

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

CHAPTER

THE FLORIDA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Volume 9 Number 6 Newsletter JUNE 1985

President: Wes Coleman Editor: Beth Read

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Monday, June 3, 7:30 p.m.

The regular Board of Directors meeting will be held at Bob Carr's home, 2820 S.W. 38 Court, Miami. All voting members are welcome to attend.

REGULAR MEETING

Friday, June 21, 8:00 p.m.

The regular meeting will be held at the Audubon House, 5530 Sunset Drive, South Miami. The speaker for the evening will be JAMES DEAN, whose topic will be ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL SHIPWRECKS. This promises to be an interesting evening, especially in light of recent discoveries in the Florida Keys.

MAY BOARD MEETING

The meeting was convened at Jo Southard's home, 8961 S.W. 51 Street, Miami, with President Wes Coleman presiding.

Jim Lord had expressed an interest in the display cases and was appointed Chairman of the Display Committee and Bill Lyors has been appointed Maintenance Crew Chief. A discussion was held regarding the appointment of an official photographer but no action was taken. The idea of a scrapbook for the society was discussed and Emily Dieterich was appointed Scrapbook Chairman and will purchase the scrapbook. Judi Trimble was asked and agreed to assemble a pictorial history of the recent "digs" and the Board agreed to reimburse Judi for any expenses involved. The Board voted to amend the by-law to establish an institutional membership class, with dues of \$25.00, after notice to members.

The possibility of finding shelf space for donated books and resource materials was discussed. Members agreed to each assume responsibility for the program for one meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Emily Dieterich,
Secretary

PROPOSED NEW MEMBERSHIP CLASS

The Board of Directors at the May Board Meeting voted to create a new membership class, an Institutional Membership with yearly dues set at \$25.00. If you have any comments please contact a member of the Board. The final vote will be taken at the regular July Board Meeting.

SITE REPORT

The excavation project on the Cheatum site (DA1058) and the Coleman Site (DA141) is over, but the site will continue to be monitored. Site reports for both sites are underway. Any help you can give with cleaning and accessing material from the Cheatum site is needed and will contribute in a meaningful way to our final report on this excavation project.

The Cheatum site (DA1058) was visited recently by State Archaeologist Louis Tesar. He will be making a recommendation on the site based on his field observation.

There will be no regularly scheduled "digs" this summer, but emergency excavations will be conducted if necessary.

Bob Carr

THANK YOU

We want to thank Joe Long from the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society who spent two days doing a contour map of the Cheatum site. Working with Joe on this project were ASSF members Wes Coleman, Bob and Debbie Carr and Seth Lefkow.

FIELD TRIP UPCOMING

SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 9:00 a.m.

Arrangements have been made for a field trip to the jet port site on Sunday, June 9th. Member Sue Goldman will do a tour of the site. All who are interested are to meet at Wes Coleman's home, 10 N.W. 124 Avenue, Miami, at 9:00 a.m. and we will car pool from there. We will be escorted across the ramp by airport authorities. Bring a brown bag lunch, water to drink, and a small pick to help turn up the rocks on the site. For background material on the site, see below.

JET PORT SITE

Fossils excavated from the Jet Port site by your organization in January, 1970.

Among the fossils permitting identification was a tooth of a small (young adult) mammoth, Mammuthus c.f. floridanus (cat. no. A1-110); a partial skull of a horse, Equus c.f. leidy (cat. no. A7-310/41), other fragments, mostly teeth, of Equus (cat. nos. A5-310/14, A6-310, A7-510/23, B3-1110). Several shell fragments of a giant tortoise, Geochelone c.f. crassiscutata were present, (A4-610, B2-210/4, B2-310/5, B2-410/6, B2-510/3). Other fossils, less precisely identified, included a mammalian tooth (A2-910), mammalian limb bones (A5-710, B3-1010), and a portion of a mammalian shoulder blade (B2-810). Several small conical teeth in a plastic box belonged to an alligator (no catalogue number).

The site itself probably represents an old sink hole that served as a trap or a catch basin for animals living in the area at the time. This is a very common situation in Florida due to the tendency of widespread limestone beds to form underground solution chambers whose roof collapses due to fluctuating water tables thus forming sink holes. The sink holes themselves project into sediments older than the animals caught therein.

