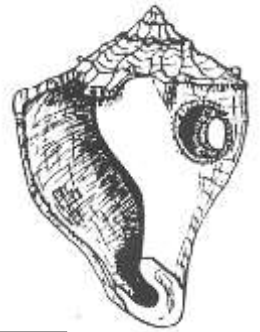


SWFAS

NEWSLETTER

THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



JOHN G. BERIAULT, ACTING EDITOR

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APRIL, 2000



FAS CONFERENCE PREPARATION CONTINUES, EXCITEMENT BUILDS!

Planning and preparation continues toward the FAS2000 Conference to be held in Fort Myers, May 5th through 7th. Another productive session was held last month at the monthly SWFAS Board Meeting. It was decided to hold the last Board Meeting (and Conference-planning session) at the host hotel (the

Ah, Them Good Old Days! When the Steamboats plied the major rivers of Florida and Moore rode the Mobile Gopher to Marco and the Southwest Florida Coast...

Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort Hotel, 2201 West First Street, Ft. Myers, FL 33901, phone 941-353-3454). This **April 12th Board meeting** will be at 7:00 PM, rather than the usual 6:30 PM time to give the people living the furthest away from “ground-zero” a chance to arrive. Copied to the back of the Newsletter is a map showing WHERE the Hotel is situated in Downtown

Fort Myers. We welcome certain of the membership (particularly those people who have signed on as volunteers to staff the various committees) to join us, keeping in mind even the Board is uncertain as to

Inside this Newsletter

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- 2 “A Sarropean Gauntlet”:** “Like Pumpkins in A Field”: Read Dr. Robert Gore... Part Three
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where we will sit or the reception the Hotel will give us, showing up as a large, unannounced group. We are preparing the Program for the 39 speakers, well-known and less well-known, that have applied to give papers. Things seem to be going well and excitement is building!

THE DATE BOOK

April 12th - SWFAS Board of Directors Meeting, Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort Hotel, 2201 West First Street, Fort Myers (Phone (941) 353-3454), 7:00 PM

April 19th - SWFAS General Meeting Bonita Spring Community Center, downtown Bonita Springs, 7:30 PM

May 5th – 7th – FAS 2000 Conference, Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort Hotel Ft. Myers

About SWFAS

The directorate: President John G. Beriault, first vice president Betsy Perdichizzi, second vice president Don Taggart, membership secretary Charlie Strader, treasurer Charlie Strader, recording secretary Jo Ann Grey, directors Steve Tutko, Sue Long, Dottie Thompson, Jo Ann Grey, Charles Dugan, Jack Thompson, Tom Franchino, John Beriault and Charlie Strader.

The committees: Field: Beriault, 434-0624; Hospitality: position open; Membership: Brenda Hamilton; Publicity: Dottie Thompson, 597-2269; Sales: Valerie Flanigan, 262-8394; Finances, Jack Thompson 597-2269, 774-8517; Lab: (774-8517), Art Lee, 261-4939, Walt Buschelman, 775-9734, Jack Thompson, 597-2269.

To Join: Address your check to the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society, P.O. Box 9965, Naples, FL 34101. Dues are: Individual \$20, Individual Sustaining \$50.00, Family \$35, Student \$15.

Any questions, comments, contributions to the Newsletter: John G. Beriault, acting editor, P.O. Box 9074, Naples, FL 34101-9074 or Email to: JGBeriault@aol.com.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT! THE MAY MEETING WILL BE THE FAS2000 CONFERENCE!

It's becoming increasingly difficult to obtain speakers, particularly those from other FAS chapters, and those others willing to travel long distances. It was decision of the SWFAS Board at the last meeting to make the May SWFAS Meeting coincide with the Conference. Talk about feast or famine! Here is your choice of 39 speakers (3 ¼ years worth!). So remember, **DO NOT** go to the Bonita Springs Community Center May 17th! You will only find a few people as confused as yourself!



POTSHERDS AND
POTSHOTS... AN ONGOING
SERIES BY ROBERT GORE

A SARROPEAN GAUNTLET.
III. "LIKE PUMPKINS IN A
FIELD".

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Our speculative consideration of the mysterious Sarropeans can be summarized with a simple statement: the Sarrope, for all their ferocity and monopolies, were doomed to historical oblivion. After the de Laudonniere and Le Moyne references, published in the 1590s, no further mention was made of either Lake Sarrope or its eponymous Indians by anyone. Not any of the Timucuan-speaking tribes with whom the French were dealing; nor any of the southern peninsular Calusa, Muspa, Tequesta, Jeaga, Jobe, or Keys Indians chronicled by the Spaniards. Neither has the name Sarrope surfaced in any of the clerical literature or visitaciones of the time. Instead, the main tribes associated most directly with Lake Okeechobee were the Maya'imi, Guacata, perhaps the "Santa Luzes" and much later the Mayaca, as the Mayaco or Myakka. Were the Sarrope absorbed into one or more of these tribes? If so, how did this come to occur? The pages of history remain blank, and even the Lake of Sarrope faded from the maps.

