

January 2017



CHIEFTAINS MUSEUM / MAJOR RIDGE HOME

THE RIDGE REPORT

New Events in the New Year at Chieftains

Happy New Year! The museum is excited to announce our Spring 2017 partnerships and programs for the community.

BERRY COLLEGE

Chieftains will kick off 2017 with a Family Free Day as we host the Fourth Annual Floyd County Seed Swap with Berry College at the museum on Saturday, February 18th from 11am-2pm. This annual event brings together agricultural specialists and garden enthusiasts to share ideas on plant sustainability in our community. Seed saving was particularly important for Cherokee agriculture from year to year. Participants in the Seed Swap can learn the proper way to save seeds, share their own seeds, and complete learning activities inside the museum related to Cherokee farming and gardening.

We cannot tell a lie—the museum is proud to be a co-sponsor for the Big Fibbers Storytelling Festival, March 17th-19th, 2017. Organized by the Ridge & Valley Tellers in our community, the Big Fibbers event is a three-day annual storytelling festival in Rome, Georgia that features storytelling from local, regional, and national tellers, a storytelling workshop, a tall-tale contest for grown-ups, and a storytelling contest for those seventeen and under. Storytellers scheduled for this year's event include Carol Cain, Natalie Jones plus Chetter Galloway, Jane Cunningham, Anthony Vinson, Terrell Shaw, Esther Culver, Bob Harris, Mary Elena Kirk, Gary Greene, and Delmas Franklin. Chieftains Museum will host a "Meet the Tellers" reception for festival participants on our campus from 5-7pm on March 16th. Visit www.facebook.com/bigfibbers/ to see how you can become a part of this wonderful local tradition!



The museum will celebrate the first day of spring by partnering with Berry College to present "Ancestral Seeds: Cherokee Gardening Past and Present" by Dr. James Veteto, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Cherokee studies at Western Carolina University. Veteto is also the Executive Director of the Appalachian Institute for Mountain Studies, Director of the Southern Seed Legacy, and a Research Associate at the Botanical Research Institute of Texas. This free lecture is open to the public and will begin at 6:00pm on Monday, March 20th in Evans Auditorium on the Berry College campus.

Mark your calendars for one of our biggest events of the year—the annual Herb & Plant Sale scheduled this year for April 8th-9th at the Coosa Valley Fairgrounds. This year's sale will feature plenty of beautiful plants, shrubs, and trees to refresh your drought damaged lawns and gardens. A member preview sale will take place the evening of Friday, April 7th.

For more information on these events, visit our website at www.chieftainmuseum.org. We hope to see all of you as we stride towards spring at Chieftains Museum!

Fall 2016 Brings Harvest of Events to Chieftains

The museum closed the year with several educational and fun events for the local community.



Chieftains once again had a table in the children's craft tent at the Chiaha Harvest Festival in October. The museum hosted 317 children and their families at our table to make Halloween masks while they learned about the tradition of Cherokee Booger Masks.

Another educational experience for the community took place at the museum in November. Our Family Free Day featured a Cherokee weapons demonstration performed by a volunteer from Red Clay State Historic Site as well as crafts inside the museum. 123 families, community members, and Boy Scouts joined us at the museum to learn about this unique aspect of Cherokee culture.



A ranger from the Red Clay State Historical Park teaches the crowd about Cherokee culture.



Visitors create crafts at the Christmas Free Day event.

To finish the year, Chieftains hosted our annual Christmas Free Day in December. A new tradition at the museum, this program provides the community with free admission to the museum where they can sip hot cocoa as they complete Christmas crafts to keep or share. This year, 81 participants braved the cold, rainy weather to help us celebrate the season at the museum.

We would like to thank all of those who made our Fall 2016 programs a success!

New Features in Major Ridge Demonstration Garden

Although the ground has gone cold, the Chieftains Museum Landscape Committee and volunteer Master Gardeners have kept warm spirits as we plan new features for the museum campus.

