

The Traveller

A Newsletter of the Bartram Trail Conference

Spring, 2010

Art, Nature, and History The 2009 Biennial Conference

DeLand, Florida, October 23–25, 2009



Members of the Bartram Trail Conference enjoyed an excursion on the St. Johns River, departing from Blue Springs State Park.

Mallory O'Connor stood on the steps of the Museum of Florida Art and smiled, gesturing toward the exhibit salons on the second floor. "We are fortunate that the Bartram Trail Conference could come to De Land at the same time the museum is hosting the *Liquid Muse Exhibit*." The artist, art historian, and Professor Emerita at Santa Fe College, Gainesville, Florida was kicking off the 2009 meeting of the Conference, and the members gladly turned from the buffet tables and listened.

"Water is central to Florida's allure. Water has shaped culture since humans first arrived here thousands of years ago. The St. Johns River and its watershed have

been central to Florida history. The 35 Florida artists selected to contribute work to *Liquid Muse* have all been inspired by water, but their paintings express in various ways the truth that the river is many different things—beautiful, historic, mysterious, romantic and—imperiled. Let's go see it."

Historians, gardeners, archaeologists, environmentalists, and others followed Mallory to the halls above. Jackson Walker's painting of William Bartram seated in his boat, surrounded by his paraphernalia, opened the tour, followed by other paintings that capture the beauty of the St. Johns watershed.

Following the evening dinner, Dr. Dan-

iel Schafer delivered an illustrated lecture on William Bartram and eighteenth-century plantations along the St. Johns River. Dr. Schafer, Professor Emeritus of History, University of North Florida and a leading authority on early Florida history, noted that Bartram mentioned in his *Travels* only a few of the two dozen plantations that had emerged along the river by the mid 1700s. Rather than discussing the burgeoning settlement and exploitation of the area, Schafer concluded, Bartram chose to portray Florida as a vast, wild, unsettled wilderness.

Schafer created the website "Florida History Online" which includes an exhaustive description of St. Johns Plantations in the time of John and William Bartram's explorations. (<http://www.unf.edu/floridahistoryonline/Projects/Bartram.html>)

The meeting continued the following day with illustrated presentations by leading Bartram scholars.

Chuck Spornick of Emory University reviewed William and John Bartram's journeys along the St. Johns, detailing important sites and pointing out the importance of James Spalding of Frederica, Georgia, and other capitalists who supported science, exploration, and the arts in the 1700s. These men not only gave financial aid to Bartram, they also donated "in-kind," by providing assistance in travel and accommodations along the way. Bartram accompanied teams of Spalding's traders up the St. Johns and across Florida. He made the Spalding and Kelsall Upper and Lower Stores bases of operation. "Bartram's trip would not have been possible without Spalding's help," said Spornick.

Deerskin trade was paramount to the Spalding and Kelsall business plan and formed the background of Bartram's jour-

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Sunday morning began with a walk into Bartram's Alachua Savannah at Paynes Prairie State Park.

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ney, Kathryn Braund pointed out. This trade depended on political ties that the English entrepreneurs had established with Creek and Seminole men and women. "You had to be friends if you wanted to trade," Braund declared.

Braund is Professor of History at Auburn University where she specializes in Colonial American Indian studies.

Bringing the trading "up close and personal," Charlotte Porter, Curator at the Florida Museum of Natural History, discussed the museum's excavations at Spalding and Kelsall's Lower Store near Palatka. Illustrating her lecture with sacks of artifacts, she told the story of how English goods (including Wedgewood ceramics) made their way into the Florida backcountry through the traders.

Thomas Hallock concluded the morning session with a focus on the art of William Bartram. He reviewed Bartram's illustrations through the course of his career, from watercolors done as a youth, to his fine drawings completed mostly for patrons John Fothergill and Peter Collinson, to the "journeyman work" completed later in life. "With over two hundred drawings and engravings surviving," Hallock noted, "it becomes clear that Bartram was a rather steady and productive artist."

In the afternoon, the conferees traveled to Blue Spring State Park to visit the southern extreme of William Bartram's

itinerary. There, Bartram had seen "perfectly diaphanous, and here are continually a prodigious number and variety of fish; they appear as plain as though lying on a table before your eyes, although many feet deep in the water." In his day, the water was "very offensive to the smell, much like bilge water or the washings of a gun-barrel, and is smelt at a great distance."

