Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society
www.cgcas.org

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

November 2009

Editor: David Burns

November Meeting

Thursday November 19th

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

7 – 8 PM.

The People in Between: Tampa Bay Natives from Contact to Extinction

B. William Burger, M.A., Archaeological Consultant

Archival research of primary European documents has resulted in remarkably detailed accounts about some of Florida's last native inhabitants. While 16th century documentation broadly relates to the entire peninsula, some detailed information from the following centuries provides glimpses into native cultures of the Tampa Bay region. Ethnographic data for the central peninsular Gulf Coast is quite limited. This talk provides a review of presently available information and related speculations about the Uzita, Yagua, Tocobaga, and Pohoy, the Tampa Bay peoples caught between the Timucua to the north and the Calusa to the south.

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.

Field Trip to Little Salt Spring

To complement our October meeting presentation, CGCAS took a field trip to visit Little Salt Spring on Saturday October 24, 2009. After the tour we visited Warm Mineral Springs which is nearby.

Little Salt Spring ranks as one of the major archaeological sites in the western hemisphere. Even though only 5 percent of the spring has been explored, divers have found artifacts dating back 12,000 years ago.

Steve Koski, the site archaeologist, was our fieldtrip guide. Archaeologists have discovered a wide range of preserved organic materials at the site, including wooden stakes, greenstone pendants, deer remains and bone tools, fossils of extinct prehistoric creatures, and a 7,000 year-old skull with brain tissue who's mitochondrial DNA revealed a genetic lineage not previously identified in the Americas. Because there is no dissolved oxygen in the water, bacteria cannot grow and decompose wood and the other organic materials, offering unique artifact preservation.

CGCAS Lecture Series for 2009-2010

We have another interesting line up of speakers for the coming year. All these presentations will be at the Weedon Island Preserve 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.

December 17, 2009 – *Asa Randall, M.A.,* Rethinking the Significance and Long-Term Histories of Archaic Shell Mounds along the Middle St. Johns River

January 21, 2010 – *David Steadman, Ph.D.,* Using Prehistoric Archaeology to Study Modern Biodiversity

February 18, 2010 – *Bob Carr, M.A.,* Bahamian and Florida Cultural Interactions in Prehistory through the Early 19th-Century

March 18, 2010 – *Bill Marquardt, Ph.D.,* Shell Mounds in the Southeastern U.S.: Middens, Monuments, Temple Mounds, Rings, or Works?

April 15, 2010 – *Alison Elgart, Ph.D.,* Life and Death in Southeastern Florida during the Late Archaic

Bayshore Homes Up-date

We are busy washing the material from Column Sample 4 and will begin sorting this material soon. Material from the excavation also needs to be washed and sorted. We are doing this again at the Weedon Island Center on Saturday mornings starting at 10 AM. Watch your emails for updates. If you have not been a part of this before, you are invited to join us. It's fun and interesting too!

Mac Perry Presentation

On Saturday November 28th at 2 PM Mac Perry will give a talk entitled "Life and Lunch in a 12th Century Florida Indian Village" at the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center. Mac has done extensive research on the foods eaten by Florida's native people. Subjects he will discuss include: foods introduced from the Old World; Florida plant foods available in the 12th -century; daily life in a 12th-century Manasota Culture Village on Tampa Bay; the role of the village Gatherer; plant foods used for thickening and sweetening, spices, dyes, teas, breads, salt, oil, smoking; how toxins were removed; and more. Guests will be offered a small sample of typical 12th- century foods.

Congratulations Phyllis

On Friday October 23, 2009, Phyllis Kolianos, Manager of the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center, was presented the "Distinguished Alumni Award" for 2009 from USF's Department of Anthropology.

Science Center Indian Village Damaged

Late last month parts of the16th-century village at the Science Center of Pinellas County in St. Petersburg were damaged by fire. The blaze was deemed arson. The fire, perpetuated by the dry thatching on a structure, was quickly contained.

CGCAS had an instrumental part in the design and construction of the village on the grounds of the Science Center. It was used as a focus of our annual Archaeology Month for several years. It is currently used as a part of summer educational activities at the Center.

Christmas Party 2009

This year's Christmas Party will be held on Sunday, December 13, 2009 at the home of Mac and Faye Perry, 8399 42nd Ave. N. St. Petersburg. The theme of this get together is "Christmas in a 9th-century Indian Village". The fun will start at 1 PM and go to at least 4 PM. Bring a dish to share and CGCAS will provide drinks/spirits, forks/plates. Bring an old item from home for the "Indian Giver Exchange". There will be a brief board meeting at noon to which everyone is invited to attend. You will enjoy the live Christmas music from "Memory Lane".

