



## WMS/LSS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 34, No. 3 May/June 2023

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 at 7:00 PM (except June, July and August). **We will meet in-person May 9<sup>th</sup> with the speaker** at the North Port Community United Church of Christ, 3450 S. Biscayne Blvd. (left side of building on right until the lan-damaged building is restored). Join us for "dinner with the speaker" at 5:00 PM at the Tarpon Point Grill & Marina on the Myakka River prior to the meeting. For those who cannot make the meeting, we will also hold it via Zoom, To Zoom in to the May 9 meeting, go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82400155724?pwd=WkZDWGdGZ1hRNWNta2NkVFpHckVBZz09;>

Meeting ID: 824 0015 5724, Passcode: 050978.

### PLEISTOCENE SURVIVORS TOPIC OF MAY 9 MEETING.

Provided by the speaker

As the last Ice Age came to a close much of the mega-fauna in North America went extinct. However, there were survivors, and the story is not only often overlooked, but is important to understanding the current mass extinction we are now going through. This presentation will focus on that subject which is one small sub-chapter of the author's new book; *Ice Age Florida: In Story and Art*.

Dr. Bob Sinibaldi is a past president of the Tampa Bay Fossil Club and is still on their board of directors. He was a recipient of the Howard Converse Award for his contributions to paleontology in the state of Florida by the University of Florida Department of Vertebrate Paleontology in 2011.



May 9 speaker Dr. Bob Sinibaldi

### A PROCLAMATION ON WARM MINERAL SPRINGS BY THE OFFICERS AND BOARD OF THE WMS/LSSAS.

The City of North Port and our community are facing difficult times regarding WMS, the preservation of the historic buildings, the degree of appropriate development, and recent changes in the direction to the WMS Master Plan. As part of our mission of historic preservation and education, and our namesake, we offer this Proclamation.

#### PROCLAMATION ON WARM MINERAL SPRINGS, FLORIDA

*Whereas, Warm Mineral Springs contains multiple levels of significance regarding its Geology, Geothermal Hydrology, Archaeology, Paleontology, History, Architecture, and traditional historic use as a wellness spa; as well as the significance of the outflow creek, which provides critical habitat for endangered manatees in the winter when they are most vulnerable,*

*Whereas, Warm Mineral Springs is an internationally-renowned archeological site and historic property, listed on the National Register of Historic Places for evidence of some of Florida's earliest inhabitants (listed in 1976), and for its historic 1959 mid-century modern buildings, designed by renowned architect Jack West, of the Sarasota School of Architecture (listed in 2019 by the city of North Port). And, eligible as a Traditional Cultural Property that has a strong association with the beliefs and identities of a particular culture,*

*Whereas, Warm Mineral Springs is a natural and cultural resource owned by the City of North Port, providing a steady*

income stream for profitability and sustainability to the City,

**Whereas**, the protection of this natural and cultural wonder is in the best interest of the public; the citizens of North Port, Sarasota County, Florida, and the nation,

**Whereas**, as stewards of this publicly-owned, one-of-a-kind natural and cultural resource, the City of North Port has a responsibility to see that all levels of significance noted above are taken into consideration and protected to the highest degree possible; and to protect the site and surrounding landscape that serves as a natural protective buffer, from commercial over-exploitation at the expense of the resources they are responsible to protect,

**Whereas**, the current private/public partnership plan as outlined in Option 4 of the new development proposal for a hotel and condominiums goes against those preservation principles that were decided upon during numerous public meetings in 2019; of which its impacts are without scientific study, and could have an adverse effect on the natural and cultural significance on the National Register-listed site,

**Therefore**, we, the Board of the Warm Mineral Spring/Little Salt Spring Archaeological Society would like to see no development more intrusive than what was publicly agreed upon in 2019; and to prioritize stabilization and restoration of the historic buildings not contingent on development approval as currently proposed under Option 4; and approval of any development on the property and adjacent properties should have appropriate cultural sensitivity and monitoring observed during any construction. And to, protect the integrity of the geology of this karstic feature, a ceiling collapsed sinkhole which contains the only natural geothermal vent in Florida and which has been geological feature on the landscape for a minimum of 20,000 years.

