

# Newsletter



## SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Post Office Box 9965, Naples, Florida 33941

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Arthur R. Lee, editor

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JANUARY, 1988

### January meeting

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS, TALK ON DATING SCHEDULED FOR SOCIETY'S ANNUAL MEET**

Election of officers, action on a series of proposed changes to the by-laws, and a talk on archaeological chronology are scheduled for the next SWFAS meeting, Thursday, Jan. 21, starting at 7:30 p.m. in the Community room of the First Federal Savings and Loan building, 3201 Tamiami Trail North, Naples.

A nominating committee has proposed the election of John Beriault to a third term as president; Gary Susdorf, from second to first vice president; Doug Messineo, second vice president, and the re-election of Barbara Logie, recording secretary; Lynn Lee, corresponding secretary; and Jack Thompson, treasurer. Anne Waterhouse was nominated for a three-year term as director. Hold-over directors are Charlie Strader, Eleanor Young, Ruth Winchell and Joe Long. Nominations may be taken from the floor as well, if those nominated agree to serve.

Most of the changes to the by-laws are intended to bring them into line with current practice; they also would establish and define the functions of a number of committees, to be activated as need and availability of personnel may dictate.

### **WHEN WAS THAT?**

The oyster shell we take from the test pit doesn't, unfortunately, have a reverse side saying "Produced by Glades Culture Cooperative No.7. Consume before April 1, 3,500 B.C." to tell us how old it is.

If we're lucky it will contain a chunk of charcoal which can yield a quite accurate Carbon<sup>14</sup> dating of the layer from which it was taken. But the C<sup>14</sup> and other chemo-physical techniques were developed only after World War II. Before, fossils were dated by their place in geological formations, or by a method developed by the French archaeologist, the Abbe Breuil.

In the first years of this century Breuil realized that archaeology had to be conceived of in human terms, rather than solely in a geologic idiom. That concept led to his starting the classification of artifacts by type. Thus stone tools chipped in a certain manner became known as representative of the "X" culture -- the name usually being taken from the locality in which the first such tools were identified, such as Magdalenian.

His system of classification spread across the world, and so it is that we in Florida now know certain types of pottery and other artifacts as belonging to the "Safety Harbor" or "St. John's II" cultures, or being of a "Glades IIa" sequence.

The system of chronology used in Southwest Florida will be explained at the Jan. 21 meeting of SWFAS by President John Beriault.

### **WELCOME TO SWFAS!**

These new members have been welcomed by Treasurer Jack Thompson and Corresponding Secretary Lynn Lee: Kathryn Ball, Bill Kemper, and Mary Vogenberger, all of Bokeelia; Delores Aegerter of Mattacha; Barbara Harris of Bonita Springs, and Jean Belknap, Paul and Phyllis Benedict, and Robert Nelson, all of Naples, and William T. Mills, Marathon.

## WE PUSHED LAWS AND SHOVELS; 1987 WAS A BUSY YEAR FOR SWFAS

From the standpoint of possible future effect, probably the most significant event of SWFAS' 1987 was authorization by the Collier County Commission for the organization to use a shack of the late Naturalist Dr. Frank C. Craighead as a laboratory.

SWFAS always has been a digging organization, and it's axiomatic that every day in the field demands weeks of laboratory work, curating and analyzing materials removed from the earth. With no permanent laboratory, such work had piled up, and County Museum Director Ron Jamro's suggestion that the Craighead building, which had been willed to the county on the scientist's death a decade ago, be used by SWFAS provided a welcome solution.

An agreement with the county was signed March 1; the building was moved onto SWFAS-built foundations near the Museum soon after; new siding, roof and porch were added by the Friends of the Museum organization and with the new year came air conditioning and lighting. A successful yard sale and individual donations helped with the financing. SWFAS shaped sand from an excavation into the base of an Indian mound replica nearby.

Meanwhile, SWFAS continued in its digging tradition: In May and June two large, shallow sites were excavated in the Pelican Bay area; October saw SWFAS crews on Galt Island two weekends, and some individual members on weekdays, putting down five test pits; a number of volunteers from Pine Island subsequently joined our organization. Nov. 14 and 25 crews opened test pits on an area in Golden Gate that had been used as a hunting camp both by native Americans hundreds of years ago and by Heineken-drinking hunters more recently.

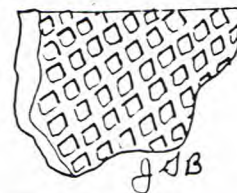
Addison Key and Chokoloskee Island materials were sorted and analyzed, and pre-development walk-over surveys were conducted in July and November by SWFAS members on two areas north of Naples.

