



Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS)

OUR 41st YEAR

September 2021 Newsletter

<https://swflarchaeology.org/>

PRESIDENT'S CORNER *By John F. Furey M.A., RPA*



It's September already and many members are looking forward to traveling back to Southwestern Florida for the Winter. The hurricanes that missed Florida managed to find a large part of Louisiana and the Northeastern states causing flooding on a scale that was catastrophic. Florida may be used to hurricanes but they appear to be increasing in severity. Let's hope for a quiet winter.

SWFAS kicks off its 2021-2022 season this month and we were looking for some normalcy in order to plan the presentation programs in the coming season, however, we will again begin publishing our Zoom Newsletters in October to offer interesting video. This will continue through May 2022. Our hope was to begin in person presentations beginning in January 2022, however, the pandemic situation has worsened and the SWFAS Zoom Newsletters and the regular SWFAS Newsletters will continue, and I will to find new and interesting articles for you.

A recent report on Poverty Point by Tristram R. Kidder et.al. 2021 looks at the construction of Poverty Point Earthworks from an engineering standpoint that offers a novel conception of the social structure of the inhabitants of the site that is quite different than the prevailing ideas about Poverty Point. See below.

Dr. Keith Ashley and the University of North Florida archaeology team announces that they believe that they have located, on Big Talbot Island, the native village of Sarabay that dates to the 1560's and was mentioned in documents by both the Spanish and French. See below.

SWFAS DONATIONS IN LIEU OF DUES FOR 20212

We have not been collecting dues for some time because a major expense is involved in our presentations, however, we do have many fixed costs that we still have to meet. Any tax-deductible donation you could afford would be appreciated. You can mail a check to our treasurer or donate on line at the SWFAS website listed above. Thank you. SWFAS is a 501 (c)3 registered non-profit organization.

SWFAS PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

We all welcome Susan and Chip Harrington back to Naples again. They recently relocated and we are all glad to have them back in Southwest Florida. Susan will be returning to the SWFAS Craighead Archaeological Laboratory at the Collier County Museum and continue on with her role as our SWFAS Secretary. Welcome Back.

Rachael Kangas has been our FPAN (Florida Public Archaeological Network) Southwest Florida Representative for the last six years and has done an excellent job. Rachael has accepted a move to the West Central FPAN Region (Tampa/St. Petersburg). Congratulations and good luck in your new region and all the best. In the interim, Sara Ayers-Rigsby will fill in for Rachael and can be contacted at sayersrigsby@fauedu.

MEETINGS

SEAC 2021 Durham, NC, Sun. October 24 to Wednesday October 27.

SAA 87th 2022 Chicago, IL March, 30 to April 3, 2022.

SWFAS 2021 NEWSLETTER and ZOOM SCHEDULE

October SWFAS ZOOM Newsletter
SWFAS October Newsletter

November SWFAS ZOOM Newsletter
SWFAS November Newsletter

December SWFAS ZOOM Newsletter
SWFAS Newsletter

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki SEMINOLE MUSEUM

The Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Seminole Museum re-opened on August 21, 2021. They recently opened a major new addition to the museum and the museum is spectacular. It is located at the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation at 34725 W. Boundary Road, Clewiston, FL 33440. You can contact them at 877-902-1113 and they are open Sunday through Saturday, 9am–5pm. Face masks are required. This is a must see Southwest Florida venue.

THINGS TO DO PLACES TO GO

Southwest Florida offers many opportunities to enjoy the outdoors as well as indoors. Tour **Koreshan Historical Site** off US 41 at Corkscrew Road in Estero and learn about the Koreshans who lived there.

In Naples, see the **Naples Botanical Garden** at 4820 Bayshore Drive, 239-643-7275, with hours 9am-2pm, <https://www.naplesgarden.org/> .

The **Museum of the Everglades** offers an exhibit on Pioneering the Past: The Story of the Brickell Family-South Florida's Forgotten Founders. The Brickell family homesteaded Brickell Point in Miami where the Miami Circle was excavated and the Brickell's co-founded Miami. The exhibit runs through November 27, 2021. Go to <https://colliermuseums.com/> for more information on this and other Collier County Museum programs.

ARTICLES

POVERTY POINT

NEW EVIDENCE SUPPORTS IDEA THAT AMERICA'S FIRST CIVILIZATION WAS MADE UP OF 'SOPHISTICATED' ENGINEERS

by Sara Savat, Materials provided by Washington University in St. Louis.

September 2, 2021

from Science Daily at <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/09/210902125046.htm>



The Native Americans who occupied the area known as Poverty Point in northern Louisiana more than 3,000 years ago long have been believed to be simple hunters and gatherers. But new Washington University in St. Louis archaeological findings paint a drastically different picture of America's first civilization. Far from the simplicity of life sometimes portrayed in anthropology books, these early Indigenous people were highly skilled engineers capable of building massive earthen structures in a matter of months -- possibly even weeks -- that withstood

the test of times, the findings show.

