



Trail Tree Newsletter

January 2017

This is Volume 35 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

I mentioned in the last newsletter that the tree submittals usually slow-down in the summer and early fall but that has not been the case. In fact, they may have actually increased. But more importantly, we are now receiving trees from locations not previously in the database and have now added the 43 state, Oregon. There has also been a tree found in Washington State but it has yet to be submitted so that we can check it out. We currently have over 2,100 trees in the database.

Prior to the advent of dowsing for helping to analyze a Marker Tree, we have lived with a stated criteria that the tree had to be around 20 inches in diameter to be old enough to have been bent before the Indians left during the removal period. We know that not all Indians left on the removal. Now, we have sufficient evidence that some of them remained and continued to practice the skill of bending trees. With dowsing, we can determine if the tree is a Marker Tree and if too small what its purpose may have been. An example of this fact is Bob Wells and I visited a small bent tree near Covington, GA. The tree was 9 inches in diameter, far too small to be considered under our standard criteria. However, the dowsing rods indicated the tree was a Marker Tree. Further, it was determined using the dowsing rods that the tree was pointing to two graves based on its two vertical members. The graves were determined to be Creek Indians who had died 65-70 years ago which makes the 9 inch diameter more believable. This fact indicated the tree was bent around 1945! Thus, some Creek Indian was still around that part of GA and knew who to bend a tree to mark graves. The home site of the two Creek Indians who are buried near Covington was also found nearby.

Trees of Interest

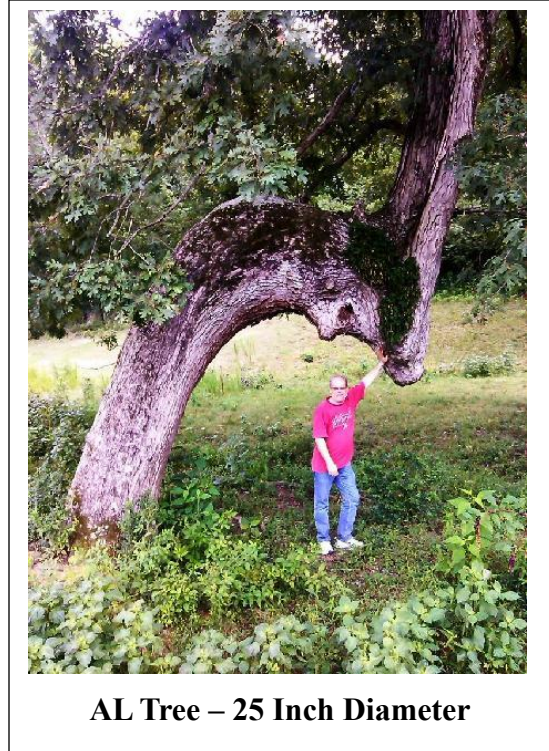
I've included trees from all over the United States in this issue to show how widespread the trees are. We have not begun to learn the full extend of the Marker trees and each day brings new information about this remarkable aspect of Indian culture.

AL Tree

Andy sent in his tree from AL. This tree is on Andy's grandfather's farm when they still owned the property. The new owners allowed Andy to revisit the tree he grew up with. This tree points to a spring on the farm.

AR Trees

One of the states with the largest number of trees is AR. Every month, we get trees submitted from AR. Jim sent in his tree which is quite large at 38.2 inches in diameter. But not to be undone, one of our chief researchers in AR, Bob Gaut came in with a 44 inch diameter tree in the standard "4" tree configuration.



OH Tree

Judy Gaines from OH sent in her tree which is 40.9 inches in diameter. This tree points to a creek. Her tree is one of those that defy gravity as it leans way out from the base of the tree.



OH Tree – 40.9 Inches in Diameter

CA Tree

Barbara found her tree up 7,680 feet of elevation in the Sierra Mountains in CA. Her tree is a Sitka Spruce which is a new tree species for us but logical for the high Sierra's. Note in the picture that the tree has four vertical pointers. This may be a grave pointer tree. We would have to go to the site to verify this fact and hopefully someday we can.



