

Gary R. Toms



In nearly 50 years of involvement in genealogy, Gary R. Toms has conducted personal research projects, held diverse offices in local, state, national, international, and lineage societies. Elected offices have included President of the Missouri State Genealogical Association, Vice-President of American Family Records Association, director for the Federation of Genealogical Societies. He also edited or co-edited four genealogical periodicals, and has written material for publication in periodicals and in book form.

After completing a B.A. in History at the University of Missouri – Kansas City, he worked in many capacities in the museum/historic preservation field including tour guide, exhibit specialist, cataloguer, and site administrator. He completed a career of 25 years in museum work, including over half of that time as the county's Historic Curator, administrator of five museums and attendant programs and activities. He left that to work full time in the field of genealogy. He was employed by a genealogical publishing and services firm before working on his own for several years as a professional researcher. For the past 10 years, he has been a Genealogy Reference Assistant at the Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Missouri (formerly the Genealogy and Local History Branch of Mid-Continent Public Library).

Beginning with his first public speaking presentation on genealogy in 1967, Gary has addressed numerous local audiences on historical and genealogical topics. In the early 1980s, he appeared as a guest on several area radio and television programs, discussing local history. From 1989 to the present, he has presented genealogical classes and programs to audiences in 11 states.

—William R. Gann, February 2010