



Tennessee Trail of Tears Association

OCTOBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING TNTOTA EVENTS

Online Membership Meetings:

Saturday, Oct. 16, 3 pm Eastern, 2 pm Central. During the past couple of years, many of us haven't been traveling as much. While we've been staying close to home, museum professionals have taken the opportunity to update their exhibits or open new museums all together. Luckily, some museums have taken advantage of digital technology so that we can visit them from home! Please join Dr. Danielle Shelton for a virtual tour of the new Cherokee National History Museum. You'll learn how this new technology works and see the museum's highlights from the comfort of home. A link to the virtual-only meeting will be sent via email closer to the meeting.

Bio: Danielle Shelton is a historian with the US Forest Service where she works on various projects at National Forests throughout the country. She earned her Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Maryland University College while stationed in Europe as a member of the US Air Force and her Master's in History from the University of Arkansas. Danielle recently graduated with a PhD in Public History at Middle Tennessee State University. Her dissertation explores the cultural landscape of Red Clay State Historic Park. Her research led to the renovation of Red Clay's museum. Danielle currently serves as vice-president of TNTOTA. (Please note that the meeting at the Meadowlands Pavilion in Calhoun that was scheduled for this day has been moved to 2022 because of Covid concerns.)

Sunday, Nov. 14, 4 pm Eastern, 3 pm Central. Join us online as Mike Wren shows us the new 1838 Claims database that is now available online at the National TOTA website. Mike will show us how to maximize our searches and how to use the database to learn more about the Cherokees who lost property and had their lives disrupted by the TOT. Mike will primarily use Tennessee claims in a shorter version of the program he did for national. To get a preview of the database before Mike's talk, click here <https://claims.nationaltota.com/>. To see the full program Mike presented to National TOTA, click here <https://nationaltota.com/trail-of-tears-webinar>. A link to the virtual-only meeting will be sent via email closer to the meeting.

Bio: Michael Wren is a native of Tucson Arizona but grew up in north Alabama. He is a graduate of Auburn University. Mike retired from a multi-national company providing tax leveraged financing for Fortune 500 companies. He and his wife, Elise, are the parents of three adult children and a new granddaughter. Wren has a lifelong passion for history and has been an active independent researcher for most of his adult life. He is a long term committed member of the Trail of Tears Association.

Memorial Walk:

Trail of Tears Memorial Walk and Program, Winchester, TN. Saturday, October 23. To participate in the walk, assemble at 11:00 am central, noon eastern, at the Old Cowan Road Park, beside 200 Wilson Street, Winchester. At 11:45, we will begin the walk along Old Cowan Road to the Franklin County Library. TOTA's Executive Director, Troy Wayne Poteete, will be the featured speaker for the post walk program at the Franklin County Library. Contact Floyd Ayers, floydayers@comcast.com, or Kathy Pack of the Franklin County Library, 931-967-3706, for more information.

TNTOTA Tables at Festivals:

12th Annual Vital Buffalo Farm Blessing of the Buffalo, 8220 Highway 60, Georgetown, TN. Saturday, October 9. 3 -7 pm.

Cherohala Skyway 25th Anniversary Festival, Charles Hall Museum and Heritage Center, Tellico Plains, TN. Saturday, October 23. 10 am to 5 pm.

TRAIL OF TEARS MEMORIAL WALK AND SIGN DEDICATION, WOODBURY, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19. The commemorative walk began a little after 12:30 pm at the Woodbury United Methodist Church and proceeded to the Cannon County Court House. In spite of a light rain, there was a good turnout for the walk, program, and sign dedication inside one of the courtrooms in the courthouse. TNTOTA state director Melba Eads was instrumental in obtaining 11 new TOT signs from the NPS to place on the TOT in Cannon County and had been patiently waiting over a year to get them dedicated. President Vicki Rozema was excited to have the honor of doing the sign dedication. Other guests and speakers included singer Kathy Irwin, Rev. Ray Samuels, Robert Bush of the Cannon County Historical Society, director of Cannon County Schools Mr. Curtis, and Musician Jess Running Bear. Melba read a letter from Muscogee Principal Chief David Hill who was unable to attend due to tribal travel restrictions caused by COVID.



Left: TOT Memorial Walk on Main Street in Woodbury. Right: Participants in the program and sign dedication. Melba Eads, third from right, obtained 11 TOT signs for Cannon County.

