

President's talk 2015 – given by the Chair, Mary Sorene:

The President has sent a message.

PRESIDENT: I apologise for not being able to joint you, but I am working today. In addition I have been asked to help out on a full-time course for a couple of hours a week and that means that I am very busy during term time. I also have evening classes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, so the different locations I am at means I am travelling from place to place and just about make it on time!

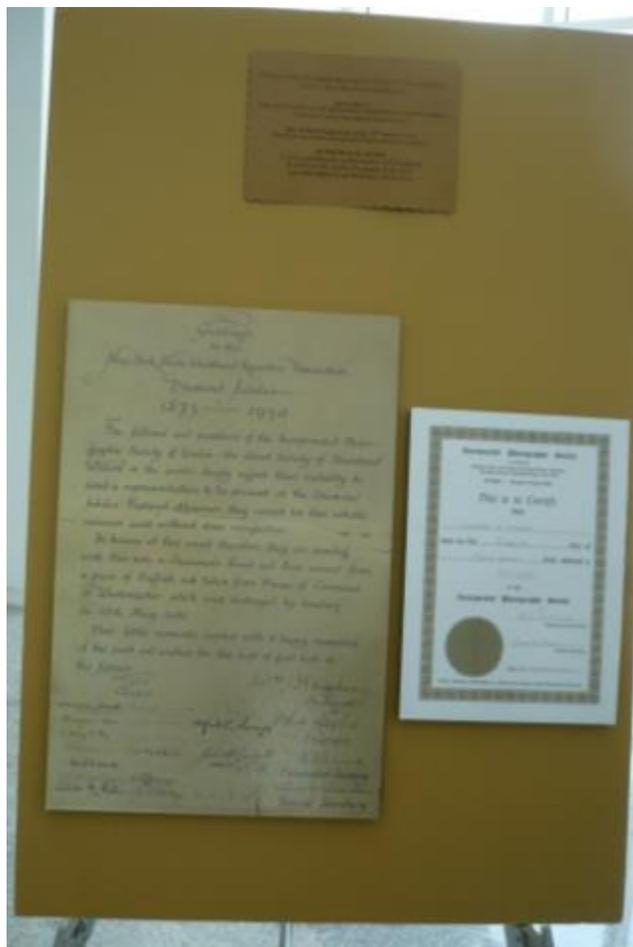
I still try and find time, admin and working, marking permitting, to do some steno practice, but obviously with teaching shorthand all day, nearly every day, my skills are kept up to date.

I just want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for the holiday season and the New Year and give you an opportunity to progress with the Annual General Meeting. Merry Christmas everyone.

MARY SORENE: I am going to talk to you about my trip to the Gallery of Shorthand at the Alfonse M. D'Amato Federal Courthouse, Central Islip, New York. I have a lot of photographs to show you, so it won't be me just talking all the time.

I planned a trip to New York to attend the National Court Reporters Association's Annual Convention. I am a member and through them, several years ago, I gained my Certified Reporting Instructor (CRI) qualification.

I had learned that Dominic Tursi, the founder of the Museum, was offering a tour to those attending the Convention. Incidentally, Dom became a member of the IPS a few years ago, so I emailed him to confirm my visit.



Let me now fast forward to my arrival in New York, at the Midtown Hilton, and meeting up with others who were going on the tour on Wednesday 30 July 2015.

The good news for us was that as there were several “out of towners” Dom, at his own expense, had organised a stretched limo to take us there and back, rather than each of us taking a train to and from Penn Station which itself was several blocks away from the hotel and would then have involved a taxi from Islip station to the courthouse.

I have photos of the limo at the hotel and then when we arrived at the court house.



The “out of towners” then had a private tour of the Museum before others arrived.



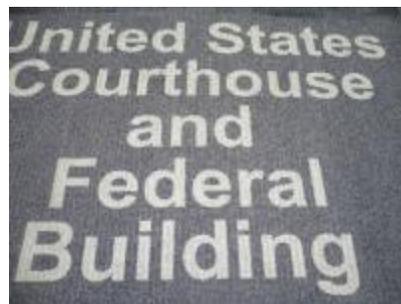
Dom founded The Gallery of Shorthand when someone from the department that runs the Federal Court building asked him to display his collection of steno machines. Dom needed no further encouragement.

The Gallery of Shorthand officially opened on 30 September 2010.

Featured prominently in the grand rotunda of this Long Island federal courthouse some 40 miles east of New York City, as you enter the Courthouse the Gallery is immediately to your right.



