to promote and foster family history education and research and the sharing of accumulated genealogical knowledge. For at least 45 years, Virginia Genealogical Society has used “VGS” in connection with its educational services. During this time, Virginia Genealogical Society has created in its VGS mark both name recognition and goodwill throughout the United States.

Virginia Genealogical Society, using its VGS mark, has built a national reputation as a leader in promoting genealogical education and research and providing opportunities for individuals to share family history information. Virginia Genealogical Society offers online resources through its website [www.vgs.org](http://www.vgs.org) and its various social media accounts, including its Twitter account, [@VGSGenealogy](https://twitter.com/VGSGenealogy). Virginia Genealogical Society facilitates conferences and workshops and presents regularly at National Genealogical Society conferences under its VGS branding.

Our client recently became aware of the existence of Virtual Genealogical Society’s use of VGS to advertise its genealogical services both on its website and through social media sites. Specifically, Virtual Genealogical Society’s website states that it “provide[s] a forum for genealogists to connect, network, and mentor with genealogists around the world through monthly meetings online, webinars, social networking, annual conferences, and in-person meet-ups at conferences, institutes and events.” *See* attached.

Virtual Genealogical Society’s use of the term VGS to describe your genealogical services violates the trademark rights of our client and, if not discontinued immediately, will seriously diminish the value of its trademark and will tend to confuse and deceive the relevant consumer market.

Our client’s VGS mark has become widely known to describe Virginia Genealogical Society services and it has acquired substantial goodwill in its use of the VGS mark for nearly a

Ms. Katherine R. Willson  
June 7, 2018  
Page 2

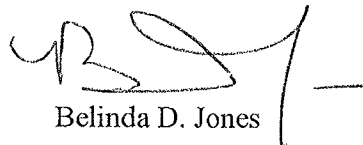
half decade. Virtual Genealogical Society's use of VGS infringes on our client's trademark and dilutes the mark, with significant consumer confusion being inevitable in light of the similarity of services between the parties.

Virtual Genealogical Society's use of the term VGS constitutes trademark infringement and unfair competition and violates federal trademark laws as well as potentially state trademark anti-dilution, unfair competition and deceptive/unfair business practices laws.

We demand that Virtual Genealogical Society (i) immediately delete all references to VGS from its website, any social media sites and other marketing materials, and cease and desist from any other use of VGS in its marketing, (ii) confirm to me in writing that you have done so and (iii) advise me of any other websites (controlled by Virtual Genealogical Society or under common control) or marketing materials which contain references to VGS.

In view of the importance of this matter, we urge your prompt consideration, and request that we have immediate confirmation from you **no later than June 20, 2018** that you are immediately discontinuing all further acts of trademark infringement and unfair competition, and will otherwise accept the terms outlined above. We are hopeful that we can resolve this matter amicably, but do intend to ensure our client's rights are fully enforced and protected. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Belinda D. Jones

Enclosure

2328588

cc: Noelle M. James, Esq. (via email)



# Virtual Genealogical Society

Virtual meetings & conferences. *Any time. Any place.*

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The **Virtual Genealogical Society** is a global organization (not a 501c3) serving family history enthusiasts of all levels, geared towards those:

- whose circumstances make it difficult to attend local genealogical society meetings
- who prefer online presentations, special interest groups (SIGs), conferences, and socializing
- with an interest in connecting, networking, and mentoring with global genealogists

The Virtual Genealogical Society began with the recognition that many family history enthusiasts are merging technology and globalization in their genealogical pursuits. We aim to provide a forum for genealogists to connect, network, and mentor with genealogists around the world through monthly meetings online, webinars, social networking, annual conferences, and in-person meet-ups at conferences, institutes and events around the world.

VGS is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination and harassment, and will not participate in any activity that discriminates against any person for any reason, including age, ethnicity, gender identity/expression, health status, language, military/veteran status, physical or mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, and sexual orientation.

Acts of discrimination during a VGS activity should be reported immediately and will be promptly acted upon.


**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

- Katherine R. Willson
- Christine Woodcock
- Lisa Alzo
- Terri O'Connell

**RESOURCE PARTNERS:**


- GenChat
- The In-Depth Genealogist
- The NextGen Genealogy Network

@VirGenSoc tweets:


 **Virtual Genealogical Society**  
@VirGenSoc

Great idea!

