



**WMS/LSS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

Vol. 31, No. 3, May/June 2020

*A 501(c)3 Corporation and Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society*

The Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Spring Archaeological Society meets the second Tuesday of the month (except June, July and August) at 7:00 pm. General meetings are held at the North Port Community United Church, located at 3450 S. Biscayne Blvd. Dinner prior to the September and October meetings will be announced in the September/October newsletter.  
**Celebrating Our 30th Anniversary!**

**A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

Dear members and friends,

As you may have expected, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our May 12th meeting has been canceled.

I want to thank you for putting your trust in me as President of the WMS/LSS Archaeological Society. It is a position I was hesitant to undertake, but as a board member, I felt the need to assist the society as we move forward in our 30th Anniversary. As an archaeologist, I believe in the educational value of the organization and its archaeological and historic preservation-minded goals. I am glad past WMS/LSSAS President, Steve Koski, will stay on as Vice-President to provide valuable advice and assistance through his professional experience and 30-year involvement in the organization; and hopefully give him a break after six years in the position.

We did move forward with our March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting with a presentation by Sarasota County Historical Resources Curator, Ms. Lindsey Ogles, who gave an exceptional presentation on "Finding Overtown – Sarasota's First African-American Community." This was most appreciated with two-day notice. Also, her presentation happened to be related to the Florida Archaeology Month theme. Our scheduled March speaker, coming from Orlando, canceled due to the incipience of Covid-19 in Florida, which is understandable. Many of our members also took a precautionary tone and stayed away as most are in a high-risk category. We look forward to rescheduling Dr. Edward Gonzalez-Tennant's presentation at a later date.

We also had our annual 2020 elections at the March meeting and Treasurer Kate Cattran had a Publix cake made for our 30th Anniversary celebration.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank one of our long-serving Board Member, Rik Jimison, who completed his three-year term. His knowledgeable background with Sarasota County Human Services and experience with the various government agencies will be greatly missed, as well as his excellent formal writing style. This was last evidenced in the Proclamation from the North Port Commission in honor of our 30th Anniversary (See the March/April Newsletter). We are hopeful we can count on his continued support when the need arises in the future, as he has knowledge and talents many of us are lacking.

Thank you, Rik, for your dedicated service to the Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Spring Archaeological Society.



The 2020 Board members, Joan San Lwin. President Kathy Gerace, Linda Elligott, Ted Ehmann, Treasurer Kat Cattran, past president Steve Koski, Secretary Sandy Heacock, Betty Nugent and Membership Secretary, Linda Massey. Incoming Vice-President Bill Goetz and Thalia St. Lewis, and board member Rita Bass not in the photo.

As we take our normal summer hiatus (June, July and August), we hope to be able to again meet in the fall, pending ongoing developments.

We have already begun setting up a schedule of speakers and field trips for this next active year. Michelle Calhoun, who was to speak at our canceled April 14th meeting, has agreed to present at our September 8th meeting on "A Preliminary Analysis of Columella Tools and Gastropod Hammers from Snake Island, Sarasota County, Florida." In October, we expect to hear from Eric Prendergast, on "Love Letters to the Steamer *Gopher Found* in a Sewer Trench in Downtown Tampa," a fascinating story he presented at last year's Florida Anthropological Society conference in Crystal River, which was attended by several of our members. We also hope to have Dr. Edward Gonzalez-Tennent reschedule his lecture and book signing on the Rosewood Massacre, as well as Dr. Mike Savarese from FGCU on his important geologic findings as part of the major archaeological work on Mound Key. This tentative schedule will of course be dependent on recommended precautionary practices, and all will be informed in August when more information is available.

We are also planning to reschedule the field trip to the Florida Natural History Museum that had to be canceled due to the pandemic. Also, with the thrilling new finds at Mound Key, we hope to be able to plan a field trip there, as well as to other possible locales and events.

With all of your continued support, the Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Spring Archaeological Society will once again provide an exciting and educational series of lectures and field trips during the 2020/2021 year. Fingers crossed.

Stay safe, stay well, and hope to see you in September!  
Kathy Gerace, WMS/LSSAS President.

## FINDING OVERTOWN – SARASOTA'S FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

This year's Florida Archaeology Month theme was focused on black cemeteries and the recent discoveries of several forgotten cemeteries in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties.

Along this theme, Lindsay Ogles gave a presentation about her work digitally reconstructing the Overtown community (today known as the Rosemary District). She discussed methods by which traditional source materials can be used to digitally recreate historic areas, and place historic communities, sites, and cemeteries within the context of our modern communities. By focusing on a community which has been almost entirely removed from the public view, her techniques and work translates well to other lost or forgotten vestiges of African-American communities and life. By addressing the influences of gentrification and demolition on Overtown, her presentation addressed several of the threats also facing black cemeteries throughout Florida.

