

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



BETSY MCCARTHY, EDITOR VOL.20 NO. 2 FEB. 2004

FEBRUARY 2004 SWFAS MEETING

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society will meet on Wednesday, February 18, at Florida Gulf Coast University, in Building Academic III, room 124 at 7:30 PM. Corbett Torrence will discuss Seeing Level: Rethinking Sea-level rise at the Pineland Site. This was a major Calusa Village on Pine Island. Research has shown the sea level rising and falling over 2,000 years. Torrence is on the FGCU staff, has been involved with the Pineland and Mound Key sites and directs research at Mound House on Ft. Myers Beach.

Refreshments will be served at 7:00 PM. Those interested in archaeology and pre-history are invited to attend. Call (239) 597-2269 for further information.

JANUARY MEETING

Terry Simpson came to town to tell us about the Anderson/Narvaez mound in St. Petersburg, which members of the Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society excavated under his leadership over a five year period. The Mound had been preserved for years by the Anderson

family who still own the property. SWFAS members visited it last summer.

Unfortunately, Simpson found that the slides he needed had been removed. He gave us an excellent, short oral report and then moved to Egypt. Terry treated himself to a trip when he received his master's degree in Anthropology from USF.

SHOW ME THE MONEY!!! SAYS SWFAS TREASURER CHARLIE STRADER

We are happy to report the one generous SWFAS member did just that with another much needed donation of \$500. I say "another" as incredibly this is her fourth such donation in as many years! We give her our sincere thanks and hope her donation will inspire other members. Even with \$680. worth of cash donations in 2003, SWFAS still had a negative income of \$670. It is normal for such to occur without a big fundraising event. Since no one seems to get excited about having a car wash, bake sales, etc., and we do not have enough big ticket items for a rummage sale, we thought the best way to raise funds might simply be to **BEG**. Besides outright donations (which are tax deductible and you are welcome to earmark for

specific activities), we want to remind all that SWFAS has a Life Membership category available for \$500. We may even be willing to consider an Immortal Membership category for \$1000. or more. For those that don't have such excess cash, but still want to contribute, you may want to consider donating valuable items that we could auction at meetings, etc. We are also open to other fund raising ideas- just call Charlie Strader or Tom Francino with your ideas.

Wait a minute you say – Where is all our SWFAS money going? Well, 2003 was a typical year in that we did not have any unusually big expenses, but still, without more income than just dues we will continue to lose money. The largest expense we have is copying and postage for the newsletter which was \$1,411. last year. Fortunately Jack and Dottie Thompson do not charge for their labor each month. I don't think any of us want to take away anything from the newsletter, so this is somewhat of a fixed cost of doing business. The next biggest expenses were incurred by operation the Craighead Laboratory. Considering the well respected work done there and the educational benefit of having an actual working facility, its cost seems to be an excellent investment. Besides, the majority of the cost was \$540. to store archaeological material waiting for analysis. The end of storage fees is in sight as the Lab Rats may work through this in months, or a year or so, and this cost may be gone, but the Laboratory also has a backlog of needed projects that could use such funds. The next

largest expense was \$317. for guest speaker fees. Many think this amount should even be increased each year to help bring in even more top notch speakers. We have been very fortunate in the past with so many good speakers willing to present at no cost, but it would be wonderful to have a large budget for such, therefore maybe making our meetings even more appealing to more people.

So, besides reminding you that dues are due as of January 1st, please consider our \$50. Individual Membership or our Life Membership categories, or just slipping in a little extra in your check. And I am serious about the Immortal Membership as we still have not forgotten the generosity and support of Colonel and Mrs. Donald Randell and will not forget the continued donation of our more recent benefactor.

CRAIGHEAD LAB NOTES

We are planning for Archaeology Day in March.

Art Lee and Jack Harvey are getting close to finishing the Horse Creek Camp Site report. We worked there in 1983 at the mouth of the Cocohatchee River at Wiggins Bay in Naples. The area is entirely developed now and our report will be the only source of information. We operate the lab in order to do just this preservation of history task.

Lab Rat Jan Gooding has been delayed in returning for the winter and Lois Polewka is in town and will join us soon.