Jun 3, 2018


 **Virtual Genealogical Society**  
@VirGenSoc


VGS members!! Special deal from @MyHeritage @MyHeritage VGS just received an email from MyHeritage informing us that their DNA tests are \$59 until June 17 as part of their Fathers Day sale! See "perks" tab in members only area virtualgensoc.com

 **Virtual Genealogical Society**  
@VirGenSoc

virtualgensoc.com

Jun 3, 2018

 **Virtual Genealogical Society**  
Retweeted

 **Christine McCloud**  
@geneapleau

Listening to @ExtremeGenes & hearing @VirGenSoc being featured! #genealogy

Jun 1, 2018

Powered by  
Divano & WordPress.

1 1 2



# Virtual Genealogical Society

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#### BUSINESS INFO

Launched in 2018

#### Mission

The Virtual Genealogical Society began with the recognition that many family history enthusiasts are merging technology and globalization in their genealogical... See More

#### TEAM MEMBERS



Katherine R. Willson

#### CONTACT INFO

Call 734-546-2360

@VirtualGenSoc

Send Message

http://VirtualGenSoc.com

https://twitter.com/VirGenSoc

#### MORE INFO

#### About

Virtual genealogy meetings & conferences. Any time. Any where.

#### Community Organization

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## Virtual Genealogical Society

@VirGenSoc

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Global

VirtualGenSoc.com

Joined April 2018



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Virtual Genealogical Society  
Great idea!

Jun 3

Jacqi Stevens @jacqistevens

I'm totally convinced there still needs to be a bloggers central at #genealogy conferences. Just met Linda Stufflebean passing in the hall at #SCGS2018. Wish we had more time to talk!

1 0 6



Virtual Genealogical Society

Jun 3

VGS members!! Special deal from @MyHeritage @MyHeritage VGS just received an email from MyHeritage informing us that their DNA tests are \$59 until June 17 as part of their Father's Day sale! See "perks" tab in members only area

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VGS  
virtualgensoc.com

1 4 6

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted



Christine McCloud

Jun 1

Listening to @ExtremeGenes & hearing @VirGenSoc being featured! #genealogy

1 3 5

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted



Jenny Hawran

May 31

I love attending @lisaalzo classes. I always leave inspired to write! @scsgenealogy #SCGS2018

1 6 21

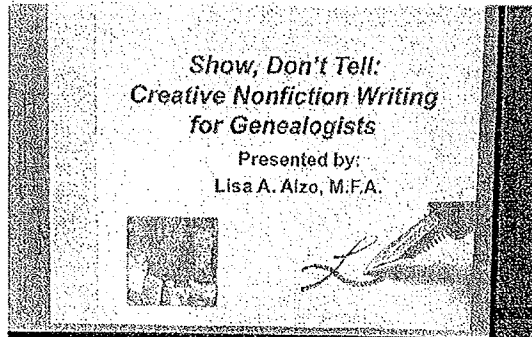
Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted



In-Depth Genealogist

May 30

Sale: Going In-Depth for \$20 bit.ly/2re1BG1 #genealogy #indepthgen



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\$20

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Offer ends midnight EST 5/8/2018

2 3

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted



Conference Keeper

May 29

IL/Jul 07 /What a powerful lineup of genealogy speakers! 2018 McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society (MCIGS) Summer Genealogy Conference. Curt Witcher, Judy Russell, David Rencher, Lisa Alzo bit.ly/2t14ggj #genealogy #familyhistory



2 3



Virtual Genealogical Society

May 30

Agreed! Fun and informative!



Conference Keeper @ConfKeep

This week! One of the most fun genealogy conferences in the US! 2018 SoCal Genealogical Society Jamboree, coming May 31- June 2, 2018. bit.ly/2itgj7H #jamboree2018 #genealogy #familyhistory ...

2



Virtual Genealogical Society

May 30

Calling all VGS members: SCGS Genealogy Jamboree - All VGS members who are attending Jamboree in Burbank, CA this weekend are invited to meet at the bar/patio area in the conference hotel at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, June 1. Looking forward to meeting everyone. :)

3 5



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Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted · May 29 · Have an account? Log in



**Conference Keeper** · May 29  
Tell all your cousins about ConferenceKeeper! conferencekeeper.org ! It's free -- and the most complete calendar of #genealogy events available. Genealogy events are more fun with friends (and cousins!!) !

