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This month at SWFAS

Lubbock in My Rear View Mirror: Ten Years of Archaeology on the Llano Estacado

On Wednesday, Paul Backhouse, who is currently the Chief Data Analyst - BC THPO for the Seminole Tribe of Florida, will speak about his experiences in the southwestern U.S. His talk will describe recent and ongoing investigations on the Southern High Plains, or Llano Estacado, of northwest Texas and eastern New Mexico.

The region, a vast flat semi-arid plateau, contains a complete sequence of human activities that stretch back to the earliest North Americans or Paleoindians. In fact many important sites, such as the Clovis site (Blackwater Draw Locality #1) also are located within this region.

My experience of the area and its archaeology is that of an outsider, an Englishman arriving on the Southern Plains after traveling the world in search of surf! Needless to say I did not find any surf on the High Plains but what I did discover was an amazing landscape filled with dust, snakes, tornadoes, and most importantly archaeology. Working with the Lubbock Lake Landmark regional research crew -- first as a volunteer and later as a seasoned crew chief -- I was able to participate in the recording and excavation of many important sites which I will discuss. Leaving Lubbock was a more difficult decision than I would ever have imagined ten years previously and when I shake out my trouser pockets I swear there is still red dust in there.

Biography

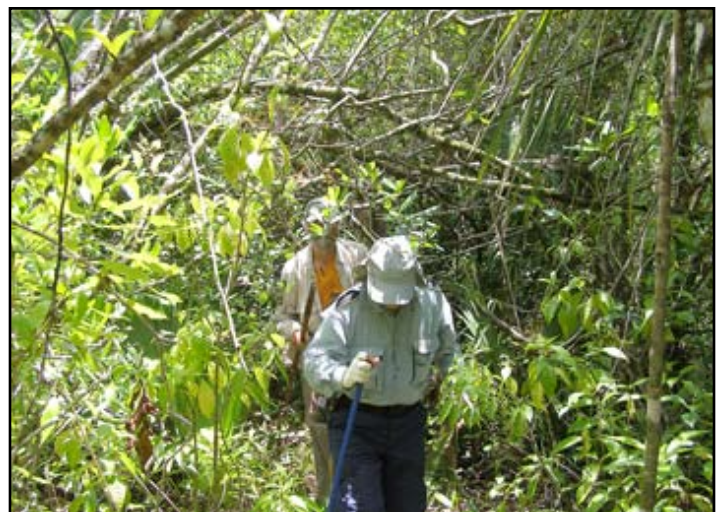
Paul is currently Chief Data Analyst - BC THPO for the Seminole Tribe of Florida. He was born and raised a 'Caulk Head' on the Isle of Wight, off of the coast of southern England. Paul left the island on a permanent basis at age 18 for the first time to attend university and study Computer Science. Needless, to say the bright lights of the mainland were a revelation to a young islander and not many lectures were attended! Realizing that there was a big world out there Paul spent his early twenties traveling the world, first in search

of great surfing and increasingly in search of archaeological sites.

Arriving in America as part of his travels, a penniless Paul volunteered with the Lubbock Lake Landmark project in Lubbock, Texas (the food and board were free). The opportunity consolidated Paul's love of archaeology and inspired him to return to England and obtain a degree in the subject. During his studies Paul returned to Lubbock and upon completing his undergraduate degree, he became part of the full time staff. Paul began his doctoral research in 2002 and has recently submitted his dissertation. Paul has suppressed his wanderlust while working on the Southern High Plains, however during a hiatus he took a bus trip to Mexico City which ended a year later in Patagonia!

Most recently Paul has married the Landmark projects archivist and they moved east with their two cats to work with the Seminole Tribe in Florida.

Fakahatchee Strand



See Fakahatchee, page 2

Brent Weisman & Jonathan Dean on Fakahatchee Strand Findings

By Jack Harvey

This is a very informal report on the event on Saturday, June 16, 2007. It was held in a large open truck garage at the back of the Fakahatchee Strand State Park Preserve headquarters compound on Janes Scenic Drive just north of Copeland, FL. This was an initial report on findings of a



Above is Dr. Weisman describing assumed aboriginal life in Fakahatchee. The tools, drawers and shelves behind him are the workshop area of the large vehicle garage where we met. Mosquitoes attended as well.



