



Tennessee Trail of Tears Association

NOVEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

Giles County Trail of Tears Commemorative Walk, Pulaski, TN

Saturday, November 5, 2022, 9AM CDST

(Please note that this is at 9 AM Central Daylight Savings Time. Clocks are set back to regular time at 2AM Sunday, Nov. 6.)

There will be an opening ceremony event starting at 9 AM at the Giles County TOT Museum at 220 Stadium Street in Pulaski. The walk will then proceed from the TOT museum to the Overlook at Richland Creek (approximately 2 miles round-trip). Walkers are advised to dress warmly. There is an art walk dedication of Cherokee children's art for the viaduct gallery at 11 AM following the walk. The Giles County TOT Committee, the City of Pulaski, Home Depot, and Tycon Excavating are sponsoring the walk. This walk is also officially sanctioned by TNTOTA. The museum will be opened all day for tours. Contact Peggy Tatum at 931-478-0315 for more information.

Red Clay State Park Cherokee Cultural Fair, Cleveland, TN

Saturday & Sunday, November 12-13, 10 AM to 5 PM EST

TOTA Executive Director Troy Wayne Poteete will give a special talk on Saturday, November 12 at 11 AM Eastern on "The Motivations and Considerations of the Treaty Party" as part of the Cultural Festival. There will also be traditional dancing, craft demonstrations, Cherokee craft and food vendors, and much more. Admission is \$5 per vehicle.

Whites Creek Trail of Tears Third Annual Commemorative Walk, Whites Creek, TN

Saturday, November 19, 2022, 2 PM CST

The walk will begin at 2 pm CST. Meet at the Greenway at Fontanel. The address is 4125 Whites Creek Pike. The walk is sponsored by the Whites Creek Historical Society and the Friends of Whites Creek and is officially sanctioned by TNTOTA. TNTOTA board member and Muskogee Nation citizen Melba Checote-Eads has been involved with this walk since the beginning in 2019. There will be stops along the way with shared readings of original sources recording the event and the reactions of those who were alive at the time. Poetry from the United States Poet Laureate, Joy Harjo, will also be shared. Following the walk, Travis Rael will give a talk on his archaeological findings in a field located in Whites Creek, which are Mississippian and also date back to 8000 BC. Whites Creek is located a little north of Nashville and lies on the Northern Route of the Trail of Tears.

TNTOTA ELECTIONS, NOVEMBER

Every two years, TNTOTA has elections. Watch your inbox during November for details on how to nominate board members and on how to vote. Positions that need to be voted on this year include President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, two state director positions, and one national director position.

TNTOTA MEMBER MEETING, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, RED CLAY STATE PARK VISITOR CENTER, CLEVELAND, TN

Our program was presented by Stephen Neal Dennis. His topic was “The Dirty Little Secret of the Cherokee Removal: Moving Money.” While researching his book, *A Proud Little Town: A History of La Fayette, Georgia, 1835-1885*, Dennis discovered the military accounting records for the Cherokee Removal in the Treasury Department records at the National Archives. Mr. Dennis brought several old maps for us to see and Vicki Rozema brought snacks which were served afterwards. Many thanks to Red Clay State Park for hosting our meeting and to Stephen for agreeing to present us with this valuable information.



Left: Guest speaker Stephen Neal Dennis. Right: TNTOTA members engrossed in the program held at Red Clay State Park.

BLESSING OF THE BUFFALO, GREG VITAL FARM, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2022

TNTOTA hosted an informational table again this year at Greg Vital’s annual Blessing of the Buffalo at his farm in Georgetown. Vicki Rozema set up our table next to our friends at the Cherokee Removal Park in Birchwood. Thanks to Mr. Vital for inviting us and to Faye Callaway and Jim Ogden for helping answer questions at the table.



Left to right: Vicki Rozema, who set up the table at the Buffalo Blessing Event; Jim Ogden and Faye Callaway, TNTOTA members who helped man the table for several hours and answered many questions from the crowds who attended this year's event.

