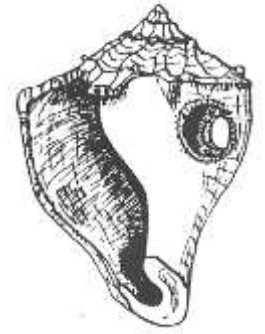


SWFAS

NEWSLETTER

THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



JOHN G. BERIAULT, ACTING EDITOR

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 8

AUGUST, 2002



1908 Postcard showing photo taken ca. 1890 of what is now downtown Miami, not far from the Miami Circle. These fellows have been excavating a street. Did they find anything exciting? We'll probably never know...

Fine Fieldtrip Had By All on July 20th

Participants smart and lucky enough to turn out for the July 20th SWFAS Fieldtrip to Warm Mineral and Little Salt Springs and to Spanish Point were not disappointed. Steve Koski, our good and knowledgeable

friend from the Warm Mineral Springs chapter of FAS gave us an excellent tour of the two springs, and then, after a very good lunch, the

remainder of the day was spent visiting Spanish Point, a truly impressive historic and prehistoric site situated on Little Sarasota Bay. Our able guide, Bruce, took us into places visitors are not normally shown, including an amazing Late Archaic period horseshoe-shaped "shell ring" feature. The non-profit organization

maintaining Spanish Point has done a truly fine job of restoring and interpreting this very important and beautiful site.

Field Trip set for August 17th

SWFAS is planning to visit the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum on the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation August 17th. Information on this Field Trip will be found on Page Four of this

Newsletter.

Inside this Newsletter

- 1 We have Moved! Florida Gulf Coast University is the new site of our General Meetings**
- 2 Gone Fishin'... Got Fish? Part Two. Read Dr. Robert Gore...**
- 4 SWFAS Field Trip Set for August 17th... Read Notice Inside!**

THE DATE BOOK

August 14th SWFAS Board Meeting – Hampton Inn, Bonita Springs, 7:00 PM

August 17th SWFAS Field Trip to Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.
There will be **NO** General Meeting this month!

About SWFAS

The directorate: President Betsy Perdichizzi, first vice president Tom Franchino, second vice president Corbett Torrence, membership secretary Charlie Strader, treasurer Charlie Strader, recording secretary Jo Ann Grey, directors Steve Tutko, Sue Long, Dottie Thompson, Jo Ann Grey, Don Taggart, Jack Thompson, John Beriault, Charlie Strader, Theresa (Torrence) Schober, and Dr Susan Stans.

The committees: Field: Beriault, 434-0624; Hospitality: position open; Membership: Charlie Strader, 941-992-6133; 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.



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

**"GONE FISHIN'"--
Fending, Tending,
Mending, and Vending.
Part 2**

All fishing was (as it still is today) essentially aquatic hunting. The act itself in both the pre- and post-contact days was further embellished in that it usually used an atlatl-thrown spear, a bow and arrows, perhaps cast nets, and at times man on beast contact. Seventeenth century Jesuit and Franciscan priests gave vivid descriptions of sea-going chases in which the south-eastern coastal-dwelling Tequesta or "Keys" Indians put to sea in their log-canoes and actively pursued and ran down marine mammals such as whales, dolphins, sea otters, or manatees. In some cases they even jumped on the back of the mammal and after plugging its blowhole

rode the hapless beast to shore where it was dispatched. The image of a mechanical bull in a red-neck bar comes to mind, except that no one (not even red-necks) eat mechanical beef.

Whales, porpoises, and manatees could be hunted this way, with spears as the weapon of choice. Seals, when they came ashore to breed, could be approached on foot and clubbed or speared. The Caribbean Monk Seal, now believed to be extinct, provided sea-fare for both the Indians and the Spaniards, including the supposed "discoverer" of Florida Juan Ponce de Leon. Even notably and normally pelagic (i.e. offshore) fish species might be taken, as the recovery of sailfish bones in one midden testified. These large predatory and tasty fishes could have been collected by good old-fashioned baited hook, or entrapped or netted when they wandered too close inshore. The latter occurrence does happen from time to time, even in the 20th century. My own now-sainted father-in-law provided some indirect evidence to this. He swore that he once observed a large sailfish jumping in the poly-saline Intracoastal Waterway at Dania, just south of Port Everglades. Whether the fish was "lost" (as seems likely) or perhaps was trying to rid itself of gill and body parasites (which also seems likely) will regrettably remain unknown. But it was observed at least five miles south of the nearest oceanic inlet--and my

father-in-law was not a drinking man.

It must also be remembered that in those pre-twenty-first century halcyon days of yesteryear the abundances of animals waiting to be fished could be phenomenal. Someone deciding to go fishing would have to be totally inept to come back to the village empty-handed. For example, on the central eastern coast Jonathan Dickinson and his party, captives of the Jeaga Indians near Jupiter Inlet, were amazed at the abilities of one Jeaga who, using a "striking staff" (presumably an atlatl and spear) was able in two hours' time to obtain "as many fish as would serve twenty men." Dickinson also noted the use of torches by the Ays Indians to go night-fishing, probably again using atlatl- thrown spears.