Outings included a March tour of Mound Key, and a July 26 visit to a model development on Tidy Island. In governmental affairs, spokesmen urged protection of archaeological resources at two zoning hearings before the Collier County commissioners; letters were sent to state officials asking for preservation of several pre-history-rich areas; a serious survey of archaeological resources as part of an over-all land use program was requested of the county commission; and state representatives were asked to act favorably on a stronger law to protect burial grounds - a measure which did pass.

Speakers at monthly meetings covered a wide range of subjects, and two members, John Beriault and Gina Understahl, gave papers at the annual meeting of the Florida Anthropological Society. A joint picnic was held with the Bonita Springs Historical Society.

### THE POTSDHERDS WE DIG . . .

The St. Johns culture of the eastern and central areas of Florida extended from ca. 500 B.C. to A.D. 1565. After A.D. 100 check-stamped St. Johns pottery emerged, and imports or imitations are found in mounds of our area from time to time.



### INTERIOR WORK COMMENCED ON CRAIGHEAD LAB BUILDING

Work on the interior of the Craighead laboratory building is underway, following appointment of a liaison committee representing the various organizations concerned with it.

Central air conditioning has been installed, replacing window units which were removed by the Friends of the Museum, who provided the new system, as not being in keeping with the architectural atmosphere of the County Museum complex. A new electrical system will give sorters and analysts excellent light.

Preliminary to those projects, ceiling and wall panels were removed by a SWFAS crew. New wall paneling and covering for the floor and countertops have arrived, and are being installed. The interior layout, including storage racks and major furnishings, has been designed by Richard F. Geary III, the Friends' member of the inter-group committee, which also includes representatives of SWFAS, the Museum, and county government.

Jan. 9 a large plexiglass assembly shaped to resemble walls of a test pit was installed in the Indian mound replica built near the lab.

Workers were Paul Benedict, James and John Beriault, Walter Buschelman, Museum Director Ron Jamro, Art Lee, Leo Ruble, Anne and Keith Waterhouse, and Mary Ruth Winchell.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN SUBMITTED TO LEE COUNTY

Fifty-three previously unrecorded sites were listed by Piper Archaeological Research, Inc., of St. Petersburg, in an Archaeological Zone Management Plan and Site Inventory for Lee county submitted to the county Historic Preservation Commission at a meeting Dec. 21 attended by SWFAS members. The study is intended to assist the county in developing a management tool for the conservation of significant resources, according to Bill Spikowski, county planner.

The work, funded in part by a state grant, involved a review of existing literature and records, interviews of knowledgeable residents, and field checks. From these were developed a site predictive model that may be used in the future development review process. The report was presented by Ken Hardin and Bob Austin of Piper.

SWFAS members attending included Kathryn Ball, Jack and Ann Gaddy, Dr. Michael J. Hansinger, Wayne and Shirley House, and Mary Vogenberger.

Members may obtain a copy of the report and an accompanying "sensitivity map" through Gladys Cook in Fort Myers at 335-2235.

## SOME GALT ISLAND SAMPLES TEST AS EARLY AS 1,600 YEARS AGO

Material from Level 12 of Test Pit E-1 at Galt Island has Carbon<sup>14</sup> tested to about 1,610 years ago, Dr. William Marquardt of Florida State Museum at Gainesville has advised SWFAS.

Dates from Test Pit B-1 ranged from 720 to 1,320 years before present, and a sample from Level 10 of C-1 tested at 1,480 years ago.

At the Society's December meeting Dr. Marquardt said that an unusual potsherd from the Island was made by the "applied spike" technique, but its origins remain obscure.

He and John Beriault showed slides exposed during the recent two-week survey of the Island, using a map prepared by Beriault to locate the five test pits excavated by volunteers from SWFAS and Pine Island and other features.

The applied spike technique is common in Guatemala, Dr. Marquardt said, but it appears that the materials used in manufacture of the Galt sherd might have been local.

Much work remains to be done in analyzing pottery recovered during the survey, but it is evident that the site will be of importance in establishing cultural relationships in the area, he reported. The survey was undertaken at the request of the owner, William T. Mills of Marathon, to help in development of a plan combining residential use with preservation of the important archaeological resources. Mr. Mills has joined SWFAS, incidentally.

## You pays your money and takes your trowel

### EARTHWATCH SPONSORS EXCAVATION AT FLORIDA'S HUNTOON SITE

Four two-week digging sessions at the Huntoon site in northern Florida have been set by Earthwatch for the Feb. 6 - April 7 period.

