



# Southwest Florida Archaeological Society (SWFAS)

## OUR 42nd YEAR

### November 2022 Newsletter

<https://swflarchaeology.org/>

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



Southwest Florida continues to recover from the devastation of Hurricane Ian. It is the beginning of a process that will take many years to rebuild, and the character of some places like Times Square at Fort Myers Beach, Matlacha, and the Ft Myers River Marina District will be forever changed. In addition to the impacts to residential and commercial areas, many of our local archaeological sites were also impacted by this tremendous storm. Records of SWFAS excavations and historical records are stored at the SWFAS Craighead Archaeological Laboratory at the Collier County Museum at Government Center in Naples. Thankfully, the laboratory building sustained no damage from Ian. After Hurricane Irma hit Marco Island and Naples in 2017, Craighead Lab

volunteers Susan Harrington, our SWFAS Secretary, and SWFAS members Liz Clement and Jan Gooding, with assistance from staff at the Collier County Museum, were able to scan and upload all of the old irreplaceable SWFAS newsletters and records into digital form for the computer. We created <https://swflarchaeology.org/> with all of the SWFAS Newsletters from 1983 onward and other information on-line. If you have records of the society or of the archaeological history of this area, please let us know how we can digitize those records to ensure their long term preservation.

Despite all the excess water from Hurricane Ian we have experienced here in Florida, other parts of the US and the world are experiencing a severe drought. This drought is exposing many historic ships and structures, as well as archaeological sites as rivers and lake levels recede. Mother Nature giveth and taketh depending upon where you live. Locally, new archaeological sites may have been exposed by Hurricane Ian's floodwaters and, should you see anything that looks like an exposed archaeological site, please report it to SWFAS so we can assist in getting the information in to the right place.

#### **THE MOUND HOUSE HURRICANE IAN UPDATE**

On Sunday October 23, Charlie Strader, our SWFAS Treasurer, visited Ft. Myers Beach and checked on the condition of the Mound House. Alison Gieson, the Director of the Mound House, happened to be there and he was able to get a report on how the building survived the onslaught of Hurricane Ian. The main house on top of the 15-foot high mound received about an inch of water on the first floor, and everything is repairable. Water did enter the underground exhibit, but the walls all held, and it should dry out. According to SWFAS board member Theresa Schober, who worked with engineers to create the exhibit, it was designed to withstand storm events, and this is not its first hurricane. Many of the Florida-native plants on the property were damaged but should recover. After viewing videos of the destruction at Times Square, it is good to know that this oldest house on FMB and the archaeological exhibit survived.

#### **ARTICLES IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

It seems that the recent dating of new fossils from South Africa that were found in the Sterkfontein Caves, are pushing back the dates of *Australopithecus africanus* from 2.1 to 2.6 million years to 3.4 to 3.6 million years old. This raises many new questions on early human evolution with *A. africanus* potentially co-existing with *A. afarensis*, although in a different geographical part of Africa. This one-million-year reversal in age of fossil sites that are notoriously difficult to date may result in the adjustment of the current evolutionary time sequences for the precursors to humans. See below.

How can a 1,200-year-old-canoe found in Lake Mendota, Wisconsin improve relations between the Ho-Chunk Nation, state archaeologists, and the Wisconsin Historical Society? To find out, read below.

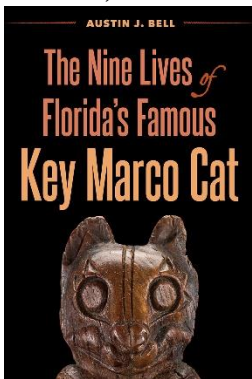
## **THE PIANO CASSA PROJECT, Rome, Italy**

