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# Ridge Notes

The Newsletter of Chieftains Museum / Major Ridge Home

Winter 2008

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

In pondering the content of this article, reflections on the past year and the remarkable happenings which enhanced the effectiveness of our operations in 2007 come to mind.

Those reflections include: polymer on the walking trail behind the Museum which effects a dirt road.....attending the inauguration of the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation made possible by the generosity of Gaynelle Grizzard, our "elder" and founder.....a successful membership party held at the home of Fran and Harris Bagley.....new directional signs placed by the City of Rome and GADOT directing visitors to our national site on the historic Trail of Tears.....dedication of the Ross/Ridge Road by the DAR.....a successful National TOTA Conference held in Rome.....continued support by the National Park Service.....a year of quality service by our staff and board of directors. All are vital to the health of our organization.

We wish you and yours a wonderful 2008. May all your New Year's Resolutions be easy ones. We hope to see you at the Museum soon!

*Marsha Welch*

Marsha Welch, Board President

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

### January

Special exhibit "Things Found," January 15 - March 28, 2008

Have you ever wondered about the collections that are housed at the Chieftains Museum? We have many artifacts that are not displayed in the Museum. Experience objects found on the property of Major Ridge through the upcoming exhibit "Things Found" presented by the Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home in January 2008. Visitors to the Museum will be excited to see artifacts which have been found around the Museum during the past 40 years! These are items that the public will find most enjoyable as they date from the Ridge period to the early 20th century. This collection includes a variety of objects including pottery, personal effects, toys, and tools recovered from various surface collections, archaeological excavations, and items found underneath the house. Also on exhibit will be selected items from the collection of the late Ed Byars, a resident of Rome, a former employee of the Georgia Department of Transportation, and an "amateur archeologist." Mr. Byars collected the pieces from various sites around Floyd County during his years as a GDOT employee. Unfortunately, location data do not accompany the items. The items from his collection are on loan from Mrs. Ed Byars.

### February

Dr Tiya Miles speaks on the African-American experience on the Trail of Tears in celebration of Black History Month. February 22, 7 p.m., Lovejoy Baptist Church, 436 Branham Avenue, Rome, GA.

### April

Old Ways Workshops TBA

April 19-20 Annual Herb and Plant Sale

April 19 - 26 Rome celebrates "Rivers Festival." During the Rivers Festival, Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home will be holding its annual Plant and Herb Sale at the Coosa Valley Fairgrounds on April 19 and 20. New this year, we will offer rainbarrels for sale, which will include a spigot. Chieftains will also be participating in the Ross to Ridge Trail Walk on April 19. The walk will begin at the confluence of the rivers downtown and end at Chieftains. There, walkers will be able to tour the museum and to listen to stories from the Seven Hills Tellers about the river system and its relationship to Cherokee life and heritage. Donations will be happily accepted

April 22 - July 25 Cherokee Clothing Styles

Clothing styles from three historic time periods: pre-contact, contact and post contacts, including the dress worn by Bobbie Smith, wife of the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, during his inauguration in August 2007.



Claudia M. Oakes, Executive Director of Chieftains Museum/ Major Ridge Home (center) congratulates Volunteers of the Year, Peggy Nash (left) and Ruth Demeter (right).

## TOTA CONTRIBUTORS

In November 2007 the Georgia Chapter of the National Trail of Tears Association hosted the National TOTA conference in Rome at the Forum. We thank the following contributors who helped to make this conference successful:

United Community Bank  
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 Broad Street Café  
 & Ice Cream Parlor



Chieftains assist with conference registration.



Jeff Bishop, Sarah and Harvey Hill enjoy lunch at the TOTA conference.



TOTA attendees enjoy a reception hosted at the Museum during the conference.



Jack Baker of National TOTA, Jerry Jennings, County Commissioner; Ansley Saeille from Chieftains, Arne Rigas, City Commissioner and Eddie Lumsden, County Commissioner talk during the TOTA luncheon.



Patti Barron, Chieftains Board Member and Carey Tilley, Executive Director of the Cherokee Heritage Center, visit at the Chieftains Reception.

## DAR DEDICATION

The Xavier Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicated an historic marker designating the Ross Ridge Road on the afternoon of Thursday, November 8th at Ridge Ferry Park following the conclusion of the National Trail of Tears Association meeting for 2007. The DAR frequently erects historical markers to recognize events or locations where American history has occurred. Since the City of Rome had attached to Chieftains' National Park site certification for the National Trail of Tears, the DAR had the marker built to commemorate this pathway that Chief John Ross and Major Ridge traveled when they lived in the Floyd County area before the removal of 1838. The dedication was attended by many state and local elected officials of both the DAR and the state of Georgia. Chief Chad Smith of the Cherokee Nation gave the address for the dedication after being introduced by DAR Xavier Chapter Regent Cathy Dollar.

## CHEROKEE NATION INAUGURATION CEREMONY FOR CHIEF CHAD SMITH HELD ON AUGUST 14, 2007



Chief Chad Smith is sworn in as Principal Chief.



Visiting with the Chief and Jack Baker, Tribal Council Member, at the inaugural reception.



Ansley, Marsha, Claudia and Gaynelle enjoy a private lunch with the Chief, Troy Poteete and Carey Tilley.



Visiting the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah, OK.



