

CHEROKEE COUNCIL HOUSE

CHEROKEE, NORTH CAROLINA

DATE: _____

RESOLUTION NO.: _____

A Resolution to name Dr. Brett Riggs Ph.D., as an Honorary Member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

WHEREAS, it has been the tradition of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians to give special recognition to individuals who are not enrolled members of the Tribe but who have, over the years, contributed extraordinary time and energy to the Tribe and its members and have earned a place in the hearts of Tribal Members; and

WHEREAS, The ultimate expression of recognition is for the Tribe to name a person as an Honorary Member of the Tribe; and

WHEREAS, the title of Honorary Members does not provide any legal or financial benefit to the recipient, but is instead an expression of appreciation and respect by the Tribe; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Brett Rigg Ph.D. deserves to be named an Honorary Member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Riggs Ph.D. has spent the last 40 years leading archeology work that has uncovered vast amounts of history of the Cherokee in North Carolina.

WHEREAS, Dr. Riggs Ph.D. was a research archaeologist with the Research Laboratories of Archaeology (RLA) at UNC-Chapel Hill. He specializes in Cherokee studies and, for more than twenty years, has worked in southwestern North Carolina to shed light on the lives of Cherokee families during the removal era of the 1830s. In his position with the RLA, he is helping to establish the National Historic Trail of Tears Long-Distance Trail in the extreme southwestern corner of North Carolina. Results of these studies will be presented to the National Park Service and, ultimately, to the US Congress for consideration and approval

WHEREAS, Dr. Riggs Ph.D. is a leading researcher and archaeologist, having researched the emigration camps around what was Fort Cass and presented his report to Trail of Tears Association members in 2019 in Cleveland, Tenn. Also, the WCU professor of Cherokee studies, and his students, studied two encampment sites for two years through a National Park Service grant.

WHEREAS, Dr. Riggs Ph.D. is known for working on Historical Cherokee sites; Two Sparrows village at Western Carolina University, Watauga Mound, Unicoi Turnpike, and Camp Armistead. He leads tours for tribal members and programs to and about these historical sites.

WHEREAS, Dr. Riggs Ph.D. started the James Cooper Lecture Series.

WHEREAS, Dr. Riggs Ph.D. works with the Remember the Removal Riders, Right Path, National and the North Carolina Trail of Tears Association, US Forest Service, National Park Service, Siler/ Jones House, Cherokee Potters Guild, Mainspring, and EBCI THPO.

WHEREAS, Dr. Riggs Ph.D. is the current WCU Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies. He also is an At-Large member of the National Trail of Tears Association Board.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Tribal Council of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, in Council assembled and with a quorum present, that in appreciation for and recognition of, his friendship and contributions to the Cherokee people over many years, the Tribe hereby bestows upon Dr. Brett Riggs Ph.D. the title of Honorary Member of the Eastern band of Cherokee Indian.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that all resolutions inconsistent with this resolution are hereby rescinded and that this resolution shall become effective upon ratification by the Principal Chief.

Submitted by: Dawn Arneach, a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians from Elawodi (Yellowhill)

Robin Swayney, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Tribal Liaison for the National Trail of Tears Association

Perry Shell, Kolanvyi (Big Cove) Council Representative

Adam Wachacha, Tutiya (Snowbird/Cherokee Co) Council Representative



EBCI Remember the Removal Riders

February 16 · 🌐

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Update: Training week 6 by TW Saunooke

As we continue our training I'd like to Thank some of the people we have been studying and



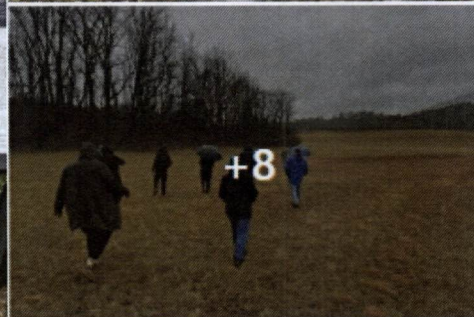
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We furthered our genealogy on Monday with Robin, Karen and Anita.

On Saturday our group was honored to have Dr. Riggs lead the discussions as we took our first steps as a team on a piece of the Trail of Tears located near the Cowee mound in Franklin. We also visited Nikwasi and Watauga mounds. It was a cold gloomy rainy day and brought to light the fact that even in conditions such as those our relatives and ancestors had little to nothing to shield them from such elements as they were marched away from their homelands and all of their belongings. This day tied in with all the history and genealogy we have been learning the last 6 weeks. Standing on the site of the Watauga Town I was standing near the houses where part of my direct line relatives were born and raised.

