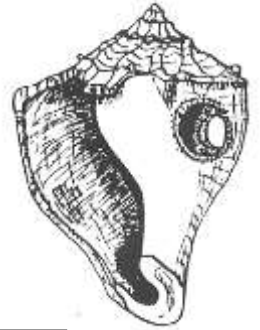


SWFAS

NEWSLETTER

THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



JOHN G. BERIAULT, ACTING EDITOR

VOLUME 16, NUMBER 5

MAY, 2000



THESE are the
Seminoles? Examples of
“Cigar Art” from the late
Nineteenth Century.
Interesting the
Conceptions people had
(and still have) of the
Indians!

your program schedules for times
and phone numbers.

Inside this Newsletter

- 1 FAS2000:** Are YOU ready (and willing) to help...?
- 2 “DOWN ON THE CALUSAN FARM”:** Read Dr. Robert Gore... Part One
- 4 The Craighead Laboratory:** A History - by Art Lee - Installment Six...

THE FAS2000 CONFERENCE HAS ARRIVED!!!!

The above headline may be “Old News” by the time this issue of the Newsletter arrives on your front doorstep. By May 5th, the Conference will be in “full swing” with a Reception hosted by the Florida Archaeological Council (FAC) at the historic

Edison Home at 6:00 PM. The following day,

Saturday, May 6th will see the start of the presentation of scientific papers by the 39 registered speakers. And 7:00 PM that evening will be the FAS Banquet and the presentation of the prestigious Craighead Award to a very deserving individual.. On Sunday, May 7th, are two field trips – one to the Pineland Archaeological Site (and the Randell Research Center) on Pine Island and two three-hour Mound Key Archaeological Site Boat Tours offered by Calusa Coast Outfitters. Be sure to consult

As President (and acting editor) of SWFAS, I want to thank all the people of our (and other) organization(s) that put in so much time and effort to put on this major event. How ever the event “comes off”, you deserve high praise and thanks for all your hard work. I’m sure the FAS2000 Conference will be a credit to all of you. It couldn’t have happened without everyone on the “team” pulling, working, and discussing together the many facets and tasks involved. Thank you all so very much!

THE DATE BOOK

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

May 10th - SWFAS Board of Directors Meeting, Hampton Inn, Bonita Springs, 6:30 PM

May 5-7th - SWFAS General Meeting – The general Meeting and the FAS Conference coincide

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.

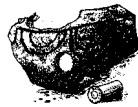
The committees: Field: Beriault, 434-0624; Hospitality: position open; Membership: Brenda Hamilton; Publicity: Dottie Thompson, 597-2269; Sales: Valerie Flanigan, 262-8394; Finances, Jack Thompson 597-2269, 774-8517; Lab: (774-8517), Art Lee, 261-4939, Walt Buschelman, 775-9734, Jack Thompson, 597-2269.

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

DOWN ON THE CALUSAN FARM--PERHAPS? 1.

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Agriculture among the Calusa has been a mildly contentious subject in the historical, as well as recent literature. Part of the problem is definitional. Broadly speaking, agriculture as a category embraces several subcategories. These include a) active horticulture wherein seeds or tubers are deliberately planted and the resulting crop is tended to some degree and then harvested; b) a semi-active collecting horticulture where selected plants already sprouted in the wild are transplanted from one area to another to facilitate harvesting, with or without further tending; and c) a passive foraging horticulture in which plants or plant products are searched for in the wild and their location pinpointed for immediate or future harvesting with no, or only minimal tending (e.g. weeding, patch clearing) involved. Standard examples of active horticulture in the ethnological literature include maize and cassava; examples of semi-active horticulture include cassava and coontie; examples of passive horticulture include coontie, tobacco, and almost any other utilizable fruit, nut, root, rhizome, or shoot collected ad libitum in the field. Thus, the question as to whether the Calusa, or any other moiety, were an agricultural society, must be one of both degree and kind. The answers will depend on which category is emphasized—or appears to be dominant in the cultural evidence.

"Aye," as the Bard wrote, "there's the rub." The conventional anthropological wisdom is that the Calusa did not engage in agriculture in the sense of active horticulture or "farming." Being essentially an estuarine people with access to the open sea and all its marine products, they supposedly would have had little need or inclination to grow plants. Midden evidence and historiographical accounts seemingly support this contention. Less dogmatic, however, and therefore not yet disproved, is the possibility that the Calusa did indeed engage in some opportunistic form of collecting or foraging horticulture. There is a world of difference between "tending" and "growing," as Adam and Eve found out. Undetermined, nonetheless, is what plant species, if any, were cultivated, either semi-actively or passively. Here, numerous speculations can be made. But whether plant items would remain detectable in middens is questionable.

