EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

TOTA Returns to Cherokee Homelands for Conference

The 8th Annual Trail of Tears Association Conference & Symposium was held October 6 – 9, 2003, at the Holiday Inn in Cherokee, North Carolina. There were over 170 people at the conference.

The Museum of the Cherokee Indian welcomed conferencegoers to Cherokee with a reception and book signing at the museum the night of the 6th. After a morning board of directors meeting on the 7th, YOTA President Jack Baker introduced Principal Chief Chad Smith of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation and Principal Chief Michell Hicks of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians at the opening luncheon. Principal Chief Chad Smith of the Eastern Band then spoke to the conferences about the significance of not only telling the story of removal but also of telling about the enormous strength and resilience of the Cherokee people in surviving and prospering after removal.

Concurrent sessions started the afternoon of the 7th and ended the 9th. Presenters at the conference included Bill Anderson from Western Carolina University, James Bird from the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation, Michael Green from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duane King from the Southwest Museum, Theda Perdue from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Jaime Pinkham and Rick Wood from The Trust for Public Land, Bert Riggs from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Anne Rogers from Western Carolina University, former Deputy Principal Chief Hastings Shade from the Cherokee Nation, Anna McCoy Smith, a researcher of the Moravian Church, Philip Thompson from Thomason and Associates, and Dave Welch from the Oregon-California Trails Association.

Presentation topics included Creeks in Indian Territory, marriage between Europeans and Indians, Creek removal, Cherokee removal, trail preservation, land conservation, the Eastern Band’s removal exemption, maps and new discoveries along the Trail, the relationship between Cherokee and Moravian women, and the Trail of Tears in North Carolina, and Cherokee culture.

Two tours were offered to conferencegoers, including a driving tour to Murphy, North Carolina, that included narration about Trail of Tears sites seen along the way, and another tour to Junaluska Memorial Museum and Kituwah Mound. Both tours were very well-received among those attending.

Photo courtesy of Ted Slape

(Taken left to right) Betty Barker, Mary Adair, Carole Richmond, Betty Merryfield, and Jeni Wood wear their tear dresses to the opening reception and book signing at the Museum of the Cherokee Indian.

Dr. Bert Riggs (center) explains to tour participants the significance of Kituwah Mound.

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Remember, Challenge Cost-Share funds are not a grant, but rather are funds for mutually-agreed-upon national historic trail projects. Site-specific projects can generally only be funded for certified sites. Projects can be related to resource protection, management, visitor use facilities, interpretation, education, or research. Projects require a 50/50 match of federal and nonfederal funding. However, the nonfederal match can include the value of volunteer time and other in-kind services, donated equipment and supplies, and so forth. If you’re not sure whether or not your project will qualify, call us anyway, and let’s talk.

In fiscal year 2004, there was a reduction in the amount of Challenge Cost-Share funds available for national trails nationwide. Our total was reduced by approximately 16%, and we now have two new trails (El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail and the Old Spanish National Historic Trail) that are eligible to apply for funds.

Many of the projects accomplished along the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail are receiving funding from the National Park Service Challenge Cost-Share Program. Your project might qualify, too. Give us a call and we will send you a project proposal form and instructions. Projects should support the programs and goals of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail as set forth in the Comprehensive Management and Use Plan.

If you have a possible project, contact John Conoboy right away by mail or phone (505-988-6733).

We have extended our deadline. Project proposals should be received at the National Trails System Office - Santa Fe by March 31, 2004.

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PRRSRT STD U.S. POSTAGE PAID LITTLE ROCK, AR PERMIT 195

Newsletter of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail Partnership • May 2003 • Number 2

Byline:

Trail of Tears Association
2100 N University, Suite 143
Little Rock, AR 72207-6344

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A Message from the Trail of Tears Association President

In an earlier newsletter I gave my vision for the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, which discussed the potential for interpretation along the entire route. The Department of Arkansas Heritage is moving toward that goal. The mission of the Delta Heritage Trail is to establish a system of trails and recreation management within the NPS, USDA Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management, in process of erecting Trail of Tears' interpretation displays at six sites all across the state. These range from a site in eastern Arkansas at Helena on the Mississippi River, which was on the river route to northwest Arkansas at Pea Ridge National Battlefield Park, on the northern land route.