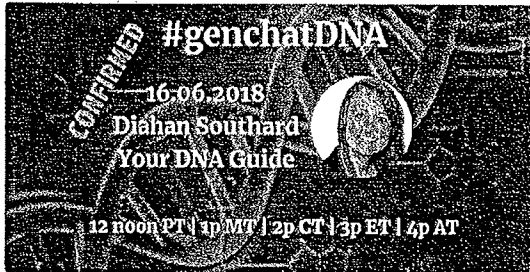


1 3 3

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted · May 29



**SirLeprechaunRabbit** · May 29  
Next month on #genchatDNA  
16JUN  
Join in as Our DNA Guide leads us through the mysteries and marvels of #genetic #genealogy  
SLR 🍀 🍀



1 9 16

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted · May 29



**Amber Oldenburg** · May 29  
Are you a speaker & would like to be part of the upcoming 2019 @OhioGenSoc Conference? The deadline for speaker submissions is Thursday, May 31st at Midnight EST. Hurry up and get your proposals in! #genealogy

2 3 5

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted · May 29



**MI Genealogical Coun** · May 29  
Are you struggling to find your ancestors in-between census years?  
In his program "City Directories: Not Your Average Phone Book," Daniel Earl will look at the wealth of family history... seekingmichigan.org/events/2018-ab...

2 6 10

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted · May 29



**Gail Dever** · May 29  
Virtual Genealogical Society issues call for webinar presentation proposals [genealogyalacarte.ca/?p=23974](https://www.genealogyalacarte.ca/?p=23974) via @genealacarte @VirGenSoc #genealogy

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1 3 4



Virtual Genealogical Society · May 28

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS! The Virtual Genealogical Society invites engaging and dynamic speakers to submit diverse proposals in all areas of genealogy for our 2019 monthly programs that are broadcast live via GoToWebinar. For more info: [virtualgensoc.com/2019-call-for-...](http://virtualgensoc.com/2019-call-for-...)



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8 14

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted



Erin Hill-Burns · May 28

Added the new @VirGenSoc blogger badge to my collection #IAMNextGen @NextGenNetwork @GeneaBlogTRIBE genesandhistory.wordpress.com | Genes & History



1 9

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted



#genchat The #Genealogy CommuniTree · May 28

And non-bloggers are not forgotten! @VirGenSoc has got you covered!

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[www.VirtualGenSoc.com](http://www.VirtualGenSoc.com)

0 2 5

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted



**#genchat** The #Genealogy CommuniTree May 28

Here is the VGS blogger badge to download for use on your blogs!

Please, ensure that clicking on the badge links back to the VGS website at

[virtualgensoc.com](http://virtualgensoc.com)



### Virtual Genealogical Society

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# BLOGGER

0 6 10



**Virtual Genealogical Society** May 25

Special thanks to @MyHChiefGen for this discount for our members!

**Virtual Genealogical Society** @VirGenSoc

SPECIAL DISCOUNT from @MyHeritage for VGS members. Offer ends June 3. Find out more in the members area of our website!

1 1 6



**Virtual Genealogical Society** May 25

SPECIAL DISCOUNT from @MyHeritage for VGS members. Offer ends June 3. Find out more in the members area of our website!

0 4 7

Virtual Genealogical Society Retweeted



**National Library of Scotland** May 23

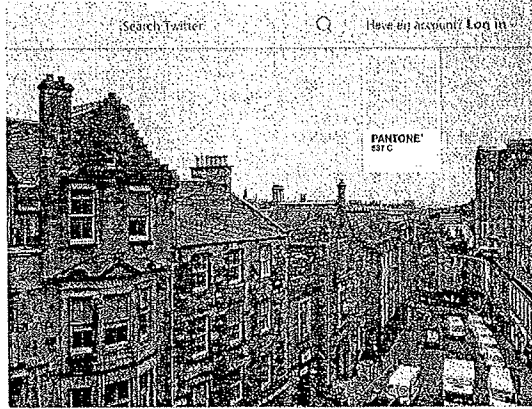
This is your Scottish libraries weather update... we have GREY - repeat - we have GREY\*

#Scotland

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20.3K Tweets
- Nadal  
41.5K Tweets
- Alice Johnson  
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