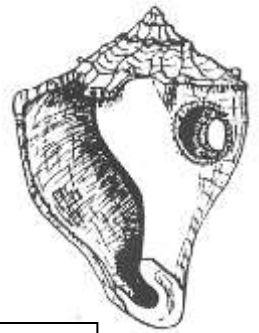


SWFAS

NEWSLETTER

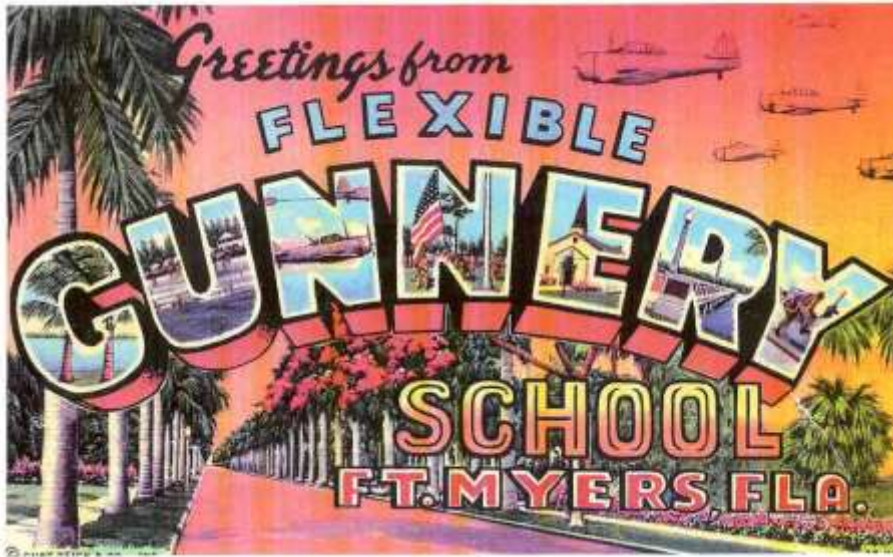
THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



JOHN G. BERIAULT, ACTING EDITOR

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AUGUST, 2001



DON'T YOU KNOW THERE IS (WAS) A WAR ON? Here is a postcard meant to be mailed by a World War II serviceman to loved ones back home. The people, events, and locations from this time are fading. Archaeology may deal with part of this record sooner than we think...

**MOUND KEY MANIA
... RYAN WHEELER
WOWS HUGE CROWD
AT JULY 18TH SWFAS
MEETING AT FGCU**

Some of us “had a feeling” the attendance at our July meeting would be greater than the average summer response. How great – we weren’t aware till 15 minutes before the opening, when we had to change rooms to handle the crowd that came to hear Dr. Ryan Wheeler give his presentation on the Johnson/Wilcox Collection of artifacts from Mound Key in southern Lee County. Even the very large classroom which Dr. Mike McDonald hunted up for us was barely sufficient, and there was standing-room only!

Ryan’s talk was certainly worth the increased attendance as his cogent comments and slides of the exquisite objects from the late Colonial Period (c. 1700-1800) found on Mound Key over a century ago by an early settler were well worth the hearing and seeing. Ryan is the author of a recently-published book on the subject, and we were given the opportunity to purchase autographed copies. We hope that Ryan can return at some future time and give us his findings on other exciting and on-going projects, such as those involving the Pine Island Canal, which he is pursuing.

Inside this Newsletter

- 1 We are Moving! Florida Gulf Coast University will be the new site of our General Meetings**
- 2 You can’t get there from here – Part One!**
Read Dr. Robert Gore...

THE DATE BOOK

August 8thth SWFAS Board Meeting – Hampton Inn, Bonita Springs, 7:00 PM

August 15th, 2001 General Meeting – HELD AT FGCU MAIN CAMPUS – TAKE EXITS 19 OR 20 EAST OF I-75

(see Map this issue)

About SWFAS

The directorate: President Betsy Perdichizzi, first 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, Charlie Strader and Dr Michael McDonald.

The committees: Field: Beriault, 434-0624; Hospitality: position open; Membership: Charlie Strader; Publicity: Dottie Thompson, 597-2269; Sales: position open; 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.

DUES ARE DUE!

