

The Traveller

A Newsletter of the Bartram Trail Conference

Spring 2011

The Road to Whatoga

By Jim Kautz

Among William Bartram's descriptions of Cherokee towns is the pleasant anecdote of his visit to Whatoga. He rode three miles from Nucasse (now Nikwasi, in the town of Franklin, NC) and found himself beside Whatoga's council house, which was "situated on the top of an ancient artificial mount..."

He wrote:

I was now at a stand how to proceed farther, when observing an Indian man at the door of his habitation, three or four hundred yards distance from me, beckoning to come to him, I ventured to ride through their lots, being careful to do no injury to the young plants, the rising hopes of their labour and industry, crossed a little grassy vale watered by a silver stream, which gently undulated through, then ascended a green hill to the house, where I was cheerfully welcomed at the door and led in by the chief, giving the care of my horse to two handsome youths, his sons.

Within a half-hour's time, Bartram enjoyed "sodden venison, hot corn cakes, &c. with a pleasant cooling liquor made of hommony well boiled, mixed afterwards with milk," ceremonial pipe smoking and conversation about affairs in Charleston. (*Travels*, 350f)

In my own peregrinations, I tried to locate Whatoga. I felt a bit like Bartram: I was "at a stand how to proceed farther," hemmed in not by corn and beans but by the vague site locations in the literature.

Harper speculates, with little evidence:

"Although Watauga Creek enters the river from the east, the Indian town of that name ("Whatoga") is shown on the west side by some authorities (Hunter's maps of 1730 and 1751; Swanton, 1922: pl. 7), probably about opposite the creek. On the other hand, Mooney (1900: pl. 3) places it on the east side. Perhaps this settlement, like Cowee, occupied both sides of the river." (389)

The *Bartram Heritage Report* cites Harper and goes one step farther: "Nucasse was on the west side of the river, and if it had been necessary for Bartram to cross, it seems likely that he would have so indicated." (Note 96)

Watauga Creek does enter the east bank of the Little Tennessee, but the distance is much less than three miles downstream from Nikwasi. If there, Whatoga would have been infringing on Nikwasi. Further, I could see no large area for plantations; nor was there much of a hill—the location of the chief's house.

Lamar Marshall has a more precise idea of the location of Whatoga. With years of experience in engineering and armed with wilderness skills, Lamar has taken on the project of locating the trails and towns of the Cherokees. Employed by Wild South, in partnership with Mountain Stewards and the Southeastern Anthropological Institute, Lamar works with funds provided by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

A visit to Lamar's second story office in his house in Cowee brings an inquirer face to face with more than 700 old maps and journals from the colonial and Revolutionary period—digitized and me-

ticulously organized in his computer. His monitor, commanded by quick moves of his mouse, flashes from Hunter's 1731 map to Benjamin Hawkins's journal (1796) to recent photos of deeply worn paths that lie on routes detailed by Bartram and other early travelers.

He shows me Gen. James Grant's 1761 map and tells me that what Grant and others called the "Iona-Canara" road was the primary link from the Lower Settlements in South Carolina to Tomotla (near Andrews, NC). His finger traces the route on the old map. "See," he says. "It runs along the ridge south of Watauga." Then he shifts to a modern topographical map where he has superimposed Grant's map (he calls it "georeferencing"). Grant's road lies virtually beneath the road I drive to go to the lumber yard and grocery—State 28, the Bryson City Road.

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2011 Bartram Trail Conference

Please mark your calendars for the weekend of October 21–23, 2011. Our biannual meeting, generously hosted by Macon State University and Mercer University, will feature the usual eclectic blend of interesting presentations, fellowship and activity. Featured speakers will discuss the art of nature writing, the place of the Ocmulgee Mounds in southeastern history, and the region's role in garden history. Check out our website soon, www.bartramtrail.org, for more information. ☘

William Bartram's Georgia: Art and Science on the Southern Frontier



Philip Juras discussed his landscape paintings inspired by Bartram's Travels.

Fifty Bartram enthusiasts from across the Southeast assembled in Savannah at the Telfair Museum on March 4 for the daylong conference "William Bartram's Georgia: Art and Science on the Southern Frontier." The conference was sponsored by the Bartram Trail Conference, the Georgia Sea Grant College Program, Mercer University Press, and College of Environment and Design at the University of Georgia, and organized by BTC board member Dorinda G. Dallmeyer.

Speakers included Brad Sanders discussing William Bartram's Savannah experiences, Joel Fry describing Bartram's botanical discoveries during his Georgia sojourn, and Dr. Marc Jolley examining Bartram's *Travels* and his other philosophical writing as truly revolutionary documents. The afternoon featured Dr. T. Peter Bennett describing Bartram's impact on the development of American science

in the post-Revolutionary period and Dr. Drew Lanham bringing that discussion forward into the 21st century. Landscape painter Philip Juras, whose exhibition "The Southern Frontier: Landscapes Inspired by Bartram's *Travels*" is currently featured at the Telfair Museum, led the audience through his process of finding and re-imaging the landscapes Bartram wrote about. The afternoon closed with a reading by southern nature writers Doug Davis, John Lane, Janisse Ray, and Thomas Rain Crow. Following a reception, conference participants enjoyed an after-hours tour of the exhibit led by Philip Juras.

