

## *Winter Newsletter 2010-2011*

Osiyo, nigada!

We hope that all the members of First Families and their families had a wonderful holiday and are enjoying a prosperous New Year. It is winter here at the Cherokee Family Research Center and as always we are keeping ourselves busy. Ben has been doing great work with our library books and has been spending much of his time indexing several of our records which had no previous indexes. I have been working on research requests and preparing my renewal portfolio as a certified genealogist. In April, we will be in Springdale, AR giving another seminar and in May I have the honor to be a speaker at the National Genealogical Society Conference in Charleston, SC. We are looking forward to another great year and highly anticipate the moment when we will reach the 1000 member mark.

Everyone have a safe winter and enjoy a beautiful new spring in 2011.

Gene



*First Families Reunion 2004*



**We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members!**

### **Member**

Susan Armstrong Coltharp  
Marie Payne Smith  
Derek Dantzler Hannah  
Wendell Timothy Halseth  
Heidi Lynn Halseth  
Harold Lee Dunkle  
Mont Ellis Teague  
Kimberly Jo Crosslan  
R. David Clark

### **Ancestor**

Nanye-hi/Ghigau/Nancy Ward  
Mary A. P. Bigby  
Na-ni/Nanyeh/Ghigau/Nancy Ward  
Chief Moytoy I (Amadohiyi) of Chota  
Chief Moytoy I (Amadohiyi) of Chota  
Lucy Gertrude (Arthur) Nidiffer  
George Washington Adair  
William Woodie Russell  
Isaac Childress



## Member Spotlight

by Marie Payne Smith, descendant of Mary Ann "Polly" Bigby

I recently became a First Family Member (# 922) in October 2010. I chose my ancestor Mary Ann "Polly" Bigby (1802 – 1883) to list as my direct descendant until I can continue further research.

My father, Edmon Payne (b 1942) was born in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. He attended Tahlequah High School where he met my mother, Oleta "Gant" Rockwell. My mother was born 1943 in Drumright, Oklahoma. For a time she lived in Ohio with her mother Marie (1922–2010) who had moved there to work as a first cook on the big lake freighters sailing the Great Lakes. After this Oleta moved to Tahlequah to live with her Aunt Rose Hall where she met and married my father.

My mother's family comes from the southern part of the state. My maternal grandmother's family were mixed bloods of Choctaw, Cherokee, and possibly Comanche descent mixed with Scottish, French, and English. My maternal great-grandparents supposedly lived on the property where the Sallisaw Racehorse track now sits. This family line migrated from Arkansas and Mississippi. Other ancestors had immigrated to the New World as early as the mid 1600s.

My father's side is of Cherokee descent. His maternal grandfather was Andy Taylor (my great-grandfather 1894–1967) who was a Dawes enrollee. Andy's father was John David Taylor (1855–1931) and his grandfather was Wyly Taylor (b 1827) who was a son of David Miller Taylor (1791–1977) and Mary Ann "Polly" Bigby Taylor (1802 – 1883). Mary's mother and father were James Bigby (1778 – 1856) and Catherine "Katy" Foreman (1785 – 1842).

The family story is that during the Trail of Tears part of the family came to Indian Territory but, part of the family stayed behind in the East. Wyly's family had stayed behind. Wyly was one of 13 children of David and Mary Taylor. Wyly married Christiana Tipton and they had my great-great-grandfather John David Taylor who was one of four children. Wyly and John would come to Indian Territory once in awhile and hunt in the Gideon area. When it was announced that land would possibly be available for allotment John David moved to Gideon permanently. This allotment land is still in the family. It is currently owned by my great-aunt and is located in the Gideon area. I currently live less than ¼ mile away from this property. Wyly having lost his first wife by this time decided to go back East to North Carolina where he married Sisley Ann Smith. Supposedly the family never heard from him again. Wyly is listed on the Dawes Roll, the Hester Roll of 1883, and the Drennen Roll of 1851.

David and Mary Bigby Taylor's children attended a mission school in the East. David Taylor signed the Ridge Treaty in the war between the Ridge and Ross party. So, the family had to leave Tennessee and moved to Cherokee Co, North Carolina to the mountains where they remained. Ironically it was his mother and father in law who would have to walk the Trail to Indian Territory while he remained behind in the East.

This is a small bit of family history passed down from one generation to the next. I would love to know the "rest of the story" of this particular line. Why did David sign the treaty? How did his in-laws feel about it? Was the family torn apart after this for good? What happened to Christiana Tipton? No one seems to know for certain. I had heard stories that Christiana might have been put into an asylum. There is a lot of unanswered questions. I would love to know the rest of the story. Or maybe someone out there has heard something different. I would love to hear about it. Genealogy is never complete. There are always unanswered questions waiting to be discovered. If anyone has any clues or stories of this family, I would love to hear them.

*Marie is an employee of the Cherokee Nation and wife of Rex Smith, employee of the Cherokee National Historical Society. They are the parents of Justin Smith and Feather Trevino. We would like to say Wado to Marie Smith for contributing to the FFCN Newsletter and the Smith family, long time supporters of the Cherokee Heritage Center!*

## ***In Memoriam***

We would like to respectfully recognize the lives of our beloved First Families of the Cherokee Nation members. We honor their memory and acknowledge their legacy left for future generations.

**Michelle Santora** Mr. Santora (Tsigesv) was a member of the First Families since the 8 July 2003 and a descendant of George Fence. He resided in California and attended the First Families reunion in 2005. Mr. Santora passed away on 20 Jun 2010.

**Kenneth Dale Ryan**, Mr. Ryan (Tsigesv) was a member of the First Families since the 30 of April 2007. He was a descendant of Margaret A. Addington and a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. He passed away on 19 September 2009.

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The Cherokee Heritage Center lost two of our elders recently; Mr. Sam Nofire (Tsigesv) this month, Mr. Levi Carey (Tsigesv) in January . Both were fluent speakers will be greatly missed at the Heritage Center.

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### **Cherokee Family Research Center Events**

On Saturday April 23, 2011 Gene is conducting a Cherokee Ancestry Seminar hosted by the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History in Springdale Arkansas.

Topics include - Cherokee Genealogy: A Beginner's Guide, The Dawes Final Roll and Public Misconceptions, The Thirteen Detachments on the Trail of Tears, and The Cherokee Old Settlers in Arkansas.

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Also on June 10th & 11th the Research Center is hosting the **10th Annual Cherokee Ancestry Conference**. Topics include How Do You Know? Understanding Evidence and Source Citations, Cherokee Resources of the Tulsa Genealogy Center, Thirteen Detachments on the Trail of Tears and more.

Speakers for this years conference are Barbara Becker Meehan Certified Professional Genealogist , Ryan Mackey Language Curriculum Specialist, Roy Hamilton Cherokee Arts and Humanities Council and Gene Norris Certified Professional Genealogist.