Debra Goodrich Bisel to Discuss
Kansas Forts and Bases: Sentinels on the Prairie

On Tuesday, January 27 at 6:30 p.m., the National Archives at Kansas City will host Debra Goodrich Bisel who will discuss her book Kansas Forts and Bases: Sentinels on the Prairie. A free light reception will precede the lecture at 6:00 p.m.

The relationship between Kansas and the science of war is ingrained, consistent and evident, yet it seems antithetical to the quiet, conservative farmer who is the quintessential image of the state. It is not. The same values created both, and both created Kansas. From early exploration of America, Bleeding Kansas, the Civil War and the Plains Indian wars to the world wars and the modern era, the forts and bases of the Sunflower State have been central to America’s defense. Beginning with Fort de Cavagnial in 1744 through to the defunct fields of Cold War missile silos, Sentinels on the Prairie provides a guide to the forts and posts throughout Kansas. Copies of Bisel’s book will be available for purchase and signing after the program.

To make a reservation for this free program call 816-268-8010 or email kansascity.educate@nara.gov. Requests for ADA accommodations must be submitted five business days prior to events.

“Say it With Snap!” Exhibition to Close on January 7

“Say it With Snap!” highlights historic work place posters created by the Chicago-based Mather & Company in the 1920s. These posters answered the needs of a rapidly changing American work force through the use of dynamic color and catchy slogans designed to cajole, coax, and even admonish employees to perform at their best. The exhibit will close on Wednesday, January 7, 2015.

“Say it With Snap!” is co-curated and organized by Dulce Maria Roman, Curatorial Chair and Curator of Modern Art at the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida in Gainesville; and Jon Williams, Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Prints and Photographs at the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, DE. The exhibition a program of ExhibitsUSA, a national division of Mid-America Arts Alliance with The Missouri Arts Council and The National Endowment for the Arts.
January Gems for Genealogists

The National Archives at Kansas City will offer three free genealogy workshop in January. Coming to America: Passenger Arrival Lists will be held on Thursday, January 15; Becoming a U.S. Citizen: A Look at Naturalization Records will be held on Thursday, January 22; and Alien Case Files will be held on Thursday, January 29. Please note all workshops will be held from 10:00—11:30 a.m. at the National Archives, 400 West Pershing Road, Kansas City, Missouri.

Workshop Descriptions:

January 15 - Coming to America: Passenger Arrival Lists
Ship passenger arrival lists have been created for different purposes throughout history, but can provide useful information about your immigrant ancestors. This course will cover types of ship passenger arrival lists, dates, forms, and search techniques.

January 22 – Becoming a U.S. Citizen: A Look at Naturalizations Records
Throughout U.S. history immigration and naturalization laws have changed with the political climate. As a result researching historic naturalization records can be challenging. Learn about the paper trail left by those seeking citizenship.

January 29 – Alien Case Files (A-Files)
Learn about the Alien Files (A-Files), and how to complete a successful request. The A-Files contain U.S. immigration documents generated and collected since the mid-20th century with a wealth of data, including visas, photographs, applications, affidavits, correspondence, and more.

To make a reservation for these free workshops, please call 816-268-8000 or email kansascity.archives@nara.gov. Requests for ADA accommodations must be submitted five business days prior to events.

Right A petition of naturalization for Nicolina Reres, includes a photo. National Archives at Kansas City, Record Group 21, Records of the U.S. District Court for the Western (Kansas City) Division of the Western District of Missouri, Petitions for Naturalization, 1909-1991 (National Archives Identifier 570549) Petition of Nicolina Reres, #10471.
Hidden Treasures from the Stacks
Iowa Students Protest Goes to Supreme Court

Housed in the rotunda of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., are three documents often referred to as the Charters of Freedom. One of them is known as the Bill of Rights. The National Archives at Kansas City holds many court cases which have challenged the Constitutional Amendments that make up the Bill of Rights. Highlighting these court documents in preparation for the 225th Anniversary of the Bill of Rights will be the major focus of the National Archives for the next two years.

One such notable case found at the National Archives at Kansas City is *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*. The case, originally filed in 1965, was eventually argued in front of the Supreme Court. It became a landmark case regarding the civil rights of students. The First Amendment, specifically Freedom of Speech, was the impetus for the lawsuit.

Noted within the court documents we find that in December 1965 a group of adults and students met in Des Moines, Iowa to plan a public protest against the Vietnam War. They decided to wear black armbands from December 16 to New Year’s Day as a peaceful way to express their opinions. On December 14, the officials of the involved schools enacted a rule stating “any student wearing an armband would be asked to remove the armband, and the refusal to remove it would result in suspension.”

Mary Beth Tinker and Christopher Eckhardt arrived at their respective schools, Warren Harding Junior High and Roosevelt High School, on December 16 and were suspended after refusing to remove their black armbands. Mary Beth Tinker’s brother, John, wore his armband the next day to North High School and was suspended as well. (In addition, two other Tinker children, Paul and Hope, ages 8 and 11 respectively, also wore armbands to school.) The Tinker and Eckhardt families sued the school district in the U.S. District Court for violation of the right to free speech under the First Amendment.

The District Court dismissed the case and agreed with the school district’s actions based on their claim that the armbands would have caused a disruption at the school. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit upheld the decision of the District Court. In 1968, the Tinkers and Eckhardts appealed their case to

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the Supreme Court of the United States, which issued a decision in 1969. Many questions had to be considered by the Supreme Court. Were the armbands a form of symbolic speech protected by the First Amendment? Does the constitutional right of free speech protect the symbolic speech of public school students? Does the school have the power to restrict speech to maintain discipline in the classroom?

By a 7-2 vote, the Supreme Court decision favored the Tinkers. The Court did not agree that the Des Moines school district proved the armbands had caused “substantial interference with schoolwork or discipline.” The Supreme Court also pointed out that the school had allowed other political symbols, such as campaign buttons, to be worn by students. Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas wrote this often quoted statement: “It can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.”

The original U.S. District Court case of Tinker v. Des Moines is housed at the National Archives in Kansas City, as a part of Record Group 21, Records of the District Courts of the United States. For more information about the case visit the National Archives online catalog at http://research.archives.gov/description/7788707.

Right: The list of plaintiffs’ witnesses that would eventually testify in the Tinker case about their actions in regards to protesting the Vietnam War. National Archives at Kansas City, Record Group 21, Records of the District Courts of the United States, U.S. District Court for the Central (Des Moines) Division of the Southern District of Iowa, Civil and Criminal Order Journals, 1967-1999 (National Archives Identifier: 7788707), John F. Tinker et. al. v. The Des Moines Independent Community School District, Civil Case No. 7-1810.