On this Day 27 April 2023

Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Spring Archeological Society  
a 501 (c)(3) not for profit corporation and Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society

Officers and Board of Directors: President, Kathy Gerace; Vice President, Steve Koski; Treasurer, Marion Pierce; Secretary, Lisa Shavers; Directors: Bill Goetz, Michelle Calhoun, Amy Dwyer, Thalia Lewis, Joan San Lwin, Linda Massey, and Betty Nugent.

#### **PLEISTOCENE SURVIVORS** (cont. from page 1)

Dr. Sinibaldi has authored 3 books; *Fossil Diving in Florida's Waters* (1998), *What Your Fossils Can Tell You* (2011) and *Ice Age Florida* (2021). He has donated several hundred specimens to the UF Department of Paleontology over the past several years.

#### **ARCHEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTATION OF PENSACOLA'S SUBMERGED HISTORY (AND OTHER WORTHY PURSUITS)**

by Judi and John Crescenzo

On April 11, 2023, Dr. John R. Bratten, archaeologist and conservator for the University of West Florida, presented "Archaeological Documentation of Pensacola's Submerged History (and other worthy pursuits)" on Zoom. Bratten graduated

from the Nautical Archaeology Program at Texas A&M University and has been involved with the conservation of artifacts from various locations, including 17<sup>th</sup> Century Jamaica and Revolutionary War Lake Champlain. He led work on diverse underwater projects such as the 1559 Don Tristán de Luna y Arellano shipwreck and recent primitive boats built by Cuban refugees.

Don Tristán de Luna, a Spanish conquistador, traveled with Coronado to the American Southwest. He had 11 ships built in Europe. In 1800, he brought colonists to Pensacola Bay just before a probable Category 5 hurricane hit Pensacola. Luna reported the losses, including his ships, in a legal document.

The Emmanuel Point Ship I remains, located in 1992, included old timbers, ballast, and a ship's pump well. Sketches were used for positive identification. In 1997, the anchor was raised and displayed in Pensacola, along with a copper cauldron rim. Comparison to a 1618 painting *Woman Cooking Eggs* by Spanish artist Diego Velasquez shows a mortar and pestle identical to the ship artifacts. A breastplate was also found. Its replica was created based on x-rays. Other artifacts included olive, palm, and fruit pits, as well as cockroaches and black rat and mice bones. Cow, pig, sheep, goat, and chicken bones prove their early arrival in North America. Feline bones found on a second ship were found to be related to domestic Iron Age cats from England and Scotland. These were not treasure ships but 1 coin, a *Blanca*, was found, along with a scale and weights.

Another ship, the Emmanuel Point Ship II, discovered in 2006, contained about 7,735 artifacts including a carved wooden spoon and an ivory manicure set with a whistle. Excavation units determined the orientation of the ship, found in twelve feet of water. A hurricane drove the ship onto a sandbar, where it broke apart and remains today. Insect parts on the ship suggest that it may have carried honey. Additional artifacts included a 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish olive jar, a silver coin minted in Mexico City, wooden barrel pieces, and a cannon wheel.

Emmanuel Point Ship III was discovered in 7 feet of water on a different sandbar with clear visibility, but Bratten's field school closed because of Covid. Intact ship timbers have been located, and grants will allow the school to reopen this summer.

More shipwrecks were found in the Pensacola area. The Santa Rosa Island Shipwreck was close to shore. It was obviously made in the New World because the timbers are large. In comparison, European-built ships used smaller timber because much of Europe had been logged. The stern of the Santa Rosa shipwreck was drained of water and screened for artifacts, uncovering 2 bone dice, a bailing scoop and a double fiddle block and pulley blocks for lifting. A stair riser from between decks was located, along with brooms and a carpenter's box of iron spikes. Research showed this was a Spanish ship named *Rosario*, which was used to pick up masts.

Other shipwrecks included the *Rhoda*, which came to Pensacola for lumber. Its iron frames indicate that it was a later ship. The ship, *Catharine*, was used in 1897 to pick up lumber from Pensacola, but ran aground. It was located with sonar. Remains included iron masts, a porthole window, and a name plate showing British origins. In 1906, the *Hamilton*, a small fishing vessel was discovered. Artifacts included an ivory

toothbrush, straight razor, and dishes. A lumber schooner was found in summer 2003 on the Blackwater River. In recent years, aircraft parts were located near Pensacola Naval Station, in the Gulf of Mexico, in 90 feet of water. In 2016, a land site colony was located, and its artifacts were compared with those on the ships.