The Gallery is open to the public for free viewing during usual court hours. Tours are available by prearrangement with Gallery Director Dom Tursi – a fulltime court reporter in the same building.



The Gallery of Shorthand relates the history of one of mankind's oldest professions.

Yes, I know what you're thinking! But, you're wrong! There is more than one "world's oldest profession"...and, all of us, the modern day scribes are members of it. Writers of Shorthand!

There are 10 Epochs displayed in the Gallery.

Epoch I begins with the earliest form of written expression in what is now called Iraq in 3500 BC. The Sumerians came to realize that any important thought should be preserved.

Epoch II starts in 206 BC in China. The Chinese had a different reason for inventing faster and faster ways of writing. Apparently, they wanted to capture confessions after arrests as quickly as possible and needed fast ways of writing down what the accused was saying and sign it off

Epoch III in the Gallery is Roman shorthand. This epoch starts in 63 BC, when Cicero invented the first system of short writing as used by his slave Tiro, who essentially was Cicero's reporter.

Epoch IV starts in 500 AD with the abolition of shorthand, as during the Middle Ages it was considered cryptography, diabolical, black magic and witchcraft.

Epoch V starts in 1588, and is known as "The vital 250 years". This was when Timothy Bright invented his system of shorthand.

Epoch VI is "the revolutionary system of shorthand", based on phonetics when, in 1837, a 24 year old English teacher by the name of Isaac Pitman

published Stenographic Sound-Hand. This system, was later renamed Phonography, Writing by Sound or simply Pitman Shorthand.

Epoch VII is about the proliferation of shorthand in Europe. England, Germany, Italy and France.

Epoch VIII looks at the proliferation of shorthand in America.

Epoch IX brings us closer to today with mechanised shorthand.

Epoch X however, brings us right up to date with sophisticated electronic shorthand machines, specially designed computer software and state-of-the-art wireless and internet technology.

This includes Realtime Reporting (instantaneous translation of the spoken word back into the written word);

Closed Captioning (subtitles on the TV); and

CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) for deaf and hard of hearing people. In the UK we call it VSTTR Verbatim Speech-to-Text Reporting.

The full text of Dom Tursi's research may be found on his website -

<http://www.galleryofshorthand.org/history.html>

- as my talk on my visit is merely an overview.

On 30 July 2015 it wasn't too long before others arrived and we sat down in the left-hand side of the foyer and Dom spoke to us about his Gallery which was on the opposite side of the main entrance.



Believed to be the only museum of its kind, The Gallery uses more than 30 steno machines, 50 books, and 20 pictorial illustrations and artefact replicas to remind what has largely been taken for granted: the role of shorthand in the preservation of thought, and the front-row seats occupied by shorthand artisans at events which have shaped history. Open to the public during normal court hours, admission is free.

Lunch was laid on and then there was a surprise. The Judge that Dom had said was coming down to talk to us had, instead, invited us into his Chambers.

This is Judge Joseph F Bianco who was appointed as a United States District Judge in the Eastern District of New York by President George W. Bush on 3 January 2006.

Judge Bianco spoke to us about the museum and, of course, Dom Tursi, but what was most fascinating for me was that the judge then spoke about the fact that nearly each week of the school year, he invites classes of schoolchildren to visit his courtroom and, indeed, he also accommodates them his Chambers. They are usually fifth graders, 10-year-olds. Therefore, we were a little older and larger than his usual audience.

The judge, appearing very relaxed without his gown, doesn't just talk to them about the court and the law, but he gets them interacting with each other by taking on the parts of the prosecuting and defence counsel, the judge and jury, and by role play, re-enacting such well-known things as Romeo and Juliet. I am sure that he has inspired many students to not only keep on the straight and narrow, but also to enter the legal profession.

At the end of the session the students are given a “gavel” a pencil with two erasers on the end. We too were given them. A lovely memento.



Most people just get to spend an hour at the Gallery. I spent over half a day there travelling to and from in the luxury of a stretched limo and in the company of like-minded professional reporters. It was a wonderful day out and I recommend The Gallery of Shorthand to anyone who is in the area.