**“THE ETHNOGENESIS OF THE EASTERN BAND OF THE CHEROKEE INDIANS,”
MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2022, CHATTANOOGA**

NCTOTA and TNTOTA member Anita Finger-Smith was the guest speaker for Part II of the 2022 Moccasin Bend Lecture Series presented by the National Park Partners and sponsored by Greg Vital. The event was held at the Tennessee Aquarium IMAX Theatre in Chattanooga. Anita explained five circumstances during the early 19th Century that contributed to the nucleus of Cherokee Indians who remained in western North Carolina after the forced removal of most Cherokee to Indian Territory. Many people still believe the only reason the Eastern Band of the Cherokee are in the East today is because they “hid out in the mountains.” Although this was true for some, the majority are there for other reasons. TNTOTA was a co-sponsor for this program and Vicki Rozema brought a display of TOT sites in the greater Chattanooga area.



Left: Anita Finger-Smith was the guest speaker at the IMAX. Right: Charlie Rhodarmer, Vicki Rozema, Robin Swayne, Cleata Townsend, Jim Ogden, and Anita Finger-Smith are some of the TNTOTA and NCTOTA members who attended the program presented by Anita. They are standing in front of the TNTOTA display which was set up in the IMAX lobby next to NCTOTA's informational table.

TRAIL OF TEARS NATIONAL CONFERENCE, CHEROKEE, NC, SEPTEMBER 19-21, 2022

This year's national TOTA conference was held at the Harrah's Casino in Cherokee, NC. Several TNTOTA members gave talks including TNTOTA VP Danielle Shelton, TNTOTA State Director Charlie Rhodarmer, Deborah Kirk, and Mike Wren. The Cherokee conference had originally been scheduled for 2020, but postponed to 2021, then to 2022 because of the Covid-19 epidemic. Many thanks to the North Carolina chapter which worked so hard through the pandemic to schedule and reschedule multiple times while hosting one of the best conferences ever. Cleata Townsend and Vicki Rozema attended the pre-conference TOTA national board meeting held on Monday morning September 19 as representatives for the TN chapter on the national board. The 2023 conference will be held in West Siloam Springs, OK. The dates for next year's conference have not been set.



Left: Some of the many TNTOTA members who attended the national conference in Cherokee. The TN chapter is always well-represented at every national conference. Right: The Warriors of AniKituwah led an evening of dance, story-telling, music, and dining at the sacred Kituwah mound near Ela.

WINCHESTER TRAIL OF TEARS COMMEMORATIVE WALK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2022

Following a blessing, the annual Winchester TOT Memorial walk began at the park at 200 Wilson Street in Winchester. About 50-55 walkers, a horseback rider, and three wagons traveled .8 miles to the Franklin County Library for Indian tacos prepared by Doris and Lee Trevino, displays, an atlatl demonstration, and flute music by Kevin Ashley. Cherokee storyteller Fred Bradley was the guest speaker at 1 pm.



Left: Walkers on their way to the Franklin County Library. Center: Cherokee Storyteller Fred Bradley was the honored guest after the TOT memorial walk. Right: Mules pull a wagon for some to ride on the memorial trip to the library.

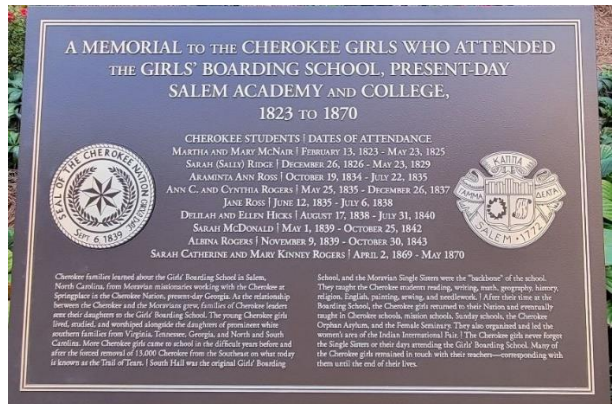
CHEROKEE COMMEMORATION EVENT AT SALEM ACADEMY AND COLLEGE

On October 22, a plaque honoring thirteen Cherokee girls who attended the Girl's Boarding School (present day Salem College) between the years 1823 and 1870 was dedicated by Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, Chuck Hoskin, Jr. Also participating in the event were Jack Baker, President of the National Trail of Tears Association; Dr. Summer McGee, President of Salem Academy and College; Anna McCoy Smith, Salem College Class of 1998 and primary researcher of the Cherokee girls' stories; and Elizabeth Wheeler, Salem College Class of 2024.

