

The *Traveller*

A Newsletter of the Bartram Trail Conference

Spring, 2018

Bartram and Botany at the Georgia Coast



"My progress was rendered delightful by the sylvan elegance of the groves, cheerful meadows, and high distant forests, which in grand order presented themselves to view."

by Dorinda Dallmeyer

Twenty-six Bartram enthusiasts from as far away as Texas and Oklahoma converged on Little St. Simons Island, Georgia, for the first-ever "Through Bartram's Eyes: An Immersion in the Nature, Art, and History of William Bartram's Georgia Coast" held March 7–9. Although neither of the Bartrams visited this particular Georgia barrier island, William visited Sapelo to the north and St. Simons to the south, as well as spending many of the winter months in Darien just upriver on the Altamaha. Little



Matthew Stoddard and Philip Juras point out changes in vegetation type at Altama.

St. Simons' well-preserved landscape, flora, and fauna call to mind the Bartrams' descriptions of what they saw elsewhere along the Georgia seacoast and during their forays on the Altamaha River.

The program kicked off on a bright, brisk afternoon with a round-trip boat cruise from the northern tip of St. Simons Island upriver to Altama Wildlife Management Area, managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy. Despite gusty winds, huge alligators basked in the shelter of



Hooded Pitcher Plant, *Sarracenia minor*



"O peaceful Alatomaha, gentle by nature. How thou art ruffled."

marsh grasses, reminding us of those William experienced firsthand further south in Florida. Disembarking at the historic Altama Plantation, the group walked along an abandoned rice dike to note the change in vegetation types from freshwater grasses, through river

hardwoods, to the edge of remnant stands of longleaf pine on the uplands beyond. Although man-made, the dike itself featured an impressive array of wildflowers and shrubs in bloom, including native azaleas, red buckeye, neverwet, and, surprisingly

extensive beds of jack-in-the-pulpit. DNR naturalist Matthew Stoddard capped the walk with a visit to pitcher plants growing in low spots among the pines. Assisting with plant identification was Carol Denhof, understory and media coordinator for the Longleaf Alliance.

On Thursday, the group spent the entire day exploring a transect of the island's ecotypes from the maritime live oak forest, to pine woodlands, to freshwater-influenced wetlands, to shrub thickets and grasslands, and on to the beach. In addition to the island's resident professional naturalists, special guest lecturers assisting in the field included Christi Lambert, director of coastal and marine conservation for The Nature Conservancy, artist Philip Juras, and BTC board member Dorinda Dallmeyer. Throughout the event, quotes from the *Travels* linked William Bartram's words across the centuries to the scene before us. ❀

Experience History at the 2018 Bartram Frolic

The Bartram Trail of Putnam County and the City of Palatka are planning the 2018 St. Johns River Bartram Frolic. They believe the historic St. Johns River should be celebrated for its beauty and heritage by recognizing William Bartram's visits in 1765 and 1774. The 2018 festival will be September 29 & September 30. This will be the fifth Frolic in Palatka—the first was documented in *Travels* in July of 1774 at the Lower Store, the second in October of 2015 during the Bartram Trail Conference, the third in September of 2016 during the celebration of the designation of the Bartram National Recreation Trail, and the fourth was in September of 2017. The festival will be based at the St. Johns River Center—headquarters for the Bartram Trail in Putnam County.

The festival will feature historically themed reenactors—Seminoles, European traders, Indian maidens, British governors, troops and of course William Bartram and his barque. The Putnam Blueways & Trails Citizen Support Organization will organize paddling tours, biking tours and guided hikes. Tours of Palatka's historic districts will be available, as well as river tours on the *Pride of Palatka* that include a sunset wine cruise to Rollestown and Dunn's Little Island.

There will be music at a different venue. Nature-based vendors will sell their wares and civic clubs will provide food and services on the riverfront. There will be art shows, including an exhibit of 21 full-scale reproductions of Bartram drawings from the Natural History Museum of London.