But if answers are not yet forthcoming some hypotheses may still be proposed, based on an

examination of two relatively recent pieces of information in the historiographical literature.

Both suggest some evidentiary circumstances that may possibly bear on the fate of the Sarrope. If true, the ultimate conclusion, both simple and sinister, may have been provided by Lake Okeechobee itself, more than three hundred and fifty years after the Sarrope's disappearance from history.

The first bit of possible evidence comes from an article containing reminiscences about life on the shores of Lake Okeechobee in 1918. The writer, Edna Morris Harvey, described a trip on Christmas Day to Kramer [sic] Island just offshore of the Lake's southeast corner. As she and her friends walked around the deserted island they saw:

“. . . many large Indian burial mounds and at the water's edge there were human bones and parts of skeletons. The water was dashing against them, taking some with it and unearthing others.”

The second possible bit of evidence clearly ties in with the first. It comes from the eminent "cracker historian" Lawrence Will, who noted in his chronicle of Lake Okeechobee that when the Lake dried down during the 1918-1919 drought the low water levels off Kreamer Island revealed a macabre sight:

“Exposed on the lake's muddy bottom off the north ends of Kreamer and Ritta Islands, and between observation [Shoal] and

the mainland, there were scores, yes maybe hundreds, for nobody ever counted them, of human skeletons. Some were close to shore, others farther out, skeletons of grown people and children, too, laying there just as they had fallen, partly covered up with silt . . .skulls [were seined] as far as 1,500 yards offshore . . . look[ing] like pumpkins in a field.”

Such numbers, and the presence of mounds nearby on Kreamer Island, suggest either an extensive cemetery, or a great catastrophe--or both. But they raise numerous other speculative questions as well. We know, for example, from archaeological excavations made at Fort Center by Dr. William Sears, that the Maya'imi or a related tribe built charnel houses for the preparation of their dead, and used platforms that extended out into ponds adjacent to Fisheating Creek. Did the Sarrope do similarly in Lake Okeechobee, and dispose of their dead offshore? Were the skeletons first defleshed and then bundled, following local custom? Or--were the skeletons even Sarropean?

Lake Okeechobee is ringed with burial mounds as well as other earthworks, and more than 40 have been located and/or designated within the broader Okeechobee Basin. Given the expansion and contraction of the Lake's surficial area over the centuries it would not be surprising to find numerous other burials or disinterments farther out in the Lake. Perhaps, as noted by Mrs. Harvey, the bone-yard

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offshore was merely the result of centuries of Lake failings and risings, coupled with events of disturbed weather, that gradually eroded and destroyed shoreline burial mounds. Regrettably, the tribal affiliation of the people disinterred will probably remain unknown. Or, perhaps the mounds and the skeletons were Indeed Sarropean.

If so, did these bones mark an ancient, long-used cemetery? Or were they a short-term record of the final killing field of the last Sarrope? Were the deaths caused by a natural catastrophe such as hurricane or flood? Or epidemic European-introduced disease? Or internecine warfare? Were the dead carefully staked down into the shallow peat and mud bottom of Lake Okeechobee by the dwindling survivors in a funereal ritual similar to that used by tribes on the St. Johns River? Or were they abandoned in panic, and left where they fell after being slaughtered?

The skeletons noted by Edna Harvey and Lawrence Will were never forensically examined for wounds, trauma, dismemberment, or evidence of disease. Floridan archaeology had not yet

matured in the first decades of the 1900s. Public focus was on Lake Okeechobee as "the coming rich place" where land in square mile parcels was being developed and sold in 10-acre lots. Three major hurricanes had swept through the region by 1932. No one had either interest or time to look at a bunch of Indian bones. And Lake Okeechobee has kept its secrets for another four-score years after the skeletons were first uncovered. But, sitting in an easy chair before a dying winter's fire, dram glass in hand, the thought lingers that perhaps, just perhaps, the Calusa and Oathkaquan Indians were involved. Perhaps on a day of vengeance four centuries ago they really did exact a deadly and ultimately genocidal retribution for the monumental Insult and assault that the Sarropes perpetrated on the Oathkaquan maiden, daughter of a chief--she of ravishing and then ravished beauty, once betrothed to, but stolen from, Calos. Chief of the Calusa.

