



**Trail of Tears Association, Tennessee Chapter Newsletter
November 2015**

CHAPTER MEETING: Saturday, November 14, 2015 1:00 pm Central time, 2:00 pm Eastern time

Signs for the Northern Route of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail will be dedicated Saturday November 14 at 1:00 pm eastern, 12 noon central standard time, at the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park, Blythe Ferry Road, Birchwood, Tennessee. For more information about the Cherokee Removal Park, visit their webpage at <http://www.cherokeeremoval.org/>.

A meeting of the Tennessee Chapter, Trail of Tears Association will be held approximately 1 hour following the sign dedication in the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park meeting room. Instead of our usual pot luck lunch, members are invited to bring finger foods. The Cherokee Removal Park is located at 6800 Blythe Ferry Road, Birchwood, TN on the southeast side of the Tennessee River off Highway 60.

CURRENT LIST OF BOARD MEMBERS, NATIONAL DIRECTORS, WEBSITE EDITOR

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TNTOTA WEBSITE: www.TNTOTA.com

CHAPTER REPORT FOR THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

(Note from Vicki- Each year the state chapters give reports at the annual conference. Below is the report prepared by President Lee Trevino and presented at the conference by National Director Wally Leary.)

The Tennessee Chapter held two (2) membership meetings thus far in 2015, and we are working on a date for November.

March 14, 2015 was the occasion of the annual election of officers. The meeting followed a pot-luck luncheon at Lou's Chapel, Martin Springs, Tennessee. The slate of nominated officers were elected by majority vote as follows: Lee Trevino, President; Shirley Lawrence, Vice President; Floyd Ayers, Treasurer; Carolyn Jones, Secretary; Cleata Townsend, National Director.

Following a report from Cleata Townsend on the possible purchase of Brown's Tavern, a Trail of Tears National Historic Trail Landmark, by Cornerstone, and due to the significance of this site to the Trail of Tears, the membership voted to pledge One Thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) to support the purchase.

The Tennessee State Museum curator, Rex Weeks, requested the counsel of the Tennessee Chapter, Trail of Tears Association on a project within "The Age of Jackson" gallery. Vicki Rozema and Melba Eads volunteered to represent TNTOTA. They subsequently consulted with and submitted their recommendations for the exhibit to Mr. Weeks.

The Board of the Tennessee Chapter met on June 6 and again on July 11, 2015, at Monteagle, Tennessee. Vicki Rozema and Patrick Cummins were appointed by the Board to fill two open State Director positions resulting from resignations.

A membership meeting July 25, 2015, was held at the Warren County Administrative Building, McMinnville, Tennessee. Patrick Cummins, State Director, presented a program on "The History of the 1823 Nashville Toll Bridge". Shirley Lawrence gave a report on the Fort Armistead Charrette.

Three TNTOTA outstanding service awards were presented by President Trevino. Former TNTOTA member, Vicky Garland, received an award for her research and documentation of the Bell and Bengie Routes in Giles, Lawrence, and Maury Counties and for her work in establishing National Historic Trail signs along the Bell Route from Pulaski to the Wayne County line. TNTOTA Charter Member, Carlos Wilson, received an award for his many years of research and documentation of the Taylor Route and for his role in establishing National Historic Trail signs along the Taylor Route in Hamilton and Rhea Counties. TNTOTA Charter Member, Doris Tate Trevino, received an award for her many years of contributions to TNTOTA as a researcher, educator, fund raiser and Board Member throughout the history of the Tennessee Chapter.

