

2018 Gann Gathering: The Gann – Cherokee Connection

30th Annual Meeting



June 19-20-21, 2018

Choctaw Casino & Hotel – Pocola, Oklahoma

This registration packet provides the details of the scheduled program and activities, location and hotel reservation information, and a registration form. Online registration is also available as explained on the registration form.

Headquarters



Our headquarters will be the beautiful Choctaw Casino & Hotel at Pocola, Oklahoma. This is on the southwest outskirts of Fort Smith, Arkansas. We are meeting mid-week this year, to take advantage of exceptional hotel room rates.

Theme and Program

The theme, “The Gann-Cherokee Connection,” focuses our attention on a more-in-depth look at this branch of the family than we have had in the past. We will also enjoy some other talks including one on Ganns in the War of 1812 and another about other Gann families who came to Oklahoma. We will also have an update on DNA discoveries in Gann-related ancestry.



Once again, **Laura Gann** presents the poignant story of Thomas Gann and Catherine McCoy-Hicks of the Cherokee Nation East, from Georgia and Tennessee to Oklahoma! Laura’s late husband, Ray Gann, was a direct Gann descendant of Thomas and Catherine.

Our keynote storyteller is **Troy Wayne Poteete**, also a direct descendant of Thomas and Catherine, whose fascinating and historically accurate details of the Trail of Tears, “Nunna Daul Sunyi” (the trails where we wept), is a people’s story well worth hearing.

Troy is the Executive Director of the Trail of Tears Association. He will take us on an exploration of Cherokee History from revolutionary times through the tragedy of Thomas Gann’s family during the forced removal, including Catherine’s death and the adoption of his young daughter, Ruth, by the celebrated Missionary Samuel Worchester. He will also tell of the aftermath of the removal which caused near Civil War in the 1840s, and the post-Civil War pressures on tribal government caused by Federal policies which allowed white intruders to infest the Nation and resulted in Swimmer Gann’s shooting up the town and being sent off to prison by Hanging Judge Parker. We will also learn about a series of circumstances fostered by the Federal government to justify wresting away tribal self-governance and allowing legal plundering of tribal lands.

Fellowship

Of course, fellowship is a major part of all Gann Gatherings, the opportunity to renew past friendships and meet new cousins and ‘first-timers’. A reception the first evening provides time dedicated to this, and many conversations and exchanges will continue throughout the event.



Tour (optional)

Whenever we go into an area we have not visited previously, we always try to include an opportunity to explore and learn about local culture and history. This year, a tour has been arranged, via car-pooling, to the Cherokee Capital, Tahlequah. There we will learn the history of Tahlequah and the Cherokee from our guide, tour a nearby antebellum plantation home, and the Cherokee National Supreme Court Museum. After a home-style buffet lunch, we will delve deeper into Cherokee history as we explore Diligwa, the 1710 Cherokee village and the Trail of Tears Museum. All of this is bundled as a package, offered as a separate option from the main registration. (See separate itinerary sheet, enclosed.)



Details

Whether you choose to join in the tour or not, you will certainly enjoy the main activities, and are sure to meet some new Gann cousins. We will all have a great time as we learn about “The Gann-Cherokee Connection” in Pocola on June 19th, 20th, and 21st. Come join us — it won’t be the same without you!

- A Registration Form with all options and fees and contact information is available on the Society’s website, Facebook page, and by mail or email upon request.
- The program registration for two days of presentations, the first-night reception, one luncheon and the closing banquet, is \$70. For children and youth (18 & under), \$55.
- The optional car-pool tour to the selected Cherokee sites at Tahlequah and Park Hill, with guide, admission fees, and lunch, is \$40. For children 15 & under, \$28; free for 3 & under.
- Guest rooms at the Choctaw Casino Hotel in Pocola are \$69 + 5% Tribe tax with the Society’s room block code as listed below. A limited number of suites are also available at a rate of \$150 + tax with the same code. The hotel reservation telephone number for the Pocola location is **1-800-590-5825**. Be certain to mention the **Gann Historical Society** and Room Block Code **1806GANNHI**. (18 06 Gann h i)
- The cut-off date for the hotel room block is June 5, 2018.
- Final date for receipt of advance registrations is June 7, 2018. Registrations received after that date cannot be guaranteed meals as the meal count locks in on that date.

Special note to those traveling with children:

This year’s hotel does not have a swimming pool. Children are allowed to walk through the Casino to reach the restaurants and the meeting room which is at the opposite side from the hotel. Special red carpet pathways are provided for this purpose. We do not have any scheduled children’s or youth activities this year unless a volunteer steps forward to provide this service.