Palatka's art league will have a show featuring local art inspired by the St. Johns River and nature. Saturday evening will feature a wine stroll and frolic through downtown Palatka. Sunday will include a Bartram prayer stroll on the riverfront and more touring and paddling opportunities. Later, lectures on Bartram will take place in the Larimer Arts Center. We are anticipating a preview of the film *Cultivating the Wild—William Bartram's Travels* produced by Dorinda Dallmeyer and Eric Breitenbach.

For more information visit <http://bartram.putnam-fl.com>. If you would like to participate in the festival, please contact Ken Mahaffey at somewherenfl@gmail.com and (386) 916-9160, or Sam Carr at scarr304gn@gmail.com and (386) 937-3901. ❀

Lacombe Rising



Small Business group preparing for Earth Day in Lacombe, Louisiana. L to R: Dr. Tony Bondi with the Lacombe Family Pharmacy, Realtor Patty Cooper, Bayou Adventure owners Shannon and Jeff Bordelon with history teacher and Bayou Lacombe Cardinals coach Gerrin Narcisse and Recreation District 4 Director Jordan Johnson are calling on other business and community leaders to unite behind their effort to promote a cleaner and more progressive Lacombe. The three onlooking deer declined to be identified, but they too support Earth Day April 22.

In a meeting at Bayou Adventure Kayak Tours and Outdoor Sports Outfitters, members of Lacombe's Small Business Group agreed to commemorate the 1775 visit of William Bartram to Bayou Lacombe in their annual plans for 2018 Earth Day celebrations on April 22.

Tom Aicklen, Coordinator of the Lacombe Heritage Center and owner of the Bartram Wilderness Adventure Resource Restoration Trail and Blueway, proposed that Bartram's birthday on April 20 be incorporated into the annual Lacombe Rising Earth Day activities. This will be part of the Bartram National Heritage Corridor being put forward by the Bartram Trail

Conference to connect Bartram trails throughout the eight Southern states through which he traveled.

Aicklen has agreed to help bring together the necessary legislative support in Congress to establish this significant heritage corridor. He quoted from Bartram's account of his journey from the Pearl River along the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain to verify that Bartram did indeed spend the night on a spit of sandy beach near Goose Point and the mouth of Bayou Lacombe. By comparing Bartram's account to Iberville's journal of March 28, 1699, we can determine that both parties likely camped on what is now a submerged island that was once

part of the archaic coastline of North America.

The distance given from point to point by Bartram agrees with present day maps and distances.

"Leaving the friendly Mr. Rumsey's seat on Pearl Island, we descended a creek from the landing near his house; this creek led us about a mile, winding through salt sedgy marshes, into Lake Pontchartrain, along whose North shore we coasted about twenty miles, having low, reedy marshes, on our starboard; these marshes were very extensive between us and the far distant high forests on the main: at evening the shore became bolder, with sandy elevations, affording a few dwarf Oaks, Zanthoxylon, Myrica and Rham. frangula. We came to a little bay, kindled a fire, and after supper betook ourselves to repose; our situation open, airy and cool, on clean sand banks; we rested quietly, though sometimes roused by alarms from the crocodiles, which are here in great numbers, and of enormous bulk and strength."

As an official Louisiana Tourism Ambassador, on behalf of Louisiana's Lieutenant Governor, Lacombe Small Business group is eager to designate the aquatic route of Bartram as a recognized blueway for canoeists, sailors, pleasure boaters, and kayakers as part of our fourteen parish Corridors and Trails Rural Tourism Economic Development Incentive. ❀

Save the Date

October, 2019
the Bartram Trail Conference
will convene in
Montgomery, Alabama

William Bartram in Alabama

by Brad Sanders

Monroe County, Alabama, was created in 1815 from the Creek land cession of 1814 and included much of central Alabama. As the area became settled the original Monroe County was broken into smaller counties. Conecuh County was formed in 1818 by an act of the Territorial Legislature that reads "And be it further enacted, That all that tract of country, lying east of the Federal Road, and not included in any other county now established, except the county of Monroe, shall hereafter form one County to be called and known by the name of Conecuh."

The Federal Road was constructed in 1806–07 as a mail route through Creek territory and at the time was only a horse path that followed an existing trail. That trail was known as the Pensacola Path or the Mobile and Pensacola Path for it connected the Upper Creek Towns with trade in Pensacola and Mobile. This was the path that William Bartram followed when he travelled to Mobile in July 1775 and again when he returned in November of that year.