The conference travelers found no such odors, but witnessed the "Alligators and gar [that] were numerous in the bason, even at the apertures where the ebullition emerges through the rocks, as also many other tribes of fish."

At the park the group boarded an eco-tour boat for a two-hour ride through



Charlotte Porter displayed artifacts recovered from Spalding's Lower Store.

the winding streams that intersect the St Johns. Wading birds, soaring hawks, and alligators competed with camaraderie for their attention.

Early Sunday morning, the group drove through the area known to Bartram as "the scrub" and met at the north rim of "Payne's Prairie" (the Alachua Savanna). Led by George Edwards, President of the Friends of Paynes Prairie, they visited the Great Sink, marveled at the sunning alligators, and strolled through the wetland to observe the birds and recall Bartram's awe over this "Elysian field."

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"Paddle Georgia" Winds through Bartram Country

This year's Paddle Georgia will be on the Broad and Savannah Rivers—prime William Bartram country.

Paddle Georgia is a week-long (June 19 through June 25) endeavor organized each year in cooperation with the Georgia River Network, a river conservation group located in Athens. An extremely popular event, it is the largest organized

paddle in the United States. Registration will open online in early February. More information on Paddle Georgia 2010 will soon be updated at http://www.garivers.org/paddle_georgia/pghome.html.

Brochures will be available the last week in February. Participation is limited to the first 300 thru-paddlers. ☼

Tom Hallock Elected President of BTC

The Bartram Trail Conference has elected Dr. Thomas Hallock as its next president.

Tom was born in New Jersey, in Muhlenberg Memorial Hospital, a place named for one of Bartram's principal correspondents. After receiving his PhD in English and American literature from New York University, he moved to South Georgia, where he taught at Valdosta State University and first became interested in William Bartram. He is the founding editor of *The Traveller* and the author of *From the Fallen Tree: Frontier Narratives, Environmental Politics, and the Roots of a National Pastoral*. Tom currently teaches at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg.

With Nancy Hoffmann, he recently completed *William Bartram, the Search for Nature's Design: Selected Art, Letters, and Unpublished Writings*, due for publication this May by the University of Georgia Press. ❀



Tom Hallock

New (Old) Historical Marker in Alabama

The Clarke County (Alabama) Historical Society erected a Bartram Trail historical marker at the entrance to the Stimpson Sanctuary near Rockville, about two miles from the lower Tombigbee River, in November 2009.

Recognizing Bartram and his visit to the Tensaw Delta, the marker was developed in 1976 during the nation's Bicentennial celebration. It was misplaced, however, and never put up. A few years later it was found and taken to Jackson for erection but was again lost until the Historical Society rediscovered it.

The inscription on the marker reads:

"William Bartram, America's first native-born artist and naturalist, passed through Clarke County during the Revolutionary era, making the first scientific notations of its flora, fauna and inhabitants. As the appointed botanist of Britain's King George III, he traveled 2,400 miles in three journeys into the southern colonies in 1775-76, collecting rare plants and specimens and making detailed drawings of plants and animals."

Bartram historians note that John Bartram, William's father, was King George's botanist in America. William was not. Several markers placed in Alabama in 1976 contain the error. ❀

Bayou Manchac Named Historic Waterway

Bayou Manchac has been declared a "Historic and Scenic River" by the State of Louisiana. William Bartram followed this waterway on a "strait, spacious, and perfectly level" road "under the shadow of a grand forest, the trees of the first order in magnitude and beauty..." to travel from the Amite River to the Mississippi.

Under the "Historic and Scenic River" designation, the state Department of Wildlife and Fisheries must develop a management plan and regulate water quality. The designation forbids realigning

the channel and commercially harvesting trees within 100 feet of the waterway. New construction, including piers and boat slips, is restricted.

Bayou Manchac runs through the southern suburbs of Baton Rouge. Local citizens, concerned about development, advocated protecting the bayou, which served as a water link to New Orleans before Andrew Jackson had a dam constructed to block its flow. Pamela Caillouet, a member of the Bartram Trail Conference and a resident of the area, participated in the push to protect the stream. ❀

Conference, continued from page 2

Following a box lunch at the City of Gainesville's Boulware Springs Park and a brief business meeting, the travelers drove off to Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, and other Florida towns, eager to reconvene at some other Bartram venue in 2011.

