



## Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS) May 2016 Newsletter

### **PRESIDENT'S CORNER** by John Furey



**Guinnessa Mahar** was our guest speaker on April 20, 2016 at the Southwest Florida Museum of History in Ft. Myers, Florida. Her presentation of "Fishing Techniques of Florida's Ancient People" provided us with a much better understanding of how the native people of Florida adapted to a coastal environment and the different technological strategies employed to provide their subsistence. Fishing, along with shellfish gathering, was a critical adaptation in South Florida for the Calusa and others where the natives were nonagricultural. Many fish vertebra bones found in South Florida archaeological sites are quite small indicating the

widespread use of very "tight" nets. That was the case in my excavation of 8PB-56 Boca Weir in Highland Beach, Florida. See the additional description of Guinnessa's research in this newsletter below.

**The Society for American Archaeology (SAA)** held its' 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida on April 6-10, 2016. There were several sessions on the Southeast and a few that were specific to Florida. Our April speaker Guinnessa Mahar was the chair of a session entitled "Recent Considerations of Coastal Subsistence Practices in the Southeast USA". Our own Theresa Schober and a former SWFAS speaker Victor Thompson were participants in this session. "Excavations at Platt Mound on the Upper Saint John's River of Florida" chaired by Danny Gregory was another and "The Belle Glade Culture Revisited" chaired by Christian Davenport rounded out the Florida sessions. William Locascio, a SWFAS Trustee, will be working with Christian Davenport this Summer excavating in Belle Glade. You may access the SAA web site at [www.saa.org](http://www.saa.org) and even join on line. The SAA publishes the scholarly journal American Antiquity.

**The Florida Anthropological Society** is holding its 68<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in Jupiter, Florida on May 19<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup>. SWFAS has about twenty members who are also members of FAS and several will attend. The meeting kicks off on Friday night with a reception at Dubois Park which contains the largest remaining aboriginal shell mound on the Atlantic shore. The park also contains a pioneer home and guided tours of the home will be offered. Details of the meeting can be found at: <http://fasweb.org/annual-conference/>.

**Summer Field School Archaeological Excavations.** Is 2016 the year to consider combining a vacation in the United States or even Europe as a volunteer on an excavation? Many opportunities exist for students and retired people to combine a lengthy vacation and an archaeological adventure. You have to pay for travel and food but often your lodging, while not the Ritz, is covered. You get to experience what field work is like and can put some of your skills to use, learn new ones and even earn college credits. To locate something of interest, google archaeological field schools. Now is the time they are looking for volunteers to round out their crews.

**26 Years Ago this Month.** SWFAS Organized and hosted the FAS 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting in Naples, FL on April 27-29, 1990. It was held at the Collier County Nature Conservancy. I am unable to find any other information on this meeting. If anyone remembers, please do a write up of how it went and we will publish it.

**120 Years Ago.** In 1896 Frank Hamilton Cushing excavated on Marco Island and in 1897 published his "Explorations of Ancient Key-Dwellers Remains on the Gulf Coast of Florida" on the Key Marco Site. This excavation and report started a focus on southwest Florida and was a major factor in attracting Clarence B. Moore to the west coast of Florida.

**67 Years Ago.** In 1949 Gordon R. Willey published his seminal work "Archaeology of The Florida Gulf Coast".

**14 Years Ago.** In 2002 the “Archaeology of the Everglades” was posthumously published by John W. Griffin. This was the final area of Florida that, because of its inaccessibility, had been archaeologically underreported.

## **MAY MEETING**

There is no SWFAS May meeting as the annual Florida Anthropological statewide meeting will be held in Jupiter, Florida from May 19 – 22.

Our meeting schedule will resume in the Fall with a meeting on October 19 at a location to be determined. A September SWFAS Newsletter will inform you of the speaker and location. See you then! Have a great Summer.

## **INFORMATION ON GINESSA MAHAR’S TALK AT THE APRIL MEETING** *by Gayle Sheets*



Ginessa Mahar is a PhD candidate in Anthropology from the University of Florida. Her work is focused on prehistoric fishing technologies and practices employed along the Florida Gulf Coast. With thousands of years of people being fisher folk in the area, Ginessa employs a research methodology that integrates both archaeological and ethnographic approaches seeking to learn how people currently practice fishing and then maybe find evidence of the same in the archaeological record. So if current fishermen are making the choice between using nets or weirs or hook and line, it’s because they understand the different behaviors of the various species of fish and how to best target them.

