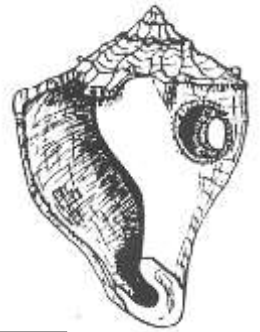


SWFAS

NEWSLETTER

THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



JOHN G. BERIAULT, ACTING EDITOR

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“A Dweller In the Everglades” A dramatic early photograph of a Seminole Indian man from the turn of the century, ironically from *Century Magazine*. This magazine, *Harper’s* and a few others are good sources for this material...

**GOOD NEWS!
THE MUSEUM
“CRISIS” IS
APPARENTLY
RESOLVED!**

The June 13th meeting of the Collier County Commission has provided “good news” for both the supporters of maintaining funding for the Collier County Museum and those backers of the historical Wilkinson House. The Collier County Historical Society

has received their requested Tourist Development Council funding, and the various supporters of the Museum (including SWFAS) have received continued funding for the Museum (at least through the rest of this year) from other monies the County had available. The Museum even received a bit more than it requested.

The downside is that the Museum is no longer assured of automatically receiving TDC funding for future years, but the “crisis” has been averted – at least for now.

Inside this Newsletter

- 1 Good News: the Museum is Funded! (We think...)**
- 2 “Down On the Calusan Farm”:** Read Dr. Robert Gore... Part Three
- 4 The New Book About Useppa:** A Review - by Art Lee



THE DATE BOOK

July 12th - SWFAS Board of Directors Meeting, Hampton Inn, Bonita Springs, 7:00 PM

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

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.

POTSHERDS AND

POTSHOTS... AN ONGOING SERIES BY ROBERT GORE

DOWN ON THE CALUSAN FARM--FINALLY? III.

An important question arising from our previous considerations of nutrition is: Did the Calusa eat well? The self-evident answer is: Seemingly so. Examination of Calusan or purportedly Calusan middens reveals that these aboriginals not only ingested huge amounts of shellfish, they also ate just about everything that had bones. The faunal tallies on the face of it suggest two things--first these aboriginals dined on a grand diversity of food items ranging from the largest animals to the very smallest. If it walked, swam, flew, crawled, hopped, scampered, or burrowed it appeared on their menu at one time or another. But another and less evident answer, perhaps overlooked in the enumerations of the fauna in the excavations, is that maybe the Calusa dined often, but not necessarily always well. They may have had no other choice at certain times. In other words, eat even mice and lizards and snakes--or go hungry.

Well, comes the response, their midden tallies certainly show diversity and numbers, so the arguments are refuted. Unless, comes the riposte and premise, the middens were not continually occupied. For example, anyone today who has gone to a New England clambake, a Cajun crawdad cookup, or a beachside oyster bash, knows that a large amount of shelly material is produced during a fairly short time. Assume, for the sake of argument, that a group of, say, 100 people participate and produce a half-inch layer of refuse on a 10 meter square (33 X 33 ft) plot over a 1/2 day period. If abundances of participants and food items remain the same, a layer 1 inch thick will accrue in each two day period. A midden 33 X 33 X 6 feet high (72 inches) would thus require a generous 144 days (about 5 months) to be formed. During this time the local production of its building materials would surely decline, perhaps so catastrophically as to never recover. In any case, the midden-makers would need to go continually farther afield to keep a reasonable supply of seafood or other foods available.

Take another example, that enduring symbol of Calusality, the Lightning Whelk (Busycon). Midden after midden is filled with whelk shells, often large to huge specimens, often

adapted in part as tools (after being eaten), and often occurring in greater abundances relative to other gastropod (snail) shells--but never in abundances similar to oyster or clam shells. This is not unexpected for three reasons. First, Lightning whelks, like most predators, are almost always fewer than their prey—otherwise they are overdoing their predation and will soon put themselves out of an evolutionary job. Second, Calusans preying on Lightning whelks decrease the offshore whelk population but raise the shell populations in the middens. Third, the larger whelk shells are fewer and farther between because the Calusan energy expenditure to take one large food item would be equivalently less over a given time than to collect many smaller items over the same time. Its the same difference being killing one deer or catching a thousand lizards; or a net full of mullet versus a net holding a single manatee. The fishery term is "catch per unit effort."

