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A.D.," he said. "Of course there are stone landscapes like this that stretch from Alabama to New England."

Yolanda Saunooke, of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, said preservation of the site is in the best interest of history.

"We have nothing to hide," she said. "We're just trying to protect this historic, archeological site."

Tyler Howe, also of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians, also debunked Thornton's theory as being totally fabricated.

"A hundred years ago, it was believed that the Lost Tribes of Israel built these mounds," Howe said. "Now we're supposed to believe it was the Mayans."

Emman Spain, Tribal historic preservation officer of the Muscogee Creek Nation, disputes Thornton's claim of being an expert of Muscogee Creek Indians.

"He stretches the truth in his writings," Spain said during an interview at the U.S. Forest Service headquarters in Union County. "All the things written about (Track Rock Gap), and some of the individuals here that are stretching things, trying to claim connection to the Muscogee Creek Nation. We felt compelled to come out here and debunk a lot of the things (Thornton) is saying, such as, he is not a Tribal member. He has no association with the Muscogee Creek Nation. The Muscogee Creek Nation does not endorse anything he says or any of his writings."

Spain said all the Muscogee Nation wants is for people to know, that Thornton has no connection to the Muscogee Nation and he has no authority to speak on behalf of the Muscogee Nation.

"And also, we're here to applaud the Forest Service efforts to protect and preserve these significant cultural sites here," Spain said. "We know there is a fine balance in the mandates that the Forest Service has, and obligations to the general public, as well as obligations to these federal laws."

"So we're here to applaud the Forest Service efforts in the protection of these cul-



Yolanda Saunooke and Tyler Howe of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians, and David Proctor and Emman Spain of the Muscogee Creek Nation dispute a claim that the Track Rock site was created by the Maya Indians. Photo/Joe Collins

tural sites and we would like to say that we look forward to being a continuing partner with our federal partners here such as the Forest Service and we appreciate everything they are doing," Spain said.

Muscogee Creek tribal cultural advisor and traditionalist expert, David Proctor, compares the Web and media frenzy surrounding the Track Rock site as just more Mayan Myth.

"There are no stories associated with any other tribes in this area during the time of our ancestors," Proctor said. "If the Mayans had been here, we would have had many stories told around the fires of them, but those stories do not exist therefore the Mayans were never here. Our people are buried here and the Mayans would have feared such a place as this."

"This is a very sacred area to our people and we are

insulted by the comments insinuating that we can't recognize that our tribes used this land and made these stone landscapes," Spain said. "Our people migrated to the south and west and the Cherokee moved in behind us. The area was important to them as well. You will find evidence of both tribes here, but no Mayan."

At the end of the season premier of America Unearthed, Wolters concluded that there is a Georgia-Mayan connection.

He declared it's time for the historic community to rewrite the myths and determine the truths that have long gone overlooked.

After all the recent speculation over the Track Rock Gap site, the *North Georgia News* wonders why this site wasn't important enough to study before 2009, the first year an archeological study was conducted at this historic

site. That truly is one of *History's Mysteries*.

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the description of a vehicle driven by an elderly man out of White County had been discovered at a residence at Cobb Ridge off Richard Russell in Spiva Cove," Worden said. "The White County Sheriff's Office had advised of a 87-year-old male reported missing on Dec. 17 and the vehicle found at that residence came back as being owned by that subject."

"Union County Fire & Rescue's rescue team was called in to assist in the search for Mr. Arnold," Worden said.

"Investigators Mark Cecci and Lamar Dyer were called in to process the Jeep Liberty for additional clues about Mr. Arnold."

On Tuesday afternoon, Arnold's body was located, Worden said.

"Apparently he had gotten out of his vehicle and began walking around," Worden said. "It's obvious that he took a fall, and wound up in a laurel thicket near the creek. He succumbed to the elements after that fall, and that's where he was found."

In his younger days, Arnold was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries sustained while fighting in the *Battle for Bastogne* as a front line radio operator, and went on to help liberate the *Buchenwald Death Camp* in April 1944.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013 at 11 a.m. from The Bridge Church with Rev. Patrick Ballington officiating.

Alexander Funeral Home of Cleveland had charge of the funeral arrangements.

Trackrock Campground supports Preserve our Legacy



Welcome to Trackrock and the special hospitality of the Alexander family.

Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse



December 11, 1982
October 15, 2004

In memory of
Matthew Allen King
by Mom, Dad & Daniel

December 5, 2012

In memory of
Michael Fowler
by John, Andrea, Jacob,
Lindsay, Nana & Granddad

May 1, 1928
December 9, 2001

In memory of
Ann Farabee
by Maurice Farabee

**Bell ringing information
at 706-745-5493**

The Community Council's "Preserve our Legacy" campaign received a significant boost this week with a generous donation from the Alexander family and Trackrock Campground and Cabins. In making the presentation to John Roberts, Community Council member and Camp Host at Trackrock, the family reconfirmed their ongoing commitment to the Student's Education, Adult Outreach and Preservation Programs provided by the Community Council.

In accepting the Alexander's gift, Council member Roberts remarked, "None of this would be possible without the generous support of the business community and Trackrock is once again leading the way with this generous donation. The Alexander family has been a lead supporter since our first campaign years ago and we are most grateful for that leadership and continuing support".

Trackrock Campground and Cabins is a 300 acre paradise of meadows, hayfields,

and woodlands in the shadow of Brasstown Bald, Georgia's highest point. Completely isolated from all other commercial developments, the property is bordered on three sides by National Forest. Great care is taken to preserve the natural environment. Wildlife, flowers, and flowering shrubs are abundant throughout the campground and surrounding area.

There are 95 level, shaded and uncrowded campsites for tents, popups, and RVs of any size. Bath houses located in the camping area are kept spotless and are equipped with hot showers. One and two bedroom cabins are available for those who prefer not to camp. The cabins are fully furnished, including kitchens, and have covered porches, picnic tables and grills. For more information www.trackrock.com

The "Preserve our Legacy" campaign has a goal of \$60,000 which will permit the Council to fully fund the three initiatives of Student Education, Adult Outreach and Preservation Projects. If you are a business looking for a way to support your community or an individual who has benefited from the Council's work, you can make a donation to the campaign by visiting our secure site at www.caes.uga.edu/center/gmrec/.

The Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center is part of the University of Georgia and its Community Council programs, which are 100% funded by community donations, serve Fannin, Towns and Union counties in Georgia and Cherokee and Clay counties in North Carolina. For more information on the Center and the Community Council programs call the Center at (706) 745-2655.