During this past summer, my wife and I traveled to Rome, Italy for 44 days to visit our daughter and grandchildren. We did very little sightseeing as we have visited Rome many times over the years but, it seems that you cannot dig anywhere in Rome without encountering an archaeological discovery. The American Overseas School of Rome that our grandchildren attend was excavating for an addition to one of its buildings and encountered a burial. The archaeologists were called in and excavated a series of seven tombs, a small necropolis with a possible altar and a dedicated “Dromos”, or corridor, connecting them. Located in northeastern Rome, within the Grande Raccordo Anulare (the ring road around Rome), just off the Cassia, and a short distance south from Nero’s Tomb, they appear to represent the cemetery of local, middle-class residents of nearby villas that had previously been found on the school grounds and were excavated in 1959. Clay tiles called “cappuccina” were specially made to cover the five foot long prone burials. The tiles contained the visible trademark of the clay tile factory that manufactured them, and were dated to AD 300. As a part of the funeral rite, called “libagioni”, food was left in clay pots and specially made small terracotta flowers were included with the burials as grave offerings. Rome required all burials to be outside of Rome proper to conserve space. Wealthy families liked to locate their tombs with their names next to the main roads for visibility. For the common people, they would have been buried in one of the 60 underground catacombs that surround Rome. Several years ago, I visited the huge catacomb on the Via Appia Antica, south of the city, and was amazed at the extent of the unique cave system that held thousands of skeletons.

## **THE SWFAS FIELD TRIP IN DECEMBER HAS BEEN CANCELLED**

**PRESENTATION: NOVEMBER 16, 2022, 7:00 pm**

**NAPLES, COLLIER COUNTY MUSEUM AT GOVERNMENT CENTER**



***Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey Of Key Marco’s Artifacts, By Austin Bell***

Excavated from a waterlogged archaeological site on the shores of subtropical Florida by legendary anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing in 1896, the Key Marco Cat has become a modern icon of heritage, history, and local identity. Preserved in the muck for centuries on Marco Island and discovered in pristine condition due to its oxygen-free environment, the Cat has since traveled more than 12,000 miles and has been viewed by millions of people. In this presentation, Bell explores nine periods in the life of the small wooden carving, beginning with how it was sculpted, what it may have represented to the ancient Calusa, and clues to the Cat's mysterious origins that have emerged in its later lives. Bell’s award-winning book, *The Nine Lives of Florida's Famous Key Marco Cat* will be available for purchase (\$26.95) Debit and credit cards are accepted.

Austin Bell, M.A. is the Curator of Collections for the Marco Island Historical Society and a Consulting Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. He is the author of four books, including *Marco Island* (2018) and *The Nine Lives of Florida’s Famous Key Marco Cat* (2021), winner of a 2021 Florida Book Award and a 2022 Meritorious Achievement Award from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation. Bell currently serves on the Florida Anthropological Society’s Board of Directors and is the Vice-Chair of the Collier County Historic Archaeological Preservation Board. A Florida native, Bell lives in Marco Island with his wife Erin and daughter Chloe.



## TO GO TO THE COLLIER MUSEUM AT GOVERNMENT CENTER:



Take the I-75 toward Naples, then exit at County Hwy-886 exit, EXIT 105, toward Naples. Go about 1 mile and turn left onto Livingston Rd/County Hwy-881. Go 1.4 miles and turn right onto Radio Rd/ County Hwy-856. Then go 1 mile and turn left onto Airport-Pulling Rd S/County Hwy-31. Go about .5 miles and turn left onto Tamiami Trl E/US-41 N. 3331 TAMIAMI TRL E is on the left. It is the large government center complex. Follow the signs for the museum to the rear of the complex.

## SWFAS 2023 PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

### JANUARY 18, 2023, FT. MYERS, IMAG MUSEUM

**Dr. Uzi Baram**, Professor of Anthropology and the Director of the New College Public Archaeology Laboratory, Sarasota, Florida. Dr. Baram will speak regarding his excavations, *The Excavation of Angola: A Maroon Settlement on the Manatee River in Bradenton, FL*.

### FEBRUARY 15, 2023, FT. MYERS, IMAG MUSEUM

**Dr. Maranda Kles**, RPA, Vice President of Archaeological Consultants in Sarasota, FL, specializes in Southeastern Archaeology, Physical Anthropology, and Bioarchaeology. Dr. Kles will speak on the prehistory of SWFL, including the Calusa and their known relations with their historical neighbors. The usage of the region by Cuban fishermen that set up fishing camps called ‘rancheros’ after the Calusa abandoned the region, the eventual settlement by pioneers, the historical military settlement of Ft. Myers, that gave the city its name, and its relationship to the military network of Florida.

