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Moccasin Track News

Message from the President:

It's been a great year for Georgia's Trail of Tears Association chapter, but guess what? Next year is going to be even better!

This year we established an online research database, applied for and received a \$60,000 Challenge Cost Share from the National Park Service to do archaeology at the Georgia fort sites, held well-attended workshops for grant writing and research, researched and documented long out-of-print Removal-era newspapers, worked with the Georgia DOT on mapping out the Fort Buffington site, and even got our picture taken with the governor after he signed a resolution recognizing the anniversary of the Trail of Tears. The hard work of our officers and volunteers has really paid off.

But this is really only the beginning. 2009 will really be all about one thing – GRANTS. That's because without grant money, our hands are really tied. Everyone, including me, wants to see "on the ground" projects come to fruition, such as signs and wayside exhibits. The problem is, the kinds of interpretation that the National Park Service wants to put in place are very expensive. If we were to try to place interpretive exhibits with what we get from dues and selling t-shirts, we'd be broke in three months. But there is a better way.

So your officers have been busy preparing for a round of grant applications. The first step was compiling a list of what's out there, and Linda Baker has done a wonderful job at putting together a grant calendar so that we'll know what the deadlines and requirements are. At the January board meeting, we will put our heads together and put the right projects together with the right grants to make our money go so much farther than it would otherwise.

In fact, Sarah Hill and I have been in deep discussions with Gail King and Mike Wren of the Alabama chapter about collaborative efforts, and we are preparing a massive grant project as we speak which will digitally document an otherwise unavailable series of records at the Treasury Department in Washington, D.C. These photos of these rare and important Removal-era documents will be indexed and made available on the TOTAbase and on disc. We're very excited about making these one-of-a-kind primary source materials available to the public for the first time, and I will keep you updated as we move this process forward.

(And please look to the TOTAbase in the coming weeks as I make available some new photographs and literally hundreds of new documents, many of which were so generously shared by the Alabama chapter. I look forward to our continued collaboration!)

A big thanks to Linda Baker, Linda Geiger, Leslie Thomas, and ALL of our officers and volunteers for making this such a successful year. 2009 is only going to be better! Please join us!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
Jeff Bishop
President

Trail of Tears at the Funk Heritage Center

By Linda Baker

The Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association will hold their first membership meeting of 2009 at the Funk Heritage Center on January 10th. Our meetings are free and open to the public. The meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m. and will start with a presentation by Erin L. Andrews. The Funk Heritage Center is located on the campus of Reinhardt College in Waleska, GA. It is "Georgia's Official Frontier and Southeastern Indian Interpretive Center".

Interested in public archaeology in education, Ms. Andrews is a second-year graduate student in Anthropology currently working with the Funk Heritage Center. Her research interests include public outreach archaeological programs, visual culture, museology, material culture, ceramic technology and archaeology of the prehistoric Southeast. A Magna Cum Laude undergraduate in Anthropology from the University of Georgia, Ms. Andrews possesses a wide range of field experience in both private and non-profit undertakings located throughout the southeastern U.S. For the past four years, Ms. Andrews has worked as a staff archaeologist for Terracon Consultants, Inc. conducting archaeological site assessments, related laboratory analysis and report writing.

The Trail of Tears Association was created to support the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail established by an act of Congress in 1987. The TOTA is dedicated to identifying and preserving sites associated with the removal of Native Americans from the Southeast. The Association consists of nine state chapters representing the nine states that the Cherokees and other tribes traveled through on their way to Arkansas and Oklahoma. The forced removal of the Cherokees was completed in 1838.

You need not have Native American ancestry to attend our meetings, just an interest and desire to learn more about this fascinating and tragic period in our country's history. For more information about the TOTA, visit the National TOTA website at www.nationaltota.org and the Georgia Chapter website at www.gatrailoftears.org. For questions about the January meeting, contact Linda Baker at 770-704-6338 or at badnil@alltel.net. For information about or directions to the Funk Heritage Center, call 770-720-5967 or visit www.reinhardt.edu.

Tentative Schedule for Meetings in 2009

January 10 – Funk Heritage Center at Reinhardt College in Waleska, GA. Speaker Erin Andrews.

March 14 – Banning Mills, Whitesburg, GA. Speaker Chris Haveman.

May 9 – Old Stone Church, Ringgold, GA. Speaker Dr. Sarah Hill.

July 11- Chattahoochee Nature Center, Roswell, GA. Speakers Lisa Simpson and Kris Barkley.

September 12- New Echota, Calhoun, GA. Park rangers will give updates on projects. Nominations for officers.

November 14 – Marsh House, Lafayette, GA. Election of officers. This year all four major positions are up for election – President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Please mark your calendars and be sure to try to attend meetings. We need your help for making this organization vital to the heritage of those who have gone before us. Interested in helping out? Contact Linda Baker at 770-704-6338 or via email at badnil@alltel.net. Let us know what your expertise is.

Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association
Minutes – November 8, 2008
Meeting at the Chief Vann House State Park, Spring Place, Georgia

Jeff Bishop, President, called the meeting to order at 10:40 AM. There were 22 attendees, including 3 visitors. Jeff welcomed first time visitors and new members and asked them to introduce themselves.

Jeff thanked Jeff Stancil, Park Manager, for hosting our membership meeting. Jeff Stancil welcomed us to the Vann House, told us about recent improvements and exhibits and said we were welcome to tour the house and grounds after the meeting. He said that 3 Cherokee cabins had been moved to the property. He also thanked the GA Chapter for the letters of support sent to the DNR in response to threatened cuts and closures at state parks. Anyone interested in helping the Vann House with its efforts can join "Friends of the Vann House" by contacting the Vann House staff.

