

Central Gulf Coast *Archaeological Society*



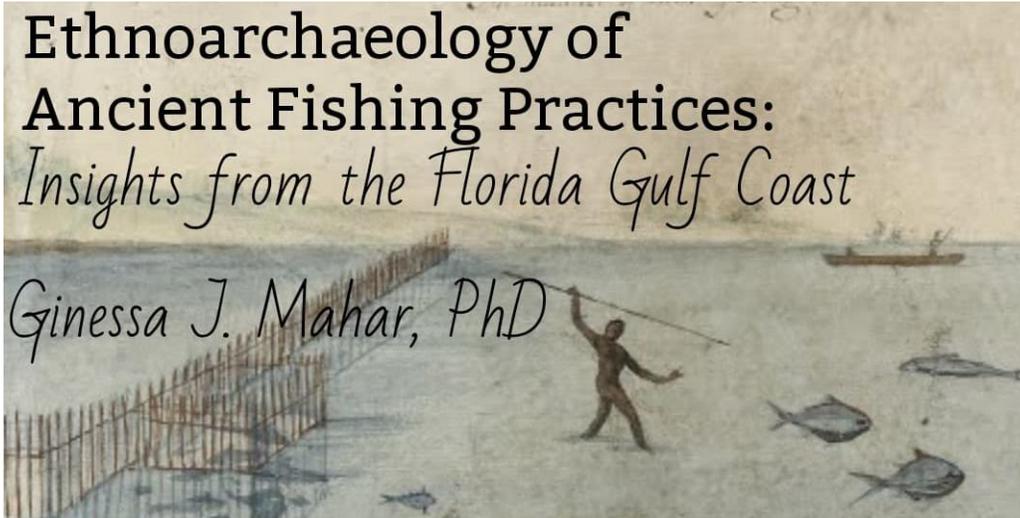
41 YEARS OF PROMOTING FLORIDA'S RICH HERITAGE
CGCAS IS A CHAPTER OF THE FLORIDA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

| SEPTEMBER 2019 |

Ethnoarchaeology of Ancient Fishing Practices: *Insights from the Florida Gulf Coast*

Guinessa J. Mahar, PhD



Thursday, September 19th, 7pm

Millions of people venture out into Florida's coastal waters each year to take part in an ancient practice: fishing. Whether for commercial or recreational purposes fishing has deep roots in the region - thousands of years deep. That Florida's ancient inhabitants have benefited from these bountiful coastal waters for over ten thousand years is not surprising. Coastal archaeological sites throughout the state are loaded with the remains of fish familiar to local fishing enthusiasts: mullet, red drum, seatrout, sheepshead and more. But while archaeologists have been able to identify what fishes ancient fisherfolk were catching, they have not been able to discern how they were catching them. Until recently. Ethnoarchaeology is the study of living human practices to understand past human actions and archaeological materials. Methods like this are often used when archaeological investigations leave researchers with more questions than answers. This presentation tacks back and forth through time—over two thousand years—on a quest to better understand the knowledge, practices, and technologies of Florida's ancient fisherfolk.

Guinessa Mahar completed her Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Florida. Her dissertation research involves the investigation of coastal fishing communities that thrived along the shores of the North Florida Gulf Coast during the Woodland period. Mahar specifically focuses on the fluorescence of civic-ceremonial centers and how fishing technologies and practices developed to facilitate the large gatherings that brought distant communities together at these sacred sites.

The monthly CGCAS Archaeology Lecture series is sponsored by the Alliance for Weedon Island Archaeological Research and Education (AWIARE) and held at the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center in St Petersburg. All talks are free and open to the public. Registration is not required, but to RSVP please go to our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CGCASflorida or to the Weedon Island Eventbrite page: <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/weedon-island-preserve-cultural-and-natural-history-center-1250121017>

Mark Your Calendar for our Upcoming Speaker!



Thursday, October 17th, 7pm

Adventures in Downtown Tampa Archaeology – The Lost Fort Brooke Cemetery and 100-Year-Old Love Letters to the Steamer *Gopher*

Eric Prendergast, M.A. RPA

Senior Staff Archaeologist, Cardno

Almost everywhere you dig in southern downtown Tampa, near the water front, there are some remains from the infamous military installation that gave rise to the town of Tampa in the early 1800s. It has long been known that Fort Brooke had two cemeteries, but only one of them was ever found and excavated in the 1980s. Recent excavations across downtown Tampa have focused on the hunt for the second lost cemetery, among many other components of the fort. While testing the model designed to locate the cemetery, a sealed jar was discovered, crammed full of letters written in 1916. The letters were mailed to someone aboard C. B. Moore's steamer *Gopher*, while the ship completed its 1916 expedition on the Mississippi River. What were they doing buried in a parking lot in Tampa?