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HISTORY OF THE CRAIGHEAD LABORATORY: PART 5

by Arthur R. Lee

The Storage Problem

The perennial storage problem was slightly eased in July 1991 when P.W. Qualls constructed a wooden cabinet with sliding drawers to hold

part of the growing comparative collection. Early in the lab's operation it became apparent that analysts needed specimen animal bones and shells to help identify the left-overs from meals eaten long ago that appear in test pits. The first was a complete skeleton of a raccoon found on Gait island. Charlie Strader found a road 01 fox, and buried it to let nature reduce it to bone - the start of a small cemetery as other animals lost the right of way to cars. A Pine Island fisherman contributed several small fish not now commonly caught. Workers' back yards became repositories for fish remains; Jean Belknap, whose fishing expeditions with her brother yielded nature-prepared bones of alligator and manatee (ai4 duly registered with the state authorities) became skilled at separating bones from fur, and Walt Buschelman perfected a technique for bleaching bones. Fish markets became used to requests for fish heads from which otoliths - excellent for species identification - could be extracted and added to examples John Dante had contributed from his consider-able collection.. An opossum chose a lot next to Dante's home as a place to die, and John Beriault contributed several sets of bones he had come across. A state license was applied for and granted to maintain the collection, kept in serviceable condition by Ella May Ablahat. The lab, by the way, still welcomes (fresh) roadkills.

More storage for specimens was provided in 1995 when the Museum made available a large metal specimen cabinet. Still later the

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Museum permitted SWFAS to erect shelves in part of a garage building it had acquired and located adjacent to the lab, a luxury it enjoyed until October, 1999, when a change in Museum operation forced SWFAS to rent commercial warehouse space. Also in 1995 the Museum gave SWFAS use of a large-capacity

metric scale. Another major contribution to the lab's technical arsenal was the donation in March, 1992, by Barbara and Reed Toomey of a flotation barrel, a device to separate out light organic material from column samples, as well as to do normal screening. It has been

in periodic use ever since, supplemented by two lab-fabricated pairs of screens of 1 mm and 0.5 mm gauge. Ron Jamro, Ray Seguin, Charlie Strader and Linda S. Robinson donated balances and other laboratory equipment. Bob and Jean Belknap have placed on long-term loan a diamond-blade saw for use in shell dating. Constructive criticism of the lab's chair inventory has been made by Elizabeth McCarthy and Jan Gooding, who bought their own upgrades. A number of people have helped flesh out the lab's reference library, including Linda S. Robinson, Annette Snapp, Dr. Robin and Jan

Brown, Jean Belknap, Maria Stone, Ella May Ablahat and the Lees. A major contribution to SWFAS's and the lab's ability to participate in public events was the construction by Ray Seguin of an elaborate, transportable metal-framed folding exhibit; Eleanore Young put a good deal of time into adapting a previously-prepared exhibit to its format.

Many individuals have helped the lab financially, with contributions ranging from enough to purchase odd bits of equipment to sizable cash donations; Lois and Stanley Polewka were quick to appreciate the load imposed by the \$300 needed for each Carbon 14 date, and others, like Linda S. Robinson and Jim and Sue Long, have joined them in helping to defray those costs; John Beriault has been the source of countless assists. The lab has shared, as well, from major contributions to SWFAS such as the stock donation from Pat and the late Col. Don Randell and a sizable gift from a visitor to Bonita Springs who dropped in at a monthly meeting, joined in a site investigation, and decided that the organization needed a boost - Noma Copley of New York City.

The First Report

A major milestone was passed in September, 1992, when a report on the exploration of Mulberry Midden, a hunting camp just off Immokalee road near highway 1-75, was sent to the printers. Although ad hoc reports had been prepared for various occasions during the lab's existence, the 36-page report on Site SCR697 was the

first comprehensive report on all aspects of the excavation and laboratory analysis of artifacts from a site. Since then, two other formal reports have been printed, on Satin Leaf 8CR766, a tool-manufacturing station on south Marco Island, published in May, 1996, and Heineken Hammock SCR231, a hunting camp in what is now the Berkshire village area just east of Naples, published in May, 1998. All of the reports, stripped of their voluminous tables, have been printed in the quarterly journal of the Florida Anthropological Society, *The Florida Anthropologist*, as well.

In a unique experiment in 1992 food shell that had been excavated from a mound on the banks of the Imperial river was sorted, weighed, counted, and disposed of at the home of Charlie and Gail Strader, an event of the Society's annual December picnic.