TNTOTA invites you to drop by our booth at the 34th annual NAIA Tennessee Powwow on Oct 16, 17, & 18 at Long Hunter State Park, Nashville, Tennessee. <http://www.naiatn.org/powwow>

The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail / 1823 Nashville Toll Bridge site on the Cumberland River at Nashville, TN

On August 17th, 2015, members of TDOT Historic Preservation Staff, TDOT Archaeology Division Management, NPS Cultural Resource Specialist Mike Taylor, and TN Chapter State Director Pat Cummins, met in Nashville Tennessee at TDOT's downtown offices to discuss the 1823 Nashville Toll Bridge / Trail of Tears interpretive management plan currently under development by the Tennessee Department of Transportation, and The National Park Service. Recommended revisions to the first draft of the management plan were discussed between those present, and noted. TDOT Historic Preservation Staff management stated that they anticipate having the final draft of the long term management and interpretive plan completed for the bridge abutment site by the end of October 2015.

The National Park Service made the recommendation that the Tennessee Department of Transportation / Historic Preservation Division should now work directly with the leadership of the National Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association, and representatives of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma to complete the Trail of Tears interpretive management plan for this historic Trail of Tears crossing point over the Cumberland River. The National Park Service will, however, of course still be available to all those involved for consultation when needed or otherwise requested. Hopes are that the 1823 Nashville Toll Bridge site will be officially signed with official National Park Service Trail of Tears National Historic Trail signage and a permanent public viewing platform erected at the site within the next 6 months to 1 year.

Historic Brown's Tavern Saved by Cornerstones, Inc.

Cornerstones, Inc. is under contract to purchase historic Brown's Tavern in Chattanooga, Tenn. Cornerstones, Inc., Chattanooga's only nonprofit historic preservation organization, is currently under contract to purchase Brown's Tavern. The historic log structure is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is believed to have been built in 1803, before the founding of the City of Chattanooga.

John Brown, owner and operator of Brown's Ferry, was half-Cherokee and actively part of a Cherokee tribe. Brown played an important role in history as a captain in The War of 1812, and as brother-in-law to John Ross, who founded Ross Landing in 1815. Ross Landing became the start of Chattanooga in 1838. John Brown later joined the Trail of Tears with his family, and returned back to Chattanooga shortly before his death.

The purchase of Brown's Tavern is Cornerstones, Inc.'s second outright purchase in its 21 year history, and the first outside of downtown's urban core. "The architectural and historical significance was too important to lose, so Cornerstones consciously stepped outside of downtown to protect this property," said Ann Gray, executive director of Cornerstones, Inc. "Initially there was a very real threat as to whether this historic, two story log structure would be saved from demolition. Thankfully it was privately owned and maintained for almost 50 years."

Cornerstones, Inc. will place conservation and façade easements on the property to protect it from here on forward. Negotiations are under way to sell the property to a responsible owner who understands its historical significance, and has a background in preservation architecture. The prospective new owner is willing and able to renovate, restore and maintain it in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. "All structures, especially historic ones, need to be inhabited. The highest and best use for any structure is to have people in them," said Gray.

Cornerstones, Inc. was able to recognize the historical and preservational value of Brown's Tavern. By purchasing the property with their revolving fund, Cornerstones has insured the protection of this nationally significant property. Cornerstones, Inc. has a revolving fund that is used to save historical structures and relies heavily on donations. With the outright purchase of Brown's Tavern, funds have been depleted. Cornerstones, Inc. is asking for contributions to help continue to save Chattanooga's architectural heritage.

Cornerstones, Inc. is Chattanooga's only nonprofit historical preservation organization and has continually worked with the community to help save and preserve important historical buildings located in Chattanooga. The challenge falls to Cornerstones to keep watch, champion the maintenance and profitable use of historic structures, and when necessary, step in and participate in their preservation and revitalization. Additional information is located and can be found online or by calling 423-265-2825.

-- END OF CHAPTER REPORT TO NATIONAL --

2016 NATIONAL TRAIL OF TEARS CONFERENCE

Next year's national conference will be held Oct. 3-6 in Dalton, GA. The Georgia Chapter, who will host the conference, has already started planning the event by lining up some speakers and hotels. So mark your calendars for next year's conference!

