

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY - NEWSLETTER -

Travis F. Doering, Editor

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- THE JANUARY MONTHLY MEETING of the SWFAS 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. on Thursday, January 16, 1986.

- Election of this year's officers will be part of this month's meeting. A review of nominations which were presented at an earlier meeting are as follows:

President	:	John Beriault	Treasurer:	Jack Thompson
1st Vice Pres.	:	Travis Doering	Trustees :	Keith Waterhouse
2nd Vice Pres.	:	Carol Wilson		Art Lee
Recording Sec.	:	Barbara Logie		Mary Ruth Winchell
Corresponding Sec.:		Gail Strader		

- Our guest speaker for the evening will be Frank Perry. Mr. Perry is an expert on Pliocene Fossil Shells from the Pinecrest Formation. He will show us slides and samples of the kinds of things that can be found at the Warren Ashley Pit near Sarasota. Many of these shells are rare and valuable. This will be a great opportunity to see exactly what our field trip to the Ashley Pit on Saturday, January 18th will be like. Details about the trip will be discussed. (For more information call John Beriault at 261-0295.)

- SITE FORM MEETING - Tuesday, January 14th, at 6:30 p.m. at Charlie Strader's residence (992-6133). Three recently found and very promising sites will be discussed as well as other subjects of importance to SWFAS.

- ARCHEOLOGY CONSERVANCY MEETING - Saturday, February 1st at 1:00 p.m. at Charlie Strader's residence (992-6133).

- STRADER SITE INVESTIGATION - On February 15th and 16th, the SWFAS and members of Naples High School Social Studies Group will examine the near famous Strader site on the banks of the Imperial River in Bonita Springs. Please call Charlie Strader (992-6133).

- FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING - February 20th, 1986 at 7:30 p.m., First Federal Savings & Loan of Ft. Myers, (Community Room). The topic for this meeting will be "The Archeology of Granada" featuring The Leon Wilder Collection considered to be the finest pre-columbian pieces from this recently famous island.

- DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING - If you missed the December monthly meeting you missed one of the special talks of 1985. Tales of 115° heat, sandstorms, tent-downing windstorms, range fires, flash floods and other memorable events of a thoroughly enjoyable vacation were related to us by Cathy Trejo. Cathy, who has been an educator for 18 years, this past June and July attended a BYU sponsored archeological dig at the "Nancy Patterson Village" in S.E. Utah.

Fulfilling a 10 year dream to learn 1st hand about the American Indian group known as the Anasazi, Cathy dug with professionals and other

dedicated amateurs at this site which dated from 900-1300 A.D. and is referred to as Pueblo I & II. By sharing the dangers, exciting adventures, and common interests and goals, Cathy made very close friends and had numerous once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

The information and slides were terrific; Cathy's personal remarks and presentation were great. Thank you for the evening's talk. We hope to hear more about your trip in the future, and possibly some documentation that Nancy Patterson was really a lost race horse.

- DUES - If you have not paid your 1986 dues - YOU ARE LATE!!! Please bring them to the monthly meeting. We need and appreciate your support.

- SPECIAL ARTICLE - The following is a special article written by SWFAS member Lindsey Williams for the Daily Herald News and appeared in the December 14, 1985 issue. This fine piece gives a good background, as well as the latest findings on the discoveries at Windover Farms that the SWFAS newsletter has been reporting on over the months:

Ancient Brain Code Matched By Scientists - "We sawed off the back of the skull, and into our hands dropped the brain -- completely and perfectly preserved!"

Dr. Glen H. Doran, archeologist for Fl. State Univ., speaks with awe of the discovery of a 7,000 year old human brain from a Florida swamp near Titusville. It is the first time this delicate organ, this old, has been unearthed intact.

The preservation is so near natural that scientists at FSU and Univ. of Florida have been able to clone -- create a living duplicate -- of the genetic chromosome containing the code for growing a specific individual.

"This doesn't mean an ancient Indian will come crawling out of our laboratory," Doran hastens to reassure the squeamish. "Growing a complex organism is beyond human capability."

He explained, however, that it should be possible to determine the pattern of "rungs" on the twisted ladder-shaped cells which ordain the sex, shape, size, color and thousands of other characteristics which make up living creatures.