For openers, with some 3,500 terrestrial plant species on the lower peninsula, and another several hundred species of algae and higher plants found in shallow coastal estuarine and marine waters, the Calusan vegetational diet was potentially both extensive and varied. The seasonal abundances of some of these same plant products (so goes one standard argument) could easily preclude any need for

the Calusa to earn a horticultural, let alone agricultural, keep by the sweat of their brow. Seasonal picking might have been the most utilitarian solution. This may be called the "Garden of Eden" or "Genesis I:29" argument.

Another factor is how rapidly a food plant grew to a utilizable size, and how much work was involved in its processing. Slow-growing, deep-rooted plants like coontie, for example, could only be used once, when they were excavated. Their preparation made their vegetational remnants unlikely midden survivors. By the same token, rhizomatous plants like cassava are easiest grown from their "tubers" (like potatoes). The tubers not processed and eaten would be replanted and would also thus be unlikely to windup as evidence in a midden. This could be called the "Use It or Lose It" argument.

Then there is the preparation and eating thereof. Boiling in sea water, roasting or smoking over hot fires, and ultimately ingestion, all produce calefactory, culinary, masticatory and gastric changes in the plant products. The digested and ejected residues are usually attacked immediately by dung beetles and fly larvae. In fact, except for seeds and wood, very little whole vegetational matter is likely to survive in a midden, even one little disturbed. Decomposition by molds, fungi, and bacteria,

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ingestion by worms (annelids, nematodes), insects, uniramians (millipedes), molluscs (snails, slugs), and numerous vertebrate species (birds, rodents and other mammals) almost guarantees that any vegetal refuse, including seeds, would rapidly become humus--as anyone who has ever excavated a midden (or made a compost heap) can attest. This might be called the "Joel 1:4" argument.

Similarly, there is the celebrated (if not contentious) case of the Maya'imi. Evidence for their presumed cultivation of maize (as a farmed crop) came not from maize kernels but from microscopic examination of ditch sediments and presumably human coprolites (subfossilized human excrement) containing maize pollen. Putting aside the question as to how 2000+ year old fossil human feces can be reliably distinguished from, say, fossil dog or deer scat, pollen assays are a fiendishly difficult and exacting investigatory routine under the best of conditions. Confounding the supposed results is nature's perversity for making some pollens look suspiciously like others--maize and Tripsacum (Gamagrass) for example. Even so, one wonders what plant evidence might be revealed in a careful palynological examination of Calusa middens--and presumed coprolites. DNA comparisons could then be made between ancient and modern plants to confirm suspected identifications. It would be tedious, but then, most good research is. Call this the "Plus ca change, plus crest la meme"

chose," argument, with apologies to Alphonse Karr.

Unfortunately, even if identifiable vegetational residue did occur in a Calusan midden, there is no guarantee that it was contemporaneous with the Calusa--or that it wasn't. Given the possibility that what the Calusa were eating then may still be vegetationally abundant now, separating the old from the not-so-old in a midden might prove difficult, particularly where burrowing rodents, gopher tortoise excavators, and armadillo perturbators have gained access. The presumptiveness of our modern expectations can also get in the way. For example, dismissing certain plant remains in a midden as not proper foodstuffs and therefore not utilizable can be dangerous to the health of one's hypothesis. Just because we, today, find some plants non-tasty or non-useful is no indication that the Calusa also did. Let's call this the "Job 6:6" argument.

The problem of determining Calusan "farming" practices would be further complicated if these Aborigines relied primarily on cultivating and harvesting marine and estuarine plants. After all, it is now a truism that the Calusa were estuary exploiters. .Might they then have cultivated (and therefore "farmed") intertidal algae or seagrasses using weirs, or stone-lined fish traps? If so they would not be an isolated case. Marine

algae are eaten by many peoples around the world. Who hasn't seen (if not eaten) Japanese sushi wrapped in nori, Irish dulce in a salad, or Scots sea lettuce as a bed for smoked salmon? But there are physiological problems even for these actively-sea farmed species. Algae are mostly water, at times up to 99% of their weight. It takes a lot of algae to make a plate of veggies. We'll designate this the "Ecclesiasticus 31:19" argument.