At the very least, of course, catching fish was serious business because it meant food and survival for both the individual as well as the village. The abundances of fish remains in the coastal middens certainly indicates that most fishing was quite probably more like work than sport, for the tribal adults at least. And the manual labor involved more than just hauling nets ("man's work") or cleaning the catch ("woman's work"). For example, to fish the deeper waters canoes had to be built, and Pedro Menendez de Avila noted the large fishing-canoes that the putative Calusa rowed (and later sailed) offshore. The fish were then presumably obtained using atlatls and spears, hauled aboard, and the canoes were then rowed back to

shore. Whether nets were ever dragged behind the watercraft offshore or were merely used like throw nets remains unclear, but even hauling by hand a small seine net packed with, say, flying fish would be no mean feat, especially in a tippy log-canoe on choppy offshore seas. One alternative would be to leave the closed net packed with fish in the water, and row back to the beach. But just thinking of the labor involved in towing a fully packed-net sea anchor is enough to raise a sweat. And dead and dying fish also attract sharks, which could be both boon and bane, depending on whether one was out of, or in, the water . .

On the other hand, for shallow-water near-shore fishing, seine-like nets seemed to be the method of choice for catching large numbers of fish. These may have been actively employed as dragnets pulled by wading humans, or were perhaps set up across tidal passes as more passive collection devices before or during an outgoing tide, as noted by The Inca Garcilaso de la Vega. Either situation was nonetheless labor-intensive, particularly if successful. And there was always the mending to be done after larger fish broke through the meshwork.

PAGE THREE

Add to this the fact that the nets, atlatl fishing spears, or weirs (whether of rocks, reeds, tree trunks or cordage) all, had to be constructed first, and then maintained using manual labor. Net cordage also had to be woven laboriously from palmetto or cabbage palm fiber and, although reasonably strong, has little durability over time once it was immersed. As any commercial fisherman knows, even today's nets have a disconcerting tendency to become frayed or holed, requiring constant mending. If captives or slaves were not available to weave or repair the nets, or haul them onshore when full, this task may have fallen to the old men or children of the village. The catch, of course, had to be removed from the net (perhaps by both men and women), sorted and cleaned, and then prepared (probably by women) before it spoiled. It seems intuitive that any fishes still living might even be maintained in small rock-enclosed or tree-trunk walled holding pens until needed.

Because seine-nets are relatively unselective as to prey it also seems safe to assume that excess catch of desired fishes, or even large numbers of by-catch (i.e. other less desirable marine, estuarine, or freshwater animals) were occasionally taken. Rather than discard the less desirable "trash-fish" species, these may have been set aside for trade items with aboriginals living in the peninsular interior, or perhaps

for use as primitive fertilizer for those aboriginals who might have small gardens. Catfish dorsal spines, and stingray tail spines are well-known midden items and functioned as spear or arrow points, and quite possibly as needles when appropriately shaved. Certainly the presence of teeth from at least five families of sharks (including even those from a fossil species) in the middens and mounds around Lake Okeechobee implies that such commerce regularly took place from either coast into the interior.

At the same time, it seems self-evident that fishing methodologies that worked offshore, or in the estuaries, could also be useful in the upper reaches of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Rivers. Because several edible fish species such as snook, red-fish, and even tarpon have no difficulty in making it into and surviving in fresh or nearly fresh waters, what was sauce for the Calusa could be sauce for the Guacata. Contrary to present-day popular opinion, tarpon is not inedible. In fact, at the turn of the nineteenth century "tarpum" was collected in the mangrove estuaries, boiled, heavily-salted, and used as an adjunct ration by the white settlers around Fort Pierce. Next time we will look briefly at fishing as a type of hunter-gatherer activity.

ART LEE RESIGNS

Art Lee has submitted his resignation as Director of the Craighead Laboratory. The Board of Directors reluctantly accepted it and named him Director, Emeritus at its July 10 meeting. Art had held the position since 1987 when SWFAS saved Dr. Craighead's field lab, which had been given to Collier County, by moving it to the Museum. Since then the lab has been brought to a level of technical proficiency that is respected by academicians and professional archaeologists. Art will stay on at the lab and continue to do the editorial work at which he is the best.

He came to SWFAS in the early 80's after a distinguished career in publishing, the Navy and the State Department. He is past FAS president, holder of the Lazarus Award and Craighead Award. Lynn has been at his side in all he has done.

The Board made Jack Thompson Director. He joined SWFAS in 1981, served as President and Treasurer. He also is a past President and Treasurer of

PAGE FOUR

FAS. He recently received its Lazarus Award. He has been at the lab regularly for about 8 years. He has been supported by Dottie throughout.

The major lab project to clean and analyze the materials found at the Old Marco Inn will begin as soon as a final agreement is received.

