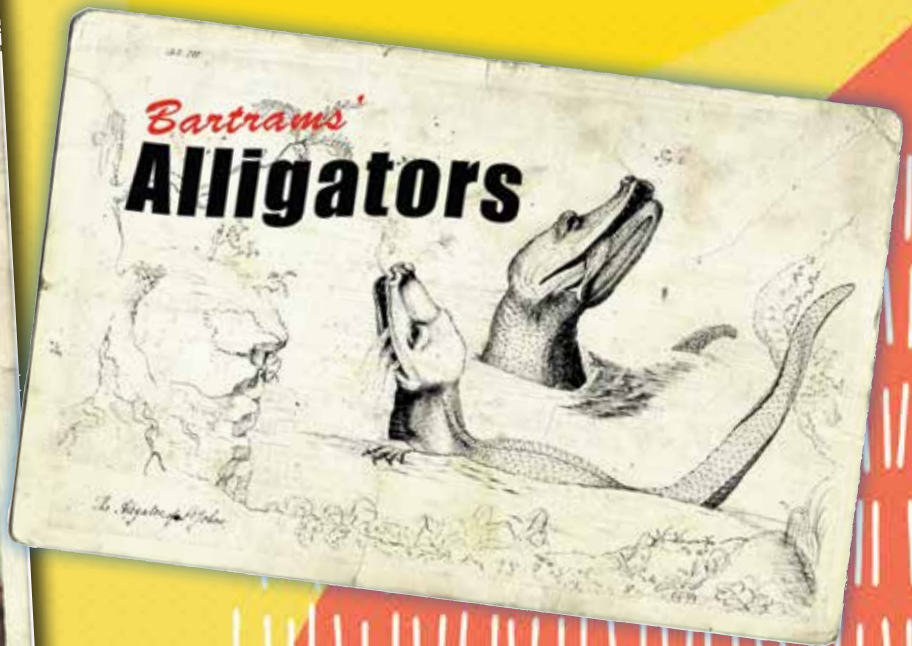


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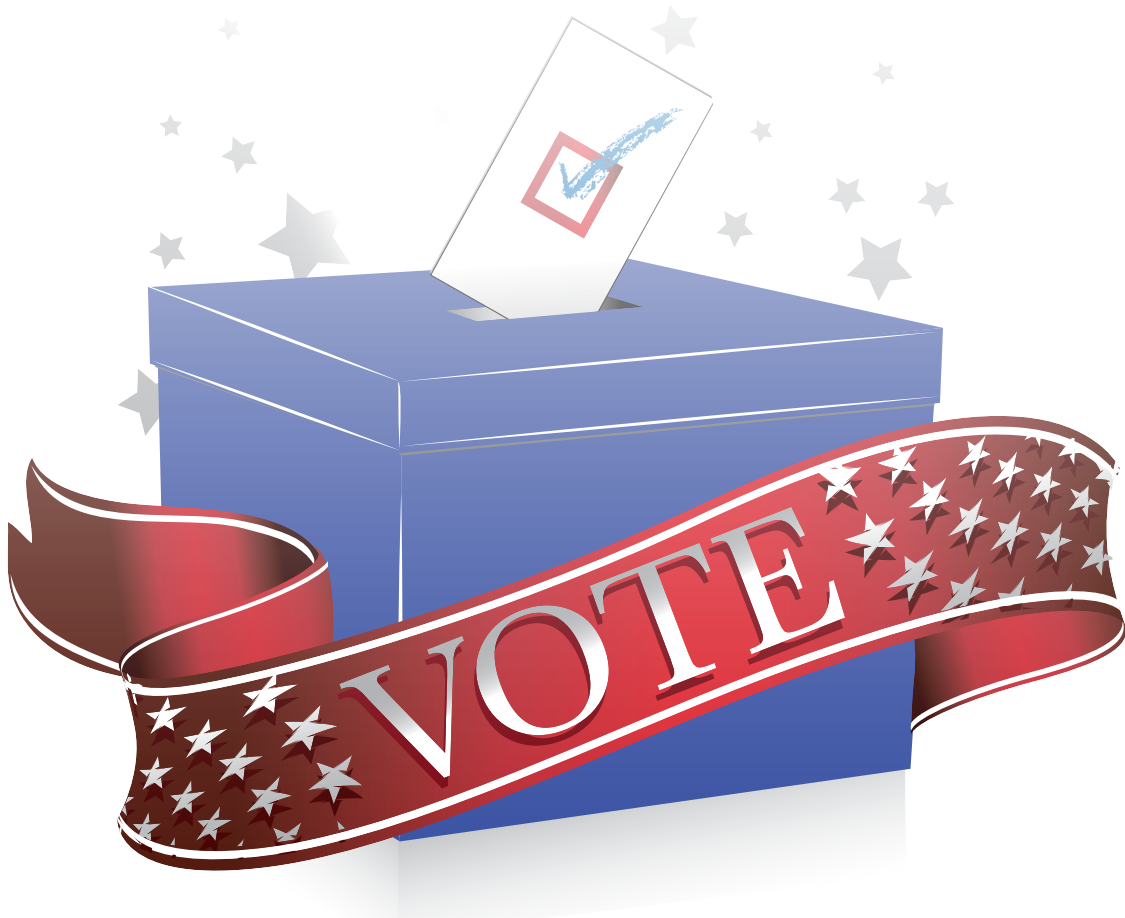
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PALATKA DAILY NEWS

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May the Bartram legacy inspire others to become explorers

Since arriving in Putnam County a little more than three years ago, William "Billy" Bartram was one of the first names I heard. I came in as an outsider – a girl who grew up in St. Augustine learning about the Castillo de San Marcos and the Fountain of Youth.

As local municipalities continue to work to make Putnam County a hub for tourism, I've heard people say Palatka and Putnam County are not St. Augustine or that we don't have the history people want to see.

I'm here to say that's simply not true. Putnam County is an outdoor adventurer's haven and we can thank Billy Bartram and his father, John Bartram.

The Palatka Daily News produced a Bartram's Travels edition of Explore 2014-2015. While it's been done before, Bartram's reach continues to expand and much has changed since then.

I spent all of April learning more about Bartram. I saw the delight on local second graders' faces as they learned from Billy Bartram, Job Wiggins and The Long Warrior at this year's St. Johns River Bartram Frolic in Palatka.

Did the children know the actors portraying the historical figures weren't the real explorers? No. But that's the great thing about a child's mind. I think it allows them to be more immersed in what they're learning. We should never stop learning, even

if the veil of meeting a time-traveling, hundreds-year-old traveler slips off to reveal reality.

When I started working on this year's Explore magazine, I knew I wanted to find out more, as much as possible, about Bartram's travels.

I took a bus tour with many people who weren't from Putnam County but had traveled here just to learn about the Bartram legacy.

Billy Bartram and his father were explorers and their history invites everyone to be explorers, too. So, take a trip with us. Adventure through the pages and step back in time to the 18th century. I hope this publication inspires you to seek out some of these sights in person.

This magazine would not be possible without the help of Sam Carr, Richard Franz, Palmer Kinser, Paul Ackerman, Ken and Janice Mahaffey the Bartram Trail Society of Florida, Palatka Water Works volunteers, the Putnam County School District, former Daily News employee Allison Waters-Merritt who researched the Bartram legacy in 2014 and compiled most of the original research here, the wonderful Daily News team who put this together and many more people who have helped Bartram's history come alive and resonate in Putnam County.

Sarah Cavacini is a reporter at the Palatka Daily News.

She can be reached at scavacini@palatkadailynews.com.

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Board	1st Thursday of Month4:00pm
Community Redevelopment	
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Airport Advisory Board	1st Wednesday of Month..... 12:00noon
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For Agenda Deadlines, Please call 386- 329-0100 for date and time	

Bartram Trail Society of Florida

45 years of preserving Bartrams' history



By Sarah Cavacini

Palatka Daily News

scavacini@palatkadailynews.com

Flipping through the archives of Palatka Daily News records of 1978, two familiar names pop up – John and William Bartram.

On Jan. 12, 1978, “Mrs. Wilkes gave a talk on the ‘Bartram Trail’ and what it would mean to have Palatka state headquarters for the project,” the Daily News reported.

Bartram enthusiasts made an appearance again Jan. 20, 1978, this time on the front page of the Daily News. Our news editor at the time Butch Prevatt wrote about a group of nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts who were “blazing the trail of history.”

The Bartram Trail Society was formed only earlier that month with the goal of retracing John and William Bartram’s steps as part of an inter-state project.

“In all, eight states were

involved in the project with the thrust of the Florida efforts centering in Palatka,” Prevatt reported in 1978.

Sam Carr, the current president of the current Bartram Trail Society of Florida, said he didn’t know a Bartram Trail Society had already been formed decades earlier when he and others re-

They’re Blazing The Trail Of History

In Hopes Of Retracing Bartram’s Steps

By BUTCH PREVATT
News Editor

Nature-lovers and hiking enthusiasts soon may be able to follow in the footsteps of two of history’s best known naturalists—John and William Bartram.

Efforts are under way in Palatka by a fledgling group, the Bartram Trail Society, formed earlier this month, to join an inter-state project with a goal of establishing a footpath along the original trail used by William Bartram. Bartram made extensive journeys in Florida during the 18th century.

In all, eight states were involved in the project with the thrust of the Florida efforts centering in Palatka.

Wynnan Long, 29-year-old Palatka man, who is developing the feasibility report for the establishment of the trail in Florida, says the trail would start at a point near Stokes Landing, southwest of Palatka. It would continue across the county to the Payor’s Prairie wetlands that border Alachua County. Tracing the original Bartram route, the trail would continue toward the Suwannee River at a point about seven miles west of Chiefland.

Although Bartram traveled by water much of the time

during his Florida explorations, he covered much of the then virgin wilderness of the area on foot and by horseback.

The Bartram Trail Conference, the spearheading group over each of the state trail societies, has been allocated \$200,000 by Congress for the study.

If the Bartram Trail is to be included on a national list of scenic trails, Congress would have to approve the plan. The Florida trail is one of more than 20 now being developed across the nation and under consideration for inclusion on the scenic register.

The Bartram Trail Conference is under the auspices of the U.S. Interior Department’s Division of Outdoor Recreation.

In February, the Outdoor Recreation Bureau will send officials to Palatka along with the Bartram Trail Conference leaders for a workshop session on plans.

A date for that meeting has not been set. Long, who now is working on the plan, says it will not be until later this year before the feasibility report is ready.

