

# The Traveller

A Newsletter of the Bartram Trail Conference

Spring, 2006

## Augusta Biennial Conference



Brad Sanders

*The Saturday evening cruise on the Augusta Canal under a fine October sky.*

This edition of *The Traveller* features the area of Augusta, Georgia, site of the Bartram Trail Conference's biennial meeting (October 21–23, 2005).

Forty two persons from six states gathered for the meeting, hosted by Ed and Mary Ann Cashin, BTC leaders and members of the faculty of Augusta State University. After a Friday evening reception in the university's Maxwell Alumni House, a historic building on the edge of the campus, the group dined in the penthouse of Washington Hall and saw Brad Sanders' photographic description of "Augusta Scenes Bartram Might Have Seen."

Saturday featured a morning walk through the Phinizy Swamp, lunch and Isaac Johnson's discussion of Black history in the historic Springfield Church, and a video presentation in the old Enterprise Mill. In the cool of the evening, the group

glided quietly along the Augusta Canal in a replica Petersburg boat, enjoying the natural beauty along the canal that once powered the city's textile industry.

On Sunday, the conferees drove some thirty miles west to the place Bartram knew as Wrightsborough. Gathering in the old Methodist Church, now maintained by the Historic Wrightsboro Foundation, they heard a lecture by historian Robert Davis on Wrightsborough's place in the Revolutionary period, then walked through the abandoned land of the settlement that Bartram visited twice and called a "pleasant town."

Members of Foundation served dinner on the grounds of the church. After a brief business meeting, several carloads drove through the fields of Wrightsborough for a walk to Joseph Mattock's eighteenth century dam.

### Replica of Ancient Pot Brings Support for Scholarships

The elevator doors on the penthouse floor of Washington Hall opened to reveal John Hall bearing in his arms a large box. When supper was over, Jacob Lowery toted the box through the doors and to his car. And the Fothergill Scholarship fund had increased significantly.

After dinner, John announced a special event. Reaching into the box, he drew out a reddish-brown pottery vessel which he described as a reproduction of a Mississippian pot, one-third its original size, carefully crafted by Patsy Hanvey of Gadsden, Alabama. Patsy is a serious student of history and a master potter of authentic Creek pottery reproductions. The original pot came from the excavation of a mound on the Savannah River, ten miles



Kathryn Braund

*Jacob Lowery, Rosa Hall and the revered Mississippian pot.*

below Augusta. The vessel is published in *The Archaeology of William Henry Holmes* edited by David Meltzer and Robert C. Dunwell (Smithsonian Institution Press). Meltzer and Dunwell describe the decorative pattern on the exterior of the cooking pot as a "...common figure..." with "...a kind of compound filfot cross...or Thor's hammer...a grouping of lines having a cross with bent arms as a base or center. The border spaces are filled in with lines parallel with the curved arms of the central figure."

"Patsy has donated this vessel to be auctioned for the Fothergill Fund," said John.

Kathryn Braund opened the bidding at \$50. From around the room came bids. "Seventy-five." "One hundred." "One-fifty." Two bidders remained, calling vigorously: "Two hundred. . . Scholarships!" Jacob Lowery bid, goading the crowd and reminding them of the auction's purpose

"Two-fifty," John Hall responded.

"Three hundred," shouted Jacob. The room was silent.

"Going once," said Kathryn. "Going twice." More silence. "Gone, to Jacob Lowery for \$300!"

As the members applauded, John set the pot on the table in front of Jacob.

## The Bartram Trail on Television

On February 14, 2003 Georgia Public Television first aired an episode of Georgia Outdoors that featured the Bartram Trail and William Bartram's explorations in Georgia. The program is replayed several times each year, but can now be viewed on-line anytime. Type this URL in your browser to go directly to the GPTV Bartram Trail program web page.

<http://www.gpb.org/public/tv/georgiaoutdoors/shows.jsp?episid=524&catid=1002>

You must have Windows Media Player installed to view the program on your computer.

# Bartram's Impressions of Augusta

Edward J. Cashin

What Bartram wrote about Augusta and what he thought about Augusta are not necessarily the same. He had visited the town in 1765 with his father and his impressions of the place might have been tintured with nostalgia. He seemed delighted with everything on his visit in 1773. He described the countryside as "everywhere fertile and delightful." The Savannah River was already "famous" as it forced its way through rocky hills "as if impatient to repose on the extensive plain below." The month was May, the atmosphere breathed fragrance, the meadows were gay and green, and the hills "arbustive." What else might he have noticed? He must have observed that Augusta was still an Indian town. In fact, hundreds of Creek and Cherokee Indians were in town for a treaty and Bartram wrote about that. There was still a resident band of Chickasaw Indians across from Augusta on the Carolina side of the river. The leading citizens were Indian merchants. People roundabouts seemed satisfied with the royal government, particularly because the treaty opened over a million acres of new lands for settlement.

