

# SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY Newsletter

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society

Gail Strader, editor

MAY, 1997

Volume XIII, Number 1



## The Seminole Wars and Their Impact on Florida History

The May monthly meeting will be held at the Bonita Springs Community Center Wednesday, May 21. Gavel will be a 7:30 p.m., preceded by a social period.

In addition to updates on society activities and upcoming events, the general membership will be asked to vote on proposed SWFAS by-law changes (*see page two*).

Our speaker this month will be John K. Mahon, Ph.D.. Mahon is professor emeritus of history at the University of Florida and he will speak on the Seminole Wars.

The wars (1816-1868) marked a time of extreme conflict in Florida history and resulted in the expulsion of most Seminole people from their homeland. Mr. Mahon will discuss the three Seminole Wars, their cause and consequences, giving special attention to the major leaders of both sides and to the relationship between the Seminoles and the African Americans.

Dr. Mahon is well published and has written several books in the field of American Military History.

Although some of the top layers of the mound area have been disturbed by the heavy equipment, it is still impressive to see the undulations of the deposited shell, giving one insights into the complexity of such large shell mound islands that dot the southwest coast of Florida. The clearing has disturbed prehistoric components but also found on the

### *(Bulldozed con't)*

property are the historic remnants of some of the area's earliest pioneer homesteads.

In an related issue, it was found that Collier County has NOT been issuing the required Accidental Discovery Notice to permit applicants informing them that their property is in an area of historic or archeological probability (as required by the Preservation Regulations) when applying for permits in an area defined as such on county planning maps. It was also discovered that the county site review staff responsible for reporting the discovery of historical and archeological sites during the course of construction have little to no training, or even awareness, of what may indicate or constitute such a site. ♦

By Charlie Strader

Six acres on Chokoloskee Island were recently scraped clear of nearly all vegetation. The area bulldozed was the largest remaining tract of forested land on this large prehistoric shell mound island. The destruction was first reported in the local newspaper, the "Everglades Echo", by writer Lucinda Hackney.

What makes the act even more incredulous is that the bulldozing was done without obtaining any permits. This has lead to the landowner being cited by the county for illegal clearing of native vegetation, and is also the first incidence of a citation involving the section in the Collier County Historic/Archaeological Preservation Regulations that covers "accidental" disturbance of archaeological sites.

With only a half dozen isolated trees left, the topography, composed of a vast quantity of shells and midden materials nearly 20 feet deep, that makes up the archaeological site of Chokoloskee is now exposed.

### ✉ *From the Editor...*

I'd like to extend a personal thank you to Art and Lynn Lee for providing us with an excellent SWFAS newsletter and for maintaining our membership records for the past decade. (*That's 10 years of thanks!*)

I recently reviewed some of the past newsletters to try to figure out how Art did it all and was amazed at how much information he and Lynn have been providing us over the years.

We hope to continue providing you with an informative newsletter full of events - past and present, lab reports, messages from President, Steve Tutko, the "Date Book", the "Fine Screen", interesting articles and more.

Putting together a newsletter is a challenging task for anyone and it would have been much more difficult for me had it not been for the help and leadership of Art and Lynn. *Thanks to you both.*

Gail Strader

ABOUT SWFAS

The directorate: President Stephen Tutko, vice president Reed Toomey, treasurer Jack Thompson, secretary Betty Anholt, membership secretary, Gail Strader. Trustees are John Beriault, Valerie Flanigan, Wayne House, Sue M. Long, Kimberly Polen, Charlie Strader, Don Taggart, and Dottie Thompson.

The committees: Field, Beriault, 261-0082, 434-0624; Hospitality, Pat Merchant, 262-1900, 598-3051; Membership: Gail Strader, 992-6133, Publicity, Dottie Thompson, 597-2269, Sales, Flanigan, 262-8394; Finances, Jack Thompson, 597-2269, 774-8517; Lab (775-9734), Art Lee, 261-4939, Walt Buschelman, 775-9734; Jack Thompson.

To join: Address your check to the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society, P. O. Box 9965, Naples, FL 34101. Dues are: Individual \$15, student \$10, family and contributing \$25. Questions? Call Gail (992-6133)

The Date Book

Craighead lab hours are 9-12 Tuesdays and Thursdays. In Collier County Museum grounds, Airport Road and U.S. 41, east Naples.

• Wednesday, May 7, Board of Directors meeting at the Hampton Inn, corner of U.S. 41 and Bonita Beach Road, Bonita Springs, starting at 7 PM. Members welcome.

• Wednesday, May 21, annual meeting at the Bonita Springs Community Center; gavel at 7:30 preceded by a social period.

• Wednesday, June 4, Board of Directors meeting at the Hampton Inn, corner of U.S. 41 and Bonita Beach road, starting at 7 PM. Members welcome.