Art will be recognized at the September meeting at Florida Gulf Coast University.

SWFAS FIELDTRIP – AUGUST 17th, 2002

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Seminole Tribe of Florida Museum

Saturday August 17, 2002
Directions I-75 Exit 49, Go north at the gas station for 17 miles (863) 902-1113 \$3.00 per person

Meet at museum no later than 9:45 for a 10:00 guided tour. Boardwalk nature trail on own.

Optional lunch at Billie Swamp Safari after tour, 3 mile ride.

Reservations - call Betsy Perdichizzi (239) 394-6917

VIDEOS AVAILABLE

The Craighead Lab has a number of videos that members can

borrow. The lab is open Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Call 239-774-8517.

ANASAZI, The Ancient Ones

CAHOKIA MOUNDS, Ancient Metropolis
DOMAIN OF THE CALUSAS, Discovery of South Florida

MIAMI CIRCLE, BBC Documentary
PREHISTORIC FLORIDA, Geology of Florida

PRIMITIVE POTTERY MANUFACTURE, Pottery making techniques.

SHADOWS AND REFLECTIONS, Florida's Lost People
TOTCH OF THE EVERGLADES, Interview with a pioneer.

SUN DAGGER, America's Stonehenge.
WEEDON ISLAND, Jerry Milanich

GORDON R. WILLEY Speech in 1999 at FAS Annual Meeting
WINDOVER

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH
Glen Doran

HELP WANTED

Some of us love to dig, some like lab work and others prefer writing reports. The lab is looking for a person who can organize files, straighten out a library of reference books and keep things organized in the Craighead Lab. He or she will be a valuable team member.

Call 239-597-2269

THE MIAMI CIRCLE The BBC video on the Miami Circle is now available. Call Cindy Chevalier at 954-792-9776. We saw it recently but it has not yet been shown on PBS in this country. Those at the meeting rated it highly.

PAGE FIVE



Steve Koski displays sloth bone at Little Salt Springs



Happy participants in SWFAS July 20th, 2002 Fieldtrip at Warm Mineral Springs

Warm Mineral Springs

By Betsy Perdichizzi

Warm Mineral Springs is only 100 miles up Interstate 75 just north of North Port, it is the place where mammals and human beings interacted in the Pleistocene Age.

It is a sinkhole. Carbonic acid ate slowly through the limestone and created the sinkhole, trapping old seawater hundreds of thousands of years ago. The water is 78 degrees year round fed by a fissure 230 feet deep. Nineteen million gallons of water a day flow with 8 to 9 million gallons flowing away.

Many people were enjoying swimming as Professor Steve Koski guided 30 spectators on a Southwest Archaeological field trip. When asked if Warm Mineral Springs was Ponce de Leon's Fountain of Youth, Koski replied, "It could have been, there is no other thermal spring in Florida."

The discoveries of this area have placed Pleistocene mammals, such as the giant sloth, in the same period as man. Pleistocene, you may recall, is part of the Neocene period originating one million years ago, characterized by widespread glacial ice and the appearance of man. Human burials were found on a shelf at the 45 foot level. The main occupation by man was during the Paleo Indian Period.

Some cataclysmic event happened 10 to 12,000 years ago causing stalactites to drop onto the ledge. These were brought up and

have been placed around the fountain near the entrance.

The state of Florida had a chance to buy it in 1987. They came up with 2 million dollars and had a 2 million dollar grant from C.A.R.L. They price was 4 and a half million dollars and the deal fell through. Florida lost the opportunity for a state park with its only thermal spring. In 1950 the Springs was bought for approximately \$380,000. by the Fred Daily family.

In the 1940's it was a wilderness area. There was a trailer park in Punta Gorda with a dirt road leading to the springs. People came to bathe in the mineral waters said to be beneficial for the health.

In 1958, Colonel William Royal was the first person to use scuba diving gear to investigate the Springs, he found mega fauna, human remains, a Giant Sloth and a Saber Cat.

In 1961 Colonel Royal and Eugenia Clark, a specialist on sharks, found a skull on the shelf that still had human brain tissue. Their reputations suffered because reporters thought they had planted the material.

In 1970 Carl Clausen, State Archaeologist, was the first scientist to write a paper about the Springs. This led to funding that occurred from 1972-1975.

During 1980-1990, Sonny Cockrell acquired funding but it was discontinued after 1990.

Little Salt Springs

The group also paid a visit to Little Salt Springs now owned by the University of Miami for study and research. LSS is actually larger, more potable, and has a deeper ledge at the 90 foot level.

It has a 3 1/2 foot tarpon, snakes, turtles and four alligators, a mother alligator and four babies. Koski said a long haired student snared a baby alligator and was looking at it when the mother crossed the springs toward him. The student released the baby, but ever after had to be vigilant when near the water. The mother alligator would come up out of the water to protect her babies against him. She did not bother the rest of the team. They captured the mother and took her three miles away before turning her loose. She returned to the Springs after a week or so, much battered from cross country trip.