However, Long says there is interest here in establishing the Bartram pathway even if it is not approved by Congress.

Phoenicia Circle Hears Bartram Talk

Phoenicia Garden Circle met Thursday at the home of Mrs. H. A. Owen. Co-hostesses were Mrs. Charles Meeks and Mrs. S. A. Gordon. Refreshments were served to the 14 members and guests. Mrs. B.A. Wilkes, club president, introduced Mrs. L.J. Herring, who spoke on the “Rewards of Gardening.” Her talk ended with a poem.

Under new business, Mrs. H.W. Palmore, president, spoke about the Garden Club project for Arbor Day, Jan. 26. Each Circle is to donate a flowering tree to be planted at St. Johns River Community College.

Feb. 1 there is to be an all-day flower workshop on “Spice of Life” under the direction of Mrs. Ruth Mullins beginning at 10 a.m. Reservations for lunch and classes must be made by Jan. 25 with Mrs. Dan

Mrs. Wilkes reminded the Circle of the plant sale during the Amelia Festival and of the Jan. 18 horticulture meeting with Kathy Sample as speaker.

Mrs. Roy Germany discussed the making of Mrs. W.W. Carter an honorary member. It was moved and seconded that she become one. Mrs. Germany also brought up the subject of the April trip to Raiford Prison. No plans were made at this time.

Sunshine Chairman Mrs. J. V. Nevels is to send get well cards to Mrs. R.H. Baker and Mrs. A. H. Lassiter.

Hostesses for the February meeting were appointed, Mrs. Lassiter, Mrs. DeVaughn and Mrs. Johns.

After the business meeting, Mrs. Wilkes gave a talk on the “Bartram Trail” and what it would mean to have Palatka, state headquarters for the project.

Excerpts from the Palatka Daily News. Top: Jan. 20, 1978 edition.

To left: Jan. 12, 1978 edition.

Palatka Daily News Archives

continued on page 8



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established the society in 2019.

Present-day members Ken and Janice Mahaffey, however, have been part of the society since its inception in the late 1970s.

"It's our history," Ken Mahaffey said. "It was just meaningful to be able to ... pass this knowledge onto the people coming in behind us because no one knew who William Bartram was."

Ken Mahaffey said he had a business in 1978 where he would take people on tours and out camping, which is where he first connected with the group of people who wanted to preserve Bartram's history.

The Bartram Trail Society lost funding soon after 1978, but the Mahaffeys said they kept the Bartram fire burning.

In 2013, the husband and wife traveled to London's Natural History Museum, where they saw some of William Bartram's drawings. Ken Mahaffey said the museum curator then traveled to Palatka and let him and Janice Mahaffey have copies of the prints.

"That's what regenerated the interest," Ken Mahaffey said. "It was just an exciting time for us."

Some of William Bartram's prints are featured in this magazine and are on bartramtrailsociety.com.

Since 2013, the society's grown

to include more areas of the St. Johns River and extends across numerous Florida counties.

"Anytime you can keep the history of our area alive, it's something interesting for our kids to read," Ken Mahaffey said.

The ball just keeps rolling, he

noted, as the society's work has extended into the local schools and more events.

People who want to get involved with the Bartram Trail Society of Florida can visit bartramtrailsociety.com/membership.

Bartram Trail Society of Florida President Sam Carr (left) explains to visitors about the Bartram Trail's history in Welaka during a bus tour.

- Sarah Cavacini/
Palatka Daily News



Ken Mahaffey, left, and Dean Campbell, right, discuss places to put a marker for Seven Sisters Island as Sam Carr holds the sign.

- Archives/
Palatka Daily News



Dean Campbell drills a hole in a marker as Ken Mahaffey holds the sign steady prior to placement at Satsuma Springs.

- Archives/
Palatka Daily News



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Bartrams' Legacy

By Allison Waters-Merritt
Special to the Palatka Daily News



Painting of William Bartram by
Charles Willson Peale

- Courtesy of Independence National Historical Park.

waiting to settle on this new colony.

In March of 1774, William Bartram returned to East Florida on his own expedition funded by Dr. John Fothergill in return for plant specimens and sketches of birds, fish, flowers and plants as well as his manuscript. "Travels in Georgia and Florida 1773-74: A Report to Dr. John Fothergill," is still utilized to this day by scholars. Most of Bartram's adventures on the St. Johns River documents sights still relatively untouched in Putnam County. The springs, lakes and animals well documented by Bartram still exist in their natural state today, placing Putnam in a unique situation to continue to preserve the beauty Bartram documented so well. Additionally, William added horseback travel to this trip, exploring into west Putnam and further into Alachua County, describing the Alachua savanna, or what is now known as Payne's Prairie. Bartram traveled further north to the Suwannee River, calling it the little St. Johns River. When Bartram left Florida, he continued north with his explorations, not returning home in Pennsylvania until 1777. He transformed his journals into a narrative that was finally published in 1791 under the full title, "Travels Through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulgees,

or Creek Confederacy, and the County of the Chactaws." The book is still in print today.

Both father and son describe the possibilities of the St. Johns River and yet their writing styles were vastly different. John methodically describes the areas as a scientist, while William's passages are more philosophical and romantic in nature in describing the beauty and fierceness of the territory. With his vivid imagery and descriptions, his contact with the Seminoles and traders in the area, most of the stories contained on the following pages are culled from William Bartram's "Travels."

Neither Bartram would return to Florida. In 1776, the upstart colonies would revolt against England, placing Bartram's English benefactors as the enemy. John Bartram would die three years after William's last visit to Florida in 1777. Spain would regain control of Florida from the English as part of the Peace of Paris of 1783 and in 1819, the Adams-Onís treaty would be signed between the United States of America and Spain, giving acquisition of Florida to the U.S.

With William Bartram's book publishing in 1791, some scholars have suggested "Travels" was written for a different audience and that he offered the book as a means of shaping the new country.

In 1765 Pennsylvania Quaker John Bartram with his son William explored East Florida along the St. Johns River. East and West Florida had become British colonies two years prior and little was known about the area. King George III awarded John Bartram a stipend as a royal botanist to explore this uncharted wilderness so that potential investors would have evidence of the quality of water and soil in Britain's newest acquisition. They began their exploration of the St. Johns River on Dec. 19, 1765 for eight weeks of dangerous and exhaustive travel, covering a distance of 500 miles. While John measured and judged the quality of soil and plants in his surroundings, William was free to sketch his observations of plant and animal life. On this trip, the pair stayed mainly to the river, not venturing into the western interior of Florida, as Bartram needed to make his reports back to England, the king and the litany of investors



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An aerial photograph of the St. Johns River in Florida. The river is a vibrant blue, winding through a vast, dense forest of green and brown trees. The forest appears to be a mix of mangroves and other tropical or subtropical vegetation. The river has several bends and inlets, creating a complex pattern. In the lower left, a small bridge or pier extends into the water. The overall scene is serene and natural.

Along the St. Johns River

*"In the month of March 1774, I sat
off from Savanna, for Florida...."*

- William Bartram's "Travels"

Over 200 years ago as he sailed his small boat up the waters of the northward flowing St. Johns River. Bartram would make his way into Putnam County and his adventures would have a cataclysmic effect upon people in Europe who were eager to hear news of the "new" country.

William Bartram was not a stranger to the St. Johns River, having traversed its waterways 9 years prior with his father at the age of 26. The pair had visited East Florida, especially St. Augustine and were on hand at Picolata when the provincial government was negotiating a treaty with the Seminoles.

Upon accepting the task set forth by Dr. John Forthengill, Bartram began making his way from Savannah to Frederica, a fort and settlement on St. Simons Island in March of 1774. Here he met with James Spalding, Esq., a gentleman with extensive trading and connections with various Native American tribes throughout East Florida. Spalding furnished Bartram with letters to his agents at his trading houses on the St. Johns River and invited him to use these outposts as his headquarters.

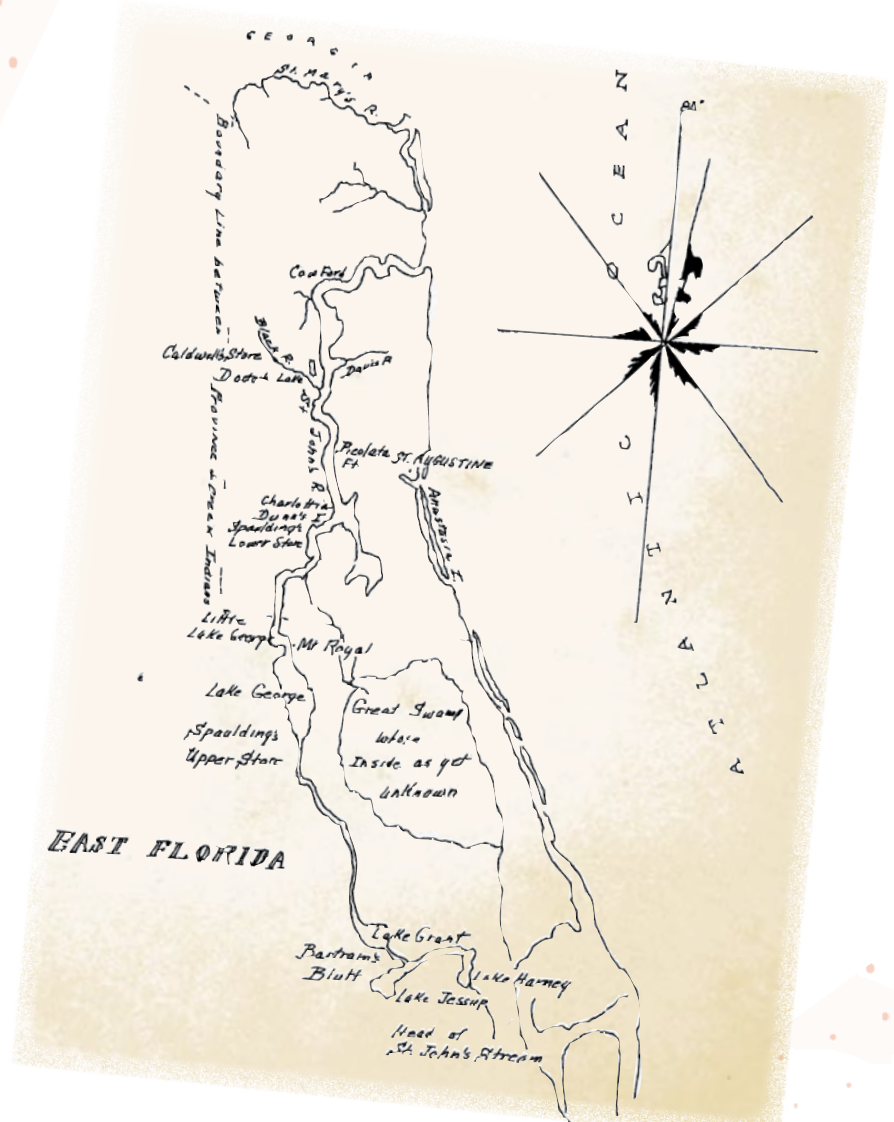
Further along his journey at approximately the site of Amelia Island and the present site of Fernandina, Bartram's boat met with a trading schooner that delivered news of an Indian uprising around St. Augustine and along the St.

