

Newsletter

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



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Arthur R. Lee, editor

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December meeting

GALT ISLAND'S MYSTERIES TO BE DISCUSSED BY SWFAS MEMBERS

Like a drop of water hanging from a shingle, Galt island lies off the extreme southwest corner of Pine Island -- 38 acres of lowlands and man-made mounds.

Now deserted, it once housed a flourishing community of individuals capable of cooperating on large-scale public works, for the canoe trails, isolated burial grounds, and elevated residential and ceremonial areas bespeak the labor of many over a long period.

In recent years it has been the object of dispute between conservationists and those who would exploit it with little regard for its past. It was in the interest of helping to find means of restoring it to residential use with minimum damage to its history that it was, at the behest of its present owners, explored over a recent three-week period by volunteers from SWFAS and local residents, headed by Dr. William Marquardt of Florida State Museum in Gainesville.

From the pottery and tools that emerged from the five test pits dug during the survey emerged clues to the relationship between its former inhabitants and their neighbors. In many cases these relationships were not unexpected, but origins of some artifacts remain hidden.

Such mysteries will be explored Thursday evening, Dec. 17, at the monthly meeting of SWFAS in the Community room of the First Federal Savings and Loan of Ft. Myers -- 3201 Tamiami Trail north, Naples, starting at 7:30 p.m. President John Beriault will pull together a presentation made up of slides and photos by himself and other participants in the survey, including contributions from Dr. Marquardt.



GARAGE SALE, CONTRIBUTIONS, HELP DEFRAY LAB COSTS

The garage sale held on the parking lot of First Federal Savings and Loan of Ft. Myers Nov. 21 gained SWFAS coffers \$417.59, and contributions have boosted recent revenues to over \$700, Treasurer Jack Thompson announces.

Analysis shows sales receipts of \$442.34 and a cash donation of \$10, less \$25 cost of the city permit and \$9.75 for a newspaper advertisement. Sale director Barbara Logie had set a goal of \$300 for the event.

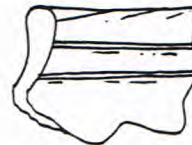
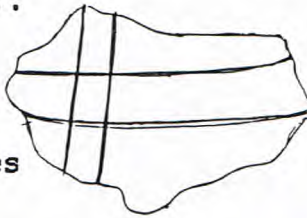
In addition, contributions from Lawrence Miller and John Beriault, who turned over fees given him for helping with a pre-development survey of an area north of Naples, brought another \$300 to the treasury. The money is needed to help pay for costs of renovating the Craighead laboratory on the Collier County Museum grounds.

Barbara had canvassed the SWFAS membership by phone before the event to solicit merchandise and, with volunteer Nick Geljack, did most of the pricing. Charlie Strader's truck hauled bulky sale items and saw horses and plywood loaned by B&B Builders Supply for tables.

The small amount not sold, mostly clothing and books, went to the Humane Society except for one lot of clothing which Barbara took to Immokalee for distribution to the needy. Given the success of the sale, Barbara hopes that another can be held in the future and asks that members set aside unwanted objects for it.

THE POTSDHERDS WE DIG . . .

Present on the floors of SWFAS test pits not infrequently are sherds like these -- Surfside Incised. They date to the Late Glades II and Early Glades III(a) periods, ca.A.D.900-1300.



JAB

SWFAS AUDIENCE JOINS GEARY ON JUNKET TO MACHU PICHU

A spur of the moment decision to take a trip gave members of the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society and their guests a light-hearted video junket to one of South America's more imposing edifices - Machu Pichu.

At the November 19 meeting of the Society Richard F. Geary III of Naples told how a sudden resolve to yield to his long-standing interest in pre-Columbian Central and South America resulted in his being joined by a handful of friends for a visit to the ceremonial center.

The breakdown of a TV set's audio system gave the standing-room-only audience the benefit of Geary's amusing personal narration of the video tape he and his companions exposed during the expedition.



COLLIER MUSEUM NEEDS A FEW GOOD . . . VOLUNTEERS

Facing a Feb. 15th opening date, Director Ron Jamro and his staff of the Collier County Museum need help.

They are busy preparing exhibits and haven't the time to take care of the visitors who persist in arriving. So Ron is looking for a person or persons to act as docents: To greet visitors, show them the exhibits in the entrance hall, explain that the museum will be more interesting after its opening, and encourage them to join the Friends of the Museum.