The Cherokee Nation Youth Choir performs at the Inauguration.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

During 2007, the Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home has been engaged in a significant amount of work to fully define and implement the appropriate steps to return the property to its 1837 configuration, the year the Ridge family left northwest Georgia to go to Indian Territory in what is now Oklahoma and western Arkansas. The most important step that the museum took was the engagement of a museum planning and design firm to guide our leadership in the planning of a new interpretive center for the northern end of the property.

After receiving proposals from a number of architectural and design groups from across the country, the Museum's Facilities Committee invited four firms to make presentations. From that group, the Committee recommended to the full Board of Directors that the Museum engage Metcalfe Architecture and Design of Philadelphia to work with us in this important phase of planning for our future. Among Metcalfe's client list are Monticello, the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, Independence Hall Visitors Center, and the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences.

In September, November, and December 2007, the board and invited members of the community worked with Metcalfe representatives in a series of workshops to plan the interior of the interpretive center. We anticipate the new facility will be approximately 15,000 square feet and will have minimum physical and visual impact on the property. Its location on the northern end of the property will allow for dramatic sightlines to the Ridge home and the former Ridge ferry site. There will be space for permanent and temporary exhibits, classrooms for school and public programs, the museum store, a multi-use media room, office space, and a small outdoor amphitheater. The space will be a two-story open floor plan to also allow for facility rental for social functions to enhance earned income.

These are exciting times in the history of the Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home, and we will keep you, our supporters, informed as we progress toward realizing our vision.



*Chieftains Board and NPS representatives meet with the Metcalfe team for design workshops.*

## ATTENTION MEMBERS AND NOT-YET MEMBERS!

The Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home is going to make some changes to our membership structure starting in 2008. Those of you who renewed your membership after August 1, 2007, will be paid-up members through December 31, 2008. We are going to a calendar-year membership year to coincide with our calendar-year fiscal year, so we can better predict our membership income as it directly relates to our yearly operating budget.

As for you not-yet members, please use the form included in this newsletter to become members. Then you, too, can begin enjoying such benefits as free museum admission, discounted program fees, 10% discounts in the museum store, early members-only shopping time at our annual Herb Sale, and other member events.

Also, early in 2008, we will send all you current and new members a membership card so you can easily see when your membership is due for renewal. As you will see elsewhere in this newsletter, very exciting things are happening at Chieftains, and more will be coming in 2008, so you won't want to miss being part of our "growing history"!

A note to members who renewed before December 31, 2007: please forgive us if we sent you a year-end reminder after you had already renewed. We have recently hired a part-time data entry clerk who is helping us sort out our data base, and we sincerely apologize if we asked you to renew when you already had!

## DR. BLANTON VISIT

The Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home welcomed Dr. Dennis Blanton, Curator of Native American Archaeology, Fernbank Museum of Natural History, on January 24, 2008. Dr. Blanton provided a presentation of his work involving archaeology at St. Catherine's Island and his continuing fieldwork at Santa Isabel de Utinahica. Santa Isabel is a 17th century Spanish mission site located near the forks of the Ocmulgee and Oconee Rivers in present day Telfair County, Georgia.

## MUSEUM STORE FEATURES NEW BOOKS

We have new items in the Museum Store for your gift needs. We have the beautiful coffee table books: *The Cherokee Trail of Tears*, text by Duane King, and photography by David Fitzgerald, and *Cherokee*, photography by David Fitzgerald and text by Robert J. Conley. Both books have an introduction by Principal Chief, Chadwick Smith. We also have *The Art of the Cherokee*, from prehistory to the present by Susan C. Power. These books would be welcome in any home. We also have many books for children from animal tales of the Cherokee to the history of the people.

We have jewelry, rocks, replica arrowheads, dreamcatchers of all types, t-shirts and much more! Do not forget to pick up your own copy of the DVD, Rich-Heape Films production of "The Trail of Tears, Cherokee Legacy," presented by Wes Studi and narrated by James Earl Jones. This video won the Best Documentary from the American Indian Film Institute Silver World Medal, New York Festivals TELLY Silver Award and was the featured Saturday night presentation at the 2007 Rome International Film Festival.

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## Memorials, Honors and Acknowledgements

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### We gratefully acknowledge the following donations:

Atlanta History Center - display case  
 Ford, Gittings & Kane Jewelers - two display cases

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\*Every effort has been made to insure the accuracy of this list. Please let us know if there have been any omissions or if any corrections should be made. We appreciate your continued support of the Museum and its programs.

**CHIEFTAINS  
MUSEUM  
MAJOR RIDGE HOME**

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**OUR MISSION:**

To preserve and interpret the story of the 19th Century Cherokee through the life and home of the Ridge Family.

**OUR VISION:**

To become a nationally recognized destination to experience 19th Century Cherokee life and the event leading to the “clash of cultures” that culminated in the Trail of Tears.

***It's never too late to become a member!***

**2008 MEMBERSHIP DONATION**

In recognition of the unique historical and cultural significance of Chieftains Museum, I support the membership campaign as:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chieftain (\$2500+) | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor (\$1000)        | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron (\$500)    |
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***Looking for a special gift for someone who has “everything?”***

Look no further! Give the gift of membership to Chieftains Museum, Inc. All levels of membership include a 10% discount in the Museum Store, early shopping privileges at the annual Herb and Plant Sale, and unlimited free admission to the Museum and its ongoing exhibits. Members are also invited to the annual Membership Party each fall, hosted by our Board of Directors, featuring an unusual menu of food with a Cherokee influence.