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Red Clay Historic Park Signs

New signs to the entrances of Red Clay State Historic Park were revealed Wednesday. The signs, in English and Cherokee, point out that Red Clay is part of the Trail Of Tears National Historic Trail.

Taking part in the unveiling were Cherokee and other Native American representatives, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Cleveland and Bradley County leaders, members of the Tennessee Trail Of Tears Association, the North Carolina TOTA, Friends Of Red Clay, National Park Service and others.

Cleveland Mayor Tom Rowland spoke to the group about the founding of Red Clay State Historic Park in the 1970s. Rowland, as chairman of the Cherokee Red Clay Association, worked with Col. James Corn Sr., who bought the historic site and sold it to the state to preserve it. A brewing company had tried to buy the site because of its spring water.

Mayor Rowland talked about the early efforts to convince the state that the last Eastern capital of the Cherokee before the 1838 Removal should be a state historic park.

Brock Hill, Tennessee Department Of Environment and Conservation deputy commissioner, said the state has 56 state parks, including the historic park's that tell the story of Tennessee. Red Clay, he said, "is a real cool place. This is a really special place in the hearts of many people."

Park Manager Erin Medley, said the park was already part of the Trail Of Tears National Historic Trail but "we've never had the signage to show that."

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