"We as a research community -- and population as a whole -- have undervalued native people and their ability to do this work and to do it quickly in the ways they did," said Tristram R. "T.R." Kidder, lead author and the Edward S. and Tedi Macias Professor of Anthropology in Arts & Sciences. "One of the most remarkable things is that these earthworks have held together for more than 3,000 years with no failure or major erosion. By comparison, modern bridges, highways and dams fail with amazing regularity because building things out of dirt is more complicated than you would think. They really were incredible engineers with very sophisticated technical knowledge."

The findings were published in *Southeastern Archaeology* on September, 1, 2021. Washington University's Kai Su, Seth B. Grooms, along with graduates Edward R. Henry (Colorado State) and Kelly Ervin (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service) also contributed to the paper.

The Poverty Point World Heritage site consists of a massive 72-foot-tall earthen mound and concentric half circle ridges. The structures were constructed by hunter-gatherers approximately 3,400 years ago from nearly 2 million cubic yards of soil. Amazingly, this was done without the luxury of modern tools, domesticated animals or even wheeled carts. According to Kidder, the site was likely an important religious site where Native Americans came in pilgrimage, similar to Mecca. It was abandoned abruptly between 3,000-3,200 years ago -- most likely due to documented flooding in the Mississippi Valley and climate change.

The ridges at Poverty Point contain vast amounts of artifacts around the edges and within, suggesting that people lived there. Kidder and team re-excavated and re-evaluated a site on Ridge West 3 at the Poverty Point Site that was originally excavated by renowned archaeologist Jon Gibson in 1991. Using modern research methods including radiocarbon dating, microscopic analysis of soils and magnetic measurements of soils, the research provides conclusive evidence that the earthworks were built rapidly. Essentially, there is no evidence of boundaries or signs of weathering between the various levels, which would have occurred if there was even a brief pause in construction. Kidder believes the construction was completed in lifts, or layers of sediment deposited to increase the ridge height and linear dimensions before another layer was placed to expand the footprint vertically and horizontally.

Why does that matter? According to Kidder, the findings challenge previous beliefs about how pre-modern hunters and gatherers behaved. Building the enormous mounds and ridges at Poverty Point would have required a large labor pool that was well organized and would have required leadership to execute. Hunters and gatherers were believed to shun politics. "Between the speed of the excavation and construction, and the quantity of earth being moved, these data show us native people coming to the site and working in concert. This in and of itself is remarkable because hunter-gatherers aren't supposed to be able to do these activities," Kidder said.

What's even more impressive than how quickly the people built the earthen structures is the fact that they're still intact. Due to its proximity to the Gulf of Mexico, this area receives immense amounts of rain that makes earthworks especially prone to erosion. Microscopic analysis of soils shows that the Native Americans mixed different types of soil -- clays, silts and sand -- in a calculated recipe to make the structures stronger. "Similar to the Roman concrete or rammed earth in China, Native Americans discovered sophisticated ways of mixing different types of materials to make them virtually indestructible, despite not being compacted. There's some magic there that our modern engineers have not been able to figure out yet," Kidder said.

ARCHAEOLOGY UNCOVERING LOST INDIGENOUS NE FLORIDA SETTLEMENT OF SARABAY

UNCOVERING THE LOST INDIGENOUS SETTLEMENT OF SARABAY, FLORIDA

by Conny Waters

June 9, 2021

from AncientPages.com at <https://www.ancientpages.com/2021/06/09/uncovering-the-lost-indigenous-settlement-of-sarabay-florida/>



Image credit: University of North Florida

The University of North Florida archaeology team is fairly confident they have located the lost Indigenous Northeast Florida community of Sarabay, a settlement mentioned in both French and Spanish documents dating back to the 1560s but has not yet been discovered until now. The project includes excavations of broad areas, houses, and other buildings associated with the village of Sarabay, Florida. The Mocama-speaking Timucua Indians of northeastern Florida were among the first indigenous populations of Florida encountered by European explorers in the 1560s.

Documents written by the French and Spanish describe Timucua villages with wooden palisade walls, houses, public buildings, and granaries. These accounts further hint at the location of some of these villages. While the actual whereabouts of most of these villages have gone undetected for nearly 450 years, the previous testing by the UNF Archaeology Lab has identified the archaeological location of the village of Sarabay at the Armellino site on Big Talbot Island, Florida.

The type and amounts of Indigenous pottery the UNF team is finding, combined with the type and dates for European artifacts as well as cartographic map evidence, strongly support this location as being the late 16th/early 17th-century Mocama settlement. The researchers have opened large excavation blocks with many exciting new artifacts finds and are currently searching for evidence of houses and public architecture.

The students, led by Dr. Keith Ashley, UNF Archaeology Lab director, and assistant professor, recently recovered more than 50 pieces of early Spanish pottery as well as Indigenous pottery that dates to the late 1500s or early 1600s. They have also recovered bone, stone and shell artifacts as well as burned corn cob fragments.



