



## TNTOTA NEWSLETTER

Hello to all! I hope your summer is going well. We are, apparently, living through some historic weather times. I wanted to let you know about some events that have taken place and some that are planned. If you have other events planned, please let us know so that we can notify other members.

### **MEMBERSHIP MEETING AUGUST 27, 2023 MARTIN SPRINGS**

Our next meeting will be on Sunday, August 27 at Martin Springs cave, near Monteagle, TN. The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Central Time (3 p.m. Eastern). Everyone needs to bring a folding chair. Refreshments will be served.

#### **RSVP**

**You will need to RSVP and include any additional guests so we can notify our hosts, the Jumpers, of how many people to expect. Reply to this email or send a separate email, before August 20, to the chapter secretary, Darlene Goins at [tntrailoftears@gmail.com](mailto:tntrailoftears@gmail.com).**

Martin Springs is located just off Interstate 24, exit 143, between Monteagle and Jasper, at the foot of Monteagle Mountain. The site is on private property with access only by special permission.

From Nashville/Murfreesboro, take I-24 East toward Chattanooga: - after crossing Monteagle Mountain, get off at exit 143 and turn left, crossing over I-24 - turn left onto Martin Springs Rd directly in front of old service station - Martin Springs will be 1.6 miles on the right.

From Chattanooga and East Tennessee, take I-24 West toward Nashville: - after crossing the Tennessee River (Nickajack Lake) and passing by Kimball/South Pittsburg, get off at Exit 143 and turn right - turn left onto Martin Springs Rd directly in front of the old service station - Martin Springs will be 1.6 miles on the right

From Lawrenceburg and southern Middle Tennessee: - take US Hwy 64 east toward Chattanooga to I-24 (14 miles past Winchester) and turn right onto I-24 toward Chattanooga - after crossing Monteagle Mountain, get off at exit 143 and turn left, crossing over I-24 - turn left onto Martin Springs Rd directly in front of the old service station - Martin Springs will be 1.6 miles on the right.

Based on research by TNTOTA members and the National Park Service it is indicated that the Bell Detachment camped and rested at Martin Springs for a couple of days prior to its arduous ascent of the steep Monteagle Mountain. Of course, in 1838 the site was not called "Martin Springs". Lt. Deas referred to it as the "Head of Battle Creek".

*Thank you to Cleata Townsend for arranging the meeting location and to Angela and Bill Jumper for graciously allowing us to visit and for hosting our meeting.*

### **January 22, 2023 & June 20, 2023 TNTOTA Board meetings**

The TNTOTA Board and new slate of officers met to review 2022 and make initial plans for 2023 & 2024. As a reminder, and for any members who may have joined since the last communication, the current officers are:

President	Laura Spann	Vice-President	Charlie Rhodarmer
Secretary	Darlene Goins	Treasurer	Erin Medley
State Directors	Melba Choate Eads, Faye Callaway, Debbie Moore		
National Directors	Vicki Rozema, Cleata Townsend		

**\*NOTE: Information about Chapter By-Law Revisions follows at the end of the newsletter with an additional attachment.**

### **February 19, 2023 Membership Meeting**

A membership meeting was held at the Hiwassee River Heritage Center in Charleston in collaboration with the Charleston-Calhoun-Hiwassee Historical Society (CCHHS). Laura Spann gave a presentation on a genealogy research project successfully identifying the Cherokee ancestry of a high school classmate by using Chapman Roll payment records and Miller Roll applications. Some family members remained in Tennessee while others removed to the Flint District of Cherokee Nation, West.

### **May 12-13, 2023 "Let Freedom Ring" Event**

Graydon Swisher represented TNTOTA at the Let Freedom Ring event in Millington, TN. He reports that there was lots of good traffic and inquiries. He had the opportunity to explain how the new TOTA directional signs lead to the Water Route waymarkers at Tom Lee Park and the Land Route marker on Mud Island, both sites on the Mississippi River. Tom Lee Park has been undergoing extensive renovation and is scheduled to re-open on Labor Day, Sept. 2, 2023.

### **June 5, 2023 Red Clay State Historic Park Blacksmith Shop Ribbon Cutting**

The Park celebrated the recent addition of a 19<sup>th</sup> century blacksmith shop to its replica farmstead. In the 1800s, Avery Miller, a Cherokee blacksmith, owned and operated the shop. The building will serve to educate visitors about the trade of blacksmithing and to tell the history of blacksmithing in the Cherokee Nation. Support for the project came from the Tennessee Arts Commission, Friends of Red Clay State Park, the Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of commerce, Kerry and Sue Hicks, Dr. Danielle Shelton, and TOTA President Jack Baker.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony coincided with the annual visit by the Remember the Removal Bike Riders. The Riders enjoyed time to rest, to have dinner, and then the traditional plunge at Blue Hole, the water source for the Cherokee Council during 1832 to 1837.



Left to Right: Sue and Kerry Hicks, Designer & Builder; Ava Walkingstick, Jr. Miss Cherokee; Erin Medley, Park Manager; Jack Baker, President, National Trail of Tears Association; Melissa Woody, Cleveland/Bradley County Chamber of Commerce; Mydryn Phillipe, Friends of Red Clay; Danielle Shelton, U.S. Forest Service and Red Clay Historian; Rob Barrett, Park Ranger.



