

Quanah Tribune-Chief

QUANAH, HARDEMAN COUNTY, TEXAS

\$1.00

FRIDAY, October 9, 2020

www.quanahtribunechief.com

10 PAGES

VOL. 131

NO. 15

Planting of Comanche Marker Trees Brings Awareness to Area

On Saturday, September 26, Quanah was honored to have Steve Houser, founding member of the Texas Historic Tree Coalition and certified arborist, and four descendants of Quanah Parker participate in the planting of two Comanche Marker Trees. Houser is considered the top authority on Comanche Marker Trees and literally wrote the book, *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas*. Houser has been working with the Comanche Nation for over 25 years in helping to identify Comanche Marker Trees. He has been deeply honored to work with the Comanche Nation with marker trees for as long as he has. Houser was able to spare a few moments to sit down with the QTC.

QTC: What are Comanche Marker Trees?

Houser: Comanche Marker Trees are living witnesses to the Comanche Nation and their incredible



Steve Houser plants a Comanche Marker Tree at the Q.A.&P. Depot.

Shane Lance/Quanah Tribune-Chief

way of life. The trees were around when the Comanches were still

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Trees

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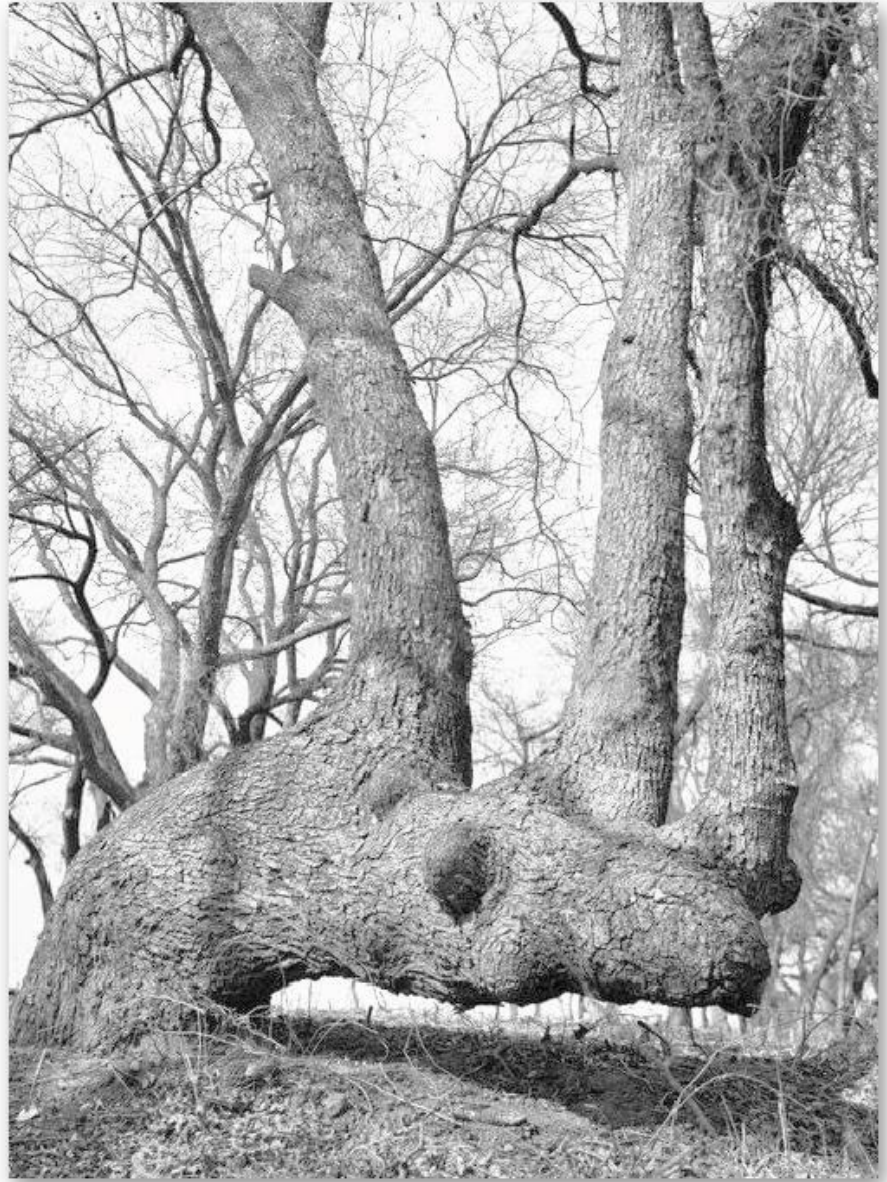
here. They mark a number of different and important aspects of the national landscape. It can be a trail, painted rock quarry, water, or even burial trees. There has not been a specific type of bend or shape found to identify certain types of locations. Some trees were bent on purpose while other trees used as marker trees grew naturally.

QTC: What are the common trees used to make a Comanche Marker Tree?

Houser: The two most common trees are pecan and post oak trees. I have found a burr oak and eastern red cedar. It is possible that there are other species of marker trees such as mesquite trees, but none have been identified as of yet. To be a marker tree, the tree will need to be at least 150 years old.

QTC: What are the criteria of recognizing a Comanche Marker Tree?

Houser: The tree will need to be at least 150 years old, it will need a purpose such as marking a water source, and it must be proved that Comanches were in the area of the tree.



Comanche Marker Tree in Holliday, Texas.

QTC: What are the proper steps for someone who believes they have identified a marker tree?

Houser: If you come across a bent tree with an unusual shape, you can go to the Historic Tree Coalition webpage at www.txhtc.org and fill out the submission form. You will need to send basic data of the tree along with photographs of the tree.

In a couple of years, Houser will come back to Quanah to bend both of the trees that were planted. They will be bent towards Medicine Mounds. Houser has been learning to replicate the historical process used by the Comanches, including making and using yucca rope to tie down the trees. For more information on Comanche Marker Trees, please visit www.txhtc.org or you can purchase Comanche Marker Trees of Texas on Amazon or other book retailers.