The minutes of the September membership meeting were approved as printed in the Nov/Dec newsletter posted prior to the November meeting. There was no financial report from Treasurer Linda Geiger but she reported that our account balance is up to \$13,000+.

Jeff said that in the new year, grants will be our #1 priority. Our existing funds cannot support the high cost of signage plus the cost-share grant which we have obtained will require some upfront expenditures (we will be reimbursed later). The \$60,000 cost-share grant will support research at certain removal camp and fort sites. Dr. David Crass will soon prepare a project plan for us; following that, we will need to hire an archaeologist. Jeff expects it to be a 2-year project. Jean Cox mentioned the Ratner Foundation as a source of grant money. Linda Fletcher showed us some new t-shirts that Linda Turner made for us to sell. Another source of funds will be an increased presence at pow wows and other events where we can sell the t-shirts and other merchandise. Linda Baker and Peggy Stanfield are working on a 2009 calendar of events.

Linda B. spoke about the new chapter bylaws that we hope to get adopted for 2009. The new bylaws will have to be approved by National TOTA first.

Cailey Fowler spoke about the Bannister-Bray house. This is possibly the oldest house in Gordon County and rumored to be the birthplace of brothers Stand and Buck Watie (Elias Boudinot). As such it has tremendous historic significance. Cailey has written a letter to the current property owner expressing our interest in the house and offer to date the house using dendrochronology. Jeff said we will not be able to save all historic sites but need to prioritize the sites we know about.

Leslie Thomas reported on the 13th annual TOTA conference in Little Rock. She said the highlight of the conference was getting to spend a whole day at the Sequoyah Research Center, repository of the Trail of Tears Association archives. She said there will be research workshops in 2009 to help those who would like to work on the research effort. Leslie addressed a member who said that the number of deaths due to removal had been exaggerated in the past according to the Cherokee Nation History Course. Leslie said that part of our mission is to clear up past misconceptions and make sure we tell the most accurate story possible.

Dola Davis and Tommy Cox, National TOTA Board representatives, reported on the National Board meeting held during the 2008 TOTA conference. These board meetings are held twice a year. The National Park Service has said that we need to get back on track with the Strategic Plan developed a few years ago. One example of planning that needs to be done is how to maintain sites after we have found and interpreted them. The 2009 National TOTA conference will be held in Alabama.

Jeff asked Linda G. to work with him to place a subset of the TOTAbase on the GA Chapter website that non-members can access. This would contain key sites and hopefully would inspire non-members to join so that they could access the entire TOTAbase.

Thank you to all who donated a total of \$22.75 to the Sunshine Fund.

Door prizes donated by Marvin Sowder, Tommy and Kathy Cox and Linda and Bob Baker were handed out. Tommy and Kathy gave out posters donated by Carey Tilley, Director of the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah, OK.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 PM. A board meeting was held following lunch. The next chapter meeting on January 10, 2009 will be at the Funk Heritage Center in Waleska.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Baker, Secretary

Tellus: Northwest Georgia Science Museum Opens January 12, 2009

Jeff Bishop

President

Leslie Thomas

V. P., Programs, &

Newsletter Editor

Linda Baker

Secretary/Publicity

Linda Geiger

Treasurer

Dola Davis

National Director

Tommy Cox

National Director

You are receiving this newsletter because you have not indicated you have email computer service. GATOTA has gone green and mails newsletters to new members and those without computer access. If you would like to help us go green, contact

Leslie at:

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

gatrailoftears.org

Georgia's newest attraction will open its doors to the public on January 12, 2009, as Tellus: Northwest Georgia Science Museum becomes the premiere destination for family-oriented science experiences. Eye-popping exhibits like an 80 foot-long Apatosaurus and a replica Wright flyer will excite and amaze visitors of all ages. Children will have a blast conducting hands-on experiments with light, sound, magnets and more. Dazzling gems and minerals will sparkle and glow alongside interactive exhibits demonstrating how the Earth moves and changes. Tellus is an expansive, world-class museum located in Cartersville at I-75 Exit 293. The museum features four main galleries: *The Weinman Mineral Gallery*, The Fossil Gallery, Science in Motion and The Collins Family Big Backyard. A 120-seat digital planetarium and an observatory with a state-of-the-art 20-inch telescope will also be located at Tellus. "Our visitors will see a collection of exhibits, all under one roof, that are not found anywhere else in the southeast: dinosaurs, crystals, vintage cars, a digital planetarium, a hands-on science gallery, and outdoor exhibits," said Tellus Museum Director Jose Santamaria. "There is so much to explore it may take several trips to experience all we have to offer." Tellus will be open daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission will be \$12 adults, \$10 seniors ages 65+, \$8 children ages 3-17 and students with ID, free to Tellus members and active military with ID. Planetarium show will be an additional \$3 (\$2 for members and one free show for active military). For information call 770-606-5700 or see www.TellusMuseum.org.

Be sure to check the gastateparks.org website for current events. Other websites that have places of interest to visit in Georgia are NotAtlanta.org, ExploreGordonCounty.com, Boothmuseum.org, and a good information website to subscribe to is <http://www.georgiahighcountry.org/>. Also subscribe to the Qualla newsletter for their calendar of events at <http://www.cherokee-nc.com/>.

GEORGIA CHAPTER OF THE TRAIL OF TEARS ASSOCIATION

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