The Bartram Trail Conference greatly appreciates the hospitality of the Museum of Florida Art and the Friends of Paynes Prairie who assisted Kathryn Braund in the planning of the meeting. ❀

Book Reviews

Mark Dion: Travels of William Bartram Reconsidered. Philadelphia, PA: Bartram's Garden, 2008. Parallels between Bartram's *Travels* and *Mark Dion: Travels of William Bartram Reconsidered* are not hard to find. Dion planned it that way.

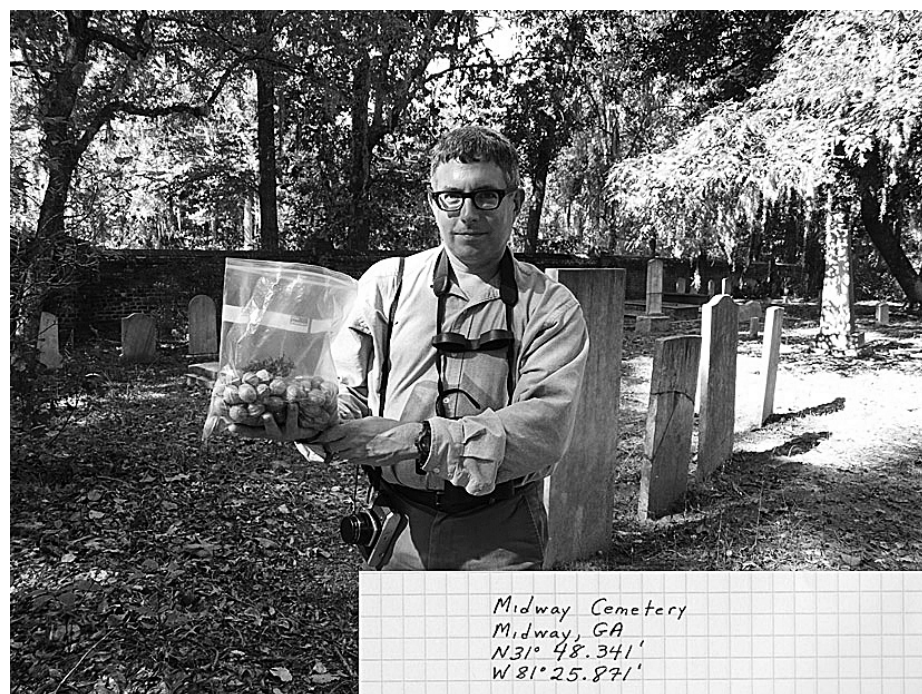
- William Bartram began his journey in Philadelphia in 1773 and returned home in 1777. Mark Dion began his journey in Philadelphia in 2007 and returned there in 2008.
- Bartram looked for what, in his day, were curiosities. He collected many of the same. So did Dion.
- Bartram wrote letters to his sponsor. Dion wrote postcards and published his journal online.
- Both men set forth with letters of introduction; both drew and painted objects discovered; and both suffered hardships in the Tensaw Delta of Alabama.
- Objects both collected now reside in Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia (William's grow there in the garden; Mark's rest in elegantly crafted wood display cabinets and chests).

There the similarities end. And they should. William Bartram travelled into a land barely known to outsiders, virtually unmapped, and sparsely developed. Mark Dion, equipped with technologies of transportation and expression undreamed in the 18th century, followed Bartram through a region that has since suffered wars, transformed its population, and become part of an international culture.

