



## **Tennessee Trail of Tears Association**

### **AUGUST 2022 NEWSLETTER**

#### **TNTOTA MEMBER MEETING, SUNDAY, AUG. 21, 3 PM EASTERN, HIWASSEE RIVER HERITAGE CENTER, CHARLESTON, TN**

The Charleston-Calhoun-Hiwassee Historical Society has invited TNTOTA members to their quarterly meeting. The Historical Society is hosting Kathi Littlejohn on Sunday afternoon, August 21 at 3:00pm at Hiwassee River Heritage Center which is located at 8746 Hiwassee Street, Charleston, TN.

Kathi, a Cherokee Storyteller, is an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. She lives in Cherokee, North Carolina's WolfTown Community with her family and has been telling Cherokee stories for more than 30 years at events, festivals, and schools. Some of the events she has attended include the American Indian Museum in Washington, DC, Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia, and the Eclipse Celebration in the Great Smokies National Park, in conjunction with NASA and the NPS. She has produced four CDs of Cherokee stories and a series of YouTube videos named “Cherokee History and Stories, “What Happened Here?””

Kathi will be speaking on the 1802 Meigs survey line and its retracing in 2009, also the Meigs family and their ties to Bradley County, Tennessee. She will give information about the Cherokee Language Speaker’s Consortium and this group’s efforts to preserve the Cherokee language. She will end her presentation telling Cherokee Stories.

Kathi's husband Leroy will have a table set up with Cherokee crafts. He makes spears for girls and boys, little wooden hummingbirds, necklaces, sling shots, all from native material. Kathi's CDs of Cherokee stories will also be available.

Please RSVP to [hiwasseeheritagecenter@gmail.com](mailto:hiwasseeheritagecenter@gmail.com) if you plan to attend.

#### **25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TRAIL OF TEARS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE & SYMPOSIUM** **MONDAY SEPT. 19 – WEDNESDAY SEPT. 21, 2022** **HARRAH’S CHEROKEE CASINO RESORT, CHEROKEE, NC**

All TNTOTA and TOTA members should have received an email with a link to the national newsletter that has information on the conference. If not, you can use this link to get conference information and to register. <https://nationaltota.com/25th-annual-trail-of-tears-conference-symposium>.

If you wish to stay at the casino resort, there is a special rate for the TOTA conference of \$109 per night plus taxes, fees, and a nightly resort fee for a total of \$148.41 per night. Use group code S09TOTA to obtain the group rate. I had trouble booking my room online so I ended up calling Harrah's at 828-497-7777 to get my reservation. **Warning- the TOTA newsletter says that the Group Code discount on rooms expires August 19 or when all the rooms in the block are gone, whichever is earlier.** So, if you have not already booked your room, you may wish to do so immediately.

### **TENNESSEE CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS**

Tues. - Sat., August 16 - 20

Meigs County Fair

TNTOTA will have an informational table.

Decatur, TN

Sat., September 10

International Cowpea Festival and Cook-off

TNTOTA will have an informational table.

Charleston City Park, Charleston, TN

Sat. & Sun., September 10 & 11

Sequoyah Fall Festival

TNTOTA will have an informational table.

Sequoyah Birthplace Museum, Vonore, TN

Sat., October 22

Cherohala Skyway Festival

TNTOTA will have an informational table.

Charles Hall Museum and Heritage Center, Tellico Plains, TN

Sat. & Sun., November 12-13

Red Clay State Park Cherokee Cultural Fair

TNTOTA will have an informational table.

Red Clay State Park, Cleveland, TN

Sat., October 22

Winchester Trail of Tears Commemorative Walk

Winchester, TN

The walk will begin at 200 Wilson Street, Winchester. There will be a blessing before the walk begins. The walkers, horseback riders, wagons will depart at 11:45 am and travel .8 miles to the Franklin County Library for food, displays, demonstrations, live flute music and activities. Cherokee storyteller Fred Bradley will be the guest speaker at 1 pm.

For more information, contact Kathy Pack at [katpac56@aol.com](mailto:katpac56@aol.com).

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR INFORMATION TABLES, RESEARCH, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

TNTOTA is in need of volunteers to help man information tables at several of the events listed above. You can volunteer for an hour or two or a whole day, whatever works for you. There is already someone from TNTOTA working at the event who can answer many questions about our

displays and our organization. You can learn from them and help out when the other volunteers need to take a break or perhaps you can help set up or take down the displays. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Vicki at [VickiRozema@Comcast.net](mailto:VickiRozema@Comcast.net).

TNTOTA also needs volunteers to work on research and documentation and historic preservation. We need to locate documents, research, and reports that have already been done on the TOT routes through TN and the historic sites along those routes, as well as identify areas that need more research. If you are interested in working with other TNTOTA members in this effort, or if you have or know the location of information on TOT routes and sites in TN, please contact Vicki at [VickiRozema@Comcast.net](mailto:VickiRozema@Comcast.net). We need to identify these valuable sources.

Each state chapter of TOTA has been charged with designating an official Historic Preservation Liaison. Some chapters have recommended that it is preferable to have more than one official HPL in each chapter in case something happens to one, there is someone who can take over. If you would like to learn more about what is involved in this, please contact Vicki at [VickiRozema@Comcast.net](mailto:VickiRozema@Comcast.net). (I know, I sound like a broken record.) If you wish to be considered as the lead or a co-liaison for the chapter, it is preferred that you already have some knowledge of the TOT in TN and some research experience.

### **TNTOTA INFORMATIONAL TABLE AT SEQUOYAH REMEMBRANCE DAY (SUNDAY, AUGUST 7)**

On August 7, Darlene Goins hosted the TNTOTA table at Sequoyah Remembrance Day at the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum. She reports that “there was a steady crowd and many of them stopped by the table to check out the display, pick up brochures, and talk. It was a very enjoyable afternoon.”