Perquisites include access to the Museum library, a desk and chair in air conditioned space, and association with congenial people. Hours are weekdays from 10-12 and 2-4, but it's not necessary that one person do it all -- the work can be divided among several. Ron's telephone number is 774-8723.



MANY CHIEFS - FEW INDIANS

Survey of a development area north of Naples did not lack talent.

As its first phase was coming to an end, the contract archaeologists had to decide whether certain deposits were secondary depositions or were as they had been formed some centuries ago. They called in outside talent Nov.22, with the resulting line-up of luminaries scrabbling about the sand: Marion M. Almy, Joan Deming, John Beriault, all past presidents of the Florida Anthropological Society; and George Luer, assistant editor of the FAS' Anthropologist.



YOUR DUES ARE DUE!

Unless you have joined SWFAS since September 1, 1987, your annual dues are due January 1, 1988, Treasurer Jack Thompson reminds. To simplify record keeping, all members are given a first-of-the-year anniversary date, but those who joined after Sept. 1 will not be delinquent until Jan.1,1989. Individual dues are \$10, families pay \$15, students \$7.50, and those who got large Christmas bonuses can be contributing members at \$25.



Archaeology In Florida

Fort Lauderdale - A three-session seminar on basic archaeological field techniques has been set for December by the Broward County Archaeological Society. Arranged for evenings, the weekly meetings include sessions by Gypsy Graves on field techniques and Sam Enslow on ceramics. Goal is to meet basic guidelines of the Florida Anthropological Society which call for six hours of instruction for field workers.

Sarasota - Sarasota county commissioners have approved an ordinance creating a Department of Historical Resources, expected to help preserve the area's disappearing archaeological sites

ONCE A HUNTING CAMP, ALWAYS A HUNTING CAMP

The site is a rough oval of woods, possibly an acre and a half in size, surrounded by all the attributes of a rapidly-growing community -- a double-laned boulevard, a tennis court, homes, and a paved street.

Except for the woods, all has been added since the time about five years ago when Charlie and Gail Strader and John Beriault looked in on what obviously had been a hunting camp to which an access trail had been cleared by light earth-moving equipment. They found some evidences of pre-historic occupation, and labeled it the Heineken site after the little green bottles the hunters had left behind.

Since that time, the Golden Gate community of Berkshire village has grown up around it, but that island of woods has, fortunately, been spared.

The weekend of Nov. 14-15 a SWFAS crew excavated two test pits, one one- and-one-half by two meters, the other one meter by one meter. Both were shallow, stopping at a limestone floor at about the 30 cm. level.

Confirming the fact that the site had been used by hunters was the appearance just below the surface of a half-rotted shotgun shell. And as the pits went deeper it was apparent that the site had been used for the same purpose, as a base for hunting, perhaps 500-600 years ago.

Those former hunters did well by themselves, it would appear, for the pits revealed remains of deer, turtle, fish, racoon, and a surprisingly wide variety of shellfish, considering that it had been brought a half-dozen miles inland from the coast. There was evidence of fire, and pottery sherds -- possibly St. Johns -- included an excurved rim.

Workers included Beriault, Walt and Mary Buschelman, Tom and Joan Clark, Guy Fischer, Art Lee, Joe and Freida Long, Leo Ruble, James Ward, and Mary Ruth Winchell.



Books

THE LAST PICTURE SHOW . . . FROM LASCAUX

Ruspoli, Mario; The Cave of Lascaux, The Final Photographic Record; Thames & Hudson; 1987; 208 pp.; large format; cloth; 227 photographs, drawings and diagrams including 146 color plates; \$45.



'Tis the Christmas season, and for someone you hold in very high esteem, here's the perfect present, given a certain interest in either art or archaeology.

The cave of Lascaux in France was discovered in 1940 and was found to contain some of the world's most spectacular paintings, dating back 17,000 years. Obviously a sanctuary and site of ancient rites and ceremonies, it was so heavily visited that the paintings deteriorated from lights- and humidity-engendered fungus. As a result, it was closed to the public in 1963.

In 1981 the distinguished ethnologist and film maker Mario Ruspoli was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture to film and photograph its paintings of bison, horses, aurochs and deer, a task that took three years. This book is a result of his work. His remarkable color plates, supplemented by sketches from other sources, and the accompanying text capture not only the artistry of the medicine men of 20 millenia past, but the spirit of their magic. This is not only the last look at the marvels of this cave, but a rich source for future research. ARL

DATEBOOK

- * Dec. 17. Monthly meeting of SWFAS at First Federal Savings and Loan of Ft. Myers, 3201 North Tamiami Trail, 7:30 p.m.