"Who knows? We might find a chromosomal difference that would help us understand cancer or hereditary diseases." -----

A cache of human bones was made last year when a land developer subdivided a piece of property known as Windover Farms. A swamp was directly in the path of a planned street. Earthmoving machinery was brought in to remove muck and replace it with hard fill. Most swamp muck in the area is 10 feet deep; but here the depth was 20 feet, not counting three feet of standing water. When the equipment operators came to an unusual peat strata "like rubber" they also turned up what they thought were rocks. Upon closer examination the rocks proved to be human skulls.

Fortunately the developer recognized that the find was significant and informed the FSU anthropology department. Immediately evident to Dr. Doran were shell, wood and human skeletal material of five persons. Three of the individuals were children, a unique discovery inasmuch as immature bones decay easily.

The scarcity of artifacts and a complete lack of pottery fragments confirmed the age of the Windover site, for stone tools and ceramic utensils are a relatively late introduction into Florida. Windover Farms rerouted its road and bore the initials costs of site preparation and permitting. Archeological excavation began in the fall of 1984. A 3-acre portion of the pond was drained by continuous pumping of 158 wells encircling the site. Originally the pond was a cove of Bird Lake inadvertently drained by an attempt to build a canal at the turn of the century.

A crew of dedicated volunteers under the direction of Dr. Doran and

Dr. David Dickel, field director, removes damp peat a quarter-inch at a time with hand trowels and dentist picks. -----

So far, four skulls with brain material have been found, the most recent one in November while we toured the site. "When we found the first brain-filled skull last year we didn't realize what we had," Doran recalls. "There was no previous experience to guide us. It was several hours before we suspected the material was brain tissue. Then we simply put it in a plastic sack and drove it to Tallahassee at the end of the day."

"Since then we have learned to put the skulls into air-tight bags with nitrogen gas, pack them in ice and rush them to nearby Brevard Community College."

The high degree of preservation is because of the rapid burial of bodies directly into underwater graves scooped out of the swamp muck which has no oxygen to support decay. According to radio-carbon datings of the bones, the burials extended over a period of 400 years between 7,000 and 8,000 years ago. Apparently, the site had been set aside by the Indians as a cemetery. Doran speculates that the natives of that time believed spirits were released at death, and water was a barrier to them. Thus, immediate burial under water was essential. The association of water with supernatural spirits was common with primitive people. "Fortunately this superstition preserved the brain before it had an opportunity to deteriorate," he states.

The practice has produced an efficient time-capsule which can be deciphered to some extent with the help of archeologists, anthropologists, microbiologists, paleobotanists, pollen specialists, geologists and zooarcheologists. From microscopic analysis of organic material sifted from the digging, the scientists have been able to reconstruct the environment of Florida over a 10,000 year period. Analyses has shown that the area immediately after the last ice age was cooler -- comparable with the climate of Virginia today. During the past 8,000 to 9,000 years the area has undergone a gradual warming trend, and pine forest flourished. This was crowded out successively with bay, hickory, and live oak trees. About 5,000 years ago there was a savannah-like environment with grasses prevalent. This was rather quickly replaced with the present subtropical foliage. -----

To date, 40 individuals have been removed from the site -- half of them "sub-adult." Doran and Dickel expect to find "at least a hundred" more if funding can be obtained. Doran estimates that a thorough excavation of the site would cost "something over a million dollars" because of the elaborate piping and pumping necessary. He ruefully admits that this much money would be hard to come by. The state legislature recognizing the importance of the site, has underwritten much of the current expenses. But the demand for scientific funding is great. Doran hopes for foundation or federal funds to continue the dig. "Our findings held show how closely we, today, are related to the people who lived here thousands of years ago," declares Dr. Doran.

"All of us have a basic desire to find out who we are. We hope to dig out clues that fit an enormous puzzle. Maybe we can catch a glimpse of humankind and who we are."

Daily Herald News, Saturday, Dec. 14, 1985 by Lindsey Williams

- NEW BOOK - Book Traces Naples' History --- A prominent local historian and a management consultant turned history-buff have co-authored the most recent history book on Naples which takes a fresh look at the community's early years. "The Founding of Naples" is the culmination of months of research by historian Ron Jamro, director of the Collier County Museum, and Gerald Lanterman, a management consultant. The book was

published with funding from Naples Federal. "Ever since I came to Naples six years ago, I have wondered why so little had been written on the city's founding," Jamro said. "I had heard the traditional stories, but had never seen documentation to back them up."