But another and more serious drawback is that some algae are toxic, sometimes dangerously so. Thus, the Calusan harvester not only would need a large reservoir of patience but had better know his or her plants well. On the plus side, if the Maya'imi or Sarrope could detoxify coontie the Calusa shouldn't have too much trouble avoiding the problem seaweeds--once a tribesperson had made the ultimate gustatorial sacrifice. Unfortunately (again),algae residues in a midden remain unlikely. Even should they be somehow preserved, they would be all but impossible to discern let alone distinguish as to species. We'll call this the "Caveat Harvester" argument.

The same holds true for non-algal marine plants. Coastal Indians on the Baja Peninsula, for example, harvest and eat Turtle Grass (Thalassia species). Who is to say that the Calusa didn't do the same? It's packed with nourishment as any Logger-head Turtle or Manatee can attest. But,

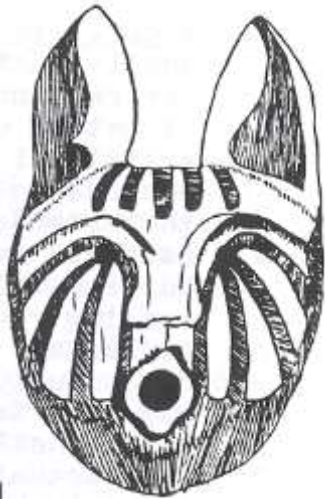
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because Turtle Grass is a submerged marine spermatophyte that both flowers and sets seed underwater, the chances of ever confirming nearshore cultivation seem vanishingly small. Even the chance of finding seed residues in middens might be rather slim. Worse, the residues in any beachside midden might be erroneously dismissed as intertidal contamination. Moreover, coastal alteration from waves, tides, currents, and storms means the chance of finding evidence for cultivation of any Turtle Grass garden plots seems highly unlikely. So, let's call this the "Rose By Any Other Name" argument.

What about coastal-shoreline plants? Noted botanist emeritus Julia Morton listed 16 common Floridan seaside plants with edible parts. Potential Calusan cultivars are Sea Oats (Uniola), Spanish Bayonet (Yucca), both "farmed" today in Mexico, Sea Purslane (Sesuvium), Glasswort (Salicornia), Saltwort (Batis) and Cocoplum (Chrysobalanus). Naturally occurring plots of these species would be easy to circumscribe and thereby encourage self-seeding. Even Seagrape trees might have been "tended" in the sense of groves by reduction of underbrush around their trunks to discourage competition and animal foraging, while encouraging access by humans. Call this argument one of "Benign Horticultural Negligence."

Does all this mean that no evidence for Calusa agriculture in whatever guise will ever be found? The answer is: Only if researchers quit looking. "Lack of evidence" saith the statistician, "is not evidence of lack." We'll take up this cudgel again using a different viewpoint next time.

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HISTORY OF THE CRAIGHEAD LABORATORY: PART 6

by Arthur R. Lee

Computers

Computers. In its very early days the Museum passed on to the lab a computer surplus to its needs. It was full-sized, too big for the space that could be made for it, and soon was returned. As time went on, and the boxes of artifacts

to be analyzed grew in number, it was becoming evident to all that hand-figuring was resulting in too many answers for the same problems. So after Capt. Carl Johnson of Bonita Springs in 1993 wrote "Computer Whiz" on his membership application form, he was immediately put to work. Special analysis forms were prepared to feed information into his high-powered machine, and the resulting relationship between him and the lab has proved to be permanent, and strengthened by the support Jack Thompson was able to provide after his retirement from the business world.

There still was need for an in-house machine, so the lab went abegging. A local computer shop in 1995 donated a (what turned out to be a very) used computer, and Lynn Lee located a table slender enough and with wheels that could be rolled into the closet for safekeeping when not in use. However, the computer was so antiquated and unreliable that when, in 1999, it refused to turn on its monitor, no tears were shed as it was sent on its way to a vocational school for cannibalizing. The board of directors voted funds for a new one, and it is now in operation, equipped to work in tandem with Captain Carl.

In this recitation the phrase "SWFAS volunteers" or the word "workers" have been used, with little attempt at individual identification, which obviously, given the stretch of

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time involved, could not complete. During the construction and furnishing phases no personnel records were kept, although later on the Museum wanted a record made of SWFAS workers, in their role as Museum volunteers, which imposed a discipline of sorts.