But here may be a curious consequence. Living large whelk shells, the kind for which the Calusa had such an apparent fondness, are rarely seen today in southwestern Florida bays and lagoons. It might prove elucidative if a census of shells graded by size and level of occurrence Was made in a selected group of middens. Perhaps a decline in Busycon shell-size would be revealed. Perhaps the Calusas were over-exploiting that resource, sending it

into a populational decline from which even today the gastropod has yet to recover.

Similarly, consider oyster bars, which today also do not seem numerous enough, nor the shells large enough, to support a populous and vigorous seafood-eating society. Today, oysters In Naples restaurants are all shipped in from far up the coast. Or, consider clams. If the Calusas were as adept as, say, a Doxsee clammer, a determined Calusan family of four wading the seagrass beds might gather up to 120 modern bushels during a low tide(approximately an 4-6 hour period). Parenthetically, it took just37 years for the Doxsee Company, raising up to 500 bushels over a12-hour shift, to exhaust the quahog clam population off Marco. Perhaps, when all of the estuarine seafood species are considered, and because the Calusa were committed to such broad-scale harvesting over time, they were inadvertently setting the stage for their own decline via over-exploitation. Are there other correspondences? Maybe the middens will tell.

So, where does that leave us regarding Calusa agriculture? Not much farther along than when we started. Conceivably, living primarily on meats, eggs, and grazing or foraging on natural plants, the typical Calusan might live healthily. But, goes the argument, not being farmers their

PAGE THREE

plant supply would have to be more or less ad libitum--what they could gather every day or two--the women, that is. The men were busy hunting, fishing, and fighting the Spaniards. But they all may have been too committed to foraging to successfully adapt to another means of obtaining food--viz. by growing it. This supports the premise of the sever-al arguments briefly discussed in the last two months--viz. plant-based dietary supplements must have existed to maintain Calusan health--but they may not have known, or cared to learn, how to grow them. Just what these supplements were, how they were cultivated or gathered, to what degree they comprised the daily diet, and whether in the long run it was nutritionally sufficient or numerically enough, remains our food for speculation.

Which brings up a final speculative point. The late pre-contact and post-contact Calusa, seemingly in vigorous health, but purportedly dedicated to an essentially flesh-egg-protein diet in a hunter-fisher-gatherer mode, were supposedly isolated from, or unaware of, or unconcerned with the value of agricultural foodstuffs. Did they become a tribe undergoing a gradual nutritional decline because of this philosophy? The last 150years of their history gives a tantalizing hint that this might be

so. True, they eventually switched to limited agriculture, or to bartering with Cuban traders for maize and beans, but by then it may have been too late.

Even more critically: What effect did their restricted nutritional situation have on their ability to respond to European diseases? Death rates, particularly of children vs adults, might provide additional data. But the most chilling aspect of all these considerations, also supported by the historical data, is that nobody else on the peninsula seemed to care much.

Ecclesiasticus 37:30.

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SWFAS LIBRARY HAS NEW BOOK ON USEPPA EXCAVATIONS

SWFAS has just received as a gift from the editor, Dr. William H. Marquardt, a copy of *The Archaeology of Useppa Island*, published as Monograph No. 3, 1999, by the University of Florida's Institute of Archaeology and Paleoenvironmental Studies. Representing the results of more than a decade of research on the island, it is the third in the Institute's monograph series, the

first having been *Culture and Environment in the Domain of the Calusa*, 1992, edited by Marquardt; the second was *Sharks and Shark Products in Prehistoric South Florida*, by Laura Kozuch, in 1993. The volume is in SWFAS' lending library at the Craighead laboratory, located on the grounds of the Collier County Museum, Naples.

Sections of the new book include an introduction by Marquardt, who is also credited with chapters on Useppa Island in the Archaic and Caloosahatchee Periods, *The Recent History of Useppa Island*, *The Road Less Traveled: Excerpts from an Interview with Garfield Beckstead*; and *The Archaeology of Useppa Island: A Summary*. Other chapters are *The Archaic Period on Useppa Island: Excavations on Calusa Ridge*, by Corbett MCP. Torrence; *Seasonality and Subsistence in a Southwest Florida Estuary* by Irvy R. Quitmyer and Melissa A. Massaro; *Pre-Columbian Use of Plants on Useppa Island* by C. Margaret Scarry; *Pre-Columbian Human Skeletal Remains from Useppa Island* by Dale L. Hutchinson; *Useppa's Cuban Fishing Community* by Maria Z. Palov with an appendix on analysis of a sample of post-contact European ceramics from the island by Susan Lynn White; *Archaeology of Useppa Island's Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Calusa Ridge and*

PAGE FOUR

Collier Inn Middens, by Karen J. Walker.