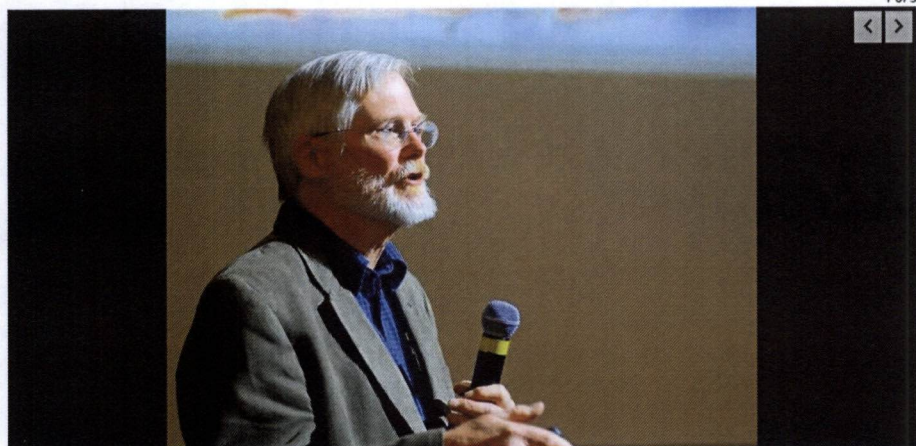
I know this journey is just beginning but days like that confirm why I wanted to be a part of this Ride. As we reanimate their footsteps we are insuring that their Legacy will continue to Thrive through us!!!

Si Otsedoha (We Are Still Here)!!!



Insight provided on Cherokee removal camps in Tennessee

BY WILL CHAVEZ Assistant Editor May 26, 2021



Archaeologist Brett Riggs, Ph.D., has worked with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians on projects since the early 1990s.
CHAD HUNTER/CHEROKEE PHOENIX

CLEVELAND, Tenn. – On May 26, 1838, 7,000 federal soldiers began rounding up Cherokee people in North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee for the process of moving them west to Indian Territory.

Approximately 10,000 Cherokee were sent to the Charleston, Tennessee, area to camps near Fort Cass, which was the military operational headquarters for the entire Cherokee removal. They were to be removed by boat, but because of a drought the waterways dried and forced the people to remain in Tennessee throughout the summer. Also, Cherokee leaders, fearing rampant disease in the summer asked the government to delay the removals until the fall, which was granted.

Western Carolina University's Brett Riggs, Ph.D., a leading researcher and archaeologist, researched the emigration camps around what was Fort Cass and presented his report to Trail of Tears Association members in 2019 in Cleveland, 11 miles from Charleston.

Riggs, a WCU professor of Cherokee studies, and his students, studied two encampment sites for two years through a National Park Service grant.

"At one we found evidence of that occupation and materials that folks had left behind, which is pretty powerful, realizing this is some of the last materials that folks held," Riggs said. "That summer that folks spent here at Fort Cass was a pause in their deportation. It was sort of like they were hanging in limbo. There was tremendous uncertainty. It was incredibly hot and incredibly dry. We have accounts that it was in the 90s every day from mid-June right on into September. The heat wouldn't break; it wouldn't rain. Not only was it oppressive, it was really foreboding for people. It was the world turned upside down."

He said the misery of that hot summer turned into a one of the coldest winters on record as the Cherokee people made their way to Indian Territory, now Oklahoma.

"It's hard to imagine what that would have been like stuck here waiting in the oppressive heat. And there was a lot of sickness and a lot of death here. It had to have felt like it was the end of the world," he said.

Objects found by Riggs included busted iron pots and kettles, scissors, pieces of brass trigger guards, pieces of copper kettles, nails, horse harness buckles – things people on the move carried.

"Of course, people were not able to bring much from their own homes," he said. "There were stores here at the

Trending Now

- 1 High court says no tax exemption for tribal citizens
- 2 'We didn't kill enough Indians': Ann Coulter comments nothing new
- 3 Cherokee Owned: CN citizens Jessie and Amber Whitworth thriving with multiple businesses
- 4 Author series to focus on Cherokee people who inhabited northwest Georgia
- 5 NSU awarded \$2.3 million to support social work graduate students

Latest e-Edition



July 1, 2025
issue of the
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CREATE AN EVENT

