Trail Tree Newsletter
April 2020

This is Volume 48 of the Quarterly Trail Tree Project Newsletter. We hope the topics in this newsletter will be of interest to you. If you want us to report on other things, just let us know and we will be happy to do that. Below is all the latest news.

Trail Tree (TT) Database

Trail Tree Database

We crossed the threshold of 2,700 Marker Trees in the database in December 2019 and we are now closing in on 2,760 trees. The trees in the database cover 44 states and Canada. Still no trees from the missing states but maybe this year we will at least get a tree from one of them.

Trees of Interest

I’ve selected some of trees from all over the United States submitted from mid-November 2019 to early January 2020 to show the extent of Marker Trees nationwide. The trees being submitted are helping to tell more of the story of these “living artifacts” and we welcome the opportunity to learn more about them.

MO Tree

Roberta found her tree near St. Green City, MO. This is a very special purpose Marker Tree known as a long arm tree.

AR Trees

I’ve included three trees from AR because two of them are similar to the MO tree and one other is in the top five trees for largest size and oldest age.
The purpose of the two AR trees has been determined to be marking the location of Indian graves. They have a distinct shape characteristic that helps to identify them. These two trees were documented by Bob and Denny who have been covering central AR for many years.

Mark is a new researcher in AR covering the southwestern part of AR. One of his first discoveries is a tree related to the Osage Nation and is one of the oldest and largest found to date. This tree is 51.3 inches in diameter.

**VA Trees**

VA is another state where many of the Marker Trees are being found. There seems to be a renewed interest in locating the Marker Trees in this state. Chris sent in his tree from Stafford, VA in the eastern part of the state. John found his tree across the state to the west in Amherst County.
Laura and her team have begun a renewed interest in locating more Marker Trees in Oconee County, SC. One of their first finds is the tree below. Notice the nose on this tree which is very special.

**SC Tree**

Laura and her team have begun a renewed interest in locating more Marker Trees in Oconee County, SC. One of their first finds is the tree below. Notice the nose on this tree which is very special.
**WV Tree**

Amy has been busy locating the Marker Trees in WV. She discovered a new one in late Dec 2019 and sent it to us.

**NY Tree**

Michael is a new researcher working the area of southeastern NY just across the border from NJ. There he has found multiple sites related to the Delaware tribe which we will share more about in subsequent newsletters.

One of his first Marker Tree discoveries is shown below.
Ohio Tree

The story of the OH tree is a fascinating one. Richard sent this one in to us in December 2019. This tree was located on Richard’s fathers’ farm near Shelby, OH. They called it the “Peacock tree.” His father liked the tree and protected it. Richard’s father hired some workers to clear a part of the farm for cattle and assumed the lumber company would leave the tree alone. Unfortunately, by the time he noticed the tree having been cut down, it had already been hauled away. If it had lived on is would be one of the oldest today.

Indian Heritage Sites Research Program

In GA and AL during the winter months, we had the highest amount of rainfall I have witnessed in my 20 years of living in the North GA mountains. It literally rained for weeks at a time. We were not able to get much done so visiting sites to research them was almost impossible. We finally got a break at the end of Feb and we jumped on it. Near Calhoun Falls, SC is a fascinating Catawba Indian site that helped us to finally understand some of what happened to a part of the Catawba based on our research over several years. We wrote a research report entitled, “The Rest of the Catawba Story” which you can find on our web site at www.mountaint stewards.org under Reports.

GA Indian Removal Memorial at Eagle’s Rest Park

We made a lot of plans and had guests coming from multiple tribes for the dedication of the GA Indian Removal Memorial but had to cancel the dedication due to the concerns about the coronavirus. With all
the continued issues our country is facing due to this pandemic, we may not be able to reschedule the dedication until next fall if then.

**New Web Site Operational**

Dr. Mickey Nardo, who loved to program computer code in his spare time built a wonderful web site for the Mountain Stewards in 2006-7. Unfortunately, Mickey died several years ago and the computer code he used went out of use due to age and vulnerability issues. As a result, when our web site host moved our web site to a new server, everything crashed and it could not be repaired using the old code.

Thus, our web site had to be completely rewritten in a new computer language and updated. The new site at [www.mountaintswards.org](http://www.mountaintswards.org) has much more information than previously and I think it is easier to use. Check it out when you can.

We have now added many of our research reports that previously were only available to a few fellow researchers. We also add the newsletters to the site so a larger number of people could read them. Also, on the site are some of the videos we have been making in the past few years which have had a limited distribution. These videos are developed by Bob Wells who is our producer-director for all our film activities.

One thing we could not keep on the web site, at least for now, is the access to the trees in the National Database. The software we were using to show the trees by area location had some vulnerabilities and might cause the database to be hacked. Thus, it had to be dropped from use. We are working to see if we can create a way to show the trees by state location but it is taking some time to explore computer coding options so it may be awhile before we can show trees in the database. In the meantime, I have added to the web site a report of the tree configurations we wrote over a year ago. This helps to show the many type marker Trees you can find in the US.

*Mystery of the Trees* Presentations and Book Signings

Although we had stopped advertising our availability to do presentation two years ago after we sold out of the books, we still get a lot of requests for presentations. We have done a few this year but had to cancel others beginning in March due to the virus restrictions. We still have about 50 of the Mystery of the Trees DVD’s left to sell and they will not be reprinted when gone. They now sell for $12.00 and will be for sale until supplies are gone.

**New Presentations**

In 2020, we have started sharing more about what we have learned about interpreting Indian sites and Marker Trees using Native Science and dowsing. We had scheduled two Native Science and Dowsing Symposiums for 2020. The first was to be held in Oconee County, SC in late May but has now been canceled due to virus and the second one is still scheduled for northeast Arkansas in late July. Hopefully, the virus restrictions on meetings will be over by the time we get to July but if not, they will have to be reschedule for later in the year.
Also, this year we planned to offer two new lectures at the Wilderness Wildlife Week (WWW) Conference in Pigeon Forge, TN on 5-7 May, 2020. These two lectures are: *Medicine Men, Earth Energies and Healing* and *The Secret Geodetic Code to Design and Build Sacred Places*. However, WWW has now been canceled for 2020 and will be held in early Feb 2021.

**DAR Conservation Award**

I was surprised to receive this year the Daughters of the American Revolution 2020 Conservation Award Medal for the work of the Mountain Stewards over the past decade which includes our Indian Cultural Heritage Program efforts. The press release stated in part:

“On March 5, 2020, the NSDAR Sequoyah Chapter presented the distinguished National Conservation Medal to Don Wells of Pickens County. This award recognizes individuals with a “distinguished volunteer conservation record” who demonstrate outstanding efforts in wildlife and nature centers, in resource management and park establishment, in youth leadership and education and in the field of conservation related media.”

**Facebook**

To stay in touch with our activities in between Newsletter issues, follow us on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/mysterytrees](http://www.facebook.com/mysterytrees). This site provides a running account of our weekly activities. Please log on to the site and LIKE the page. This opens our information to a larger audience and helps educate folks about the program. Currently, our LIKE’s total is 2,120. A lot of dialog is now on going between the followers of the site who are sharing their findings across the nation.