Readers of *Travels* would think that nothing had changed during the two years prior to his second visit to the town. "The site of Augusta is perhaps the most delightful and eligible of any in Georgia for a city," he wrote. After two paragraphs of praise, he concluded, "I do not hesitate to pronounce as my opinion, will very soon become the metropolis of Georgia." In fact, much had changed. An Indian war, provoked in part by the 1773 cession, terrorized the Georgia backcountry during most of 1774, obliging Bartram to limit his excursions to Florida. A peace treaty in October 1774 allowed him to continue his interrupted tour of the interior. He would have noticed that Augusta was no longer an Indian town. Many now regarded the Indians as enemies and obstacles to their hopes for additional land. They faulted the royal government for not demanding more land as a condition of peace in the

late treaty. The long-established Indian merchants seemed to be losing control.

A reader might wonder why Bartram did not return to Augusta in July 1775 after his excursion through Cherokee country. He had to outfit himself for the long journey to Mobile, and he had "a few weeks" to do so. Augusta was the logical place for such outfitting. Instead he lingered at Fort James in the wilderness. He must have thought that the Revolutionary movement was reaching out to engulf him. The leader of his caravan was detained on suspicion of disloyalty to the patriot cause. Parties calling themselves Sons of Liberty in Savannah and Augusta made life miserable for anyone who failed to swear an oath to uphold the measures of the Continental Congress. Bartram hated to swear oaths.

He did return to the little town in late December 1775. There is no more talk about gay lawns and arbustive hills. He wrote only that he stayed a few days with his friend Dr. Wells outside the town. The gloom of winter had settled on the place. The contrast from his first visit was striking. Then, hundreds of Indians were guests of the city. Now, people huddled in stockaded houses in fear of British-inspired raids from those same Indians. Bartram proceeded to Savannah, only to find that town under threat of an attack by a British fleet. The Revolution claimed him, like it or not, and he marched off to skirmish with the enemy on the Florida borderlands.

It is just as well that Bartram preferred rhapsody to reality, and we have a timeless Augusta with gay lawns and arbustive hills. In fact the City of Augusta prefers it that way and has carved Bartram's description of the town on its Riverwalk.

(Edward Cashin is Professor of History Emeritus at August State University. A native of Augusta, Dr. Cashin is author of numerous books on the history of Georgia and of *William Bartram and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2000.)



# Wrightsborough

*Bartram Trail conference members tromp around Old Wrightsborough as the finale to the 2006 conference.*

*Jim Kautz*

William Bartram had cut short his exploration around the mouth of the Altamaha in the middle of May 1773. He rode to Augusta to observe a crucial conference of Creeks, Cherokees and the Colonial government. It was an opportunity for the explorer to meet leaders of the nations whose lands he planned to wander and study.

When he arrived in Augusta and learned that the Indian delegations had delayed, he went some thirty-five miles farther west to Wrightsborough, a town established in 1768 on the edge of European settlement. A few days after the conference, he returned to Wrightsborough, this time in the company of a party of military officers, land surveyors, Indians and entrepreneurs surveying the “New Purchase”—land the Crown had acquired from the Creeks and Cherokees.

Bartram says Wrightsborough was a “pleasant town,” “founded by Jos. Mattock, Esq; of the sect called Quakers; this public spirited man having obtained, for himself and his followers, a district, comprehending upwards of forty thousand acres of land” (Travels, pp. 35-37). Governor Wright had deeded them an area of magnificent forests, rich soil, and well-drained hillsides on the edge of the “Fall Line” of Georgia. Streams “murmering in the hollow rocks... Groves, presenting to view their prolific Boosom, beautifully decorated with the sorounding flowery hill & verdant lawns; all gay & Fragrant defuses a lovely & fruitfull Scenery all around.” The settlers, he reported to Dr. John Fothergill, “Plant Wheat, Barley, Flax, Hemp, Oates, corn, Cotton, Indigo, Breed Cattle, Sheep, and Make Very good Butter & Cheese.”

Ed Cashin has pointed out that Bartram’s trip to the town with the land surveyors was probably the most important thing that ever happened in Wrightsborough. The Cherokees to the north had gotten themselves into debt to the British. To pay off their tab they had agreed to give up land to the settlers. The problem was: some of the land didn’t belong to the



Chuck Spornick

Cherokees; it was Creek land. That was the reason for the conference in Augusta and for the survey. The Creeks, the Cherokees, and His Majesty’s government needed to work out a land dispute. When the conference concluded with a plan for marking the new boundary, a party of nearly one hundred surveyors, soldiers, wealthy colonists, Indian chiefs and braves, came together at Wrightsborough and headed northwest, marking the boundary of the new cession of land.

By 1799 most of the Quakers had moved to eastern Tennessee, Ohio, and beyond. The Georgia legislature abolished the Quaker control of the township, and deeded it to a new set of trustees. The town was renamed Wrightsboro.