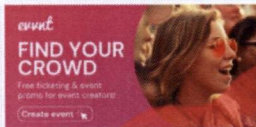
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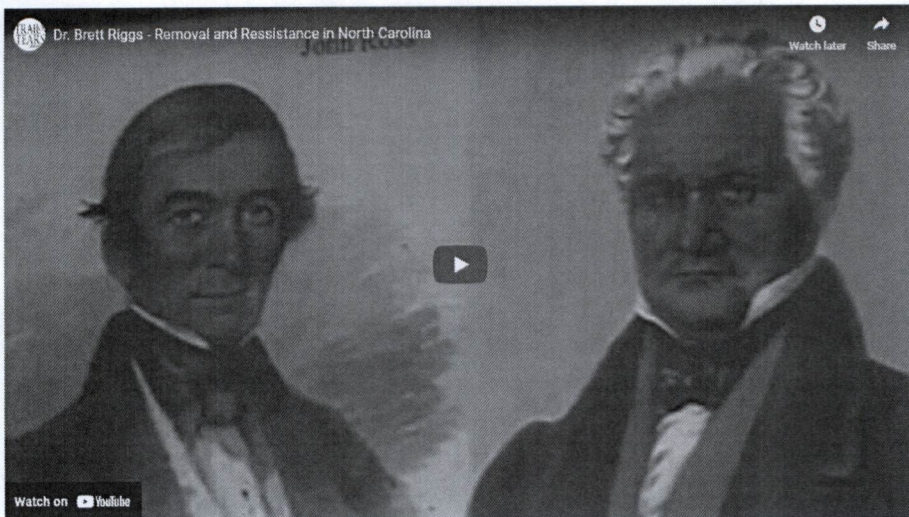
Keith Anderson

Roxy Theater

7:30PM



LIVE MUSIC



Thank you, Yona. We should have given you a shorter bio there. I think that was one for the Cherokee Nation, and I'm really honored to be with you all here tonight to address the Trail of Tears Conference and the Eastern Band Community, which is a real treat for me because I always like to see what we do brought back into the community. I want to start first by remembering my good friend and colleague TJ Holland, who has walked on since the last time we were able to get together here.

TJ held everything together. I can't just recite everything that TJ did. Some of you might know him as the manager of the Museum of the Cherokee Indian and the cultural resources manager for the tribe, but he was much, much more to the Eastern Band, his family, and the people who knew him well. Losing TJ is an immeasurable loss to the tribe and to me personally.

Tonight, I'm going to talk about some research that TJ worked on along with me and our good friend and colleague Lance Green. Lance's book, if you don't have it yet, you need to get it because it talks about many of these same stories but much more coherently than I will. TJ had a hand in all of this. For those who knew him, he was into far more than you could possibly imagine behind the scenes, working with museums and organizations across the country. We really miss TJ, and as I have there at the bottom, we will see him again. We will see TJ again.

Our title for tonight is "Whatever Risk They Might Run: Cherokee Responses to Removal in North Carolina," because in North Carolina, the removal played out quite differently than in other areas of the Cherokee Nation. I want to look at why that is and the fact that it played out differently is why the Eastern Band is here today. The Eastern Band has a different arc during removal. I've heard people say, "I don't know why the Eastern Band would be interested in the Trail of Tears because they didn't take the walk," but in fact, the very genesis of the Eastern Band is associated with removal and the Trail of Tears. It is their story, the Eastern Band's story, as well.

There are very specific reasons that people did not go to the West when everything came down, and I want us to look at those. This is a huge story and a very complicated story, and I'm going to try not to tell it in real time and recite all that. But I want to hit some of the high points and give you a structure for what went on. Then there will be other talks during the conference by Lance Green and Bill Jelski and others that will expand on these. I'll just try to set the stage for them and what they do.

The title comes from George Fanshew's journal. Fanshew was a British geologist touring around in the Cherokee Nation. He went into the Valley River Valley, starting in past Andrews, in August of 1837. He ran into a Cherokee named John Welch. Welch didn't want to talk to Fanshew, and with good reason. Fanshew was actually a spy for the US government; he was taking names. But Welch did tell him that the Cherokees were determined not to abandon their country "whatever risk they might run." That's more than prophetic.

Despite the scope and scale of this forced deportation in 1838 and 1839, in 1840, there were over a thousand Cherokee people who remained in the Cherokee homelands, and most of those were in North Carolina. That persistence of Cherokee people in their homelands was not coincidental. It wasn't ad hoc. In fact, it was intentional and strategic. It was part of a long-term process that people didn't see going on at the time, but it was planning. It was the same principal characters all the way through who executed this plan. That plan originated within traditional town structures, in town councils, because these towns wanted to create and maintain their autonomy as traditional communities.