Johns River. The trading post in the area was plundered and the traders barely escaped with their lives. Before the plunderers reached Spalding's stores, a runner had warned them and the traders had moved much of the goods into the swamps and hidden them.

Reaching Amelia Island, Bartram spent time at a plantation owned by Lord Egmont who later gave him passage up the St. Johns River as far as Cow-Ford, now known as Jacksonville.

At Cow-Ford, Bartram purchased a little sailboat and set sail along up the river. The time was now mid-April and the breezes were fair and the weather was pleasant. Here he wrote of groves of live oaks and palms and laurel (magnolia). He mentioned orange trees in full bloom that filled the air with their fragrance.

A fierce storm forced Bartram to camp for the night, rigging his sail against the violent winds and torrential rains, near present day Orange Park.



Travels in East Florida (adapted from William De Brahm's Map of the General Survey of East Florida... 1766-1770, in Harper, William Bartram's Travels

-Harper, Travels of Bartram, p.630



Flowering Dogwood *Cornus Florida*

- Courtesy American Philosophical Society, B.S. Dealfield Collection

"The storm came up, with a furious wind and tremendous thunder and lightning, from the opposite N.W. coast, but luckily for me, little rain fell, and I rested very well. But as the wind the next morning blew very fresh, right in upon the shore, there was no possibility of moving, with safety, from my present situation."

However, upon hearing the sound of musket fire, Bartram did leave the confines of his area to explore. There he came upon an Indian carrying a musket and dead turkey in his path surprised him. The Indian was a hunter for the owner of the plantation. Mr. Marshall, the plantation owner sent slaves

to retrieve Bartram's boat and make repairs due to damage from the storm.

When the boat was fixed, Bartram stopped near the present site of Switzerland, in St. Johns County, the following evening and then the next morning covered the 12 miles to the site of the old fort in Picolata where previously Bartram and his father had witnessed treaties between the Indians and the British. The old fort was dismantled and the walls made of coquina were carried away and used in other buildings.

Leaving Picolata, Bartram proceeded up the river and observed vast numbers of small flying insects emerging from the shallow water.

"Solemnly and slowly move onward, to the river's shore, the rustling clouds of the Ephemera. How awful the procession! Innumerable millions of winged beings, voluntarily verging on to destruction, to the brink of the grave, where they behold bands of their enemies with wide open jaws, ready to receive them."

He recorded that many of these immediately took flight while myriads of others crept up the grass and herbage where they waited to either

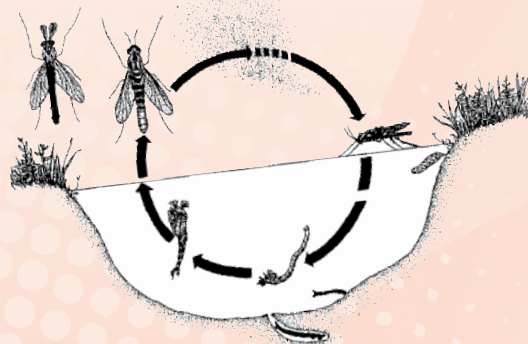
dry or gain strength before flying away. This phenomenon began early in the morning and ceased shortly after sunup. He reported that again in the evening they returned in clouds of millions to descend upon the water surface to lay their eggs, which sank to the bottom, then to be buried in the cozy mud.

Bartram concluded that the eggs would hatch again the following spring. He called them the genus Ephemera. They probably were what later would be known as "blind mosquitos," a genus of the midge family and that one could imagine these creatures being

After pondering the plight of

"created merely for the food of fish and other animals."

the Ephemera, Bartram slept and upon rising in the morning began his journey towards what is now Palatka.



Life Cycle of Aquatic Midges (Blind Mosquitoes) Clockwise from mid right: egg mass, larva, pupa, adults - male left, female right

- Courtesy University of Florida IFAS Extension

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Bartram Arrives in Putnam



By Allison Waters-Merritt
Special to the Palatka Daily News

Alligator, *Alligator mississippiensis* - Courtesy Natural History Museum, London

Sailing across the west shore of the St. Johns River, in the little boat that had brought him from Cow-Ford (present day Jacksonville), he doubled around a point of land and suddenly came upon an Indian settlement in what is now Palatka.

"It was a fine situation, the bank rising gradually from the water. There were eight or ten habitations, in a row; or street, fronting the water, and about fifty yards distance from it. Some of the youth were naked, up to their hips in the water, fishing with rods and lines; whilst others, younger, were diverting themselves in shooting frogs with

bows and arrows. On my near approach, the little children took to their heels, and ran to some women who were hoeing corn; but the stouter youth stood their ground, and, smiling called to me."

Bartram also noted elderly people reclined on skins on the ground underneath the oaks and palm trees and a carefully pruned orange grove at the upper end of the village. Land was also cleared for farming with a variety of plants including corn, beans, squashes, melons and tobacco for the village.

Bartram would return a few months later, just prior to leaving Florida, for a watermelon and orange festival.

"Mr. McLatche invited me with him on a visit to an Indian town, about twelve miles distance from the trading-house, to regale ourselves at a feast of Water Melons and Oranges, the Indians having brought a canoe load of them to the trading-house the day preceding, which they disposed of to the traders."

Traveling on horseback, Bartram soon discovered the Indian village was familiar.

"About noon we arrived at the town, the same little village I passed by on my ascent of the river, on the banks of the little lake below Charlottia."

continued on page 18

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Charlotia (Rollestown)

Denys Rolle established Rollestown on a high bank east of the river in what is now part of East Palatka. The town was originally called Charlotia, after Queen Charlotte. The settlement was intended as a utopian agricultural community for the poor in a land of peace and plenty. In 1765 John Bartram and William Bartram visited the site and in 1774 William returned to the location.

Rolle owned approximately 78,000 acres at this location through purchases and grants from 1765 through 1784 extending from Federal Point to Dunns Creek. The areas of East Palatka, Hastings, Spuds and San Mateo in addition to the farm lands surrounding these areas occupy only portions of the conglomerate owned by Denys Rolle.

continued on page 20

CHARLOTIA

Upon passing the Indian village the first time as he made his way along the St. Johns River, Bartram headed toward what is now known as East Palatka and San Mateo.

"The river gradually narrowing, I came in sight of Charlotia, where it not above half a mile wide, but deep; and as there was a considerable current against me, I came here to an anchor. This town was founded by Den. Rolle, esq. and is situated on a high bluff, on the east coast, fifteen or twenty feet perpendicular from the river, and is in length half a mile, or more, upon its banks."

Also known as Rollestown, Charlotia was located at the site of the Florida Power and Light power plant in East Palatka. As Bartram would explain, Rolle obtained 40,000 acres of land from the crown in any part of East Florida he chose. Rolle originally planned to locate elsewhere when he set out from England with 100 families. However, with unfavorable weather and wind, the party missed their destination and upon viewing the area with its rich soil and its vicinity to St. Augustine, the seat of government at the time, settled upon this location for



his colony.

Despite the allure of potential prosperity for Charlotia, the colonists quickly fell upon hard times at the site.

"But it seems, from an ill concerted plan in its infant establishment, negligence, or extreme parsimony in sending proper recruits and other necessities together with a bad choice of citizens, the settlement by decrees grew weaker, and at length totally fell to the ground. Those of them who escape the contagious fevers, fled the dreaded place, betaking themselves for subsistence to the more fruitful and populous regions of Georgia and Carolina."

While the buildings themselves were "mouldering to earth," Bartram did find a mansion house of cypress wood being maintained by the overseer and his family and also a blacksmith shop with his family.

Rolle's grant of land extended to

what he called Dunn's Lake and along a little river connecting it to the St. Johns. The present name of the lake is Crescent Lake but the little river is still referred to as Dunns Creek.

Opposite of Charlotia, on the



west shore of the river, Bartram noted large swamps of excellent rice land and a previous Indian settlement.

"The aborigines of America had a very great town in this place, as appears from the great tumuli, and conical mounts of earth and shells, and other traces of a settlement which yet remain."

Close to Spalding's lower store, where Bartram had made arrangements for his items to be stored, he received directions to the location at present day Stokes Landing.

"Having obtained from the people here directions for discovering the little remote island where the traders and their goods were secreted, which was about seven miles higher up,

I sat sail again, with a fair wind, and in about one hour and an half arrived at the desired place, having fortunately taken the right channel of the river, amongst a multitude of others, occasioned by a number of low swampy islands."

Upon arriving at Spalding's lower store, Bartram took the opportunity for a few days of rest before sailing up the river in mid-May.

American Lotus *Nelumbo lutea* •
Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* -
Courtesy Natural History Museum, London



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Despite acquiring these vast tracts of land for a large settlement, most of the indentured people from England he sent to Rollestown absconded soon after reaching Charleston, St. Augustine and Savannah. Rolle's settlers were indentured servants from the streets of London who were primarily vagrants, beggars, debtors and prostitutes, who knew nothing about farming. He persistently invested in his plantation, sending supplies and on three occasions bringing more than 200-white indentured laborers in crossings across the Atlantic.

During his time in East Florida, Rolle and his wife lived in St. Augustine and despite his misfortunes in Florida, his rental income in England kept him a wealthy man, enough for him to continue to try to populate Rollestown, which was turning into an entertaining spectacle for those living in St. Augustine.

In 1769, Governor John Grant noted a vessel carrying "eighty useless and expensive settlers" had arrived for the settlement. However, Rolle himself was not on board, having been left behind by the ship's captain due to dispute.

