SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

- NEWSLETTER -

Vol. I, No. 1

MAY 1985

THIS is the FIRST ISSUE of the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society's newly expanded monthly Newsletter. It is our intention to give our members and friends up-to-date information and greater in-depth coverage of upcoming events, tours, digs, and meetings. Also, we hope to bring detailed results of the Society's work in the field. Included will be reports on excavations, publications, and other work by our members.

THERE will be sections set aside for comments by our President, book reviews, new publications, and items of interest to the Society's members. The main focus of the Newsletter will be, of course, "The Archaeology of South Florida," but we are not confining ourselves to only this area. Articles and information on all subjects that may be of interest will appear. We will be limited only by the assistance and cooperation of you, the membership.

IF you wish to express ideas or contribute to the Newsletter in any capacity, please write to:

"SWFAS" NEWSLETTER
P. O. Box 9965
Naples, Florida 33941

SWFAS

THE MAY MONTHLY MEETING will be held at the First Federal Savings and Loan of Ft. Myers, (Community Room), 3201 Tamiami Trail North, Naples, Florida, at 7:30 p.m., May 16th, 1985.

OUR speaker will be John Beriault, who will present to us the details and findings from a recent camping and excavation trip to Big Munson Key. John, Charlie Strader, and Joe Long spent four days on the archaeologically rich key which is owned by the Boy Scouts of America. The island is in the lower Florida Keys near Big Pine Key in the Atlantic. It is comprised of mangrove swamps, low scrubby "rock land" hardwood hammock, and beach dunes; the western edge of which contains a major village midden site.

THE island's lush tropical surroundings are home to a herd of 20-30 good size healthy Key deer and a rare sub-species of raccoon (Key Vaca Raccoon), which attempted to relieve the campers of their food every night.

THE three members of SWFAS joined Bob Carr and others in excavating the Pre-Columbian site, and an elevational profile of the dune ridge and pits was completed. Ceramics, tools, jewelry and other possible art works were found.

WE hope you will all be at the meeting Thursday to see and hear about this interesting trip.

SORTING SESSION June 11, 1985 @ 5:30 p.m., J. Beriault's Residence

THESE meetings will allow you the first-hand experience of sorting and classifying the materials from excavations, test pits, and other collections the Society has amassed. (Call J. Beriault, 261-0295)

SITE FORM MEETING June 18, 1985 @ 6:30 p.m., C. Strader Residence

THESE meetings not only include the completion of site forms, but we discuss and plan future activities of the Society. If you would like to take part in the shaping of the Society and its goals, you are welcome to attend these meetings. (Call C. Strader, 992-6133)

JUNE MONTHLY MEETING June 20, 1985 @ 7:30 p.m., First Federal of Ft. Myers, Community Room.

ANALYSIS SESSION June 23, 1985 @ 10:00 a.m., J. Beriault Residence

THESE get-togethers will let you examine and catagorize the artifacts from the sorting sessions. You will be able to assist in the reconstruction of South Florida Prehistory. (Call J. Beriault, 261-0295)

APRIL MONTHLY MEETING

OUR thanks go to Dr. John Gifford of the University of Miami. As guest speaker at our April meeting, Dr. Gifford spoke on "Little Salt Spring" near North Port, Florida.

THIS was truly one of our most interesting presentations. The questions that were raised and the lure of discovering the answers in the not-too-distant future make Little Salt Springs a special center for archaeological investigation.

THE opportunity for an unprecedented look at an archaic tribe population and their life styles adds to the stimulating appeal of the site. Dr. Gifford's presentation of the facts and previous work done, as well as the goals of the future made the evening very informative and entertaining.

THANK you again, Dr. Gifford, and please keep us informed as to your progress.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER — The SWFAS Library

FOR a time, the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society Library will basically be an Intra-Membership Loan System. A current list of the bibliography will be maintained and made available at SWFAS functions such as the monthly meeting. From a master check out list, the item(s) desired can be requested and reserved. The items can be exchanged at the next appropriate meeting. For the time being, I will provide a location for donated items and coordinate the exchanges.

WE are requesting all types of items such as books, magazines, periodicals, newspaper clippings, reports, research papers, etc., containing information relating to the group's interests.

IF you wish to donate an item, please include your name and the date and other pertinent information. The item(s) can be retained in your possession until requested or given to me if it is more convenient. The item may be returned to the original owner upon request.

PLEASE help to enjoy and contribute to this Southwest Florida Archaeological Society Library. Do keep in mind when items are checked out that many are on temporary loan, so we should maintain their condition. For more information, contact me at 992-6133. Thank you.

Charlie Strader, President

THE GREAT GLADES GRITTYWARE PARTY — "The Ecstasy and The Agony"

THIS extravaganza was so spectacular that it had to be held at the Strader Resort on the beautiful Imperial River on two different dates.

SATURDAY, March 30th, the forming and molding phase (The Ecstasy) 25-30 people gathered to form terra-cotta clay into items ranging from ancient indian pottery vessels, to wind chimes, to indescribable objects whose use and meaning are still undetermined. Things started off slowly on this beautiful South Florida day, but the pace quickened when the participants found out where the refreshments were.

ON the serious side, over 70 objects including birds, trays, masks, vases and jars were made. John Beriault used a hand-carved native cypress stamping paddle with a concentric eye design from the Ft. Walton culture on one side, and a St. John's check stamp on the other to form two authentic looking Indian vessels. Art Lee incorporated Sanibel and Gordon Pass incised designs on his items. A tarpon jaw bone, native shells and other items were also used to incise various objects.