That resistance was organized within particular families and clans, extended family networks, and those families had developed, I think strategically, ties with certain white people who were closely affiliated with those families, spoke Cherokee, and were dedicated to their cause. They used those people as proxies in their plans. Sometimes people think these plans originated with the white allies, but that's not the case. They were operatives who were sent out to do things. There's this long narrative, this dominant narrative, that the folks in North Carolina were just the runaways who hid in the mountains until finally the whole episode was over. But that masks what happened. It masks the very purposeful plan and coordination that the people applied to remain in their mountain homelands.

Sometimes, in talking with Eastern Band groups, particularly young people, the question is posed, "Why didn't we fight back? Why didn't we push back? Why didn't we fight them?" My answer is, you did. You fought in the smartest, most intelligent way possible, and you won. People don't tell you that. You didn't allow yourselves to be pushed out. There's no accident about that.

A little bit of backstory, as many Cherokee stories do, at Gadsden, where in 1816 a council met in October. That council included some pretty famous Eastern Band progenitors, people like Yona AUSA and well-noted names you would recognize. Konat was there. They were giving the federal agent down the road a piece of their mind. This is a very strongly worded memorial that comes from that meeting. They said, "Do not take us for any part of the nation. You're ignoring us." Then they said, "We must from that conclude that we are left to do the best we can for ourselves and act accordingly." This is a declaration issued from Gadsden because they could see what was coming. In 1816, Gadsden was close to the boundary of the Cherokee Nation. It had once been in the center, but because of various land cessions, it was now on the edge. In 1819, they felt like they'd been thrown under the bus. The people around Gadsden and the Tuckasegee River Valley and the Little Tennessee River Valley lost their lands to this land cession, an enormous land cession that took half of the Cherokee lands in North Carolina and much in Tennessee and Alabama as well. They were faced with the loss of their homes and their beloved town.

From 1820 right up through 1838, Gadsden and the communities that were up here on the Tuckasegee and Oconaluftee Rivers were outside the nation. But that treaty had a specific clause, Article Two, in which the United States allowed a reserve, a reservation of 640 acres for each head of family that registered their name with the agent and chose to become citizens of the United States in the manner stipulated. People went to register their names. In fact, far more than the federal government ever anticipated, hundreds of people registered their names for reserves across the ceded areas, 75 in North Carolina. Seventy-five, including our friend John Welch. He was in on this, as were others. Here is his plat from Deep Creek. We have a list of 75 reserves in North Carolina. If you look at those highlighted names, those are all people who signed that memorial at Gadsden. They are doing exactly what they said they would do, for themselves.

Then, those highlighted in blue are names I want you to note: there's John Welch, our friend Gideon Morris, who was his neighbor, and Yona AUSA. They are all reserves; they are all in on this program. Forty-nine of these reserves were plotted out and surveyed. You can see it's a huge area in Western North Carolina. If all 75 had been plotted out, that would be 48,000 acres, almost as big as the Qualla Boundary. That's how much land they were reserving. These reserves were clustered. What we can tell from the limited documentation is that while the United States intended this land to be held as private farms and plantations, that's not really what they were doing. They were putting this land together for their communities.

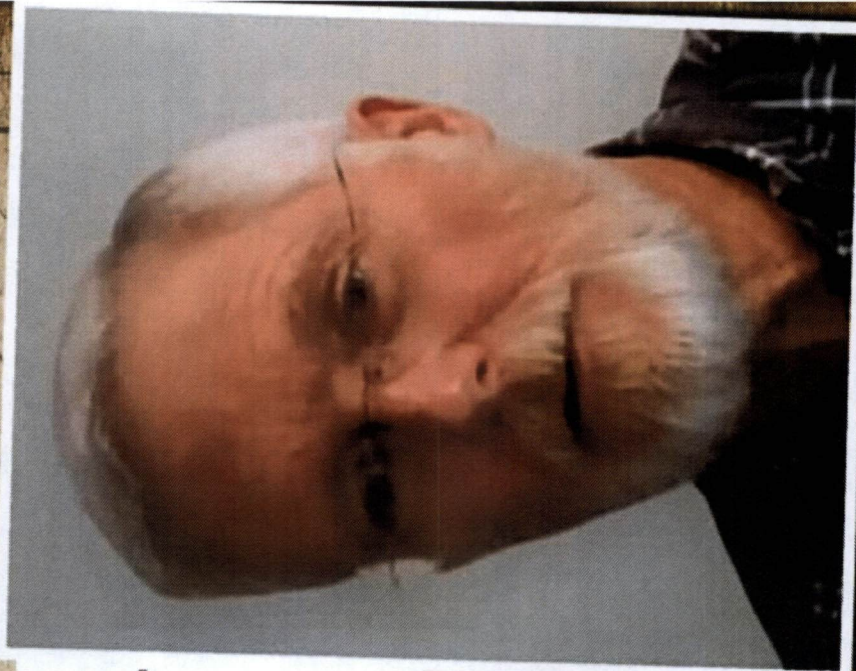
with limited photos
of the migration of the Cherokee
to the West
to more accurately tell of the story to the
United States and the world
one belief

The Return of Standing Wolf

with a little help from his friends...



