

Newsletter

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



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August meeting

BERIAULT TO DISCUSS PELICAN BAY SITE

Results of two weekends of decapage on two sites in the Pelican Bay area will be shown August 20 by President John Beriault during the monthly meeting of the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society in the Community room of the First Federal Savings and Loan of Fort Myers, 3201 Tamiami Trail North. The meeting will start at 7:30 p.m.

SWFAS crews on May 2 and 3 and again on June 20 and 21 excavated a total of 18 one-square-meter areas, recording the position of each of the thousands of shells and fragments encountered on what apparently was a temporary-use location. The deposits were relatively shallow.

Except for a knoll feature which remains to be explored, the two sessions completed the organization's survey of the site.



CONSTRUCTION OF INDIAN MOUND STARTED AT COUNTY MUSEUM

Bulk of the earth for the replica of an Indian mound SWFAS is constructing on grounds of the Collier County Museum is in place and has been contoured.

The mound will be in two sections, divided by a boardwalk which will guide visitors through the museum grounds, as though a cut had been made in a single, larger, structure.

The fill came from a pond dug on the museum grounds and was moved to the mound site by a contractor for Friends of the Museum, which is reconstructing the facility. Contouring and finishing was done by SWFAS shovelers.

The mound will be topped by vegetation typical of the structures SWFAS diggers explore, and one side will be shaped to look like a corner of a trench excavation, showing the stratification that would be formed by various periods of occupancy in an actual archaeological site.

The mound is located between the principal museum building and the Craighead laboratory structure, near an area which has been planted by the Native Plant Society.

The museum has not been opened to the public since it was moved from its former location in the county governmental complex.



DATEBOOK

* September 8. Site form meeting at the Strader residence; 6:30 p.m.

* September 17. Regular monthly meeting at First Federal Savings and Loan building; 7:30 p.m.

SPEAKER SHARES WONDER OF OLD STONES WITH SWFAS

"As we grow older
The world becomes stranger, the pattern
more complicated
Of dead and living....
And not the lifetime of one man only
But of old stones that cannot be deciphered."

T.S.Elliot, East Coker

Jumping from Aztec to Olmec cultures by way of Mayan, Zapotec and Toltec, Dr. Joseph Booth gave a full-house SWFAS audience a kaleidoscopic view of some of his favorite pre-Columbian artifacts July 16 at the organization's monthly meeting.

The educator/artist overwhelmed Society members and visitors with scores of slides he has taken during years of studying pre-Columbian Mexico and Central America. The Community room of the First Federal Building was lined with a hundred color and black and white prints, and he used two projectors, one for his running slide show, and the other charged with sketch maps to keep his audience oriented geographically as his subjects skipped from area to area and from epoch to epoch.

His theme, Some Stones I Have Known, gave his fancy free rein as he moved from architecture to graphic representation, his sole criterion being that the stones had caught his imagination or raised a question. Who was, he wondered, the man with the pointed beard whose likeness he found in stones widely separated in space and possibly time? What was one culture's fascination with jade, which was valued more highly than gold? How is it that offerings still are being made to carven images that belong to another time and civilization?

Dr. Booth recently retired to Sarasota after careers that have included school administration, art teaching, photography, art, museum curation and, with them all, a passion for the pre-Columbian world. He was accompanied by his wife, Maxine.

Archaeology in Florida

LITTLE SALT SPRINGS YIELDS 7,500-YEAR BRAIN

Miami-The University of Miami has announced that a two-meter test pit at the edge of a slough contained a human burial with a well-preserved brain and wood, including an oak digging stick. Radiocarbon dates were 7,500-7,800 years B.P. The work was done by Carl Clausen and Dr. John Gifford and was the first there since 1978. SWFAS visited the site last year.

