
Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

July 2007

Editor: David Burns



Bayshore Homes Project

We are currently processing the material recovered from the column sample in Test Unit 2 at Bayshore Homes. We will continue to sort this material at Weedon Island on Saturdays at 10:00am. In the next couple of weeks we will begin excavating Test Unit 3. Since there is still a lot of sorting to be done from Test Unit 2, we may divide up the crew with some doing work in the lab while the others will be helping in the field. These tasks can rotate from week to week. There is still time to join us in this exciting and important project. Thanks to all the CGCAS members who have taken part so far. If you are interested, please contact Dr. Bob Austin at 813-677-2280 or email him at bob@searchinc.com if you want to help.

FAS 2008 Committees

The planning for the 2008 FAS Annual Meeting in Tampa continues. The chairs of the committees have begun to meet to make sure all is on track to make this another memorable meeting. The people have agreed to chair the committees below. They will need help and your assistance is greatly appreciated. Thanks to those who have already signed up and for the rest of you, please consider volunteering on one of these committees:

Program Committee: Chair, Dr. Bob Austin (bob@searchinc.com)

Local Arrangements Committee: Co-Chair, Marcie Connors (tjconnors@verizon.net); Shanna Drwiega (sdrwiega@yahoo.com)

Registration Committee: Chair, Chris Hardy (kastoagirl@yahoo.com)

Public Relations Committee: Chair, Linda Allred (lallred@mybluelight.com)

Condolences

We wish to extend our deepest sympathies to Butch Evans and family on the recent passing of his wife, Janet. Butch has been involved in area archaeology for many years and both were helping CGCAS at with the Bayshore Homes project. We will miss her cheerful personality and willingness to jump in and help.

Great Picnic

Thank you Jack and Shanna Drwiega for opening your home to the CGCAS members who attended the recent summer picnic. We all spent a pleasant afternoon enjoying good food, company, and "beverages". Again, thank you for a great time.

Newsletter by email

One last time, I promise. If any of you have recently gotten a new email address or feel that you would like to try and get the newsletter online, let me know. One of the benefits of receiving it that

way is that it is in color and another is that you get it quickly.

In the News

On July 8th a modern compilation of Seven Wonders of the World was been announced at a ceremony in Lisbon.

They are:

The Great Wall of China

The ruins of Petra in Jordan

The statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro

The Inca ruins of Machu Picchu in Peru

The Mayan city of Chichen Itza Mexico

The Colosseum in Rome

The Taj Mahal mausoleum

The sites were chosen on the basis of around 100 million votes cast by people around the world over the internet and by mobile phone text messages.

Losing out among the frontrunners on the short-listed sites were the Acropolis in Greece, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the statues on Easter Island, and Britain's Stonehenge.

The shortlist also included the Angkor Wat temples in Cambodia, the Alhambra in Granada, Spain, the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, the Kiyomizu Temple in Japan, the Kremlin and Red Square in Moscow, Neuschwanstein Castle in southern Germany, New York's Statue of Liberty, Sydney Opera House and the ancient city of Timbuktu in Mali.

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### **Lucy to Pay First Visit to the U.S.**

Lucy, the 3.2 million year old skeleton unearthed in Ethiopia in 1974 will tour the United States on exhibit for the first time. The fossil remains of *Australopithecus afarensis* or better known as "Lucy" begins the tour on August 31<sup>st</sup> at the Houston Museum of Natural History. The other tour stops have not been finalized. However last year Ethiopian officials listed Washington, New York, Denver, and Chicago as stops.

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Miami Circle May be Threatened by Crumbling Seawall

A nearby seawall has collapsed possibly putting the unexcavated bones, pottery, beads or

tools around the 38-foot Miami Circle at risk of being washed away.

State engineers surveyed the 100-foot-long section of seawall and planned to line the riverbank with large boulders as a temporary fix.

The Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research (BAR) plans to ask the Legislature to fund the project while emergency repairs stabilize the site for the current hurricane season.

Magazine Features Article on Florida's Indigenous People

The new issue of Current World Archaeology No. 23 features an article about the Brave New World.: Life with the First Americans. The article contains many pictures and painting done by John White. White accompanied Walter Raleigh's first attempts to establish a colony in Virginia. These paintings give great insight into the way the indigenous people were living before first contact.