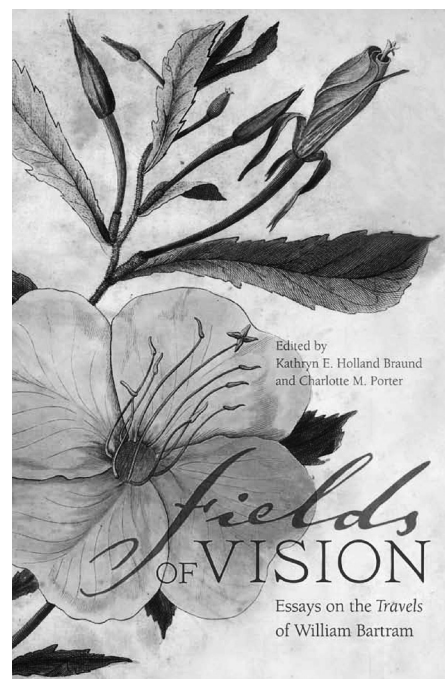
The Bartram's Garden publication is the story, loosely and imaginatively told, of an artist's pursuit of the land of Bartram's *Travels*. It is not a scientific study. Nor does it purport to be a thoroughgoing exposition of all places along the Bartram trail. Dion conceived his project as "part Lewis and Clark, part Jack Kerouac, part Pee Wee's *Big Adventure* and part Borat." The result is artifacts of the 21st century, photographs, original painted postcards, and narrative—and this book. Dion's art is the process, the collections, the website, and the journals.

The publication, which reflects but cannot encompass the entirety of the project, displays images of Dion's journey and numerous vivid pictures of artifacts—picked up in ditches, swamps, and flea markets. These include bottles of insects, drawers filled with seeds, and an abundance of rubber, plastic, and ceramic alligators.

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Mark Dion at the Midway Cemetery.



Fields of Vision Released by the University of Alabama Press

Fields of Vision: Essays on the Travels of William Bartram, edited by Kathryn H. Braund and Charlotte M. Porter, has just been released by the University of Alabama Press.

This richly illustrated volume of essays, a selection from Bartram Trail Conference meetings since 2001, brings together scholarly contributions from history, archaeology, and botany. The authors discuss the political and personal context of Bartram's travels; two important plants first discovered by Bartram; Creek architecture; foodways in the 18th-century south, particularly those of Indian groups that Bartram encountered; rediscovery of a lost Bartram manuscript; John and William Bartram's observations on the Mount Royal site on the St. Johns River; new approaches to reading Bartram; the use of digital imagery in modern botanical research; and Bartram's place in contemporary environmental issues.

This "must read" for any Bartram aficionado is available directly from UAP (800-621-2736), at your local bookstore, or Amazon.com in hard and soft covers. The soft cover features an illustration of one of Bartram's signal botanical discoveries, the largeflower primrose. ❀

Kathryn Braund, A Presidential Tribute

When Jim Kautz tapped me to do this piece, I naturally panicked (some sort of a grad-student ur-memory keeps me terrified of her) and sought help from her loyal lieutenants—Tom Hallock, Jim Kautz, Brad Sanders, and Chuck Spornick. They reassured me that the piece would be easy to write and that even greater challenges would fall to her successor as President to match her accomplishments!

Talk about a hard act to follow. As Kathryn Braund ends her term as President of the Bartram Trail Conference, it's time to review the incredible list of her accomplishments, the better to intimidate her successors.

Kathryn began her tenure in 2000. Though possessed of a patient husband and loyal dogs, the amount of time she has spent on BTC matters is beyond the ken of mere mortals like us.

She revived the BTC biennial conferences, the first one being in Gainesville in 2001. This was followed by four successful conferences, in Montgomery in 2003 (the canoe trip on the Tallapoosa in the rain!), Augusta in 2005 (that neat canal boat), Spanish Fort in 2007 (twenty-five canoes in the swamp), and Deland in 2009 (the big riverboat, and all those danged alligators!). It must be pointed out that she does seem to have a thing about boats. Sometimes almost singlehandedly, she arranged the multitudinous details of meeting sites, speakers, tours, and meals. You do remember having drinks and hors d'oeuvres on the deck of the Five-Rivers Center in the Mobile Delta with the sun setting on one horizon and the full moon coming up on the other? Classic Braund!

Kathryn also organized and sponsored the wonderful off-year symposium on Bartram and his work at Auburn. That's where we saw the French edition of *Travels with the Europeanized engraving of old Mico Clucco* that made him look like Rousseau.

Under Kathryn's leadership the BTC launched its first website. That was



Kathryn Braund talking with Chuck Spornick during the 2009 Bartram Trail Conference biennial meeting

good enough, but then she and Brad Sanders also oversaw its revision two years ago. I often point it out to people newly interested in Bartram and they always report how useful and informative it is. Kathryn also reinvigorated the newsletter, inspiring Tom Hallock and Jim Kautz to make it into the interesting and informative periodical that it has become.