### MARCH 15, 2023, FT. MYERS, IMAG MUSEUM

**Tina Marie Osceola**, Director, Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF), Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO); **Dominique DeBeaubien**, Collections Manager/NAGPRA Coordinator, STOF THPO; **Samantha Wade**, Sr. Bioarchaeologist, STOF THPO

#NoMoreStolenAncestors: The Seminole Tribe of Florida's Repatriation Efforts. Repatriation of Native American artifacts from archaeological sites and current archaeological projects that are being investigated.

### APRIL 19, 2023, NAPLES, COLLIER COUNTY MUSEUM AT GOVERNMENT CENTER

**Steve Bertone**, Research Biologist with the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) in Naples, FL. Steve has conducted biological research and worked on several archaeological projects in the Reserve and the 10,000 Islands. He will be speaking about the early settlers in the NERR.

*Note that all presentations are on a Wednesday evening and begin at 7:00 pm.*

## ARTICLES

### **NEW HUMAN FOSSIL DISCOVERY HAS EVERYONE QUESTIONING THE ORIGIN OF MANKIND**

By Joshua Hawkins

July 3, 2022

From Newsbreak at <https://www.newsbreak.com/news/2655470596572/new-human-fossil-discovery-has-everyone-questioning-the-origin-of-mankind>



We have long debated the origin of mankind. Some believe in God’s creation of man in his own image, while others say that mankind evolved from another species. Now, new evidence found in South Africa has reignited questions about where modern humans come from, and what species we may have left behind.



Way back in 1947, Robert Broom and John T. Robinson discovered the fossils of an ancient pre-human now known as Mrs. Ples. At the time, many believed the skull, identified as part of *Australopithecus africanus*, to be around 2.1 to 2.6 million years old. Many also believed the genus *Australopithecus* to be the likely precursor to the genus *homo*, marking it as the evolutionary origin of mankind. Now, though, a new study has thrown all of these beliefs out the window. Researchers published the new study in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. In it, authors Darryl Granger and others posit that the skull date back to between 3.4 to 3.6 million years. That's almost a one-million-year difference. As such, this study's discovery has thrown a wrench into the theories that Mrs. Ples and other skeletons that were dated similarly are the precursors to modern humankind.

Granger says the caves in South Africa where Mrs. Ples was discovered hold more *Australopithecus* fossils than anywhere in the world. The site, known as Sterkfontein Caves, is now part of the UNESCO World Heritage site known as the Cradle of Humankind. The discoveries in the cave have been at the center of debates on the origin of mankind for over 70 years.

Now, though, this new evidence suggests the fossils found in South Africa are from the same time as renowned fossils like Lucy, which was found in Ethiopia back in 1974. Many long considered East Africa the most likely origin of mankind, where the earliest hominin that evolved into the *Homo* genus resided. So, this study simply adds more merit to those claims. But, one thing Granger notes is that it is very difficult to date the fossils found in South Africa. But, he does say they are much older than originally thought. At the time the discovery of Mrs. Ples confused many. That's because the fossil showed a skull more akin to a chimpanzee. Many believed that the brain had evolved at the same time that pre-humans began walking upright.

With Mrs. Ples now dating to a similar period as Lucy and others, though, it once more has scientists scratching their heads. We've long searched for the origin of mankind, and now, it seems that scientists will need to keep searching if they hope to find a more definitive answer to that lingering question.

### ***HOW A 1,200-YEAR-OLD CANOE FOUND IN WISCONSIN'S LAKE MENDOTA LAST SUMMER IS SERVING AS A BRIDGE FOR TRIBAL RELATIONS***

*By Frank Vaisvilas, Green Bay Press-Gazette*

*July 5, 2022*

*From Green Bay Press-Gazette at <https://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/story/news/native-american-issues/2022/07/05/ancient-canoe-found-wisconsin-lake-mendota-building-tribal-relations/7770755001/>*



*The recovery team for the Wisconsin Historical Society lifts a 1,200-year-old canoe from Lake Mendota.  
© Wisconsin Historical Society*