In *Travels* Bartram wrote of his journey from the Upper Creek Towns to Mobile, "We now leave the river at a good distance, the Alabama bearing away southerly, and enter a vast open forest which continued above seventy miles, East and West, without any considerable variation, generally a level plain, except near the banks of creeks that course through;... We now enter a very remarkable grove of Dog wood trees (*cornus Florida*) which continued nine or ten miles unalterable, except here and there a towering magnolia grandiflora;... During a progress of near seventy miles, through this high forest, there constantly presented to view on one hand or the other, spacious groves of this fine flowering

tree, which must, in the spring season, when covered with blossoms present a most pleasing scene; when at the same time a variety of other sweet shrubs display their beauty, adorned in their gay apparel,... The evening cool, we encamped on the banks of a glittering rivulet amidst a spicy grove of the *Ilisium floridanum*."

This remarkable grove of dogwoods was west of Greenville in an area first known as Dogwood Flat then later as Pine Flat. The camp site was on either West Sepulga River or Murder Creek. Bartram wrote that the next day they crossed the "river Schambe." This was without a doubt Big Escambia Creek, which was at the time called Escambia River. In the 1830s there was a toll bridge at that crossing.

There were no settlements or plantations to speak of along this route at the time Bartram travelled the path to Mobile. After the Revolution mixed-blood Creeks established a few plantations in the area. The 1805 Treaty of Washington obtained permission for the US to construct the Federal Road through the Creek Nation and promoted the establishment of trading posts and "stands" along the route to be owned and operated by the Creeks themselves. The owners of these stands were often mixed-blood Creeks. James Cornells was one such entrepreneur who moved to Burnt Corn Springs in 1813 and constructed a large and impressive home. He received a large grant of land in the area as reward for his aid to the Americans during the Creek war.

The landscape through which Bartram travelled is, of course, much altered from the landscape that he described. Today much of the route is surrounded by pine plantations with the occasional bucolic scene of contented cows and lush green pasture. When we reach the southern part of



