



**Trail of Tears Association, Tennessee Chapter Newsletter
January 2016**

2016 DUES ARE NOW DUE

All 2015 TNTOTA members should have received a membership/dues renewal form from the national TOTA office either via email or U.S. postal service. If you did not receive your form, you can email me at VickiRozema@comcast.net and I will send one via email OR for a hardcopy, contact Mike Killingsworth at the national office at MIKE KILLINGSWORTH, ADMINISTRATIVE PROJECT SPECIALIST, TRAIL OF TEARS ASSOCIATION, 1100 N. UNIVERSITY, STE 143, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72207, PH: (501) 666-9032.

Members whose dues are not received in Little Rock by March 1 will be dropped from membership and mailing lists by national. A payment of \$25 entitles you to national membership and membership in one state chapter. Each additional state chapter membership costs another \$10.

New TNTOTA chapter members who joined in 2015 are:

Individuals:

Kevin R. Triplett - Nashville, TN

Stephanie Steele - Tellico Plains, TN

Sherry Teal - Murfreesboro, TN

Ron Moore - Cleveland, TN

Jimmy A. McCullough - Mount Shasta, CA

Tabetha Jean Wright - Antioch, TN

Group: Native Cultural Circle - Clarksville, TN

Hope Mahalee Newberry - Chattanooga, TN

D. Jasal Morris - Cleveland, TN

Melissa Mortimer - Chattanooga, TN

Charlotte McCloskey - Big Canoe, GA

Danville Sweeton - Lebanon, TN

Leland Parrott - Pensacola, FL

Anyone who donates \$100 or more to national is listed as a TOTA Sponsor. We had a number of TNTOTA chapter members who were listed as sponsors in 2015 including Robert Courtland Wyland of Montoursville, PA; Patricia Edgar of Dahlonega, GA; Sarah H. Hill of Atlanta, GA; Daniel Littlefield of North Little Rock, AR; Charlotte McCloskey of Big Canoe, GA; Diane Parrish of Westport, CT; Maxwell Ramsey of Knoxville, TN; Lawrence Simmons of Metairie, LA; the Town of Coopertown, TN; and Friends of Moccasin Bend National Park in Chattanooga, TN.

A blue box on the dues renewal form can also be used to make a donation to a specific chapter. We hope that you will consider making a donation directly to the Tennessee chapter in 2016 by using the blue box. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Danville Sweeton of Lebanon, TN, who made a donation to the Tennessee chapter in 2015 and to all the folks who placed money in the tip jar at the NAIA powwow in Nashville to support the Tennessee chapter. \$128.50 was raised at the NAIA powwow through merchandise sales and the tip jar. THANK YOU DANVILLE AND NAIA SUPPORTERS!

JOHNS-KING HOUSE IN SMYRNA, TN LISTED ON "MOST-ENDANGERED" LIST

Thanks to the efforts of TNTOTA State Director and Native History Association President Pat Cummins, the Johns-King House in Rutherford County has been placed on the top ten list of most-endangered historic properties in Tennessee. The list is compiled annually by the Tennessee Preservation Trust to draw attention to historic sites that are worth preserving. The 1807 Johns-King house is a "Trail of Tears Witness House." Pat reports that the Jesse Bushyhead, Evan Jones, Moses Daniel, and Old Field detachments passed by the house in October 1838. These four detachments containing approximately 4,200 Cherokees followed the Rutherford County alternate route through Old Jefferson, bypassing

Murfreesboro en route to Nashville. For more information, see the *Daily News Journal* article at <http://www.dnj.com/story/news/2015/11/01/smyrna-home-endangered-historic-site/74884162/>.

BLYTHE FERRY SIGN DEDICATION, NOVEMBER 14, 2015

Signs for the Northern Route of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail were dedicated Saturday November 14, 2015 at the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park in Birchwood, Tennessee. A meeting of the Tennessee Chapter, Trail of Tears Association was held after the sign dedication. For more information about the Cherokee Removal Park, visit their webpage at <http://www.cherokeeremoval.org/>.



Blythe Ferry Sign Dedication – Left: Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park Superintendent Brad Bennett with TNTOTA President Lee Trevino and Vice President Shirley Lawrence in front of new sign unveiled by David Moore, President, Franklin County Historical Society. Right, center in hat: TNTOTA Treasurer Floyd Ayers reads from a diary account of the removal to attendees including David Moore and TNTOTA National and State Director Cleata Townsend, on far right.

TRAIL OF TEARS BOOTH AT NAIA POWWOW, NASHVILLE, OCTOBER 16-18, 2015

Floyd Ayers reports that hundreds visited the Trail of Tears booth at the NAIA powwow in Nashville. Thanks to Toye Heape and State Director Pat Cummins for providing the canopy and tables and for staffing the booth on both Saturday and Sunday. Floyd and Carolyn Jones helped on Saturday.



Left: Carolyn Jones and Floyd Ayers man the TN Trail of Tears booth at the NAIA powwow in Nashville in October 2015. **Right:** Grand entry at the NAIA powwow. Both photos provided by Toye Heape.

CHATTANOOGA TO REMOVE POLICE FIRING RANGE FROM MOCCASIN BEND

In November, the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* reported that the City of Chattanooga had begun work on a plan to remove the police firing range from Moccasin Bend. The firing range is adjacent to the Moccasin Bend National Archaeological District which contains a portion of the route travelled by the Bell and Drane detachments of Cherokees in 1838. The existence of the firing range has long been viewed by supporters of the park as a major obstacle in development of the park into a peaceful and educational place to visit. In addition to the Trail of Tears site, the park is an important Civil War and early Native American site. For more information, visit the Friends of Moccasin Bend website at <http://moccasinbendpark.org/>. The Friends of Moccasin Bend is a group member of the National Trail of Tears Association as well as TNTOTA.

