
Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

November 2007

Editor: David Burns



November Meeting

Stains, Rains and Backhoes: Large Scale Excavations at Two Pre-Columbian Village Sites on the Tanamá River in Northwest Puerto Rico

by

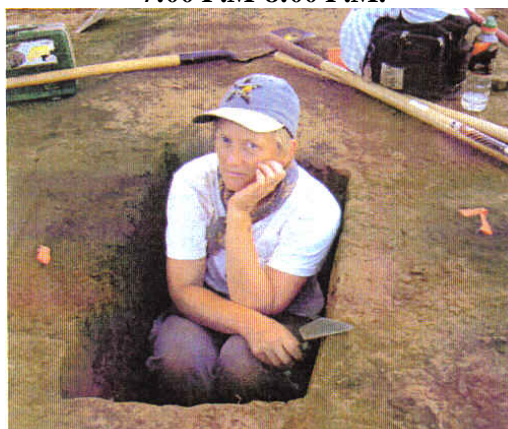
Lisabeth A. Carlson, Ph.D. Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center

1800 Weedon Drive, St. Petersburg, FL 33702

7:00 P.M-8:00 P.M.



The results of a significant study by Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc. conducted for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers highlight how people lived differently in the same location through time. Excavation revealed information about two pre-Columbian sites dating 500 years apart in northwest Puerto Rico. On top of the later village site is an 18th century colonial occupation. Research conclusions were drawn from data collected on subsistence, environmental reconstruction, burial practices, structure construction techniques, and groundstone production and use. This talk, sponsored by the Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society, is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is appreciated.

!!Address Correction!!

FAS 2008 Annual Meeting

The recent FAS 2008 meeting registration form listed an erroneous address for Registration Chair Chris Hardy. **The correct mailing address is 1668 Nantucket Court, Palm Harbor, Florida 34683.** If you have already submitted your registration you may have it returned by the Post Office. If so, please resend to the correct address. If you have not submitted your registration yet, a corrected form is included with this newsletter. Additional information on the upcoming annual meeting is available on-line at www.fasweb.org. We apologize for the confusion.

Bayshore Homes Project

The material recovered from the column sample in TU3 has been washed and dried and bagged. On Saturday November 17th, we will meet at the Weedon Island Center and begin processing this material. Everyone is welcome to join us. Since the opening of the New Exhibit will be taking place at the same time, there will be many visitors at the Center and CGCAS members can stop in and help us sort for a while.

The last test unit of this project will be started after Thanksgiving and at that time; the crew may be split again with some working in the lab at Weedon Island on the column sample while others will be in the field.

Since there will be sorting to be done and future work on TU 4, 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.

VISIT THE CGCAS WEBSITE!

Our website is updated with lots of important information. Check out the Calendar of Events, look for fieldwork opportunities, and much more! at www.cgcas.org

FAS 2008 Committees

The planning for the 2008 FAS Annual Meeting in Tampa continues. This meeting is only 6 months away and is coming up fast. The chairs of the committees are meeting to make sure all is on track to make this another memorable meeting.

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

Local Arrangements Committee: Co-Chairs,
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)

CGCAS Yard Sale

On Saturday October 27th at the home of Shanna and Jack Drwiega in Tampa, CGCAS held a yard sale. The sale

was open from 8 am to 2 pm. It was a rainy day and thanks to two pop-up tents, we made it through the day. In spite of the weather, we still had a good turn out of shoppers. We netted \$242.77 that will go toward building up our reserves for the FAS 2008 Annual meeting and other projects

!!Dues Time is Approaching!!

This is a reminder that the time to pay your dues for 2008 is coming up. As you know, this year we began having memberships go from January to January. Your membership is important to enable CGCAS to continue to take part in archaeological projects, plan events, and to put out this newsletter plus other expenses.

Programs for the Coming Year

Theresa Schober, Director of the Cultural and Environmental Center in Ft. Myers, gave an excellent talk on October 18th that was well attended by CGCAS members and students from Dr. John Arthur's archaeology class. Below is a list of upcoming speakers and their topics. More details will be announced in future newsletters. All will be on Thursday and will be held at the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center at 7 pm.

Jeff Du Vernay, MA 12/20/2007 *Recent Investigations at the Yon Mound and Village Site (8Li2)*

Margo Schwadron, MA 1/17/2008 *Landscapes of Complexity: The Prehistoric Shell Work Sites of the Thousand Islands, Florida*

Jeff Moates, MA 2/21/2008 *Maritime archaeology*

James Davidson, Ph.D. 3/20/2008 *Kingsley Plantation*

Christian Davenport, MA 4/17/2008, *Preliminary Results of an Archaeological Survey of Lake Okeechobee*

Your Email Address is Needed

In order to better keep you better informed of upcoming events and to distribute the newsletter in a timely fashion, we are requesting that you send your current email address to Roger Block, the Membership Secretary, at rblock@tampabay.rr.com. If you do not want to receive information via email please let us know and we will make sure you are not on the list. Thank you in advance for this information.

Christmas Party

The annual CGCAS Christmas Party will be held in December. Its location and date are still being confirmed. This information will be presented in the next newsletter or by special announcement if it is scheduled before the next issue is out.