The magazine should be available at both Borders and Barnes and Noble booksellers. You may be able to check it out soon on their website: www.arcaheology.co.uk

Safety Harbor Museum Internment Ceremony

A very rare, public internment ceremony was held on Saturday, June 30 at the Safety Harbor Museum of Regional History. About 200 people attended this respectful ceremony conducted by the Spirit People Intertribal Family, a Native American group located in the Tampa Bay area that honors the history and traditions of Native Americans from Paleo-times to the modern era.

In 1925, a local farmer came upon some ancient Indian human remains. After his death, his daughter placed the remains in a box and left them on the doorstep of the Safety Harbor Museum. Upon receipt of the remains, the Museum had them examined by scientists at the University of Florida in Gainesville and they concluded that the person was from the Weeden Island era (200 AD to 900 AD).

Late last year, the Safety Harbor Museum Director Bobbie Davison Jones and Education Director Walter Bowman decided that these human

remains should be properly returned to Mother Earth in the small burial mound located at the Museum site. But who could or would properly conduct such a sacred ceremony? They wrote letters to the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes of Florida and to the local Native American organization, the Spirit People Intertribal Family.

The Spirit People organization is experienced and authorized to conduct NAGPRA related ceremonies of internment and thus the Spirit People coordinated to conduct this special burial mound interment ceremony at the Safety Harbor Museum. And what made this very unique, the ceremony would be performed as a public event to enrich the Tampa Bay public's appreciation for the ancient past and develop public awareness of how a sacred internment is conducted.

The ceremony was scheduled to begin at 10:00 AM. The spiritual leader and ceremony director, Robert Chastain, who is a member of the Reedy River Indian Community in South Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, represented the Spirit People organization in leading the ceremony. He announced to the large crowd what the solemn ceremony process was and what public protocol was required during the internment process - complete silence and no picture taking while the burial was conducted. At 10:00 AM a fifteen minute private ceremony was held to properly prepare the human remains for burial in the small burial mound located just east of the Museum on the Museum property.

Because of my long standing working relationship with the Safety Harbor Museum, I was allowed to participate with three other Museum Directors to be official witnesses to the sacred private ceremony. The sacred private ceremony took place in a small room in the Museum where Robert Chastain gathered with five Spirit People leaders and the four Museum witnesses. The sacredness of this ceremony was very moving to me and to all who attended.

Then in a procession, the spirit leader led the Spirit People members and witnesses out of the Museum to the public gathering around the small burial mound. A shallow trench had been prepared in the east side of the burial mound. The large crowd was completely silent and transfixed as Robert Chastain placed the ancient bones carefully in the trench. Prayers were said as the process was completed. Then groups of Spirit People women

carried shells filled with the earth that had been previously extracted from the mound and spread them over the remains. Sacred herbs and medicine were spread over the dirt layers and the shallow trench was carefully and respectfully filled up. Upon filling the shallow trench with the dirt, the spirit leader, Robert Chastain, announced, "He has gone home". Ahoa or Amen.

This was a truly wonderful and solemn ceremony conducted with all the sacredness and respectfulness appropriate for anyone. The Spirit People Intertribal Family organization should be commended for making this public event a true cultural experience for the Tampa Bay community. Most times this ritual is done quietly and in private. And the Safety Harbor Museum is to be saluted for their responsible actions in arranging for this very special internment ceremony.

Roger Block, CGCAS Board Member



Robert Chastain, spiritual leader of the internment ceremony.

Editor's note: This article was reviewed and approved by the Spirit People Intertribal Family Organization and contains comments by Bobbie Davison Jones and Walter Bowman of the Museum. CGCAS members Linda Allred, Mary Askew, Elaine Bardsley, and Jody Brinton also attended the ceremony.

Weedon Happenings

An exhibit *From Sea to Shining Sea: 200 Years of Charting America's Coast* is currently on display. The exhibit celebrates the Coast Survey's 200 year legacy of science and service. It is now a part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The exhibit is in poster format and each poster describes the development of charting technology and methods through 200 years. A booklet is available that contains the same information that is presented in the posters.

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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 Roger Block, Membership Secretary, 785 Capri Blvd., Treasure Island, FL 33706

	Dues
Regular	\$20.00
Student	10.00
Family	25.00
Life	150.00



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