Luckily, Lindsay had the presentation that she recently gave at a national conference and we thank her for her gracious last-minute acceptance to speak to our group!



March speaker Lindsay Ogles accepts our world-famous tee-shirt from incoming president Kathy Gerace.

## APRIL-MAY CANCELED EVENTS TO BE RESCHEDULED

There have been many cancellations over the past couple months that have appeared in our newsletter. Following are a few previously announced and their new dates if rescheduled.

- **March 14, 2020 Cattle Drive and Jamboree at Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch:** Rescheduled 2021 date to be announced.
- **March 20, 2020 Field Trip to the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville:** Rescheduled date to be announced.
- **March 25, 2020 Southwest Florida Archaeology Panel at Shannon Staub Library:** Rescheduled to March 2021 date to be announced.
- **April 25, 2020 Historic and Preservation Coalition of Sarasota County (HPCOSC) Awards Luncheon:** Rescheduled date to be announced.
- **FAS May 8-10 Annual Meeting and Conference:** The 72nd Annual Meeting of the Florida Anthropological Society, which was to be held May 7-10, 2020 in Naples, is under consideration by the FAS board to be rescheduled to October 2-4, 2020. The meeting will be hosted by the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society. These dates have not been confirmed, but under consideration. If you had previously registered for the conference and are no longer interested in attending a rescheduled date, you may contact Charlie Strader at [swfas@explorationsinc.com](mailto:swfas@explorationsinc.com) to request a full refund. For those who are interested in attending, it's best to hold off until a date is confirmed (which could still be changed due to circumstance). You can carry over your registration fees to the rescheduled date. Information will be provided when known.

If you submitted a paper or poster abstract and would like to withdraw it, please contact John Furey at [jffurey@charter.net](mailto:jffurey@charter.net) to do so. You may also keep your abstract submitted until a date is confirmed and you are sure you can make it. The Ritz-Carlton has indicated that all rooms reserved for May were automatically canceled and the October 2-4 dates are available for rescheduling, and another cancellation would be accepted if the situation does not improve. If the October dates are

selected, guests planning to attend will be able to rebook their rooms through a new conference link when it becomes available.

## ORCHID STUDY MOVES FORWARD AT LSS

By S.H.Koski

The collaboration between Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and the University of Miami was initiated in 2019 and continued in March and April of 2020. The project was revived by Dr. Antonio Toscano de Brito, Ph.D. Curator of the Orchid Research Center, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, with the recording of eighteen specimens. Friends of LSS president Lawry Reid contacted Toscano at the recommendation of Dr. Craig Huegel, who identified a population of *Sacoila lanceolata*, var. *paludicola* at LSS in 2006. He and Kat McConnel published a paper on their research in the *North American Native Orchid Journal* titled, "General Notes on the Ecology of *Sacoila Paludicola*, Sarasota County, Florida (Huegel and McConnel 2008). Based on their study, Huegel and McConnel consider the variety a separate species based on a number of differences between the species *S. lanceolata* and var. *S. l. paludicola*. See an article by Huegel in, *The Quarterly Journal of the Florida Native Plant Society* (Vol. 26 No. 2 2009) at: [https://www.fnps.org/assets/pdf/palmetto/vol26\\_no2\\_huegel.pdf](https://www.fnps.org/assets/pdf/palmetto/vol26_no2_huegel.pdf)

The 2019 study was assisted by Steve Koski and FLSS President Lawry Reid (now FLSS VP). The research was undertaken to document the population of *S. l. paludicola*, identified by the late Dr. Carl Luer, with the discovery of a population in the Fakahatchee Strand in Collier County. This was done in an attempt to compare the LSS specimens with the variety from the Fakahatchee and species of *S. lanceolata* from Brazil, Cuba, and other Caribbean Islands, and do DNA analysis to determine if the variety is, in fact, a separate species and not just a variety. The 2019 documentation included a collection of a single specimen, a number of flowers, and leaves, to begin the DNA. It seems that the species and variety have distinct separate habitats where they occur, and several other differences, that led Huegel and McConnel to believe that they rose to the level of a separate species.

Unfortunately, Toscano suffered a health setback last year, and we hope he makes a full recovery and can continue with his important research. In the meantime, LSS site manager Koski, FLSS membership secretary Nancy Morrison, John and Beth Mertzler, WMS/LSSAS volunteer Michelle Calhoun documented this year's bloom to help continue the research.



