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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**

**August-September 2008**



Editor: David Burns

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**September Meeting**

**Thursday September 18<sup>th</sup>**

**at**

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

**7 – 8 PM.**

**The Archaeological Investigation of Tampa's Maritime Past**

**By**



**John William Morris III**

This talk by John William (Billy Ray) Morris III will focus on the two years of historical, cartographic, and archaeological investigation into the maritime history of Tampa Bay. Of particular significance are the excavation and recording of the wreck of the blockade runner Kate Dale and the complete mapping of the USS Narcissus, a Union armed tug lost on Egmont shoals after the war. Public archaeology is an important component of this investigation which is being conducted by the Florida Aquarium and funded in part by grants from the State Historic Preservation Board. This program is co-sponsored by the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center and is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is requested. For further information or to register, call (727) 453-6500.

## Bayshore Homes Grant Finished

The Bayshore Homes Grant Project has officially ended. This work was funded by a Historic Preservation Survey and Planning Grant from the Florida Department of State. We were able to put in 4 1X2 units, take 3 column samples for analysis, conduct soil borings in the large midden, and obtain 10 radiocarbon dates. There have been some exciting results from these tests. The final report: "Bayshore Homes Archaeological Survey and National Register Evaluation" co-authored by **Robert J. Austin, Jeffrey M. Mitchem, Arlene Fradkin, John E. Foss, Shanna Drwiega, and Linda Allred**, was submitted to the state on July 30. It is planned to post the report on the CGCAS web site as a PDF for downloading for those who are interested. This 191 page report will become a valuable reference on this important site. Thanks to all the CGCAS members and others who helped during this project.

CGCAS has taken a break for the summer and will resume work on this project in September.

## Scientists revisiting mystery of Vero Man

**Experts hope to find true age of bones unearthed in 1915**

*By Henry A. Stephens for Florida's Treasure Coast and Palm Beaches, July 10, 2008*

VERO BEACH — Two state anthropologists and a geochemist are expected to start taking soil samples today in a new look at a 93-year-old controversy concerning Vero Man, the area's supposed oldest human being, and how long ago he lived here.

Assistant City Engineer Bill Messersmith said Wednesday he's required to look for archaeological remains before the state will give him a permit for an \$810,000 new stormwater-treatment facility. But he also hopes the soil work on the south bank of the Main Relief Canal can settle the Vero Man question.

The question, posed in 1915 — when Vero Man's bones were found among Ice Age animal bones — was whether man lived in Florida before 4,000 years ago, Messersmith said.

Scientists have answered the question "yes" based on findings elsewhere in Florida in the last several decades. But they have yet to bring closure to Vero Man.

If the scientists don't find any remains, Messersmith said, that would simplify his stormwater project. But it would be worth further samples, he said, if the scientists can answer the question conclusively.

Geologists have taken soil borings for years, yielding long columns of soil that show various layers. But it's a new technique for archaeologists, Indian River County Historian Ruth Stanbridge said Wednesday.

"It's like reading tree rings," she said, adding different colors and shades of soil layers will indicate whether the location was underwater or high and dry at the time. And the deeper the layer from the ground surface, the older the layer would be.

Anthropologists Barbara Purdy from the University of Florida and Glen Doran from Florida State University are

expected to start the borings today, along with private-sector geochemist Thomas Stafford Jr.

The cores, or soil borings, will penetrate the layers that would contain prehistoric human and animal bones, Stanbridge said, keeping them in the layer where they were buried.

That was the big issue, she said, when fossil-hunters in 1915 found the partial skull and skeleton later dubbed Vero Man. The Indian River Farms Co. was creating the Main Relief Canal at the time by dredging the Van Valkenberg Creek.

The human bones were found along with bones from Late Ice Age animals, such as mastodons and mammoths, leading some researchers to conclude humans were here thousands of years earlier than previously thought.

## Next Lecture Series

We have another interesting line up of speakers for the coming year. All these presentations will be at the Weedon Island Preserve and Cultural and Natural History Center. The dates are the second Thursday of the month with the lectures beginning at 7 pm. They are free and open to the public. Further information will be presented in future newsletters regarding each month's presentation.

**September 18, 2008** – *John William (Billy Ray) Morris, MA* - The Archaeological Investigation of Tampa's Maritime Past

**October 16, 2008** – *William Keegan, Ph.D. and Lindsay Keegan* - Shell Net Weights from Key Marco and Puerto Rico: New Perspectives on Aboriginal Fishing Technology

**November 21, 2008** – TBA

**December 18, 2008** – (tentative) *Robert Tykot, Ph.D.* – Prehistoric Diets in North America

**January 15, 2009** – *Barbara Purdy, Ph.D.* – Early Human Occupation of Florida

**February 19, 2009** – *Michael Russo, Ph.D.* - Discovering C.B. Moore's Lost Mounds and Rings in North Florida

**March 19, 2009** – *Uzi Baram, Ph.D.* – The Search for Angola

**April 16, 2009** – TBA

**May 21, 2009** – TBA

## In Print and in the News

This month there are a number of new books and special issues available or soon to be available that might be of interest to you.

