



The Archaeological Society of Southern Florida



Volume 27, Issue 3

Newsletter of the Society

March 2001

President: Barbara Tansey

Editor: Lisa Weier

NOTE: Next Meeting CHANGE OF DATE

Our next meeting will be held at the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, downtown Miami, at the Metro-Dade Cultural Center Plaza, 101 West Flagler Street. We will meet on the **THIRD** Thursday of March, the 15nd, at 7:00 p.m. (Board members meet in the patio at the museum entrance at 6:00 p.m. – no food or refreshments will be available).



Please join us for a private behind the scenes tour of the museum's basement and fossil displays, including the Weston fossils recently discovered and discussed in the news. Our tour will be lead by the museum's curator, George Zamanillo. Expect the tour to last approximately 1 hour.

We will meet at the entrance to the museum at 7:00 p.m., and there will be no charge for society members. Parking is \$2 in the garage across the street on the block to the west of the Cultural Plaza at 50 N.W. 2nd Avenue, with museum ticket validation. You can also park at the Metro-Dade County Garage at 140 W. Flagler Street. If you park at the Cultural Center garage, take the over-the-street walkway from the Parking Level 2 directly to the plaza.

Directions from the South: If traveling north on I-95, take the NW 2nd Street exit (Exit 4). Turn right onto NW 2nd Street, and then right on NW 2nd Avenue for one block. The Cultural Center is on the left and the Miami-Dade Cultural Center parking garage is on the right.

Directions from the North: If traveling south on I-95, exit at Orange Bowl/NW 8th Street (Exit 5A). Turn left onto NW 2nd Street, and then turn right onto NW 2nd Avenue. The Cultural Center is on the left, and its parking garage on the right.

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Ancient canoes found at bottom of Florida lake

Dec. 20, 2000 News24

It has always been somewhat of a mystery, why a shallow foot-and-a-half deep lake near Gainesville, Florida, was once called Pith-la-choc-co, meaning "place of the long boats" in the Florida Seminole Indian language.

Pithlachocco, Florida - They lay like ancient and forgotten American Indian warriors at the bottom of Newnan's Lake, named after the much romanticized 19th century Indian fighter Colonel Daniel Newnan.

It has always been somewhat of a mystery, this shallow foot-and-a-half deep lake near Gainesville, Florida, which was once called Pith-la-choc-co, meaning "place of the long boats" in the Florida Seminole Indian language.

Why, the Seminoles had always wondered, had the lake been named after these boats? Did it mean, as some believed, that the lake itself had sometime long ago been in the shape of a long boat? These days no one is wondering anymore.

In what has been the greatest single discovery in North America of prehistoric Indian canoes, Florida state archaeologists claim that many of them date as far back as 3 000 BC and give hints of a hunting and gathering society that ran concurrent with Archaic Greece and Pharaonic Egypt.

"Out of the 87 canoes we found, 36 fell between the ages of 3 000 BC and 1 000 BC," says Florida State Archaeologist Melissa Memory.

"They were made from logs, and in fact looked like modified logs. Each was 15 to 31 feet long (4,5 to 9,5 meters). And they were constructed by burning the wood at the center and then scraping out the charcoal with stone and shell tools."

The find, Memory insists, is more important than the recent Miami Circle discovery of 1998, if only because the canoes are older. The Miami Circle, which is now believed to be the foundation for an American Indian council house or chief's house, only dated back to 300 BC.

Moreover, she said, "the fact that there are 5 000 year old canoes at all proves that the Indians of this particular time were settling down, getting away from their nomadic past, and adapting to their particular environments."

Memory, who is employed with the Bureau of Archaeological Research (an agency of the Florida Department of State), began studying the canoes soon after their recent discovery was made last May independently by a lake resident and a group of Gainesville East Side High School students.

