



Trail Tree Newsletter

January 2015

This is the Volume 27 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

Our Trail Tree Database is maintained on our web site host here in GA along with all the other data we display on the web site. This database is an SQL database operated on the host software. The host company periodically makes changes to the web hosting software and servers and on rare occasions causes us some problems. However, they have caused a major problem in our database and now we are working with them to fix it. We hope to have all things back in working order soon but for the meantime we have a lot of trees waiting to go into the database.

Trees of Interest

We have a number of trees that have been submitted since our last newsletter and many of them are what we refer to as “Big’uns.” Some of the more interesting ones are shown in the next few paragraphs.

Arkansas Trees

In the last newsletter, I got one of the trees mixed up as to its location and who submitted so I am fixing that mistake in this newsletter. Cheryl Park found a tree near the Buffalo National River Park and Bob Gaut, one of our researchers in AR, traveled to the area to help Cheryl document the tree. That tree which is about 22.5 inches in diameter is shown on the next page. In the same timeframe, Bob traveled to Natural Dam, AR to document a tree found by Jim Bilgischer and his wife. That tree is also shown on the next page and it is 31 inches in diameter. These two trees are representative of the many markers trees found in AR.



Arkansas Tree – Cheryl's



Arkansas Tree – Bilgischer's

Another Arkansas Tree

Bob Gaut reported several more trees in the ensuing months after documenting the previous two trees. One of those trees is an interesting configuration. This tree is one of those that defies logical conclusions on how it was bent into its marker shape. He has just reported several more trees in 2015, one of which has a similar shape to this one.

Missouri Tree

Cindy Hart reported this tree in Miller County, MO. The tree is on a farm with what appears to be a trail near it. The tree is 34 inches in diameter.

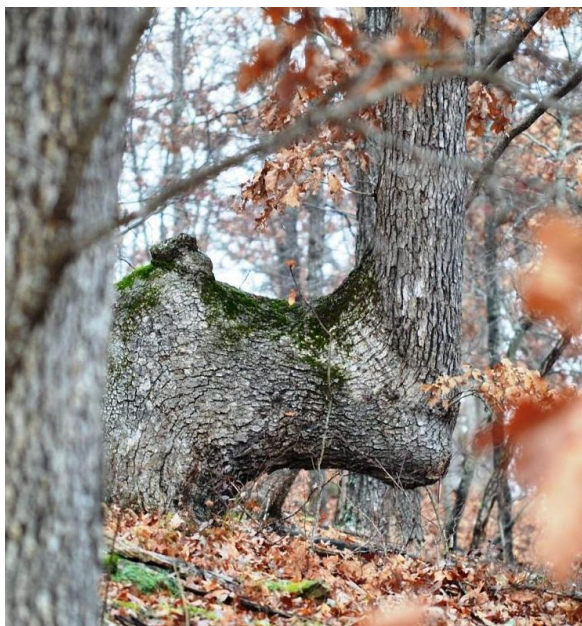
Thirty five miles to the west of Cindy's tree, two large diameter marker trees were reported but have not yet documented into the database.



Arkansas Tree – 21 Inch diameter



Missouri Tree – 34 inch diameter



Missouri Tree - Undocumented

Tennessee Tree and Stone Carving

John Beckley was hiking the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area near Oneida, TN and found this tree which points NW toward a small water source. The tree also points toward a large cliff area above the Cumberland River. Just a short distance from the tree on the cliff is a 2 foot diameter symbol carved into the rock shown in the photo on this page. The symbol appears to be a Chi-Rho symbol which has religious meaning but is also associated with celestial events. The symbol in the center is sometimes used to represent a shepherd's staff. This part of the symbol was measured and found to point due north. Probably would be worthwhile to go to the site at a solstice event to see how the symbol lines up with the sun.



Tennessee Tree



Rock Symbol near Cumberland River

Georgia Tree

After doing a presentation in Lumpkin County, GA, we were invited to come back and see several trees found there. One of those trees was a classical marker tree pointing downhill to a spring. This tree is 21.5 inches in diameter.

Indian Trails Mapping Program

Diane and I along with fellow researcher Eddie Lanham have now begun publishing a 7-8 part story on a research project which involves the travels of the Creek Indians from GA and AL to New York City in 1790 to sign the Treaty of New York. This thousand mile journey along Indian Trails is one of those fascinating stories of Indian travel that we can only imagine considering we can't go very far without maps, compass, GPS and our in-car navigation systems.

In November, Diane and I traveled to SE GA to work with Dee Sturgis and many local researchers on trails and Indian sites along the Altamaha River. We were taken to one site known as the "Rock Oven" which was in fact a cave. Creek Indians live in on the banks of the Altamaha River for many years. It appears that Creek Indians continued to live in that area up into the early 1900's which proves not all Creek Indians left GA on the removal.



