



THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA

CHAPTER

THE FLORIDA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 12 Number 9 Newsletter SEPTEMBER 1987

President: Bill Steele

Editor: Debra Goldman

BOARD MEETING

FRIDAY, SEP. 18, 6:00 PM

The September Board of Director's Meeting will be held at Beth Read's office, 1489 South Miami Avenue on Friday, September 18th. All board members please attend. All other interested members are welcome to attend.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

FRIDAY, SEP. 18, 8:00 PM

Howard Kleinberg, Editor of The Miami News, will be our speaker at the September meeting. Mr. Kleinberg writes on "Old Miami" and his pieces appear every Saturday on the back page of Section 1 in The Miami News.

The meeting will be held at The Coral Gables House (George Merrick's homestead), 907 Coral Way, Coral Gables on Friday, September 18 at 8:00 p.m.

SWFAS

The Southwest Florida Archaeological Society is constructing a replica of an Indian mound on the grounds of the Collier County Museum. One portion of the mound will be made to look like part of a trench excavation, showing stratified layers as in an actual archaeological site.

BCAS

The Broward County Archaeological Society is presently excavating the Margate Blount site located in north Broward County. The group works on weekends under the direction of Gypsy Graves and has invited us to join them. A sign-up sheet will be available for those interested at the September meeting.

LITTLE SALT SPRINGS

A human burial with a well-preserved brain was discovered at Little Salt Springs by Carl Clausen and Dr. John Gifford of the University of Miami. An oak digging stick was also found. Radio carbon dates of 7500-7800 B.P. were obtained.
(From SWFAS newsletter)

DESOTO SITE

16th Century coins, venetian glass beads, Spanish pottery sherds and chain mail are some of the artifacts excavated from the DeSoto's 1539 Winter Camp Site under the direction of Calvin Jones. (From SWFAS newsletter)

HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

Florida Trust for Historic Preservation will hold a conference in Gainesville, FL on September 17-20, 1987. For further information, contact Emily Dieterich at 345-4228

OKEECHOBEE PREPARES FOR RE-ENACTMENT

The 150th Anniversary of the battle of Okeechobee will be commemorated with a History Fair and Re-enactment on December 4,5,6, 1987.

The battle was fought on December 25, 1838 - the largest and fiercest battle of the Seminole Wars. The Army forces were commanded by Colonel Zachery Taylor. The Indians were led by Wildcat, Sam Jones and Alligator. Army casualties were 27 dead, 111 wounded. The dead included Colonel Richard Gentry, commander of the Missouri Volunteers. The Indians suffered at least 10 dead and many wounded.

On Labor Day, 1987, Bill Steele geared up the Okeechobee community for the December event by leading a parade on horseback waving the flag of the Missouri Volunteers, many of whom lost their lives in the battle. Wes Coleman was also in the parade dressed as a Seminole Chieftain. A press conference followed the parade, announcing the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy's discoveries following the 3 month field investigation of the Okeechobee Battlefield. The field work yielded over 100 artifacts including a bayonet, gun barrels, musket balls and miscellaneous artifacts associated with the campaign.