LEARN ABOUT FLORIDA'S FIRST INHABITANTS

This five-lecture course deals with what we know about the 12,000 years of Florida human prehistory and is presented by author Robin C. Brown.

It will be given at The Calusa Nature Center's Iona House 35330 Ortiz Ave. It begins on March 18 and ends April 15, 2004. It will be held on five Thursday afternoons from 2:00 to 3:30 PM.

Sign up through FGCU's Renaissance Academy. Tuition for all five lectures is \$40. Call 590-1095 to register.

Each lecture will end with a demonstration of one of the skills the first Floridians used in their day to day living.

On Saturday, April 17 there will be an all day Indian Craft Day at Hickey's Creek, with fire-making, basket weaving, pottery firing, and more.

ABOUT SWFAS –

The Directorate:

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To Join –

Address your check to: The Southwest Florida Archaeology Society, PO Box 9965, Naples, FL 34101. Dues are: Individual - \$20. Sustaining - \$50. Family - \$35. Student - \$15.z

Questions, comments, or contributions to the newsletter: Betsy McCarthy, 909-8 Augusta Blvd, Naples, FL 34113 or e-mail popismom@hotmail.com.

OLDEST EVIDENCE FOUND OF HUMANS IN ARCTIC SIBERIA

By Paul Recer The Associated Press Published: Jan 2, 2004

WASHINGTON - A people who may have been ancestors of the first Americans lived in Arctic Siberia, enduring one of the most unforgiving environments on Earth at the height of the Ice Age, according to researchers who discovered the oldest evidence yet of humans living near the frigid gateway to the New World.

Russian scientists uncovered a 30,000 year old site where ancient hunters lived on the Yana River in Siberia about 300 miles north of the Arctic Circle and not far from the Bering land bridge that then connected Asia with North America. "Although a direct connection remains tenuous, the Yana site indicates that humans extended deep into the Arctic during colder

(Ice Age) times,” the authors wrote in a study appearing this week in the journal *Science*.

The researchers found stone tools, ivory weapons, and the butchered bones of mammoths, bison, bears, lions and hares, all animals that would have been available to hunters during that Ice Age period.

Using a dating technique that measures the ratios of different carbon isotopes, the researchers determined the artifacts were deposited at the site about 30,000 Years ago. That would be about twice as old as Monte Verde in Chile, the most ancient human life known in the American continents.

Donald K. Grayson, a paleoanthropologist at the University of Washington in Seattle, said the discovery is very significant because it is so much earlier than any other proven evidence of people living in the frigid lands of Siberia that formed the gateway to the Americas.

“Until this site was reported, the earliest site in the Bering land bridge area was dated at about 11,000 years ago,” Grayson said. “Every other site that had been thought to have been early enough to have something to do with peopling of the New World has been shown not to be so.”

At the time of the Yana occupation, much of the high latitudes on Earth were in the grip of an ice age that sent glaciers creeping over much of what is now Europe, Canada and the northern United States.

About the Yana River area was ice free, a dry flood plain without glaciers. It was home to mammoth, horse, musk ox and other animals that provided food for the human

hunters who braved Arctic blasts to live there.

“Abundant game means lots of food,” Julie Brigham-Grette of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, said in *Science*. “It was not stark tundra as one might imagine.”

Among the artifacts found at the Yana site were weapons that resembled some found at a Clovis, N.M. site dated about 11,000 years old. Grayson and others said the evidence is weak linking those implements to the tool and weapon techniques used by the Clovis people. Similar artifacts also have been found in Europe and western Asia, Grayson said.

“The similarities (in the tools and weapons) are not enough to prove they were ancestral to the Clovis people in the New World,” Grayson said.

Some experts still hold out hope that the new discovery provides important new clues about the ancient migration from Asia to the Americas.

Finding evidence of human habitation at the Yana site “makes it plausible that the first peopling of the Americas occurred prior to the last glacial Maximum,” Daniel Mann of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, said in *Science*. The last glacial maximum was 20,000 to 25,000 years ago.

Grayson and others, however, said more evidence is needed before it becomes widely accepted that it was people from the Yana site who migrated to the New World.

The major problem, Grayson said, is that archaeological evidence for human dwellings in Siberia is sparse.... From the Central Gulf Coast Arch. Soc. Newsletter.