Image credit: University of North Florida



Image credit: University of North Florida

Expanding upon UNF excavations conducted at the southern end of Big Talbot Island in 1998, 1999 and 2020, the UNF research team has completed what is likely the most extensive excavations at a Mocama-Timucua site in Northeast Florida history.

This dig is part of the UNF Archaeology Lab's ongoing Mocama Archaeological Project. This study focuses on the Mocama-speaking Timucua Indians who lived along the Atlantic coast of Northern Florida at the time of European arrival in 1562. The Mocama were among the first indigenous populations encountered by European explorers in the 1560s.

The team hopes to ultimately confirm the discovery of Sarabay by finding evidence of houses and public architecture. They will continue to explore and learn about Sarabay's physical layout during continuing fieldwork projects over the next three years.

OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE 2021 CALENDAR YEAR

Officers

President: John Furey
First Vice-President: Jim Oswald
Second Vice-President: Elizabeth Clement
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First of 3-year term:
Tiffany Bannworth
Emily Garcia
Second of 3-year term:
Amanda Townsend
Third of 3-year term:
Theresa Schober (Chapter Rep.)
Mary Southall

Find us on Facebook at Southwest Florida Archaeological Society!

Check out our website at <http://swflarchaeology.org/>

SWFAS AND FAS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

We encourage those interested in Florida archaeology to become members of The Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) and The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS). Annual dues are due in January and membership applications to both organizations are attached. Membership in the FAS provides you with four annual volumes of *The Florida Anthropologist* and occasional newsletters on anthropological events in Florida in addition to the annual statewide meeting. More information on FAS can be found online at: www.fasweb.org. Membership in SWFAS offers you a local series of talks on archaeological and anthropological subjects that you can attend. The SWFAS monthly newsletter keeps you up to date on local events as well as other important archaeological topics. We urge you to support both with your membership. All of the SWFAS Lecture Series are open to the public at no charge.



JOIN US!

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society

<http://swflarchaeology.org/>

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS) was founded in 1980 as a not-for profit corporation to provide a meeting place for people interested in the area's past.

Our goals are to:

- Learn more of the area's history
- Create a place for sharing of this information
- Advocate for preservation of cultural resources

Its members include professional and amateur archaeologists and interested members of the general public. Members come from all walks of life and age groups. They share a lively curiosity, a respect for the people who preceded them here, and a feeling of responsibility for the conservation of the places and objects they left behind.

The Society holds monthly meetings between October and April, attracting speakers who are in the forefront of archaeological and historical research. Occasionally members join in trips to historical and archaeological sites.

A monthly newsletter, Facebook page, and website keep members abreast of our events and happenings.

The organization is a chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society, a statewide organization that publishes quarterly newsletters and a journal, *The Florida Anthropologist*, and holds an annual conference.

I want to help The Southwest Florida Archaeology Society preserve and interpret Florida's heritage!

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

City/Town _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Check One:

Individual (\$20) _____ Sustaining Individual (\$50) _____ Family (\$35) _____

Student (\$5) _____ Life (\$500) _____

Donation to Support SWFAS Speakers and Programs _____

Skills, training, interests: _____

I hereby agree to abide by the rules and bylaws of the Southwest Archaeological Society. I further release from any and all liability due to accident and injury to myself, dependents and any property owners cooperating with the society.

Signature: _____ Date _____

Please make your check out to SWFAS and mail to:

Charlie Strader
SWFAS Treasurer
27655 Kent Road
Bonita Springs, FL 34135

REV. 12052017

FAS Membership Categories

Membership in the Society is open to all interested individuals who are willing to abide by the Florida Anthropological Society Statement of Ethical Responsibilities, which can be found on our website fasweb.org. *Membership is for one year.*

Student *	\$15	Sustaining	\$100
Regular	\$30	Patron	\$1,000
Family	\$35	Benefactor	\$2,500
Institutional	\$30		

*Student membership is open to graduate, undergraduate and high school students. A photocopy of your student ID must accompany payment. **Add \$25 for foreign addresses.

Send Membership Form and Dues Payment to:

Florida Anthropological Society, P O Box 1561 Boynton Beach, FL 33425

You can join online or pay Membership dues renewals via PayPal on our website fasweb.org.

THE FLORIDA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC. IS A TAX-EXEMPT 501C3 ORGANIZATION. TAX ID#59-1084419.

Name: _____

Membership Category: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

FAS Chapter: _____

I wish to make a donation to:

\$ _____ Dot Moore/FAS Student Grant Fund \$ _____ Florida Archaeology Month Account

\$ _____ Florida Anthropologist Monograph Fund \$ _____ Florida Anthropologist Endowment Fund

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

_____ I agree to abide by the Code of Ethics of the Florida Anthropological Society.

Signature

Date