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# Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society

[www.cgcas.org](http://www.cgcas.org)



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

March 2009



Editor: David Burns

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## March Meeting

### Thursday March 19th

at

**Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center  
1800 Weedon Dr. NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33702**

**7 – 8 PM.**

Looking for Angola: New Approaches and Evidence in the Search for an Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Maroon Community on the Manatee River



*Uzi Baram, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Anthropology, New College of Florida*

In 1990 historian Canter Brown, Jr. published archival insights into a previously unknown maroon (individuals who escaped from slavery) community known as Angola. A decade later, Vickie Oldham, a documentary filmmaker, began an overview of Sarasota's history including the saga of escaped slaves. As a community activist, she organized a group of scholars in an archaeological search to find material evidence for this history. The location of Angola is unclear in the documentary record. From the beginning of the archaeological project, it was obvious that the search for material evidence would be challenging and would require tremendous public support from homeowners. As a public archaeology program, "Looking for Angola" has reached out to local and descendant communities. In this presentation, Dr. Baram relates the settlement to the history of maroons in Florida, explains the choices made by the research team, and provides an update on the research for Angola in Florida and with descendant communities in the Bahamas. This program is co-sponsored by CGCAS and the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center and is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is requested. Call 727-453-6500 to register and for further information.

## Last Call for 2009 Memberships!

Time is quickly drawing to a close to renew your 2009 dues. April 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline. Membership runs from January to January.

## CGCAS Lecture Series 2008-2009

Our lecture series for 2008-2009 includes a wide variety of topics and geographic areas: prehistoric, historic, and underwater archaeology conducted in Florida, the Caribbean, and the Yucatan. All the presentations are held at the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center on the third Thursday of every month from September through April. The lectures begin at 7 pm and are free and open to the public. Further information will be presented in future newsletters regarding each month's presentation.

**March 19, 2009** – *Uzi Baram*, PhD. – Looking for Angola: New Approaches & Evidence in the Search for an Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Maroon Community on the Manatee River.

**April 16, 2009** – *Allan Meyers*, Ph.D. – Lost Hacienda: Reconstructing the Lives of Laborers on a Yucatan Plantation.

## Field Trip to Emerson Point



We are planning on a field trip to Emerson Point Park in Palmetto, Florida. We will meet at 9:00 am on Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup> at the Publix at 5925 34<sup>th</sup> St. S., in St Petersburg. Our tour guide will be archaeologist Bill Burger.

After the tour we will meet at a local restaurant for lunch.

Emerson Point Park is a 195-acre park located on Snead Island in Palmetto on the north bank of the Manatee River. It is the site of a large prehistoric mound complex dating from around AD 800-AD 1500. It is composed of one of the largest temple mounds on Florida's west coast, as well as extensive middens and various "effigy" shaped mounds. Tour guide Bill Burger has made a study of this site over the years and will be an excellent interpreter of the Native American component, as well as the later historic homestead sites. These include the remains of a 19<sup>th</sup> century tabby house and cistern, located atop the temple mound. This beautifully preserved park is located almost directly across from DeSoto Park, purported landing site of the expedition of Hernando DeSoto in 1539.

As mentioned, we will meet on the east side of the Publix parking lot at 9:00 am. If you would like to meet us at the Park at 10:00 am, take I-275 across the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, stay left for US 19, then take Business 41 into Palmetto. Turn right on 10<sup>th</sup> St. W. (2<sup>nd</sup> traffic light) and continue to Snead Island. Follow the signs to Emerson Point Park (right on Tarpon Ave., then left on 17<sup>th</sup> St. W.)



## Alliance for Weedon Island Archaeological Research and Education

The Alliance for Weedon Island Archaeological Research and Education (AWIARE) is a newly formed non-profit organization

that has as its goal to promote and facilitate long-term archaeological research, scientific exploration, and public education at Weedon Island Preserve and adjacent Gulf Coast region. The Officers and Advisory Board include professional archaeologists and interested lay persons, including several CGCAS members.

AWIARE recently hosted the very successful 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Rethinking Weedon Island symposium titled A Pottery Potlatch from February 20-22, 2009. The event was held at the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center and was attended by over two dozen archaeologists who discussed the archaeology of the Weedon Island Culture.

Collections of Weedon Island pottery from Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, and Arkansas were available for study, comparison with other regions, and to be photographed for future reference. Demonstrations of laser scanning technology and a handheld X-ray Fluorescence that can quickly analyze the elemental composition of artifacts were presented.

On Sunday several private collections of Weedon Island artifacts were on display and Dr. David Brose gave a talk called "Breaking the Mould: New Views on the Meaning of Weedon Island."