The Juras exhibition will remain at the Telfair Museum until May 8 and then open on May 28 at the Morris Museum of Art in Augusta. For a list of other events, please see www.bartramproject.com. ❀

The Road to Whatoga, continued from page 1

When I asked Lamar whether Whatoga was on the west or east side of the river, he replied that the records of Gen. Griffith Rutherford's campaign of 1776 in show that his army came down Watauga Creek from Cowee Mountain and lay on a high hill overlooking "Watauga Town." The Cherokees abandoned their town before the army. In the morning, the army crossed the Little Tennessee River before entering and sacking the town. "The town proper was definitely on the West side of the river when Bartram came through only a few months earlier," he concludes.

We drive down the highway and turn on to Riverbend Road. Bartram's panorama spreads before us. The mound (now reduced by two centuries of plows) where Bartram saw the council house rises near a barn, on a high hill. In the valley is Rocky Branch, a worthy candidate for "a little grassy vale watered by a silver stream, which gently undulated...." Beyond the creek rises a steep hill where modern house looks out on the fields and the Little Tennessee—a likely spot for the home of Chief Will.

Lamar Marshall's work continues far beyond the "Vale of Cowee." Already, he has walked about 100 miles of trail segments, including the Indian Gap Trail across the Smokies, driven along another 150 to 200 miles of trails that follow primary or secondary modern roads, and mapped about 150 miles of trails that cross the Chattahoochee, Cherokee, and Pisgah Nantahala National Forests. The project will eventually cover much of western North Carolina as well as parts of Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia.

Lamar Marshall may be reached at lamar@wildsouth.org for further information on the Cherokee trails project. ❀

Philip Juras exhibition schedule:

Telfair Academy, Savannah, GA
January 28–May 8, 2011
April 14th, Artist Presentation at the Telfair's Jepson Center

Morris Museum, Augusta, GA
May 28–August 14, 2011
June 2nd, Opening Reception and Artist Presentation

Ancient footpaths of a lost era

By Lamar Marshall

It was a hot day even at 5,000 feet elevation when we parked the car at Indian Gap on the crest of the Great Smoky Mountains and began mapping the route of the ancient Indian Gap trail that connected the Cherokee claims and hunting grounds of Kentucky with the Middle and Out Town Cherokee settlements.

Armed with 10 years of research, 50 years of cross-country experience, maps, GPS, food and water, the two-person Wild South team (Duke intern Kevin Lloyd and myself) started south toward Qualla Boundary, home of the Eastern Band of Cherokees, which lay about 14 miles away. Of course, it would take many days to map the route across the rugged terrain we were about to encounter.

We slid down the mountainside on slick, rocky talus, grabbing hold of tree after tree to prevent us from falling. Eventually our descending compass course intersected the bed of the Oconaluftee Turnpike, a road that was built along portions of the Indian trail in the early 1800s. We attempted to walk along the centerline of the long-abandoned roadbed that

contoured down the mountain towards Beech Flats.

I am sure that the original and oldest sections of the trail followed the drainage up where it crosses modern U.S. 441. More than one early record notes that Cherokees rode and walked straight up and over the mountains. The English complained that they couldn't follow the steep Cherokee trails on horseback, so they switchbacked up the mountains to lessen the grade. Some of the trails between deadly mountain precipices were so narrow that terrified horses, on approaching from opposite directions and being forced to pass one another, rubbed each other's hair off. As Cherokee trails were enlarged and upgraded for pack horses and wagons, they were sometimes lengthened to lessen the steep grades.

What had begun as a fairly open road soon vanished in chest high stinging nettle and treacherous, hidden, wet rocks. We inched our way along, sliding our boots over the slick rocks and taking GPS waypoints every few hundred yards, our legs burning like fire. The quarter mile of nettles yielded to a hundred years of encroaching rhododendron and mountain laurel thickets that obviously only rabbits, short bears or the Cherokee Little People could negotiate. We climbed over, detoured around and eventually found that the best way to move ahead and make progress was on our bellies. Our backpacks hung up on the lowest limbs and we detoured around steaming piles of bear scat. The black bears, it seems, regularly used the old turnpike as a main travel-way.

This didn't make us feel overly safe as we would certainly be eaten before we could extract ourselves from the impenetrable thickets. True, the bear would probably only have gotten one of us, but as I was 61, I'm not sure that I could have outrun a 20-year-old intern. He attempted to scare any rambling bears whom we might run into by yelling "Heyyyyyy Bear." I wondered if the numerous raw garlic cloves on my sandwiches would repel large omnivores or just make their mouth water for a human condiment.