It is only with partners like the Department of Arkansas Heritage that this vision will be realized. I am grateful for their leadership under Bobbie Hefington in leading the way and becoming an example for others to follow. Indeed, they were instrumental in helping to establish the Trail of Tears Association and assisted in hosting the first annual conference in 1996. It is partners like this that will make the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail a success!

Pat Hays, the mayor of North Little Rock, has also shown his interest in the Trail of Tears by hosting a two-day charette to discuss ways of interpreting the forced removal of the Five Civilized Tribes, in a premier site along the river route near North Little Rock. This city has the distinction of being one of only two locations through which at least a part of each of the Tribes passed during their removal.

Jack Baker, President of the Trail of Tears Association

Library President and curator, Jack Baker, is one of a significant number of visitors in the coming years. I appreciate Mayor Hays’ interest in the Trail of Tears and look forward to the development of the site with the inclusion of Trail of Tears interpretation.

In December I visited the Moravian Archives in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. While there I saw the travel diary of Miles Vogler, a missionary to the Cherokees, of his journey in the fall of 1783 from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to the Cherokee Nation at New Echota in present-day Bartow County, Georgia. This handwritten, 65-page diary gives a detailed account of the route he took. Vogler, with two other Moravian missionaries, used the same northern route that was used by the majority of the Cherokees who left in the weeks following V.W. and went to northwest Arkansas at Pea Ridge National Battlefield Park, on the northern land route.

This diary will be a great asset in locating the actual Trail that was used and in identifying any segments that may still exist.

The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, which is to have numerous certified sites with interpretation all along the Trail, which was on the river route to northwest Arkansas at Pea Ridge National Battlefield Park, on the northern land route.

The Partnership for the National Trails System Office - Intermountain Region

The Partnership for the National Trails System Office - Intermountain Region - Trail of Tears National Historic Trail Receives Attention in National and International News

The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail (TRTE) has recently received national and international attention in several venues. This past summer, TIME magazine published a special issue on the National Park System—emphasizing historic and cultural sites. A brief history of Federal Indian removal and the national historic Trail were presented in The American-Indian Experience section. Although the article about the Trail was brief, many readers had the opportunity to be introduced to the removal story, since TIME’s circulation is in the millions.

The Partnership for the National Trails System, Inc., and its executive director, Gary Werner. However, as is customary, our Washington, D.C., and regional offices will take some share of that money to help cover their operational costs. We are still waiting to learn what the amount of those assessments will be.

Significant headway has been made in trail certification along the routes of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. We are streamlining the process and making the agreement forms simpler.

A new certification brochure will replace the outdated certification handbook. Several new sites have been certified and a number of agreements are pending (see page 5). An attractive framed certificate has been designed for site owners to display, and designs for signs have been created by our staff.

Legislation (HR#342) has been introduced to study and recommend whether to include the Benge and Bell Routes as part of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. Currently, there are unmarked sections of accounts of detachments of Cherokee on the routes during the removal. In addition, mapping of the routes and identification of some sites and segments along them were included in the Comprehensive Management and Use Plan. Trail supporters, particularly in Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama, would like to see the bill amended to include additional removal routes in those states. At this writing, no hearing on the legislation has been scheduled.

In addition to the Strategic Plan developed in Miami in 2002, we will soon have a finalized Interpretive Plan. These two plans, developed with you, will guide the work of the Association and the NPS for at least the next five years. Many of you responded to the request to prioritize the top five actions identified in the interpretive planning process, and we thank you for your input. Respondents identified signing of the trail as a high priority. This Trail of Tears National Historic Trail and the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, which our Santa Fe Office co-administers with the Bureau of Land Management, means that more trails are competing for a share of those funds.

