

Newsletter Spring 2010

First Families of the Cherokee Nation News

Siyo to the membership of the First Families of the Cherokee Nation. We hope everyone is having a great year. The organization has made some additions to it's membership and as of May 15, 2010, we have 879 members, 18 new memberships since the last newsletter.

We want to extend a warm welcome to:

Member

Rue Renfro Powers
Darrell Bryan Wofford
Rex Lee Huha
Sequoyah E. England
Destiny C. Vann
Elijah Alexander Vann
Anita Keen Deiter
Marget Hoffman Herndon
Billy Joe Hoffman
Kristen Dianna Collins
Robert Patrick Gililand
Michael C. Halseth
David M. Cooper
Ryan Townsend Rash
Catherine Foreman Gray
Leslie Marie Halseth
Dr. Jonathan B. Hook
Freida Mae (Moore) Hoffman

Ancestor

Zerelda T. Yarnell
James Daugherty Wofford and Jackson England
James Boles
Jackson England
James Vann
James Vann
Watta Beanstick
Ellen (Humphrey) Hoffman
Ellen (Humphrey) Hoffman
Ellen (Humphrey) Hoffman
James Boles
Chief Moytoy I (Amadohiyi) of Chota
Moses Downing
Nancy Ward
James Starr
Chief Moytoy I (Amadohiyi) of Chota
Nellie Martin Agnew
Thompson Sanders

The FFCN Reunion organizing committee would like to invite the membership to present family history story boards at the 2010 annual reunion. If interested email Gene Norris at gene-norris@cherokee.org. We would like for all members to participate in the event as much as possible so please take this opportunity to showcase your family history. We would like to thank Roy Hamilton for writing up a short piece for this newsletter detailing his experience at one of the cemeteries in Sequoyah County, Oklahoma. All members are welcome to submit any news or family history for inclusion in future publications.

FFCN Reunions of the Past



FFCN Tidbit:

Congratulations to Mary Crofford, FFCN member, the new Collections Manager for the Cherokee National Historical Society.



The Places Where Our People Rest

There are, no doubt, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Cherokee family cemeteries scattered throughout the Cherokee Nation proper. We have visited many, documented some, and found them all historically important. But, there I had an experience like no other in June. I was invited to visit two family cemeteries in a rural area of Sequoyah County.

We visited the Warseat/Sourjohn Cemetery first. It is still in use, but in need of restoration efforts. Several headstones are in the Cherokee syllabary, some dating back to the civil war era, and some with family members born before the Removal Era. We plan on returning to the site and documenting each stone, and doing some restoration work.

The second cemetery we were taken to was about two miles from the first, located off of the main road, through a field, and in the tree line of a woodland area near a hollow. This cemetery is the Creek Sam Cemetery. Like I said, I have been to many cemeteries in the Cherokee Nation; but, none has ever affected me like this cemetery did.

It slowly becomes visible as you crest the edge of the decline to the hollow, sitting among grown, growing, trees, dead trees, and fallen branches. There is perhaps 40 stone structures setting about the landscape. They are like stone coffins floating above the land. They are of varied sizes, adult and child. All of those that are inscribed are in the syllabary, there are engraved symbols on some, and there are small opens in one end of all of them. Some of the tops have slid off of them, and lay nearby. This is a sight that brings to mind ancient Inca ruins. This is an amazing sight, beautiful and full of the spirit of Cherokee ancestors.

We'll return, I am sure many times, and document the headstones, take photographs and try to do some restoration. I'll follow-up and include a picture in a future newsletter.

Kila,

Roy Hamilton, Board Member Cherokee National Historical Society

[Roy Hamilton assists in organizing the FFCN Reunion and volunteers his extensive knowledge to the many patrons of the Cherokee Family Research Center]

Cherokee Family Research Center News



Ancestry Conference Set

On June 11 & 12 the CFRC will be hosting the annual Cherokee Ancestry Conference at the Cherokee Nation W. W. Keeler Complex, Tahlequah Oklahoma. Gene has organized and coordinated an amazing and informative conference. Catherine Foreman Gray, a member of the First Families of the Cherokee Nation will present **American Outlaws, Cherokee Patriots**. Attendees will receive conference materials including speaker handouts, goodie bags and door prizes. The cost is \$60 for members of the First Families of the Cherokee Nation. For registration information you can visit www.cherokeeheritage.org.

Library Receives a New Look

If you haven't stopped by the Cherokee Heritage Center lately, please come by! The library has recently moved and had a face lift. We are now directly inside the north doors of the Heritage Center and would like to thank the Cherokee Heritage Center and Cherokee Nation for brand new furniture including six new bookshelves! The Research Center staff spent some of the month of January painting the walls, staining furniture and reorganizing to make the library as user friendly as possible. Thanks goes to Rex Smith and Mickel Yantz for assisting with the addition of 12 new story boards presenting photos and maps of the Cherokee Nation and its citizenry.

Globetrotting Gene

We continue to have visitors from far across the United States. Throughout the previous year, the majority of inquiries were from the nearby state of Arkansas. Go Razorbacks! Gene has also been traveling the continent with outreach to the satellite communities of Cherokee Nation citizens. Along with his genealogy talks he recently returned from the National Genealogical Conference 2010 in Salt Lake City, Utah.