

# Chieftains Commemorates our 200<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary!

Winter 2018



CHIEFTAINS MUSEUM / MAJOR RIDGE HOME

THE RIDGE REPORT

The museum would like to wish all of our friends and supporters a wonderful holiday season and a very Happy New Year!

We are excited to look towards 2019 as we commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Major Ridge coming to the house that is Chieftains Museum. For this anniversary, we have planned a dynamic and exciting calendar of events and programs for the community. We start the year with a traveling exhibition from the Oklahoma History Center and will conduct a special program each month as part of our anniversary celebration. These programs will include an African American genealogy workshop, a new archaeological dig on the museum campus with Pat Garrow, performances by the Warriors of AniKituhwa from North Carolina, a presentation by award winning author Charles Frazier, and an in-house exhibition on Frankie Welch, just to name a few of the featured events on our calendar for 2019.

We encourage you to join us in commemorating this important anniversary by renewing your membership, encouraging others to join the museum in 2019 and by attending our special anniversary events throughout the year. Members of the museum will receive special benefits for each event in 2019. Memberships start at \$20 for students and can be purchased at the museum, over the phone, or via regular mail. Membership forms can be found on the museum website at [www.chieftainsmuseum.org](http://www.chieftainsmuseum.org).

We look forward to seeing you in 2019 as we mark this special 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Chieftains!



*The Warriors of AniKituhwa from North Carolina will be performing during a special museum event in June 2019. Stay tuned to our website and Facebook page for more information as the event approaches!*

# Chieftains Begins Commemorative Year with an Exhibition of Cherokee Portraits



Beginning January 16th, Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home will present “Of Influence: Portraits of Cherokee People,” a traveling exhibition on loan from the Oklahoma History Center and funded by a grant from the Rome Area Council for the Arts.

Ranging from 1845 to the 1960s, this portrait collection presents people of influence in the Cherokee tribe. From Cherokee leader and Confederate Colonel William Penn Adair to photographer Jennie Ross Cobb, these photographs illuminate Cherokee individuals and their roles within their tribe and communities. Many images in this exhibit show the actual size of the original photograph alongside an enlarged version.

Museum members with a 2019 membership are invited to an exclusive exhibition preview the evening of January 11<sup>th</sup> from 5-7pm. The exhibition will be open to the public and available with the purchase of regular admission from January 16th through February 28th during museum operating hours, Wednesday-Saturday from 10am-5pm.

For more information on the exhibition, museum memberships, or other events in 2019, contact the museum at (706) 291-9494 or visit our website at [www.chieftainmuseum.org](http://www.chieftainmuseum.org).



## Chieftains Works With Forum on ICE Experience



*4th grade students from West Central Elementary School play a game of hot potato at the Chieftains station during the ICE Experience at the Forum on December 4th.*

It has been a busy holiday season for the museum! Beginning in November, Chieftains participated in the I.C.E. (Ice skating, Chieftains, E.C.O. Center) Experience in partnership with the Forum River Center and the Rome E.C.O. Center. This series of field trips brought teachers and students from as far away as Carroll County to try their hand at ice skating as well as learn about our local history and ecology.

Students who attended the I.C.E. Experience were treated to a winter wonderland experience on the ice before visiting with E.C.O. Center staff to discover how animals survive through the winter. Students then met with Chieftains staff and volunteers to learn games Cherokee children could

play inside during the cold winter months. By the end of December, over 1,100 students participated in the I.C.E. Experience.

Chieftains would like to thank Thomas Kislak and the Forum River Center for allowing us to partner with them on this signature event in Rome!

# Native American Slaveholders Subject of February Workshop for Black History Month

In honor of Black History Month, the museum will co-sponsor a workshop to help you find your African American ancestors at the Rome-Floyd County Library from 10am-12pm on Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Sponsored in-part by both the Rome Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and the Rome-Floyd County Library, the workshop will feature a presentation by Emma Davis Hamilton, a genealogist who specializes in African American ancestry, particularly when searching for enslaved relatives owned by Native Americans.



When learning about history, many researchers are surprised to discover that many Native Americans were slaveholders. Long before the African slave trade existed in America, there was evidence of inter-tribal servitude and slavery throughout the various Native nations that lived here. However, slavery for Native Americans was often the result of warfare, with slaves being taken from conquered tribes. With European contact, however, the concept of slavery in North America began to change—African slavery was a lifetime condition that passed from generation to generation.

For the Cherokee, the use of African slaves for large-scale labor emerged after the United States became its own nation. Soon after American Revolution, the United States government encouraged the Cherokee people to assimilate into American life and lead a more farm-based lifestyle that included subsistence farming, plantation farming, and ranching. As a result, the Cherokee began to raise cash crops such as tobacco and cotton that required slave labor. In general, slaveholding in the Cherokee Nation was limited to a wealthy minority of Cherokees, including Major Ridge. On the Chieftains property, Major Ridge owned a 210-acre plantation with between 15 and 30 slaves tending the fields and house. The property also included three slave cabins.