Brett H. Riggs
Cherokee Studies Program
Western Carolina University





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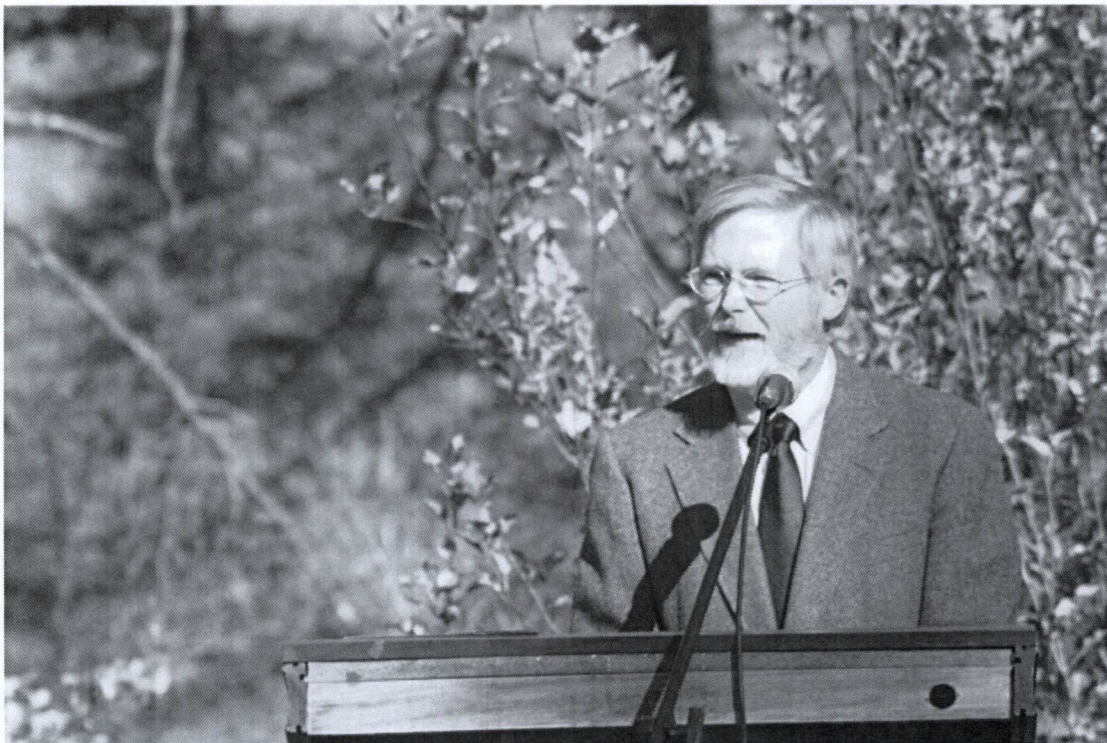
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Riggs

Brett

Dr. Riggs is a research archaeologist with the Research Laboratories of Archaeology (RLA) at UNC-Chapel Hill. He specializes in Cherokee studies and, for more than twenty years, has worked in southwestern North Carolina to shed light on the lives of Cherokee families during the removal era of the 1830s. In his position with the RLA he is helping to establish the National Historic Trail of Tears Long-Distance Trail in the extreme southwestern corner of North Carolina. Results of these studies will be presented to the National Park Service and, ultimately, to the US Congress for consideration and approval.



Job Title Lead Faculty

Select Page



WCU professor receives Cherokee honor for preservation of culture, interpretive work

by admin | Oct 3, 2016 | COMMUNITY sgadugi | 0 comments



AWARD IN OKLAHOMA: Participating in the presentation of the Cherokee National Worcestor Award during the 64th annual Cherokee National Holiday Awards in Tahlequah, Okla. are (from left) Miss Cherokee (Nation) Sky Wildcat, Cherokee Nation Deputy Chief S. Joe Crittenden, award recipient Brett Riggs, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation Bill John Baker and Junior Miss Cherokee (Nation) Lauryn McCoy. (WCU photo)

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. – Brett Riggs, Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies at Western Carolina University, has received the 2016 Cherokee National Worcestor Award for his efforts to preserve Cherokee culture.