Eric is a transplant from the northeast who has only lived in Tampa since 2012, when he came to graduate school at USF. Since then he has worked in CRM and has recently served as Principal Investigator for major excavations in Downtown Tampa and for the Zion Cemetery Project, Robles Park Village.

Welcome Back, CGC'ers!

Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society Members,

Welcome to the Fall 2019 Season of CGCAS! We are so excited to present to you the first newsletter of the season, full of society information and events! Before we get into what is on the horizon, we wanted to provide you all with a wrap-up of our busy summer. We kicked off the summer by not only co-hosting a fantastic FAS Annual Meeting in Crystal River but also receiving an award from FAS. For full details and photos check out the May 2019 newsletter, but we wanted to take this opportunity to again thank all of the CGCAS members who volunteered and/or attended the event. The large representation of CGCAS members at FAS really showed how strong our society is!

Our summer field trip took CGCAS members to the Bishop Museum of Science and Nature (formerly the South Florida Museum) in Bradenton. Here, members were able to see the Montague Tallant Collection of Florida's First Peoples which consists of pre-and immediate post-contact archaeological material as well as collections relating to the scientific and cultural history of southwest Florida and Manatee County. We got to hang out with a few hungry manatees as well!



The biggest event of the summer was our Palm Harbor Masonic Lodge Archaeological Project! As a request from the Pinellas County Historic Preservation Board, we conducted a small survey around the historic Palm Harbor Masonic Lodge building. CGCAS members dug shovel tests and two 1 by 1 meter units around the building and uncovered artifacts from several different stages in the structure's history, including a large trash pit from the 1920s/30s. The owner of the building was happy to allow CGCAS to do the work and even wants us to create a small exhibit of the artifacts we excavated in the building once it's renovated! Want to take part in the project? We are scheduling some lab days where CGCAS members and the public can come assist in washing and sorting the artifacts.

The Society had a great summer and we hope that you all did too but we are excited for you all to take part in what is to come this Fall! Our Fall speaker series is shaping up to be one of our best ever and we hope to see you at one of these great monthly lectures. We are also planning other upcoming events like field trips and lab days. So, keep a look out for our upcoming newsletters and check our Facebook page for all the great programming we are offering soon. Thank you for being a part of the Central Gulf coast Archaeological Society!

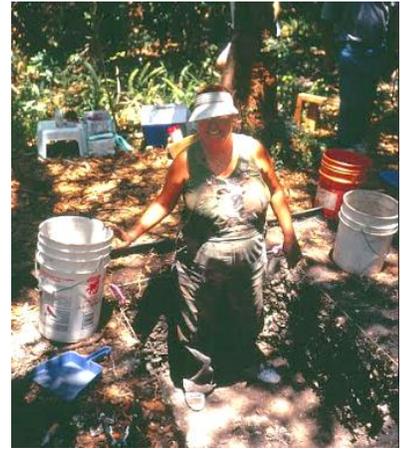
Kassie Kemp
CGCAS President

CGCAS Tshirts Now on Sale



We would like to give a huge THANKS to CGCAS members Jim and Becky Dohr for donating their time, tshirts, and printing equipment to create our new CGCAS tshirts! Their generous gift means we can fundraise to support our Speaker Series and I. Mac Perry Student Paper Competition in future. Shirts will be on sale at our monthly lecture and meeting at the Weedon Island Preserve so be sure to snag one for yourself before they are all gone.

In Memoriam Patty Morris Foxworth 1958-2019



It is with great sadness that we report that long-time member, Patty Morris Foxworth, passed away on August 26 in Lakeland. Patty was an enthusiastic supporter of CGCAS and of archaeology in general. She and her husband Bob participated in several CGCAS digs including the Kuttler site, Abercrombie Park, and Bayshore Homes. She also helped in the lab. Although her participation in CGCAS events lessened after she and Bob moved to Lakeland, they could often be seen at the Thursday night lectures. Condolences can be sent to Bob at Scott Lake Health and Rehab, Room 304, 800 County Road 540A, Lakeland, FL 33813.