Mary Sorene

Chair

12 December 2015

Some Posters from the Museum:

 *The Preservation of Thought* 

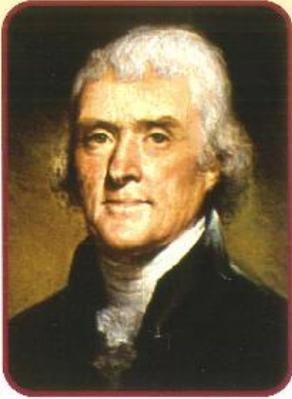
If government deliberation is to be remembered, revised, or acted upon, it must first be recorded.
Thomas Jefferson

The affairs of a society, its organizations and governmental bodies, can be scrutinized only when its discussions are memorialized in an accurate and impartial writing.

This timeless truth led to the creation of written language in 3500 BC. It compelled Julius Caesar in 59 AD to order that the deliberations of the Roman Senate be written. And in 1873, reversing their practice of secret meetings, the United States Senate engaged official reporters to transcribe debates – preserved in The Congressional Record.

This same powerful tenet is fulfilled every day in the courts of America as shorthand reporters capture every word of proceedings for appellate and other review.

The Gallery of Shorthand celebrates shorthand reporters, who preserve the rhetoric of society from a front-row seat at everyday and historic events, and honors those who entrust them with that solemn duty.



THE GALLERY OF SHORTHAND
Alfonse M. D'Amato Federal Courthouse
100 Federal Plaza – Central Islip, New York 11722
631.712.7108
Dominick M. Tursi, Director



How They Do That

SOME OF THE MAGIC REVEALED



They occupy front row seats at court and other proceedings, yet are hardly noticed. They write every word spoken, yet their fingers barely seem to move on their strange machine. Poets have exalted them. Doctors have analyzed them.

COURT REPORTING

*A Neuropsychologist's Explanation
Taken from actual testimony in 2008*

Q. Why do you say our brains are a miracle that needs to be protected?

A. If you use as an example the court reporter who is writing my words, this is a miracle in progress, happening right before your eyes. Let me explain what it is she does. As I am speaking, the information comes in through her ear, into her temporal lobe, and logs itself into the language center. She must comprehend what I'm saying.

Then it has to get rerouted to the prefrontal cortex, where she has to be able to hold the information because, as you see, I am continuously talking. She has to analyze it, integrate it, and synthesize it. Then it has to go back to the cerebellum.



After executing all this, she has to convert my words into those little, squiggly court reporting hieroglyphics. In other words, she has to convert it into a different language.

She's sitting here, and I'm probably talking too fast for her, but she's able to do this simultaneously. Seamlessly.

The brain's white matter allows her to reroute all of this information simultaneously without effort.

No other animal on the planet can do this. That's why I believe court reporters will never be replaced, because no technology could replace the beauty of that brain and the miracle of that brain. We take our brains for granted.

And that's why your brain should always be protected and you should take care of it.

ODE TO A SHORTHAND WRITER

Written to his Amanuensis
By Decimus Magnus Ausonius
Noted 4th Century Roman Poet



"COME, YOUNG AND FAMOUS
REPORTER, PREPARE THE TABLETS ON
WHICH YOU EXPRESS WITH SIMPLE
DOTS WHOLE SPEECHES AS RAPIDLY
AS OTHERS WOULD TRACE ONE
SINGLE WORD.

"I DICTATE VOLUMES, AND MY PRONUNCIATION
IS AS RAPID AS HAIL; YET YOUR EAR MISSES
NOTHING, AND THE PAGES ARE NOT FILLED.

"YOUR HAND, OF WHICH THE MOVEMENT IS
HARDLY PERCEPTIBLE, FLIES OVER THE WAXY
SURFACE; AND ALTHOUGH MY TONGUE RUNS
OVER LONG PHRASES, YOU FIX MY IDEAS ON
YOUR TABLETS LONG BEFORE THEY ARE
WORDED.

"I WISH I COULD THINK AS RAPIDLY AS YOU
WRITE! TELL ME, THEN, SINCE YOU PRECEDE MY
IMAGINATION - TELL ME WHO HAS BETRAYED
ME? WHO HAS REVEALED TO YOU WHAT I WAS
MEDITATING? HOW MANY THEFTS DOES YOUR
HAND MAKE IN MY SOUL! WHAT IS THIS NEW
ORDER OF THINGS? HOW IS IT THAT WHAT MY
MOUTH HAS NOT YET EXPRESSED HAS ALREADY
ARRIVED AT YOUR EARS?

"NO ART, NO PRECEPT CAN HAVE GIVEN YOU
THIS TALENT, SINCE NO OTHER HAND HAS THE
CELERITY OF YOURS; AND YOU CERTAINLY OWE
TO NATURE AND THE GODS A GIFT WHICH
ALLOWS YOU TO KNOW WHAT I AM GOING TO
PRONOUNCE; AND TO THINK, AS IT WERE,
WITH MYSELF."