Additionally, Rolle imported a herd of more than 1,000 head of cattle from Georgia, until, Rolle claimed, a dishonest overseer sold off the herd and pocketed the proceeds. However, another accounting states that the manager William Collins, sold the cattle, crop of corn and indigo, cattle, sheep and horses to clear Rolle's debts accrued from running the estate. Rolle ordered a second



Sarah Cavacini / Palatka Daily News

This marker in East Palatka reminds Bartram Trail visitors of the historical Rollestown, a colony of English philanthropist Denys Rolle that was founded in 1767.

shipment of cattle from Georgia, but misfortune would strike again and the animals were killed by vagrants and refugees before arriving.

Upon William Bartram's second visit to Rollestown in 1774, the settlement was deserted again except for the overseer, his family, the blacksmith and his family.

Rolle would make another attempt in 1779 and returned with 150 African slaves and new overseers, finally recognizing his attempts with the indentured servants were doomed to failure. Rolle would purchase another 50 slaves and yet only a tiny percentage of his property was developed.

Despite the setbacks, Rolle continued to purchase property until Florida changed hands back to the Spanish and in 1784, Rolle ordered the evacuation of his slaves to a 2,000 acre estate in Great Exuma in the Bahama Islands, eliminating his dreams of a vast settlement in East Florida.



Rose Mallow - Hibiscus Coccineus

- Courtesy Private Collection/ Ron White, photographer

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The prayer at Mount Royal

By Sarah Cavacini
Palatka Daily News
scavacini@palatkadailynews.com



Sarah Cavacini / Palatka Daily News

The replica of what some Bartram historians call the most significant artifact found at Mount Royal. This is a medallion of Spanish origin, historians confirmed.

As seen in previous passages, William Bartram is a man of poetry. His intense passion for nature and all the beauty it beholds can be heard as he stands atop Mount Royal's Indian burial mound. Here, he prays:

"YE vigilant and faithful servants of the Most High! ye who worship the Creator, morning, noon and eve, in the simplicity of heart; I haste to join the universal anthem. My heart and voice unite with yours, in sincere homage to the great Creator, the universal sovereign.

O MAY I be permitted to approach the throne of mercy! may these my humble and penitent supplications, amidst the universal shouts of homage, from the creatures, meet with thy acceptance.

AND although, I am sensible, that my service, cannot encrease,

continued on page 26

Sacred Burial Ground at Mount Royal

By Allison Waters-Merritt
Special to the Palatka Daily News

At about fifty yards from the landing place, stands a magnificent Indian mound. About fifteen years ago I visited this place, at which time there were no settlements of white people, but all appeared wild and savage; yet in that uncultivated state it possessed an almost inexpressible air of grandeur, which is now entirely changed.

Bartram reminisced of the scene that he saw with his father less than a decade earlier, now completely erased by farming.

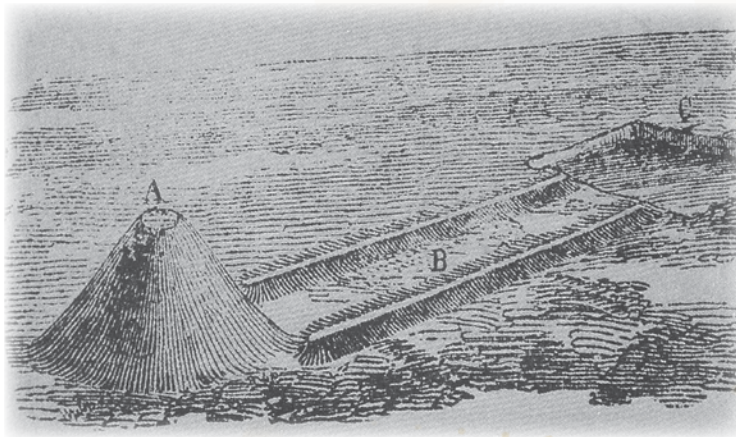
"But what greatly contributed towards completing the magnificence of the scene, was a noble Indian highway, which led from the great mound, on a straight line, three quarters of a mile, first through a point or wing

of the orange grove, and continuing thence through an awful forest of live oaks, it was terminated by palms and laurel magnolias, on the verge of an oblong artificial lake, which was on the edge of an extensive green level savanna."

In these passages above, William Bartram is describing the area around Mount Royal, located in South Putnam. Just north of Fruitland on the St. Johns River, Mount Royal is significant for its early Indian history. However, years later upon his return to the area the forest had been replaced with crops that lay abandoned.

"But that venerable grove is now no more. All has been cleared away and planted with indigo, corn and cotton, but since deserted: there was not scarcely five acres of ground under fence. It appeared like a desert to a great extent, and terminated, on the land site, but frightful thickets, and open pine forests.

It appears, however, that the late proprietor had some taste as he has preserved



William Bartram drawing of Mount Royal courtesy of bartram.putnam-fl.com

the mound and this little adjoining grove inviolate. The prospect from his station is so happily situated by nature, as to comprise at one view the whole of the sublime and pleasing."

In the 1890's archeologist and writer Clarence Bloomfield "C.B." Moore excavated the site, finding human burials with hammered and embossed sheet copper ornaments, polished stone tools, and pearl and shell beads. After removing about two-thirds of the structure, Moore rebuilt the site. While his methods are considered barbaric by today's standards of archeology, ripping pieces from the ground with no grid mapping of the site or field drawings of the excavation, Moore's findings were documented and preserved,

rather than succumbing to looters and treasure seekers.

The Indian burial mound at Mount Royal was again rediscovered in the 1940s when workmen were digging a foundation for some construction work. A number of skeletons were unearthed and the work was abandoned rather than disturb the burial site. Mount Royal is now registered in the National Archives as a national historical place.

From the time Bartram saw the site until its registry on the National Archives, the mound was used for road building material and had been the victim of others after Moore who removed artifacts that are lost to private



Sarah Cavacini/Palatka Daily News

Local Quaker Pete Ackerman reads William Bartram's Prayer at Mount Royal on top of the Native American Burial Mound to a group of Bartram Trail tourists.

collections or destroyed.

The artificial lake described by Bartram is believed by some to be

continued on page 26

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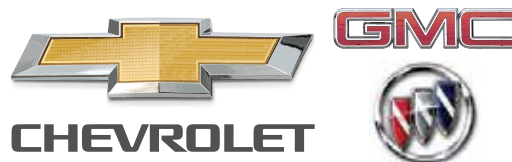


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or diminish thy glory, yet it is pleasing to thy servant, to be permitted to sound thy praise; for O sovereign Lord! we know that thou alone art perfect, and worthy to be worshiped. O universal Father! look down upon us we beseech thee, with an eye of pity and compassion, and grant that universal peace and love, may prevail in the earth, even that divine harmony, which fills the heavens, thy glorious habitation.

AND O sovereign Lord! since it has pleased thee to endue man with power, and pre-eminence, here on earth, and establish his dominion over all creatures, may we look up to thee, that our understanding may be so illuminated with wisdom and our hearts warmed and animated, with a due sense of charity, that we may be enabled to do thy will, and perform our duty towards those submitted to our service, and protection, and be merciful to them even as we hope for mercy.

THUS may we be worthy of the dignity, and superiority of the high, and distinguished station, in which thou hast placed us here on earth."

The prayer was the inspiration for the 2020 documentary "Cultivating the Wild," according to Bartram Trail Society of Florida President Sam Carr. The film, which can be watched on pbs.org/video/cultivating-the-wild-arsdvf, details the legacy of William Bartram and features Jim Sawgrass, who plays The Long Warrior during local Bartram events.



Mount Royal continued from page 23

a pond in the Welaka State Forest area not far from the Indian mound and now has a sign with the name, "Indian Pond."

With the morning sun, William Bartram set his craft toward Big Lake George, about a mile away from Drayton and Hog Islands.

Now as we approach the capes, behold the little ocean of Lake George, the distant circular coast gradually rising to view, from his misty fringed horizon. I cannot entirely suppress my apprehensions of danger. My vessel at once diminished to a nut-shell on the swelling seas, and at the distance of a few miles, must appear to the surprised observer as some aquatic animal, at intervals

emerging from its surface. This lake is a large and beautiful piece of water..."

Strong winds caused him to seek shelter on Drayton Island where he spent the day and night. While he found no recent habitations at the site, he did find earthenware, animal bones and shells that were evidence the Indians had used the island extensively. After exploring, Bartram returned to the supply ship, where his companions in the supply boat were fishing. The next morning the group arose and headed toward Spalding's Upper Store, located approximately five miles up the St. Johns River where it empties into Big Lake George at the present site of Astor. After travelling into what is now Volusia County, Bartram would make his way back to Spalding's Lower Store at Stokes Landing.



Visitors stand at the base of the Mount Royal Site to learn more about the Native American burial ground that William Bartram wrote about in his book, "Travels."

Sarah Cavacini/Palatka Daily News



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Base camp for his collections

Spalding's Lower Store

By Allison Waters-Merritt
Special to the Palatka Daily News



Spalding's Lower Store - Courtesy bartram.putnam-fl.com

Spalding's Lower Store managed by Charles McClatchie is not only the most prominent site in Putnam County for William Bartram's travels, it is probably the most important site on the St. Johns River. The location allowed Bartram to store his collections and operated as a base for him to return to as he ventured throughout East Florida.

However, when Bartram and his father John, first visited the area in 1765, Spalding's Lower store, it appears that they spent little time surveying the area as little mention of soil characteristics or vegetation around the store is made on this visit. When William Bartram returned to the site almost a decade later, it would be a hub of commerce and travel for Europeans and Native Americans. It would also serve as a location for a few of Bartram's more entertaining situations.

After travelling to present-day Volusia County, Bartram returned to Spalding's Lower Store. There he rested and on horseback travelled through West Putnam and into Alachua County to see the Alachua savanna, now known as Paynes' Prairie. After one of Bartram's trips to Mount Royal to procure more

specimens and seeds, he returned to find a large group of Indians at Spalding's Lower Store.

"They had just arrived here from St. Augustine, where they had been with a large troop of horses for sale, and furnished themselves with a very liberal supply of spirituous liquors, about twenty kegs, each containing five gallons."

Bartram noted that not a drop had been touched on the journey, until the group came upon the young traders and pack-horse men at the store.

"...they were prevailed on to broach their beloved nectar; which in the end caused some disturbance, and the consumption of most of their liquor; for after they had once got a smack of it, they never were sober for ten days, and by that time there was but little left."

The group did eventually sober up. However, before leaving, Bartram was called upon to help in another matter between the Indians and a rattlesnake that had ventured into their camp. Here Bartram mentions the name by which the Indians call him – Puc Puggy, which translates to "flower hunter."