The good news is, the Trail of Tears budget was increased by $603,000. The funding increase is the result of diligent work by the Partnership for the National Trails System Office - Intermountain Region

A Message from the Superintendent of the National Trails System Office - Intermountain Region

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The next issue of Pathways, the national newsletter of the Partnership for the National Trails System, will feature an article about the TRTE interpretive exhibits at the Cherokee Heritage Center at Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Also covered will be the annual conference of the Partnership that was sponsored by the Trail of Tears Association in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

The Trail of Tears NHT was selected as a case study in partnerships for the publication "Branding Our Trails" - approaches in National Park Stewardship. The TRTE article includes the trail logo and map, a photograph of a trail segment, and a trail scene painted by Cherokee artist Sam Watts. This attractive, full-color brochure made its debut at the World Congress on National Parks this past September in Durban, South Africa. Several thousand copies were distributed during the multi-agency conference on partnerships this past November in Los Angeles, California.
The Oklahoma chapter held its fall meeting on November 15, 2003, at the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. A grave marking ceremony for 10 survivors of the Trail of Tears was held following the meeting. The chapter has now conducted a total of 92 marksmarks since the beginning of the project to honor the survivors of the forced removal.

Planning for the 2004 national TOTA conference is underway by the Oklahoma chapter. We look forward to hosting the meeting, which will be held at the Cherokee Nation Hotel and Complex in Catoosa, Oklahoma, in October 2004.

The Georgia chapter has been active in research, historical restoration, and education about the Trail of Tears. The chapter continues to work closely with the Cherokee Nation Historical Society and other local organizations to promote local research and education about the Trail of Tears. The chapter has also worked with the Cherokee Nation Historical Park to develop new exhibits and educational programs about the Trail of Tears.

The Arkansas chapter will be busy in 2004, as well as its partners at the American Native Press Archives, the Department of Arkansas History and Heritage, and local historical societies. The chapter is interested in working with local communities to develop new exhibits and educational programs about the Trail of Tears. The chapter is also interested in working with local communities to develop new exhibits and educational programs about the Trail of Tears.

The Trail of Tears Association and the National Park Service have been working together to develop a new exhibit at the Trail of Tears National Historical Park. The exhibit will tell the story of the Cherokee and other Native American tribes who were forced to leave their homes and travel to Oklahoma. The exhibit will also highlight the contributions of local communities to the Trail of Tears.

The Missouri chapter has been working with local communities to develop new exhibits and educational programs about the Trail of Tears. The chapter is interested in working with local communities to develop new exhibits and educational programs about the Trail of Tears. The chapter is also interested in working with local communities to develop new exhibits and educational programs about the Trail of Tears.

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Development of Trail of Tears Association Website Complete

The national Trail of Tears Association’s website is now up and running and can be found at www.nationalTOTA.org. The main page of the site offers information on the role the Trail of Tears Association plays in preserving and promoting the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, and the relationship between the Association and the National Park Service. The “General Information” page describes the TOTA mission and provides links to information about the state chapters, national board of directors, conference information, and products sold by TOTA. “The Story” page details the history of the Cherokee removal, from European contact to the aftermarket in the Indian Territory. The “Membership Information” page lists the benefits of membership and provides an application form.

Three pages are provided by the National Park Service as links to their website: “Trail Maps and Database,” “Newsletters,” and “Certified Sites.” The “Trail Maps” page offers two map databases using Geographic Information Systems, one titled “Designated Routes” and the other titled “Routes Under Study.” The “Newsletters” page offers access to the most current newsletter, as well as two older newsletters. The “Certified Sites” page lists the certified sites along the Trail, provides descriptions and contact information for each site, and describes how a site becomes certified.

The website will be updated regularly. Check back very often to see updates about such things as the chapters and the conference.

DAH Prepares Nominations for National Register

The Department of Arkansas Heritage (DAH) and its Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) have been preparing National Register of Historic Places nominations for Trail of Tears sites in the state, working with the historic context developed in partnership with the NPS’s National Trails System Office-Santa Fe and approved last year by the Keeper of the National Register in Washington, D.C.

To date, Bell Route segments at Village Creek State Park have been listed on the National Register, as has the site of the Blackfish Lake Ferry Crossing and Cadron segment. Nominations are also being developed for three Northern Route segments in Benton County, and AHPP historians are conducting additional fieldwork for more potential nominations. The AHPP is also seeking National Historic Landmark status for the 1.5-mile-long Village Creek State Park segment. Visit the AHPP website for more information, at www.arkansaspreservation.org/history.