The massive trees Bartram reported

have long since yielded to axes and saws, leaving pockets of woodlands. Scarcely a trace of the town remains. Scars of old road beds, cut deep by stagecoaches and wagons, lead out from the paved road. Fish Trap Road, a twenty-five foot-wide crease worn into the earth marks a main street of the abandoned town. On a hill above Middle Creek a sturdy stone foundation may be a remnant of the fort built by Colonel Barnard in 1774 to protect the frontier from Creek Indians restless over incursions into their lands.

The Historic Wrightsboro Foundation maintains the building that once housed a Methodist Church and has placed interpretive markers around the surrounding historic district. Other than the church,

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# A Tour of Phinizy Swamp

*Elliott O. Edwards Jr., Ed.D.*

If William Bartram had veered a bit on his journey from Shell Bluff to Fort Moore he would have slogged through a cypress swamp known over the past century as Phinizy Swamp. Travelers passing the area in 1990 saw a dumping ground. Dr. Gene Eidson saw an opportunity. Participants of Bartram Trail Conference's 2005 meeting found a wetland that is making a comeback.

On a mild Saturday morning they drove out of Augusta to spend a few hours in the Phinizy Swamp Nature Park. Parking in a gravel lot a mile from the banks of the Savannah River, they ambled across boardwalks to a complex of classrooms and laboratories in surrounded by ponds and a cypress swamp.

Developed by the Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy, the park features award-winning constructed wetlands that serve as habitat for myriad aquatic species, a rest stop for migratory birds and tertiary wastewater treatment for the city of Augusta. Eidson, a Ph.D. who is the President and CEO of the Academy, greeted the conferees in a classroom where he recalled his dream of wetland restoration, his dozen years of work leading the Academy, and the benefits of the project. Among the slides he flashed on the screen were pictures of rusted trucks being dragged from the swamp, of children on field trips, and of scientists using sophisticated instruments to test the waters of the river.

As he led the group on a walking tour into the swamp, Eidsen pointed out plant species native to this habitat. He discussed what wetlands are, why they are so valuable, and the relationship between wetland organisms and their environment.

The park offers views of flora and fauna typical of the Savannah River basin. On any given day one may see a kingfisher, blue heron, otters, alligators, and bobcats. During the winter, a keen eye will spot migrating birds of prey that winter in all of Georgia.

Lying on the downstream edge of the city of Augusta where Beaverdam

Ditch, Phinizy Ditch, and Butler Creek converge, the swamp stretches between Doug Barnard Parkway on the west and the Savannah River on the east. Bobby Jones Expressway runs through the center of the swamp and the Augusta Regional airport lies on its southern edge.

The Phinizy ecosystem covers more than 7,000 acres owned by Augusta-Richmond County, the Georgia Department of Transportation, and private landholders. It is the discharge point for numerous flooding sources in Augusta, draining approximately 50,483 acres (78.8 square miles). It also takes in some of the discharge of the Augusta Canal. Augusta's wastewater treatment plant dumps more than forty-five million tons of treated sewage into the swamp, where aquatic plants and animals provide a final cleansing of the water before it enters the Savannah River on its way to the Atlantic.

Elevations within the Swamp itself range from over 160 to as low as 100 feet at the confluence with the Savannah River. The Swamp is fairly flat, however, downstream of Butler Creek, the slope increases to approximately 0.001 ft./ft., and further downstream at the Augusta Levee Bridge, the slope increases even more dra-

matically to approximately 0.016 ft./ft.

Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy, a private 501C(3) nonprofit organization, operates the park as part of its mission to promote environmental stewardship. Striving to become the premier environmental education training center in the Central Savannah River Area, the Academy provides educational programs and public outreach events at the Nature Park and conducts research on natural resources issues affecting the community.

The Academy promotes sustainable development practices and technologies to preserve the future health of our water resources and to ensure long-term economic growth. The Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy has a vision that, through Phinizy Swamp Nature Park and its Center for Ecological Restoration, the park will serve as a catalyst for community participation in urban water management.

Further information on the Park and its activities may be found in the Academy's newsletter, *Swamp Notes*, available, along with a calendar of events, on its website (<http://www.phinizyswamp.org>).

*(Editor's Note: Elliott Edwards is a past president of the Bartram Trail Conference. He lives in Savannah where he works for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is active in historical research and environmental concerns.)*

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## Fothergill Award 2006 now open for Applications

The Bartram Trail Conference is now accepting applications for its Fothergill Research Award. One or more fellowships of \$500 are awarded annually to an advanced graduate student or recent Ph.D. whose research promises to lead to publication, book, article, dissertation, or other substantive product in studies related to William Bartram. Appropriate areas of scholarship include but are not limited to the natural sciences, history of science, literary studies, journalism, history, biography, archaeology, art, photography, and ethnohistory. Recipients are asked to

make an informal report on work to be published in BTC newsletter, *The Traveler* and/or presented at biennial meeting of the BTC (at discretion of program committee). Deadline for receipt of applications is February 28, 2006. The award is for use in 2006. For more information, contact Dr. Kathryn H. Braund, Dept. of History, 310 Thach Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849. Phone: (334) 844-6649.; email [braunkh@auburn.edu](mailto:braunkh@auburn.edu). Please visit our website at <http://www.bartramtrail.org/> for more information about the award as well as an application form.