As Exhibited At THE GALLERY OF SHORTHAND

Allison M. D'Amico US District Courtroom • 100 Federal Plaza • Central Islip, New York 11722 • Dominick M. Turo, Director • 651-712-6108 • September 2010 • www.GalleryofShorthand.org



A New Look at an Old Art

PEN SHORTHAND



FAMOUS PERSONS WHO WROTE SHORTHAND

Shorthand has been used as a way of quickly writing important thoughts in government, business, and legal settings, as well as for education purposes. It has been used by dictators to taking notes by relations to memorialize concepts, university students during lectures, and by judges and lawyers taking notes of trials.

Because fast-writing skill is achieved by few, it has also been a fascination for practitioners and observers of the art. Here are some noted persons who have used shorthand through the ages.

EMPERORS

Titus Carus - *Vespasianus Augustus* (79-81BC)
Julian Caesar (100-66 BC)
Caesar Augustus (63BC-14 AD)

HEADS OF CHURCH AND STATE

St. Augustine (400 AD) - First Archbishop of Canterbury
Lord Cheshamford - Student of John Byson (1643-1706)
Duke of Devonshire - Student of John Byson (1643-1706)
Lord Casway - Student of John Byson (1643-1706)
James F. Byrnes - US Secretary of State (1945-47)
Timothy Pickens - US Secretary of State (1799)

US PRESIDENTS

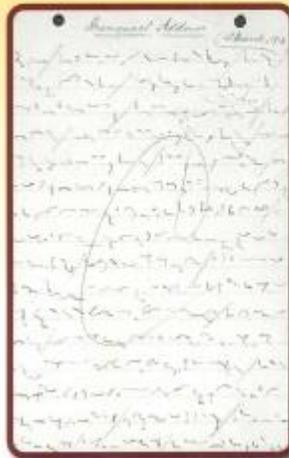
James Madison - Used shorthand notes in record minutes of the 1787 Constitutional Convention. Translated these into writing.
Thomas Jefferson - Also used shorthand during the 1787 Constitutional Convention.
John Quincy Adams - Used shorthand while studying law.
Woodrow Wilson - Wrote his Inaugural Address in shorthand.

DIARISTS

Samuel Pepys (journalized Pepys) - Charted his daily life from 1669-69, using Shorthand's Telegraphic. Filled 5 volumes plus an index.
Judge Samuel Sewall - Salem, Waltham trial judge. Nicknamed The American Pepys because he kept a daily life diary from 1674-77 and 1685-1729.
William Byrd - Founded Richmond, Virginia. Used Mason's La Pheme Volume to diary his life in three stages: 1798-1713, 1717-1721, 1725-1743.

ENTERTAINMENT

Charles Dickens - Author *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *Christmas Carol*. Used Cassey's system. Worked as a shorthand Parliamentary reporter in the 1830s.
Daniel Defoe - Author of *Robinson Crusoe*.
George Bernard Shaw - Nobel Prize and Oscar winner. Music writer.
Laurie R. King - Best-selling writer in shorthand more of his 60 plays.
Billy Rose - Lyricist - *Perfection* - *Footloose*.
Speed contest champion at age 13 (Gagg Shorthand).
Harvey Keitel - Actor - *Once Upon a Time*.
Cesar Rogers (NY Central Canal, New Garden) for 30 years.
Michelle Pfeiffer - Actress.
Studied court reporting at Golden West College, California.
Susan Hagler - Founder of Herbold.
Certified Court Reporter. Reported medical malpractice depositions.



Woodrow Wilson's own Shorthand notes of his Inaugural Address



FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT PEN WRITERS

Doc Wilson - *Sans Verbatim Shik-A-Matic* Writer.
It can take many days, short handwritten - typically referred to as pen shorthand writers - were at least as competent as machine shorthand writers. Their marks were well shaped and cultured, worked in the same areas that machine writers do today, and achieved incredible results of speed and accuracy. The major obstacle to the longevity of these practitioners is that it took about seven times longer than with machine shorthand to achieve volumes reporting speed. Also an issue was pen writing fatigue.

Thomas Lloyd, regarded by his peers as the Father of American Shorthand, used a British shorthand system called *Telegraphic* to report George Washington's Inaugural Address. In 1793 Mr. Lloyd became the first reporter in the US Congress.
Read more about Thomas Lloyd in Legends of Shorthand.