150TH ANNIVERSARY

History Fair



Re-enactment

OF THE BATTLE OF OKEECHOBEE

DEC.4-6

For information call

Bill Steele (305)375-1621
Becky Williamson (813)763-6957

or write

Archaeological & Historical
Conservancy

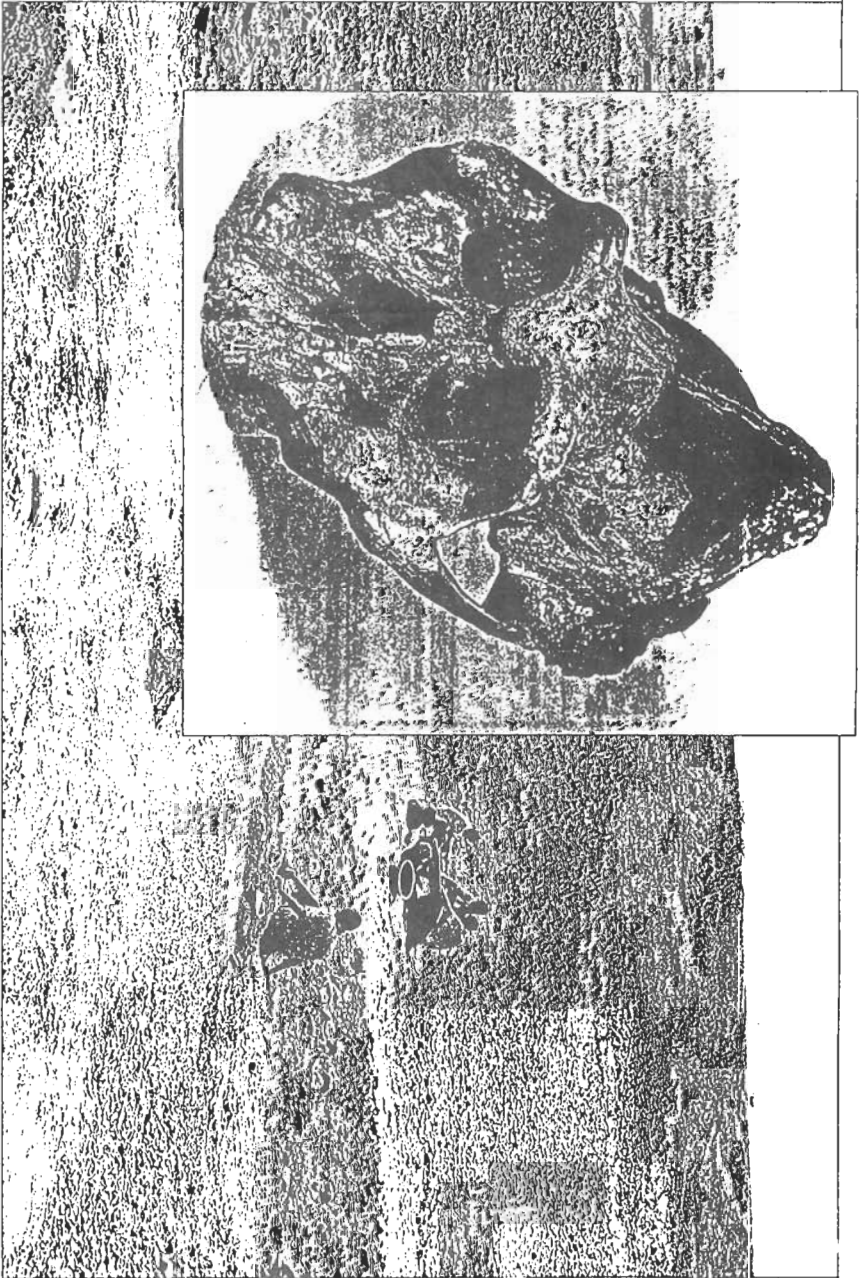
P.O. Box 450283 Miami, FL 33145

Grafting Onto The Family Tree of Man

Anthropologists are trying to figure out where to place a new fossil find — the skull of an apelike-humanlike creature — in the evolutionary order



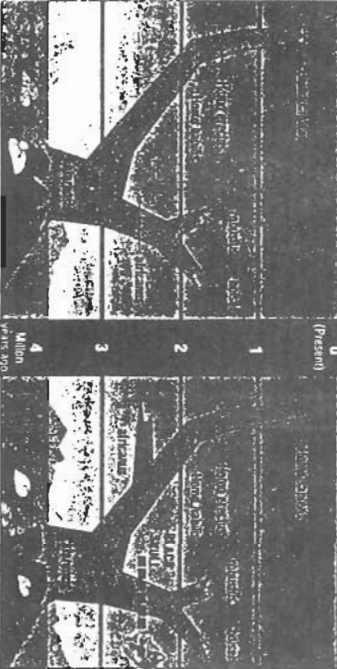
Alan Walker, left, who found the fossil, crouches on the ground, right, in Africa in 1967. Walker's discovery, which he dated at 2.2 million to 2.5 million years old, while the Australopithecus fossil lineage, which became extinct about 1 million years ago, is dated at 1.5 million years old. Walker, who is now at Stony Brook, said they failed to obtain a consensus to name the creature a new species. At right, the site in the African Desert is being visited by the Black Skull team.



A New Branch on the Family Tree

The discovery of the Black Skull is exciting a reexamination of the human family tree. Whether it was once thought that robust and bonoi evolved from a common ancestor, the discovery of the Black Skull, according to one theory, indicates that these two species evolved directly from a common ancestor, but after the period of separation from the human lineage.

Reverend Brian Stull



By Jamie Falan

THE RECENT discovery in Africa of yet another ancient skull, this one roughly 2.5 million years old, is making anthropologists rethink long-held beliefs about the evolution of the human line. It is the top of an evolutionary tree that is not expected to be found during that time period.

The specimen — remains of an apelike creature with humanlike features — may belong to a novel species. That it must be placed somewhere on the evolutionary tree is not in question. Found washing out of the Kenyan desert, it is a very primitive form with a small brain and a facial structure and chewing capacities.

To give some perspective to the evolutionary picture, the oldest hominid fossils in a timeline are about 4 million years old. Next came *Australopithecus africanus*, living between 2.5 and 3 million years ago. Next came *Australopithecus robustus* and *Australopithecus boisei*, two species that lived between 1.5 and 2 million years ago. These animals had large jaws and huge teeth. But the new find, which seems to resemble

the robustus and boisei species, is older than the previously found robustus fossils. As a result, it is a novel development from a African perspective — Homo habilis — lived side by side with robustus and boisei about 2 million years ago. Before the finding of the Black Skull, it is not because the fossil in which it was found is rich in manganese, which gave it a blue-black patina.

Based on previous fossil finds, researchers have estimated that the hominid lineage split some 2 million years ago. Yet they were quite different species. *Robustus* and *boisei* were heavily built and primarily ate vegetation, while *homo erectus* was more gracile and ate a diet of meat and plants.

The heavily built *erectus* disappeared around a million years ago. No one knows why. *WT 17000* resembles an ape. But scientists believe the 1.7-million-year-old animal walked on two legs and lived on the ground. Still, it is not believed directly related to modern humans.

Walker, an anatomist at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, who found and named *WT 17000*, believes the skull belongs only with *WT 17000*. He agrees that the bone lineage can be traced back in time through *WT 17000*, whereas robustus is an independent development from *erectus*. He says robustus and boisei may look alike but descended from different species.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

September 17-20 Florida Trust for Historic Preservation Conference, Gainesville.
Call Emily at 545-4228 for information.
September 18 September Board of Directors Meeting, Beth Read's office, 6 PM.
September 18 September Membership Meeting, Coral Gables House, 907 Coral Way,
Coral Gables, 8 PM.

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN LOCATION OF SEPTEMBER'S MEETING!!! CORAL GABLES HOUSE !!!

LATE BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS

Finlay Matheson will also be present at September's meeting, speaking to us about the development plans in the area of the Cutler Fossil Site. He'll have slides and plans of the proposed development which will incorporate the site.



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