# Bartram's Botanical Explorations in the Augusta Frontier

Brad Sanders

When William Bartram visited in late May, 1773, Augusta was the center of the Indian trade for the Southeast and the largest city (really, more of a village) on the southwestern frontier. As yet, the surrounding countryside was not so heavily settled as on the east side of the Savannah River in South Carolina, which was filling up fast. During his travels to Augusta and around the New Purchase Bartram had opportunity to botanize in an area that had not seen significant settlement since the passage of Ponce de Leon and his army of adventurers 250 years earlier.

En route to Augusta from Savannah Bartram noted that the land rose sensibly in terraces as he traveled farther from the sea. He surmised that at one time this land had been covered by the ocean, which had deposited a sandy soil and the fossilized oysters at Shell Bluff. As he approached Augusta he was surprised to find growing on the banks of the Savannah River Leatherwood and Shooting Stars for he thought the climate too hot for them to thrive. The steep and forested banks of the Savannah River provided cool protection for such plants.

This land about Augusta was inherently different from the land just north of Augusta, which was marked by a hilly terrain and rocky rapids among the rivers. At Augusta Bartram was able to observe the blending of the Coastal Plain and the Piedmont, which is most obvious at the I-20 bridge, Lock and Dam Park and Savannah Bluffs Heritage Preserve in North Augusta, South Carolina. In the Piedmont, where rivers approach the Coastal Plain, there are a series of rocky rapids as the land makes a slightly steeper descent. This is the fall line and Augusta sits right below the rapids of the Savannah River because that was the limit of navigation upriver. Oglethorpe chose the place for

Augusta also for the fact that several important Indian paths crossed above and below the rapids.

Among these rocky shoals of the Savannah River fall line Bartram found one of the rarest and most habitat specific plants in the Southeast. The Rocky Shoals Spider Lily, *Hymenocallis coronaria*, grows only on the rocky shoals of rivers just above the fall line. These lilies require



*Shoals Spider Lily, Hymenocallis coronaria*

fresh, unpolluted running water, rocks to cling to and rapids to aerate the water. Bartram briefly mentioned this gorgeous plant as first appearing above Augusta among the rapids, now about where the I-20 bridge crosses. He wrote;

*Upon the rich rocky hills at the cataracts of Augusta, I first observed the perfumed Rhododendron ferruginum, white robed Philadelphus inodorus, and cerulean Malva; but nothing in vegetable nature was more pleasing than the odoriferous Pancreatium fluitans, which almost alone possesses the little rocky islets which just appear above the water.*

Bartram's *Pancreatium fluitans* is nomen

*nudum*, meaning a name published without a description. John Eatton LeConte provided a complete description of the Shoals Spider Lily in 1836 and named it *Hymenocallis coronaria*.

Just south of I-20 in North Augusta is Savannah Bluffs Heritage Preserve, created by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources to protect a population of Shoals Spider Lily and an aboriginal fish weir. Coincidentally, there is a disjunct population of Bottlebrush Buckeye, *Aesculus parviflora*, which is native to the Chattahoochee and Alabama river systems.

William Bartram first saw Bottlebrush Buckeye on his visit to Uchee and Apalachicola on the Chattahoochee River in 1775. He gave an incomplete description in the *Travels* and suggested no name except that he mentioned *Aesculus alba* (White Buckeye) in Monroe County, Alabama. In his rambles about Augusta Bartram found another Buckeye which he named *Aesculus sylvatica*, Carolina Buckeye.

At the falls of the Savannah River Bartram saw Lesser Rosebay, his *Rhododendron ferruginum*, which was named *Rhododendron minus* by André Michaux. Also, Bartram mentions *Philadelphus inodorus*, Scentless Mock Orange; and a cerulean colored mallow that is anyone's guess. On the banks of the Little River Bartram described a "very curious shrub" that turns out to be the elusive and rare *Elliottia racemosa*. In modern times it is not known to exist so far north except for one small population near Pollard's Corner in Columbia County, which lies exactly on Bartram's route to Fort James. *Elliottia* was identified in 1808 from a collection made in Burke county by Stephen Elliott. Bartram's drawings of *Elliottia* are in the collection of the Natural History Museum in London.

Along the banks of the Savannah River and among the hills overlooking the streams and rivers Bartram found a plant in bloom in May, 1775 that obviously made an impression upon him. He wrote...