The weeks of fieldwork went by and

we negotiated more of the same on other trails. One trail over the Snowbird Mountains crisscrossed a creek 18 times within a couple of miles. I left Kevin at lunch one day to GPS a trail and was jogging back thinking how tough and in shape I was for an aging redneck. At that instant I tripped on a branch, dove headlong and hit the rocky trail face first, GPS, pen, and trail book scattering in every direction. I bruised both shins and every one of the thousand rhododendron snags that my shins hung up on the rest of the day reminded me that "pride goeth before a fall."

I got stung over a dozen times by yellow jackets on four different days, and was near hypothermia from a blinding rain storm that took us by surprise on Chunky Gal Mountain. We never stepped on a timber rattler, though old timers warned us religiously to beware, the mountains were full of them and that a strike from a large rattler could knock a full grown man to the ground. After seeing a road-killed rattler that looked like the leg of a hog, I dug through my many boxes of old, outdoor gear and found my camouflaged snake leggings. Being a flat-land Alabama refugee, I didn't think I would need those up here in the mountains. I was wrong.

Those were some of the harder days, but the many sunny days of immersion in the wild Appalachian mountains overshadowed them. I leaned up and became much stronger with the intense climbing up and down mountains and tangles of laurel and rhododendron. This is not easy work. Researching and documenting Indian trails requires an extensive knowledge of cross country navigation, surveying skills, historic map collections, and state and federal archives and physical ability.

It took many years of studying rare historic maps, records and documents to lay the groundwork that would enable us to produce a master map whereby we could overlay a network of old Indian trails on top of modern roadmaps. What is beginning to unfold is clear evidence that the main arteries of our 20th century road system were built directly on Cherokee trails and corridors. The evolution of our

Note: In April 2009, the non-profit organization Wild South was notified by the Cherokee Preservation Foundation of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians that it and partner organizations Mountain Stewards and the Southeastern Anthropological Institute had been awarded a grant to complete a project called the Trails of the Middle, Valley and Out Town Cherokee Settlements. What began as a project to reconstruct the trail and road system of the Cherokee Nation in Western North Carolina and surrounding states became a journey of geographical time travel. The many thousands of rare archives scattered across the eastern United States that proved "who, what, why, when and where" also revealed new information as to what transpired on and around these Cherokee trails that we were mapping.

modern highway system originated from a continent-wide, aboriginal trail system that connected Native America before De Soto, Columbus, the Vikings and all other uninvited visitors who used the words "first discovered" even though these words were misnomers. It is obvious that Indians discovered America several thousand years before Europeans invented the sail and recruited sailors to transport their illegal immigrants.

With the mapping of these trails, we can now begin to add a missing dimension to the emerging story of Cherokee geography and hopefully come up with a snapshot of the cultural and ancestral landscape. This mechanical beginning will not be complete without the help of the older generation of Cherokee people and the collective memory that recalls the trails and roads that their parents and grandparents used.

After a year and a half, trails have been mapped across the Great Smoky, Nantahala, Cowee, Snowbird and Blue Ridge Mountains. A subtotal shows that there are about 148 miles of known Indian trails and corridors on the Pisgah, Nantahala and Cherokee national forests. U.S. Forest Service Archaeologist Rodney Snedeker has assisted Wild South in the trails research and plans to incorporate the final maps and reports into forest planning as required by the National Historic Preservation Act. Though many trail-beds have been erased by agriculture and development, some trails were simply abandoned in the forests or survived as unpaved forest service roads. Others became our modern paved roads and major highways.

Success is measured by the identification, interpretation and designation of a historic trail. Wild South began historic trail mapping in north Alabama where 200 miles of Cherokee Indian trails were researched, identified and field mapped. Several hundred yards of the original Cherokee wagon road from Gunter's Landing to Fort Payne was discovered in the woods of Guntersville State Park. Working with the Alabama Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association, the findings were incorporated into a 300-page report that documented the removal of 1,100 Cherokee Indians in 1838 from Fort Payne, Ala., to the Tennessee state line. Other state Trail of Tears groups are mapping additional sections of

the route between there and Oklahoma. To the Cherokees who were forced west, the trail became known as "The Trail Where They Cried."

The same trails that had been here for millennia were used by migrating settlers before and after the time of Indian Removal in 1838. By then, most foot and horse trails had been improved for wagons. A number of them were "cut out" by American armies during the Cherokee War of 1776 to 1786. Many of the roads that were here in 1838 were used in the Civil War, and those used in the Civil War were still in use when the U.S. Geological Survey began its systematic topographic mapping in the 1880s, providing us with a snapshot of the 19th century road system.

Next, these same roads were graded, graveled, widened and paved for automobiles. Some major Cherokee trails remain deeply entrenched on National Forests and private lands. Before the era of blasting away mountains and arbitrarily laying interstates from points A to B, people followed the natural, flowing geography of the land through valley corridors, mountain gaps and shallow fords. Therefore, Indian trails represent original America, long before the era of strip malls and lifeless ribbons of asphalt.