Given these limitations, no attempt will be made here to provide a complete list of those who contributed to creation of the lab as an entity, or its function. However, there are many names which crop up repeatedly in accounts of various phases of lab development and which merit inclusion in this account. Work on refurbishing the interior and construction of the back steps and the ill-fated "Indian mound", as an example, involved Alice Ash, Paul Benedict, James and John Beriault, Virginia Beville, Walter Buschelman, Travis Doering, Ron Jamro, Elvin Konen, Art and Lynn Lee, Virginia Read, Leo Ruble, Charlie Strader, Jack and Dottie Thompson, Anne and Keith Waterhouse, and Mary Ruth Winchell. With actual lab operation some of those names dropped out of the record, and others appeared, such as Jean Belknap, Mary Buschelman and Ray Seguin. Bud and Shirley House won the award for having traveled the greatest distance - from St. James City -to attend an early "wash in", nosing out Gary Susdorf and his son Brian of Fort Myers. Added to the roster of those helping when the lab was moved to its present location were Dan Catino, John Dante, Valerie Flanagan, P. W. Qualls, and Gail

Strader. Later affairs attracted Liz Allgeier, Sylvia Ansey, Linda Ballou, Leila Conrade, Jo Ann Grey, Barb and Chuck Hostetler, Jim Long, Melvin and Jackie Milstein, Suzanne Morrow, Virginia Reed, Terry Sachko, Doris Smith, Dr. Aubrey and Doris Sparks, Ev Ulinger, Suzan Watts, and Eleanor Young.

When operations became more formalized, an "honor roll " was set up at the instigation of Bud House, listing on bronze tabs the names of those who have rung up 200 hours or more of lab time. That list currently has these names: Ella May Ablahat, Jean Belknap, Walt Buschelman, John Dante, Jan Gooding, Art and Lynn Lee, Elizabeth McCarthy, Lois Polewka, and Jack Thompson.

Shark Teeth and Voodoo

These names do not constitute the full roster of those who have helped make the lab what it is, but they are what have floated to the surface of meager records and a fallible memory. An interesting side note on human nature has been provided by the makeup of lab workers. Those who slug through the detail, day in and day out, are willing to put up with something less than climactic excitement to achieve the end result - another footnote in the history of this area, another view of its early inhabitants. Through their lens, minor changes in pottery decoration, identification of an animal tooth, loom large.

Some come to the lab in search of peace. Over time we have been helped by individuals recently displaced physically, who are still adjusting to this part of the world. Others have found it to be a place where physical wounds can heal; there have been several who have there waited out a time of recuperation analyzing shell or bone.

Visitors, too, arrive through varied motivation: Several times a year the lab is visited by people who have found stone points on the beach; some leave overjoyed at having found something identifiable with the ancient people; others are disappointed at not having discovered an object that they could sell for thousands. There is a thin but steady stream of visitors who have found everything from a carved voodoo fetish to a silver Calusa tablet; the state's mines provide a continuing flow of people referred to the lab by the Museum with their Pleistocene sharks' teeth or bits of mastodon; Jean Belknap's reference books and memory are of great service to them.

In this regard, and in maintaining an informative display of objects in the large window, the lab serves as a contributing adjunct to the Museum, as do its occasional symposia and lectures; the

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Museum is one of the few in the United States to have its own archaeological laboratory. SWFAS' formal reports are published as part of a Museum technical reports series. A subliminal message is passed to those who look through the window at the workers inside: "Here are grown people putting in time and effort to learn and preserve the history of this place."(One member of a fourth grade class, looking at the people at their tables, asked: "Are they real?") Archaeology classes from the Florida Gulf Coast University have a chance to see the physical - as opposed to the classroom and textual side of the profession.



WHO USED TO BE WHO IN ARCHAEOLOGY

by Steve Tutko

Frederic Ward Putnam, b. Salem, Mass, 1839, d. 1915, was an American anthropologist and the author of more than 400 papers in zoology, ethnology, and archaeology. A student of the naturalist Louis Agassiz, Putnam founded the anthropology departments at Harvard University (1886) and at four major museums, including the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago (1894) and the American Museum of Natural History in New York city, where he worked from 1894 to 1903. He also launched the Journal *The American Naturalist*, first published in 1867.

CRAIGHEAD LAB REPORT - April 2000

by Ella May Ablahat

This month heralds the end of the winter period and we are losing four of our regular workers. We can only hope that the weather up north, where they are headed, ameliorates a bit so they will not miss Florida too much. Just enough so they will get back here real soon.

Betsy McCarthy, our scientific illustrator who does such great work, will return in August, hypothetically to be here when tile is

laid in her condo, but actually to work in the Lab.