*... fiery azalea, flaming on the ascending hills or wavy surface of the gliding brooks. The epithet fiery, I annex to this most celebrated species of azalea, as be-*



Lesser Rosebay, *Rhodendron minus*

*ing expressive of the appearance of it in flower, which are in general of the colour of the finest red lead, orange and bright gold, as well as yellow and cream colour; these various splendid colours are not only in separate plants, but frequently all the varieties and shades are seen in separate branches on the same plant, and the clusters of the blossoms cover the shrubs in such incredible profusion on the hill sides, that suddenly opening to view from dark shades, we are alarmed with the apprehension of the hills being set on fire.*

William Bartram was the first botanist to describe Flame Azalea, which grew in abundance in the Piedmont of Georgia and South Carolina. The Flame Azalea ranges from Pennsylvania to the Georgia mountains, generally growing most abundantly in the Appalachian Mountains, but Bartram wrote that as he traveled along the Savannah River north of Augusta there was an abundance of Flame Azalea. In fact, the Savannah River has been a corridor of distribution for this beautiful plant as far south as Ebenezer.

A listing of plants that Bartram saw above and below Augusta shows that at the time the landscape held a variety of trees and flowering plants that was more diverse than the average forest of today. We may today still find such woodlands in deep ravines and steep river banks that were not conducive to farming and logging.

*(Editor's Note:* Brad Sanders, who teaches graphic communications in Athens, Georgia, is publisher of *The Traveller*, webmaster of the BTC website [<http://www.bartramtrail.org>], and author of *Guide to William Bartram's Travels*. Athens, Georgia: Fevertree Press, 2002.)

## BTC Field Trip: Philadelphia in Spring 2006

Kathryn Braund

*"I resolved to make a little botanical excursion..."*

So wrote William Bartram in the introduction to *Travels*. (xxvii) At the final day of the conference in Augusta, members of the BTC made the same resolution and called for a field trip in 2006—an "off year" when the biennial conference does not convene. The destination choice for the first official field trip was unanimous and enthusiastic: William Bartram's home in Philadelphia. Thus, preliminary plans are in place for a late spring "botanical excursion" to Bartram's Garden and other sites of interest. Please find below a tentative itinerary. Final plans (and dates) will be made when we determine actual interest and participation.

### Proposed Date: May 24–26

*Day One:* Arrive in Philadelphia and settle in. Suggested afternoon stop (on your own) is the Second National Bank of the United States, at 420 Chestnut Street. This historic building is modeled on Greece's Parthenon and is operated by the National Park Service. There, enjoy a stroll through the Portrait Gallery, which includes portraits of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and, of course, the famous portrait of William Bartram. Assemble that evening for drinks and dinner (Dutch). Suggested locale: Philadelphia's City Tavern ([citytavern.com](http://citytavern.com)).

*Day Two:* We board a chartered coach for Bartram's Garden ([bartramsgarden.org](http://bartramsgarden.org)). We'll spend the morning there, exploring the house built by John Bartram as well as the wonderfully maintained grounds—some forty-five acres that features farm buildings, archaeological digs, a wetland area and other surprises. We'll lunch at the garden. Then, we're off to Chanticleer Garden ([chanticleergarden.org](http://chanticleergarden.org)). This 35-acre pleasure garden includes two

large houses, the former estate of Adolph Rosengarten, Sr. Now maintained as a public garden, we'll view spectacular flower and vegetable gardens, as well as a woodland garden, water garden and herb garden—among other wonders. At the end of the day, we return to the historic district of Philadelphia for a night on the town.

*Day Three:* We board the bus for an excursion to two of the great gardens of America: Winterthur ([winterthur.org](http://winterthur.org)) and Longwood ([longwoodgardens.org](http://longwoodgardens.org)). At Winterthur, in addition to the antique-filled mansion of the late Henry Francis du Pont, there will be exhibitions on 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century needlework and antique teaware. The sixty-acre garden will pull you outside, while some may wish to visit the extensive library and museum (home of the famous portrait of *James Oglethorpe Presenting the Yamacraw (Creek) Indians to the Georgia Trustees*). After lunch at Winterthur, we're back on the bus and off to nearby Longwood, the 1000+ acre creation of Pierre S. du Pont and home to a variety of horticultural displays, woodlands, twenty indoor gardens and greenhouses, as well as numerous fountains.

Cost of participation: \$150 (this includes all entrance fees, guided tours, two lunches, chauffeured charter van and snacks). Participants are responsible for all other meals, as well as lodging and transportation to Philadelphia. Once we determine participation, an attempt will be made to secure a group rate for a hotel in the historic district of Philadelphia.

To make the trip a reality, we need prompt expressions of interest/commitment in order to firm up reservations, secure transportation and make group hotel rate inquiries. If you are interested, please contact Kathryn Braund at your earliest convenience at [khbraund@charter.net](mailto:khbraund@charter.net). Itinerary and cost are subject to change depending upon participation.

# North Carolina Bartram Trail

## Trail-blazing after all these years

Tim Warren

After almost three decades of work by the North Carolina Bartram Trail Society a hiker can now walk the North Carolina Bartram Trail for eighty miles. While the entire trail does not follow directly on Bartram's footprints, in several places it traverses locations that Bartram described in his *Travels* and affords modern "travellers" opportunities to rediscover the rich biological diversity that he described there.