The fly leaf is inscribed "For Michael Hansinger", who is a member of SWFAS of long standing.

The volume is probably unique in reproducing life-like depictions of Florida residents of the period AD 600-800. The likenesses were photographs of busts sculptured by forensic artist Betty Pat Gatliff from skulls recovered from Useppa's Collier Ridge excavation.

The work reports on findings from probes and excavations spread over a decade, and cites earlier work done there by Jerald Milanich and colleagues, among others. It covers some 6,000 years of human occupation.

Torrence described the discovery of shattered lightning whelk shells in a vertical position, and cited earlier work done by Milanich which had identified a similar site on Useppa as representing an operation for the removal of the columellae. (A nearly identical discovery on a Marco Island site [Satin Leaf] by SWFAS was reported in *The Florida Anthropologist* for March 1997.) The columellae were used as tools and, Torrence postulates, raw material for shell beads.

The book can be purchased from IAPS Books, P.O. Box 117800, Gainesville, FL 32611-7800, in hardcover for \$35 and in softcover for \$20; add 6% sales tax and \$2 postage; make your check or money order (no credit cards) payable to University of Florida Foundation.

SAD LATE-BREAKING NEWS...

We were informed, despite the optimistic outcome of the June 13th Collier County Commission Meeting, that troubles may not be over as yet for the Collier County Museum. A line item budget detailing all expenditures has been demanded by Chairman Constantine. As yet, SWFAS has not heard what effect, if any, this will have on the operation of our laboratory efforts at the Museum. This announcement is just to inform the membership that the Museum situation has not yet totally resolved itself, so stay tuned...

PINELAND SITE ACQUISITIONS FACE AN UPHILL BATTLE

As this Newsletter heads to press, we have heard of developments concerning the acquisition efforts for increased land holdings for the Pineland

Site, at northern Pine Island in Lee County. The Randell Research Center is attempting to expand the land area surrounding and including this most important site. Part of the several acres presently being considered for acquisition includes the historic Pineland Post Office and property on which resides one additional building. The situation looked good for acquisition until several "purists" in the environmental community objected to the somewhat altered nature of the property (which, by the way includes 3 to 4 acres of relatively pristine mangrove swamp) due to the presence of the buildings and due to the fact one of the buildings might later be rented by the Research Center as a modest revenue-producing effort. The acquisition is now somewhat in limbo –but not dead yet. People supporting the acquisition of this archaeologically - sensitive property have been urged to attend the Lee County Commission meeting scheduled for 9:30 AM, June 27th at the old Courthouse Building in downtown Fort Myers.

MORE CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE

In the last issue we asked all the membership to please tell us whom we should recognize as people contributing to the success of the FAS2000 Conference of which SWFAS was the sponsoring chapter. Two names need to be mentioned. Both of these ladies helped with

PAGE FIVE
registration and worked long and hard at the tables in the foyer seeing people were properly checked in, informed, and given their packets of material. They are Shirley House and Beverly Kronquist. It is still not too late to let me know of anyone else. I will take your revelations of "good deeds unsung" and put them in the next issue.

TWO THINGS ARE NEEDED...

I'm in need of help in two areas. As of press time this issue, we have only one more speaker committed, and he will speak in October. This means as soon as *this* month, there is no planned program. If you have connections to someone with an archaeological program (please keep it in that field, since we are an archaeological society!), please contact them and see if they are interested, then please contact me and Betsy Perdichizzi (email address: betsyperd@gulfaccess.net) and we will schedule a month with that speaker featured.

The other help I am needing is in copy from YOU to place in the Newsletter. I know it's *Summer*, people are off enjoying themselves "on vacation" - but, hey, the rest of the year it's *Winter*, and people are too busy with the holidays and visitors... So quit finding excuses, and help me out...thanks!