"I stepped to the door opening to the piazza, where I met my friend the old interpreter, who informed me that there was a very large rattle snake in the Indian camp, which had taken possession of it, having driven the men, women and children out, and he heard them saying that they would send for Puc-Puggy (for that was the name which they had given me, signifying the Flower Hunter) to kill him or take him out of their camp."

Despite his wishes to not have anything to do with the snake, and an attempt to sneak out of sight by a back door, a party of three Indians



Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake

Crotalus adamanteus - Courtesy Natural History Museum, London

Timber Rattlesnake *Crotalus horridus*

- Courtesy Private Collection Ron White, photographer.

found Bartram and compelled him to dispatch the snake.

I desired them to excuse me at this time; they pleaded and entreated me to go with them, in order to free them from a great rattle snake which had entered their camp; that none of them had freedom or courage to expel him; and understanding that it was my pleasure to collect all their animals and other natural productions of their land, desired that I would come with them and take him away, that I was welcome to him."

Bartram managed to kill the snake and before he could retire, another commotion outside got his attention.

"I had not been long retired to my apartment, before I was again roused from it by a tumult in the yard; and hearing Puc-Puggy called on, I started up, when instantly the old interpreter met me again, and told me the Indians were approaching in order to scratch me. I asked him for what? He answered for killing the rattle snake within their camp."

According to Bartram, the purpose of "scratching" him was to make him more tame and mild and that he was "too heroic and violent" and needed to lose some blood.

Coming to his rescue was an Indian prince who proclaimed Bartram a brave warrior and friend, to

continued on page 30



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which the group then backed off, proclaiming Puc-Puggy as their friend.

"Thus it seemed that the whole was a ludicrous farce to satisfy their people and appease the manes of the dead rattle snake."

However, this would not be the end of Bartram's adventures at the trading post. Shortly after the watermelon and orange feast at the Indian village, Bartram again regaled readers of his daring deeds, this time involving a herd of horses. Travelling to Seven Sisters Island.

"...I crossed the river with a gang of our people, who were transporting a party of horses to range in the meadows and plains on the side opposite to the trading-house: we carried them over in a large flat or scow."

Bartram explains that the horses were not well trained and became impatient on the boat. Finally the horses broke free and jumped into the river to swim to land.

"...most of them plunged into the river and forced over board one of our people. I being a pretty good swimmer, in the midst

of the bustle, and to avoid being beat over and perhaps wounded, leapt out and caught hold of the dock of one of the horses. We all landed safe on one of the islands, about one hundred and fifty yards distance, and the flat followed us. After a deal of trouble and loss of time, we got the horses again into the scow, where securing them by withs and vines, we again sat off, and soon landed safe on the main, at a high bluff or bank of the river, where, after turning the horses to pasture, and resting ourselves, we sat off on a visit to a plantation on the river, six or eight miles distance."

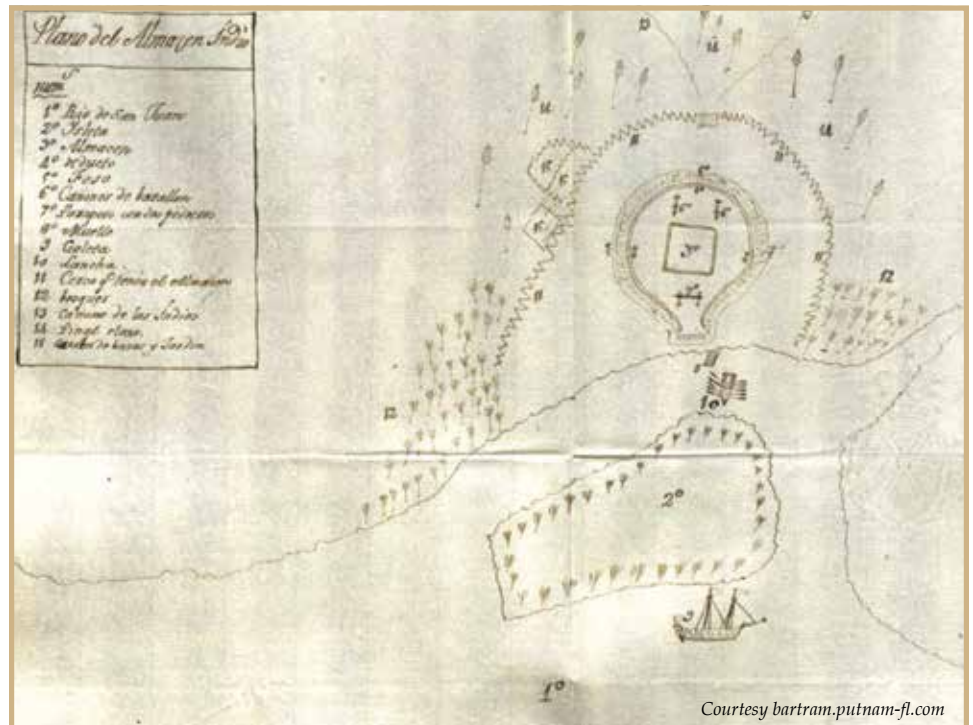
Upon returning to the trading house, Bartram would find the ship loaded and ready to depart, and with his possessions on board he would take leave of Charles McClatchie, Spalding's

lower store, Putnam County and Florida with a journal that would ignite the imaginations of those in Europe of Florida's beauty and bounty.



Courtesy of the University of South Florida

Cowboy is depicted traveling on cracker horse through swamp in South Central states during a later era.



Courtesy bartram.putnam-fl.com

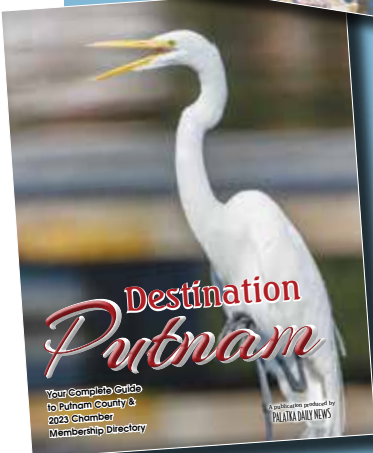
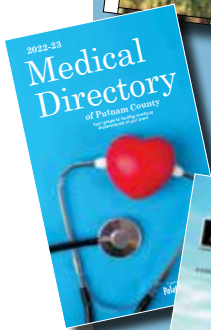
Left: Mico Chlucco the Long Warrior, or King of the Seminoles; Top Right: Sunset overlooking Seven Sisters Island; Above: Spanish map of Stokeslanding .

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Warmouth (Great Yellow Bream) *Chaenobryttus coronarius* - Courtesy Natural History Museum, London

Sites explored beyond the St. Johns River Springs of South Putnam

By Allison Waters-Merritt
Special to the Palatka Daily News

When John and William Bartram traveled the St. Johns River in 1765, John took particular notice of several springs in Putnam County that William either did not revisit on his journey almost a decade later, or chose to re-write about these previous journal entries from his father. As previously mentioned, John's meticulous details and practical observations were to give investors details in encouraging the settlement of East Florida. John Bartram's details have helped scholars, researchers and history enthusiasts relocate some of the harder-to-find springs he mentioned in his travels including

Satsuma Springs, Welaka Springs, Nashua Spring and Beecher Spring.

On December 27, 1765, the Bartrams left Spalding's Lower Store area and traveled approximately five miles before landing at their first destination.

"Thermometer, 50, fine morning. Set out from the Store, and about 5 miles above, landed on a high bluff, on the east-side of the river, at Johnson's Spring, a run of clear and sweet water, then travelled on foot along thick woody, but loamy ground, looking rich on the surface by reason of the continual falling leaves, and by the constant evergreen shade rotting to soil, as the sun never shines on the ground strong enough to exhale their virtue before their dissolution, as under deciduous trees: We crossed several small rivulets of clear sweet water, and as many narrow moist swamps."

From there, the group found what is believed to be Satsuma Springs. One of the benefits of having John note the springs is that they are still relatively unchanged now as to when he saw them, making them good landmarks for reference when correctly identified from the various springs in the area.

"We came down a steep hill 20 foot high and about 4 or 500 yards from the river, under the foot of which issued out a large fountain (big enough to turn a mill) of warm clear water of a very offensive taste, and smelt like bilge-water, or the washings of a gun-barrel; the sediment that adhered to the trees fallen therein looked of a pale white or bluish cast, like milk and water mixed..."

Satsuma Springs is one spring that today still matches the description John Bartram wrote. The high sulfate concentration

results in the strong odor described by John and the sulfate levels cause the growth of

continued on page 33



Sarah Cavacini / Palatka Daily News

Archives / Palatka Daily News

The Satsuma Springs are on private land in Welaka and were part of William Bartram's travels through Putnam County. Despite the sulfur smell that lingers around Satsuma Springs, two curious poodles venture toward the springs looking for a drink of water.

sulfur bacteria, which grow on the surface, causing the
"pale white or bluish cast."

Today, Satsuma Springs is located on private property and the river can only access the shoreline leading to the spring. At the head, the spring is just as Bartram described, though it is now bordered on one side by a short sandbag wall that protects the spring from runoff from the steep bluff surrounding the spring.

After leaving Satsuma Spring, the party continued their journey south to Nashua Spring.

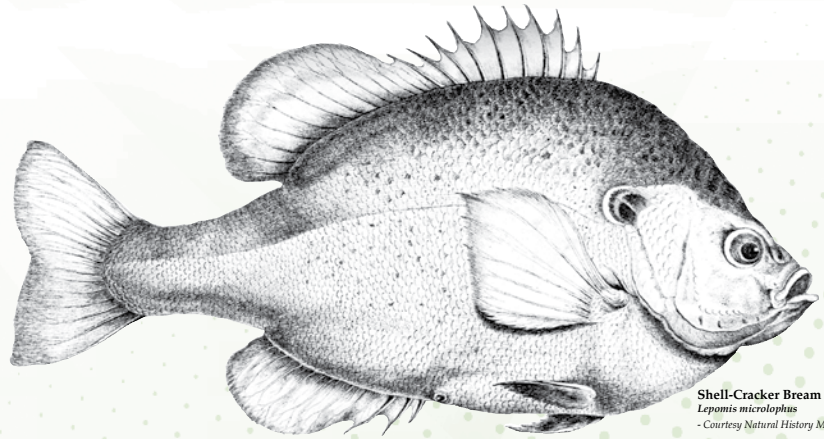
"We crossed the swamp, and ascended and descended two hills and narrow swamps more; at the foot of the last issued out another warm spring of clear water like the other, but not so large."