The trail offers a year round visual feast of nature: delicate spring wildflowers; Flame and Clammy Azaleas; waterfalls and fast flowing rivers; and autumn's blazing hardwood forests. Beginning at Bee Gum Gap near the North Carolina-Georgia border, where it connects with the Georgia Bartram Trail, the pathway winds its way through some of the most rugged terrain in the southern Appalachians and ends at the top of Cheoah Bald, some twelve miles northeast of Andrews, NC. On only a few miles will the hiker's boots tread on gravel or asphalt.

Work began in 1977 when a handful of amateur naturalists dreamed of commemorating William Bartram's travels and writings with a foot trail in western North Carolina. They founded The North Carolina Bartram Trail Society and dedicated themselves to keep the trail open and cleared of storm damaged trees, to promote interest in William Bartram's travels and writings, and to stimulate interest in the local flora and fauna by encouraging public enjoyment of the trails by both walking them and helping to maintain them. Club volunteers—botanists, firefighters, attorneys, computer programmers, and assorted others, assisted at times by the U. S. Forest Service programs such as the Youth Conservation Corps and Young Adult Conservation Corps, built the trail.

Under the leadership of club president Burt Kornegay in the 1990s, the society completed the eighty miles of trail and blazed a section along the Little Tennessee River for a canoe trail. Burt's articles attracted others, including several college fraternities who joined local members

for day-long workhikes. Dr. Jim Lowe of Robbinsville, the next president, continued this momentum by hosting Outward Bound groups and sponsoring "alternative spring breaks" with college students that dug trail by day and base-camped by night.

Toting their chainsaws, Pulaskis (diggers with an axe blade), and brush eaters, club members continue to join for monthly workhikes each second Saturday, as weather permits. Beyond the routine work of clearing trees blown down by storms and restoring tread washed out by the heavy rains that fall in the uplands of the Little Tennessee River, the Society continues to improve the trail. Recently, members set bulletin board signs at the major trailheads and small directional woodland signs that correspond to landmarks on the Society's maps. Additional yellow blazes mark the main trail, and blue blazes denote the side trails to vistas along the BT.

The club plans to re-route and extend the trail, cutting a new section which will trim five miles off the current road walk. It also hopes to link the Bartram Trail to the Little Tennessee River Greenway through Macon County.

Publications and meetings draw interest in Bartram and the trail. Society members have assisted authors from *National Geographic* and *Backpacker*. The

group publishes a series of seven detailed topographical maps available to the public, along with other information, on its website [www.ncbartramtrail.org](http://www.ncbartramtrail.org). Its semi-annual meetings provide updates to the membership about the trail, elections of officers, a guest natural history speaker, and afternoon guided hikes on the trail. Special celebrations have included a lecture by noted ethnobotanist Dr. James A. Duke at its 25th anniversary meeting and two biennial meetings of the Bartram Trail Conference.

We extend a hearty invitation to the members of the Bartram Trail Conference to join us on the NC Bartram Trail. My goal is to continue to provide opportunities for service work hikes on the BT for outdoor enthusiasts in the form of day hikes, overnight hikes and work hikes. These can be for individuals, families, church or scout troops, and school groups. Work hikes can be tailored to fit almost any group. Persons interested in receiving notices of the workhikes may visit the BTS website at [www.ncbartramtrail.org](http://www.ncbartramtrail.org) and sign up for the Google work-hike groups.

Whether for work or excursions, a visitor to the North Carolina Bartram Trail may behold, "with rapture and astonishment a sublimely awful scene of power and magnificence, a world of mountains piled upon mountains." —William Bartram, 1775

(*Editor's Note:* Tim Warren is President of NCBTS Board of Directors, 2006–2007. He lives in Brevard, NC.)

Intending to explore as far west as the Overhill Settlements of the Cherokees, south of the current Knoxville, Tennessee, Bartram left Charleston in late April 1775. His itinerary took him through the South Carolina uplands and across the Oconee Mountains. He crossed the Chatooga River and passed the ruins of Stekoa, near the current Clayton, Georgia. At the eastern continental divide, he entered the valley of the Little Tennessee River, exploring in late May.

Along the way, a storm, "armed with terrors of thunder and fiery shafts of lightning," drenched him. After he dried out in an abandoned Indian hunting cabin, he proceeded down the valley where he stayed at the Cherokee town of Cowee and explored the surrounding mountains. Here he had his memorable encounter with the Cherokee maidens, witnessed an Indian celebration, and "beheld with rapture and astonishment a sublimely awful scene of power and magnificence, a world of mountains piled upon mountains."

He cut short his trip beyond Cowee after three days in the rugged Nantahala ("Jore") Mountains and made a hasty return to Augusta, Georgia.



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# Who Are The Members of the Bartram Trail Conference?

In this and upcoming editions of *The Traveller* we will feature brief introductions to members of the Conference.

## Jacob Lowrey

As others with an interest in William Bartram, Jacob Lowrey grew up along the trail that Bartram followed. This member of the Bartram Trail Conference was born in Burnt Corn, a hamlet near Evergreen in southwest Alabama. Burnt Corn sits astride the old Federal Road that connected the Gulf Coast with middle Georgia and is known as the site of a battle between the Upper Creeks and settlers in 1813.