Lois Polewka left, next will be Jan Gooding. Maura Duncan has returned to her home in England and as you can well imagine we certainly could use some help. Do we see any hands raised?

Walt Buschelman is analyzing shells while your reporter weighs, measures and bags them.

Art Lee and Jack Thompson are finishing up the tables on Horse Creek and in the process getting ready to write up the report.

A REMINDER...

As was mentioned in last month's Newsletter... be sure to accost any of the speakers at the FAS Conference with a request they come to give a presentation at one of the SWFAS meetings over the next several months. If the people seem inclined, please bring me (the acting editor), the potential presenters' email addresses (it is much easier for me to email than to try to play "phone-tag"!) My own email address is: jgberiault@aol.com - and I would be happy to contact anyone on behest of SWFAS. Please get whatever information, such as preference for a particular month, etc. from these people as you speak with them.

While I am on the subject, would one of our members be willing to coordinate a calendar of speakers so we will know Who we can expect and in what month? This would be a great help. Thank you!

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ALL-IMPORTANT LATE-BREAKING NEWS! - PLEASE READ AND RESPOND...

As this current issue was going to press, we heard some extremely distressing news that needs to be acted on immediately by all our members. The following information was supplied to the Newsletter by someone very close to the "action":

THE SITUATION

The county museum in the past few years has been funded in good part by the Collier County Tourist Development Council. Last Monday, the 17th, the council, with the backing of County Commission Chairman Timothy J. Constantine, voted to remove ALL OPERATING FUNDS from the Collier County Museum, the Museum of the Everglades, and Roberts Ranch for fiscal year 2001. The funds are to be diverted to the Collier County Historical Society for the next three years, to help pay down the \$2.2 million balance still owed on the Wilkinson House property.

This action, if unchanged, will close ALL county museum facilities on October 1, 2000, INCLUDING THE CRAIGHEAD LABORATORY.

The Tourist Development Council's decision must be reviewed and approved by the Board of County Commissioners - which is also chaired by Commissioner Constantine -- during a formal review of all county budgets in June. At that meeting the Commission can decide to:

1. Uphold the Tourist Development Council action and re-direct the entire operating budget for the county's three-museum system to the Collier County Historical Society for the next three years. That diversion would reduce the balance the Historical Society owes the city of Naples to \$1.4 million.

2. Substitute \$274,400 or more from the county's general fund for the each of the next three years to replace the lost Tourist Development Council revenue to enable the museum to continue operation.

3. Over-rule the TDC's decision and restore full operational funding to the Museum through tourist tax revenues, which is the current arrangement through the Tourist Tax ordinance,

RECOMMENDATION AS TO CONTENT OF LETTERS

The Museum should have continuing funding to permit at least the current level of operation because:

1. It is the sole official repository for historic materials of all types, pre-historic as well as historic (Through its Technical Publication Series it has published several archaeological reports.) Its map collection is in constant use, as is its specialized library.

2. It produces exhibits highlighting local historical events, its annual Old Florida Festival relates the area's history in an informal fashion. It entertains tourists from all of the United States, Canada, Mexico, much of South America, all of Europe, Australia, China, and South Asia.

3. It is an important adjunct to the county school system, with more than 6,000 school children visiting the museum annually, where they learn the county's history, the area's native plants, animals, and a miscellany in the Discovery Cottage.

4. It provides wholesome activities for the area's youth. It has been the site of various Boy Scout activities -- in the past couple years it was the scene of projects leading to two Eagle Scout activities; it is an annual feature of a number of summer camps for young people.

5. Two new museum activities hold promise of making major contributions to the social and educational life of Everglades City (already in full function with a complete line of museum

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activities) and Immokalee, where the Roberts Ranch facility could help in relating the start of the cattle and citrus industries of the area in an interesting fashion.

PLEASE WRITE LETTERS!!!

Letters to the people listed below should emphasize the need to keep current projects alive.

Avoid citing the tie-in with SWFAS; speak as just a person interested in the Museum as a civic benefit.

You may want to note that it does not seem wise to jeopardize a thriving, full-functioning, successful operation to aid the acquisition of a property whose value to the public is questionable.

here are the names and addresses:

Board of County Commissioners
3301 East Tamiami Trail
Naples, FL 34112-4977
Phone: 774-8097 (general number for all commissioners)
John C. Norris
District 1

James D. Carter, Ph.D
District 2

Timothy J. Constantine, Chairman
District 3

Pamela S. Mac'Kie
District 4

Barbara B. Berry
District 5

Tom Oliff
County Manager 774-8383