By walking these ancient trails, we are traveling through corridors of time. Today, people can stand in the deeply worn recesses of these travel ways and look at the surrounding mountains with the assurance that they are seeing from exactly the same viewpoint, the shapes, colors, ridge tops, balds and wooded slopes that were seen by the Cherokee a thousand years ago as he or she walked in this same spot. I once rode by horseback down a remote and high mountain trail deep in the Smoky Mountains behind three Cherokees at dusk. There was a distinct feeling that this moment could have been in the year 1700, and we would soon smell the smoke of a hundred fires as it hung suspended over an Indian village in a valley below.

Along these trails are the blood, sweat and tears of those who lived, laughed and died here. Their bare feet, moccasins and horse hooves touched the earth that yet remains. The trails were the travel arteries of the land and they are fibers that con-

nect this generation with the history of the land.

The history, like the rugged mountains, is rough, challenging and not always easy to revisit. Most people living in WNC know little of the story of its painful settlement and the events that transpired across the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Few people are aware that the most powerful army in the world invaded what would become Macon and Jackson counties in 1761 and burned 50 or more towns of the Cherokee Nation in order to make them subservient to the King of England. Or that in 1776 those British-Americans who were rebelling against the King would send three armies comprised of militia from three colonies and the help of Georgia to burn 36 more Cherokee towns to destroy the Cherokee-British alliance and punish the Cherokees for attacking illegal settlements and encroachments on Indian lands.

In 1820 there were Cherokee citizens, in Macon and Jackson counties who had their family farms stolen out from under them by locals who defied federal law and trampled the Constitution. When these U.S. citizens got an attorney and defended their private property rights through legal recourse, the North Carolina Supreme Court upheld the illegal sales and confiscation. The citizens were paid a pittance and kicked off their land. They were forced to move away and after that, forced to move away again. If this happened today, the public outcry would ring from coast to coast. It would be illegal, unthinkable and no doubt the U.S. Supreme Court would overturn such an insidious violation of constitutional rights.

Yet it happened to Cherokee citizens, and because they were a non-white minority, they were stripped of the very rights that were guaranteed to them by the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. The white minority and missionaries who tried to fight for Indian rights were overwhelmed by the public tide of greed and racism. ❀

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<http://www.smokymountainnews.com/index.php/component/k2/item/2117-ancient-footpaths-of-a-lost-era>

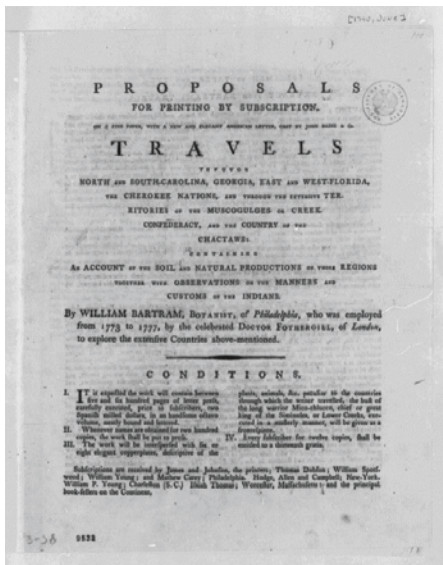
Bartram Scenic Highway

The William Bartram Scenic Highway management team in St. Johns County, Florida (Jacksonville metropolitan area) recently won two prestigious awards from the American Planning Association, Florida Chapter.

Specifically, The William Bartram Scenic and Historic Highway group was recognized with awards for its Master Plan and its website, www.BartramScenicHighway.com. The website also received the Public Education Award from the American Planning Association.

The Bartram Scenic Highway group is working to protect and preserve the scenic, historic and intrinsic resources of the magnificent William Bartram Scenic and Historic Highway Corridor in St. Johns County, Florida.

Congratulations to the Bartram Scenic and Historic Highway Corridor Management team on winning these prestigious awards. ❀



do we need a caption here?

Book Review

Bartram denied their existence; history buried their stories

“Reading this book is like opening a time capsule in Bartram’s life—it paints a far more complete picture of what the explorer-naturalist saw during his second journey up the St. Johns.”—Bill Belleville, author of *River of Lakes: A Journey on Florida’s St. Johns River*.

University Press of Florida
www.upf.com
ISBN 978-0-8130-3527-7
\$24.95

In his famous and influential book *Travels*, the naturalist William Bartram described the St. Johns riverfront in east Florida as an idyllic, untouched paradise and eloquently praised the pristine wilderness conditions that existed along the St. Johns before settlers and slaves felled trees, cleared brush, and created farms and plantations. Bartram’s account was based on a journey he took down the river in 1774. Or was it?

Historians have relied upon the integrity of the information in *Travels* for centuries, often concluding from it that the British (the colonial power from 1763 to 1783) had not engaged in large-scale land development in Florida. However, the well-documented truth is that the St. Johns riverfront was not in a state of unspoiled nature in 1774; it was instead the scene of drained wetlands and ambitious agricultural developments including numerous successful farms and plantations. Unsuccessful settlements could also be found, William Bartram’s own foundered venture among them.