Fortunately the animals which could be identified with certainty make it possible to give a fairly accurate date for the fauna trapped in the old sink hole. The mammoth is a Pleistocene species. The tortoise and horse strongly suggest a late Pheistocene date. The data does not permit me to make a pinpoint date in terms of years, but I suggest a date of 10,000-15,000 years before the present. The tortoise and mannoth are not found (so far, anyway) in post-Pleistocene deposits, therefore they must be at least 7,000-8,000 years old. I assume a slightly older date because the horses, mammoths, and tortoises are characteristic of slightly drier habitats than the present day glades. Such a habitat obtained when the sea level (and thus the water table) was lower due to the great quantity of ocean water bound in glacial remnants existing toward the end of the glacial epoch. The area would then have been a somewhat drier grassland then at present--probably a savannah-like region.

W. G. Weaver
Department of Biology
Miami-Dade Jr. College

NEW GAS POWERED SIFTER

Bill Lyons has converted the electric sifter with a gasoline engine donated by Dan Laxson which makes it totally portable. The sifter was initiated the weekend of May 3-4 and works spectacularly. The crew went through "tons of material". Thanks to Bill Lyons who has also offered to maintain our equipment, screens etc. His idea for the sifter was ingenious and works great.

"Rain stops no man in pursuit of adventure"

Twenty-one ASSF members in various groups collected in an assortment of vehicles and headed for Islamorada the weekend of May 10-12, where they met the Southwest Archaeological Society and rain. The final destination was a trip to Indian Key and Lignumvitae Key planned by our super tour guide, Daryl Nagel. At 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning we arrived at the dock only to be told that the boat could not take us to the islands. We said, "we don't mind the rain". "Neither do we", said the Park Rangers, "but the water dripping from the poisonwood trees is very dangerous!" "Well, in that case", we said, some of us speaking from vivid memories, "we'll take a raincheck!"

At that point the cocksure ASSF group broke into little splinter groups, to go back home, to go to Key West, to visit Irving Eyster, to go shopping, to go back to sleep, to wander about other state parks.

At about 1:00 p.m. we began to find each other back at the dock, basking in the sun, meeting the SWFAS and taking a head count of the ASSF survivors of the morning, hoping they could find a seat on the boat, if the poisonwood trees would cooperate. The Rangers were very helpful and all, including 30 junior high students from Stuart, were shuttled back and forth to the islands.

As a first time visitor to these historic sites, I was in awe, as usual, of the tropical splendor and the historic sites. We were very fortunate to have Past President Irving Eyster as our tour guide on this journey. Irving has done much of the survey work on these islands as well as directing the archaeological excavation on Indian Key. Lignumvitae is a botanical beauty with a charming house once owned by the Matheson family. Indian Key, the first county seat of Dade County, has the remains of a complete town with streets, cisterns and house foundations and, of course, a very exciting story of its demise.

Thanks to Daryl, Irving, the Ranger and God (for the sunshine and our safety), we had a very enlightening day which, by the way, continued into the night as the ASSF and ASFAS joined forces for dinner at Whale Harbor, a few drinks at Rotten Ralphs, and Trivial Pursuit until the wee hours of the morning at the Eyster house.

As one who had fun, lets do this again.

Jeanie McGuire

RESULTS OF TRAVEL SURVEY

At the annual meeting in April a questionnaire was distributed to members in attendance relative to travel desires. The results are as follows: 72% wanted 3-4 trips per year, 50% wanted weekend trips, 50% wanted single day trips. The types of trips preferred were: (1) tour of sites, (2) tour of educational or process facilities, (3) working experiences, (4) lectures, (5) social gatherings. Also requested was a continuation of the shared plans with the Naples group. The preferred cost of the trips was: day (range \$2 to \$50) #1 \$25, weekend (range \$35 to \$150) #2 \$50. Single respondents requested another trip to Gainesville and a visit to the museum and sites in Broward County.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS by Travel Coordinator

Clearly the group would like 3-4 trips to be planned per year encompassing a combination of weekends and single days.

The major drawback is the cost which members are willing to incur. While \$20-25 per single day trip is realistic and possible, the weekend trips are impossible at the rate of \$50.

Thus it is recommended that only one weekend trip be planned per year and that it be recognized that few people will be able to attend. Suggested trips include: Miami River Mini Tour by canoe; Copeland trip/Corkscrew Sanctuary; Blowing Rocks in Jupiter; Everglades hike for the hearty; Devil's Millhopper state geological site; Gainesville/Museum; St. Augustine; Little Salt Springs; Examination of Chokoloskee, geologically; Guided tour of the city of Miami/historical emphasis. Individuals now may visit Lignum Vitae/Indian Key by boat through the Park Service.