## Celebrate Florida Archaeology Month 2009

Saturday, March 14, 2009 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center. Join us as we celebrate Florida Archaeology Month and learn what's happening in archaeology in the Tampa Bay area. March is designated as "Florida Archaeology Month," and special programs are planned statewide to recognize the importance archaeology plays in informing the public about the diverse history and prehistory in the state. At Weedon Island Preserve, the Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society will host a display of their recent research in St. Petersburg.

## Grand Opening of the History Mound Trail

Guided Hikes: 9:00 am – 10:00 am and 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm  
Education Services Staff and Volunteers, Environmental Lands Division.

Join us on a guided hike of the new History Mound Trail as Center staff interprets the early prehistory of a shell mound while discussing the colorful, recent history of Weedon Island Preserve. This new half-mile hiking trail provides excellent educational opportunities as it combines the beauty of several seldom seen natural communities with the Preserve's rich cultural heritage. Previously inaccessible, half of the trail provides visitors a close-up view of scrubby flatwoods and xeric hammock/shell mound communities. On the other half, hikers follow the footsteps of others along a road created in the 1930s.

## What Weedon Island Teaches Us about How to Live on This Planet

Lecture: 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm, Brent R. Weisman, Ph.D., Alliance for Weedon Island Archaeological Research and Education (AWIARE). Brent Weisman, president of the newly formed non-profit organization AWIARE, discusses how the value of archaeological research helps us understand the present.

Enjoy Native American crafts, activities and demonstrations, and the Center's exhibit gallery, Connecting People and Place, depicting prehistoric, historic, and present life on Tampa Bay. Bring your family and spend the day with us at Weedon Island Preserve. Enjoy a picnic lunch under our shady oaks and discover hidden secrets along our interpretative trail. Then head back to the Center for more archaeology fun. All event activities are free and open to the public. Recommended for all ages. Contact: [Call \(727\)453-6500](tel:7274536500) for more information.

## Trail of Florida's Indian Heritage Speaker Series

The Trail of Florida's Indian Heritage 2009 Speaker Series theme of this year's program is "Bringing Florida Archaeology to Life". This month's programs include:

**March 21, 2009 1:00-2:30PM**, Collier County Historical Museum, Naples - **Dr. Nancy M. White**, Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of South Florida on "Adventures in Northwest Florida Jungle Archaeology".

**March 26, 2009 1:00-2:30PM**, Museum of Florida Art and Culture, South Florida Community College, Avon Park - **Christopher M. Still**, Florida Heritage Artist.

### DIGITAL ARCHAEOLOGY: Giant Shoulders

*By Jack Harvey*

"If I have seen farther than others, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants." Sir Isaac Newton said this, but if you stand on the shoulders of Google, you learn Albert Einstein said it too. Another source claims it originated in the twelfth century with Bernard of Chartres. Still another credits eleventh century monk John of Salisbury. But perhaps their real genius was in finding giant shoulders to stand on.

There was a time when finding giant shoulders required traveling to a great center of learning such as Ancient Greece to study with Socrates, Plato or Aristotle. Libraries hardly existed, perhaps one per nation, so knowledge mostly spread like folklore. By the fifteenth century one of the greatest centers of learning of the western world, Cambridge University, had a library of only 122 books. Then Gutenberg's printing press appeared a few years later and literacy started spreading because suddenly all students had books. Giant shoulder access had improved a giant step and only a century later, Galileo read of a Dutch invention, the telescope. He built one of sufficient power to show the satellites of Jupiter and unseat Earth as the center of the universe.

Over four centuries since, access has steadily improved through incremental improvements in printing and paper production. In the twentieth century, it rose to a zenith with thousands of new books and periodicals each year and copy counts in the millions.

Then near the start of the twenty-first century, giant shoulder access improved by another giant step with the advent of the Internet. It is causing another sudden step change in access to information, comparable to the change initiated by the printing press 600 years ago. The printing press eliminated the requirement to travel for months to view knowledge from giant shoulders; instead you could read books at your local library. Today, you browse the Internet, viewing from giant shoulders at the speed of light.

Two twentieth-century developments, the laser and the digital computer, made the Internet possible. The laser brought fiber-optic communication, lowering the cost of sending digital data around the planet by many orders of magnitude. And the digital computer enabled comprehending and exploiting all that digital data.

The need for a long range high speed data intercommunication network was well established by the commercial success of telegrams, cablegrams, stock market tickers, teletypes and facsimile machines. But high cost was a serious obstacle and these early schemes simply transmitted text messages (often garbled) and poor graphics. Yet demand for electrical mail brought many competing services to market.