Evidence for the existence of these

settlements abounds in archives in the United Kingdom and in the family papers of the descendants of British East Florida settlers and absentee landowners. So why did Bartram erase them from history? Was his insistence on a pristine paradise in *Travels* based on an early expedition that he and his father, the botanist John Bartram, conducted in 1764–65? Was his distaste for development a result of bitterness and shame over his own failed settlement?

Daniel L. Schafer explores all of these questions in this intriguing book, reconstructing the sights and colorful stories of the St. Johns riverfront that Bartram rejected in favor of an illusory wilderness. His reveries on Florida’s wild nature would later echo in the pages of the romantic poets Samuel Coleridge and William Wordsworth, and provide “nature” inspiration for works by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. At last, the full story of William Bartram’s famous journey and the histories of the plantations he “ghosted” are uncovered in this eminently readable, highly informative, and extremely entertaining volume.

Schafer, professor emeritus of history at the University of North Florida, is the author of *Governor James Grant’s Villa: A British East Florida Indigo Plantation*, *St. Augustine’s British Years: 1763–1784*, *Anna Madgigine Jai Kingsley: African Princess, Florida Slave, Plantation Slaveowner*, and *Thunder on the River: The Civil War in Northeast Florida*. ❀

William Bartram's Letters and Writings

William Bartram: The Search for Nature's Design, Selected Art, Letters, & Unpublished Writings, edited by Thomas Hallock and Nancy E. Hoffmann. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010. Pp. 608. \$49.95. ISBN 978-0-8203-2877-5).

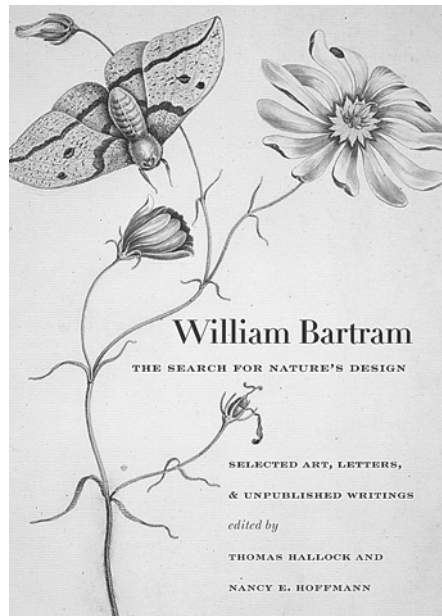
This stunning volume replete with William Bartram's illustrations encompasses not only his extraordinary life, but also explores a full quarter-century of posthumous memorials written about one of the eighteenth-century's most significant naturalists. Thomas Hallock and Nancy E. Hoffmann have exceeded even the loftiest of expectations with this thoroughly remarkable contribution. In *The Search for Nature's Design*, Bartram emerges as not only an engaging and sophisticated scientist, but also an indelibly human character with engaging character assets and defects and a surprisingly large cadre of friends. Moreover, emanating from these glossy pages is a fresh portrait of the intellectual world of Bartram's time.

Few Americans of any generation have traveled as widely or promoted scientific endeavors as much as William Bartram. In spite of his renowned career, Bartram was a perplexing character whom biographers have described as a loner: shy and reclusive. He is, perhaps, best known for his 1791 classic *Travels Through North and South Carolina, East & West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscolgules or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Choctaws*, but the dazzling botanical account of the American southeast is but one in a varied and valuable literary collection.

Born in 1739 in Kingsessing, Pennsylvania, to the famous naturalist John Bartram, William developed a lifelong interest in medicine, botany, literature, and art and often accompanied his father on exploratory expeditions into the American backcountry. Although his parents

preferred a stable occupation for their son, young William could not pry himself from the study of botany. Having failed as a businessman, Bartram embarked on his famous tour of the southern colonies in March 1773. The exhaustively detailed records from his journey became, nearly two decades later, his signature work, *Travels*, and provide keen insight into the fratricidal conflict then brewing in the Carolina backcountry.

Following his tour, Bartram initi-



ated a wide and varied correspondence with other botanical enthusiasts. He also worked on drafts of *Travels* and other lesser publications. By the 1790s, Bartram had become a sought after philosopher and began a lengthy dialogue with the Lutheran minister and botanist Gotthilf Henry Ernest Muhlenberg. The next decade, still writing, Bartram found himself mentoring a new generation of young scientists at the "Botanical Academy of Pennsylvania." Although this relatively settled profession occupied his last years, Bartram never stopped exploring and documenting his findings in his "Garden Diary" and "Calendar."

The editors have organized their collection into two parts. Thomas Hallock serves as the primary editor of part one, a detailed and meticulously annotated exploration of the vast majority of Bartram's correspondence as well as important letters written about him. This section is neatly compartmentalized into seven chapters, each with a brief introduction, and covers the breadth of Bartram's life, from the doting John Bartram describing his precocious and inquisitive fourteen-year-old son's "first essay and [map] drawing" to a touching letter informing former first Lady, Dolley Madison, of Bartram's death.