• Wednesday, June 18, annual meeting at the Bonita Springs Community Center; gavel at 7:30 preceded by a social period.



Society to Vote at May Meeting

Changes in SWFAS By-Laws proposed by the Board of Directors to be brought forth to members at the May meeting for a vote of approval. Changes proposed are as follows:

ARTICLE I - Membership

Section 1. There shall be seven classes of membership:

- A. Regular Individual membership: Annual dues \$20.00.
B. Individual Sustaining Membership: Annual dues \$50.00.
C. Family Membership: Annual dues \$35.00. Family Memberships are restricted to all members of a family dwelling in a single household.
D. Student membership: Annual dues \$15.00. Shall be limited to individuals enrolled as full-time students in an accredited academic institution.
E. Honorary Membership which may be conferred on appropriate individuals from time to time by the Board of Directors.
F. Institutional Membership (non-voting).

G. Individual Life Membership:

LAB HELP WANTED

- "Can you use more help?" was one of the frequently asked questions visitors asked while touring the lab during the December '96 picnic. The answer given ... Yes, lots more!
• Shell, bone, pottery sherds & tools from various sites still wait to be cleaned, sorted, catalogued and analyzed. There's plenty to do and you can learn by doing.
• Lab hours are 9-12 Tuesdays & Thursdays but they can add more work days and open in the afternoon. Call Art Lee, 261-4939; Walt Buschelman, 775-9734 or Jack Thompson, 597-2269.

No experience necessary.

\$500.00.

ARTICLE II - Officers

Add a SECTION 7 - Chapter Representative

The chapter representative to the Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) and alternate shall be appointed annually by the President with the concurrence of the Board of Directors. The Chapter Representative sits on the FAS board of directors, and SWFAS's affiliation with FAS is placed in jeopardy if the Chapter Representative fails to attend three consecutive FAS board Meetings. Duties are to further SWFAS's interests before the FAS board at its quarterly, annual and special meetings, and to prepare quarterly, annual, and other such reports as may be required.

(Trustees would become SECTION 8, and Committees would become SECTION 9.)



The Fine Screen

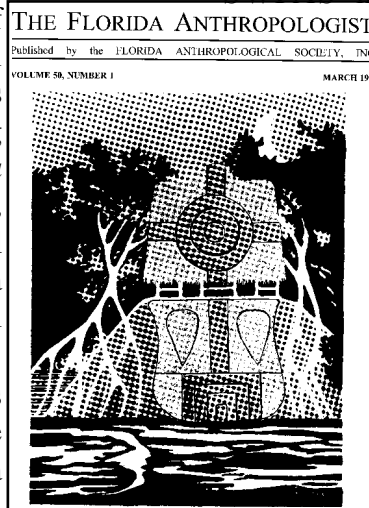
- Art Lee announced this was the lab's most successful winter yet. Congratulations to all who participated in making this a productive season! Art also reported that the last of our seasonal residents have returned north for the summer and that's two less people at the lab. You'll be missed!
• If any of you come across interesting articles for the newsletter, President, Steve Tutko has put in a request for such. Please submit a copy via mail to Gail Strader, 27655 Kent Rd, Bonita Springs, FL 34135 or fax to 941-992-7666.
• Don't throw away your June mailing label.... The membership records have been entered into a new computer system...so please check your June mailing label carefully for misspells. If you have changes or hear of anyone who did not get a newsletter and should have, please direct this information to Gail Strader (941-992-6133).

# 4,000-Year-Old Tool Factory Found On South Marco Island

By Art Lee

and Jack Thompson.

Discovery on south Marco Island of a 4,000-year-old "factory" for the manufacture of a type of shell tool from whelk shells was reported in the spring issue of *The Florida Anthropologist*, quarterly technical journal of the Florida Anthropological Society.

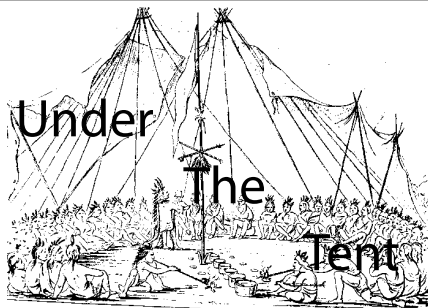


The find was made by the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS). The site, called "SatinLeaf" by its finders was located on a ridge overlooking Barfield Bay scheduled to be bulldozed down to make space for automobile parking at a condominium known as Vintage Bay being built by D.B.A. Development Corporation.