Finding enslaved ancestors is a challenge for many African American researchers, a challenge often met by professional researchers like Emma Davis Hamilton. Emma Davis Hamilton is a native of Florida. She has 25 years of experience as a genealogy and history researcher. She is the past president and a charter member of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Metro Atlanta Chapter and a board member of the Georgia Genealogical Society and the Friends of the Georgia Archives. Hamilton is also a member of the National Genealogical Society; the South Carolina Genealogical Society and the Florida Genealogical Society. She has made presentations at the National Genealogical Society conference, the Federation of Genealogical Societies conference, the National Archives at Atlanta, the Georgia Archives, and the Atlanta History Center. Hamilton is also a retired Lieutenant Colonel (U.S. Army). She received her undergraduate degree from Howard University and a master's degree from Western Kentucky University.

The February 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop is free and open to the public, but reservations are required. To make your reservation, please contact the museum at (706) 291-9494 or via email at [chmuseum@bellsouth.net](mailto:chmuseum@bellsouth.net) by January 30, 2019.



## Annual Floyd County Seed Swap Scheduled for March 2<sup>ND</sup>

BERRY COLLEGE

While winter winds continue in the new year, spring is just around the corner! Chieftains is proud to partner with Berry College to host the Sixth Annual Floyd County Seed Swap in conjunction with a Family Free Day at the museum on Saturday, March 2nd.

The Seed Swap is an informal event co-sponsored by the museum along with the Berry College Environmental Studies Program, Keep Rome Floyd Beautiful, Action Ministries Rome, the Rome Federated Garden Club, and Rome Master Gardeners. The purpose of the Seed Swap is to encourage the production and protection of heirloom seeds and plant varieties that are at risk of being lost in order to provide a sustainable and diverse landscape in our community. Seed saving was particularly important to Cherokees like Major Ridge in order to sustain his family through the winter months and provide crops for the spring and summer.

For those interested in seeing what the Seed Swap and the museum are all about, the museum is offering free admission for the entire day.

For more information on the Seed Swap/Free Day and other upcoming events, contact the museum at (706) 291-9494 or visit the museum's website at [www.chieftainmuseum.org](http://www.chieftainmuseum.org).

## Collections Corner

### Invitation to the Opening of Frankie Welch's Shop in Atlanta



Frankie Welch is a fashion designer from Rome, Georgia. She has designed scarves for prominent political figures, which she sold from her boutique in Alexandria, Virginia. After a career as a Home Economics teacher which spanned nearly two decades, Welch began working as a fashion consultant. Developing a clientele, she moved into designing accessories and then dresses. Welch designed a dress worn by First Lady Betty Ford, which is now on display in the Smithsonian's First Ladies' Hall in the National Museum of American History. She also designed dresses on display at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Frankie Welch signed and sent this card to Dorothy B. Padgett, inviting her to attend the opening of Mrs. Welch's "unusual scarf, clothing, and accessory shop" in Omni International on November 9, 1977. This invitation was donated to the museum by Mrs. Padgett in 2018. The museum plans to create a temporary exhibit on Mrs. Welch in 2019.

Perhaps you know my scarf designs since so many of them were inspired by my native Georgia.

After fourteen years in Virginia, I'm coming home to open an unusual scarf, clothing and accessory shop in Omni International.

I do hope you can join me for my special opening.

Sincerely,  
Frankie Welch

So hope you can come  
Frankie

Frankie Welch  
requests the pleasure of the company of  
Dorothy B. Padgett  
at the opening of her shop  
on November 9, 1977

R.S.V.P. at Two o'clock  
523-5631 Frankie Welch, Omni International



**CHIEFTAINS MUSEUM/MAJOR RIDGE HOME**

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**We're on the Web!**

Visit us at [chieftainmuseum.org](http://chieftainmuseum.org)



The museum will be closed for the holidays beginning Saturday, December 22nd. We will resume regular hours of operation on Thursday, January 3, 2019.

We hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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## Get Your Membership Today!

Remember that our membership year at Chieftains ends on December 31, 2018. You can renew your membership anytime by contacting the museum at (706) 291-9494.

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## Upcoming Events

- January 11th:** Member preview of "Of Influence: Portraits of Cherokee People," 5-7pm
- January 16th-** "Of Influence: Portraits of Cherokee People" exhibit on display through February 28th
- February 2nd:** African American Genealogy Workshop at Rome-Floyd County Library, 10am-12pm
- March 2nd:** Sixth Annual Floyd County Seed Swap