Ginessa’s exploration of current and ancient technologies involved her own fishing experimentation also. As a volunteer at the Florida Wildlife Commission, she participated in using net capturing techniques similar to those used by ancient fishing communities in the area that are currently banned, namely seine and gill netting. Ethno historic evidence suggests that fish weirs made out of piles of oyster shells were in use by the Calusa at contact in the 16th century. And so she organized and constructed both tidal and longshore weir systems to learn their impact.

In fish capture, it comes down to two techniques: “active” wherein people and gear move to capture the fish (seine nets being a good example); and “passive” where the fish encounter gear and are thus captured (such as weirs). And results from Ginessa’s use of the above fishing methods revealed that each technique resulted in different fish being caught. The active seine net produced large-sized demersal fish (bottom feeders like mullet and flounder). The passive longshore weir was better at catching smaller-sized pelagics (those that occupy the water column and surface water).

And there are social implications from the use of these techniques that Ginessa says would have affected their view of the world and hence the way they organized themselves. To that point, when building the weir, she unfortunately broke her leg but found an advantage in that she could devote herself completely to planning the project and directing those doing the construction. Whatever technique used in mass capture, communal or specialized labor and teamwork would have been essential to achieving the success they realized as fishers.

## **DR. FRANK C. CRAIGHEAD JR. and DR. JOHN J. CRAIGHEAD**

The twin sons of Frank Sr. and Caroline Craighead followed in their father’s footsteps as scientists in ecology and wildlife management. They are mentioned in the May 2016 issue of National Geographic on pages 106 and 107 regarding their work at Yellow Stone National Park. The following article from the Wyoming Wildlife Foundation provides a snapshot of their lives.

## Wyoming Outdoor Hall of Fame (WYOHOF) - Past Inductees

### Dr. John J. Craighead & Dr. Frank C. Craighead, Jr. - (Posthumously)



Frank Cooper Craighead, Jr. and John Johnson Craighead were born in Washington, D.C. on August 14, 1916. Their parents were Dr. Frank C. Craighead, Sr. and Carolyn Johnson Craighead. Frank, Sr. was a forest entomologist working for the Department of Agriculture, and Carolyn was a biologist technician. As youths, the boys developed a keen fascination with falconry, helping to pioneer the sport in the United States and honing what would become their lifelong interest in wildlife conservation. In the summer of 1934, just after high school, Frank and John drove west in a 1928 Chevrolet with several of their friends, photographing and capturing hawks and falcons. They drove on dirt roads all the way, pulling over at night to camp. During this trip, they first saw Jackson Hole and visited with world renowned naturalists Olaus and Mardy Murie. The spectacular beauty of Wyoming remained with them through subsequent travels, and they promised themselves they would return some day to live near the Tetons. Parts of this trip were described in their first magazine article, "Adventures with Birds of Prey," penned for National Geographic Magazine in 1937.

Frank and John graduated with A.B. degrees in Science in 1939 from Pennsylvania State University, where they both excelled on the wrestling team. They went on to the University of Michigan for M.S. degrees in Ecology and Wildlife Management in 1940. That same year, an Indian Prince named K.S. "Bapa" Dharmakumarsinjhi read their falconry article in the National Geographic Magazine and invited them to visit him in India. They wrote another National Geographic article and made a film about this visit, both titled, "Life With an Indian Prince." These were the last days of the rule of Maharajahs in India, and the last days of Indian falconry on a grand scale.

With the outbreak of World War II, the brothers organized and conducted an outdoor living course for training military pre-inductees. Frank and John were commissioned as Lieutenants in the U.S. Naval Reserve Aviation Training Program and stationed in Pensacola, Florida. The Navy had taken keen interest in the brothers' outdoor skills course at the university, and as naval officers they were thus tasked with the unique assignment of pioneering survival techniques for military aviators and other personnel in the South Pacific. One outcome of this service was publication of their oft-reprinted Navy manual, "How to Survive on Land and Sea." While on a short military leave, Frank took a train to Illinois and married Esther Stevens.

After their wartime service, the brothers returned to Jackson Hole, where they bought 14 acres of land from John Moulton on Antelope Flats near Moose. They also completed their studies at the University of Michigan. John Craighead married Margaret Smith and the two couples built identical log cabins on their property in Moose and began families.