Weedon Island Center Exhibit Opening

The long awaited opening of the new Exhibit Gallery "Weedon Island Preserve – Connecting People and Place" is

schedule for Saturday November 17, 2007 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The 6,000 square foot exhibit hall captures the essence of Weedon Island Preserve and the Tampa Bay estuary in an interactive experience for the whole family. Special demonstrations highlight various elements of the exhibit hall.

Local and regional artists will demonstrate Native American technology, and you will be able to see various animals from this area throughout the day. Plan on attending this opening celebration for the exciting new exhibit and take part in this fun-filled day. This event is free and open to the public.

Weedon Island Lecture

On Saturday, December 1, at 4:00 PM, the Weedon Island Cultural and Natural History Center will present a special lecture by Dr. Thomas Pluckhahn from the University of South Florida titled *Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Understanding Weeden Island as a Regional Tradition*. Archaeological excavations at Weedon Island in the 1920s resulted in the identification of a distinctive suite of pottery that came to be known as "Weeden Island." The name has since been applied to describe similar artifacts found on more than 3000 archaeological sites across Florida, Alabama, and Georgia. Along with "Weeden Island" pottery, many of these sites display other features—burial mounds with pottery caches, platform mounds, circular villages around open plazas—that make Weeden Island one of the most distinctive regional traditions in all of prehistoric North America. What does it mean that communities separated by as much as 500 miles produced the same pottery and conducted similar funeral ceremonies? In other words, how do we account for the similarities that comprise the Weeden Island tradition? Dr. Pluckhahn will review theories past and present, before offering some new speculation on the meaning of "Weeden Island" as a regional tradition.

The lecture is part of a day-long workshop for professional archaeologists which will focus on developing research strategies for the Weedon Island archaeological site. Dr. Pluckhahn's lecture is free and open to the public.

Clovis Dethroned

Editor's note: *Articles in recent issues of Science and the Mammoth Trumpet declare that the Clovis First model makes no sense. This pronouncement was almost sure to draw strong rebuttals from pro Clovis-First proponents. However, since the Clovis culture plays such an important part in our study of the past, it is believed that members would like to keep abreast of the thinking on both sides of the controversy and form their own opinions.*

Part 1

Shortened version of the article in the July '07 issue of the *Mammoth Trumpet* written by Dr. Michael Waters and Dr. Tom Stafford, both with the Center for the Study of the First Americans (CSFA, Texas A&M, College Station, Texas).

Like any science, American archaeology has its own long standing and cherished theories. In the face of new evidence

however, it appears that one of the most abiding, the Clovis-First model, must now bow out of the debate. According to CSFA research first published in *Science* and later in the *Mammoth Trumpet*, Mike Waters and geochronologist Tom Stafford, using revised radio carbon dating, stated that "it's impossible for the Clovis people to be the First Americans." This dating was prompted by the fact that the age of Clovis in the past has been based on radiocarbon dates using old radiocarbon technologies or unreliable carbon types. Also, the standard deviations on many of them were very large.

In order to accurately determine the revised age range for Clovis, Waters and Stafford acquired 43 radiocarbon samples from documented Clovis sites. New dates were then generated on bone, charcoal and seeds, using highly accurate accelerated mass spectrometer (AMS) dating methods.

Waters and Stafford found that their new dates fell between a minimum range of 13,125-12,925 CALBP and a maximum range of 13,250-12,800 CALBP. This gave Clovis a duration of some 200 to 240 years, a relative eye-blink in archaeological terms. These findings show that "We have Clovis people living in North and South America at the same time. So how could this make Clovis first?" Then there are demographic objections. It's unlikely that hunter-gatherers entering the New World from the north could have traveled to the southern tip of South America in less than 500 years. Says Waters, "It just wasn't enough time for people to adapt to environments..... This just didn't make sense if Clovis were the first to enter the Americas."

Part 2

The Rebuttal .

As was anticipated by the authors of the "Clovis Dethroned" articles first in *Science* and later in the *Mammoth Trumpet*, Dr. Gary Haynes and other well known anthropologists responded to the assertion that Clovis was a short-lived cultural phenomenon. Haynes et al. 2007 commented in *Science* that Waters and Stafford have not definitely established the temporal span of this cultural complex in the Americas. Haynes also stated that the Waters and Stafford assertion that the Clovis point-making people could not have migrated to the Tierra del Fuego site in Chile lacks solid evidence and empirical support.

In more detailed comments, Haynes provides examples of why he and others disagree that the overlap of Clovis and non-Clovis at some sites proves the presence of pre-Clovis occupations in the Americas. For example, the occupants of the Bonneville Estates site in Nevada and the Arlington Springs site California may or may not have even been Clovis people, lacking diagnostic artifacts. It is also pointed out that while the Goshen site is characterized by well-made unfluted points, the dating of the points is ambiguous.

What Stafford and Waters (personal correspondence) and Haynes et al. agree on is that only a continuing program of radiometric dating and careful stratigraphic correlations can address the continuing ambiguity of the emergence and spread of the Clovis culture. In other words, do more digging below the Clovis level.

Submitted by Pete Peterson

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The Society

Membership

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 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



Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

P.O. Box 340705,
Tampa, FL 33694.

Dues

Regular	\$20.00
Student	10.00
Family	25.00
Life	150.00