



The Archaeological Society of Southern Florida



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Newsletter of the Society

October 2000

President: Barbara Tansey

Editor: Lisa Weier



Dating the Pyramids

Join us for an exciting evening of discussion and great pictures, when Dr. Curtis Mckinney takes us on a tour of Egypt and the pyramids. Curtis worked on material from various sites in Egypt while at Southern Methodist University in Dallas during the 1980's.

Curtis was involved with dating Paleolithic material and will discuss the radio carbon dating techniques used to determine the age of the pyramids. Also covered will be Egyptian mythology, the Old, Middle, Late and New Kingdoms, and some of the more "alternative" building theories that have been offered over the years.

Please join us on Thursday, September 14th, 7:30 p.m., Atlantic Radio Telephone, 2495 NW 35th Avenue. Call Lisa Weier at (305) 807-8102 for directions.

Mystery of an Incised Quahog Shell

Submitted by ASSF member Bill Lyons

In 1961 an interesting quahog clam shell was found by John Fales of the Florida Anthropological Society in a mound near Lake Okeechocee.

The shell was incised with Spanish markings and contained a map on the interior section. It was incised with a cross and some Roman numerals. Under the Roman numerals was a plus (+) sign, and the capital letters "LA." The Roman numerals were 4 X's and it was determined that this represented 40 plus leagues (or 40 "LA").

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Mystery of an Incised Quahog Shell

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The name "Calos" is incised on the lower portion of the shell. This was the name of the cacique (king or ruler) who ruled over a large section of the West coast.

The Map on the interior indicates NORT (North) and ESTE (East). It also shows a RIO (river). There is an X placed near a circular marking, which is apparently at the end of a branch of the river or possibly a trail. The area to the West of the map would be considered the Gulf of Mexico. The river could be the Caloosahatchee.



The branch of the river or trail, as the case may be, could lead to the Sun Circle Mound. The X could be where one or more Spaniards were being held captive. This would be 40 plus leagues from the Gulf.

This Story is very interesting and I am sure there is more to it.

(Note: the shell pictured here is not the original artifact, but a reproduction Bill made of the shell from the book he found at West Dade Regional Library)

The only information I've ever found which mentions this shell came from a page copied years ago in a book entitled, "Desoto Didn't Land at Tampa," by Rolfe Schell.



It would be interesting to know the present location of the shell and the complete story behind it. Also of interest is the question of whether the shell is a Southern quahog (rough exterior), or Northern Quahog (smooth exterior). Both types are found in Florida waters.

If anyone has any information on this shell please contact the editor, Lisa Weier, at 305-807-8102 or bigpicture14@e.coolworks.com.

Field Trip

Mark your calendars on Saturday, October 28th for our upcoming fieldtrip to **Windley Key Fossil Reef State Geological Site**.

Windley Key is one of the highest in the chain of Keys formed of "Key Largo Limestone" over 125,000 years ago. About 5,000 year ago the water level stabilized and the ancient coral reef crest that remained exposed created the islands we call the Florida Keys.

Some areas used as quarries until the 1960's have clean cuts made by the quarry machinery and reveal perfectly preserved fossilized specimens of a variety of ancient coral animals.

Over 40 kinds of trees can be found along the trails, whose fruits, nuts and berries provide sustenance for several endangered animals and dozens of migratory bird species.

Directions: head South on US1 to mile marker 85.5. Along the way you'll pass Key Largo, and Tavernier. Coming into Islamorada, the 2nd draw bridge will be Snake Creek. The entrance will be ½ mile after Snake Creek bridge on the bay side, on the right.

You'll see a chain link fence. Drive through the gate and meet at the Visitor's Center.



The tour begins at 10:00 a.m., so plan to be there about 15 minutes early. Please bring fluids, insect repellent, and food if you'd like to eat at the Key after the tour. Tour cost: \$2.50 per person.

Screen like a Banshee!

Please come out and help screen artifact-rich dirt rescued from the Bamboo Site, located at the Everglades Outpost in Florida City. Although we've been screening for sometime, there are plenty of piles left to sift, and we now have a tarp covering the screening area for shade. Any help is appreciated and no experience is necessary!

Address: 35601 S.W. 192 Ave.

Call 305-247-8000 for directions.

(PS - wear something that can get very dirty)

Continuing Site Restoration of Indian Key

Restoration work will continue at the Indian Key site, starting again sometime this fall or winter.

The park service will supply transportation to the island each day, shovels, wheelbarrows, drinking water, etc. Additional shovels and screens will be needed. Each person should bring with them each day - lunch, water or any other liquid you like (please - no alcohol), gloves and any tools you can lend us for this project. (Screens are greatly needed).

Please contact Seth Lefkow at (305) 868-2828 or you may contact Pat Wells or Bob Rose directly at Lignumvitae Key State Botanical Site (305) 393-4039 to volunteer and for directions.

Upcoming Conference:

Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) 102nd Annual Meeting, January 3-6, 2001, at the San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina.

Accommodations: San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina, 333 W. Harbor Dr. More information to follow in up-coming newsletters.

Florida Anthropological Society
FAS membership application/renewal form

YES, I want to join FAS. I enclose \$ _____

- INDIVIDUAL, \$25 FAMILY, \$30 INSTITUTIONAL, \$25
 SUSTAINING, \$40 OR MORE PATRON, \$100 LIFE, \$500

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP CODE _____

PHONE (W) _____ (H) _____

Mail to: FAS Membership
Terry Simpsons, CGCAS
P.O. Box 82255
Tampa, Florida 33682

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA
ASSF membership application/renewal form

I have read and will abide by the Objectives and Code of Ethics of ASSF listed below, and I wish to apply for membership.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip Code _____

Phone (w) _____ (h) _____

- CHECK ONE:** New Member Renewal
CHECK ONE: Individual (\$20) Family (\$25)

Mail to: Barbara Tansey
ASSF Membership
2495 N.W. 35th Avenue
Miami, FL 33142

ASSF 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 the property of the Society.

ASSF 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 benefit.

RETURN ADDRESS:

The Archaeological Society of Southern Florida
Barbara Tansey, President
2495 NW 35th Avenue
Miami, Florida 33142

FIRST CLASS



PLACE STAMP
HERE

NEXT MEETING: October 12th, 7:30 p.m.

Mailing Address

SPEAKER: Dr. Curtis McKinney **Topic:** Dating the Pyramids

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Lisa Weier can be reached at (305) 807-8102, or bigpicture14@e.coolworks.com, for questions, comments, submissions or (oops!) corrections.