Photo credits: Choctaw Casino & Resort, Granger Collection, William Gann, Oklahoma Tourism, Visit Cherokee Nation

**Program* for the 30th Annual Gann Gathering:
The Gann – Cherokee Connection
June 19–20–21, 2018
Choctaw Casino & Hotel – Pocola, Oklahoma**

** This is the program scheduled as of April 5, 2018. Note that some items may change due to circumstances beyond our control. All activities are at the Hotel except the optional tour.*

Tuesday, June 19th

Optional: Tour several Cherokee sites at and near the Cherokee capitol. We will car-pool to Tahlequah (about 90 minutes from the hotel) and Park Hill which is near there. A guide will meet us to enhance our understanding of the sites we visit in the morning.

We will enjoy a home-style buffet lunch at the Restaurant of the Cherokees, then tour the Cherokee Heritage Center in the afternoon, returning to the hotel in plenty of time for the evening reception. Participants also receive a discount at gift shops of the sites visited. (Optional fee, see separate schedule enclosed and appropriate space on registration form.)

Included: “Gathering of the Cousins” Reception

7:30 – 10:00 PM Renew past acquaintances and meet new-found cousins as you visit with those who are attending. Exchange family information and stories, and make new friends.

— *Light refreshments* —

Wednesday, June 20th

10:30 AM Opening Session, greetings, announcements.

11:00 AM “The Story of Thomas Gann and Catherine McCoy-Hicks of the Cherokee Nation East, Georgia” by Laura and (the late) Ray Gann. Laura Gann, widow of Ray Gann, will tell the story of Thomas Gann and Catherine Hicks who married in 1819 and began the Gann family connection to the Cherokees. Included will be new information that has surfaced regarding Catherine’s parentage that is prompting new, interesting research with possible assistance from DNA testing.

Their fascinating story includes how their lives and that of their children and grandchildren were forever changed because U.S. Troops, prompted by the state of Georgia, expelled the Cherokee Indians from their ancestral homeland in the Southeast and forced them over The Trail of Tears to the Indian Territory in what is now the State of Oklahoma. Troy Wayne Poteete’s presentation which follows will provide us with an understanding of Cherokee history through the eyes of Thomas and Catherine, and tell of The Trail of Tears, and after.

— *Buffet Lunch in the Meeting Room (included with pre-registration)* —

— *Entrée: Rotisserie Herb Rubbed Chicken* —

1:00 PM “Cherokee History Told By and Through the Descendants of Ignatius ‘Nathan’ Gann — Before the Removal” [**Part 1**] by Troy Wayne Poteete, descendant of Thomas and Catherine, and Executive Director of the National Trail of Tears Association.

An exploration of Cherokee History from Revolutionary War times beginning with Nathan up through Thomas Gann’s incarceration and the tragedy of his family during the forced removal, as experienced by Thomas and family, and related Cherokee families.

2:00 PM Report on Developments in Gann DNA Testing with Exciting Discoveries!
by Thea Baker, Director, GHS&L DNA Research Project

Break

3:00 PM "Cherokee History Told By and Through the Descendants of Ignatius 'Nathan' Gann — After the Removal" [**Part 2**] by Troy Wayne Poteete. Tragedy and loss strikes the family again; pressures on the Tribal Government by the Federal Government and the resulting land grabs and other changes; the trial(s) of Swimmer Gann, and more.

— Dinner on your own - with new friends or "old" ones! —

Suggested for dinner:

Seven Ponies in the hotel, time of your choosing between 4:00pm and 9:00pm
Full Buffet \$12.99 | add Prime Rib for only \$5 additional

Thursday, June 21st

9:00 AM Annual GHS&L Business Meeting. Tom Gann, President

10:00 AM "Gann Men Answer the Call: The War of 1812," by Cathie & Tim Schoppenhorst. Service in this conflict will be discussed by highlighting the lives and experiences of a few of those Gann men who served.

Break

11:00 AM "Other Gann Families of Oklahoma," by Charlie Gann. In addition to the early (forced) immigrants to what is now Oklahoma, other Ganns moved there in later years and settled in various locales. Charlie, a descendant of one of these families, will share information with us about some of these families.

— 12:00 PM Lunch on your own —

1:30 PM "Medical Tragedies of Several Gann Soldiers", by William R. Gann. Bill will share brief stories of the sacrifices and sufferings of a number of Gann men in various wars, ranging from peg-legs to modern-day prostheses.

2:00 PM "The Gann Find-a-Grave Project," by Lewis M. Ruddick, Chairman, Gann Find-a-Grave project. An introduction to the Find-a-Grave website and the GHS&L project with Gann grave listings on the site. This will describe the recently-formed project which is planned to be a compilation and coordination effort between our Gann Historical Society and Find-a-Grave with their 8,542 current total Gann matches.

2:45 PM Methodology: "Finding and Using Obituaries, with Some Pitfalls to Avoid," by Gary R. Toms. Obituaries can be a rich source of family information, but can also contain some pitfalls... and surprises. Many are available through online sources, often free of charge. Discover how to find and use these for research, or just to satisfy your curiosity.

— Dinner Banquet, beginning 6:30 p.m. (included with pre-registration) —

— *Entrée: Medallion of Berkshire Pork with Mushroom Dijon Cream* —

Dinner will be followed by Special Entertainment