DIGITAL ARCHAEOLOGY: Seeing the Unseeable

By Jack Harvey

Several great advances in science have happened because of the invention of a new tool allowing us to see something we couldn't see before. The microscope and telescope are examples. Both were invented by Dutch eyeglass makers whose children found unexpected toy-like uses for the spectacles they were selling to restore failing eyesight. The microscope and telescope didn't merely improve vision; they eventually showed us things we didn't know existed.

The Dutchman van Leeuwenhoek greatly improved the toy microscopes and discovered single-celled *animalcules*, creating the ground-breaking field of microbiology. He saw things no human eye had ever seen.

Galileo learned of the Dutch toy telescopes and also greatly improved them. He was the first human to see the moons of Jupiter. This view no human eye had ever seen demoted our planet from the center of the universe. These tools opened doors we didn't know existed, disclosing trails untrodden.

There are other tools that let us see things we know about but normally can't see. The bones and internal organs in our bodies were well known to the ancients through cadaver dissection. The x-ray allowed us to see inside our living flesh revolutionizing healthcare. Radar and sonar are also in this category, detecting ships and aircraft through fog and clouds in darkest night, or submarines lurking beneath waves.

As invented, none of these tools used digital technology. Radar and sonar didn't even show images of the detected craft. But around the middle of the 20th century, computer science showed how to greatly augment the simple analog radar and sonar systems by using "side-scanning" or "synthetic apertures" – terms far beyond the scope of this scribble.

Oceanography research ships began using this new *digital* technique to explore the ocean floor in far greater detail than ever before. Digital processing of sonar blips produced actual images of valleys, plains and mountain ranges as though the oceans were drained and photographed from high above. Suddenly the full extent and detail of the Atlantic mid-ocean ridge became apparent and the longest mountain range on the planet was discovered.

Other digital techniques discovered magnetic patterns in the rocks of the ocean floor that showed its age increased steadily the farther it is measured from the mid-ocean ridge. The young ridge was thus identified as a *spreading center* where new seafloor was being created. This discovery in turn exposed the slow movement of continental tectonic plates and that Africa and South America were once joined. The new view revolutionized the sciences of geology and paleontology.

The two earth-shakers, the microscope and telescope, have also benefitted greatly from digital techniques. The *digital* scanning electron microscope continues to expand new worlds first glimpsed by van Leeuwenhoek. Nearly all astronomical telescopes are now *digital*. The Hubble Space Telescope has no eyepiece into which an astronaut peers. This digital camera produces only numbers, as do the space-borne Chandra X-ray Observatory and the Spitzer Infra-red Telescope. Only number torrents come down to earth-based computers producing images of the unseeable cosmos.

Amazing magnification is not the only visualization that digital processing offers. Stock and commodity market price charts and graphs were once painstakingly produced by draftsmen, but are now generated by computers accessing exchange databases, and flashed to the world by cable channel CNBC. Our home computers do the same. Turning mind-numbing number heaps to images is done because our eyes are usually the fastest route for information to reach our brains. The Florida Anthropologist already prints computer generated bar charts that summarize dig data in a glance. Making unseeable data seeable is golden.

An x-ray shows not only what we want to see inside things, but also everything before or behind, blending all into an often confusing blur. *Tomography* (CT or "cat" scanning) digitally peels off the surrounding blur displaying only parts of interest in three dimensional images. It can show a blemish on a living kidney surface or the sex of a wrapped mummy.

A related technology is the MRI scan that uses intense magnetic fields and radio waves to detect hydrogen atoms and digital processing to form high contrast images of soft tissues missed by x-rays. M*agnetic Resonance Imaging* is also far beyond the scope of this scribble but it may show chemical details of fossils and artifacts that x-rays and dissection cannot see.

"Moons of Jupiter first seen by Galileo"

Galileo wasn't expecting to see moons circling Jupiter when he pointed his new telescope at it but when he did, everything changed. Will some future archaeologist discover totally unexpected anthropological phenomena when exploring a new digital technology?

Future parts of this story will explore several ways current digital technology may help archaeologists see the unseeable. One of these comes to us from the construction industry, which also benefits from seeing the unseeable. The same digital processing magic that imaged spreading center ridges beneath the ocean a half-century ago can show objects in the soil before backhoes dig. Send suggestions for topics to:jakharve@earthlink.net

2010 FAS Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting in 2010 will be hosted by the Southwest Florida Archeological Society (SWFAS) in Ft. Myers from May 7-9, 2010. Further information on this meeting will be presented in future newsletters as well as on the FAS website www.fasweb.org

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 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.

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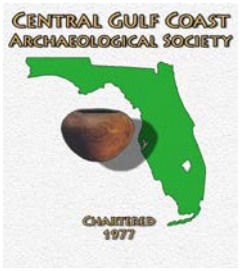
The Society

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.



Central Gulf Coast
Archaeological Society
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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