*Sacoila lanceolata* var. *paludicola* (photo S.H. Koski)

## PANDEMICS THAT CHANGED HISTORY

By Evelyn Mangie Time Sifters Board Member

Reprinted with permission from Time Sifters Archaeological Society Newsletter, April 2020

An epidemic is a disease that affects a disproportionately large number of individuals within a population at the same time. That began to happen when people turned to agriculture and began to live close together in permanent villages and towns. An epidemic becomes a pandemic when it spreads beyond a country's borders and into the rest of the world. That is what the world is experiencing today with the coronavirus that has spread to the entire populated world. That kind of disease has affected world communities for centuries, not just with suffering and death, but also causing political and economic disturbances. The following are examples of how some pandemics probably changed history.

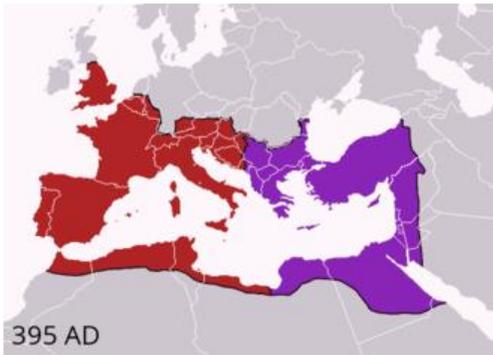
The first recorded pandemic happened in ancient Greece during the Peloponnesian War, (431-404 BCE) when the city-states of Athens and Sparta were fighting to maintain leadership of the Greek states. The Athenians were squeezed together inside the city's protective walls when the disease hit. It spread quickly, killing almost two thirds of the Athenian population. Their military was diminished, and their economy was flattened.



Image: National Geographic.

The plague also affected the other Greek states, but they continued to battle, reinforcing their navies. The kingdom north of the Greek states, Macedonia, benefitted from these wars, because Macedonia was rich in timber at this time when the timber-starved Greek states were building more wooden ships. The Macedonian leaders exploited their advantage and became very wealthy. In 359 BCE, Philip II claimed the Macedonian throne and turned his kingdom into a powerful military state that brought all of the Greek states under Macedonian control, ending the Athenian democracy, as well as Greek control over the Aegean and Ionian Seas.

The loss of classical Greek control left Philip's son, Alexander (the Great) able to conquer the Persian empire in the east while the Roman Republic in the west began to gain power in the Italian peninsula.



The Romans eventually grew into an enormous empire so large that it split into a Latin-speaking western part and a Greek-speaking eastern part. The western part fell to barbarian invaders in the 5th century CE.

Justinian, the emperor of the eastern part, began an attempt to reunite the entire Roman Empire, but a pandemic struck the Mediterranean area in 541 CE (the Justinian Plague). It killed so many people that the emperor was forced to give up his plan. Had Justinian been able to reunite, Roman Christianity probably would have been replaced by Byzantine Christianity and Europe might not have fallen into the Dark Age.



A repressive feudal society developed during the Dark Age, but another pandemic, the Black Death of 1347 CE, ended that feudal system. This pandemic killed millions, leaving the manors without both lords and serfs. Survivors left the manors to seek wage labor that laid the foundation for capitalism. Searching for blame, people began to question authorities, both religious and political, which probably led to the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, and the Enlightenment that developed in Europe from the 17th to the 19th centuries. The new capitalism sent the Spanish, English and French to the Americas and brought another plague that killed 90% of the American Indians. The loss of the indigenous population left both American continents open for massive European migration and settlement.

After that, the ocean no longer protected the Western Hemisphere from eastern pandemics and in 1829, a plague of cholera spread from India through Europe, and, by 1832, to North America. The terrible death rate encouraged Enlightenment scientists to study the cause of disease. That produced great scientists like Louis Pasteur and Joseph Lister, who discovered that disease was caused by germs and that cleanliness limited the risk of spreading it. These preventive measures were adopted by many countries and led to better medical practices, as well as government involvement in cleaning up filthy municipal areas and assisting the poor.



Images: Wikipedia; Historic-UK; nyhistory.org; National Museum of Health & Medicine.

That had a major impact on the advancement of modern medicine and the development of proactive government, but it did not stop pandemics. One of the worst was the Spanish flu in 1918, the deadliest disease outbreak in human history (so far). Unlike regular flu, Spanish flu could also affect the brain and the nervous system. A terrified U.S. Congress attempted to keep the details from the general public, which was just recovering from the horrors of WWI. Congress made it a crime to write, print or say anything negative about our government and President Woodrow Wilson tried to maintain the appearance of strong leadership. But in 1918, when he went to the Versailles Peace Conference in Paris, President Wilson hid the fact that he had a temperature of 103 degrees. He often became confused during the negotiations and historians believe that his weakened cognitive abilities were a result of the flu and that his condition contributed to the flaws in the Versailles peace treaty that led to WWII.

We can only guess what history-changing effects this coronavirus pandemic will have on the future. Hopefully, some of the effects will be positive and will allow us to mitigate pandemics before they arrive and save us from the death, insecurities, and economic disaster that always accompany them.

**2020 WMS/LSSAS OFFICERS**

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