On the trail. The field trip Dean lead us on was located about three miles north of Copeland on Janes Scenic Drive. We left the Drive on foot and headed into the bush along one of the old logging tramways. The slightly elevated level tramways are good dry foot trails in the rainy season. Yet many obstacles make walking sticks highly useful for the quarter-mile distance.

survey of Fakahatchee Strand begun in March, 2007. The general objective is to identify most significant pre-historic and historic sites, not evaluate them in depth. It was hosted by Dennis Giardina, Park Manager. The event announcement stated, "We are planning another Archaeological event in the fall with more notice and when more people will be in the area and able to attend." This event was attended by about 20 interested parties plus about five uniformed Park people

From the University of South Florida, Dr. Brent Weisman and PhD candidate Jonathan Dean did the garage presentations. (Weisman is co-author of "The Florida Journals of Frank Hamilton Cushing" with Kolianos.)

See Fakahatchee right

Prehistoric Culture History								
Glades I 0-800AD								
Glades II 800-1200AD								
Glades III 1200-1650 AD								
	Glades III			Glades II			Glades I	
	C	B	A	C	B	A	L	E
Glades Tooled	■	■	■					
Surfside Incised				■				
Plantation Pinched								
Key Largo Incised								
Matecumbe Incised								
Miami Incised								
Opa Locka Incised								
Fort Drum Incised								
Fort Drum Punctated								
Cane Patch Incised								
Sanibel Incised								
Gordons Pass Incised								
Glades Plain	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Goodland Plain								

I thought the above was a rather useful summary of the pottery types we commonly see. Dean gave this as a means of establishing approximate dates without C-14 expense.



The sites investigated included 8CR544, 8CR744, 8CR1023, 8CR1024, 8CR1025 and 8CR1031.

Geology Rules: Water Witching

By Jack Harvey

George Cook's eldest daughter Mandy caught the eye of a young hand that worked for Karl Wright on his farm a few miles away. In due course, Andy Johnson (the hired hand) asked Mandy and they got married. As a wedding gift to the young couple, George Cook gave them the northwest 80 of his 640-acre farm and said he would build a house for them.

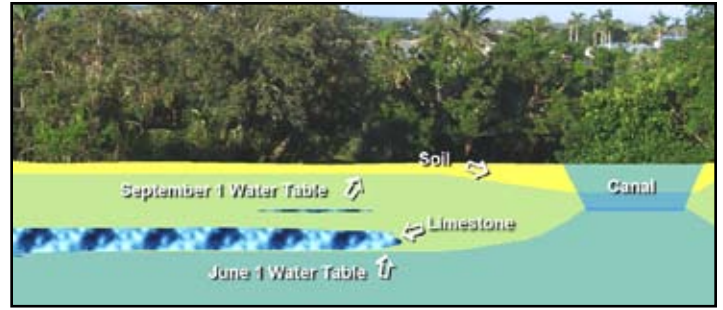
The northwest 80 had a fine high hill that Andy and Mandy decided was the place for their new house. George asked Karl what he thought of their idea and Karl said they needed a well for the house. He said they ought to get the water witch, Silas Hanson from Loch Spring, to find water first and then they could build the house close to it.

Silas Hanson came out to the proposed house location and looked around. He found a stand of saplings and cut a forked dowsing stick out of green sapling wood with his pocketknife. Holding the ends of the dowser in his two hands, he walked over and around the hilltop. Shaking his head, he followed the dowser down the south slope of the hill with George, Karl and Andy trailing behind. When he came to a tiny grove of trees, the dowsing fork started to dip. Silas walked around a little more and showed them that it really sucked down at the south edge of the grove. He kicked a hole in the prairie sod with his boot and Andy Johnson drove a stake to mark the location of the future well.

You know the rest. They dug there and found water. George said later, "That was the sweetest water you ever tasted, and lots of it!" He always said Silas Hanson was the best water witcher in the county and nobody should ever drill a well without asking Silas first. He charged \$5 and a bottle of rye because his wife wouldn't let him patronize the Loch Spring Wine & Spirits store. Silas got lots of witching jobs and his spots always had water except when the drill hit rock, but then Silas gave back the \$5.