GPR Finds more than 120 Coffins Buried Beneath Tampa Apartment Complex

By: Paul Guzzo, [Tampa Bay Times](#)

Ground-penetrating radar has detected what appear to be more than 120 coffins under an apartment complex in Tampa, the remains of the lost cemetery revealed by the *Tampa Bay Times*. The 2½-acre, segregation-era burial ground, believed to be the city's first for African-Americans, was established in 1901 along the 3700 block of Florida Ave. and extended back around 400 feet. It disappeared nearly a century ago when the land was parceled off for white developments.

The radar confirmed that Zion is still there, parts of it at least, under ground that today is home to the back of the Robles Park Village public housing complex owned by the Tampa Bay Housing Authority. Archaeologist Eric Prendergast described the find: "Reflections of rectangular objects that are the size and shape of coffins between four and six feet in depth." Prendergast is principal project investigator for private archaeological assessment company Cardno, hired by the Housing Authority to investigate whether occupied graves remain on its land. "The reflections are arranged in rows and oriented east-west within boundaries of a former cemetery," Prendergast added. (Cont. on Pg. 7)

Clam Digging through 3,500 Years of Indigenous History on the Northwest Coast

by [Larry Pynn](#), [Hakai Magazine](#)

To the untrained eye, the rows of rocks piled near the tideline on British Columbia's Quadra Island could easily be dismissed as the constructions of bored beachgoers. But new research using radiocarbon dating and analyses of ancient landscapes reveals that these rock walls are the remnants of a technology at least 3,500 years old—evidence of an aquaculture system known as clam gardens that once helped feed a much larger population of coastal Indigenous peoples.

The clam gardens on Quadra Island are located within the territories of the Laich-Kwil-Tach First Nations and northern Coast Salish. They were identified to Western science by coastal geomorphologist John Harper in the mid-1990s.

“Everybody thought he was crazy,” says Christine Roberts, in charge of archaeology for the Wei Wai Kum First Nation in Campbell River, British Columbia. People assumed the rocks were artifacts of retreating glaciers, she says, but elders in the community confirmed they were deliberate constructions. Families who built the clam gardens likely controlled harvesting from those sites.

Of the clam garden walls studied on Quadra Island, new research reveals that one was built roughly 3,500 years ago. This would make it the oldest clam garden on record, pushing back the known history of these structures by as much as 2,000 years. Clam gardens are a form of food

production and food security that the First Nations peoples have used for generations, says Nicole Smith, an independent archaeologist working with the Hakai Institute studying the Quadra Island sites. “They’re a culmination of ecosystems and environmental knowledge,” she says.

Clam gardens are ingenious structures that hint at Indigenous peoples’ intimate knowledge of their environment, and their ability to sustainably manage it for their own benefit. The rock walls typically stand 40 centimeters to 1.5 meters high, and are positioned near the lowtide line, Smith says.

As the tide shifts back and forth, sediment becomes trapped behind the rocks, creating habitat for shellfish such as butter clams and littleneck clams. Some gardens improve existing clam habitat, while others create new habitat where none existed by trapping sediment on bedrock, or by leveling steep shorelines to create terraces. The technology changes the slope of the beach at the elevation where the clams like to be, Smith explains.

Clam gardens are found from Southeast Alaska to Washington State and serve more than clams. The gardens become home to all manner of marine life forms, including crabs, whelks, and chitons, adding to biodiversity on the beaches. “They’re more sea gardens than clams,” Smith says. (Continued on next page)



LEFT: Rock-walled clam gardens are an aquaculture technology used by Indigenous peoples along the North American west coast to enhance the production of clams and other marine species. Photo by Keith Holmes



ABOVE: On Quadra Island, British Columbia, changes in the relative sea level over thousands of years mean that the clam garden rock walls, once set near the lowtide line, now sit above the water most of the time. Photo by Keith Holmes

To unlock the secrets of these ancient structures, researchers excavated six walls in Kanish Bay and three in Waiatt Bay, on Quadra Island off northeastern Vancouver Island. The scientists collected radiocarbon samples from the scars where barnacles attached themselves to the rocks, as well as from clamshells that were wedged into and beneath the walls—all neatly preserved by the sediment.

At the time they were built, the clam garden rock walls on Quadra Island would have been placed at the lowtide line. Today, those same rock walls are located as much as a meter upslope, but still flood at high tide.