June 6, 2023

**Remember the Removal Bike Riders  
Hiwassee River Heritage Center & Cherokee Removal Memorial Park**

The Hiwassee River Heritage Center and TNTOTA members were honored to host the RTR Bike Riders for lunch during their annual stop while retracing their ancestor's footsteps on the Northern Removal Route. Prior to their arrival at the HRHC, the riders stopped at Rattlesnake Springs where TOTA President Jack Baker explained the story of the 1838 Cherokee encampment there while waiting to depart from Fort Cass.

The Riders then visited the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park at Blythe Ferry where they were able to locate their ancestors' names on the granite memorial panels. They were then ferried across the Tennessee River on pontoon boats, leaving the homeland just as their relatives had done 180 years ago.



**June 20-22, 2023**

**MTSU Center for Historic Preservation visits  
TOT NHT High Potential Sites and Segments Assessment**

Dr. Carroll Van West and Amy Kostine visited East Tennessee sites for the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail High Potential Sites and Segments Assessment project. Visits included Audubon Acres, the Georgetown Road Trail Segment, Cherokee Removal Memorial Park at Blythe Ferry, Hiwassee River Heritage Center, Rattlesnake Springs, Wilson-Erwin House, the John Martin House, and the Hildebrand House.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 6	Sequoyah Remembrance Day	Sequoyah Birthplace Museum
August 27	TNTOTA Membership Meeting	Martin Springs
Sep. 9	International Cow Pea Festival	Charleston, TN
Sep. 9-10	32 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Cherokee Fall Festival	Sequoyah Birthplace Museum
Oct. 28	Annual Winchester Trail of Tears Commemorative Walk	
11:30 CST	From Old Cowan Road City Park to Franklin County Library	

26<sup>th</sup> Annual National Trail of Tears Conference & Symposium  
October 16-18, 2023  
Cherokee Casino & Hotel West Siloam Springs, OK

Additional Information: <https://nationaltota.com>

## NORTH CAROLINA DEPORTATION ROUTES THROUGH MONROE & MCMINN COUNTIES

In 2014, Dr. Brett Riggs, in collaboration with the Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association, submitted a report titled "Like a Distempered Dream" to the National Park Service. The report provided documentation of transportation elements of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail to be used to mark approximately 79 miles of the deportation routes used for the removal of approximately 3,000 Cherokees from their North Carolina homes to Calhoun and across the ferry to Fort Cass. These roads include the Unicoy Turnpike and Old Furnace Road, the Conasauga and Athens Road, the Athens to Tellico postal route and the Athens to Calhoun Road. The research indicates that there was a primary route that passed through present day Etowah, and a secondary route passed through present day Englewood.

We are happy to announce that the sign plan proposals for these routes have been submitted to the National Park Service and draft plans are in the final stages of revision. Pam Hall, curator of the Charles Hall Museum in Tellico Plains, is coordinating the Monroe County route plans and Laura Spann, TNTOTA Chapter President is coordinating the McMinn County plans. Pam and Laura recently met with Dr. Riggs to validate these routes and the planned signage. The project is extensive and encompasses the twists and turns of the curvy roads from North Carolina to the Hiwassee River at Calhoun. We look forward to having the signage installed.

## 2024 NATIONAL TRAIL OF TEARS CONFERENCE & SYMPOSIUM OCTOBER 14 -16, 2024

It is Tennessee's turn to host the National TOTA Conference!!

Initial planning is underway for this exciting event. Here are some plan highlights:

Location: The conference will be held at the Embassy Suites near Hamilton Place on Shallowford Road in north Chattanooga. This location is best suited to coordinate field trip logistics. The primary focus of the conference will be on the East Tennessee Cherokee families and surrounding sites connected with their homes and with the Removal.

Schedule (similar to prior conferences):

Monday morning	TOTA Board of Directors meeting
Monday afternoon	Conference Opening
Monday evening	Reception & Guest speakers
Tuesday	Field Trip to Red Clay, Hiwassee River Heritage Center/Fort Cass, then dinner in Calhoun at a park pavilion located on a segment of the North Carolina Deportation Route; guest speakers
Wednesday	Guest speakers and breakout sessions

We are also planning for a pre-conference event and a post-conference event. Details for these will be announced when finalized.

\*\* This is a great time for our current members to interest others in joining TOTA and participating in the educational opportunities offered at the conference.

### **Chapter By-Law Revisions**

At the January meeting, the Board voted on revisions to the Bylaws. The revisions are intended to coincide with current practices and to coordinate with TOTA goals. The Proposed Revisions are attached with an explanation. We will ask for a vote from the membership at the August meeting. Pending final approval of the bylaws, ad hoc committees were established and chairs appointed.

Communication & Education Committee; Chair appointment-Cleata Townsend  
Historic Preservation & Research Committee; Chair appointment-Vicki Rozema  
(Since her appointment, Vicki has resigned due to health issues. These committees will be discussed at the August membership meeting.)  
Nominating & Bylaws Committee (standing committee previously established)  
Chair: Laura Spann, Members: Darlene Goins, Debbie Moore

**The proposed by-law revisions are attached to this Newsletter. Please review and be prepared to vote at the August Meeting at Martin Springs. If you have questions about the bylaw revisions, please email them to [laurabspann@gmail.com](mailto:laurabspann@gmail.com).**

***I hope to see many of you at the August meeting. Take care and stay safe.***  
**Laura**