She also brought together the Fothergill Award that encourages young scholars. She has, in fact, been a tireless supporter of new research and writing. She was instrumental in helping Tom Hallock and Nancy Hoffmann shape the forthcoming *William Bartram, the Search for Nature's Design*. And she edited and pushed to fruition the recently published *Fields of Vision: Essays on the Travels of William Bartram*, drawn from the presentations at the biennial BTC conferences. She encouraged Jim Kautz's *Footprints across the South* and Beth Maynor Young and my book on Alabama Rivers, *Headwaters*.

She has tirelessly recruited new members for the conference. All this, and she has found time to teach and turn out a stream of good graduate students, write two or three books of her own and attend (and participate) in every early frontier and colonial history conference in sight. Her energy and focus are remarkable.

Says Tom Hallock, "More than any scholar I know, she has reached across to scholars from different disciplines—history, literature, archeology, and the natural sciences—while also using her passion for Bartram to reach beyond university walls, for example, by building ties with garden clubs, local historical societies, and environmental groups."

Chuck Spornick recently observed, "As Tom Hallock and I can vouch, the Bartram Trail Conference was near extinction in 1999. Ten years later, we can happily report that is not the case!"

I say let's elect her President for Life. (Say, that's got a ring to it!)

John C. Hall

Dion, continued from page 4

Several journal entries bring to life the experiences of the recent traveler. An example is Dion's parody of Bartram's ethnography:

"On Monday November 19th we were afforded an opportunity to observe a tribe of people who live in a manner utterly foreign to us. They live in a village fortified with fences and moats called Sun City. The name is appropriate since these people seem particularly fixated on the topic of weather and greatly speak with disparagement regarding the climates of their native birthplace in the North.... Two rituals bind the people here this place. They are the games of golf and tennis. ... These people are active, although seem to work little."

The reader gets few clues to Dion's itinerary. It is clear, however, that he visited New Orleans (which Bartram did not), but did not venture into the "Cherokee Mountains" (which Bartram did). Because Dion missed the "Vale of Cowee," he overlooked some of America's finest flea markets and the venue of Bartram's

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President's Notes

In 1797 the theater historian William Dunlap, with novelist Charles Brockden Brown, crossed the Schuylkill River to pay a visit to the famed naturalist, William Bartram. There they found the “sage of Kingsessing,” doing what you would expect him to be doing: gardening. Bartram was in his late fifties, still active, with decades left to live. He met his visitors while hoeing a bed of tulips, and according to Dunlap, conversed “with the ease of nature’s nobleman.”

It is one of many portraits of the botanist at home. Though often called a recluse, dismissed as an eccentric even in his own time, Bartram could actually be quite social. He was a loyal brother who helped in all aspects of the family horticultural business. As a tutor, he built lasting relationships with his nieces and nephews. He freely shared knowledge (not to mention plants) with younger peers and longtime acquaintances. He was, in a nutshell, a good friend.

Friendship is a big theme for anyone involved with the Bartram Trail Conference. Every two years the faithful gather, crossing state lines—and differing walks of life—to explore landscapes “Puc Puggy” described two centuries earlier. We come together to weigh the author’s passion for nature against our own. We come to learn more about the history of a region and nation. But most of all, I think, we gather to see each other.

Memories accumulate. Boat tours on the St. Johns River. Barbecue under the state house dome in Montgomery. Hikes along the north rim of the “Alachua Savanna.” Mullet fry leaping under a full moon in Mobile.

It’s been ten years since I first became involved with the Bartram Trail Conference (a mere tick of the clock for some members). I first learned about the BTC at a conference in Philadelphia organized by my collaborator in Bartram studies, Nancy Hoffmann. During a short break, Lawrence Hetrick called an impromptu meeting in the Academy of Natural Sciences kitchen. Lawrence asked how each of us might contribute. Under the glare of fluorescent lights, I volunteered to start a

newsletter. Brad Sanders said he would set up a website. Kathryn Braund took over the reins as president shortly afterwards.