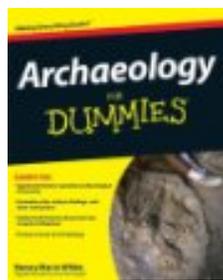
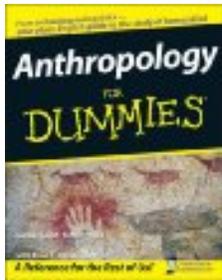


The bestselling author of *Blue Latitudes* takes us on a thrilling and eye-opening voyage to pre-Mayflower America.

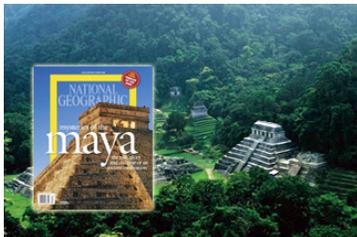
On a chance visit to Plymouth Rock, Tony Horwitz realizes he's mislaid more than a century of American history, from Columbus's sail in 1492 to Jamestown's founding in 16-oh-something. Did nothing happen in between? Determined to find out, he embarks on a journey of rediscovery, following in the footsteps of the many Europeans who preceded the Pilgrims to America.

An irresistible blend of history, myth, and misadventure, *A Voyage Long and Strange* captures the wonder and drama of first contact. Vikings, conquistadors, French voyageurs — these and many others roamed an unknown continent in quest of grapes, gold, converts, even a cure for syphilis. Though most failed, their remarkable exploits left an enduring mark on the land and people encountered by late-arriving English settlers.

Tracing this legacy with his own epic trek — from Florida's Fountain of Youth to Plymouth's sacred Rock, from desert pueblos to subarctic sweat lodges, Tony Horwitz explores the revealing gap between what we enshrine and what we forget. Displaying his trademark talent for humor, narrative, and historical insight, *A Voyage Long and Strange* allows us to rediscover the New World for ourselves. *I found this a very readable, informative book.* Editor



These recent additions to the “for Dummies” series cover both topics in “plain-English” in a very readable, concise, and entertaining way. The Anthropology issue is currently available for \$19.99 and is written by Cameron M. Smith, PhD and Evan T. Davies, PhD. The Archaeology issue is scheduled for release in October 2008 and is written by our own **Nancy Marie White**, PhD from USF.



This Collector's Edition of National Geographic's “Mysteries of the Maya: The Rise, Glory and Collapse of an Ancient Civilization” is currently for sale at bookstores. It sells for \$10.95 and contains excellent photographs, short stories, maps, and a poster “Temples of the Maya”. This is a great overview of the Maya culture done in the usual National Geographic style.

## Up Coming Event

### Bayshore Homes Archaeology Project Completion

**Saturday, September 27.** Sacred Lands (Narvarez/Anderson site), 1620 Park Street N., St. Petersburg, FL 33710, PH: 727-347-0354

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM Admission is free, but donations will be accepted. Refreshments (water, soda, coffee) and some snacks will be available for minor charge.

This event will officially thank the Bayshore Homeowners and the CGCAS members who so generously supported the Project.

Gates open at 6:00 PM (tours of site by Eric Anderson and Greenhouse archaeology displays) with presentations beginning at 7:00 PM

*Mac Perry* (unofficial major of Parque Narvaez') will give a 15 minute introduction about the history of the neighborhood.

*Dr. Bob Austin* will give a one hour overview of the Bayshore Homes Archaeology Survey Conclusions followed by a fifteen minute Q &A session.

## Thank You II

I would like to clarify my item in the last issue concerning my operation and recovery. It generated a lot of concern about my health of which I am grateful, but it was not as serious as it was made out to be. I have sleep apnea and am supposed to wear a CPAP machine when I sleep. This machine provides a constant pressure to the nasal passages and keeps the air way passages open so that I don't stop breathing periodically throughout the night. I had 5 procedures done on my nasal passages, soft palette, tongue, and throat to reconstruct and improve the problem. After a rather painful week or so of recovery, I can now breathe better and hopefully will get restful sleep from now on. I am sorry for all the misunderstanding this caused last month.—  
Dave

## 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

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

Dues	
Regular	\$20.00
Student	10.00
Family	25.00
Life	150.00