CA Tree – 30 Inch Diameter

OR Tree

Our first tree from OR is a remarkable 49.7 inch diameter Sitka Spruce tree common in the OR mountainous ranges and along the coast line. Richard and Chris found this tree in an OR State Park near the OR coast.

RI Tree

A state that we receive few trees from is RI. Urban renew has for the most part paved over and disturbed the area of this small state. Yet, there are a few trees left and Deirdre was able to find one of the largest from that state at 44.6 inches in diameter. This tree is a maple species common to the NE.

GA Tree

Judy and Ken, our NE GA research team continues to find some very unique trees for us. One of their latest finds is a tree from NE GA which probably was bent for a very special purpose. This tree originally had two arms pointing in opposite directions. One arm was lost due to age and disease. This arm is believed to have pointed to a large grave field which has not yet been studied to learn more about it. What the other arm is pointing toward is unknown.

IN Tree

Another state that we receive few trees from is Indiana. Paul sent in one he found recently and we have added it the database. It is a typical pointer tree.

WV Tree

West VA is also a state that we receive few trees from but our latest submittal tops all previous submittals from West VA. Rex's tree is 36.3 inches in diameter located on a hill overlooking a river in the western part of West VA. This tree based on its shape is probably of special significance. We hope to visit this tree in the near future to learn more about its purpose.



OR Tree 49.7 Inch Diameter



RI Tree – 44.6 Inches in Diameter



GA Tree – 42 Inch Diameter



IN Tree



West VA Tree – 36.3 Inches in Diameter

KY Tree

The KY tree submitted by David and Connie is the largest Marker Tree ever located with our program. This tree is 67.5 inches in diameter. Its unique shape probably has a special purpose unknown to us.

Many artifacts were located near the site of this tree. David and Connie reported there are other Marker Trees in the vicinity they hope to have submitted in the future.



KY Tree – 67.5 Inch Diameter

Indian Heritage Sites Mapping Program

We have now learned how to map Indian trails using the dowsing rods. With the phenomenon associated with the dowsing rods, you can get close to the location of where an Indian trail existed and use the rods to lead you to the exact site of the trail. Once there, you can turn and follow the old trail using the rods which remain closed in the yes position as long as you're following the trail. If you begin to get off of the trail, the rods will open out and that tells you to move back toward the center of the trail.

Using this technique, I followed over 20 miles of connecting Indian Trails in Pickens and Dawson County, GA. As I followed the trails, I was led to Marker Trees that marked the trail and some sections of the trail where you could see the old trail walked 200 years ago or more. Following the trails that I

was on, I discovered a number of Indian graves along the trails. I stopped and put sacred tobacco on each grave to honor and bless it.



Remnant of Indian Trail

Mystery of the Trees Presentations and Book Signings

We begin our 2017 lecture series on 18 January in Roanoke, AL and will probably do about 20 lectures this year. The series this year will include all the talks' from 2016 plus one new one on our work with the dowsing rods slated for a first time offering at the Wilderness Wildlife Week in Pigeon Forge on 9-13 May. If you want to schedule a presentation for 2017, contact us at our email address mountainman93@gmail.com to schedule a time. If you would like a list of the presentations, you can contact me at my email address. The presentations are offered for free but traveling to overnight venues is not feasible unless a large audience of at least 60 people can be guaranteed.

Facebook

To stay in touch with our activities in between Newsletter issues, follow us on our Facebook page at 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, we have over 1,500 **LIKES**. We are now striving for the 2,000 mark.

New Marker Tree Book

Our colleagues, Steve Houser and Linda Pelon, from the Texas Historic Tree Coalition and Jimmy Arterberry, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Comanche Nation, have published their book, *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas* in 2016. This is a great book that you will want to read. Through Jimmy's knowledge about the Comanche Marker Trees augmented with the research of Steve and Linda, we now can learn a great deal about these trees. Copies of the book can be obtained on Amazon and other outlets.