Friends, it's that time of year again to remind you that SWFAS membership dues are due and payable January 1st, 2001. We're not like the phone or power company – can't remind you by turning off the utility. We hope you

will see this notice and sit right down and send us a check payable to the **Southwest Florida Archaeological Society**, P.O. Box 9965, Naples, FL 34101-9965. As a group we've had a positive impact in informing people, preserving our historic and prehistoric resources, and just plain enjoying each other's company and having a good time! Please help us by staying with us and sending in your dues. Thanks!



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

YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE (CAN YOU?).
1. Journeying to Cuba.

In his 1992 book dealing with the Antillean Taino Indians, the Cuban Guanahatabeys, and their Carib compatriots, noted anthropologist Irving Rouse started a small but pertinent time bomb ticking when he wrote that:

"Little is known about the relations between the Guanahatabeys and the

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natives of southern Florida. Both populations were . . . Archaic [in] cultural and social development in the time of Columbus, and their archeological remains show some resemblances, especially in shellwork and woodwork. To what extent these resemblances [were] the result of interactions or of parallel adaptation to similar ecological conditions remains to be determined." [Rouse, 1992, pp. 20-21.]

Quite so. But Dr. Rouse neglected to mention a third possibility for these resemblances: cultural evolutionary stasis.

Rouse went on to note that the Guanahatabeys were believed to have originated during the earliest peopling of the Antilles, perhaps arriving from a homeland in Middle America (rather than the Orinoco Basin as did the Tainos and Caribs). It may also be pertinent that the Guanahatabeys were perceived as being somewhat retarded in their anthropological development compared to their contemporary island compatriots, at least at the time of Columbus, although this imputed backwardness might well have been due to European bias. Nonetheless, in 1492 these aboriginals, locked in an apparent Lithic-Archaic culture, were more or less isolated on the western end of Cuba where

they lived in caves, hunted in mobile bands, and subsisted on shellfish, fish, and game. Guanahatabey cultural accomplishments at Contact were also impoverished; they made tools of stone, bone, and shell, but apparently lacked any trace of pottery or

deliberate or accidental? When did they do this? Recently? Or farther back in pre-Columbian history? And from where? More importantly for our future consideration, if they could arrive in Cuba by sailing

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any putative contact they might have made earlier or later with Floridan peninsular aboriginals--a subject touched on in an early column. What is irrefutable, however, is that 1) the Guanahatabeys were in Cuba; 2) had seemingly been there for quite a while (long enough to have established a population, been "discovered," become well known, and eventually more or less sequestered or avoided by their Taino neighbors); and 3) they certainly didn't walk there. In fact, advancing our hypothesis by using a little more speculation, the sea journey that brought them to Cuba (and elsewhere?) may not have been all that arduous if it was made, say, 7,000-10,000 years earlier. And if it was accomplished some 20,000 years ago it would have been almost a piece of cake. Why? Because there was a lot more land in the shape of exposed seafloor at that time. Preposterous! You say. Were there any peoples in the Caribbean, or even anywhere in the Americas, to make such a voyage? And, if so, did they have adequate means of transport?

These questions run head on into two immediate problems. The first is that the Bahamas-Greater Antillean region, which included western Cuba and eastward to passages between the Virgin Islands, is thought to have been uninhabited until about 4,000

TABLE 1
APPARENT SIMILARITIES AMONG MESO-INDIAN ARTIFACTS
AT WEST INDIAN ISLAND AND MAINLAND SITES

Artifacts	Locations	
	West Indies	Continental
Hammer stones Milling stones	Puerto Rico	Western Venezuela and Pacific Panama
Flintwork	Haiti	Central America (Belize)
Stone vessel art	Haiti	St. Johns River, Florida
Projectile point	Jamaica	St. Johns River, Florida
Shell cups Stone hammers Milling stones	Cuba	Eastern Venezuela
Shell gouges		Eastern Venezuela and St. Johns River, Florida

Data from Rouse, I., 1970. The Entry of Man into the West Indies. Yale Publications in Anthropology, No. 61.

agriculture. But was it always so?