It is the highest honor the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma presents to non-Cherokees for their dedication to tribal history, heritage and sovereignty. The award was presented by Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Bill John Baker during the 64th annual Cherokee National Holiday Awards dinner in Tahlequah, Okla., earlier this month.

The Cherokee Nation is one of three federally recognized Cherokee tribes in the U.S. The other two are the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians of Western North Carolina and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians of Oklahoma.

"Dr. Riggs is a fitting and deserving honoree for the Cherokee Nation's Samuel Worcester medal because he has devoted so much of his time, research and expertise on the unique history of our tribal government in America, first in our homelands in the Southeast and the eventual removal to modern-day Oklahoma," said Baker. "His admirable work as an academic historian has enriched our ability and capacity to know more about the past and where Cherokee people came from originally. He has dedicated his life to protecting Cherokee Nation's rich story and this is a small way to say 'thank you'."

Riggs has been instrumental in documenting removal-era roads, trails and Cherokee home sites that provide the basis for the expansion of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail in southwestern North Carolina. He also is continuing to work toward interpretive development and marking of the historic landscape in the region.

"I feel deeply honored to receive this recognition from the Cherokee Nation," Riggs said. "Native peoples sometimes take a dim view of archaeology, my chosen profession, and if my work helps connect Cherokee people with their personal and community histories, then I think I'm addressing one the most pressing mandates of our discipline. I'm grateful to the people of the Cherokee Nation, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians for allowing me to work with them in illuminating the Cherokee experience, and I hope to continue these cooperative efforts in the spirit of Rev. Samuel Worcester."

Previously a research archaeologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Riggs joined the WCU faculty in 2015. He has worked continually with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians on various projects throughout the years.

As cited in presentation of the award, he assisted in the creation and completion of a project to showcase interpretive sites related to the history of the Cherokee Trail of Tears, a project of the North Carolina Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association. The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership provided a grant for the creation of a website, nctrailoftears.org, and a printed guide and map. Both describe the 16 wayside exhibits erected by the chapter in recent years to interpret the history of Cherokee removal in the 1830s at significant sites. These include military posts, roads used for the movement of troops and Cherokee deportees, and sites of Cherokee organization and resistance against forced removal.

- WCU



Cherokee Studies Program's endowed scholarship renamed for T.J. Holland

by admin | Oct 5, 2020 | COMMUNITY sgadugi |

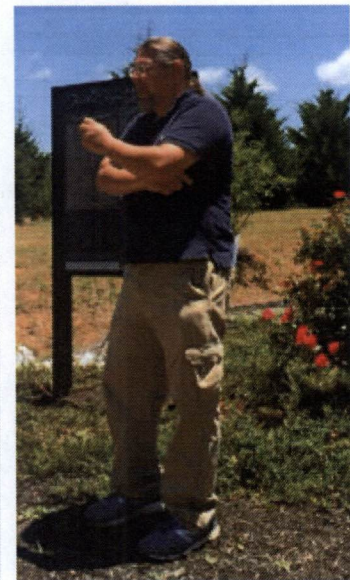
CULLOWHEE – The Cherokee Studies Program at Western Carolina University will rename its endowed scholarship in memory of T.J. Holland, an alumnus and lifelong leader in the community and Cherokee cultural preservation and revitalization who died recently.

Holland, 44, passed away unexpectedly Sept. 12 at his home in Robbinsville. He was the cultural resources manager for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and served as director of the Junaluska Memorial Museum in Robbinsville.

The T.J. Holland Memorial Cherokee Studies Scholarship will be awarded to a student enrolled in one of WCU's undergraduate or graduate programs in Cherokee studies, with special consideration given to members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Cherokee Nation, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians or another Native American tribe.

Brett Riggs, WCU's Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies, described Holland as the bridge between the Eastern Band and the university, the "person who translated academia for his Cherokee community and constituency, and who brought understanding of the perspectives of his community to the academy." Lisa Lefler, director of WCU's Culturally Based Native Health Program, recalled he was instrumental in "assisting with our annual medicine walks, elders and clinicians' meetings, as well as the annual Rooted in the Mountains symposium," and wrote extensively about the importance of respecting tribal protocols in conducting research in native communities.

In addition to his dedicated work through his many ties to WCU, Holland also served on the EBCI Medical Institutional Review board, the Tribal Historic Properties and Preservation Committee, the Center for Native Health board and the Snowbird Fading Voices Committee.