TNTOTA TABLES AT MEIGS COUNTY FAIR, DECATUR; COWPEA FESTIVAL, CHARLESTON; AND SPIRITS, SMOKE, AND SOIL FESTIVAL, COOPERTOWN.

Shirley Lawrence and Gloria Schoggins introduced a new TOT display at their table at the Meigs County Fair in Decatur on August 3-7, 2021. TNTOTA also had an information table at the Cowpea Festival in Charleston City Park on September 11. The Cowpea Festival table was

manned by Fay Callaway, Shirley Lawrence, and Debbie Moore. Reports say the table was busy answering questions and that the festival had a successful year in raising money to support the Hiwassee River Heritage Center, a certified TOT interpretive site. Meanwhile, Vicki Rozema hosted a table at the Spirits, Smoke, and Soil Festival at the Coopertown City Hall on September 11. Coopertown's City Hall is located on the TOT and hosts the Remember the Removal Bike Riders every year.



Left: New TOT display at Meigs County Fair. Photo by Deborah Huffman. Center: The TNTOTA table at the Cowpea Festival. Photo by Debbie Moore. Right: TNTOTA tent at Coopertown.

NEWS FROM MEMPHIS

Graydon Swisher II reports that the Memphis City Council Renaming Commission has considered Graydon's recommendation to rename Jackson Avenue. Jackson Avenue was used by the Bell detachment on the TOT. They are going to recommend to the City Council that the name be changed to Odyssey Avenue. In a communication to the City Council, the Renaming Commission wrote "The Trail of Tears, including the Bell Route (i.e. Jackson Ave.), was an odyssey full of hardships for the Indian tribes that were displaced by the Indian Removal Act. The existing Trail of Tears marker along the Bell Route (Jackson Avenue) acknowledges these hardships. Renaming this route Odyssey Avenue, instead of the current Jackson Avenue, is another way to acknowledge the long and eventful journey westward by Native Americans. It is also a way to recognize the historical nature of the street or route itself."

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

GRAND RE-OPENING, RED CLAY STATE PARK MUSEUM. Monday, November 4, 4 pm. Everyone is invited.

CHRISTMAS AT RED CLAY, RED CLAY STATE PARK. Sunday, December 12, 5 pm. During this event, luminaries will light the path and there will be a tour by candlelight. Danielle and Dominic (our former SIR) will guide the tours dressed as missionaries from the time period. Jamie Russell will do his living history program at the farmstead telling stories and talking about the winter solstice. Refreshments will also be provided.

RIVERS, RAILS, AND ROADS: TRANSPORTATION DURING THE CHEROKEE REMOVAL, TN AQUARIUM IMAX THEATER, CHATTANOOGA, TN. Monday, November 15, 7 PM. This program is part of the Moccasin Bend Lecture Series sponsored by the National Park Partners and Greg Vital. Amy Kostine, National Trails Program Coordinator for the Center

for Historic Preservation at MTSU and a TNTOTA member, will discuss her research on transportation methods used on the TOT. The program will be presented both in-person and virtually. ALL participants, whether going to the I-Max or viewing online, MUST register at nppcha.org/current-projects/mbls2021. This is the only way to get the link.

OTHER MEMBER NEWS

On September 26, the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* published a short piece by TNTOTA President **Vicki Rozema** on how mixed-blood Cherokee John Brown co-founded Kelly's Ferry with John Kelly and built a road from the Brown-Kelly ferry to Wauhatchie Pike which later became known as Kelly's Ferry Road. Both the ferry and the road played important roles in the Trail of Tears and the Civil War. On October 5, Vicki also presented a program on the Trail of Tears to a group of visiting Road Scholars.

TNTOTA State Director and Director of the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum, Charlie Rhodarmer, has been very busy this year because 2021 is the 200th anniversary of Sequoyah introducing his syllabary to the Cherokee people. In addition to his job as director, in March, he was TNTOTA's guest speaker for our first program of 2021. On August 18, he was the featured speaker at the East Tennessee History Center's Brown Bag Lunch. He wrote an article on the bicentennial of the syllabary for Monroe County's *Advocate and Democrat* that was published in March and was interviewed by the *Cherokee Phoenix* in May and Blount County's *Daily Times* in July. And those are just the ones I heard about. Busy man.

We regret to learn of the death of Melba Eads's second dad, William Laxton, who passed on September 24. Hugs to you, Melba.

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