Consider: even with these presumed shortcomings and perceived cultural stasis compared to their neighbors the Guanahatabey were not so retarded that they couldn't build some kind of water-craft, and then leave their continental homeland in, say, Middle America, travel up the Caribbean or across the Yucatan Channel, and reach western Cuba, perhaps by riding a countercurrent flow- ing along the southern coast of Cuba. The questions then raised are: Was this immigration

across hundreds or just scores of miles of open water, or riding a coastal countercurrent, then they could easily have arrived across a similar distance by riding a current from another direction as well. We will come back to this in a subsequent column.

Meanwhile, because the Guanahatabeyan origins are still obscure the possibility of the Caribbean-Yucatecan routs of ingress remains speculative, of course, as does

years BP. But this assumption is based mostly on archaeological, rather than anthropological evidence. Certainly there seems to be no hard evidence of permanent insular population sites from as long ago as 6,000-10,000 years BP. But even if this is the case it does not rule out temporary occupation of these same islands, particularly

people. Moreover, subsequently rising sealevels, tsunami events, or even excessively high lunar or storm-associated tides, could easily have eliminated all traces of coastal settlements, semi-permanent or temporary.

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 until about this time, and was apparently first confined to the nearby islands of Trinidad-Tobago off the mouth of the Orinoco River. The Cuban portion of the "Ceramic-Archaic Frontier" (Rouse's term) is postulated not to have been attained until very much later, about 600 AD. Nevertheless, if Rouse's dates are viable they imply that inter-island travel was getting underway at least by 3,000 years BP. And, invoking the old statistical homily, "Lack of evidence is not evidence of lack," there remains the possibility that the Cuban zone of the frontier might have been breached (albeit-briefly, but repetitively?)

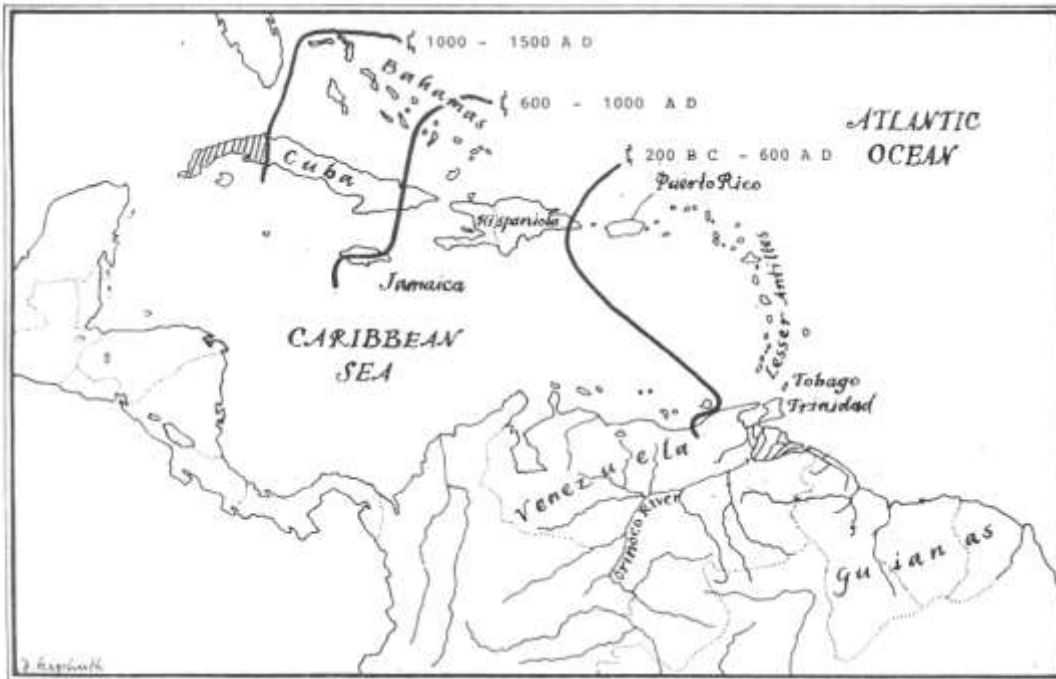


Figure 1: Proposed Temporal Expansion of the Archaic-Ceramic Frontier in the Caribbean. The dates and boundaries are approximate. Hatched area denotes Guanahatabey. Modified from Rouse, I., 1992. *The Tainos. The Rise and Fall of the Indians Who Greeted Columbus*. Yale University Press, New Haven; fig. 10, p. 36.

