

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY - NEWSLETTER -

Travis F. Doering, Editor

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- THE FEBRUARY 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, February 20, 1986.

- Our guest speaker will be Mr. Leon Wilder, whose collection of Pre-Columbian Art from the island of Granada is on display at the Univ. of Florida and Florida State Univ. Museums. Mr. Wilder's presentation of "The Archaeology of Granada" should be very exciting with slides of his famous collection. Bring along a friend and find out about the Arawak and Caribe Indians that inhabited this West Indies island.

- SITE FORM MEETING - Tuesday, February 11, 1986 at 6:30 p.m. at Charlie Strader's residence (992-6133). Among our topics at this meeting will be a planning session for investigation of the Strader site.

- STRADER SITE INVESTIGATION - Saturday & Sunday, February 15th & 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. This is approximately a two-meter-deep stratified site and various methods of excavation will be used to determine the exact boundaries of the site. Call Charlie Strader (992-6133); more information at monthly meeting.

- ANALYSIS SESSION - Tuesday, February 18, 1986 at 6:00 p.m. at B & B Builders, 3800 No. Tamiami Tr. Your chance to examine and categorize artifacts from past digs. (Call John Beriault, 261-0295).

- JANUARY MONTHLY MEETING - This was our annual business meeting and the election of new officers was held. The results are:

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

The Golden Trowel Award for 1985 was presented to John Beriault for his continued outstanding service to SWFAS.

Site Name Contest Winner - After months of nailbiting anticipation, the winner of this drawing is Lonnie Martin.

Our guest speaker at the January meeting was Frank Perry, a collector and expert on Pliocene Fossil Shells. Mr. Perry showed slides of the numerous types of beautiful and intricate fossil shells that have been found at the Warren Ashley Pit. The pit is part of the Caloosahatchee formation known as Pinecrest.

On Saturday, January 18th, Mr. Perry led a SWFAS field trip to the Warren Pit near Sarasota to hunt for fossil shells. After an enjoyable and fruitful search at the pit, our friend George Lure arranged a very nice visit to the Palmer Site, also known as Spanish Point. This is a

large complex on a finger of land that juts out into Sarasota Bay with midden ridges and a circular burial mound.

Our thanks go to Mr. Perry and Mr. Lure for making this another interesting and successful field trip.

- CUTLER RIDGE FOSSIL SITE - On Saturday, February 22, 1986, Dade County Archeologist and good friend of the SWFAS, Robert Carr, has invited our members to a special tour of the newly famous "Cutler Ridge Fossil Site". This is the site that has recently made headlines because of tremendous finds of human and animal fossil remains. Details and other plans will be discussed at this month's meeting.

- WELCOME NEW MEMBER - Gary Susdorf of Ft. Myers

- STONEHENGE EXPANDED - Condensed article from The Miami Herald, January 12, 1986 by Arthur Herman, United Press International.

Amesbury, England. The land around Stonehenge is rich in pre-historic burial mounds and earthworks. From 400 mounds, ditches and embankments, archeologists can envisage the ancient cemeteries, temples, farms and fields of the builders of mysterious Stonehenge and even of the people who arrived on the windswept plain centuries before that. Now the owners have opened much of the surrounding 1,438 acres so that tourists can enlarge the scope of their visit and explore the pre-historic landscape. The central attraction at the site 80 miles southwest of London remains, of course, the circular monument of huge stones that dates from 4,000 years ago. Over the years it was thought to be a temple, a giant sundial or an astrological clock. Experts now believe the ceremonial monument was a place of secular as well as religious pilgrimage. Scholars also marvel at the effort spent in transporting and erecting some 120 boulders and stones that weighed up to 50 tons each.

Now, visitors can follow marked trails linking the archeological sites. The four trails, varying in walking time from one to three hours, lead to "barrows" or Bronze Age burial mounds, to panoramic views of Stonehenge and to the Cursus, believed to be a ceremonial race course or processional way that predates Stonehenge and may go back to 4,000 B.C.

- EARLIEST KNOWN BIRD - The Archaeopteryx fossil has long been considered the earliest known bird. A few scientists contend the fossil, locked away in the British Museum of Natural History, is a 19th century hoax. A far larger number support its authenticity. Archaeopteryx has the body and teeth of a small dinosaur and the feathered wings of a bird. The first specimen was found in 1861 in a German quarry whose limestone was about 150 million years old. Since then, four other specimens have been found. Archaeopteryx means "ancient wing".

- INDIAN REMAINS RETURNED TO TRIBE - North Kingstown, Rhode Island. The 300 year old remains of 56 Narragansett Indians uncovered three years ago during an archaeological dig have been returned to the tribe. Tribe members called the return a "magnificent gesture", saying it was the first time uncovered remains of early Narragansetts were not given to an institution for study or display. The remains and some 200 artifacts were discovered in 1982 during construction work. The burial ground was used between 1640 and 1670.

- MORE FOSSILS - Scientists have made the largest fossil find in No. America, uncovering more than 100,000 bone pieces of animals 200 million years old at a site in Nova Scotia, the National Geographic Society announced today. The fossils, representing the crucial period in history when dinosaurs emerged to become masters of the Earth, were discovered on the shores of the Bay of Fundy north of the coast of Maine. Geologist Paul E. Olsen of Columbia Univ's Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory and biologist Neil H. Shubin of Harvard Univ. led the field work that made the discovery last summer. "Bones were sticking out all

over the place. "They were everywhere", Shubin said of the site, located on the north shore of the bay near rural Parrsboro. Some of the more significant finds so far are 12 skulls and jaws of Tritheledonts, the reptiles that are closest evolutionally to mammals. They are the first found in North America and represent the largest single collection of these rare fossils in the world, the scientists said.