Remnant of the Old Federal Road near Middleton Cemetery

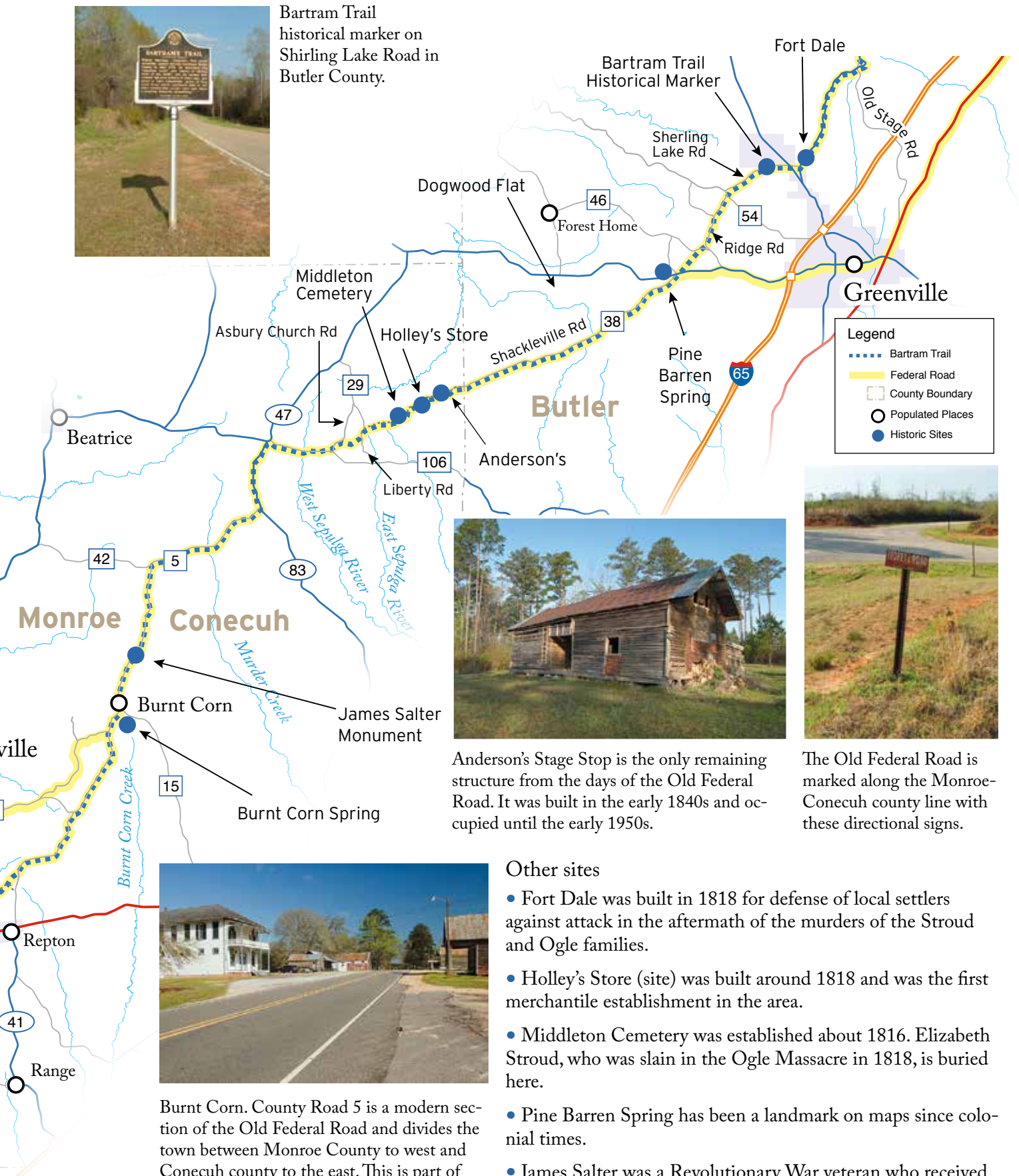
Monroe County we find much more diverse agriculture; cotton, soybeans, peanuts, and vegetables.

Following the Bartram Trail on the Monroe-Conecuh county line is a pleasant day trip for much of the route is public road. There are several unpaved sections, but those dirt roads are kept in good condition. For a lunch break take a side trip to Monroeville, the Literary Capital of Alabama, and visit the Monroe County Museum while in town. ☼





Bartram Trail historical marker on Shirling Lake Road in Butler County.



Anderson's Stage Stop is the only remaining structure from the days of the Old Federal Road. It was built in the early 1840s and occupied until the early 1950s.



The Old Federal Road is marked along the Monroe-Conecuh county line with these directional signs.



Burnt Corn. County Road 5 is a modern section of the Old Federal Road and divides the town between Monroe County to west and Conecuh county to the east. This is part of the early trading path from the Upper Creek Towns to Mobile and Pensacola.

Other sites

- Fort Dale was built in 1818 for defense of local settlers against attack in the aftermath of the murders of the Stroud and Ogle families.
- Holley's Store (site) was built around 1818 and was the first merchantile establishment in the area.
- Middleton Cemetery was established about 1816. Elizabeth Stroud, who was slain in the Ogle Massacre in 1818, is buried here.
- Pine Barren Spring has been a landmark on maps since colonial times.
- James Salter was a Revolutionary War veteran who received bounty land in Alabama but was not able to take possession until 1816. He was a member of the legislature in the 1820s.

2018 Fothergill Awards

The Bartram Trail Conference is pleased to announce the 2018 Fothergill Research Award winners. The award is named for Dr. John Fothergill, William Bartram's long-time patron and supporter. Each year, one or more fellowships of \$500 are awarded to an advanced graduate student or recent PhD recipient whose research promises to lead to a publication, book, article, dissertation, or other substantive product in studies related to William Bartram.