along their coastal zones. Remember that, In general, lowered sealevels would also expose more of their shorelines, so that many sites exposed then now lie under fathoms of water, meters of sediments, and acres-of reefs. Additionally, without long-term occupation, or an extensive stone or ceramic culture, there would be little archaeological residue except bones and charcoal to mark the comings and goings of such

The second problem is that precious little evidence exists for any kind of sea travel before 4,000 years BP. The Taino-Carib exploratory-colonization diaspora throughout the Caribbean is not believed to have begun

thousands of years earlier--and maybe from another direction--thereby making the Tainos and Caribs potentially Johnny-Come-Latelys in the upper Caribbean.

Welllll . . . maybe, rightfully respond the skeptics. But where then is the evidence for early watercraft around the Gulf or Caribbean? The objection is valid, but may be tautologically self-supporting--Q: "Where are the early watercraft?" A: "None have

been found." But keep in mind two things. First, nearly all of the evidence we have from so-called early canoes comes from craft that have been buried for millennia. We simply do not know how many other, possibly older, watercraft such as rafts, or composite canoes—rafts lie hidden under lake bottoms, seafloors, or shoreline sands, or have decayed so completely as to be unrecognizable, let alone datable.

Second, dating such craft relies on radiocarbon, Potassium-Argon, and other more esoteric and notably imprecise dating technologies, all with "finagle factors." And there's the key word: "imprecise." That's because there is a substantial difference between accuracy and precision. An aboriginal contestant may put a dozen arrows into a target, scattering them in and around the bullseye—that's accuracy, without precision. A second contestant may place all twelve arrows within a six inch circle, but far off to the side from the target center—that precision without accuracy. So, if the accuracy of radiocarbon techniques dates a canoe to, say, between 4,500-7,000 years BP, just how old is the craft? Moreover, that 2,500 year precisionless spread is still enough time to allow a substantial sealevel change to happen—and to be exploited.

Coincidentally, evidence that might be applicable to this supposition does exist in Florida. Recent findings in Newnan's Lake near Gainesville suggest that large

and apparently seaworthy wooden dugout canoes were being constructed as long ago as 6,000 years BP. It may be assumed that such watercraft did not spring de novo from the forehead of a Paleolithic boatwright but instead required some decades to be conceived, developed and perfected. Thus, seafaring watercraft might have existed very early in the Holocene, or (however unlikely) even earlier in the Late Pleistocene, and when linked with data from sealevel changes, could lend support to our hypothesis. And, although watercraft of similar age to those in Florida are apparently not yet known from elsewhere in the Caribbean or Cuba one can't help wondering how many pre-Archaic craft might lie on now-drowned offshore continental shelves, hidden under down-raining sediments, decaying slowly, while terredo clams, wood-boring isopods, and errant currents disturb and distribute their remains across the seafloor.

It has also been assumed that watercraft were made only of wood; yet wooden-framed skin boats have also been used by seafarers in other parts of the world. But finding evidence for these temporally-frail craft after all these years would seem to be almost impossible. And, at the most primitive level, logs, tangled tree branches, and other

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forest debris may have also played an inadvertent transportational role as unintended rafts. Imagine some Pleistocene-aged fisherfolk, their village suddenly ravaged by a tropical storm, being washed offshore clinging to downed trees, carried by wind, wave and current, and the survivors eventually running aground on a new land or island. Evidence? Probably impossible to ever ascertain.

There was previously another, even stronger, anthropological objection. It was once generally accepted that the arrival times for the populating of the American continents north and south (by walking) dated to no earlier than about 12,000-14,000 years BP. It even used to be thought that the cut-off date was as recent as 11,000 years BP, on the cusp of the Holocene Epoch, based originally on the presence of Clovis spearpoints and charcoal dating of cooking fires in caves in the American deserts. No longer. Recent excavations in New Mexico (summarized in an earlier SWFAS Newsletter) hint that weapons-using hunters may have been out and about in the Americas as long ago as 35,000 years BP. And we all know about the 12,500 year radiocarbon dates at Little Salt Springs right up the coast; and the weapon-scarred mammoth bones at Cutler Hammock near Miami.