Bratten documented and worked to preserve Cuban refugee boats as part of the Cuban “Chug” Boat project at Key West Botanical Garden. Photographer/artist Benjamin Bruce found boats and put them in a museum. Some were fishing boats like the *Mariel*, which carried Cubans to Florida. Refugee boats could be anything. Some examples are rafts with iron rebar and tarps, with either outboard or inboard engines, a makeshift pontoon boat propelled by an outboard, and a bolted aluminum boat which used fiberglass and foam for waterproofing. The ingenuity of the Cuban refugees is obvious, yet many unfortunately died during their escape to Key West. Thank you, Dr. Bratten for that fascinating history and program on underwater archaeology at the University of West Florida!

### **THE MILL COVE COMPLEX: DAILY LIFE, FEASTING, AND FARAWAY CONNECTIONS - TOPIC OF MARCH 14 MEETING**

by Judi and John Crescenzo

On March 14, 2023, Dr. Keith Ashley, archaeologist and associate professor of Anthropology at the University of North Florida, presented “The Mill Cove Complex: Daily Life, Feasting, and Faraway Connections.” Ashley has been involved in many excavations in northeast Florida and focused on the St. Johns fisher-hunter-gatherers in the larger context of farmers, in the southeast from the 10<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> century C.E. He is also researching 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century societies of the Timucua-speaking Mocama.

Ashley focused on the Mill Cove Complex, located near the St. Johns River. The residents of the site were influenced by the Mississippian period and the culture of Cahokia, centered east of the Mississippi River in Illinois. Cahokia was composed of a large urban center with scattered villages, with a massive population, and with large-scale construction and agriculture in the Midwest. Monks Mound, the largest prehistoric mound in North America was 100 feet high and boasted a grand plaza. It was “the New York City of the day.” By the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century, Cahokia had 120 mounds, with another 50 mounds in East St. Louis and 25 more in St. Louis.

The Mill Cove and Mount Royal complexes were both on the St. Johns River. They are the only sites in Florida which were connected to Cahokia and whose inhabitants were not farmers. Ashley’s research was conducted through the archaeology lab at the University of North Florida. The multi-scale exploration included social relationships and regions on a macro level.

People of the St. Johns II culture from A.D. 900-1250 were fisher-hunter-gatherers who made their burials on a mound at Mill Cove. The area was once a fishery used by Ernest Hemingway, but it is now only a three-foot muck area. A modern LiDAR map shows the Grant and Shields Mounds, which were dug in 1895 by archaeologist C. B. Moore. Compared to an engineer’s map, LiDAR shows much destroyed by development,



*Board member Amy Dwyer presents Dr. Keith Ashley our world famous tee-shirt at the March meeting*

but the area closest to the mounds has the most archaeological remains. Important finds include mica from the Appalachians and galena from the Ozarks. Non-local stone celts, embossed copper plates, and copper long-nosed god masks were found. A total of 23 copper items were sourced from the Southeast, Great Lakes, and Wisconsin.

From 2000-2019, 109 shovel tests were completed in 13 excavation areas. Focusing on Kinsey’s Knoll, excavated units led to dates from A.D. 950-1250. The prominent knoll is 25-30 feet above the St. Johns River. Features include pits containing shell and mostly burnished pottery. Also uncovered were charcoal, ash, fired sand, and some hematite patches and nodules. Bone artifacts with holes drilled in them were prolific and included 100 pins, some incised with hematite powder pressed into the grooves. Large bones with notches may have represented cosmology, and modified dolphin teeth could have been abraders. Many shell beads in a variety of shapes were found, along with Archaic, Woodland, and Pinellas points. Cahokian notched points with hematite were discovered at Kinsey’s Knoll, and Mount Royal revealed ground stone tool fragments. Some copper-wrapped objects and scrap pieces may also be beads.

Kinsey’s Knoll produced 20,000 pottery sherds. Large sherds were check-stamped, and small ones were burnished. St. Johns River pottery vessels were plain or check-stamped, and some were incised, punctated, or burnished. The pottery has an Ocmulgee connection in GA. Neutron activation analyses and oxidation studies show that 24% were non-local clays, which were likely brought to the area for pottery manufacture. Some clay jars had ridged tops that could have been used to secure covers during transportation. Pottery effigy adornos [appendages fixed to clay pots] of birds, dogs, and foxes were also found.

