

Southwest Florida Archaeological Society Newsletter



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JANUARY 2005

JANUARY 2005 SWFAS MEETING

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society will meet on Wednesday, January 19 at 7:00 pm at the Bonita Springs Community center at Old 41 and Reynolds Street. The public is invited to attend this meeting

David Southall, curator of Education at the Collier County Museum, will tell the story of Florida's wars of Indian Removal, and how they contributed to the root causes of the greater conflict that was yet to come.

Beginning with the invasion of Spanish Florida by U.S. forces in 1816, Florida's Indians were involved in bloody conflicts that would determine their destiny. Economic and political forces put pressure on these disparate bands to give up their lands or fight, igniting one of the most costly and unpopular of the Indian Wars.

In 1835, hostilities began again with the destruction of an entire company of soldiers along the Fort King Road at the hands of the Seminoles. In 1842 the war ground to a halt as the U.S government teetered on the brink of bankruptcy. The last and final conflict occurred from 1855 – 1857 in a remote part of Florida which years later would become

Collier County. Escaping into the vast unknown of the Everglades a small but determined band of survivors would re-emerge some thirty years later to become an instant tourist attraction; the Florida Seminole.



Seminole Chief Billy Bowlegs

David Southall is originally from Buffalo, N.Y. He has lived in S.W. Florida full time since 1981 and part-time since 1974. Southall went to work at

the Collier County Museum in 1998 after selling his environmental management business that he had operated here since 1984. David's involvement with the Museum began in 1985 when the Friends of the Museum hired his company to oversee and guide the organization of the Native Plant garden there. Southall went on to become a member of the Friends and serve many years as a museum volunteer.

raphy, and repairing, collecting, and shooting antique firearms. Southall is active in the Boy Scouts as a Crew Advisor, in the N.R.A. as a Training Counselor, and in the Museum's living history group. He is the Curator of Education at the Museum and is responsible for the school programs and guided tours.

A QUESTION OF HISTORICAL CONSEQUENCE

By Jeremy Cox , Staff Writer

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Bonita Banner, December 18, 2004

When the community's historical society offered to help the city of Bonita Springs buy a widow's more than 90-year-old house, elected leaders greeted the proposal with almost unanimous support. A contract was soon drawn up.

Then came the repair bill. A series of foreboding inspections revealed structural weaknesses, the troubling presence of mold and other expensive problems, which, all told, would have cost \$268,000 to fix. At a Dec. 1 meeting, the City Council voted by a wide margin to reject the deal.

The Bonita Springs Historical Society says it is contemplating other financing options to keep the deal alive. But if that effort fails, local preservation advocates fully expect another buyer to tear down the East Terry Street home, which is one of the three oldest in the city.

The recent past hasn't been kind to the city's oldest buildings.

Historic buildings are disappearing at a slow but steady clip. Of the 67 Bonita structures that had been placed on a state master list of his-



David Southall

A Botanist with a life-long interest in native plants and ecosystems, Southall's other interests include history (naturally), astronomy, photog-

torical properties over the years, only 54 remained standing as of last September, according to a city-commissioned historical survey. In short, one out of every five vanished.

In some cases, the structures needed to be razed because of termites or poor care. Elsewhere, progress — in the form of a highway project or the promise of a more lucrative development — was to blame.

The situation demands action, local preservationists say. Council members, though, have refused to create a separate preservation panel or strengthen laws meant to protect old buildings.

The list of extinct buildings includes the Dome Tavern on East Terry Street, a pioneer's barn on Matheson Street and a noted pharmacologist's house on Arroyal Road.

Charlie Strader, a Bonita Springs preservation advocate, has pushed the city to split the Local Planning Agency and the Historic Preservation Board; the same seven people oversee both. The advisory role would be better served in the hands of those who are passionate about the preserving the past, he said.

Last month, the members of the dual panel endorsed Strader's proposal. But the City Council turned down the idea Wednesday, citing the extra staff time and cost involved in forming a new board.

The city is losing out on millions of dollars in state and federal grants because that money often requires local governments to have a separate historic preservation board, Strader says.

Councilman David Piper also raised concern the new board would become overly zealous. The council has rebuffed previous efforts to write laws that would force historic property owners to get an advisory panel's go-ahead before making building modifications.