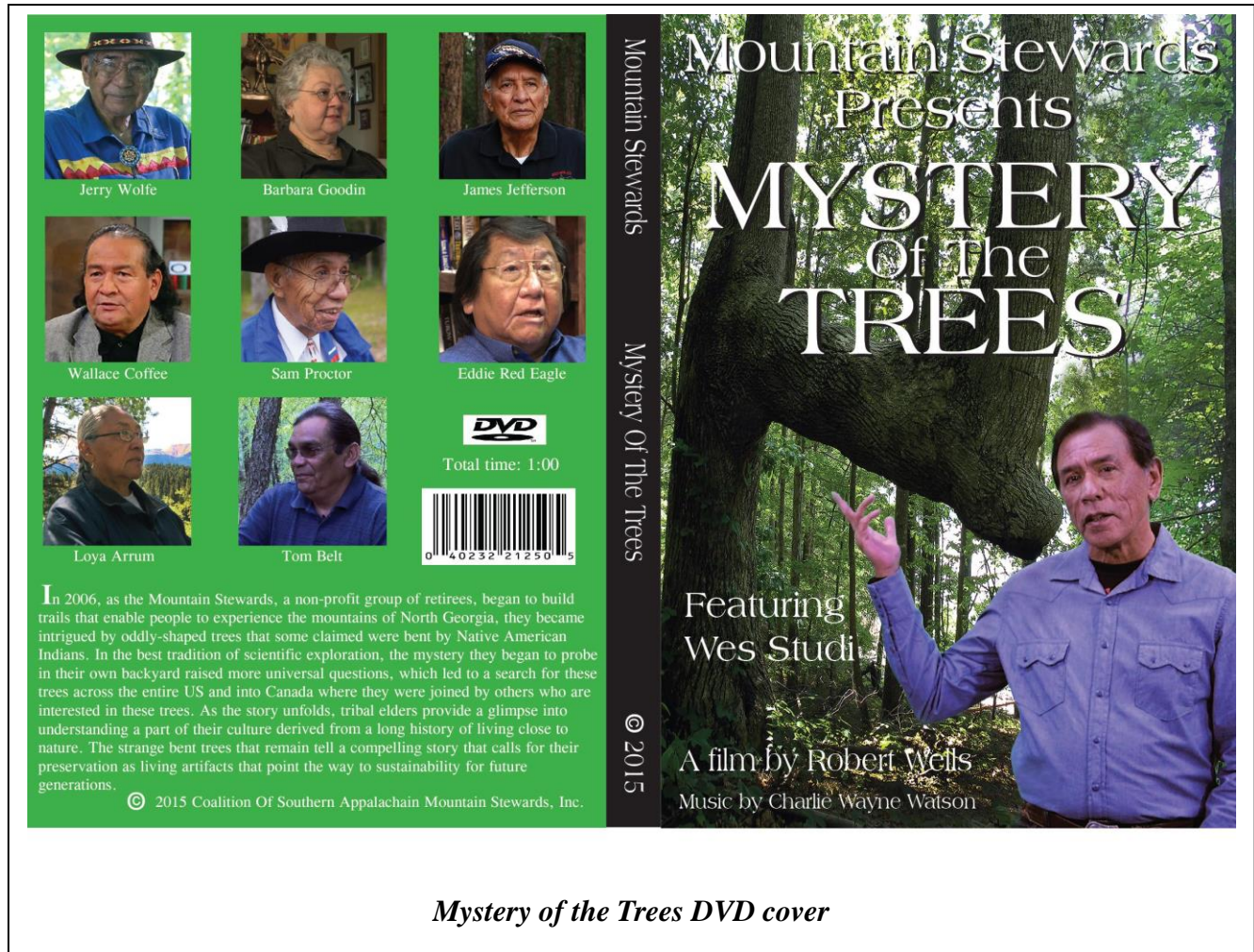
Georgia Tree – 21.5 inches in diameter

Mystery of the Trees Documentary

After almost eight years of work traveling all over the country, we have finally completed all work on the *Mystery of the Trees* documentary. We had expected to be completed before 2015 but we decided to get Wes Studi to do the narration on the film in addition to his previous efforts filmed last year. The narration was recorded in mid-December in Santa Fe New Mexico and edited into the film over the holidays. The finally editing of the film was completed on 14 January and the DVD version of the film was sent to the DVD production company for mass printing. We expect the have the DVD's by 1 February 2015.

The world premiere of the film will be held on Saturday 7 Feb in Jasper, GA. We are also scheduling other screenings of the film in SC, AL and GA. More screenings will be planned for later in the year. If

you are interested in sponsoring a showing in your area, please contact us. We are also planning on taking the film to several film festivals and may offer it to PBS for a showing on public television.



***Mystery of the Trees* Presentations and Book Signings**

We made 31 presentations last year and will begin our 2015 schedule in Pigeon Forge, TN where we are participating in the 25th Annual Wilderness Wildlife Week which attracts about 25,000 visitors. After Pigeon Forge, we already have a number of other presentations booked for 2015 and the list is growing. 2015 will also include the screenings of the film so it should be another busy year.

The sale of the *Mystery of the Trees* book continue at a reasonable pace. The monies received from the sale of the books supports the documentary costs which are significant. We have less than 250 books left in stock and don't plan a third printing unless there is a great demand for the book in 2015.

If you wish to schedule a visit to your area, please contact us at mountainman93@gmail.com. There is no cost for the presentations. However, traveling long distances to present the information to only a few

people is cost prohibitive. The current talk schedule can be found on the Mountain Stewards web site near the bottom left of the main page, (www.mountainstewards.org).

Facebook

To stay in touch with our activities in between Newsletter issues, follow us on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mysterytrees which 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 to help educate folks about the program. Currently, we have over 900 **LIKES**. We are striving for the 1,000 mark. Since the average Facebook person has 130 friends, then every time we put out a post to those that **Liked** our page on Facebook, there is a possibility that approximately 100,000 people will see it.