Dr. Isaac Pitman was 24 years old when he published his revolutionary shorthand system. Queen Victoria longed for his contribution to the shorthand world.
Read more about Dr. Isaac Pitman in Legends of Shorthand.

Dr. John Robert Gregg was 21 years old when he published his system, destined to become the most used in America. Rider College of New Jersey conferred on him a Doctor of Letters degree.
Read more about Dr. John Robert Gregg in Legends of Shorthand.

Nathan Bohlen, considered the greatest Pitman writer of all time, generated such extraordinary respect among the bench and the bar in the New York area that the legal community considered all shorthand reporters women.
Five-time National Shorthand Speed Champion (1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1922), he was the only pen writer in the 1914 speed contest to beat machine writers - at 280 wpm. Mr. Bohlen appeared in New York City in Nassau Supreme Court and in Nassau County Court.
Read more about Nathan Bohlen in Legends of Shorthand.

Charles Lee Stone, then 18 years old, was regarded as the last minute to report candidate Woodrow Wilson's address was New Jersey Sunday School rally. After reading the manuscript, Governor Wilson - himself a shorthand writer - was astounded at Stone's incredible accuracy, and asked him to stay for the rest of his campaign. Mr. Stone became President Wilson's personal stenographer for the majority of his presidency. Mr. Stone, also a successful electrician, socialist, author of "Wayward" in 1908. He later became a New York City Supreme Court Reporter, and was NORA Speed Contest Champion in 1923 and 1924.
Read more about Charles Lee Stone in Legends of Shorthand.

Billy Rose entered the Metropolitan Championship of New York at 15 years of age. The night before the competition, he practiced his write while watching. The next morning he discovered that he could not grip his pen to write. Unlabeled, "Boy" found a piece of the right size and shape, cut a hole through the points, put his pen there, and won the championship.
Read more about Billy Rose in Legends of Shorthand.

Martin J. DePrez entered his first national speed contest at the age of 15 - believed to be the only high school student to do so. Four years later he became National Shorthand Speed Champion, achieving an "Amazing Record by Accuracy, Making five three fives in Ten minutes 3441 Words," one over each on the 200, 240, and 280 wpm tests, and beating two of shorthand's major contemporary geniuses: Nathan Bohlen and Charles L. Stone. Mr. DePrez, a Westchester County, NY, Supreme Court Reporter, followed his 1925 championship by winning in 1926 and 1927.
Read more about Martin DePrez in Legends of Shorthand.

During the Newburgh War Crisis Trial, US Gagg writes on side by side with machine writer, producing daily copy for all countries.

The first reporter appointed to the federal court system was pen writer, Walter Hoffmann, of Lindbergh baby-kidnapping trial fame, used Gregg shorthand during his first five years and then converted to machine shorthand, becoming the first reporter to use a stenotype in federal court.
Read more about Walter Hoffmann in Legends of Shorthand.

Proceedings of both Houses of Congress were written exclusively by pen writers for 206 years. Stenographic was admitted in 1974 - appointed coincidentally by Gregg writer Frome Spitz, then Chief Reporter of Debates, US House of Representatives.

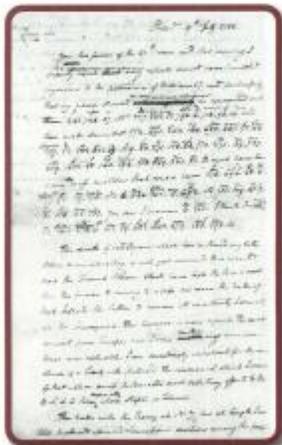
Enduring Timeline of Pen Shorthand

• In the 1840s, some of the best of pen writers existed in the US - most using Gregg Shorthand. These included secretaries, reporters, students, and others who used shorthand for everyday writing.

• By the mid 1900s there were fewer than 100 volume pen reporters.

• A 2018 *Wall Street Journal* story highlights a shorthand reporter's rise to fame as he developed a web-based stenotype just in time for Gregg shorthand notes.

• A revised Pitman system is still used in Court Britain.