Frank and John went their separate ways in the early 1950s, when John accepted a permanent position with the University of Montana.

John spent most of his subsequent career at the University of Montana, serving for many years as the leader of the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit there. Similarly, Frank served in several federal and academic positions and in 1955 formed the nonprofit Outdoor Recreation Institute. In 1959, Frank and John's careers merged again. At the request of Yellowstone National Park, they began a 12-year study of grizzly bears. One of their greatest contributions to this study, and to the science of wildlife ecology, was their leadership in developing and using radio transmitters.

If there is one recurring theme in the lives of these remarkable individuals, it is the fact that these brothers repeatedly pioneered so many frontiers, from falconry to wildlife cinematography and immobilization, radio and satellite telemetry, and large scale satellite mapping of habitats. Perpetuating their legacy, many of the

Craigheads' students, co-researchers, and children went on to pioneer their own new frontiers in science with other wildlife species including mountain lions, wolverines, Arctic grizzlies, Alaskan brown bears, and peregrine falcons, among many others.

Although Frank and John retired in the mid-1980s, neither ever gave up their lifelong devotion to outdoor recreation, scientific research, and interpretation of the natural world. At age 89, John continues to remain as active as possible, fishing, writing, and organizing a life's worth of papers, files, photographs and artifacts.

## **RELEARNING DATING METHODS** *by Jack Harvey*

Civilization as we know it arose in the Middle East Fertile Crescent, where we now find Iran, Iraq, Syria. But success sometimes breeds failure and it came to Europe as the Black Death about 1346. European culture collapsed for just a few decades, but 30 to 60 percent of the population died. In those times, a woman often had 7 or 8 children and losing 3 to 6 of them pretty much destroys a family as they knew it. And it happened to all families – rich and poor, powerful and peasant. Tax payments stopped so government stopped.

This event destroyed much of the established order in languages and natural history. Human history dates were lost as well. For example, the hieroglyph language used by ancient Egyptians to date and relate the pyramids to their pharaohs was lost. As Europe built a fact-based Renaissance, the dates and pharaohs were gradually recovered. Central to this recovery was the Rosetta Stone in 1799, with the same text in the classical Greek alphabet, and also in hieroglyphs. Once known, pyramid dates helped date many other places and things in the Eastern Mediterranean.



*Picture courtesy of the  
British Museum*

But the Rosetta Stone recovery was preceded by a period when scientists attempted to trace back from their present to earlier dates by measuring the thickness of sediment layers or varves deposited by annual changes in lake water motion. Dry years left narrower varves than rainy years. They learned to link lakes at different elevations by comparing varve thicknesses and finding patterns that overlapped, thus extending the date chain much farther back.

The linking scheme found another use in the American Southwest, where Zuni aboriginals learned to build house walls of small brick and adobe. Lacking the Roman arch, they had a problem with doorways. A large stone lintel was very heavy but the arid climate meant that tree wood lasted very long and was often used. Here, tree growth rings acted as varves so that old trees could be linked to new growth thus extending growth dates far into the past.

Frank Hamilton Cushing, an anthropologist from Pennsylvania, lived with the Zuni and may have helped use the varve linking scheme to extend Zuni dates back based on tree rings. Later, the Pepper-Hearst expedition assigned Cushing to explore Tarpon Springs and Marco Island, Florida in 1895-1897 but the tree ring dating scheme was of no use because of the wet climate. Cushing had no way of knowing the age of the many artifacts he recovered. Not until The Physicists gave us radioactivity, isotopes and unlimited energy could we date a Marco clam shell. This work explained many other science date mysteries besides archaeology's shell hammers. That story comes next.

# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

## SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY (SWFAS)

I want to help The Southwest Florida Archaeology Society preserve and interpret our prehistoric heritage.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Check One

Individual (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining Individual (\$50) \_\_\_\_\_

Family (\$35) \_\_\_\_\_ Student (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_

Life (\$500) \_\_\_\_\_

Skills, training, interests: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby agree to abide by the rules and bylaws of the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society. I further release from any and all liability due to accident and injury to myself, dependents and any property owners cooperating with the society.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check out to SWFAS and mail to:

SWFAS  
PO BOX 9965  
NAPLES, FL 34101

REV. 01262016