And the new year, 1993, saw the lab undertake a new enterprise. Twenty one individuals, many SWFAS members but including those from as far away as Lake Placid and Everglades City, attended classes held evenings twice a week in January on basic laboratory techniques. Instructors were lab regulars, Walt Buschelman, Jean Belknap, John Dante and Art and Lynn Lee, and John Beriault, who gave a special session on ceramics. The Museum generously installed exterior lights to enable class use of the porch and washing area, The following year, on October 8, 1994, the lab in conjunction with

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the Museum arranged for a day-long seminar on bone identification with Dr. Arlene Fradkin of the Florida Museum of Natural History as visiting lecturer. All 20 available places were taken, some by professionals from as far away as Sarasota. Sessions were in the Museum lecture hall and the lab. Note should be made of the effort workers have made to improve their own skills and knowledge to expand their contributions. All of the regular crew take work home and borrow technical books to study. One, Elizabeth McCarthy, attended a 1999 workshop on archaeological illustration at the Center for American Archaeology,

The fall of 1993 saw a statewide observance of Archaeology Week, and SWFAS and Museum participation was wholehearted; Museum grounds were packed with exhibits and demonstrations, and lab workers showed the public all aspects of artifact analysis. All subsequent Archaeology Week observances saw open houses at the lab, with special exhibits and talks in the Museum lecture hall. The same year, in November, exhibits were placed on the porch during the Museum's Old Florida Days observance, netting a good audience, a

practice repeated in following years.



Archaeology on the Web

By Linda Ballou

The Marco Cat caught some of us in its spell again, when we made the long trek to

Marco to see it on exhibit at the Citizen's Community Bank. There's something about that enigmatic little feline face that just hasn't been captured in any of the photographs we've seen or the reproductions that have been made. The captivating creature will probably be back in the depths of the Smithsonian by the time this newsletter comes out (the exhibit ends on March 30th), but this time it has left something new in its wake.

Check out the website at www.se.mediaone.net/~marcode to see a photograph of the delightfully detailed Calusa Indian Village diorama created by SWFAS members Hilde and Helmut Nickel. On display with the cat, their craftsmanship served to put the elegant figurine and other objects into perspective. More than simply isolated treasures, the artifacts

are seen to be part of the culture of people like those the Nickels depict going about their daily activities. Archaeology is, after all, about people.

Luckily for us, the diorama won't get locked away in a drawer in Washington D.C. like the cat. It will become part of the Marco Island Museum. But meanwhile, you can catch a glimpse of the Nickels' handiwork on the web. Look closely and perhaps you can make out what's on the roof of the chickee on the right. For additional information about the Key Marco Cat and the Marco Museum go to Marco Island Historical Society's web page at www.marcoislandflorida.com/history/

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE...

In a volunteer organization, everyone likes to be recognized and appreciated (whether they will admit it or not!) for their contributions. One of the worst "crimes" that can be committed is not to recognize these hard-working and selfless contributions – or even worse! – to wrongly attribute them to someone else. I received the following

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message from Linda Ballou...

John,

I just read in the newsletter your comment about the "excellent program cover designed by Art Lee with the help of Linda Ballou." Actually I had nothing to do with it, and, to give credit where credit is due, it might be nice to mention in the next newsletter that it was Betsy McCarthy who provided the drawing based on the engraved turtle carapace from Cushing's Key Marco excavations. Art Lee took it from there and did the rest of the cover layout. I'm working on the inside of the program -- not nearly as creative a task!

Linda

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Quite a few people have asked for some sort of map or representation of



WHERE the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort Hotel (site of the FAS2000 Conference) is located. This map is provided only as an aid, buy a decent road map. Nor is this map being reproduced for profit-making or commercial purposes. Hope it helps!

A SERIOUS MESSAGE – YA’LL LISTEN UP!

In the earlier part of the Newsletter I mentioned the very REAL problem of finding speakers for our monthly meetings. We are “scraping the barrel” and need help in assembling a program – or, at least staying several months ahead by having 3-4 speakers committed. The upcoming FAS Conference is a GOLDEN opportunity to enlist speakers. I (as SWFAS President) do hereby enjoin all the officers, directors, or anyone else in the group to fearlessly approach the various speakers and ask would they (or one of their graduate students) come and speak before us. You will have a chance to hear these speakers and to “judge” their capacities. If you can’t get a firm commitment from these folks, get ME their email addresses, and I’ll see what I can do. This is a great chance to fill the speaking schedule for a year or more! I do believe we are OWED this (forget gratitude!) for hosting the FAS Conference. Don’t get lazy on me and assume other people are doing the legwork. Bend a leg yourself, otherwise if you are bored or dissatisfied at the meetings, better

blame yourself. Thanks for helping me and the group!

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MARCH 2000 CRAIGHEAD LAB REPORT

by
Ella May Ablahat

Someone once wrote "it would appear that ancient cultures ended with people breaking pots over each other's heads." From the amount of sherds retrieved from the Chokoloskee site this just could be the case. Four diligent archaeologists at the lab are working on this problem.

SWFAS is grateful to Lois Polewka for a generous contribution to the lab. And thanks to her we are having more carbon dating done and can now identify the age of the finds.

Maura Dutton has come over from Lancaster, England for a brief stay and is working in the lab. She will return home soon but we are looking forward to her return sometime in October. Jack Thompson is inputting our shell data in the computer and Art Lee is summarizing it for our next report.