It gets better. The El Jobo complex in coastal Venezuela was radiocarbon-dated to about 16,000 years BP. Down in the Orinoco Basin anthropologists, using a series of carefully constructed arguments in conjunction with actual data recovery, have demonstrated as early as 1980 that long-accepted dates for cultural developments and subsistence in that region needed to be reinterpreted--and revised backward. It now seems, based on recent reports in the scientific literature, that there was another indigenous culture co-existing at the same time as the North American Clovis-folks, i.e. about 11,200 years BP. This culture used different tools, had adapted to living in humid rain-forests--and, in one case, were located some 5,000 miles farther south in the Brazilian Amazon!

Now, here's the problem. In the Late Pleistocene-Early Holocene there were two possible ways to get from New Mexico to the Amazon--by land, walking across the Panamanian isthmus and down the South American coast; and by sea, to land directly on the coast. But as noted above, no fabricated watercraft have been found that date to these periods--yet. Putting this aside, journeying along either route would require substantial amounts of time, which further implies that Clovis and non-Clovis cultures were extant in the Americas well before the Holocene dates once believed to have primacy.

An even greater problem is with island settlement, because walking to them is obviously out of the question. Yet there are intriguing hints, based on curious, apparent similarities in insular and continental artifacts, that some Caribbean islands were being exploited by Meso-Indian mariners whose continental homesites date to as early as 4,000 years BP. And, if sealevels had earlier receded so that broader areas of the continental shelves were exposed, then across-water distances would also have been reduced at these and even earlier times, aiding and abetting expansion. How much so? We'll look at some numbers next time.

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Endowment Fund

You've heard of the TV show *So You Want To Be A Millionaire*? The premise is that most of us wouldn't mind being one. Well, at SWFAS, you don't have to be one to set up an endowment fund. It can be a modest amount, and if it's over \$75.00, you can request a letter from us (as a non-profit 501(c)3 organization) giving you a deduction for your tax

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situation. You can earmark how or for what you would like your money spent: the Craighead Laboratory, Speakers, General Operations, a specific project or activity such as C-14 dating -- you name it. If you are interested, see our treasurer, Charlie Strader, and he will furnish the details and happily accept your contribution. Thanks!

Carpool Volunteers

It has come to our attention that several SWFAS members are unable to travel to our meetings at Florida Gulf Coast University due to inability to see to drive at night, basic lack of transportation, etc. It seems a shame that several of us couldn't offer rides to those folks, as long as it's not too far out of our way and the understanding is that the arrangements can be flexible (i.e. no guarantee we have to do this for every meeting). Here's a chance to get to know each other better and become firm friends!

We will ask for a show of hands -- or provide a sign-up sheet at the next two general meetings for those willing to provide a lift. We'll need to know where you live, as to match those needing and those

providing rides. This is a kind and neighborly thing for you to do and would be greatly appreciated.

about 2 blocks to the cross-street. Turn left (north) and go to the third parking lot (P4 on the map). Follow the elevated

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Steve Bertone, Resource Management Specialist at Rookery Bay, will be the speaker at the August meeting of the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society on Wednesday, August 15 at 7:30 P.M. The title of his talk is "Rookery Bay, an Archaeological and Historical Overview."

He has been employed at Rookery Bay for over ten years and during that time has helped build a solid data base of information about its numerous archaeological and historical resources.