His interest in the Federal Road led Jacob to William Bartram, who passed along the Creek trading path in 1775 on his way to and from Mobile and Baton Rouge. “Little did I know growing up that the road through the middle of the community of Burnt Corn had so much history associated with it,” he says.

Educated at Auburn University, the University of Alabama (M.B.A.), and Georgia State University, Jacob is a Certified Public Accountant in Greenville, South Carolina, where he pursues his hobby of historical research. He has attended two biennial meetings of the Bartram Trail Conference.

It is Bartram’s character that most draws him to Bartram and his travels. “While Bartram was certainly no rough and tumble sort of frontiersman, say like a Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone or Sam Dale, he did not seem to be intimidated by the unknown. He must have used his superior intellect, his cat-like curiosity, and sense of humor to impress others, whom often he must have entrusted with his life—O.i.e. Indian Traders and Indian Chiefs.”

## Kathryn Braund

The “Bicentennial Tree” caught the eyes of a young woman as she and her father walked through an exhibit at the 1976 National Peanut Festival in Dothan, Alabama. “It was a *Franklinia*,” she says, and with it was the story of a botanist named William Bartram. “It was the first I had heard of Bartram. They were also selling little *Franklinia* twigs. We bought one, followed the two pages of directions on its tender care, and promptly killed it,” she says. “Since then I’ve killed several other *Franklinia* twigs, but I hope I’ve done more justice to Bartram in my writing and research.”

Kathryn H. Braund researches Southeastern Indian history and colonial and revolutionary-era American history and teaches students at Auburn University. Holding undergraduate degrees in history and geography from Auburn and a Ph.D. in history from Florida State University, she has published numerous articles related to Bartram. Among the books she has written is *William Bartram on the Southeastern Indians*, which she edited and annotated with Gregory A. Waselkov.

Born in Birmingham, Alabama, Kathryn was raised in the small southeast Alabama town of Hartford—the Alabama Wiregrass. Beyond her professional interests, Kathryn enjoys growing African violets and cooking and reading cookbooks. She recently “retired” from her local volunteer fire department, where she served for ten years as both a firefighter and a member of the board of director. She was president of the board for many years.

Kathryn has attended Bartram Trail Conference meetings since the bicentennial of *Travels* (1991). She presented her first paper on William Bartram at

that meeting and in 2000 the Conference elected her its president.

“It is William Bartram’s character that impresses me and draws me to his work,” she says. “He was a genuinely fine man. He had intense interest and curiosity in the world around him and a rare ability to overlook the flaws of those he encountered. He wasn’t jealous, mean or petty; he could roll with the punches; he was friendly and open minded; he didn’t hold grudges and tried his best to be a good person—all virtues I admire.

“Of course, he was a keen observer and that makes his writing very valuable for historians and he was a wonderful writer, so his work is a joy to read. But Bartram is more than a ‘source’ to me and I think that is because his goodness is so evident.”

## Robert (Bob) Greene

Bob Greene’s interest in William Bartram did not stop with tramping the Bartram Trail in Georgia. He went on to co-author, with Chuck Spornick and Alan Cattier, *An Outdoor Guide to Bartram’s Travels* (University of Georgia Press, 2003), a guide to foot, horseback, and canoe travel along the areas explored by Bartram.

A native of Belmont, New York, Bob received his BS in Science Education from Bowling Green State University, Ohio and earned his Masters and PhD in Library Science at Florida State University.

After twenty years (1966 through 1986) of service as head librarian at Kennesaw State College (now University) north of Atlanta, he moved to the position of Science Bibliographer at Emory University. Since his retirement 1998 Bob has taken up photography seriously, is Secretary of the Bartram Trail Conference, and has attended three biennial meetings of the Conference.

A man whose life has been devoted to books and to what we may learn from them, Bob values Bartram for his writings. “New England and Europe learned about the American southeast (topography, Native Americans, plants, and animals) from Bartram’s *Travels*.”



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# President's Notes

For me, the 2005 Augusta conference was a surprise in many ways. I knew that Dr. Ed Cashin, the preeminent historian of colonial Georgia and noted Bartram scholar, had organized a wonderfully balanced program to highlight historic Augusta. As it turned out, the conference was all that—and much more. The weekend was a good lesson in what the “Bartram heritage” is all about. The BTC mission statement explains the “Bartram heritage”:

*It is awe and reverence for the glories of the natural world. It is admiration and respect for Native American cultures. It is a love of vigorous and exuberant exploration of the diverse natural landscape of the American South. It is dedication to a study of the world thorough botany, biology, history, and cultural anthropology. It is a determination to safeguard and preserve the things we value most for future generations to enjoy. Most of all, it is an abiding “curiosity” and “wonder” that transcends time and change.*

