



WMS/LSS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 21, No. 4 September/October 2010

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

The Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Spring Archaeological Society meets the second Wednesday of the month at the North Port Public Library in the Nello Juliano Room at 6:30 P.M. The meetings are free and open to the public.

Greetings! Hope everyone is having a nice summer and we welcome everyone to our September 8 meeting to kick off the fall season. We are scheduling an exciting list of speakers and field trips you are sure to enjoy.

**BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY TOPIC OF
SEPTEMBER 8**

Mr. Rance Williams will present a program on Excavations of Kursie-Gengesa on the Northern point of the Sea of Galilee, Israel, on Wednesday, September 8. His presentation will also include a short discussion on "Israel, Then and Now," along with pictures of biblical Jerusalem. He recently returned from another trip to Israel and will comment on that as well.

Mr. Williams had planned to speak this past May, but had to postpone due to unexpected circumstances. We are delighted he was able to reschedule this September.

Mr. Williams has traveled extensively throughout Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Greece, and Turkey, and has participated in archaeological excavations at ancient Gengesa with Dr. Vassilios Tzaferis, former Director of Israel's Department of Antiquities, and Dr. Charles Page, Dean of the Jerusalem Institute for Biblical Exploration. He has also participated on the Bethsaida Excavation Project with Dr. Rami Arv, from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

A retired sales manager for Ametek Corporation, Mr. Williams is a member of the Biblical Archaeology Society, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, and First Sarasota Baptist Church, where he is an adult-bible-studies teacher.

While not our typical meeting on Florida archaeology and history, this should prove to be an interesting presentation. See you there!



Rance Williams at Kursie-Gengesa, Israel

WMS/LSSAS FALL/WINTER 2010/2011 SPEAKER SERIES

We have several invitations out for speakers and are waiting to hear about our October 13 meeting. I'm sure whomever we get, you won't be disappointed, so mark your calendar. We'll announce our October speaker via email and newspaper. Our November 10 speaker will be New College environmental-studies professor Jono Miller, who will present "Environmental History of North Port." This will be a fascinating presentation you won't want to miss. On January 12, Dr. Gifford will be at Little Salt Spring with his underwater archaeology class and he has agreed to come and speak on current research on the 27 m ledge. Lots of new information! More information on the speaker series will be published in the November/December newsletter.

FIELD TRIP TO EMERSON POINT NOVEMBER 27, 2010

Our first field trip of the fall will be to Emerson Point, a 195-acre park located on Snead Island at the north shore of the Manatee River in Bradenton, on Saturday, November 27. Our tour guide will be premier Florida archaeologist Bill Burger, who spoke at our February 10, 2010, meeting on "Tampa Bay Natives, from Contact to Extinction" (see March/April 2010 NL).

Snead Island is rich in history, containing traces of human occupation going back more than one thousand years, as evidenced by the Portevant Mound and surrounding middens. The mound the largest Indian mound on Tampa Bay. The park is owned by the state and managed by Manatee County Conservation Lands Management.

Emerson Point has much to offer those who visit, with miles of shoreline for the fisherman, boardwalks and scenic trails for hiking, a 60-foot observation tower that offers breathtaking views of Tampa Bay, and picnic areas for restful enjoyment of the great Florida outdoors. It's a true natural and cultural resource wonderland.

One trail will take us through an area where a 1,000-year-old Indian village was once located, and a boardwalk will take us to the top of the Portevant Mound. Interpretive signage along the trail discusses what the area might have looked like at the time of occupation; middens and mounds with thatched houses, families conducting daily activities, canoes along the shore bringing catches of fish and shellfish for the day's meal or to be sun-dried for later consumption, children playing, fires burning, dogs barking. The site has an early historic component as well that we will learn about.

Come on the field trip November 27 and learn

more about the Indians who lived around Tampa Bay from someone who has studied them for more than 20 years. Experience the natural setting of Florida's central west coast and reflect on what it might have been like to live in the unspoiled landscape of another era. There will be a signup sheet at the September meeting.

We will meet at the North Port Library at 8:15 a.m. for an 8:30 departure and 9:30 arrival time. From I-75, take Ellenton Exit #43 and proceed west to Snead Island. For additional information, contact the Manatee County Conservation Lands Dept. at 941-776-2295.