Partners Meet in North Little Rock to Discuss Waterfront Interpretation

The City of North Little Rock, Arkansas, and Mayor Pat Hays hosted a two-day visioning session on January 13 and 14, 2004, to discuss possible development concepts for commemorating and interpreting Indian removal and the Trail of Tears in North Little Rock. In attendance were members of the Trail of Tears Association, including President Jack Baker, Executive Director Paul Austin, and Coordinator Jerra Quinton. Representing the Arkansas chapter were Chapter President Katy Sloan and Past President Dr. Dan Littlefield. Also in attendance were representatives of the Cherokee Nation, the Chickasaw Nation, the National Trails System Office of the National Park Service, Central High School National Historic Site, the Arkansas Historical Preservation Program, the North Little Rock History Commission, and other city entities. North Little Rock, and particularly the Riverfront Park along the Arkansas River in the downtown area, has emerged as a significant site because of its association with all of the five tribes removed from the southeastern United States. Recently completed research by Dr. Littlefield, funded by the NPS Challenge Cost-Share program, has shed new light on the significant extant resources of the riverfront, as well as providing an in-depth understanding of the removal experience here. In the years following the Indian Removal Act of 1830, over 40,000 Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole passed through the North Little Rock site. Some passed along the Arkansas River; some came to the area over land routes; many crossed the river on either of the two ferries to Little Rock; and large numbers camped—sometimes for weeks—on the banks of the river. The U.S. Army had a presence in the area to monitor removal activities, and contractors established major supply depots in the area as well.

Mayor Hays began the session by explaining the city’s commitment to revitalize the downtown area, which includes the development of a master waterfront plan. Aware of the city’s significance in Indian removal, Mayor Hays expressed the belief that this visioning session’s work would be useful in guiding the city’s waterfront plans. The discussion continued with an update from Dr. Littlefield on the extensive research that his team at the American Native Press Archives is conducting on Indian Removal in the North Little Rock area. The group then entered into a lengthy discussion of the large variety of stories that can be told.

Although much work is still needed, a broad range of alternatives for creating an interpretive experience in the city were discussed. Among the ideas was a major interpretive center, with each tribe or nation having a place to interpret their removal and resettlement experience; preservation and interpretation of the historic sites in the area; the development of a research and education center; the development of an interpretive trail along the river walk system; extensive public art projects; and the recreation of a creek or flat boat on the river, with a living history component.

Visioning and planning will continue, and the group adjourned with the intention of reconvening at a later date, pursuing greater tribal participation, and opening the discussion to a wider audience.

DAH and AHPP are also working with the NPS and State Parks to place interpretive wayside exhibit panels at Village Creek State Park, Helena, Pea Ridge National Military Park, Cadron Settlement Park, Lake Dardanelle State Park, and North Little Rock. These panels will discuss Removal as it affected those six locations. The NPS provided Challenge Cost-Share funding for the project and AHPP is seeking additional money from the Arkansas Humanities Council to create an additional panel for each site that will provide a brief overview of federal Indian removal policy.

Additionally, DAH has developed a memo- randum of agreement with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, which allows placement of interpretive exhibit panels at its boat ramps located at sites related to the Trail of Tears. DAH is hoping to work with the Arkansas chapter of TOYA to develop these.

Partners Meet in North Little Rock to Discuss Waterfront Interpretation

Mayor Pat Hays discusses his ideas for Trail of Tears interpretation along the North Little Rock Riverfront Park.

To finalize the draft interpretive plan, a strategy to implement the remaining action—developing and installing signs with the logo along the trail’s length—needs to be developed. How can everyone contribute to the planning, development, and placement of an identifiable system of signs? How will the work be funded? These questions, and the National Park Service. Four of the actions—those emphasizing marketing, a research strategy, site certification, and resource monitoring—will be addressed through the Strategic Plan implementation.

Thank you, Donors, for your extra support!
A Look at the 2004 TOTA Conference

Trail News is produced by the partnership of the Trail of Tears Association and the National Park Service National Trails System Office - Santa Fe.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Are you a current member of TOTA? If not, and you would like to continue receiving Trail News, please join TOTA today!

Membership in the Trail of Tears Association automatically includes membership in one state chapter. Additional state memberships are $10 each.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES
$25.00

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