The decision to start a newsletter, which we called *The Traveller*, was a good one. I learned about the history of the BTC and got a front-row seat through its resurgence. Each issue of *The Traveller* shared official business, provided news of its members, reviewed the recent literature, and offered reflections from Bartram’s trail. During my tenure as editor, I often asked myself, *when does this enthusiasm end?* Almost a decade later, with the newsletter now in the capable hands of Jim Kautz, the answer to my question has dawned: *no time soon*. William Bartram is the kind of figure who inspires lasting loyalty and affection.

Friendship is on my mind especially right now, as I take the mantle of BTC President from a person whom I feel fortunate to call my friend and peer, Kathryn Braund. The BTC’s many achievements under Kathryn’s guidance are hard to

match. She has presided over several fine conferences, encouraged a boom in membership, boosted the visibility of our favorite naturalist, encouraged scholarship, and most of all, made sure we all had fun while doing all these great things.

I can speak personally to the many times in which Kathryn has given freely over the years. She has shared insights with me on everything from Bartram and Native Americans, to documentary editing and environmentalism, to managing a career during tough economic times, to raising chickens. She has been the kind of friend whom William Bartram would have welcomed into his garden two centuries ago. As the next president of BTC, my goal is simple: follow the precedent she set. I hope to do so by offering whatever resources I can provide as an academic, and of course, doing my best to embody the spirit of friendship that Bartram defined. ☼

Thomas Hallock

President, Bartram Trail Conference

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Dion, *continued from page 5*

description of the frolicking of the “gay assembly of hamadryades.”

We may forgive that an artist identified a copperhead as a “Florida brown snake,” and be grateful that he got away with a photograph of it at close range. Less explicable is his decision to set off on a journey through the South with an intention of collecting objects to go into a “Hate Archive.” The contents of this archive are not revealed. (One imagines KKK memorabilia.) But one wonders if he would have predetermined to look for *objets d’haïne* in Minnesota or the west end of Philadelphia. This “archive,” along with Dion’s portrayal of the Alabamians whom he met in the Tensaw, suggests a bias about the South and its people that William Bartram would have avoided.

Embedded within the book is Joel Fry’s essay “A Short History of Bartram’s Garden.” Fry weaves together little-known facts, correspondence, and connections related to the Bartrams. Along with its accompanying images of the house and garden, the essay makes the book worth the

read by anyone interested in the story and background of William and John Bartram and their heirs.

Mark Dion: Travels of William Bartram Reconsidered is a fun, if occasionally exasperating, tongue-in-cheek impression of the American South, with a rearview eye on William Bartram. It was not intended to add to the corpus of books that help us understand Bartram’s life and contributions. It does, however, provide an example of the creative and happy art that Bartram spawned.

The book is available from Bartram’s Garden. ☼

Reviewed by James R. Kautz, Newsletter editor.

The Traveller is published by the Bartram Trail Conference

Thomas Hallock, President
Jim Kautz, Editor
Brad Sanders, Publisher
Zelda White, Editorial Assistant

A quill and ink

(Wm. Bartram makes a drawing)

Annie Waters

(Written following the author's participation in the 2009 biennial meeting.)

A quill and ink,
A smudge of graphite,
A puddle of yellow color,
A cake of green on a china plate.
Drawing thoughtfully in bemused days,
Strained to work in daylight,
Lines dreamed in fitful nights on trails
In dark woods,
Days on dark rivers edged with the Unknown.

Taught by Reason and Example.
Thrust headlong by
Necessity and Filial Duty.
Tempered by fears of falling and failing.
Coming to always to Peace
And a living of his own Device.

Claiming days as reward enough for another site
Inhabited in wonder by those fit to survive, or not,
At the Edge.

With Craft and Invention,
Experience and Moral Truth.
Confirmed by Beauty

Annie Waters, an artist, grew up in Tallapoosa County on Lake Martin (the Tallapoosa River). She lives in Phoenix, Arizona. After receiving her BFA in painting and



drawing at Auburn, she went to Arizona State University for her MFA. She has a working studio in downtown Phoenix and an art consulting business for private and corporate art collections throughout Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada and Texas.

Annie grew up in the woods in Alabama and loves the plants, rocks and all artifacts that her father collected. "Growing up in Tallapoosa County is why I am an artist," she says.

Kathryn Braund introduced her to Bartram when Annie returned to teach a class at the Sarah Carlisle Towery Art Colony, held each year at Kowliga on Lake Martin.