Part one is filled with eminently interesting correspondence. One particularly delectable morsel lies in the exchange, via intermediaries, between Bartram and George Washington. On June 11, 1790, Samuel Powel inquired of the president: "The extreme Bashfulness of [Bartram] and his little Intercourse with the World, may, possibly have made him choose rather to solicit the Honor of dedicating it to you thro' the Intervention of a Friend than by direct Application" (154). Nine days later, Robert Parrish informed Bartram that Washington had politely declined Bartram's offer because he wanted to avoid showing favoritism.

Part two, primarily edited by Nancy Hoffmann, is an assortment of carefully selected Bartram manuscripts. Nine lively chapters comprise this section, each also with a thoughtful introduction. These tantalizing writings reveal a broad array of Bartram's thoughts concerning slavery, Native Americans, and gardening, to name but a few. Lastly, four appendices conclude this impressive volume, most notably a "Preliminary List of Illustrations by William Bartram," which will be especially useful for further historical enquiry.

Bartram's previously unpublished treatise on slavery is an exceptionally engrossing and prescient work. Bartram cautions Americans that failure to exhibit common human decency to all persons, "Black White Red & Yellow" will lead to "calamity & destruction" because "[t]he Day will arrive when those afflicted people will not only have full satisfaction for their oppressions, but dreadfull irrevocable irresistible

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The Founding Gardeners

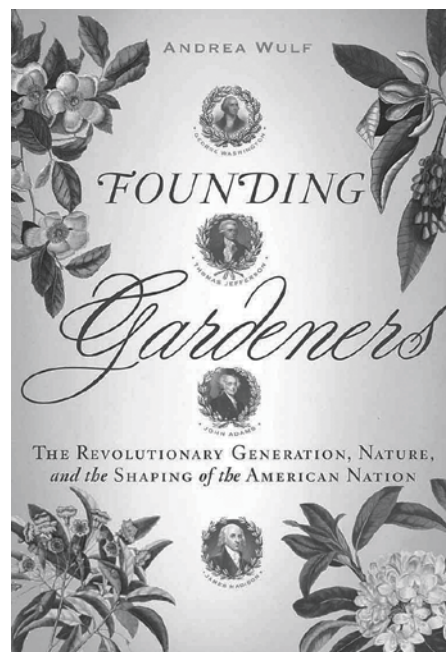
Group biography of the Founding Fathers, exploring how their passion for gardens, plants, nature & farming influenced the birth of the American nation.*

The Founding Gardeners: How the Revolutionary Generation created an American Eden, by Andrea Wulf. Published in hardback by William Heinemann on 3rd February 2011 at £20

Manhattan, July 1776. General George Washington faces 32,000 British troops and over 100 warships. As the city braces itself for the first and largest battle of the War of Independence, Washington retires to his study, clears away his maps, and ponders the voluptuous blossom of rhododendron, the sculptural flowers of kalmia, and the perfect pink of crab apple. While we tend to think of them as iconic nation builders, the first four presidents of the United States saw themselves first and foremost as farmers and gardeners. In the aftermath of the Declaration of Independence and the revolutionary war, they turned to America's towering trees and flowering shrubs, and their own gardens, to make the republic truly independent. The self-sufficient farmer became the embodiment of the republican dream. The sweeping vistas of the west and the sublime grandeur of the natural landscape were a unifying force, giving the original thirteen states a national identity that still resonates today. And the Founding Fathers' shared passion for flowers, plants and agriculture brought them together even when political rivalries began to splinter them. We see the impetuous John Adams diving into a pile of manure in London's Edgware Road, emerging only to declare, with delight, that it is inferior to his own; Thomas Jefferson, the visionary polymath, using not arms and ships but botanical weapons to prove the strength and vibrancy of the new nation; the victorious George Washington returning home and liberating his garden from the rigid corset of geometry just as he had freed his nation from the shackles of tyranny; and the diminutive but iron-willed Madison as

the forgotten father of America's environmentalism. Andrea Wulf shows us that it is impossible to understand these visionary men and the American nation without considering their love of gardening. A follow-up to Wulf's award-winning and critically acclaimed history of how gardening became an English obsession, *The Founding Gardeners* shows us plants, politics and personalities intertwined as never before, in a unique retelling of the creation of America.

Andrea Wulf trained as a design historian at the Royal College of Art and is the co-author (with Emma Gieben-Gamal) of *This Other Eden* and author of *The*



Brother Gardeners, which was longlisted for the Samuel Johnson Award. She has written for *The Sunday Times*, the *Financial Times*, *The Garden*, *The Architects' Journal*, and regularly reviews for several newspapers, including the *Guardian* and the *TLS*.

Editor Note: I emailed Andrea Wulf and asked her to give the BTC a special word regarding her new work. Below is her response.

From her website: <www.andreawulf.com>>: 21 April 2011 The Garden Club

of Georgia, Atlanta, GA, USA @ 7pm.