- * Jan. 9. Complete work on Indian mound adjacent to Craighead laboratory on Collier County Museum grounds, 1 p.m. Large crew needed to finish shaping mound and insert cross-section of "test pit". Call John Beriault at 261-0082 or Art Lee at 261-4939.

- * Jan. 12. Board of Directors/site form meeting at Strader residence; 6:30 p.m.

- * Jan. 21. Monthly meeting and annual meeting of SWFAS at First Federal Savings and Loan of Ft. Myers, 3201 North Tamiami Trail, 7:30 p.m.

WELCOME TO SWFAS!

New member J. Calvin (Jack) Gaddy, St. James City, has been welcomed by Treasurer Jack Thompson and Corresponding Secretary Lynn Lee.

The Journals

WAS AGRICULTURE AN IMPROVEMENT OVER HUNTING AND GATHERING?

The pre-historic Floridians we study had many of the attributes conventionally ascribed to advanced civilizations:

- * They constructed monumental edifices,
 - * They had a hierarchical government;
 - * They apparently achieved a high degree of cultural homogeneity over a large territory.
- Remarkably, this by all current evidence was accomplished without agriculture.

There are those who would claim that their "natural" diet was better for their health than would have been the produce of their fields, had they farmed.

Recently University of Massachusetts researchers published results of examination of 800 skeletons from burial mounds in the Illinois and Ohio river valleys.

The burials covered the transition from a hunter-gatherer culture to one dependent on agriculture. The remains show that the change was accompanied by malnutrition, increased anemia, bone lesions, spinal degeneration, and a drop in life expectancy from 26 to 19 years.

Jared Diamond, who teaches physiology at UCLA Medical School, has noted (Diamond, 1987) that skeletons from Greece and Turkey show marked decreases in height after the introduction of agriculture. He ascribes health problems to several causes, including the hunter-gatherers' varied diet being exchanged for a few starchy crops; the risk of starvation from failure of the limited number of crops; urbanization with resulting susceptibility to epidemics, and the coincident rise of deep class divisions, which permitted the privileged few to eat well while the masses had less variety and quantity.

This last point is dealt with by Arthur E. Bogan of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (Bogan, 1983), in describing the Mississippian village of Toqua. There he found the remains of healthier, upper status, residents to be associated with vestiges of better quality food while those of less privileged individuals were discovered in a context of inferior diet.

(That hunting/gathering can co-exist with farming over an extended transitional period is discussed in a recent issue of The Scientific American [Legge, 1987]).

Diamond, J. The Worst Mistake in The History of The Human Race; in Discover, May 1987.

Bogan, A.E. Evidence For Faunal Resource Partitioning in an Eastern North American Chiefdom, in Animals and Archaeology, BAR International Series 163, 1983.

Legge, Anthony J. and Peter Rawley-Conwy Gazelle Killing in Stone Age Syria; Scientific American; August 1987; pp.88-95.

Early Man in South Florida; Robert S. Carr; Archaeology, Nov.-Dec., 1987, pp.62-63.

Carr reviews the events leading to excavation of the Cutler site in south Dade county by the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy and the indications the rock shelter contained of early human occupancy. "The evidence indicates that man was Cutler's last occupant," he writes. "Although some data suggest man's arrival at the site as early as ca. 9000 B.C., as represented by the few burnt extinct faunal bones, the Dalton-like points and the several human teeth found near the dire wolf bones, it is probable that the major human occupation of the site occurred ca. 8000 B.C." Carr has kept SWFAS up-to-date on the Cutler dig in several appearances in Naples.



PUBLIC MEETING ON LEE COUNTY SURVEY

A summary of their findings and recommendations will be presented at a public meeting Monday, Dec. 21 at 4 p.m. at Meeting Room A of the Old Courthouse building in Fort Myers by Piper Archaeological Research, Inc., contractors to Lee county. Their work is part of the county's preparation of a comprehensive development plan. The presentation will be to the Lee County Historic Preservation Commission, but the public is invited, announces Bill Spikowski, county acting planning director. The Old Courthouse building is located at Main and Broadway.



SWFAS TO PUBLISH MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

SWFAS is preparing a directory of its membership to be published within the next several weeks. Distribution is to be limited to the membership.

Attached is a slip of paper containing your listing. Please let Lynn Lee, corresponding secretary, know of any changes you want made to it. She must have them by Dec. 31. Her address is 1250 9th Ave. No., Naples, 33940; telephone is 261-4939.