Other skulls, teeth, jaws and bones unearthed at the site along the water's edge belong to dinosaurs, ancient crocodiles, lizards, sharks and primitive fish. The work, supported by the National Geographic and done in cooperation with the Nova Scotia Museum in Halifax, resulted in the researchers trucking three tons of rocks from the Canadian site to their laboratories for further examination. Only a small portion of these rocks have been examined in detail, they said, and new specimens are uncovered every day.

The fossils were found in a rock formation known to geologists as the Newark Supergroup, the remains of an ancient, deep rift which stretches from Nova Scotia to South Carolina. About 200 million years ago, scientists say, this rift valley was close to the equator.

- LETTER FROM OUR OUT-GOING PRESIDENT - Charles Strader

Dear Fellow Members:

I would like to take this time to thank you for the opportunity to serve as President of the Southwest Florida Archeological Society for the past two years. It was gratifying to see both the support to the Society and also the personal support. Special thanks go to the "working members" who keep the Society going.

I would also like to use this opportunity to encourage even more support for the Society's goals. We should realize that we are more than a social club. By being a productive Society, we can make major contributions in the study and preservation of archeological resources here in Southwest Florida. We all need to be willing to do more than sit back and watch as there are many ways in which we all can contribute. Without our efforts, future generations will have less of a chance to study and learn from the remaining archeological sites in Southwest Florida.

I personally intend to not only remain active in the SWFAS but to become even more active in the locating, recording and preservation of archeological resources. I would like to see the Society become even more involved with cultural resource management. We can do this by all of us trying to be more aware of the changes in our local area both in real estate development and politics. Who knows, continued awareness and involvement may even lead to the local legislation that is needed as an instrument for preservation. As a "watch dog" organization, we can increase our opportunities to contribute to the archeological knowledge of our area.

While I have your attention, I would also like to discuss our sorting, analysis and recording sessions. Even though these meetings provide an excellent learning opportunity for new members and enjoyable get-togethers for many of us, it is also a very important function and responsibility of our Society. I hope we will have good "turnouts" for these needed activities.

I guess my point, more simply put, is to encourage more people to get involved so that we do not let just a handful of people carry the load.

Under the direction of our new president and "founding father", John Beriault, I am sure that the SWFAS will remain enjoyable and educational. Let us not hesitate to offer our advise and assistance to him so that the Society's presence and influence will continue to expand.

Thanks to the editor for allowing this ex-president so much verbage in this prestigious newsletter.

- "CORRIDOR" SITE, DISCOVERED BY MEMBERS OF SWFAS -

Around the time of the Christmas holidays, several of us got together for an exploring expedition to an intriguing hammock island near the Fakahatchee Strand. We had glimpsed this feature on many occasions while going to and from other projects and activities. It seemed a likely spot for some sort of archeological site.

We approached the island by wading through a brackish-salt grass marsh. Rope grass, black rush, and salt marsh bermuda grasses extended in sheets far to the distance under a pale blue winter sky devoid of clouds. As we walked across them, we noted the grasses were coated with a chalky white scum called periphyton-a type of algae. We surprised a four-foot long banded water snake sunning himself for warmth on a grass tussock. The snake dove off the grass and promptly slid into the muck at our feet. Two sandhill cranes flew past us low over the marsh only a short distance away.

As we came closer to the hammock, large cattails blocked our view. Their matted dead blades impeded our way and made pushing through them a tiresome process fraught somewhat with the danger of disturbing a sluggish water moccasin, which may also have been out sunning himself.

We had arrived at the island and stood on its shadowy edge staring into the tangled jungle-like interior. A confused growth of cabbage palm, gumbo limbo, mastic pigeon plum, wild lime and stangler fig presented itself. Cautiously we climbed over vines and fallen cabbage palm trunks. We began examining the root balls of these windfalls for traces of archeological evidence.

Suddenly, we caught sight of the white glimmer of shell protruding from one of the root masses. Examining this we began noting fragments of pottery; whelk, horse conch, cockle, clam and oyster shells; and a whelk shell "hammer" - clear evidence of an intensive midden site.

The "high" ground formed by this deposit was scarcely a foot above the surrounding grass marsh. It was divided into two crescent-shaped elevations by a white mangrove swamp occupying the center of the island. The site, in its position to the coast and the cypress strands to the interior, could probably be termed a "corridor" site - a "way station" or "stopping-off" place for indians canoeing down one of the tributary creeks leading to a coastal tidal river. Evidences of such a creek or canoe route through the grass marsh was found near the island.

Artifacts observed at the site suggest this low "black dirt" midden with a prominent marine shell component to have been occupied from Glades II through at least early Glades III or from c.900 - 1400 A.D.

We have named the sites Marsh Island I and II and filed a site form with the Department of Archives, History and Records Management in Tallahassee on them.

John Beriault

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Check One:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual	-- \$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contributing	-- \$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family	-- \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	-- \$ 7.50

Yes! I want to support the SWFAS 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 are tax deductible.