For years, researchers assembled on the beaches during the lowest tides, working feverishly before the ocean returned and flooded their worksites. “We’d race like crazy, then after the tide came in, we were spread-eagle on the ground to catch our breath,” says archaeologist Dana Lepofsky of Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia. “It was totally wild, covered in mud from head to toe.” Smith adds: “Shorelines have shifted a lot since the last glaciation. On Quadra Island we see clam garden walls

everywhere because the shoreline position is lower now. They stand proud and prominently.”

The clam garden study is one piece of a larger collaborative project to trace the human history on Quadra Island. Other researchers have obtained sediment cores from bogs and ponds at different elevations across the island. Identification of freshwater versus saltwater diatoms and radiocarbon dating of seeds, wood, shell, and charcoal preserved in the sediments allows researchers to trace how the shoreline has changed over time. Aircraft surveys using lidar also provide detailed elevation models, helping to pinpoint sites such as protected bays or spits where humans likely lived, resulting in more shoreline excavations yielding items such as stone tools.

It’s all providing First Nations with a unique and detailed glimpse into their past. Roberts notes that details of the clam gardens are being built into the school curriculum, so no one forgets again. “It’s pretty skookum to have this knowledge of our territory,” she concludes. [Check out this link for a video of clam garden building today!](#)



Florida Conversations: The Story of Zion Cemetery

WHEN: Tuesday, October 8th
6:30 to 7:30pm

WHERE: Tampa Bay History Center
801 Old Water Street, Tampa

Can a cemetery be forgotten?

Tampa Bay Times reporters Paul Guzzo and James Borchuk discuss their discovery of Zion Cemetery, lost for almost a century. The History Center's Rodney Kite-Powell leads this timely panel discussion featuring Guzzo, Borchuk and archaeologist Rebecca O'Sullivan.

Florida Conversations is free and open to the public, and is co-sponsored by the USF Libraries Florida Studies Center and supported by WUSF Public Media, and features authors and presenters covering a variety of Florida topics, from politics to fiction, history to environmental issues.

RSVP preferred. For more information, contact the History Center at 813.228.0097.

Volunteer
Archaeology Lab
Friday, Sep 20, 10 – Noon

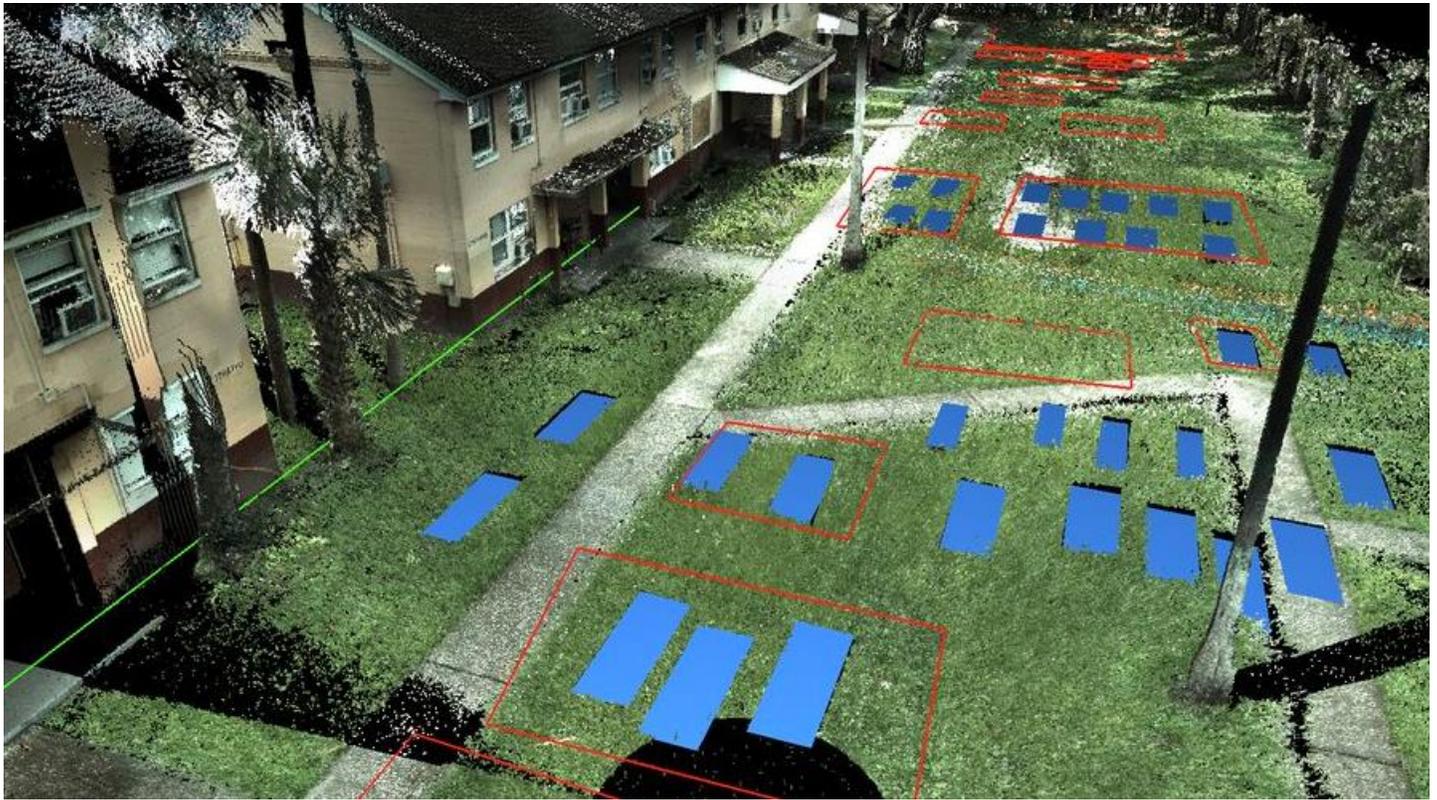
Weedon Island Preserve
Cultural and Natural
History Center, 1800
Weedon Dr NE, St Pete



