



## *Austin Families Genealogical Society*

# CONSTITUTION



### **Article I – Name**

The Society, formerly known as the *Austins of America Genealogical Society*, founded in August 1979 by Dr. Michael Edward Austin and Carol Leighton Hull, shall be known as the *Austin Families Genealogical Society*, hereafter referred to simply as the “Society.” Wherever appropriate, it shall be further described as “An International Organization of Austin Family Researchers.”

### **Article II – Purpose**

The purpose of the Society remains unchanged: to help present and future Austin family researchers around the world to discover, document and preserve their Austin family heritage. The name “Austin” as used herein is intended to include any and all alternative spellings of the name such as Austen, Awstin, Osten, Osting, etc. In order to achieve this purpose, the Society will, in accordance with its Bylaws:

- a. Actively collect Austin family records of all types from all parts of the world to become part of the Society’s Library;
- b. Publish and distribute a newsletter with genealogical and historical information on Austin families from all parts of the world. These newsletters are to be periodically indexed and bound as hard-covered volumes and placed in public libraries;
- c. Make information on Austin families from Society’s Library and other sources available to Austin family researchers through electronic media and the Internet;
- d. Provide direct assistance to Austin family researchers at Society’s Annual Conventions and through correspondence with Society genealogists and other members.

### **Article III – Membership**

- a. The Society shall be open to all those with an interest in Austin family research and in supporting the Society’s purposes. The Bylaws of the Society shall define various classes of membership, each with its own privileges and dues structure. Persons may join the Society or renew their memberships at any time during the year, by payment of currently specified dues.
- b. The Board of Directors (see Article V below) may, by two-thirds majority vote and for good and sufficient reason, terminate or suspend the membership of any person. Such reason shall be stated in writing to the person, and the unused portion of his or her dues shall be returned to him or her.

### **Article IV – Officers**

The Society shall have Officers: President, Secretary, Treasurer, and multiple Vice Presidents as specified in the Bylaws. These Officers must be members of the Society in good standing, and shall serve terms as specified in the Bylaws. The President, with confirmation by the elected Officers, may appoint a member to fill any Officer vacancy until it can be filled using the next Annual Ballot. The President shall initiate e-mail meetings of the Board of Directors (see Article V), and shall preside at the Society’s Annual Conventions (see Article VI). Vice-Presidents shall chair committees on special subjects as designated by the Board. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording Board actions, and for assuring that Society records are maintained. The Treasurer shall handle Society funds and shall make financial reports at the Annual Conventions.

### **Article V – Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected Officers and appointees. In order to obtain a broader representation of member’s interests, additional Society members may be appointed to the Board of Directors by the President with confirmation by the elected Officers. Board deliberations and decisions will generally be made via e-mail, although they may also be made at the Annual Conventions if a majority of the Board of Directors is present. The Board of Directors shall also have the power to establish Committees in furtherance of the Society’s objectives, and on such terms as the Board of Directors shall prescribe.

The Board of Directors shall also approve Annual Ballots to be distributed with the Society's newsletter, with the issue specified in the Bylaws. The Annual Ballots will allow Society members with voting rights to (a) elect Officers when necessary, (b) choose the locations for the Society's next Annual Convention, or (c) amend this Constitution. Votes may be cast by all members in good standing as specified by the Society's Bylaws. Voting results shall be published in the Society's newsletter and elsewhere as appropriate. The terms for new Officers shall begin and end as specified in the Bylaws.

#### **Article VI – Annual Conventions**

The Society shall hold annual meetings known as "International Austin Conventions." These are to be held in countries with a significant number of resident Austin families. Such countries include but are not limited to: Australia, Barbados, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and United States. Convention locations may be nominated by any Society members and approved by the Board of Directors for inclusion on the Annual Ballot. It is the intent of this Constitution that the convention shall not be held in the same country in successive years, unless this is determined by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors to be unavoidable for good and sufficient reasons. The location shall then be selected by a majority vote of those Society members returning their Annual Ballots.

#### **Article VII – Amendments**

Amendments to the Society's Constitution must first be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors and then be approved by a majority of the ballots cast by the membership (using ballots mailed out with the Society newsletter). Amendments to the Society's Bylaws may be made whenever necessary by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors.



Note: The above Constitution was approved in February 2005 by a majority of Society members voting via ballots which accompanied the Society's January 2005 newsletter.