Faunal remains include mullet, sea trout, sheephead, flounder, drums, redfish, and herring. Bear mandibles and bones from panthers, beavers, mink, otter, fox, sharks, dolphins, and deer may indicate feasting at the site. Oysters were the main faunal species. Soil comparisons show most activity occurred from September to April, but fish were year-round. Bannerstones and turkeytail points were found and appear to be Hopewellian, but perhaps they were taken from older mounds. Turkeytail points are most often found in Ohio and Indiana.



People from the St. Johns River area sustained linkages over time and distance, as well as into ancestry. Stories depict how people at that time viewed the world. A map showed items made in Cahokia, though Cahokians likely had no personal contact with the people of northeast Florida, according to Ashley. Masks found on the edge of the Mississippian world may signify alliances with those chiefdoms. Imprinted cosmology and the ability to bring home far-off prized items showed a connection to the distant world's edge. Long-nosed god masks may have established diplomacy, and foreign objects perhaps also summoned other worlds. We greatly appreciate Dr. Ashley's visit for the well-attended, in-person and Zoom hybrid presentation!

### TOUR OF PUNTA GORDA MURALS HELD IN APRIL

On Saturday, April 15, a few of members met for a short walking tour of some of the amazing murals in Punta Gorda. Attending members and guests were Normajeon Ridzyowski, Michelle Calhoun, Marion Pierce Kathy Gerace, and Kathleen Davis (pictured below).



Meeting at Veteran's Park, Mural Society president Kelly Gaylord, led the informative and educational tour, beginning with the airfield mural, and sharing the history of the Punta Gorda airport. Touring the waterfront murals and the stunning mural on the side of the bakery, we learned about challenges faced, such as structural degradation, and innovative solutions implemented to overcome them. The artistry of the murals is excellent, and they are a great credit to the pleasant aesthetics of the city.

There are 31 murals in total, scattered across the city. We learned so much about the history of the city, its founders, and early pioneers, and greatly recommend the tour in the future if readers have the opportunity. A huge thanks to Amy Dwyer for coordinating this field trip! To learn more about the Punta Gorda Mural Society and see all the murals, go to: [www.puntagordamurals.org](http://www.puntagordamurals.org)

### FLORIDA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO BE HELD MAY 12-14 IN ST. AUGUSTINE

The St. Augustine Archaeological Association is excited to invite you to the conference hosted at Flagler College. The Friday night reception is at St. Augustine Lighthouse, Saturday

presentations and board meetings at Flagler College, and the Saturday banquet, keynote speaker and awards at Ponce de Leon Hotel. For all FAS Conference and hotel information and registration, go to: [www.fasweb.org](http://www.fasweb.org) and click Annual Conference.

### LSS CHICKEE THATCH FUNDRAISING OFF TO A GOOD START

In the March/April Newsletter, we announced Hurricane Ian blew the plastic roofing off the spring-side chickee style tiki hut used by UM science and research divers when on site. LSS site manager Steve Koski would like to see the chickee re-thatched as it was originally in 1975. It was re-roofed in plastic for the 1992 research initiative. To date, we raised over \$400 of the \$2000 minimum needed to offset thatch cost, compared with plastic or tin. Thatch will greatly compliment the depth of the historic setting as well as offer a show of local support to the university. The WMS/LSSAS is a 501(c)3 not for profit corporation. Please make a tax-deductible donation to the WMS/LSSAS to P.O. Box 7797 North Port, Florida 34290, and reference "Tiki Hut repair." A 16 oz jar of LSS "Old Shed," pure, raw honey will be offered to those who donate \$100 or more while the hive is healthy and producing (the hive was saved when expanding the lawnmower shed in 2022).

**North Port's Newcomer's Day** will be held on Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>; **The *Sacoila lanceolata*, var. *paludicola*** article will appear in the 2023 September/October WMS/LSSAS Newsletter after our summer reprieve. **Our next meeting will be September 12, 2023.** Wishing all a great summer and thank you for your support!

### 2022/2023 WMS/LSSAS OFFICERS

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