State historians and archaeologists are calling a recently discovered 1,200-year-old canoe the gift "that keeps on giving" and an important bridge for building better tribal relations. The dugout canoe was discovered last summer by Wisconsin Historical Society maritime archaeologist Tamera Thomsen when she happened to be scuba diving for fun in Lake Mendota in Madison. Thomsen, who studies shipwrecks in Lake Michigan, noticed a piece of wood at the bottom of the lake and had a good idea of what she was looking at. "It's sort of odd that the wood looks so good," said Wisconsin state archaeologist James Skibo. "Wood in water lasts maybe 10 to 20 years. When we sent a small piece for carbon dating, it came back that it was from AD 800." What helped preserve the canoe was that most of it was buried in sediment.

Skibo said researchers intended to bring up the canoe and preserve it but first had to contact their tribal partners. "There was no opposition to it," Skibo said. "In fact, there was excitement, especially from Ho-Chunk officials and (Ho-Chunk tribal historic preservation officer) Bill Quackenbush." Lake Mendota is in the ancestral homeland of the Ho-Chunk Nation. In years past, relations between state archaeologists and tribal officials had

been strained, especially over issues such as past excavations of ancient burial mounds. The policy with these mounds now is not to excavate, but to preserve. But the discovery of the 1,200-year-old dugout canoe was something both state and tribal officials could celebrate and work to preserve.

Workers had to use special devices to carefully suck out the sediment the canoe was buried under. It was located about a half mile from shore and under 27 feet of water. “It took us from sunrise to noon,” Skibo said. “By the time we got to shore, a large crowd had gathered. ... As we pulled it out, some people started to clap. Some were crying. I’ve never discovered anything in such a public way. It was a vision of things to come.”

The ancient canoe is one of about three dozen ever found in Wisconsin and is the only one discovered with associated artifacts. Those artifacts are net sinkers used to sink a net for catching fish. Interesting about this find is that ancient canoes are usually found buried in shallow water. They had been buried intentionally by Indigenous people for storage over winter. Skibo said researchers are trying to determine if this canoe sunk during an accident or if Lake Mendota had been shallow at that time. “Was it a shipwreck or was Lake Mendota at a different level?” he said.

Skibo said Bill Quackenbush agreed to be a part of a grant request for funding for more research, which includes recreating lake conditions and the environment 1,200 years ago. “The Wisconsin Historical Society is very interested in building relationships with our tribal partners,” he said. “This was a great way to collaborate.”

Quackenbush recently led an expedition of Ho-Chunk students on a replica canoe and made a stop where the ancient canoe was discovered. There, state researchers talked about the discovery on site. “It was an emotional event for them,” Skibo said. “It’s one thing to hear about your ancestors, but another to be at the place where they lived. ... The canoe just keeps on giving.”

Preservation efforts are still underway for the canoe and a 3D scan was recently completed to help researchers learn more. Skibo imagines the canoe might become a centerpiece at the future Wisconsin Historical Society Center scheduled to be completed in 2026. He said the canoe could be displayed behind glass and a replica could be on display that children can actually get inside of.

## **OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE 2022 CALENDAR YEAR**

### **Officers**

President: John Furey  
First Vice-President: Jim Oswald  
Second Vice-President: Elizabeth Clement  
Secretary: Susan Harrington  
Treasurer: Charlie Strader  
Editor: John Furey  
Newsletter Composition:  
Susan Harrington

### **Trustees**

First of 3-year term:  
Amanda Townsend  
Emily Garcia  
Second of 3-year term:  
Theresa Schober (Chapter Rep.)  
Mary Southall  
Third of 3-year term:  
Tiffany Bannworth

*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](http://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](http://fasweb.org). *Membership is for one year.* SELECT LEVEL BELOW.

<input type="checkbox"/> Student*	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Institutional	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$45		

\*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.

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Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ FAS Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please choose how you wish to receive the quarterly journal, *The Florida Anthropologist*.**

Digital Only (via a password protected web link) Note: Student members only receive digital access.

Both Digital and Printed

**This is a Gift Membership from:** \_\_\_\_\_

In addition to this Membership, I also 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.

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Signature

Date

**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](http://fasweb.org).*

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