Darlene Goins and Laura Spann were honored to represent the Hiwassee River Heritage Center and Tennessee Trail of Tears Association at the week-end activities. A reception for descendants of the Cherokee girls was held on Friday evening where Cherokee relatives living in multiple states and ranging in age from 5 years to 95 years met for the first time. Darlene and Laura explained the connections between the Cherokee students and their families who were living and conducting business at the Indian Agency in what is now Charleston, TN.

Salem College, founded by Moravian Missionaries and celebrating its 250th year, is the oldest women's college in the United States. A mission at Spring Place, Georgia was also established in 1801 by the missionaries of the Moravian Church. Following the forced removal to Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma), the Moravians established New Spring Place. Cherokee girls who attended the Salem Girls Boarding School became leaders in their communities in the west: they taught in the Cherokee Female Academy, in mission schools, in Sunday Schools and in the Cherokee Orphans Asylum.

In addition to the plaque dedication, Saturday included a visit to the Moravian Archives, touring the campus and "Old Salem," and a Chicken Pie dinner at the Home Moravian Church where Chief Hoskin, Jack Baker, and Anna Smith spoke about the Moravian history with the Cherokees and the current status of the Cherokee Nation. On Sunday, Darlene and Laura along with Troy Wayne Poteete, Jack Baker, Anna Smith and Anna's daughter Dawn Smith attended services at the Home Moravian Church, established in 1771 and located on the Salem College campus.



Left: Descendants of Jane Ross Meigs Nave, the daughter of Chief John Ross. Front: Oliver Drywater, Fannie Mae Duffield, Chief Chuck Hoskin, Jr., Janet Davis Pouncil, Jamie Davis-Ashworth, Laura Groover. Back: Jennifer Davis Sims, Jeff Davis, Sherri Tubbs, Marsha McCaslin, Dolly Richardson. Right: The Memorial to the Cherokee girl students.

OTHER TOT AND MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to the Coker Creek Welcome Center in Monroe County and the Charles Hall Museum in Tellico Plains who were recently approved by the National Park Service to be designated as official interpretive sites on the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.

The Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University has contracted with the National Park Service to review and update the old 1992 list of High Potential Sites on the Trail of Tears. Amy Kostine and Dr. Carroll Van West are leading the project. In Tennessee, the CHP students have already visited the John Brown House and Brainerd Mission Cemetery in Chattanooga where they were met by TNTOTA director Cleata Townsend. They have also

visited Shellsford Baptist Church Cemetery in McMinnville where it is believed a Cherokee woman who died on the TOT might be buried and where Jesse Bushyhead, a Cherokee preacher and detachment leader on the TOT, may have preached a sermon.

TNTOTA's new website, located at TNTOTA.org, is up and running. It contains information about our organization, our goals, some of the TOT sites in TN, and a list of archived newsletters. Thanks to Stephen Shelton, husband of VP Danielle Shelton, for updating our website.

Work is proceeding on placement of TOT route signs in Marion County, TN. TNTOTA members Doris Trevino and Floyd Ayers are working with the NPS on that project. In the meantime, Toye Heape and Pat Cummins are working with the NPS to get route signs up in Rutherford County.

Melba Checote-Eads was on a public radio program in Nashville with Helen Tarleton and Toye Heape to talk about the Trail of Tears. Melba also told American Indian Stories at the Boro International Festival at MTSU.

Vicki Rozema gave a talk on the TOT and Cherokee culture to architecture students at Belmont University in Nashville who are participating in a class project to design a TOT museum and community center for the Hermitage. The project is only a class exercise and will not be implemented.

Graydon Swisher II gave a talk to Cornell University students at Chickasaw Heritage Park in Memphis on September 24.

Fred and Mary Noletti Underdown participated in the October 22 clean-up day at the Nancy Ward gravesite in Polk County.

WARNING: Scammers try to email our members from time to time, while pretending they are a TOTA or TNTOTA officer. They ask that you send them money in the form of gift cards. Because our contact info is publicly available, this happens often. This is a scam and a phishing expedition, so **DO NOT ANSWER THEM OR CLICK ON THEIR LINKS.**

To submit news for the TNTOTA Newsletter, please send it to VickiRozema@Comcast.net.