SATURDAY, April 13th, firing phase (The Agony) After a two week drying period we prepared to fire our clay in the authentic Indian manner using a shallow open pit fire. Pine and oak were used as fuel and the temperature range of 1000-1100° F was reached. As coals developed the pottery was placed carefully in the pit. This became known as the calm before the storm. Suddenly small explosions began shattering the stillness. The beautifully designed pottery was transforming itself into instant sherds.

(Continued)

SURPRISE and dismay fell over the group as well as fragments of pottery. Several reasons for this problem were discussed. Too great a temperature change, uneven heating, and so on could have been possible causes of the breakage to most of the pottery. We were all disappointed that our plans weren't successful and our creative works did not reach completion. However, it was decided that we will attempt to find out what went wrong, and we will try the whole process again in the fall.
ALL in all we learned something, had fun, and are anxious to do it again. The spirit of comraderie and humor pervade many events sponsored by SWFAS, and this was no exception. Thanks everyone for a good time.

BOOK SHELF

***National Geographic Research: A Scientific Journal
THIS is a new publication from the National Geographic Society, and it is primarily for reporting the results of research funded by the Society through its Committee for Research and Exploration. It is an interdisciplinary journal ranging from anthropology to zoology. The fields of archaeology, geology, historical geography and many others will be included.
'RESEARCH' will cover areas that go beyond the scope of the monthly National Geographic Magazine and in much greater technical detail. In the first issue (Winter 1985), is a paper by Janice G. Brown & Arthur D. Cohen entitled 'Palynologic and Petrographic Analysis of Peat Deposits, Little Salt Springs, Florida'.
PEAT cores from a bay hammock around Little Salt Springs and nearby marshy slough were analyzed to form a paleoecological history of this Florida site. Peat deposits began close to the end of Paleo-Indian occupation (circa 7000 B.C.). Human habitation at the site reached maximum levels during drier periods when fresh water was not generally available. Dry periods correspond to 8000-7000 B.C. and again around 5000 B.C.
NATIONAL Geographic Research will be published quarterly by the National Geographic Society, 1145 17th St..N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Subscription price is $40.00 per year.

***Perspectives on Gulfcoast Prehistory
THIS is another new book by Dave D. Davis, Editor, University Presses of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. ($24.50, 379 pgs., 14 black & white photos, 61 text figures, 32 tables)

***The Discoverers by Daniel J. Boorstin
THIS book covers the extraordinary saga of human discovery. Boorstin shows how and why the most promising words ever written on maps of human knowledge are "terra incognita" unknown territory. The hero of this book is 'man' the discoverer.
HOW and why did the keeping of time and geography become known to man. Heavenly bodies and our own bodies, plants and animals, history and human society had to be discovered and explained to the common man starting in the deep recesses of the past. The countless Columbuses that opened these doors are introduced here. The obstacles to discovery are also presented. The illusion of knowledge and a backdrop of myths and so called common sense, all created problems in the search for the truth.
THE Discoverers is a fascinating approach to history with new and interesting items throughout. It is very readable due to Boorstin's wit and lucid manner of presentation. Highly recommended.
Vintage Books, $9.95, Paperback 745 pgs. Local bookstore availability.

***Travel Guide and Dig Finder

JOIN scientist researching at field locations! ARCHAEOLOGICAL programs in the South Pacific, Caribbean, Mexico and Western USA. Programs in other disciplines such as paleontology, ethnography, marine biology and zoology. Write for free color catalogue of expeditions. Have Mule Will Travel, Inc. 787 South Grade Road, Office 38, Alpine, CA 92001. Call (619)445-9264

COLUMBUS LANDING SITE

San Salvadore Island, The Bahamas, June 6th July 6th, 1985. THIS is a prehistoric Arawak village on the island's coast. It was the site of Columbus' first landing in the New World in 1492. VOLUNTEERS accepted. Write to excavation director for information and requirements. Contact Charles A. Hoffman, Dept. of Anthropology, Box 15200, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ 86011. Call (602)523-3180.

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA CANOE CLUB

THE canoe club will be conducting the following trips:
June 1-2 Peace River Canoe Trip (Overnight)
June 22 Fish Eating Creek Canoe Trip (Day and/or Overnight)

For more information call Mark Benedict at 262-0304 (9a.m. to 5p.m.)

MINUTES OF SWFAS MEETING April 18, 1985

— President Strader opened the meeting @ 7:30 p.m.
— Officer's reports were read and accepted.
— New library system adopted. (See President's Corner)
— Plans of sitework and surveys at Bonita Bay were discussed. Surface collections, core samples, and test pit are planned.
— Request was made for greater participation in sorting material from previous excavations.
— Plans for the Lignum Vitae, Indian Key trip were finalized. Meeting was adjourned @ 10:00 p.m.

Barbara Logie, Secretary

Membership Application

Mail to:
SWFAS
P. O. Box 9965
Naples, FL 33941

Check One:

☐ Individual — $10.00 ☐ Contributing — $25.00
☐ Family — $15.00 ☐ Student — $7.50

Yes! I want to support the Southwest Florida Archeological Society in their work of preserving and interpreting the prehistoric heritage of Southwest Florida.

Name _____

Address _____ Phone Number _____

Interests and Abilities: _____

_____

I hereby agree to abide by the rules and bylaws of the Southwest Florida Archeological Society. I further release from any and all liability due to accident and injury to myself, dependents, and property, the Southwest Florida Archeological Society, its officers, members, and any property owners cooperating with the society.

Signature _____