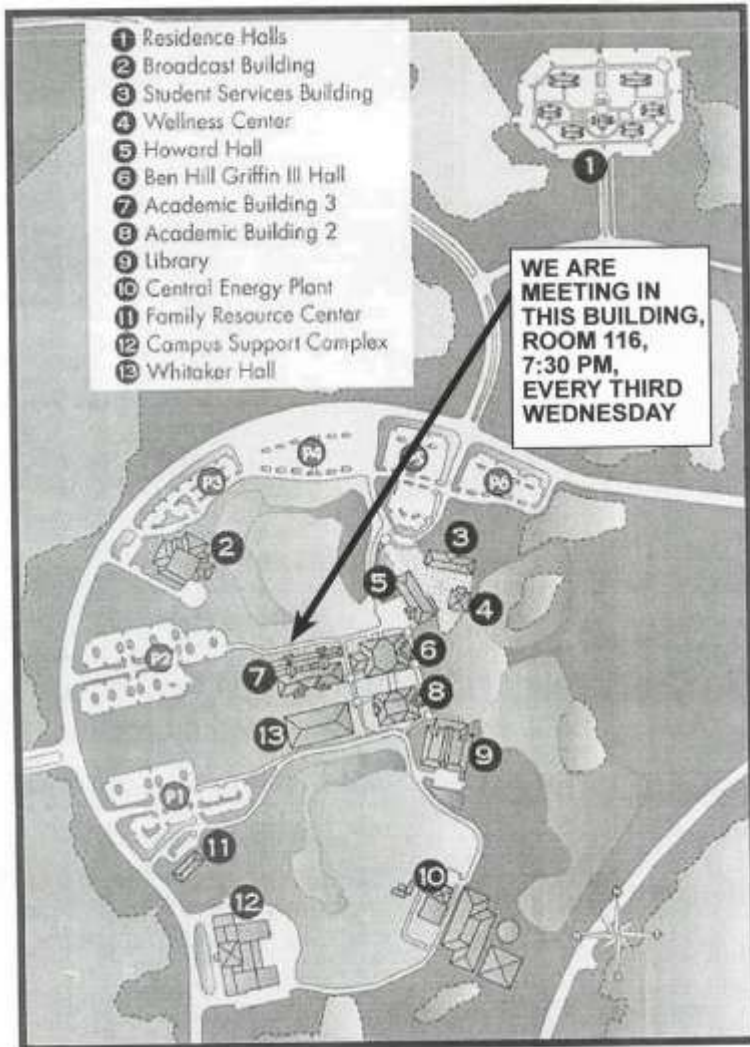
Avocational and professional archaeologists as well as those interested in history are welcome to attend. For further information call 941-597-2269

CRAIGHEAD LAB NEWS

By Art Lee

Workers at the Craighead lab had the pleasure on two occasions, July 8 and 12, of visits by nine staffers of the Koreshan State Historic Site at Estero.

Arranged in advance, the visits provided the visitors with



SO WHERE IS IT, ALREADY?

I've been asked to run again the map and directions where to find our "new" meeting site on the FGCU campus. Take I-75 north (or south) till you come to Exits 19 (or if you're coming from the north) Exit 20. Go east just a few short blocks to Ben Hill Griffin Parkway. Take the Parkway to the FGCU Campus Entrance. Go east

boardway/walkway south to where it ends at Building AB3. Go through the front door into the lobby, turn right and the classroom 116 is about the second on your right. Look for some of the other members. Sounds tiresome, but finding us is easy, trust me!

a general familiarization with archaeology and, more specifically, with the prehistory of this area and its problems. The programs started with a viewing of *Shadows and Reflections*, a prize-winning video produced by the Florida Anthropological Society which offers a broad view of the state's prehistory.

That was followed by a description of SWFAS and the Craighead laboratory and their program of defending prehistoric resources and recovering information from sites on the brink of destruction.

The visitors were shown

how materials are prepared, curated and analyzed from arrival at the lab to the issuance of formal technical reports. A display mounted by Walt Buschelman showed the various types of material salvaged from the test pits and the forms used in their analysis. Exhibits prepared by Jean Belknap dealt with the analysis of bone and pottery, and Jack Thompson wrapped the session up with a table showing the translation of data from forms to the text, tables and illustrations which make up our own issued

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reports and articles in *The Florida Anthropologist*. General discussions that followed the demonstrations dealt with areas of cooperation in the future; in the operation of the state park in general, and in cooperation in the annual Archaeology Month activities.

Participants from Koreshan July 8 were Jim Palmer, Annie Bacon, Kate Onemus, Jim Glenn and James Flemming; those on July 12 were Michael Steen, Mike Heare, and Ron Bogner.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?
This mask literally “washed up” in Northwest Florida recently. Is it from Pre-Columbian North America (or could it be from Africa, maybe from someone’s collection washed out to sea by a hurricane?) If you have any information, tell Jack Thompson – he’ll know whom to contact...