So when laser/fiber optics communication and computer cost barriers plummeted, there was an avalanche of business mergers and technical developments that brought a rapidly evolving Internet now linking well over a billion people, including nearly every working archaeologist on the planet.

This means that when you find a puzzling or remarkable artifact on a dig, you can immediately take several digital camera

color photos of it and e-mail them to an archaeologist for identification or comment. This is not some future dream; this view from giant shoulders is ready today. And it returns capabilities lost when Gutenberg's books displaced traveling to Greece to study with Aristotle: Interaction and Collaboration.

The interaction and collaboration possibilities given us by the Internet are new and strange, and understandably some sciences are slow to exploit them. No longer is it necessary to be co-located with peers and advisors at a university, or travel across the continent to attend a conference. E-mail is just the iceberg tip of speedy communication the Internet offers. Bulletin boards, message boards, newsgroups, Usenet forums, electronic conferencing and even chat rooms and text messaging are all powerful new digital tools for group interaction and collaboration. Yes, many are silly, vulgar trash. But their content and tone is controlled by the collaboration participants and managers. Professionals can hold professional-level discussions and conferences.

It's important to distinguish between the chat room model and electronic conferencing systems on the Internet. Chat rooms offer little more than party-line phone conversations. All participants in a discussion must be present simultaneously. Conversely, electronic conferencing software provides a permanent record and time for critically considered responses. It is not unusual for an Internet forum discussion topic by a group scattered over a continent or a hemisphere to last for weeks or months, around the clock. Any member can post a comment or new information at any time.

One nation-wide forum that I attended for many years has discussions continuously active more than two decades, still available for review and new thoughts. Several participants have died, but their words persist.

This permanency attribute of a well managed Internet forum is ideally suited to scholarly collaboration somewhat like that between students and professors in a university anthropology department. Facial expressions and tone of voice are missing of course, but on the other hand the profoundly deaf and physically disabled people such as physicist Stephen Hawking are equal colleagues and there is something to be said for minimizing emotional content in an intellectual discussion. The written record is priceless.

Not surprisingly, most Internet forums are computer-oriented probably because computer experts are already adept at using keyboards and adhering to software rules. Astronomers and physicists are also early adopters, for similar reasons. But archaeologists and anthropologists along with all the social sciences will catch up rapidly. When Gutenberg made books affordable, most people had to learn to read to use those powerful new tools. We are now at that stage with the new Internet tool.

Newton said, "...I have stood on the shoulders of giants." Note the plural. Not just one giant, but several. Finding giant shoulders to stand on remains an issue. We'll search for solutions next time. Send suggestions for topics to: [jakharve@earthlink.net](mailto:jakharve@earthlink.net)

### FAS Membership

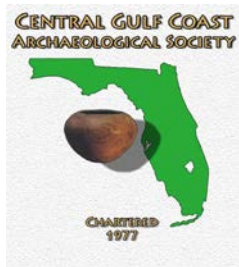
The Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) is open to persons interested in anthropology, archaeology, preservation of cultural resources and community education. Membership is made up of both professional and avocational archaeologists. Benefits of membership include the journal *The Florida Anthropologist*, the *FAS Newsletter* and participation in the annual meeting in May. More information and membership forms can be found on the web site [www.fasweb.org](http://www.fasweb.org) or by writing to the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 13191, Pensacola, FL 32591. Dues are: Student - \$15; Regular and Institutional - \$30; Family - \$35; Sustaining - \$100; Patron - \$500; Benefactor - \$2500 or more.

### CGCAS Officers/Directors

President	Bob Austin	P.O. Box 2818, Riverview, FL 33568	(813)677-2280
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Secretary	Cindy Martin	3412 Forest Bridge Cir. Brandon, Fl 33511	(813)654-4828
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	Marcie Connors	19327 Wind Dancer St., Lutz, FL 33558	(813)920-4198
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Editorial Assistants	Dorrine Burns and Bob Austin		

## The Society

Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society (CGCAS) is an association of amateur and professional archaeologists and concerned citizens dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Florida's great cultural heritage. CGCAS is a chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) and is a state chartered non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.



### **Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society**

P.O. Box 1563,  
Pinellas Park, FL 33780-1563

## Membership

Membership is open to anyone with a sincere interest in the cultural past of Florida and who is dedicated to the understanding and preservation of that heritage

Amateurs, professionals and concerned citizens are welcomed as members. Membership is yearly and all dues are payable in January. Contact Karin Lovik 1225 Jeffords St., Apt 225A, Clearwater, FL.

#### Dues

Regular	\$20.00
Student	10.00
Family	25.00
Life	150.00