If you have driven by the museum lately, you will see a new arbor constructed in the Major Ridge Demonstration Garden, courtesy of Master Gardener volunteer Chuck Nix. This arbor not only adds character to the garden, but will provide a place of reflection for visitors as they sit and view the campus on the benches built inside.

The museum plans to also add some “heart” to the demonstration garden in the next few months. Originally painted by Elizabeth Barron and exhibited in the 2016 Community HeART Project sponsored by the Rome Area Council for the Arts, the Chieftains Museum heart sculpture will come home as a focal point in the garden. Entitled “The Balance of History,” the heart-shaped artwork features a large tree and figures painted on a bronze background surrounded by Cherokee symbols. The museum is honored to have this sculpture on our campus for visitors to enjoy.



The new arbor built in the Major Ridge Demonstration Garden.



The heart sculpture will soon appear in our garden for visitors to enjoy.

Another new addition to the Chieftains campus are three interpretive signs that will be installed at the end of January. These signs provide information about Cherokee agriculture and the Ridge plantation as well as a map of the original farm as researched by the National Park Service. These signs were designed by Berry College student Tessa Howard as part of a grant she received from the school to assist with the demonstration garden and campus improvements.

Be sure to visit this spring and see how our campus is taking shape with the help of our gracious volunteers!

Collections Corner

1836 McKenney & Hall Prints of John Ridge and Spring Frog



John Ridge

The prints seen here are part of the *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*—a three-volume collection of Native American biographies and lithograph portraits originally published in the United States from 1836 to 1844 by Thomas McKenney and James Hall.

Believing that Native Americans were threatened as a race, McKenney wanted to preserve "in the archives of the Government whatever of the aboriginal man can be rescued from the destruction which awaits his race." He commissioned Charles Bird King to paint portraits of the leaders who came to Washington to negotiate treaties and had James Hall write biographies of them. To reach a wider audience, McKenney also commissioned lithographs of the paintings.

The growing collection of portraits was first housed in the United States Department of War, which at that time was responsible for Indian Affairs. In 1858, the original oil paintings were moved to *The Castle*, the Smithsonian Institution's first building.

In the winter of 1865, *The Castle* suffered the most catastrophic fire in the Smithsonian's history. 295 of the original Indian portraits were destroyed with only five being rescued. Although one of the painters had made a few copies of his favorite portraits for himself, nearly all of the portraits would have been lost had McKenney, Hall, and their colleagues not completed the lithography and publication part of the project. The three volumes are the only record of prominent Native American leaders of the first half of the 19th century.

Edward Biddle and F. W. Greenough, publishers from Philadelphia, released the prints. Biddle's prints are considered first editions and are very rare today. Greenough's prints, like the ones seen here, are considered later editions but remain rare as well.

Mrs. H.F. Hunter, Jr. donated these prints to Chieftains in 2016.



Spring Frog

Play Dress Up With US!



CHIEFTAINS MUSEUM/MAJOR RIDGE HOME

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We're on the Web!

Visit us at chieftainmuseum.org

Chieftains is excited to announce the addition of a new interactive station inside the museum. Beginning in January 2017, visitors will be able to play “dress up” with samples of 18th and 19th century clothing. A common misnomer in Cherokee history is the idea that, as a people, they were still wearing primitive clothing when they were removed from the eastern United States in 1838.



This interactive will not only provide a fun activity for families and children, but will explain clothing styles and their meanings in the history of textiles for both Cherokees and Americans. Visitors will also have a chance to see how they look in this historical clothing with our full-length mirror and are encouraged to take a photo and post it on their social media page. Come by and explore our wardrobe!

Upcoming Events

February 18th:

Family Free Day—Floyd County Seed Swap: 11am-2pm

March 17th-19th:

Big Fibbers Storytelling Festival,
Trinity United Methodist Church

March 20th:

James Veteto Lecture at Berry College at 6pm

April 7th:

Plant Sale Preview

April 8th-9th :

Annual Herb & Plant Sale