I came rather by accident to write this book and once again the Bartrams were an inspiration. When I researched *The Brother Gardeners* (in which John Bartram is one of the main protagonists) I first realized a remarkable connection to the founding fathers. Reading John Bartram's letters, I quickly realized that Benjamin Franklin was a good friend. I learned that Thomas Jefferson and George Washington had both ordered many plants from John Bartram and that they visited the garden when they were in Philadelphia. James Madison had been to Bartram's garden together with several other delegates of the Constitutional Convention just before the Great Compromise in the summer of 1787. William Bartram showed the delegates who had come to a deadlock in their negotiations his garden in which the trees and shrubs of each of the thirteen states thrived together - their branches intertwined in a flourishing horticultural union. This was arguably the most important garden visit in the history of the United States (but you will have to read to book for that).

Through Bartram I discovered that the founding fathers were all passionate about nature and plants. The result is a book about the founding fathers and how their attitude to plants, gardens, nature and agriculture shaped the American nation. For them gardening, agriculture and botany were elemental passions, as deeply ingrained in their characters as their belief in liberty for the nation they were creating. In the aftermath of the Declaration of Independence and the revolutionary war, they turned to America's towering trees and flowering shrubs, and their own gardens, to make the republic truly independent. The self-sufficient farmer became the embodiment of the republican dream. The sweeping vistas of the west and the sublime grandeur of the natural landscape were a unifying force, giving the original thirteen states a national identity that still resonates today. I think it's impossible to understand these visionary men and the American nation without considering their lives as farmers and gardeners - and therefore the *Founding Gardeners* is a book in which plants, politics, and personalities are intertwined as never before. ☘

From the President

How did William Bartram learn? We typically think of our favorite naturalist as the intrepid explorer. Astute social commentator. Artist. Wordsmith. Gardener. We think of William Bartram as a one-book wonder, the guy who penned his famous *Travels* in 1791 and probably crossed paths with some place near where you live today. But what about William Bartram as learner?

Billy was born in 1739, died in 1823, and in the course of that long life, came to know a lot about a lot of different things. In an age of polymaths, he served as the sourcebook on plant taxonomy and distribution, the archeology and current culture of Native Americans, ornithology, gardening, medicine – the list goes on.

Biographers often note that William Bartram received an exceptional education under the colonial savant Charles Thomson. Given that early schooling, enviable training from his father, and visits from leading intellectuals of his day, William Bartram seemed born to be a naturalist.

But a review of the letters throughout Bartram's life shows an extended, even deep engagement with the ideas of his time. Where we sometimes regard him as an isolated figure, William Bartram held consort in his mind with leading Enlightenment thinkers – he pored over the works of the great giver of order, Carolus Linnaeus, read the influential treatises of Comte de Buffon, found kinship in Gilbert White, and was aware of naturalists lesser-known to us today such as Thomas Pennant and Mathurin Jacques Brisson.

William Bartram was no mere academic. In one of my favorite letters, from December 1792, Bartram offers a long meditation on some books he received. He applies observations from his reading to the wild pigeons and redheaded woodpecker then arriving in his garden. "Ingenious little Philosophers," he calls them, "and my esteemed associates." From that ornithological note, Bartram launches into a staggering meditation on human virtue and the places of animals in all Creation, wondering what prevents us from treating animals and humans as equals. What

are we afraid of, he asks, "that the Spirits of animals will rise up in judgment for ... eating them?"

Sounds pretty vegan to me. But the thought process was typical for him.

I like to think of Bartram's "habit of mind," if you will, as a kind of triangle. On one side, reading; the second, direct observation; and the third, writing, illustration and reflection.

So what does this have to do with us?

I also like to think that followers of William Bartram's trail continue this practice today. Our meetings and gatherings combine pilgrimages, field experience, and casual conversation between smart folks who like to ground what they know. In the eighteenth century, they called this "curiosity." Today it's cause to come together.

Please mark your calendar for the next gathering of the "curious" on October 21-23, 2011. We will convene in Macon, Georgia, where you can expect good company, food for the belly and brain, plus excursions into natural settings—the kinds of hands-on learning that Bartram himself valued. We will follow our panel discussion of historic gardens with a walk around the Barnes Botanic Garden at Macon State; a talk on native archaeology will accompany a visit to nearby Ocmulgee Mounds. Maybe we can workshop our own writings and reflections about nature with people who do this for a living. More details to follow, as plans for the conference continue to materialize. Until then, I cannot wait for one more opportunity to learn, laugh and join together. See you next October! ☘

Thomas Hallock
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Bartram's Letters and Writings, continued from page 6

wrath, When they will be Masters" (380).

The editors have performed Herculean duties in producing this volume. From painstaking transcriptions, judicious editing, and intelligent manuscript selection to the more than one hundred brilliant illustrations, *The Search For Nature's Design* is a welcome addition to any liberal arts bookshelf and will also prove quite useful for graduate courses in science, literature, and history. ☘

Williams Receives Award for *The Flower Seeker*

The national magazine *Books & Culture* has named as its 2010 Book of the Year *The Flower Seeker* by Philip Lee Williams. *The Flower Seeker* is an epic poem that follows the young William Bartram on his journey in the American South and during his old age in his father's gardens. It is truly a southern Odyssey, using techniques of fiction and poetry to get deeply inside one of the most remarkable men ever to strap on a pair of boots in America. Philip Lee Williams is the author of 14 published books and has written about the natural world most of his career and taught nature writing at the University of Georgia.

