

Beth Watson Foulk

Beth was born and raised in Wichita, Kansas, and currently lives in Lee's Summit, Missouri, a suburb of Kansas City. She has been interested in family history since grade school. Her dad, who built a small family tree that Beth found fascinating, is credited with infecting her with the genealogy bug. Without the exposure to his interests and work, she would never have started down the genealogy road. Beth's ascent into full-blown "junkie-dom" occurred in 1998 when she learned that genealogy software could build a family tree database.

Beth's research and speaking focuses on research American Research East of the Mississippi and pre-1865. . . The lectures tend to focus on land, military, and migration-related (journals, diaries, and other manuscripts) record groups. "I enjoy most subjects that relate to a specific period in history. I like topics that lend themselves to dovetailing a narrative about a little known time in American history with the genealogy records that tell the story from an individual perspective."

Beth began teaching genealogy classes when the Midwest Genealogy Center, just ten minutes from her home, opened in June 2008. "These classes served as an invaluable incubator for me to tune my skills and refine my classes in a very compressed period of time." She currently speaks throughout the greater Kansas City metro area and regionally at Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska state events. She hopes to extend her reach geographically and to the national level over time. She is scheduled to present her first webinar for the Los Angeles Genealogy Society in September 2013. Beth finds speaking engagements by watching for calls for papers in GeneaPress and GeneaBloggers, but the most productive avenue has been proactively contacting organizations and introducing herself.

Beth recalls a unique speaking engagement at an old fashioned train depot. "This particular genealogy society meets there monthly and uses half of the depot as a meeting space and library. I remember the "stage" was a desk with a half-podium, the projector sat on a stack of copy paper boxes, the computer sat on a side table, and the projected image was viewed on one wall. I barely moved for fear of knocking something over or unplugging something."

Beth has been a member of GSG for a few years and also belongs to APG, the Heartland APG Chapter, NEHGS, and NGS. She holds an MBA in marketing.

Beth can be found online at <http://www.genealogydecoded.com> and http://www.genealogydecoded.com/ahha_moments_for_genealogists_blog.

Editor's Note: Call-Out Box:

"I highly recommend using a remote clicker to advance PowerPoint screens. You never know where the computer is going to be stationed—back of the room, middle of the audience (surrounded by chairs), or even in a closet. To be unleashed from the computer and free to walk around has made all the difference in my presentations."