This site is also located on private property and the discharge from the spring is quite small so the run from the spring to the river is difficult to see.

The group then proceeded to Welaka Springs as noted in John's Journal.

"Then travelling alternately over hills and swamps, in all about 3 or 4 miles, came to a great cover, near a quarter of

a mile from the river, out of the head of which arose a prodigious large fountain of clear water of loathsome taste, like the other two before mentioned, it directly formed a large deep creek 40 or 50 yards wide to the river, and deep enough for a large boat to swim loaded to its head, which boils up near 8 foot deep from under shelly rocks; 'tis full of large fish, as cats, garr, mullets and several other kinds, and plenty of alligators."



Shell-Cracker Bream
Lepomis microlophus
- Courtesy Natural History Museum, London



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Springs of South Putnam

continued from page 33

The spring to this day does continue to boil from a depth of eight feet and a variety of fish, alligators and manatees can be seen in the area. The river water often obscures the spring and can sometimes only be detected by the mild surface boil above the spring discharge. The spring is only accessible from the water and is surrounded by private property.

The next day, on December 28, 1765, the group continued up the St. Johns to Mount Hope, an Indian mound approximately 2.85 miles from Welaka Springs and Mount Royal, another Indian mound that William would revisit in his later travels and still exists today.

John Bartram's journal says very little about Beecher Springs.

"Landed at Mount-Royal, where there are 50 acres of cleared old fields, fine oranges in the woods and a fine spring issuing out above a mile from the river, making a stream big enough to turn a mill..."

The spring underwent massive changes with the creation of the Welaka National Fish Hatchery as part of a Federal Works Project during the Great Depression. And its upper reach has been drastically altered by the construction of the fish ponds. The flow from the spring is used to fill the ponds which then discharge back into the spring run which meanders through woodlands to the St. Johns River near the Mount Royal Airpark's boat ramp. Beecher Spring is



Welaka Spring - Courtesy of St. Johns River Water Management



Beecher Spring - Archives Palatka Daily News

on land owned by the Welaka National Fish Hatchery and is not accessible to the public.

John and his son William would continue to explore Putnam County along the river for his journal before heading back to the family farm in Pennsylvania. John's journal is important in providing investors valuable information to settle into East Florida. The springs are just a few of the sites that John Bartram described in his journals, but they are in some regards the best

landmarks for researchers to work with in that for the most part the topography has not changed in the last 200 years.

Bartram's Springs

Blue Springs

Salt Springs (Johnson & William Spring)

Silver Glenn Spring

Satsuma Springs

Saratoga Harbor (Johnson Spring)

Nashua Spring

Welaka Spring

Beecher Spring

(Note no mention of the Ocklawaha River in either publication)

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TORTOISES AND TRAILS

Water Works: Preserving the past, while protecting the future



Sarah Cavacini/Palatka Daily News

Visitors stand at the base of the Mount Royal Site to learn more about the Native American burial ground that William Bartram wrote about in his book, "Travels."

By Sarah Cavacini

Palatka Daily News

scavacini@palatkadailynews.com

Tucked on Whitewater Drive in Palatka, a hub of history awaits environmental explorers.

William Bartram's "Travels on the St. Johns River" – the book he and his father, John Bartram – doesn't directly mention the site that's now Water Works Environmental Education Center, but historians say the father-and-son duo could have visited the land during their trip in 1765.

Water Works is open for tours by request from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. each Wednesday and the first Sunday of every month, according to the Bartram Trail Society website. The 9-acre education center features a community garden, a historic building that dates back to the late 1800s and plenty of resources to help people learn about Bartram and his travels.

The Puc-Puggy Trail

Walk along the Puc-Puggy Trail to get a little taste of old Florida's trails. This path pays tribute to William Bartram, who received the name "Puc-Puggy" from the Native Americans he met in Palatka.

"Puc-Puggy" means "flower hunter," said Sam Carr, president of the Bartram Trail Society of Florida. When Bartram explored Paynes Prairie in Micanopy, the Native Americans liked Bartram and gave him the name, Carr said.

"He wasn't here for their women. He wasn't here for their horses. He wasn't here for their land. None of that," the society president told a group of people during a bus tour in April. "He wanted to observe the way they live and to document it ... for them to give him an Indian name, means they considered him part of the family."

While some of the vegetation on the trail has been growing for only



60 to 80 years because trees had been removed in past years, Water Works volunteer Palmer Kinser said a lot of the natural vegetation has returned.

People who might not have time to travel down to Welaka to see the Mount Royal site can still learn about it on the Puc-Puggy Trail. The site, which was an Indian burial mound, is memorialized with a kiosk about Mount Royal along the trail.

Benches along the Puc-Puggy trail invite travelers to stop and reflect on life in the peace and quiet of nature.

Reflection is something William Bartram did while writing "Travels." Take his time on Mount Royal for example.

"At the reanimating appearance of the rising sun, nature again revives; and I obey the cheerful (sic) summons of the gentle monitors of the meads and groves," Bartram wrote.

Gopher tortoises

Stay on the Puc-Puggy path to learn about gopher tortoises, which William Bartram wrote about during his visit. Water Works houses four gopher tortoises on-site and volunteers have created a special sandhill environment to keep them protected.

William Bartram, according to the society, was the first naturalist to describe “the great land tortoise” during a trip to Florida in the spring of 1774.

The gopher tortoise is listed as a threatened species in Florida, according to the state Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The species’ numbers plummeted because people like to build on uplands, where sandhills are, and because of the misconceptions that cattle and horses on farmlands

might fall into the tortoise burrows, Water Works volunteer Richard Franz said.

“I’ve been (studying) gopher tortoises since 1973 and I’ve never had anybody show me where that is that kind of issue,” he said in April.

Franz is also an emeritus scientist at the Florida Museum of Natural History and helped edit the 2017 publication of John and William Bartram’s “Travels.”

William Bartram does not describe tortoises on his trip through Palatka, but he did when he passed through sandhills in what is now Alachua County, Franz said.

Still, the education center protects these threatened animals, considered a keystone species because they can share their burrows with up to 150 species,



Gopher Tortoise - Archives Palatka Daily News

Franz said. Their shelters protect animals from fires, extreme heat and humidity and predators.

To learn more about gopher tortoises, visit myfwc.com.





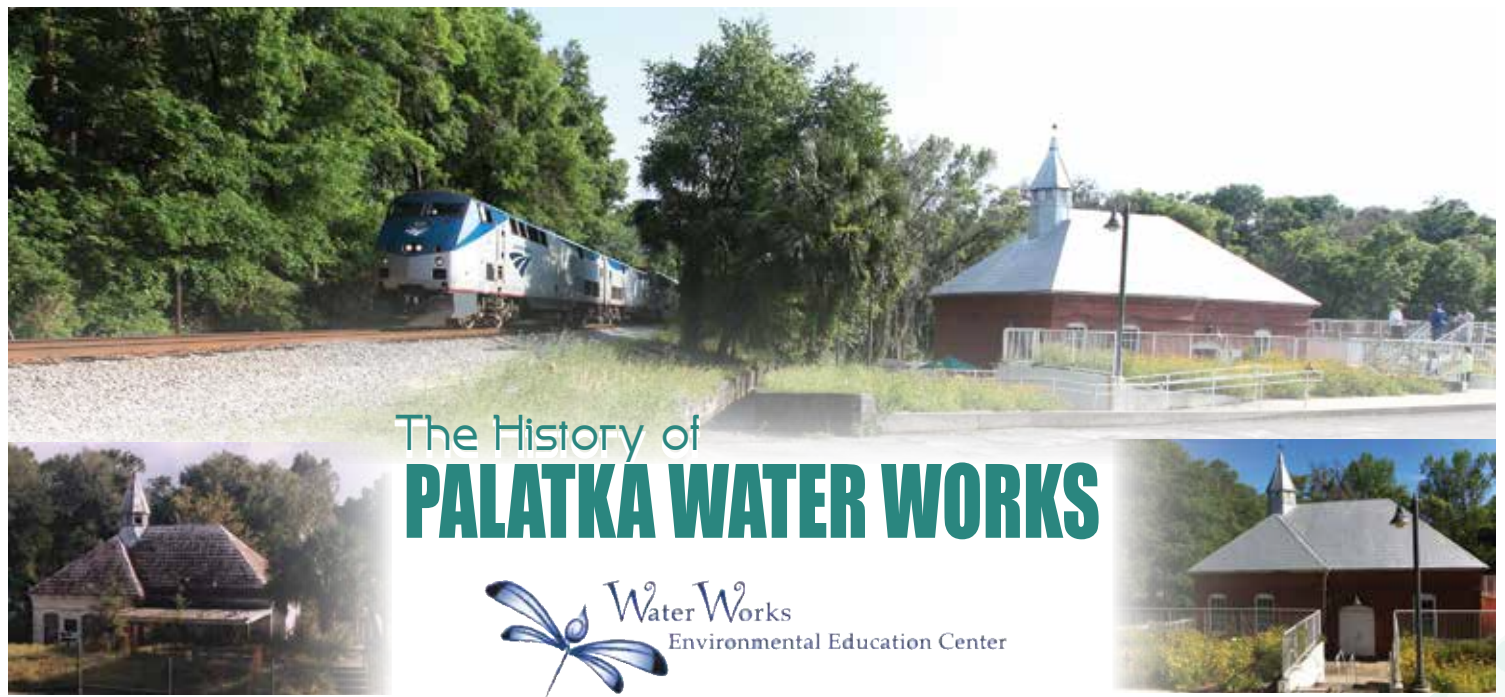


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The History of **PALATKA WATER WORKS**



In 1997 the City of Palatka had a study performed on the decaying brick structure that housed the century old Palatka Water Works. The findings of that study would lead to the preservation of the building and the re-opening of the buildings and grounds as a historical and educational site.

The grounds of the Palatka Water Works (now known as the Water Works Environmental Education Center) have a rich history, starting as a site for year-round semi-nomadic groups. While the archeological study of the area was performed in 1997 suggested a settlement did not exist on the grounds, evidence did prove that Native Americans used the area. In 1936 the Federal Writers Program wrote about the springs and the Water Works area:

“Where the pumping station is now, an Indian trail crossed the stream there. Before the stream was commercialized there was a very beautiful pool at that spot with silver white sand and water as clear as air. It was a famous place

to go for a swim. The Indian name for this stream... meant ‘white water’.”