Following her participation in the 2009 biennial meeting, she wrote the poem. When her friend Bennedene Walton read the work, she sent her a photo taken at Bartram's home in 2007. Annie painted the scene, based on Walton's photo. ❀

William Bartram, Macon, and Me

I was fortunate to receive the Fothergill Prize in 2003, and I used the money to help fund my dissertation research in archives around the Southeast, trying to recover the stories of the Native American groups about whom Bartram wrote so elegantly and among whom he traveled so extensively. As part of the deal, I was supposed to write an article for *The Traveller*. Seeing Professor Kathryn Holland Braund at an academic conference last fall sparked my memory (and then some guilty feelings) that I had never written the piece. In the seventh year of my delinquency, as a way to make amends,

I decided to walk the grounds of Ocmulgee National Monument armed with the Naturalist's edition of the *Travels* and report on the experience.

The generous Fothergill Prize funded one of my previous trips to Ocmulgee, in 2003. I had "met" William Bartram prior to the 2003 visit, but the prize money allowed me to deepen my understanding of the context in which he wrote, and paid for many a photocopy at the Georgia and South Carolina archives as I did my dissertation research that summer.

Thanks to the largesse of the Franklin Roosevelt administration, which pur-

chased the Ocmulgee land from its private owners in the 1930s, the scene is not too different from the one Bartram took in when he visited, most likely in the fall of 1773 (his notes are not too specific regarding the dates). It's possible to forgive the modern intrusions of paved roads, footbridges over the swamp, wooden stairs and guardrails, parking lots and the visitor center at the Monument—recently updated and worth far more than the price of admission (it's free). The two railroad cuts which destroyed portions of the mounds, and the knowledge that one of the ancient earthworks was dismantled and used for fill dirt on a Macon street are a different matter.

Bartram described the scene:

"On the east banks of the Oakmulge, this trading road runs nearly two miles

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William Bartram, Macon, and Me,

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through ancient Indian fields, which are called the Oakmulge fields: they are the rich low lands of the river. On the heights of these low grounds are yet visible monuments, or traces, of an ancient town, such as artificial mounts or terraces, squares and banks, encircling considerable areas" (p. 34).

The naturalist went on to practice a bit of pop ethnohistory, too:

"... This place is remarkable for being the first town or settlement, when they sat down (as they term it) or established themselves, after their emigration from the west. ... On this long journey they suffered great and innumerable difficulties, encountering and vanquishing numerous and valiant tribes of Indians, who opposed and retarded their march.

... And they say, also, that about this period the English were establishing the colony of Carolina, and the Creeks, understanding that they were a powerful, warlike people, sent deputies to Charleston ..., offering them their friendship and alliance, which was accepted, and, in consequence thereof, a treaty took place

between them, which has remained inviolable to this day" (p. 35).

This often-overlooked version of the Creek migration legend speaks volumes about the way the Creeks viewed their history in the late eighteenth century. They had established themselves in the Southeast through violence, and as such could stake the same kind of claim to the land as the English colonies (and their land-hungry descendants, the United States). I've expanded significantly on this idea in a book manuscript, *New Worlds of Violence*, now under contract with the University of Tennessee Press, and I'm also working on a book specifically about Native Americans at Ocmulgee.

I live in what used to be called the "Creek Reserve," a tract of land in Macon that Creeks held even after they relinquished their claims to most of the rest of Georgia. The city of Macon left the reserve undeveloped, and the mounds and fields were used primarily by rich Maconites as a kind of pleasure ground. The serious damage was done by the railroad cuts and road-building projects in the nineteenth century. In the 1920s, the young men of Macon took to racing mo-

torcycles up and down the Great Temple Mound. Still, the mounds and fields have persevered, thanks in no small part to the people, both Native and non-Native, who care about them.

The state of Georgia regularly threatens to build a highway adjacent to the Monument lands and in the vicinity of the Traditional Cultural Property of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. So far, these efforts have been unsuccessful, thanks to the efforts of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and local activists. Georgia's dire financial situation has also played a role in putting this questionable project on hold.

In closing, I owe a belated "thank you" to the Bartram Trail Conference for the generous prize, and another to William Bartram, whose brief pause at Ocmulgee no doubt helped me find an increasingly rare academic flower: a tenure-track job. ☼

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