ORLANDO CLAIMS OLDEST BUILDING

Orlando-A team from Rollins College at Winter Park has closed down a two-month dig near the Orange-Osceola county line after finding four circular earth stains believed to be post holes dating to 4,000 years B.P. They were in a semi-circle around an apparent hearth. Director Marilyn Stewart says they could represent the oldest structure known in Florida. The site has yielded 10,000 artifacts including 100 points dating to 8,000 years.

CONTRIBUTIONS HELP DE SOTO DIG

Tallahassee-Donations totaling \$8,000 are keeping alive a dig at the site of Hernando de Soto's 1539 winter camp a few blocks from the state capitol. Under direction of Calvin Jones, the site has produced two 16th century coins, a cross-bow arrow tip, quantities of chain mail, Venetian glass beads, Spanish pottery sherds and hand-wrought nails.

"FIRST COLONY" SITE CLOSED

St. Augustine-University of Florida researchers have shut down a dig at a site which Curator Kathleen Deagan of Florida State Museum believes to have been the oldest known successful European settlement in North America, the camp of Conquistador Pedro Menendez who left Spain in 1565. The excavation has uncovered evidence of European-style buildings, fortifying walls, musket shot, nails, dinner plates, buttons, glass, and rosary beads -- but nothing later than 1571 when St. Augustine was moved to its present location.

HERITAGE ASSOCIATION SETS "DISCOVER THE PAST" FESTIVAL

Osprey-The fourth annual Discover The Past festival will be held November 7-8 at Spanish Point, located at 500 North Tamiami Trail here, the Gulf Coast Heritage Association, Inc., has announced. The event will include displays of crafts and yester-year skills such as soap making and a "sheep to shawl" exhibit, food and entertainment. Proceeds will benefit Spanish Point, a 30-acre environmental, archaeological and historic site.

YOU CAN'T TELL THE PLAYERS WITHOUT THE PROGRAM

Guide to Fossil Man

Michael H. Day; University of Chicago Press

Fourth edition 1986; 432 pages

For those who try to keep reasonably current on the rapidly unfolding drama of man's development, immense solace can be taken from Michael Day's willingness to keep track of this bewildering array of bones and theories.

His first guide to this fascinating world was published in 1965, and he has tried to keep up with the proliferation of bones that have been unearthed since then, with editions appearing in 1967, 1977, and last year.

The book describes what the author regards as the major

WHO ARE YOU?

Guide to Fossil Man gets first things first, such as nomenclature. Here's where you are, in the order of things, according to the Guide:

Kingdom	Animalia
Phylum	Vertebrata
Class	Mammalia
Order	Primates
Superfamily	Homoidea
Family	Hominidae
Subfamily	Homininae
Genus	Homo
Species	sapiens
Subspecies	sapiens



finds and lists for each the zoological names, location, name of finder, geology of the site, associated artefacts and fauna, dating, morphology, dimensions, relationships of finds, institutions at which bones are kept, sources of casts, and bibliographic references.

Further, it provides a short course in the anatomy of fossil man: bones; normal skeletal, sexual, and age variations; changes with aging; teeth and footprints.

Day is professor of anatomy at the United Medical Schools of Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospitals, the University of London; chairman of the Leakey Trust and past president of the Royal Anthropological Society and the Primate Society of Great Britain.

SWFAS TEAM SURVEYS TRACT DUE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Responding to a request from the developers, a four-man team from SWFAS July 25 made a walking survey of a 115-acre tract south of Bonita Springs being prepared for development.

Three sites of especial interest were explored, and all quadrants of the tract were walked through and representative areas checked. No sub-surface testing was done.

One of the areas was a site on which President John Beriault some years ago had found flint debitage; it has been obliterated by bulldozers constructing new U.S. Highway 41 and is not considered to merit further investigation.

A second is a small circular sand mound and associated borrow pit, one of a group of four previously reported by SWFAS to the Florida Department of Archives, History and Records Management. Further investigation was advised before any disturbance.

The third site is a small isolated ovoid sandhill covered with live oak. Beriault believes it to be a natural feature possibly modified by Indians. Testing has been recommended and it is understood that the developer plans to keep it intact.