Authors of the study were Art Lee, John Beriault, Jean Belknap, Walt Buschelman, Annette Snapp,

The area was explored by SWEAS members at the start of pre-construction ground clearing. After its survey team found a sherd organization in September, 1994, dug several test pits which revealed a few more pottery sherds, shell scrapers, fish bones and shellfish from meals, and seven large lightning whelk shells. These had been buried in the sand, point down,

apparently to facilitate the removal of the roughly cylindrical central portion, the columella. Presence of columella tools had been noted by archaeologist W.A. Cockrell in 1970 as being typical of early (Archaic) period encampments on the sand dune encircling southern Marco Island, including the area on which the site was located, and forming nearby Horr's Island.



## Whether We Have Weather Or Not ...

Weather has always had an enormous effect upon the way people live, their health and their fortunes, and it has, therefore, always been of the deepest concern to mankind.

Observing the stars, sun, moon, wind, temperature, water, and any other phenomenon were the methods probably used by the Calusa. It is hard for us to imagine what was going through the Calusa's minds during times of severe weather. Was the world coming to an end? Did they offend their chiefs and gods? I wonder if the Calusa collected data, or maybe stories, concerning the weather and how it affected their lives and culture.

The Calusa couldn't change or alter the weather, but then again, neither can we. They did know one basic premise: when living near water, build your house and other structures on high ground; something most of us have not learned.

Hurricane season starts June 1st and ends on November 31st. Be prepared for whatever might occur - food, water, batteries, radio. You know the rest!

Remember what Mark Twain said: "Everybody talks about the weather but nobody ever does anything about it".

*Steve Taitso*

## Last Month's Speaker Here

### 4,000 Year-Old Tool (con't)

Subsequent investigation revealed that a similar "columella factory" had been found on Useppa Island by a group led by Dr. J. T. Milanich in 1980, and another, also on Useppa, by Dr. W. H. Marquardt in 1990. The Useppa finds helped to explain the presence of 116 scrapers made of quahog clam shell and a flake of chert, a flint-like stone, found on the site. At the Useppa location, some 50 miles to the northwest of Marco, it had been determined that chert stone tools and clam scrapers had been used in the extraction of the columellas there. The Useppa Island site is dated within a few hundred years of the 2200-1880 B.C. radiocarbon date attributed to the Marco site.

Excavation of the construction area was done with the permission of the developers following discovery of the pottery sherd during a site survey prompted by the presence of a number of known archaeological sites in the area. Each of the five test pits dug contained the battered whelk shells, and one had three. Only the outer whorls and pieces of the spire remained, the interior of the shells having been removed.

Artifacts and other material removed from the pits, including bone and shell remains from meals, were taken to the Craighead laboratory on the grounds of the Collier County Museum where they were counted, measured, weighed and tabulated. It was determined from the relatively small amount of food remains and charcoal that the area had not been used primarily as a residence but rather as a workshop, with food preparation and consumption being secondary.

The site is of interest not only for

the information it provides about the manufacture of shell tools--necessary because southwest Florida's closest source of tool-quality stone is the Tampa Bay area -- but for helping to fill in the time sequence of the manufacture of pottery in the region. Although other sites with fiber-tempered pottery had been located in the area, few had been subject to radiocarbon dating, so the new site helps in establishing the possible time of transition from fiber- to sand-tempering. (Tempering is the addition of material to clay to help in the manufacture of pottery).

The archaeological site is located on a Pleistocene period sand dune which encircles the southern end of Marco Island, rising to a height of 15 yards. As early as the beginning of this century the general area had been used for citrus and pineapple growing.

### Editor Lauds

### Volunteer Group's Work

An article reporting on the discovery of a 4,000-year-old tool "factory" in the spring issue of the journal of the Florida Anthropological Society" illustrates the valuable role that FAS chapters can play when "destruction of a site is eminent", wrote editor Robert J. Austin in an introduction.

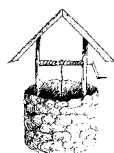
Referring to the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society's salvage of information from a Marco Island site scheduled for bulldozing, Austin remarked: in the spring issue of *The Florida Anthropologist* "SWFAS not only mobilized quickly and executed a thorough, well documented excavation, they published their results in a timely fashion. This project should serve as a model for other FAS chapters to follow on how to conduct and report on their field work." ♦

### Save Up For '98 ...

### SWFAS To Host Garage Sale

President, Steve Tutko announced plans for an upcoming garage sale planned for late winter/early spring of '98. Members are urged to start putting aside used, unwanted but good condition items in anticipation of this event.

The most successful garage sale ever occurred in March, 1994 - a big turn-out with lots of saleable items! Treasurer, Jack Thompson reported sales close to \$1000.00. The following year we had a good buyer turn-out but not enough goods to sell, and the event was skipped in '96 & '97 - making '98 even more important as these sales are our major fund-raising activity.



We're hoping this next sale will be our biggest ever. We're also hoping members have more saleable goods saved up ... A lot of good, saleable merchandise will be the key to success in this event and we hope you will start putting aside any no-longer needed items.