PHOTOS FROM JULY MEMBERSHIP MEETING IN MCMINNVILLE



Left: Pat Cummins explains the history of the Nashville Toll Bridge to Al Johnson, Ken Dubke, and others who attended the membership meeting July 25 in McMinnville. **Right:** Chapter President Lee Trevino presents an award to his wife Doris Tate Trevino that was voted on by the TN Chapter board to show its appreciation for many years of dedicated service to the chapter. Plaques were also awarded to former president Vicky Garland and member Carlos Wilson for their many years of dedication to the chapter and their research and education on the Trail of Tears, but they could not attend the meeting.

MAP OF TRAIL OF TEARS ROUTES THROUGH TENNESSEE

On the last page of the newsletter, I have included a wonderful map of the main 1838 removal routes through Tennessee. The map was created by chapter treasurer Floyd Ayers and includes the names of many present-day towns through which the old roads passed. Please use the map for educational purposes only.

◆ Tennessee Events:

12th Annual Trail of Tears Walk, Lawrenceburg, TN, Saturday, November 7, 10 am CST

The 12th Annual TOT Walk will start at David Crockett State Park Shelter Number 1. Folks are welcome to join the group and walk the original trail bed that was walked in 1838. Hosted by Vicky Garland. For more information see the event's Facebook page.

Red Clay Cherokee Christmas Program, Cleveland, TN, Sunday December 13, 6:00 pm

This living history event includes a night of singing traditional songs, cooking over the fire, and a candlelight walk. For more information on the event, see <http://tnstateparks.com/events/details/cherokee-christmas-program>.

**EXCERPT FROM LETTER FROM LT. EDWARD DEAS TO GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT,
OCTOBER 22, 1838, JASPER, TN**

“It having been necessary, by the route we travel, to cross the Tennessee R[iver] three times, our progress thus far has been slow, but after crossing the Cumberland mountain our rate of travelling will be very different. This party being small, & taking into our consideration the number of Indians passing over the Missouri route-the dryness of the past season affecting the roads- the probability of ready supplies, all other circumstances; I have concluded that we had better pursue the route by Memphis, provided the people themselves are willing to do so. The latter must be more than 150 miles shorter, than the route through Missouri, and the cost thus saved would be far more than pay the extra expense of running round the Mississippi swamp by water, to Rock Row on the White River, should the road through the swamp be found in a bad state for wagons, upon our arrival at Memphis, which I can scarcely believe will be the case.” (From National Archives Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Letters Received, Roll 115.)

Note from Vicki: Lt. Deas led several detachments of emigrating Cherokees and Creeks to Indian Territory. This letter to General Scott, who was placed in charge of the Cherokee Removal by the War Department, was written from an encampment at Jasper, TN. This detachment, known as the Bell detachment, left from the Cherokee Agency at Charleston, TN on Oct. 11, 1838 and crossed the Tennessee River the first time at Ross’s Landing (present-day downtown Chattanooga.) The Bell detachment travelled separately from the other detachments under the management of John and Lewis Ross because the Cherokee who organized this detachment, John Bell, was a political opponent of John Ross and was a signer of the notorious 1835 Treaty of New Echota. This letter reveals one of the main reasons many of the other detachments of emigrating Cherokees took the longer and more circuitous northern route through Kentucky, Illinois, and Missouri: the swamps along the Mississippi River near Memphis. The series of New Madrid earthquakes that occurred in the winter of 1811-1812 resulted in lands on the Mississippi River becoming flooded and swampy, particularly on the western bank. A transcription of the entire letter can be found on the website of the Sequoyah Research Center at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock at www.ualr.edu.

MY THANKS to Floyd Ayers for allowing me to publish his map of the routes through Tennessee and to Doris and Lee Trevino for allowing me to publish the chapter report to National. Thanks also to Carolyn Jones, our tireless and hard-working chapter secretary for providing me with addresses of chapter members who do not have email and for information on the Nov. 14 chapter meeting. If you have any news that you feel is appropriate for the newsletter and that other members might be interested in, please send it to my email address at vickirozema@comcast.net.