Silas Hanson, a tall skinny redhead, was proprietor of the Loch Spring Rexall Drugstore and went two years to college down at Omaha. While getting to be a pharmacist, he also attended some geology lectures and heard about groundwater. It was everywhere. About the only difference between places was how far you had to drill to reach it. He learned about the water table and that it was lower on hilltops. Sometimes the table came right up to the surface on hillsides and bottomland and then you had a hog wallow.

When Silas looked around the hilltop where Andy and



Water Table

Mandy wanted to build, he knew a well there would be deep and expensive. Besides, Nebraska winter storm winds would be pretty bad up there. So he headed down the south side to a little grove of trees that was probably there because water wasn't so far down. He thought the south edge of the grove would be a good place since three big pine trees would break those frigid winds and that's where he twisted the green sapling dowsing fork hard.

If you throw a bucket of water (or it rains a little) on dry soil, it usually disappears quickly. Where does it go? Does it evaporate? A tiny fraction does, but most of the water will simply soak into the ground. However if you keep throwing more water (or it rains a lot) on the same spot, pretty soon you have a puddle that doesn't disappear quickly. Why?

You know the answer – the soil has become soaked. That means all the little pores and spaces between the microscopic grains of soil are already filled with water. In effect, the groundwater table has risen to the surface you are soaking. With no empty space in the soil, no more water can go down, but it may be able to move sideways. Famously, "water seeks its own level" but it doesn't always get there quickly when water is flowing underground. The figure illustrates typical wet- and dry-season water tables in flatland South Florida. Unlike Andy and Mandy, we have no hills to cause depth variation but our canals and the occasional natural stream alter the water table flatness as the figure shows.

In late August, I dug a well in my backyard east of Naples and it took me about five minutes to reach water just two feet down. I used a modern steel shovel, but a Calusa woman with a stick and her hands could probably have done it faster and likely often did. Knowledge of things like this is essential to living off the land and the aboriginals undoubtedly knew how to find water when away from streams and lakes.

We've been underground for several columns now and perhaps we're all feeling a bit damp. So we'll go back to outer space and look for lakes next time.

Many of the attendees had lots to say following Dean's presentation, which started at 10 AM and lasted until 11:30, but the garage chitchat continued until about 1 PM. The following field trip lasted another hour.

Dean ended his lecture here with his second story board showing the many hunting cabins he had found. One even had two stories. I think we learned more about Fakahatchee hunters of the 20th century than we did about Indian hunters, but Weisman pointed out that 1st century hunters may have lived much the same, for their time.

Fakahatchee, from left

Weisman spoke first and described the overall goals and questions to be answered. Dean was the main presenter and did the work.

He selected only the highland areas, as indicated by vegetation type, on the grounds that these would most likely have been locations that the aboriginals would have used. No test unit digging was done. Instead, he took earth cores to a depth of about 1 meter. By taking a series of radial cores across a highland area, he could establish the boundaries of the midden soils and map the likely inhabited area. Including both aboriginal and recent historical, 56 sites were identified. About half had middens.

See Fakahatchee page 4

Fakahatchee, from page 3

-- Reminder --
SWFAS
membership
dues were due
January 1.

Individual - \$20
Sustaining - \$50
Family - \$35
Student \$15



Our field trip destination – an abandoned hunting cabin. Everyone had opinions about its age. My own is 10-20 years based on the newness of the aluminum screen door and the electrical wiring. Apparently these cabins included electrical generators to power the beer refrigerators and other amenities. Dean is seen at the extreme right of the picture. There was considerable instant archaeology going on, identifying old beer brands and other artifacts of 20th century hunters.

About SWFAS

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If you would like to join SWFAS, please address your check to: The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society; P.O. Box 9965; Naples, FL 34101

Dues are: Individual - \$20; Sustaining - \$50; Family - \$35; Student \$15

Board meetings are held prior to the regular meeting on the third Wednesday of the month at the Bonita Springs Community Hall on Old 41 (by the banyan tree). All are welcome. Board meetings begin at 6:00; regular meetings begin at 7:30 (with coffee served at 7).

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society
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