Daryl Ries, Travel Coordinator

DEERING ESTATE UPDATE - MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Bob Carr, Emily Dieterich and Seth Lefkow made their presence known at the May 21 Metro Dade Commission meeting. Louise Hill of the garden clubs spoke eloquently for all groups. A partisan crowd cheered the Commission when it unanimously (Carey and Schreiber were absent) passed the motion to crank up the financing with Merrill Lynch to buy the Deering property. The Governor and his Cabinet will meet June 4 to consider its previous commitment to buy the estate from the County. The total cost will be near \$25 million due to loan carrying charges, charges Dade County may have to absorb unless funds are found elsewhere.

On May 22, the County Historic Preservation Board initiated the process to designate the Deering Estate as a site of historic significance. This will take about 60 days. The next public meeting of the Historic Preservation Board is at the Dade County Commission Chambers, 73 W. Flagler St., Weds., June 19, at 3:00 p.m., Chairman Donald D. Slesnick II, presiding. Witness this interesting procedure if you can.

The present buyer of the property, Finlay Matheson, is not bound by any agreement to sell to the County, except by his own good faith which he has demonstrated continuously and actively from the outset. Matheson has met with one of the County Attorney's top assistants, Robert L. Krawcheck. The attorney expects to have the necessary Dade County contract documents with Matheson drafted prior to the June 4 Cabinet meeting, and to have the County-State documents approved by the State at the Cabinet meeting. If approved, these documents would be presented to the Dade Commission at its deferred regular meeting, to be held June 6 after the regular zoning meeting. Your support at that meeting will be valuable. The zoning meeting is at the Commission Chambers, and this matter will be considered after zoning matters have been concluded, perhaps in the afternoon.

Closing on the property could take place on or about July 31. There are several possibilities: title might vest in the State from the County at the same time the County takes from Matheson; or title might vest in the State after all CARL (Conservation and Recreation Land Trust Fund) funds have been paid to the County. This could take until June, 1987. There will be a need for a maintenance and management contract between the County and State. If the State takes title now, the need for such a contract is imminent. The terms of this contract need to be addressed NOW.

We need your input, your constructive thoughts and ideas as to how this land might be used for the benefit of everyone. Consider the needs of archaeologists, paleontologists, botanists, garden clubs, historians, ecologists, architects, boaters, hikers, and many, many other groups whose needs can be served by proper utilization of this unique Dade County land. Bill Bird, Director of the Dade County Park and Recreation Department said, "This is the most beautiful chunk of land I've ever seen."

John Carruthers II

ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

The Historical Museum has agreed to accept our archival materials. Any members who have materials to contribute please contact Emily Dieterich, 245-0287 home number. Emily also will be compiling an ongoing record of ASSF activities in a current scrapbook. Materials such as old site reports, news articles, photos or slides related to ASSF would all be appropriate and appreciated. We will make copies and return the originals to you. Be sure to include all pertinent information, dates, names, explanations, locations and mail to Emily Dieterich, 6230 Grant Court, Hollywood, Florida 33024.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

Objective: To provide a formal means by which individuals and institutions interested in archaeological and anthropological studies in South Florida and related areas may come together for mutual benefits.

Code of Ethics:

1. Members of the society agree to promote archaeological site preservation and conservation, to excavate only endangered sites as part of a qualified research group, to not excavate archaeological sites for the unscientific collecting of artifacts.

2. All artifacts and material recovered from society projects are property of the society.

I hereby apply for membership in the Archaeological Society of Southern Florida:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Renewal ___ New Member ___ \$12.00 Individual ___ \$15.00 Family ___

Mail check or money order to: The Archaeological Society of Southern Florida

101 West Flagler Street
Miami, Florida 33130

Due: January 1, 1984

DATES TO REMEMBER:

June 3 : Regular Board Meeting,
Bob Carr's home, 2820 S.W. 38 Ct.
Miami, at 7:30 p.m.

June 6 : Field trip to the Jet
Port Site, Wes Coleman's home,
10 N.W. 124 Ave., Miami, 9:00 am.

June 21 : Regualr Membership
Meeting, Audubon House,
5530 Sunset Dr., South Miami,
8:00 p.m.

Cleaning and Accessing:

every Saturday at 9:30 a.m. at
10 N.W. 124 Ave., Miami.



Emily Perry Dieterich
6230 Grant Court
Hollywood, FL 33024

101 West Flagler Street
Miami, Florida 33130