95 year-old house...

Wednesday's meeting carried another disappointment for Strader and others who want old structures to stay put. Mayor Jay Arend urged the council to reconsider buying the historic East Terry Street house, but the idea died after no one seconded Councilman Ben Nelson's motion to revive the discussion.

Historical Society members had described the deal as a sweet one. Beverly Glazier had agreed to sell the two-year home for \$365,000, \$100,000 less than she had initially asked. In a deal hammered out over several weeks, the city and the society agreed to share the cost. The city would pay \$265,000 and the society would pick up the rest.

City Manager Gary Price proposed charging the society with maintaining the house and using the rest of the property as a place where other endangered historic structures could be relocated.

But when the quarter-of-a-million-dollar renovation estimate appeared, several council members balked. Such money could be better spent on other issues, Councilman Wayne Edsall said.

"I recognize that historical preservation requires money, but it was a big dollar figure," he said.

The house is one of a kind, historians say.

Bonita pioneer Keitte Leitner picked the two-story house out of a Sears catalog in 1910, and its journey to what is now Bonita Springs included a barge ride down the Imperial River. One of Leitner's daughters lived in the house until 1979. Alan Glazier, who runs a Bonita barbershop, and his wife bought the house in 1983 and sold it to his parents, Arnold and Beverly, in 1985.



...from a Sears catalog

"The whole society is all down right now," said Lynn Becker, a society member who helped in the negotiations. "A couple of ladies were in tears after (Wednesday's) meeting. ... If Beverly sells it to a contractor, it will get demolished. That's our greatest fear."

Alan Glazier, who was a charter member of the Historical Society when it formed 20 years ago, said he wants the house — and its history — to be saved. He left Wednesday's meeting feeling bitter.

"I don't want anything to happen to the house, and I feel mom has done the best she can to work with them," said Glazier, 51. "Things that were said at that meeting last time obviously show they (council members) are not interested in this kind of thing."

The council's renovation bill was far too high, he said. For instance, the reports stated the cloth-wrapped wiring would have to be replaced with modern electrical fixtures. But, Alan Glazier said, the wiring was shut off in the 1980s and replaced with circuit breakers. In addition, a carport and a second-floor addition could be removed instead of repaired because neither are original features, he said.

Nelson, who has lived in Bonita for all but the first four years of his life, criticizes his fellow councilmen for doing too little to protect historic buildings. His position is informed by personal experience.

About six years ago, he bought a property on Wilson Street near Old 41 Road that contained two small cottages. He hoped the structures

would become the headquarters for his marine construction company.

He decided to renovate one of the buildings, but the other had to be torn down because of years of ill treatment.

"They were crack houses, is what they were," Nelson said. "I've got pictures. You wouldn't believe how awful they were. It was just completely decayed."

Preservationists wonder: What will it take for the city to turn up the intensity of its historic-preservation efforts?

"I guess the bottom line is do we want to look like Naples or do we want to look like Bonita?" Strader said. "And I'm sad to say you can see who's winning."

LATE BREAKING NEWS

As we go to press, there is word that there may be a resolution for the 1910 Bonita Springs house. Chris Busk, who has successfully saved several old houses in the past, has come forward to discuss possibilities for buying and saving the Glaser house. While not firm at this time, there is a real hope that yet another important historical house can be saved.

LOCAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY FESTIVAL AT ROOKERY BAY

Rookery Bay Environmental Learning Center is planning a History and Archaeological Festival on Saturday, March 19.

They plan to include a variety of opportunities to learn about the

Calusas and other Native American civilizations in this area, as well as post-Civil War pioneer settlers. There will be an obvious focus on the importance of using archaeological science as a tool to uncovering these educational treasures.

Environmental Learning Center



Other activities will include a guided walk down Shell Island Road. Also, they might have the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy conduct some real archaeology survey work across the creek that would provide an opportunity for participants to see the science in an actual setting. Other activities may include Reserve artifacts on display, a real loom and spinning wheel demonstration and presentations on native plant uses.

Rookery Bay Environmental Learning Center is located at 300 Tower Road off Collier Boulevard between Naples and Marco Island.