The Cherokee Studies Program at Western Carolina University will rename its endowed scholarship in memory of T.J. Holland, an alumnus and lifelong leader in the community and Cherokee cultural preservation and revitalization who died recently. (WCU photo)

Holland's expertise brought him a national reputation as trusted, knowledgeable and willing colleague, and he worked with scholars from across the country conducting research using EBCI resources.

Courtney Lewis, associate professor of anthropology at the University of South Carolina, described how Holland aided her scholarship on the role of small businesses in fostering Native American economic sovereignty. "He took time to work with me and get my feet on the ground," Lewis said.

Holland also worked with curators, such as at the Smithsonian Institution, to develop guidelines for the management of culturally sensitive Cherokee archival materials and to ensure that Cherokee communities could benefit from access to these collections. "T.J. Holland was an instrumental thought leader in developing best practices for bridging college and community," said Gwyneira Isaac, curator of North American Ethnology at the Smithsonian. "He helped us museum scholars at the Smithsonian with this critical work with communities, making collections and archives not just available, but accountable to Cherokee values."

Holland played a similar role with the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, which maintains one of the nation's most important Native American archives. "(He) was instrumental in providing patient and practical guidance to non-native archival institutions on treating culturally sensitive archival materials in ways that are respectful to native communities, guiding old, Colonial-era organizations such as ours down the path to formal agreements with the Eastern Band to protect such materials – the first time our institution ever did such a thing," said Brian Carpenter, curator of the society's Native American Materials.

Holland's personality, community commitment, professional achievements and dedication to Cherokee heritage and culture will be a long-lasting legacy, said members of Cherokee Studies Program faculty.

"T.J. was a treasured colleague," said Ben Steere, Cherokee Studies Program director. "We hope to honor his memory with a scholarship that will encourage and support the next generation of scholars to carry on his work."

To make a contribution to the T.J. Holland Memorial Cherokee Studies Scholarship, go to <https://www.givecampus.com/campaigns/15932/donations/new>.

- Western Carolina University release



Remember the Remained riders to tour area Cherokee sites

by admin | Jun 11, 2020 | COMMUNITY sgadugi |

By SCOTT MCKIE B.P.

ONE FEATHER STAFF

The 2020 Remember the Removal riders were disappointed when the event, which retraces the northern route of the Trail of Tears from Georgia to Oklahoma, was cancelled last month due to the coronavirus (COVID-19). Now, members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians' (EBCI) contingent are changing gears and will take their bicycles and tour Cherokee historical and cultural sites in western North Carolina as part of what they are calling the Remember the Remained ride.

"Right now, it is about trying to provide a similar experience to the Remember the Removal bike ride whereas the Eastern Band can do these rides to historic and sacred sites," said Bear Allison, one of the co-organizers of the ride. "We want to honor those ancestors who remained, resisted, or returned from the Removal."

The Remember the Remained event is not yet a sanctioned EBCI tribal event; just one that some of the EBCI tribal members who were chosen for the 2020 Remember the Removal ride are doing on their own. They do hope that the Remember the Remained event can possibly turn into an annual event to bring more awareness to important Cherokee sites in the east.

"Bear (Allison) came up with the idea, and we have a lot of local historical sites that not a lot of us know about here," said Laura Blythe, ride co-organizer with Allison.

Blythe said there will be five different routes in the Remember the Remained ride including: Robbinsville Route, Cullowhee Route, Murphy/Andrews/Hayesville Route, Kituwah Route, and the Franklin Route. Those routes will take the riders to various Cherokee sites such as the Kituwah Mound, Nikwasi Mound, Tallulah Mound, Water Beetle Place, Fort Montgomery, and others.

The routes will vary from 45 to 60 miles each and will be completed in one day apiece starting with the Robbinsville Route on Saturday, June 13. Allison and Blythe thanked Tribal Council Chairman Adam Wachacha who will serve the riders lunch during their Saturday event.

"I think this is a great idea that the Tribe can benefit from after it is done," she said.

Allison said, "Most of our ancestors remained here. So, this is something that we can do that carries more significance and remembrance to our ancestors."

He has lined up presenters to meet the riders on each route to discuss various historical and cultural aspects of Cherokee culture. The presenters include: TJ Holland, EBCI cultural resources supervisor; Dr. Brett Riggs, Western Carolina University's (WCU) Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies; Tom Belt, WCU Cherokee Language Program coordinator and fluent Cherokee speaker; Kathi Littlejohn, noted EBCI storyteller; and Ben Steere, WCU associate professor and director of Cherokee Studies.