LATINOS ON THE TRAIL OF TEARS

Vicki Rozema recently completed Phase I of a project for the Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service (NPS) and the Organization of American Historians (OAH) to research the presence of Latinos on the Cherokee Trail of Tears. The goal of Phase I was to produce an annotated bibliography of primary and secondary sources on the presence of people of Latino ancestry living in the Cherokee nation just prior to the 1838 removal, their possible presence on the Cherokee Trail of Tears, and to determine if enough sources existed to proceed to Phase 2 – a comprehensive research project on Latinos in the Cherokee Removal. Research for the bibliography turned up a lot of tantalizing information about the history of the Spanish in the Southeast and their contact with Southeast Indians, the presence of mixed-Spanish Cherokee families in Georgia and Alabama in the 1835 Cherokee census, and other Cherokees living in the Cherokee Nation who probably had some Latino ancestry including a large group living in Tennessee who emigrated before 1838. Additional research on these mixed-Spanish Cherokees will provide information on where they lived before and after removal, which detachments they travelled in, and how they fared on and after the Trail of Tears. These same resources will also shed light on the experiences of many other “non-elite” Cherokees who endured removal. Discussions about whether or not to proceed to Phase II will resume in early 2016. The original idea for the project was the brainchild of Keena Graham, park ranger for Russell Cave National Monument and Little River Canyon National Preserve, both in Alabama.

TNTOTA BOOTH AT BLESSING OF THE BUFFALOS, OCTOBER 31, 2015

VP Shirley Lawrence set up a TNTOTA booth at the annual Blessing of the Buffalos in October. The event is hosted each fall by Greg Vital on his buffalo farm in Georgetown, TN to honor the Native American Heritage in our area and to promote land conservation. Shirley reports that although she did not have a lot of visitors stop by the booth, she did have some interesting visitors with some good questions.

◆ Tennessee Events:

Sequoyah Birthplace Museum Cherokee Language Classes, Vonore, TN, beginning January 4, 2016

The museum is holding Cherokee language classes on Monday evenings in January from 6:30 to 9 pm. The cost is \$40 for four classes which are taught by members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. For more information or to sign up for the class, call the museum at 423-884-6246. Additional information can also be found at the museum’s website at <http://www.sequoyahmuseum.org/> under “Upcoming Events.”

◆ Georgia Events:

Tea Time at the Vann House, Chattsworth, GA, Saturday January 30, 2016, 12 to 1 pm

The Chief Vann House is holding an interesting tea and cookie tasting on January 30. The Vann family used different types of coffee and tea than we have today and this special event will serve authentic Cherokee treats from the early nineteenth-century like the Vanns enjoyed. There is a fee for this event. For more information, see the Chief Vann House website at <http://gastateparks.org/ChiefVannHouse>, call 706-695-2598, or contact redtop.programmers@dnr.ga.gov.

◆ Alabama Events:

Trail of Tears Signing, Cherokee Co. Historical Museum, Centre, AL, January 16, 10 am to 4 pm

On January 16, the Historical Preservation Society of Cherokee County and the Cherokee County Historical Museum are hosting a dedication ceremony to celebrate the posting of 15.5 miles of signs marking the Cherokee Trail of Tears. The event takes place at the museum on 101 East Main Street in Centre. Space is limited and those who are interested must RSVP at 256-927-7835 or museumatcentre@gmail.com.

EXCERPT FROM DECEMBER 30, 1838 LETTER BY REV. EVAN JONES FROM THE CAMP OF THE 4TH DETACHMENT OF EMIGRATING CHEROKEES AT LITTLE PRAIRIE, MO.

“We have now been on our road to Arkansas seventy-five days and have travelled five hundred and twenty-nine miles. We have been greatly favored by the kind hand of providence of our heavenly father. We have met with no serious accident and have been detained only two days by bad weather. It has however been exceedingly cold for some time past which renders the condition of those who are but thinly clad very uncomfortable. . . . Every morning [we] make fires along the road at short intervals. This we have found a great alleviation to the sufferings of the people.” (From William G. McLoughlin, *Champions of the Cherokees: Evan and John B. Jones*, Princeton University Press, 1990, page 184.)

Note from Vicki: Evan Jones was a Baptist missionary who worked with the Valley Town Cherokees in western North Carolina. Jones and Jesse Bushyhead, a Cherokee Baptist preacher, were instrumental in locating Cherokees who had fled to the mountains to hide and in convincing many to voluntarily come in to the emigration camps. Jones served as assistant conductor of the 4th detachment led by Situagi, aka Situwakee. This detachment departed on either October 16 or October 19, 1838 and travelled for three and a half months. (This letter indicates they left on October 16, however, other primary source documents indicate they left on October 19. One primary source document that records a departure date of October 19 shows they mustered out on February 2.) They were in McMinnville, TN on October 27 and reached Nashville on November 4 and were later stopped at the Mississippi River by ice. Jones reported seventy-one deaths and five births in the 4th detachment. Discrepancies in numbers suggest that several Cherokees may have deserted the detachment. Evan Jones was paid \$462 as Assistant Conductor for the 4th detachment while his son, Samuel Jones, was paid \$440 for his services as wagon master.

MY THANKS to Toye Heape for providing photos of the NAIA powwow in Nashville and Carolyn Jones for providing photos of the sign dedication at Blythe Ferry and new member and sponsor information. Thanks to Floyd Ayers for sponsor and donations information, for forwarding information from Pat Cummins on the Johns-King House, and for providing other information. Thanks to Jim Lewis and Wally Leary for the information on the Centre, Alabama signing dedication. 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.