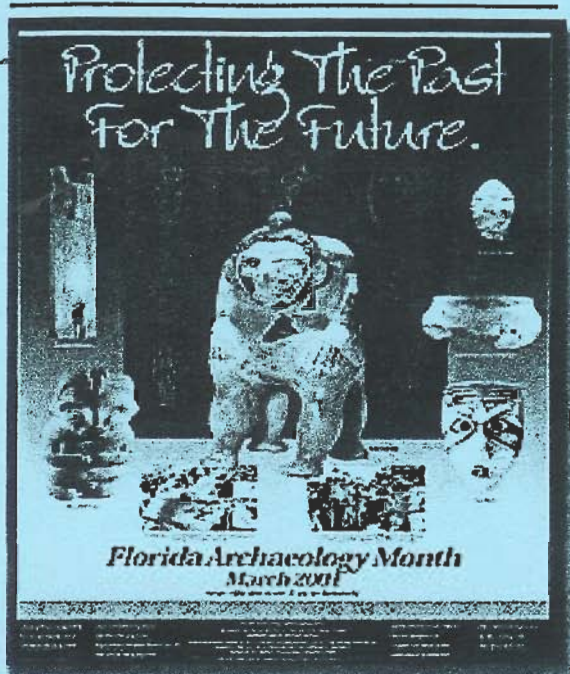
Her team of archaeologists believe this cache of canoes point to the presence of a large village site along the north shore that could have been inhabited from 1 000 BC to 1 000 AD.

Aerial photographs would seem to confirm this, as does the recovery of several artifacts such as stone spear points, stone knives, ceramic vessels and some wooden fish traps.

"Interestingly, the 52 canoes that Memory's team radiocarbon-dated were found to cluster into three time periods" explains Florida Museum of Natural History Archaeologist Gerald Milanich.

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Archaeology Fair at Monkey Jungle



(Note: Poster by artist Sheila Stewart, member Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society.)

ASSF and AHC (Archaeological and Historical Conservancy) are co-sponsoring our 8th annual **Archaeological Fair, Saturday, March 18th, 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Monkey Jungle, 14805 S.W. 216 Street.**

Directions: If traveling by turnpike, Exit # 11 and head 4 miles west. Phone (305) 235-1611 for more information and directions.

There will be hands-on displays for everyone, seeded dirt for children to sift through, and an archaeologist on hand to answer questions and identify artifacts you may want to bring.

We will also have flint knapping demonstrations, Second Seminole War re-enactors camp, educational material, photographs, books, and much more. We have a limited supply of free Archaeology Month posters.

See the exhibit of teeth and bones from extinct animals unearthed at the Monkey Jungle site. Local historical writers will be present to sell and sign their books.

Check Out...**Florida Archaeology Month**
Web Site address: <http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/archmonth/index.cfm>

(Ancient canoes... continued)

Thirty-six canoes were found from the Late Archaic Period (from 3 000 to 1 000 BC); four canoes were from the Deptford Culture Period (from 700 to 300 BC); and 12 were from the Alachua Culture Period (from 700 to 1500 AD).

All of these time periods would appear to predate the Florida Seminoles, although the tribe strongly disagrees and is currently seeking ways they can protect what they see as their cultural find.

Now that all of the fieldwork is over, Memory has covered the canoes back up with sand to protect them from the wind and sun.

The canoes are too spongy from their saturation over thousands of years with water to be saved. So it's difficult to think about removing them." - Sapa-AFP

FAS 2001 Annual Meeting

The next Florida Anthropological Society Annual Meeting will be held:

Where: St. Augustine

When: Friday, May 11th through Sunday May 13th, Radisson Ponce de Leon Conference Resort, (904) 824-2821.

Cost: Early registration (until April 1st) \$25. \$30 thereafter.

The Friday night reception will be hosted at the St. Augustine Lighthouse.

An additional option on Friday, May 11th, is the **Florida Underwater Archaeology Conference**, held in conjunction the FAS Meeting. Cost: \$35 before April 1, \$40 thereafter. Call James Cusick (352) 392-9075, ext. 306, for more information.

It's time for...

Dade Heritage Trust Miami River Days
Saturday, April 7th, 10-6:00 p.m.

(Note: ASSF will not have a presence at Miami River Days, as the president will be out of town – unless someone volunteers to set-up and man our booth...)

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 Simpson, 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: Thursday, March 15th, 7:00 p.m., at the Historical Museum.

Mailing Address

OFFICERS:

Barbara Tansey, President; Jim Lord, Vice President;
Brian Conesa, Treasurer; Lisa Weier, Secretary

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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