Left: The TNTOTA educational display at the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum. Right: Charlie Rhodarmer, Director of the Museum, using a replica printing press to demonstrate 19<sup>th</sup> Century Cherokee printing techniques.

### **TNTOTA SYMPOSIUM, RED CLAY STATE PARK**

On April 29, TNTOTA held a symposium at the pavilion at Red Clay State Park. Our guest speakers were Andrew Denson, who spoke about how the history and culture of Southeast Indigenous peoples are remembered in the South; Stefanie Haire, who presented her research on

Cherokees in the Civil War and the database she is building; Jim Ogden, who spoke about Brown's Ferry and Moccasin Bend; and TNTOTA's VP Danielle Shelton, who talked about Red Clay's Cultural Landscape.

Guests were treated to a catered lunch sponsored by the Bradley/Cleveland Chamber of Commerce and Red Clay State Park. Danielle Shelton organized the symposium and recruited our excellent speakers.



Left: Guest speakers at TNTOTA's April 29 symposium at Red Clay State Park: Jim Ogden, Danielle Shelton, Stefanie Haire, and Andrew Denson. Right: Jim Ogden presents his program on "Toward a Broadening of the Appreciation of Understanding of Brown's Ferry and the Brown's Ferry Road."

### **NEW TOT SIGNS IN SHELBY AND SEQUATCHIE COUNTIES**

Graydon Swisher II reports that TOT route signs were installed on U.S. 64 in Shelby County to commemorate the Bell Route. Thanks to the TDOT office in Jackson for installing them and to Graydon for all of his work on this project. TOT signs were also installed in Sequatchie County along the route travelled by the Richard Taylor and James Brown detachments. Thanks to Sequatchie County resident Mark Dunn, who obtained the necessary authorizations and oversaw the sign installations and to County Highway Commissioner Eric Higgins and the Sequatchie County Highway Department for working with Mark to get the signs up.



Left: New TOT sign at the corner of US 64 and Rockcreek Parkway in Memphis. Right: New TOT sign on Henson Gap Road in Sequatchie County, TN.

## **MEIGS COUNTY TOT SEGMENT PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER**

A segment of the old Georgetown Road has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. On the property of TN State Representative and TOT supporter Greg Vital, this intact segment parallels Hwy 60 at Georgetown, TN. The short, .12 mile segment of original roadbed parallels TN State Route 60, and was travelled by the Elijah Hicks and Situwakee detachments and probably several other detachments. Congratulations to Rep. Greg Vital for this significant recognition and for taking steps to protect the TOT segment. TNTOTA member Amy Kostine of MTSU's Center for Historic Preservation, was one of the main authors of the National Register of Historic Places report.

## **FORT ARMISTEAD NOMINATED FOR NATIONAL LANDMARK STATUS**

The site of Fort Armistead, which was used as a stopping point on the Unicoi Road for Cherokees deported from NC to the Cherokee Agency in TN, has passed a critical step in the path of becoming a National Historic Landmark. On May 11, the National Park system landmarks review committee voted unanimously to approve this important removal site and to advance it for final approval by the Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland.

## **2022 REMEMBER THE REMOVAL BIKE RIDE**

In early June, several of our individual and group members welcomed the arrival of the Remember the Removal Memorial Bike riders at Red Clay State Park, the Hiwassee River Heritage Center, the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park, and the town of Woodbury. The RTR riders stopped at many other sites in Tennessee including Port Royal State Park, Rattlesnake Springs in Cleveland, and Fort Morrow blockhouse in Hiwassee/Ocoee State Park. The bike ride was cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic and was scaled down in numbers of riders in 2021 for the same reason. TNTOTA helps underwrite the cost of food at two locations.



Left: Remember the Removal Riders at Red Clay State Park in Tennessee. Right: Darlene Goins, Hiwassee River Heritage Center Manager and TNTOTA Secretary talking with Desiree Matthews, 5th great-granddaughter of Lewis Ross, and Melissa Woody, VP of the Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce, talking with and a few of the bike riders when they stopped at the Heritage Center.

## **OTHER MEMBER NEWS**

We were very sad to learn of the passing of Matthew Eric Wilson, son of long-time TNTOTA members Barbara and Carlos Wilson. Matthew died in March after a long illness. Like his dad,

Matthew was a talented musician. He leaves behind many friends and family including four children and two grandchildren.

TNTOTA members Jason Terrell, Graydon Swisher II, and Troy Wayne Poteete all actively participated in Shelby County History Day on April 30. Troy was a featured guest and spoke on the Legacy of the Trail of Tears in Memphis. Also in April, TNTOTA members Carlos Wilson and Vicki Rozema presented information on the TOT to the Chattanooga Newcomers Club.

TNTOTA member Andrea Squires came all the way from California with her distant cousin Rita Parnell who came from Oklahoma to attend the April symposium and to visit sites associated with their ancestors, Thigh Walker (1799 - bef1850) and Sarah Brewer (1806 - 1871) and their 7 children who were removed with the Brown Detachment on which Thigh was a manager. Andrea and Rita are also descendants of Nancy Ward and visited her grave. Several TNTOTA members were pleased to be able to show Rita and Andrea around the area.

My thanks to Darlene Goins who arranged the upcoming joint meeting of TNTOTA and the Charleston Calhoun Hiwassee Historical Association and provided a lot of information and photos for this newsletter. Thanks, also, to all the other TNTOTA members who provided information and photos.

To submit news for the TNTOTA Newsletter, please send it to [VickiRozema@Comcast.net](mailto:VickiRozema@Comcast.net).