John Wilson, editor of *Books & Culture*, described Williams' award-winner this way:

Extracts from Bartram's Travels, reworked by Williams (as Ezra Pound reworked the sources for his Cantos), are the underlying strata of this work, which pays homage to the epic tradition in a distinctively American way. Curiosity and delight, beauty and sadness, loss and yearning, and all the "fragrant disorder of this world" are mingled here in a narrative that suggests the gratuitous abundance of Creation itself. And the physical book has been crafted with an expansive generosity that catches the spirit of the poem. Carve out time for it if you can.

To listen to a half-hour podcast on *The Flower Seeker*, please go to <http://www.booksandculture.com/> ☘

The Traveller is published by the Bartram Trail Conference

Tom Hallock, *President*

Marc Jolley, *Editor*

Brad Sanders, *Publisher*

Anne Hurst, *Treasurer & Membership Chair*

Carolyn Huelsbeck Whitmer

Carolyn Huelsbeck Whitmer, whose service to the Bartram Trail Conference spanned decades, died on February 26, 2011 after a short illness. Carolyn was the Bartram Trail Chairman of the Deep South Region of National Garden Clubs and, as Marker Chair for the BTC, she organized, researched and approved placement of Bartram Trail Markers across the South. Her enthusiasm and promotion of the BTC was instrumental in educating the general public about William Bartram. Carolyn was also the unofficial historian of the BTC and her knowledge of the early activities of the BTC was based on her own many years of dedicated service.

A native of Pensacola, Carolyn graduated from Pensacola Catholic High School in 1953 and received a degree in nursing in 1956 from Sacred Heart School of Nursing. She was married to James A. Whitmer, a marine pilot, who preceded her in death, as did her son, James P. Whitmer. She is survived by two sons (John and Peter Whitmer), and a daughter (Meg Whitmer) as well as several grandchildren.

Carolyn's life, outside her professional and family life, was dedicated to making the world a more beautiful place. Her love of nature and commitment to beautification, conservation and environmental stewardship are evident throughout her native state of Florida. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie, which protects over 4000 acres of endangered plants west of Pensacola. As a Life Member of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, she continually promoted its mission at the local, state and regional level. She was a member of Sweet Bay and Oleander Garden Clubs, served as president of the Oleander Garden Club, president of the Pensacola Federation of Garden Clubs, District One director, editor of FFGC's quarterly magazine, *The Florida Gar-*



dener and corresponding secretary for the FFGC board.

As a military wife, the garden club objective she was most dedicated to was establishing memorials to veterans of the United States armed forces. She led the creation of the Desert Storm Memorial Garden on Naval Air Station Pensacola, and petitioned the state legislature to designate a section of highway as a segment of the Blue Star Memorial Highway. On Veterans Day 2010, she spoke at the dedication ceremony for the Blue Star Memorial marker placed at Pensacola Veteran's Park, and helped design the landscaping around the marker.

Beyond these leadership roles, Carolyn studied and educated others in horticulture, botany, floral design, environmental stewardship, and civic beautification. Several summers she volunteered at Wekiva Youth Camp, a residential environmental education camp in Apopka, Florida for 3rd through 8th grade youngsters.

She published a book entitled *Memoirs of Grandmother's Garden* that was mentioned in several publications, including *Southern Living* magazine. ❀

Pedrick Stall Lowrey



The Bartram Trail Conference lost a friend on December 21, 2010, when Pedrick Stall Lowrey passed away at the age of 56 after a seven year battle with cancer. Those who were privileged to meet Pedrick at the BTC meetings in Augusta or Five Rivers will remember a charming photographer with a passion for gardening. An active volunteer for her community in her native Greenville, South Carolina, Pedrick was instrumental in preserving the Reedy River Falls Park and took a lead in fundraising for the project. Pedrick began her professional career as a chemist, working for *Coca-Cola* in Atlanta for fifteen years before returning to school and obtaining a degree in landscape design and setting out on a new career path. Pedrick's enthusiasm for life and gardening as well as her ability to capture nature's beauty with her camera—whether a blossom or a butterfly—delighted and inspired those who knew her. She is survived by her husband and BTC member Jacob Lowrey as well as her mother and brothers and their families. ❀

Bartram Trail Conference

Membership Form

____RENEWAL

____NEW MEMBER

- ____ Individual--\$ 25
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____ Student--\$10
____ Contributor--\$50
____ Sustainer \$100
____ Sponsor--\$250
____ Patron--\$500

Name: _____ Phone:() _____

Address: _____

E-Mail address: _____

Date: _____

Primary Areas of Interest in the Bartram Trail

(try to be specific about geographic locations and activities, i.e., specific Bartram sites, and whether or not you like to hike, read, garden, etc. Use back if necessary)

Please send payment to:

Anne Hurst Weeks
138 N. Chaparral Ct.
Hull, GA 30646