Jamro's curiosity heightened when 1985 was declared the Naples Centennial and he was appointed to the Naples Centennial Foundation. He served on the board with Lanterman. Jamro began his own research and found information that didn't match up with the information that has always been accepted as fact over the years.

Jamro and Lanterman continued researching Naples history, making trips to Key West -- the original county seat of what now is Naples -- to examine historical records, personal accounts, maps and illustrations, and rechecked their findings with information published in newspapers of the times.

"The story we found was too good not to be told," Jamro said. "We rediscovered key people local history had forgotten."

The 70-page book contains historical maps and photographs, 90 percent of which have never before been published locally. The book sells for \$4.95 and is available at all local Naples Federal branches and at the Collier County Museum. Copies will be donated to the schools and libraries. "We weren't seeking to sensationalize, but rather to set the historical record straight for future generations of Neapolitans to be proud of," Lanterman said. No profit is expected from the book sales. The asking price should just cover printing costs. However, if there is a profit, the money will be donated to the Collier County Museum Fund.

Naples Daily News Article.

- BOOK REVIEWS BY ART LEE - National Geographic Recaps Ancestors Search - An arresting three dimensional (holographic) photo of the Taung child's skull on the cover announces the National Geographic's latest recapitulation of man's search for his ancestors.

The November 1985 issue devotes 69 pages to a strikingly-illustrated review of the fossil evidence of man's development, following much the same path pioneered by the American Museum on Natural History's Ancestors exhibit of 1984, reported to SWFAS via slides.

Notable in the Geographic's report is the are work. One four-page fold out demonstrates Lucy's bi-pedalism by showing the skeleton as it would appear walking and running. Skulls and skull fragments, plus reconstructed skulls occupy a six-page spread and represent types from Australopithecus afarensis to Homo sapiens via A. africanus, A. robustus, A. boisei, H. habilis, H. erectus, H. sapiens (archaic), H. sapiens (Neanderthal), and H. sapiens (modern). The same cast demonstrate their bi-pedalism by running across four pages in drawings.

Sidebar stories and paintings dramatically show the progress of human and pre-human types through time, early man's distribution through Africa and Eur-Asia, techniques of dating and curating fossils and man's development of tools and art. A separate article by Richard Leakey and Alan Walker tells of the discovery of a 12 yr. old Homo erectus skeleton last year.

- Autel, Jean M., The Mammoth Hunters; Crown Publishers, NYC, 645 pp., \$19.95, 1985. ---- This is the third novel of Mrs. Autel's Earth's Children series, the others having been The Clan of the Cave Bear and The Valley of Horses. All represent attempts to describe life in Europe during the late Pleistocene.

The plot (a predictable triangle) and dialogue are pure soap opera, her characters stereotypes, and the writing commercial. (To nudge her readers along she inserts sex scenes every hundred pages or so -- explicit except for the coy substitution of "manhood" and "womanhood" for the Latin

or Anglo-Saxon genital terms).

What makes her book of interest is the fact that she has read, talked and corresponded with world experts and has travelled extensively in researching it, and is successful in fleshing out the archeological relics on which it is based. End papers illustrate the most important artifacts.

Her characters invent horseback riding, wolf taming, the needle, flint and steel, stuffing for birds, flour, the atlatl, the travois, the Heimlich maneuver and CPR being, as Cro-Magnons, inventive and capable of abstract thought.

Provocative is her theorizing about the Neanderthal mind (they are regarded by her Cro-Magnons as sub-human and are called "flatheads"). Taking off from the fact that the Neanderthal brain, though very large, was weightedⁿ in favor of memory function, she postulates a mind carrying inherited memory extending back through evolutionary eons.

The Collier Public Library has it both on regular and its new rental loan.

Art Lee

- COMMENTS AND ARTICLES - Send any information or articles you would like to see included in our newsletter to SWFAS Newsletter, P. O. Bos 9965, Naples, Florida 33941.

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 _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Interests & 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 SWFAS, its officers, members, and any property owners cooperating with the Society.

Note: All dues & contributions to SWFAS are tax deductible.

Signature: _____