James Madison's Ciphers



Poster showing Dom Tursi, in his younger days, at a speed contest:



Shorthand Speed Milestones



Remarkable and Interesting Accomplishments of Shorthand Speed Writers
Read more about these () writers in Legends of Shorthand, exhibited elsewhere in the Gallery*

ANCIENT SHORTHAND SPEED CONTESTS
First Shorthand Speed Champion - c75 AD
 Titus Caesar (Titus Fabius Sabinius Vespasianus, 11th of the 12 Caesars)

Second Shorthand Speed Champion - 1720
 250 wpm John Byroon (London, England)

MODERN SHORTHAND SPEED CONTESTS
First Shorthand Speed Champion - 1888
 270 wpm Isaac S. Dement & Fred Island (1st Place Tie)

First NCRA Speed Champion
 280 wpm Willard B. Bottoms 1909

PERFECT SPEED CONTEST PAPERS

220 Literary	Diane Kaynack	1986
	Mark Kalingbury	1997
230 Legal Opinion	Chuck Boyer	1985
280 Q&A	J. Edward Varallo*	1975 (NCRA Speed Contest)
	Dominick Tursi*	1975 (NY Speed Contest)
	Dale Varallo	1980 (PA Speed Contest)
	Candace Brasick	1994 (NCRA Speed Contest)

FASTEST RECORDED SPEEDS

June 1981 Dominick Tursi*
 5' @300 wpm, 98.40%, Great Gorge, NJ

July 30, 2004 Mark Kalingbury
 1' @360 wpm, 97.23%, Chicago, IL

SAME NUMBER OF ERRORS ON EACH CONTEST SEGMENT
 Arnold & William Cohen* - 1953
 220 Literary, 5 errors - 260 Jury Charge, 4 errors - 280 Q&A, 2 errors

FEWEST TOTAL ERRORS
(Tracking different contest formats and setting new records)

1925	Martin J. Dupraw*	- Three total errors (99.91%)
1926	Martin J. Dupraw*	- Eight total errors (99.789%)
1958 & 1960	Nathaniel Weiss	- Eight total errors (99.789%)
1975	J. Edward Varallo*	- Six Total Errors (99.82%)
1994	Candace Brasick	- Three total errors (99.91%)

MOST NCRA SPEED CHAMPIONSHIPS
 Diane Kaynack - Seven
 1978, 1981, 1982, 1985, 1988, 1989, 1992

FIRST FEMALE NCRA SPEED CHAMPION
 Alberta Boster - 1965

FIRST AMERICAN INTERSTENO SPEED CHAMPION
 Kaula Wallin Boyer - 1993

ONLY NCRA SPEED CHAMPION IN FOUR DIFFERENT DECADES
 J. Edward Varallo*
 1974, 1975, 1976, 1986, 1996, 2006

FIRST US COURT REPORTER ASSOCIATION SPEED CHAMPION
 Mindi L. Calchici - 1988

FIRST STATE SPEED CHAMPION
 Walter Seiler - 1913 - Kansas

GREATEST PHONOGRAPHY (PITMAN) SHORTHAND WRITER
 Nathan Behrin* - Speed Champion 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1922

GREATEST GREGG SHORTHAND WRITER
 Martin J. Dupraw* - Speed Champion 1925 (age 19), 1926, 1927
 "Probably the fastest pen writer who ever lived" - Mary Louise Gilman
 Set new records of accuracy under each of two different test formats

GREATEST "NATURAL" SHORTHAND WRITER
 Billy Rose* [Yes, THAT Billy Rose]
 "The greatest natural writer in the history of shorthand" - John R. Gregg,
 inventor of Gregg Shorthand




Shorthand contests are of ancient origin. It has been written of Titus Caesar (69-81 AD), "He was capable of writing shorthand with the greatest rapidity." Considering the Romans' zest for competitions of all kinds, it should not be surprising that shorthand was among them.

The first modern shorthand contest was conducted in 1887, and staged at Lake George, New York. There was no winner. In 1909 the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) made speed contests part of each annual convention. Interestingly, the first of these was also held at Lake George. NCRA shorthand speed championship competitions continue to this day.



In 1922 new records of achievement were set. Ninety-nine percent in combined averages on three readings became the bar to which all future contestants would aspire. In 1958 a new speed format, used today, was established.



Speed championships are awarded to the writer with the highest combined accuracy on 5-minute readings of three different types of material: 220 words per minute Literary (prose), 240 wpm Legal Opinion, and 280 wpm 2-voice Question & Answer simulating examination of a witness. Only the two world speed contest records consisted of one reading.



As Exhibited At THE GALLERY OF SHORTHAND
 Alliance of America 115 District Courthouse • 100 Federal Plaza • Central Bldg., New York 10722 • Donald M. Tursi, Director • 631-712-6388 • September 2010 • www.GalleryofShorthand.org