Heather Gladfelter



Whitney Robles

"Analysis of Genetic Diversity and Mutation Breeding for Restoration of *Franklinia alatamaha*"

Heather Gladfelter

PhD Candidate in Horticulture, University of Georgia

The exquisite ornamental characteristics of *Franklinia alatamaha*, along with its intriguing botanical history and discovery by the Bartrams, have made it a coveted tree in land-



Franklinia alatamaha

scapes, botanical gardens, arboretums, and private ornamental collections. However, it is now extinct in its native range largely because of the introduction of the non-native plant pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, a root-rot fungus. For *Franklinia* to ever be re-introduced successfully into its former range and into regions where *Phytophthora* now occurs, plants must be resistant to the disease. It is important to determine whether any genetic diversity conferring resistance exists in the cultivated populations worldwide. Identifying existing genetic variation in existing plants or producing new genetic variation in the laboratory could overcome genetic bottlenecks that might otherwise keep *Franklinia* forever extinct in the wild. I will be collecting leaf tissue and/or seeds in the Philadelphia region this summer for my genetic diversity project. I also will be seeking *Franklinia* leaves or seed from botanical gardens, private collections, and arboretums in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

"Curious Species: How Animals Made Natural History, 1700–1820"

Whitney Barlow Robles

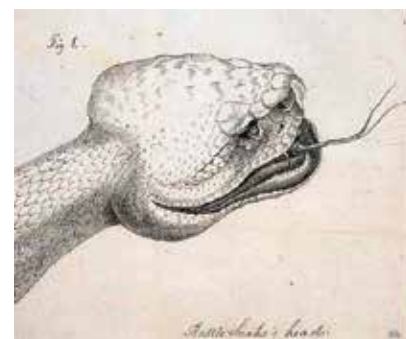
PhD Candidate (ABD), American Studies, Harvard University

My dissertation uncovers the formative role that animals and specimens played in eighteenth-century natural history in the Americas. While previous studies emphasize the human activities of natural history, my project flips the script by making corals, rattlesnakes, fish, and raccoons its protagonists. I applied for the Fothergill Research Award to support several chapters of this dissertation—and in particular my



John Fothergill, 1712–80

chapter on rattlesnakes—that engage with the writings and artworks of William Bartram and the creatures he encountered. Both William and John Bartram deeply engaged with, studied, and cared for rattlesnakes during their lives, providing a key window into affective relationships between these snakes and people. Whereas existing scholarship on rattlesnakes has largely considered their symbolic role in the iconography of Revolutionary America, I argue that uncovering the worlds of the snakes as historical actors reveals a quite different story—one centered on irrevocable loss, and an uneasy coexistence of imagery and experience. I expect the project will contribute to debates on the production of knowledge by examining how naturalists interacted with and were often confounded by the objects of their study.



William Bartram's drawing of a rattlesnake

St. Johns River Bartram Frolic

Join us as we celebrate the St. Johns River and the 244th Anniversary of William Bartram's Travels through Putnam County.

Sept. 29–30, 2018
Downtown Palatka Riverfront

- Historic Seminole, Trader & European Reenactors
- Pride of Palatka Riverboat Tours
- Hiking, Biking & Kayaking
- Art Exhibits
- Artisan Vendors
- Live Music
- Bartram Symposium

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The Bartram Trail Conference, Inc., founded in 1976, has sought to identify and mark Bartram's southern journey and works to promote interest in developing recreational trails and botanical gardens along the route. The BTC also seeks to encourage the study, preservation and interpretation of the William Bartram heritage at both cultural and natural sites in Bartram Trail states.

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Dorinda Dallmeyer (*Newsletter Editor*), Joel Fry, Kathryn Braund,

Matt Jennings

William Bartram landing on the Antarctic continent in January at Argentina's Brown Research Base.



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

Barttram Trail Conference Membership Form

Name: _____ Phone: () _____
Annual Member Dues Please check one.

- ☐ Individual \$25
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Please send payment to:

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c/o Ken & Janice Mahaffey
477 South U.S. Hwy 17
East Palatka, FL 32131-4097

Primary Areas of Interest in the Barttram Trail:(try to be specific about geographic locations and activities, i.e., specific Barttram sites, and whether or not you like to hike, read, garden, etc.)

E-Mail address: _____

Address: _____

Your dues support our newsletter, web site, Fothergill Fellowship Awards and other Barttram Trail Conference projects.

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