DECEMBER FIELD TRIP

By Jack Harvey

Ortona FL, December 11, 2004

Archaeologist Robert S. Carr led 30 SWFAS members and guests on a fascinating tour of the Ortona Indian Mounds in Glades County today. Bob Carr led our December 2003 field trip in downtown Miami and this one could not have been more different. Instead of skyscraper gazing and city traffic dodging in one of the richest parts of Florida, this year we had burrs in our clothes and thorns in bare legs in the deep boonies of one of Florida's poorest areas. Archaeology is where you find it.

Carr explained that the mound and canal complex near the tiny hamlet of Ortona was once one of the major population centers of inland south Florida. Many other well-known inland sites, such as Fort Center, were just a fraction of the size of the Ortona complex.

Many Newsletter readers recall the series of essays by Robert Gore called "Potsherds and Potshots" that appeared in 2001 through 2003. He touched on the Ortona constructions and today we were able to view them directly. There are many mound complexes that remain, although seriously damaged by 20th century road material mining.

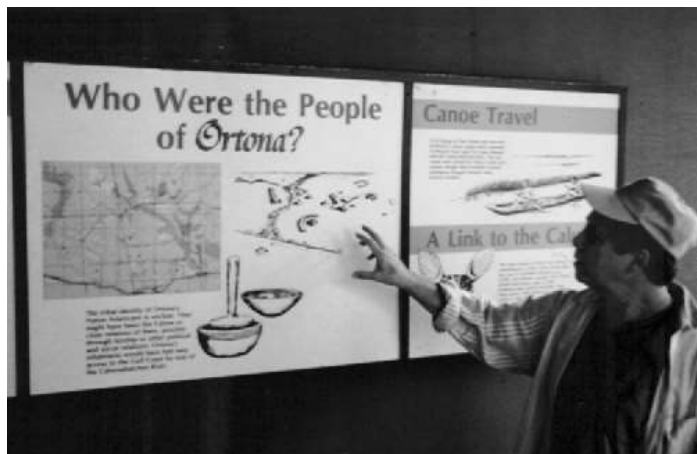


Left to right, Bud House, Don Taggart and Bob Carr



Ancient Canal Bed

We saw part of the bed of the eastern of two major canals constructed by aboriginals for canoe traffic supporting their vigorous economy that existed in this area. The remaining parts of the canals are now quite dry, both from climate change and lack of maintenance. They once provided easy access to the Caloosahatchee from the complex. Canoes could then travel upstream to Lake Okechobee or downstream to the Gulf.



Carr discussed Ortona history

Once thought to be a Spanish fort, artifacts now make it clear that aboriginals built the complex during the Calusa period. The earliest dated material was about 500 B.C. and fiber tempered pottery was found. Yet we aren't certain how these people interacted with the Calusa. Many questions remain.



Questions and Answers

Were they friendly or subservient to the Calusa along the coast? What became of them?

A year ago, our lunch was served in a posh tourist hotel next to the Miami Circle. Today we ate lunch around the weathered picnic tables of the Larry R. Luckey Ortona Indian Mound Park.



Photo by Jack Thompson

Lunch in Ortona

Following lunch in the park, Carr led our cars to another mound a mile or so farther east and outside the park. Unlike the previous dwelling mounds we visited today, this was a burial mound.



Gopher Tortoise

A large gopher tortoise watched as Bob led us single file into dense scrub and palmettos. Trees hid our goal but it quickly became apparent we were climbing a man-made mound wall rising rapidly above the flat plane we had left.

As we reached the top of the wall, another, newer, man-made feature immediately blocked our passage – a deep cut into the ancient burial mound heart created by 20th century bulldozers mining road material.



SWFAS in the Cut

The mining was stopped when human skulls began rolling down the slope of this cut. Archaeology is where you find it.

ABOUT SWFAS

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To Join: Address your check to:

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society,

PO Box 9965,

Naples FL 34101.

Dues are:

Individual - \$20. Sustaining - \$50.

Family - \$35. Student - \$15.

QUESTIONS, comments or contributions to the newsletter: Betsy McCarthy, 909-8 Augusta Blvd., Naples, FL, 34113, or e-mail:

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Dues are Due in January for 2005 !

If you joined on or after **September 1, 2004**
you are good until **January 2006**.

See **About SWFAS** above for dues and mailing address.