On his travels through Florida, and with the proximity of the Water Works property to Spalding’s Lower Store and the Indian settlement in Palatka, it is assumed that William Bartram would have made his way past this area, but there is no documentation of an actual visit. Despite this, neighboring Ravine Gardens State Park has a marker and is listed as a site on the Bartram Trail. The current nature trail at the Palatka Water Works is designated by Bartram’s Indian name, Puc-Puggy, or Flower Hunter.

The 1800’s saw a period of growth in Palatka. By 1850, the area had grown to a village of approximately 200 people. In 1853, the City of Palatka was chartered and in 1855, Hubbard L. Hart opened a stage line between Palatka and Tampa. Hart would become famous for his steamboats that would transport tourists up and down the St. Johns River.

The Civil War halted most growth in the town and Confederate Captain John J. Dickinson set up camp at White Water Branch, the source of water for the water works, called “Camp Call”. A sergeant in this troop described the area in a letter to his mother.

“It is pleasant a place as could be found outside of town. It is situated at the head of a branch that empties into the river nearby. The spring is in a hollow about 50 feet below the surface of the earth with an almost perpendicular descent...This camp, called Palatka Heights, was located, I think about a mile and a half from the Palatka Wharves, S.W. The picket duty was on the river front in Palatka...”

The lumber industry would expand Palatka’s “Golden Age” of prosperity and growth in the 1880’s. However, in 1884, a fire would decimate the town and businesses, destroying five blocks of the commercial district core. While the businesses would rebuild in brick, the memories of the fire and lack of dependable

water pressure to fight the fire would be influential in the development of the Water Works.

In 1885, the City of Palatka enacted an ordinance for construction and operation of a water works. Hart at the time controlled much of White Water Branch and was promoting the growth of Palatka Heights as a residential area. As an enterprising land owner, having the water works would help sell lots if the water works plan went through, which it did.

The original building was built, operated and maintained by a private company, Wheeler & Parks of Boston, Massachusetts. The specifications for the water works state:

"The water to be supplied by these works shall be furnished

from White Water Branch, so called, by steam pumping, using a wrought iron or steel stand pipe reservoir to maintain the requisite state pressure of water in the pipe system of said works. The pumping station machinery shall be capable of delivering one million gallons in twenty-four hours..."

Needing a reliable pressurized source of water to fight potential fires in the future, the ordinance also specified:

"26,000 feet of pipe, stop valves, 40 fire hydrants, the rates for various services and the contract would be for 25 years or until the city shall sooner purchase said works."

The water works was constructed in 1886-87 and when completed consisted of a "storage canal 800 feet in length and five feet deep,

built from brick masonry and the bottom a clean bed of sand covered with hard pine flooring, a pump house made of brick about 30 by 45 feet, one story high, adjoining an ornamental chimney stack about 65 feet in height. The boiler room of the pump house contained two large boilers and two Worthington duplex pumps." Despite the description stating the pump house was one story, photos of the structure show a two-story building.

The water from the new facility was described as being of superior quality and with sufficient pressure in the hydrants so that water, "can be thrown over the highest building in the city." The wood supply for the water works came from excess cypress from the local mills.

However, the city and the owners



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would soon be at odds over the water works and its capabilities to produce reliable service.

In 1903, the city sued Palatka Water Works to lower their rates due to problems. Several serious fires occurred in the city and the Water Works failed to supply sufficient water for the fire hydrants. In 1906, the City of Palatka passed an ordinance regulating the rates at an additional 37-percent reduction. The city did offer to buy the plant for \$55,000, but was refused. In the meantime, the city issued \$60,000 in bonds to build their own publicly-owned system. The Water Works company attempted but failed to get an injunction to stop well drilling. The city successfully hit water with the new wells while the Water Works continued to try to satisfy the city's requirements, by agreeing to install a fire alarm at the pumping station and to have someone on duty 24 hours a day to maintain steam pressure and start the pumps when the alarm sounded. In 1908, the City of Palatka ceased paying for water after the new wells began providing 230,000 gallons per day at a pressure sufficient to serve the hydrants. In 1909, the Palatka Water Works sued the city for non-payment under the terms of the original contract and was initially successful in the lawsuit. The verdict was eventually overturned in 1917 by the Florida Supreme Court and the city was awarded damages of \$8,000.

In 1922, the Palatka Water Works Company was sold to the City of Palatka. According to a newspaper article in the Palatka Daily News on March 9, 1922, the City of Palatka called a special meeting in which the Palatka Water Works transferred to the city its entire property holdings, including its pumping station, stand-pipe, mains and real estate for \$85,000 and an additional sum agreed upon for fuel, oils and other stock on hand.

At the time of the purchases, the Water Works had undergone several changes including the addition of two more reservoirs and the removal of a woodshed since the boilers were changed to coal firing around 1915.

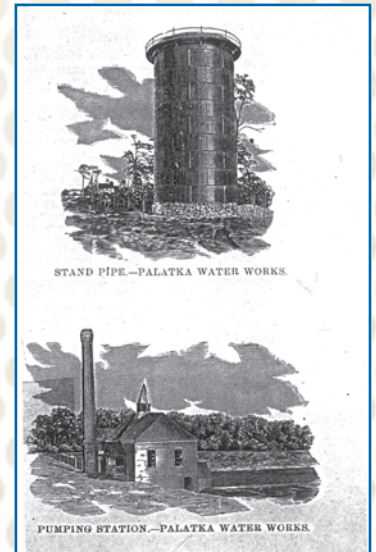
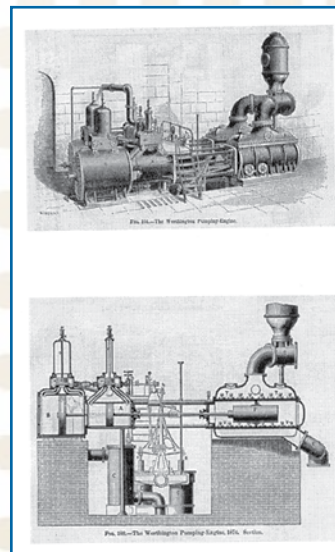
The Water Works would continue to operate as the main system for the city of Palatka until 1986. At some point in time, the western section of the building was altered from a two-story structure to essentially a single story with varying floor levels. Use of the springs was phased out beginning in the 1950's and completed in the 1960's when all water came from well fields located on the hill to the north and in the golf course south of White Water Branch.

In 1986, the water system for Palatka was transferred

to the R.C. Willis Water Treatment facility. At that time, the Water Works was abandoned and left essentially untouched. When the study was conducted in 1997, the building was found in disrepair.

"The pump house has damaged windows, missing doors and missing covers to the roof and floor access openings. The pumps are rusting and in some cases have been removed from their bases, they are presumably inoperable. The electrical system has been partially damaged and is probably unsafe." Additionally, a small alligator had taken up residence in the clear well.

In 1999, a grant was acquired to repair the roof and repoint the outside brickwork. With additional money from local businesses and organizations, the first phase of restoration was completed in 2002 for the Water Works Environmental Education Center (WWEEC). Since that time, the interior of the building has been repointed, an amphitheater and restrooms constructed,



Top left: **Worthington Pumping Engine, 1876**; Top Right: **Palatka Water Works in 1895**
-Courtesy of Palatka Water Works Environmental Education Center
Above: **Water Wall Exhibit** -Archives Palatka Daily News

an on-site nature trail developed, a large “water wall” exhibit installed and a community organic garden and orchard have been established. There are also efforts to restore a degraded hardwood forest along the Puc-Puggy Trail, re-establish wetlands associated with White Water Branch, and create from scratch a sandhill environment with gopher tortoises above the amphitheater.

The Water Works committee and volunteers help maintain the building and grounds, lead tours and conduct educational events.

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FROLICKING THROUGH THE PAST

People of all ages learn more about famed explorer



Sarah Cavacini/Palatka Daily News

Above: Historical figure William Bartram talk with children during the Frolic. To Right: History enthusiasts visit information booths at the Frolic on the river front.

By Sarah Cavacini

Palatka Daily News

scavacini@palatkadailynews.com

Under a sunny April sky, Putnam County students sat with wide eyes and eager questions as they heard tales of Native American culture and the travels of an 18th-century explorer.

William Bartram historians and environmental organization leaders spent April 17-21 on the Palatka riverfront helping history come alive for the Bartram Frolic on the St. Johns, which has been going on since 2017, according to Sam Carr, president of Bartram Trail Society of Florida.

"Palatka's history and heritage, really, it starts here," Carr said while standing at the riverfront in April. "In 1774, (Bartram) was here and he made Palatka famous from there."

The Frolic had to be canceled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic but it returned the following year and every year since.

Frolic organizers welcome different

schools and classes Monday through Friday during the event and guide guests through a day packed with adventure.

Second-graders from every school in Putnam traveled to the Frolic, where they spent a day taking a riverboat tour with the St. Johns Riverkeepers, learned the value of picking up litter with Keep Putnam Beautiful and found out more about Florida's water systems from the St. Johns River Water Management District.

The biggest highlight, however, came when the students met the man some call America's first environmentalist, William Bartram; The Long Warrior, a member of the Seminole Native American tribe who met Bartram on his travels; and trader Job Wiggins. Well, they met them in a manner of speaking.

The men who portray these historical figures have been doing that for numerous Frolics, but the children who meet them every year don't know that.

They were trying to figure out how

they could be hundreds of years old and still telling these tales, Robert H. Jenkins Jr. Elementary School teacher Elesha Cox told me.

"This is something that these children in West Putnam will never see," Cox said in April.

A weekend of walking in Bartram's footsteps

Bartram's legacy doesn't end with the weeklong field trip; the public can spend their weekend at the Frolic, too.

This year's Frolic, also known as the St. Johns River Bartram Frolic when referencing the weekend festivities, was packed April 21-23 with activities.

On Friday, people participated in a guided kayaking tour that stopped at four sites Bartram visited during this 18th-century visit to what is now Putnam County, take an equestrian trail ride on Dunns Creek State Park trails

or cycle through downtown Palatka with Celebrate Trails Florahome.

The next day, people flocked to the riverfront for the Frolic, which lasted six hours. The St. Johns River Center also hosted an educational adventure during the event called Passport to the Past, where people visited different information booths and received stamps in their "passports." Most of these stamps were made by Palatka Daily News employees.

Guided boat tours left from the Palatka dock throughout the day Saturday and attendees ended their night on the Bartram Sunset Wine Cruise hosted by historical reenactors.