Besides Beriault, members of the survey party were Leo Ruble, Jack Thompson and Art Lee.

WELCOME TO SWFAS!

New members Walter and Mary Buschelman, Lawrence Miller, and Patricia Ann Perry, all of Naples, have been welcomed into SWFAS by Treasurer Jack Thompson and Membership Secretary Lynn Lee. The four attended the Society's July meeting.

SWFAS GROUP VISITS MODEL DEVELOPMENT AREA

Sixteen members of the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society July 26 inspected a condominium/residential development on Tidy Island, near Bradenton. The project has been commended for the manner in which it has preserved its natural environment and archaeological riches.

Guide for the group was Bill Burger of Terra Ceia, a contract archaeologist who is largely responsible for inspiring the preservation of the historic and prehistoric features of the area.

He had studied the site as part of his work toward a master's degree in archaeology, and at a 1982 public meeting concerning the development spoke out in favor of preserving its past. He spent the following three years working with the developers in realizing a community into which have been incorporated two burial mounds, one, constructed between A.D.600 and 800, containing between 100 and 200 remains, and the other, built between A.D.800 and 1,000, having about 100 skeletons.

The development also preserved a shell midden on which has been constructed a reproduction of a pioneer cabin, serving as a museum to house artifacts found on the site and typical of its historic occupancy.

Those making the trip were Alice Ash, John Beriault, Virginia Beville, Al and Isabella Felsberg, Art and Lynn Lee, Joe and Freda Long, Charlie and Gail Strader, Jack and Dottie Thompson, Keith and Anne Waterhouse and Mary Ruth Winchell.

Cinema

CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR NOT QUITE CAVE BORE



The screened version of Author Jean M. Autel's book of the same name, which recounts the life of a Cro-Magnon orphan girl rescued by a band of Neanderthals, in horseshoes would be close enough to measure but definitely not a ringer.

Mrs. Autel's book (see SWFAS Newsletter Vol.I No.9) was well researched and while lacking in literary merit had a certain archaeological authenticity. The movie, unfortunately, suffered from poor writing, lack of imagination, and apparently, budget problems.

The dialogue, a small step above the "ughs" and "wahs" of earlier screened attempts to reproduce prehistoric communication, was not convincing in its use of the signs that Mrs. Autel saw as supplementing the Neanderthals' arguably limited vocalization. And the script writers failed entirely to convey the sense of tribal inherited memory, one of the author's most intriguing ideas.

Make-up was sketchy, good in some characterizations, but one wonders why no attempt was made to equip the Neanderthals with one of their most evident features, the prominent orbital crests. As it was done, hair and eye color seemed the determinant feature difference between the sub-species. (Probably sub-conscious racism, but the "superior" Cro-Magnons were blond and blue-eyed, the Neanderthals dark.)

The film now is available in video cassette. Mini consensus: Worth the two hours and \$2 video rental but not the evening or admission price for a theater. ARL

BONITA BAY PROPERTIES CONTRIBUTES RESEARCH FUNDS

A payment of \$300 has been received by SWFAS from Bonita Bay Properties to help defray costs incurred in assisting the company in its cultural resource management program.

In announcing the grant, Past President Charlie Strader, who is principal contact with the organization, thanked its Jim Osterling for his continuing support of, cooperation with, and assistance to SWFAS' long-term exploration of the area's prehistory.

In developing a picture of the development's use and occupation by Calusa and earlier inhabitants of the area, SWFAS has conducted a number of walking surveys, test pit excavations, and soils analyses over the past several years.

BROODABLE

(Contrasting large Neanderthal brain with that of modern aboriginals and others): "Perhaps to someone or something from outer space, it would be the brains of the 20th century anthropologists that require study. After all, many of the . . . aboriginal groups do have rich social culture, and many speak more languages than the average American."

R.L. Holloway, Columbia University