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NEWS RELEASE

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ARCHITREATS: FOOD FOR THOUGHT PRESENTATION
*WILLIAM BARTRAM IN ALABAMA (WHO IS WILLIAM BARTRAM
AND WHY SHOULD I CARE?)* BY JOHN HALL
AT THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

ArchiTreats: Food for Thought continues another year of informative talks on Alabama history at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Join us at **noon on Thursday, May 17, 2012**, as **John Hall** presents *William Bartram in Alabama (Who is William Bartram and Why Should I Care?)*.

William Bartram was a Revolutionary War-era artist and botanist from Philadelphia. Under the sponsorship of a British physician and gardener, he traveled the South for four years, 1774-1777, including a lengthy trip to Alabama in 1775. His important 1791 book, *Bartram's Travels*, was the first book to describe the South (and Alabama) in detail. He describes the journey with the eye of a scientist and an artist. Bartram realized he had the good fortune to see the South in its last days of natural beauty and innocence, and his descriptions of the natural environment and the Indians are without parallel. Later, he ran a plant nursery from his home in Philadelphia for many years and mentored a generation of gardeners, scientists, and explorers. His detail and accuracy are still useful and amazing to modern natural historians and anthropologists.

The talk should be of interest to people interested in Alabama colonial and frontier history, Indian history, gardeners, and a broad selection of natural history enthusiasts.

John Hall is the Director of the Black Belt Museum Project at the University of West Alabama in Livingston. He is retired from the Alabama Museum of Natural History at the University of Alabama. He has been involved with natural history and Alabama history and archaeology projects since the 1970s. He and environmental photographer Beth Young of Birmingham are the authors of the recent prize-winning book on Alabama rivers, *Headwaters*, and are among the authors of the upcoming book on longleaf pine, *Longleaf as Far as the Eye Can See*. He has been involved in Bartram studies since 1985 and has spoken widely on Alabama's first great scientist, author, and traveler. He recently assisted the Alabama Department of Archives and History in the new "This Land" exhibit.

This ArchiTreats presentation is made possible by the Friends of the Alabama Archives and a grant from the Alabama Humanities Foundation, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The public is invited to bring a sack lunch and enjoy a bit of Alabama history. For more information, call (334) 353-4726.

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