History enthusiasts finished out the weekend by traveling on a four-hour bus tour with members of the Bartram Trail Society of Florida to retrace some of Bartram's steps. Stops included Rollestown, Mount Royal, the Water Works Environmental Education Center and Satsuma Springs.

The day finished with a three-hour symposium at First Presbyterian Church of Palatka's Westminster Hall. Bartram scholars and experts taught the group about the famed environmentalist, and the symposium featured an appearance by Thomas Hallock, the editor of "Travels on the St. Johns River," the book William Bartram and his father, John Bartram, wrote about their experiences in the area.

Keep an eye out for upcoming Bartram events at bartramtrailsociety.com. The next Frolic will be April 20, 2024 – which is actually William Bartram's birthday, Carr said.

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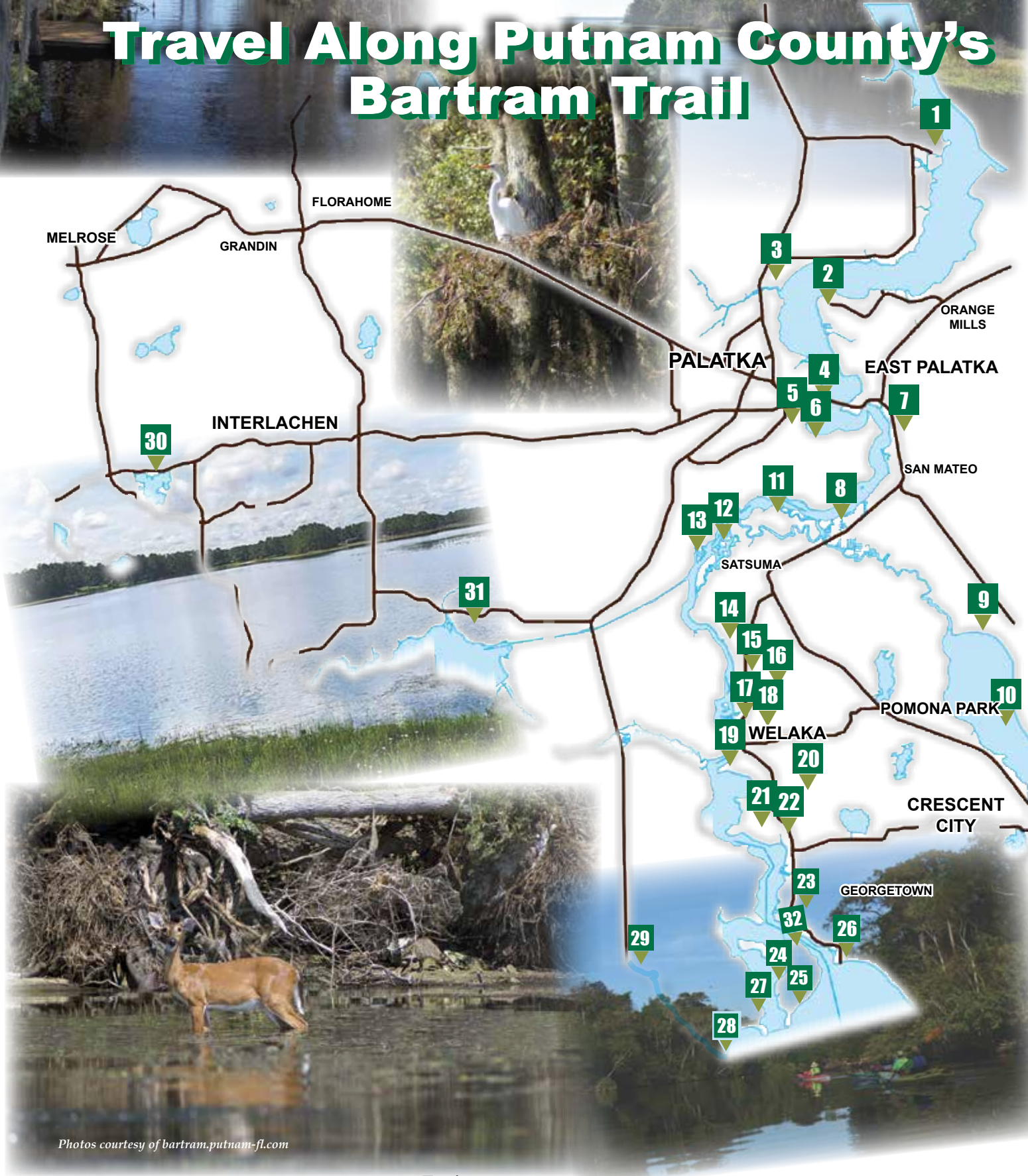
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Travel Along Putnam County's Bartram Trail



Photos courtesy of bartram.putnam-fl.com

Site 1 Palmetto Bluff
 Site 2 Forrester Point
 Site 3 Grays Creek / Rice Creek
 Site 4 Palatka
 Site 5 Ravine Gardens Bartram Trail Marker
 Site 6 Palatka Water Works- Puc Puggy Trail
 Site 7 Rollestown/Charlottia
 Site 8 Dunns Creek (Dun's Little River)
 Site 9 Crescent Lake Camp
 Site 10 Bear Island (Small Island)
 Site 11 Murphy Island
 Site 12 Seven Sisters Islands
 Site 13 Stokes Landing (Spalding's Lower Store)
 Site 14 Saratoga Harbor (Johnson's Spring)
 Site 15 Satsuma Spring
 Site 16 Nashua Spring
 Site 17 Welaka Spring
 Site 18 Johnsons Bluff
 Site 19 Beecher Point (Mount Hope)
 Site 20 Beecher Springs Welaka Nat'l Fish Hatchery
 Site 21 Mount Royal
 Site 22 Beecher Springs Run
 Site 23 Georgetown Camp
 Site 24 Drayton Island – 1766 Camp

Site 25 Drayton Island – 1774 Camp
 Site 26 Lake George Point (Orange Point)
 Site 27 Rocky Point
 Site 28 Salt Springs Run
 Site 29 Salt Springs
 Site 30 Cowpen Lake (Halfway Pond)
 Site 31 Deep Creek
 Site 32 Beautiful Isle Camp



Visit bartramtrailsociety.com/ county-trails for resources on each of the 32 sites.

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Eager to learn more about **BARTRAMS'** legacy?

By Sarah Cavacini

Palatka Daily News

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Grab a copy of "Travels on the St. Johns River," which was written by William and John Bartram during their journeys to Florida.

A hardback cover of the book was published in 2017 and edited by Thomas Hallock and Richard Franz, who are part of the effort to preserve Bartrams' history in Putnam County.

The book features an introduction from Hallock, notes from Franz and, of course, excerpts from the Bartrams' travels.

Find a copy on Amazon.com.

Excerpt from the back cover:

"In 1765 father and son naturalists John and William Bartram explored the St. Johns River Valley in Florida, a newly designated British territory and subtropical wonderland. They collected specimens and recorded extensive observations of the plants, animals, geography, ecology, and native cultures of an essentially uncharted region. The chronicle of their adventures provided

the world with an intimate look at La Florida. 'Travels on the St. Johns River' includes writings from the Bartrams' journey in a flat-bottomed boat from St. Augustine to the river's swampy headwaters near Lake Loughman, just west of today's Cape Canaveral. Vivid entries

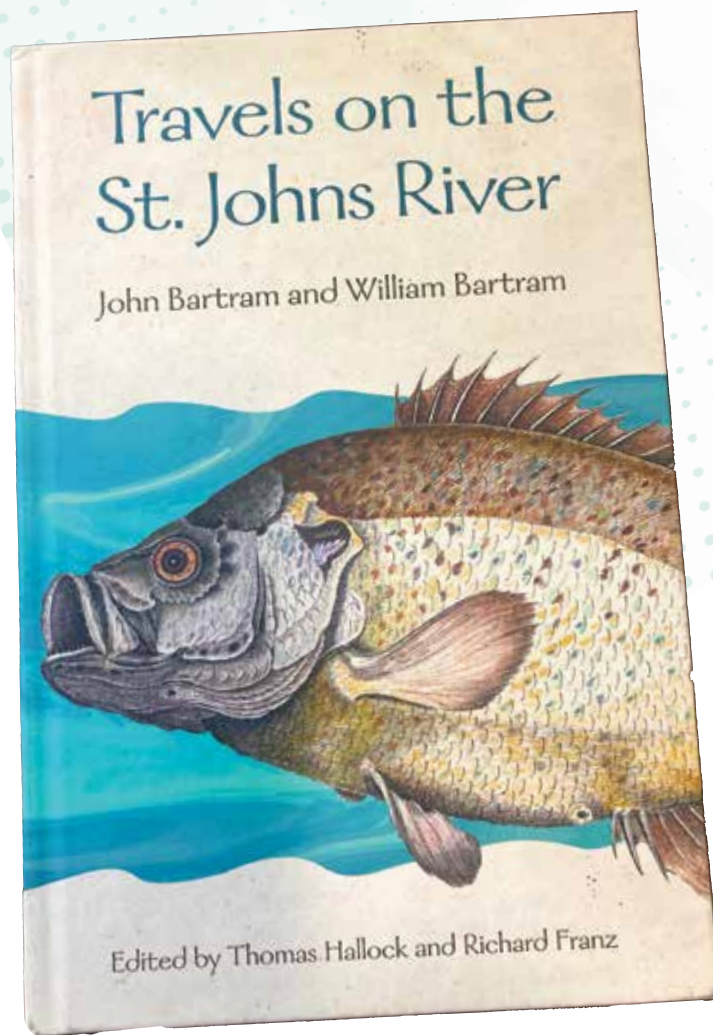
slow current. He describes the crisp, cold spring waters tasting like a gun barrel. Excerpts from William's narrative, written a decade later when he tried to make a home in East Florida, contemplate the environment and the river that would come to

be regarded as the liquid heart of his celebrated travels. A selection of personal letters reveal John's misgivings about his son's decision to become a planter in an inhospitable pine barren with little more than a hovel as shelter, but they also speak to William's belated sense of accomplishment for traveling past his father's footsteps.

Editors Thomas Hallock and Richard Franz provide valuable commentary and a modern record of the flora and fauna the Bartrams encountered.

Taken together, the firsthand accounts and editorial notes help us see the land through the

explorers' eyes and witness the many environmental changes the centuries have wrought."



from John's diary detail which tribes lived where and what vegetation overtook the river's



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