
Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society

www.cgcas.org



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

March 2011



Editor: David Burns

March Meeting

Thursday March 17th

at

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

7 – 8 PM.

Plant Usage by Prehistoric Floridians



Robin C. Brown, M.D., Author and Primitive Technologist

Archaeological preservation of plant remains is generally poor, particularly in warm, wet climates like Florida. But plant usage is vital to the understanding of past civilizations—food, tools, weapons, shelter, warmth, transport, clothing, even religious ritual. At a handful of wet sites, both plant and animal remains are spectacularly preserved. From these we have a depth of information that dramatically illustrates how much we miss when our study of the past is constrained to stone and pottery.

Pre-register for this event by visiting www.pinellascountyextension.org, clicking the “Online Registration” button, and then on the “Weedon Island” tab. You may also call 727-453-6500.

It's Out!

On Tuesday, March 1, 2011 the long awaited excavation and removal of the canoe discovered in 2001 took place. The day started out rainy and the crew had to deal with not only the rain but also the muck that it created. In a short time span of a few hours, the years of planning resulted in the successful removal of this historically significant canoe.

The canoe was initially over 40 feet long. Removal of the canoe as a whole was not practicable due to its fragile nature.

The canoe was cut into four 10-foot sections and carried to waiting boats for transport to the specially made preservation tank at the Weedon Island Maintenance Building. The four sections are currently soaking in fresh water to remove the salt water from the wood. Then Polyethylene Glycol (PEG) will be slowly added over the next two years to remove the water and make the canoe stable for reconstruction and display. The following pictures of the removal were provided by Lou Claudio. Lou has also prepared an excellent 18-minute video of this day's activities which you can view on You Tube <http://www.youtube.com/user/pcctv1?feature=mhum#p/u/12/5QrTy38Zv1E>



Removal of a ten-foot section



Carrying a section to the boat



The bow of the canoe



Three of the sections in the tank

March is Archeology Month

March is Archaeology Month in Florida and this year's theme-Native People-Native Plants- focuses on what the study of plant remains from archaeological sites can tell us about the past. Archaeobotanists use plants and artifacts made from plants to reconstruct and interpret how Native People used plants for food, medicine, dyes, fuel, building material, ornaments, tools, watercraft, and sacred items.

This year's poster is two-sided with the front displayed here. The back gives a description of the plant usage as stated above as well as pictures to identify the plants.



The Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN) held an Archaeology Month event at Weedon Island on Saturday, March 12th from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm. CGCAS participated by setting up a table displaying our recent research in St Petersburg. Members also sorted material from the Bayshore Homes project. Over 200 adults and children visited the Weedon Island Center to take the hikes and listen to an excellent program on plant usage. The new Florida Archaeology Month poster "Native Plants and Native Peoples" was passed out.

CGCAS member Jay Hardman conducted several ethnobotany hikes throughout the day.

Mac Perry's lecture on "Life and Lunch in a 9th Century Indian Village" was well attended and received. He had 9th century food samples to taste and a display of his books.

Mac will also present a lecture entitled: *The First 12,000 Years in Tampa Bay: The Extinct Pre-historic Indians of Florida* for the Pinellas County Historical Society at Heritage Village on Sunday, March 20th at 2 P.M.

This Month's Speaker

Robin C. Brown grew up in Tampa and received his undergraduate and M.D. degrees from Tulane University. He practiced medicine in Fort Myers for thirty-six years. His lifelong interest in the early history of the state prompted the writing of *Florida's Fossils*. He also wrote *Florida's First People*, an authoritative study of the Paleoindians. His most recent book, *Crafts of Florida's First People*, describes the skills that pre-contact Florida people needed to survive and how people today can master those same skills.

(Copies of Dr. Brown's books have been ordered for this lecture. This will give attendees a chance to purchase a book and have it signed by Dr. Brown.)

2011 Lecture Series

The CGCAS Lecture Series for Winter-Spring 2011 is winding down, with only one lecture left for this year.

● **Thursday, April 21, 2011, 7-8 PM**

Tatsuya Murakami, Ph.D. University of South Florida

Power Dynamics and Urban Construction at Teotihuacan (AD150-650) Mexico

The lecture will be held at the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center and is free and open to the public.

This year more than ever it is important to pre-register so that the number of attendees is accurately recorded by the County!! You can also do so by calling the Center at 727-453-6500 or by visiting www.pinellascountyextension.org, navigating to "Online Class Registration", and choosing "Weedon Island."

CGCAS Yard Sale

It's Spring cleaning time and what a better place to get rid of the items you no longer need. CGCAS is having a Yard Sale on Saturday April 1st at the home of Doris Dix (Dee Dee), 1406 86th Ave. North St. Pete 33702. The sale is planned to go from 8 am to 2 pm.

Contact Karin Lovik at karinlovik@clearwater.edu if you have material to sell. Proceeds will go to CGCAS to help cover future research and events. Thanks in advance for supporting CGCAS in your donation.

Book Club

The next CGCAS Book Club meeting is going to be held on Saturday, April 30, at Crystal River State Archaeological Park. We plan on meeting at 11 AM in the parking lot by the Visitor Center. <http://www.floridastateparks.org/crystalriverarchaeological/default.cfm> is Crystal River's web site.