Archaeology Works:
Plants and People
Sat., Sep 21, 11 – Noon

Weedon Island Preserve
Cultural and Natural History
Center, 1800 Weedon Dr
NE, St Pete

Zion Cemetery, cont. from pg 3



This image is a 3D laser scan of Robles Park Village showing grave-shaped objects beneath the ground in relation to buildings at the public housing complex. The single image is made from two data sources and aligns with historical maps of the former

Asked if the shapes could show something other than caskets, Paul Jones, project manager for Cardno, replied, “That would be too big of a coincidence.”

The *Times* published a special report about the forgotten cemetery in June, prompting the Housing Authority to hire the archaeologists. During a nine-month search, the *Times* pieced together the cemetery’s lost history but found no evidence of a mass reburial. In response to the report, the Housing Authority set up the Zion Cemetery Archaeological Consultation Committee, with members from the authority, the city of Tampa, the NAACP, the Florida Public Archaeology Network at the University of South Florida, the Robles Park Apartments Residents Council and Cardno.

Overall, the archaeologists have discovered what they believe to be 126 caskets. But there are likely more. The radar cannot detect century-old human remains if they weren’t buried in a coffin. It was typical in the early 1900s for poor African-Americans to be buried in fabric shrouds and old bones would be too deteriorated to appear on a scan. In addition, the portion of Robles Park Village once home to Zion Cemetery now has five apartment buildings on it. Radar cannot see through their floors. What’s more, Cardno had access to less than 40 percent of the cemetery property

— the portion owned by the Housing Authority. The rest is owned by restaurateur Richard Gonzmart. “Everywhere we have tested that one would assume has a burial ... has proven to have burials,” Prendergast said. “Therefore, we can predict the rest of the cemetery has burials, unless they were removed.”

The Housing Authority has said it will not remove any of the bodies. When the agency redevelops Robles Park Village in the coming years, the Zion Cemetery land will be turned into a memorial park operated by the city. The park will honor the pioneering African-Americans buried there. The Housing Authority hopes Gonzmart will add his property to the park.

The *Times* discovered death certificates for 382 people who were buried in Zion. A cemetery historian who conducted followup research said he found 747. Zion had room for some 800 graves plus a potter’s field for the indigent and unknown. The potter’s field contained 27 of the caskets found by the archaeologists. The next step would be “ground truthing,” or digging into the ground in a way that leaves the bodies undisturbed. The Housing Authority is considering how to proceed with the work.

Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society Board

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Have something for the next newsletter? Please email me!



The Society

The 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 Kassie Kemp at kkemp@mail.usf.edu for more information.

Dues

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Individual | \$25.00 |
| Student | \$12.00 |
| Family | \$30.00 |

Contact Us

You can find us online at the links below:

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Central Gulf Coast
Archaeological Society

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