The dig, at the confluence of the St. Johns and Deadman rivers, in the past seven years has yielded a mass of artifacts, preserved in the water-logged edges of an island. It is directed by Dr. Barbara Purdy of the University of Florida. A special edition of the Florida Anthropologist, Vol. 40 No. 1, March 1987, was devoted to the site, which dates from A.D. 0 to A.D. 1500.

Volunteers will rotate tasks from digging, screening, sorting, mapping and pump maintenance (the excavation is in a drained river bottom) to processing and preserving the finds. To participate, one joins Earthwatch and, on acceptance, pays \$1,090 per period, which covers housing in cabins, food, and a share of the dig's overall expenses.

Earthwatch's address is P.O. Box 8037, Syracuse, NY 13217; telephone is (617) 926-8200.

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Discovery of a new Mayan center, Chacben Kax in southern Belize, is related in the October-November issue of the Earthwatch magazine. The late Classic or early post-Classic period complex was discovered by Archaeologist Jeff MacKinnon as part of an investigation of Mayan coastal trading routes.

Another on-going Earthwatch project is exploration of Mayan ceremonial caves in southern Belize, directed by Gary Walters.

## HONOR ROLL

The following contributed to this issue of the Newsletter: John Beriault, Isabelle Felsberg, Bill Spikowski.

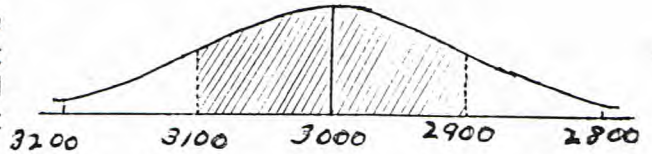
## Books

### **CAN YOU TELL TIME?**

Orton, Clive; Mathematics in Archaeology;

Collins, London, 1980, 248 pp.; \$15.35.

When the laboratory returns a radiocarbon sample with the date "3000 B.P. +/- 100", some construe that to mean simply that the artifact is between 2900 and 3100 years old. In fact, the math involved is not that simple.



The "3000" obviously is the laboratory's best estimate. The "100" means that the "standard deviation" of the estimate, an assessment of probability based on the nature of the sample, is 100 years.

The probability of the true date's being between two chosen dates is provided by a statistical formula which is represented by the area lying beneath a curve, such as the one drawn above. The probability that the actual date lies between the two dates chosen is represented by the lined area; it can be measured directly or looked up in standard tables.

Whatever the standard deviation, the curve has the characteristic that about 68% of the area beneath it lies between the estimated date minus one standard deviation and the estimated date plus one standard deviation. In our example, there is a 68% chance that the true answer lies within +/- one standard deviation (i.e. between 3100 and 2900) and a 95% chance that it lies within +/- two standard deviations (i.e. between 3200 and 2800).

This concept is one of many explained by author Clive Orton in illustrating how mathematics helps to solve common archaeological problems such as: How old is it? What is it? Where does it come from? What was it for?

He stresses that attempts to interpret archaeological phenomena should be preceded by mathematical tests to establish their objective validity: sometimes interesting patterns can arise by chance or as a by-product of techniques of excavation or recording. In such cases statistical techniques can be used to establish whether phenomena are worthy of interpretation and to suggest areas where further work might be needed.

The book was written for the non-mathematician; as such, the reviewer found it heavy going in spots, but worth the struggle. ARL

#### **DATEBOOK**

\* 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.

\* Feb. 9. Board of Directors/site form meeting at Strader residence; 6:30 p.m.

\* Feb. 18. Monthly meeting of SWFAS at First Federal Savings and Loan of Ft. Myers, 3201 North Tamiami Trail, 7:30 p.m.

### **BEWARE THE IDES OF.....FEBRUARY**

February is the month when Treasurer Jack Thompson and Corresponding Secretary Lynn Lee review the membership rolls of SWFAS, culling out those who have not paid their 1988 dues. So go through your wallet, and if you don't find a 1988 membership card, rush to the postoffice with your check. Individual memberships are \$10, students pay \$7.50, families \$15, and those who would like to try on a halo can be contributing members for \$25 -- or more. SWFAS is not-for-profit and tax deductible. To save bookwork, all memberships are given an anniversary date of Jan. 1; those who joined after last Sept. 1 won't have to pay again until Dec. 31, 1988.

### Archaeology in Florida

Ft. Lauderdale - Triggered by results of a magnetometric survey and walk-over, excavation at the site of a performing arts center in downtown Ft. Lauderdale is yielding shark teeth and vertebrae, worked strombus and busyon shells and pottery sherds. Gypsy Graves and Tom Bretherton of the Broward County Archaeological Society are supervising the dig; they have until April 1 to work on the site.