We are reading Brent Weisman's *Crystal River Archaeology*.

Archaeology in the Park

On Saturday March 26th an opportunity to watch archaeologists in action and learn about the history of Ybor City will be presented at the Ybor City Museum State Park, 1818 Ninth Ave., Tampa, 33601.

There will be fun and educational activities for children and adults. The event will run from 9 am-3 pm and is free to the public.

Sponsors include the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN), Florida Park Service, and the USF Department of Anthropology. For more information visit the website: www.flpublicarchaeology.org/wcrc

DIGITAL ARCHAEOLOGY: Owning Data

By Jack Harvey

Socrates didn't own patents or copyrights. These are fairly recent additions to the list of things we can own. It may be a coincidence that they appeared about the same time that humans stopped being property, but both events might be tied to Gutenberg's development of the printing press and the rise of science.

Johannes Gutenberg got his press going about 1439 and all hell broke loose. The government and church initially welcomed the press because it made dissemination of laws, regulations, and bibles far quicker and cheaper. But it also expedited articles of dissent and criticism of authority. Hence authorities quickly required printers to be licensed, strictly controlling what they could distribute. The French crown burned a printer at the stake in 1546. Part of the reason for storming the Bastille was to free about 800 authors, printers, and book dealers imprisoned there.

It's hard to silence people who buy ink by the barrel, however, and ideas flourished. Authors and printers were able to profit from the right to own their work. In 1710, the British Parliament passed "An Act for the Encouragement of Learning..." which began the development of modern copyright law.

Patents began about the same time but with much less uproar. Science, spurred by printed data, hatched new technology. Authorities generally recognized the value of useful new inventions and

encouraged them by granting exclusive profit rights to inventors. At first arbitrarily granted by monarchs, patents became formalized in 1474 in Venice, Italy. But the system was often abused by monarchs who granted them in return for cash. The British Statue of Monopolies in 1624 corrected much of this abuse, starting modern patent law.

Both copyrights and patents are, effectively, limited monopolies in valuable data, broadly defined as *information given*. The duration of the monopoly varies greatly. Patents may last about one generation; copyrights for the life of the author plus some years. Both are property that the owner can sell or otherwise profit from. In some cases, the profit is only professional reputation, such as honors (or tenure) granted an archaeologist. Publish or perish. (You were wondering when I would tie this kite down.)

Gutenberg reduced the cost of publishing data to a fraction of the hand-lettered manuscript copies his press replaced. But it didn't go to zero, and that's important. The paper and ink still had to be bought and the pressmen paid. Princes and Prelates still had to select what to print and distribute to the masses, so only the most important data were published. And the masses had to learn to read, so it took generations for the full effect of Gutenberg's invention to be felt.

Entrepreneurial publishers used author reputation and skilled opinion to select material for books. Charles Darwin negotiated with a publisher to print and sell "The Origin of Species", receiving two-thirds of the net proceeds after costs. 1,170 copies were sold for 15 shillings each.

Learned non-profit societies had to decide which papers to publish in their journals. While the copyright often is owned or shared by the journal, the author benefited mostly from prestige. This is a feedback process: the author benefits from being published by a prestigious journal and the journal acquires its prestige by publishing important data.

Scholarly journals such as *The Florida Anthropologist* developed *peer review* by qualified referees selecting the ideas or data to fit the limited ink and paper. This introduced a significant time lag between writing and publishing, often a year or more. While peer review selected "all the news fit to print", it also singled out "only the news that fit the page". By eliminating chaff, this might also suppress some good ideas or data and certainly delayed their use by many other minds. Darwin dithered almost 20 years before Alfred Wallace's letter forced him to publish *Origin of Species*.

Just as Gutenberg provided a giant reduction in cost and delay from the hand-lettered scroll and book ages for publishing ideas and data, the Internet provides another giant cost reduction from the Gutenberg era. Do we still need the peer review delay in selecting what to publish? Does ignoring the probably bad data justify hiding the possibly ground-breaking data when page count is not an issue?

Does science need authoritarian rule? Astronomer Carl Sagan said, "Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence", a rephrasing traced back to David Hume, an 18th-century Scottish philosopher. Most of us would agree with Sagan, et. al., but who gets to define "extraordinary evidence"?

Darwin's dilemma was that Alfred Wallace would get ownership of the extraordinary claims for speciation if Darwin failed to publish. Publish or perish. With essentially zero Internet publishing cost, what happens if scientists publish first allowing not just designated referee review of their work, but their entire scientific community? This is already happening in a limited way in some biology areas. By Internet publishing as soon as a scientist decides he has reproducible results, he establishes intellectual property "ownership" as early as possible, speeding his quest for tenure or a bigger grant. And perhaps more importantly the work of other scientists may go much quicker.

Of course, there will always be fraud and hokum but detecting and exposing it may be easier if many eyes examine it. Again, the speed of the Internet will aid that vital process. Although some might question the wisdom of trying to speed up archaeology, the Internet seems to make it possible. What do you think?

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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.

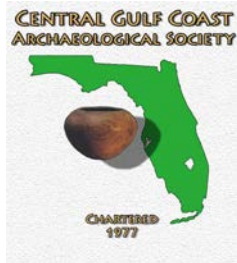
Membership

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



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Archaeological Society**

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