In Augusta, we met wonderful people like Mr. Isaac Johnson and Mrs. Dot Jones, who have dedicated their lives to historical preservation and education. It is easy to say that we value something, but it takes special strength to act on those values. Such action requires time, perseverance, dedication, determination, and passion, traits shared by all those we met in Augusta. Mr. Johnson has worked tirelessly for years to restore and preserve the St. Johns Building of historic Springfield Baptist Church. What a real joy to sit in the sanctuary of that splendid historic church with a convivial group of Bartram friends, listen to a talk on the historic church, and enjoy a wonderful lunch that our host him-

self had prepared. Bartram didn't actually visit the Springfield Church, but he might well have met some of the congregation. He certainly visited Dot Jones' Wrightsboro. Dot and a coterie of some of the finest cooks in Georgia fed us there too. And we had the privilege to admire the lovely meetinghouse and explore the surrounding countryside—even saw a mulberry tree! Isaac, Dot, Ed, and the wonderful, determined people at the Augusta canal museum have done for their own time what Bartram did in writing his book. They have saved our history, broadened our understanding of the world, and provided inspiration for the rest of us.

I think that William Bartram would have been especially delighted by our field trip to meet Dr. Gene Eidson and see his innovative work at Phinizy Swamp and the Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy. Dr. Eidson and his staff prove that it is never too late to respect the environment and work for improvement. His “curiosity” and work to reclaim and safeguard Augusta's natural environment is proving to be a model for other areas around the country.

Bartram often praised the hospitality of his hosts. I think he would be pleased to know that Augusta still celebrates his visit and its residents revere their natural and cultural heritage and continue an unparalleled tradition of gracious southern hospitality.

Kathryn Braund, *BTC President*

*The Traveller* is the newsletter of  
the Bartram Trail Conference.

Jim Kautz, *Editor*  
Brad Sanders, *publisher*

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## Fellow Traveler,

Thank you for your support of the Bartram Trail Conference. I would like to encourage you to continue your support by renewing your membership. If you are not a member, I would ask you to consider joining.

Membership contributions are critical to the work of the Conference. They are used for the publication and mailing of this newsletter; the maintenance of our website, [www.bartramtrail.org](http://www.bartramtrail.org) (averaging more than 600 uses a day); and for the biennial conference (our last conference was held in Augusta, GA in October 2005). Your dues also fund our Fothergill scholarship—awarding \$500 to an advanced graduate student or recent Ph.D. whose research promises to lead to publication, book, article, dissertation, or other substantive product in studies related to William Bartram.

Please use the printed form in the newsletter, or down-

load the form from the website: [www.bartramtrail.org/pages/membership.html](http://www.bartramtrail.org/pages/membership.html) and send it and a check for \$15.00, payable to:

*Bartram Trail Conference*

and mail it to the following address:

Charles D. Spornick  
Bartram Trail Conference, Treasurer  
390 Saint Marks Drive  
Lilburn, GA 30047

Please note, membership contributions have been \$15 for several years. They will remain at that rate through June. However, due to higher postage rates and increases in other costs, beginning July 1 dues will be \$20.

Many thanks again,

*Chuck Spornick*

The Traveller  
The Bartram Trail Conference  
c/o Brad Sanders  
189 Hidden Hills Lane  
Athens, GA 30605

**Wrightsborough**, *continued from page 3*  
its cemetery, an unpainted general store, and the foundation of a nineteenth century building remain. Four goats browse in the pen beside the shed that stands near one of the two modern white frame houses.

Out in the countryside, on land once part of the Quakers' forty thousand acres, stands a rare monument of a backcountry colonial settlement. Dot Jones, president of the BTC through a farm gate and across a hay field. Parking their vehicles in the field, they walked down a rutted track that dropped steeply into a valley. As they stood on a wooded slope, she said, "This is Mattock's dam. Joseph Mattock ran the mill here."

When following Bartram's path, one seldom finds a view that so nearly matches his. Streams of water ran gently over the granite boulders that Quaker settlers had slid into a natural shoal and fit into place

until their structure rose almost twenty feet above the streambed. Across Mattox Creek the forest had overtaken the ruins of the mill that Mattock had set on a shallow hill fifty yards below the dam. But the conference travelers could imagine walls of raw pine boards, the wheel,

the pond, and the Quaker farmers bringing their corn to be ground to meal. Some envisioned Bartram finding brothers and sisters in his native faith gathered around this mill, and recalled his words to Dr. Fothergill: "Mills are erected on the swift flowing Streams...."

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## Savannah's "Georgia Days" Features Bartram Lecture

Dr. Edward Cashin presented a lecture on William Bartram at The Georgia Historical Society's Georgia Days in Savannah.

Cashin is Professor of History Emeritus at Augusta State University and founding Director of the Center for Georgia Studies. Author of *William Bartram and the American Revolution on the Southern*

*Frontier* as well as numerous other books on the history of Georgia, Cashin led audience members through the travels of William Bartram during the revolutionary turmoil in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Bartram was the Historical Society's "Honored Figure in Georgia History" during its 2006 Georgia Days.