In speaking about the ride's significance, Allison noted, "The main reason for me signing up to the Removal ride was to learn if there were any ancestors I may have had that may have gone on the Removal. Since COVID and weather resulted in a lot of the genealogy classes being cancelled, we didn't get to finish that and find out if I had any. I wanted to honor those that did go even if I didn't have or don't have any one that had gone, but my purpose for doing the ride kind of fizzles out. But, I also wanted to know why is the Eastern Band participating in this ride if the majority of us didn't have ancestors that were removed."

He said the Remember the Remained ride hits closer to home, "This helps to bring more purpose for me and is something I can do to honor those ones that did stay. I feel if our teammates can share in that then it can bring us closer together."

Blythe said the majority of the 2020 Remember the Removal EBCI team is planning to participate in the Remember the Remained ride. "I feel like a lot of people are detached from who they are as Cherokee people...what were the sacrifices? Where did we come from? How much did we lose as a Tribe – before the removal, during the removal, and even after the removal we were still having to make sacrifices."

She went on to say, "This ride will help open up all of our eyes. As Cherokee people, and as Native Americans, it's always good to know where you come from and what is your background especially since we have such a long and rich history. And, there are a lot of people who don't even know that some of these sites exist."

Both Blythe and Allison are already looking to the future possibilities of the Remember the Remained event.

"This could be as expansive as going to Tennessee," said Blythe. "There's a lot of cultural sites over there. It's not just western North Carolina. There were towns in upper South Carolina, northern Georgia; so, we could make a 1,000-mile ride out of that."

The Remember the Remained team is asking for community support for donations of water, Gatorade, snacks, etc. for the riders. If you would like to help, contact Blythe at laura@cherokeeadventure.com or Allison at bearallison@me.com.



Cherokee information signs added at Lake Chatuge

by admin | Aug 15, 2019 | COMMUNITY sgadugi |



Gabe and Kris Yeomans take time while walking at Chatuge Dam to read the new Cherokee heritage informational sign near the parking lot at Chatuge Dam in Clay County. (CCCRA photos)

LAKE CHATUGE – In addition to sites along the Quanassee Path in Hayesville, people now have two more places to go to get information about the Cherokee and their communities, thanks to the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) partnership with Clay County Communities Revitalization Association (CCCRA).

People walking along Chatuge Dam can check out the information about Quanassee Town on the reverse side of the existing kiosk at the dam. The sign contains a 1721 English map with the location of Quanassee and other Cherokee communities that were in the upper Hiwassee River Valley, along with the description of a typical Cherokee town.

Additional informational kiosks may be found at the Chatuge Recreation Area after turning to the right about 2 miles along Hinton Center Road. At the end of the ¼ mile paved road, you will find a picturesque setting on Lake Chatuge, with paved parking, 10 picnic tables, grills, boat ramp and small beach with swimming area.

One kiosk describes Agusdogi, the Immortal Town, which was located where Shooting Creek came into the Hiwassee River. That location is now covered by the still waters of

Chatuge Reservoir.

The other kiosk depicts Cherokee Life in the Old Aquohee District of the Cherokee Nation, a sovereign republic established in 1820, with the district courthouse located in the Peachtree area.

Erin Pritchard, TVA's senior archaeological specialist, who was instrumental in installing the kiosks said, "Protecting the environment and preserving archaeological sites is a core mission at TVA. We are very grateful to the Clay County Communities Revitalization Association for reaching out to partner on these interpretive signs. This information will increase the community's awareness on not only the historic significance of this region, but also the importance of protecting these places for future generations."



The photo shows a Cherokee heritage informational sign near the boat launching ramp at the "circle" near Chatuge Dam.

Western Carolina University's Sequoyah professor of Cherokee Studies Brett Riggs provided the text, graphics, and photos for these and other informational kiosks in Clay County. Riggs is well-known for providing expert commentary on archaeological research and preservation of Cherokee history and culture. He has served as a resource to CCCRA for approximately 10 years, providing guidance and expertise as the Cherokee Homestead Exhibit was developed, and writing the text for the Spikebuck Mound and Quanassee Town site kiosks. Riggs noted that the main sign is Agusdogi, and the artwork was done by T.J. Holland, a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. This sign has QR code accessible audio with the story being told in the Cherokee language by Tom Belt, a Cherokee Nation citizen and fluent Cherokee speaker, and music provided by EBCI tribal member Matt Tooni.

To learn about the Quanassee Path, a 2-mile Cherokee History Trail that connects five sites in Hayesville, visit <https://www.cccra-nc.org/>.

- Clay County Communities Revitalization Association release