FIELD TRIPS BEING PLANNED

Other exciting field trips being planned for a later date include the Mound House at the Estero Indian Mound on Ft. Myers Beach, hosted by archaeologist Theresa Schober, our April 14, 2010, speaker on "Getting to the Bottom of Mount Elizabeth: Recent Investigations at a Late Archaic Site in the East Okeechobee Region" (see May/June NL); the Bay Shore Village site and Narvaez Mound, hosted by Mac Perry, our March 10, 2010, speaker on "First 12,000 years in Florida" (see May/June 2010 NL); and Historic Spanish Point in Osprey. We are also open for suggestions from the membership. If you have an idea for a field trip, let us know! More in the November/ December NL.

FAS MEETING IN FT. MYERS SUCCESSFUL EVENT

The 62nd annual meeting of the Florida Anthropological Society was held at the Harborside Event Center in Fort Myers and hosted by the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society. What a great meeting and location! The opening reception was held at the Mound House on Ft. Myers Beach and hosted by Ft. Myers Beach and MH Director Theresa Schober, who welcomed everyone to the site she manages (we also got to see the progress and the shell-mound exhibit). Numerous interesting papers were presented in two concurrent sessions on Saturday. Splendid food was served at the banquet Saturday night, where the Keynote Speaker—archaeologist, author, and American Academy of Arts and Sciences fellow Dr. Jerry Milanich—gave an outstanding PowerPoint presentation on "Adventures in the Everglades," illustrated with slides from the original prints of A. W. and Julian Dimock, who traveled through the Everglades from 1905 to 1910 photographing the lives of the Seminole. Several Seminole tribal members were at meeting and attended the banquet as well.

Dr. Gifford presented a paper on "Test Excavation on the 27-Meter Ledge, Little Salt Spring, 2008–2009" and Steve Koski presented on "Analysis of Two Middle Archaic

Compound Artifacts from Little Salt Spring (8SO18), Sarasota County, Florida.” Both papers were well received and attended. Great fun! It was a fantastic opportunity to see colleagues and friends and catch up on what’s going on in archaeology throughout the state. Many of our past speakers were there and a good time to network for new speakers.

Interested in joining the Florida Anthropological Society? Membership comprises professional and avocational archaeologists and persons interested in anthropology, archaeology, and historic preservation. Benefits of membership include the journal, *Florida Anthropologist*; FAS Newsletter; and participation at the annual meeting. For more information, go to www.fasweb.com or write to the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 131191, Pensacola, FL 32591. Dues: Student \$15, Regular and Institutional \$30, Family \$35, Sustaining \$100, Patron \$1000, Benefactor \$2,500.

LITTLE SALT SPRING NEWS

Another great dive season at Little Salt Spring was conducted August 10–20, as research continued on the 27 m ledge. Dr. Gifford, from the University of Miami/Rosestield School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, and the Florida Aquarium teamed up for a 12-day return visit to the 27 m ledge (90-feet). This research season was funded in part by the Florida Aquarium, which has assisted with research at the site since 2005. Three weeks of research on the ledge in July 2008 and two weeks in July of 2009 were funded in part by the National Geographic Society. Excavations continued at two of the five 1x1 m units established last year on the north side of the ledge in an area where one or more extinct tortoises were identified. Two days before the last dive day in July of 2009, a tapered wood item that appeared to be worked was identified and left in situ until this year. A portion was removed and dated last year. This year we recovered it for analysis and conservation.

Dr. Gifford and Steve Koski were assisted by UM Dive Safety Officer Rick Riera Gomez and UM graduate students Noel VanEe and Kevin Iglesias. Other UM graduate students on site for advanced technical mixed-gas training the second week of the project included David Weinstein, Victor Brandtnens, and Dan Holstein, who were preparing for a deep coral-reef project in the Bahamas. Florida Aquarium divers who assisted in one-week shifts included Casey Coy, Mike Terrell, Kristine Minnear, Jason Minnear, Ingrid Brustad, Dave Grenda, Lorin-Ellen Comirand, Micheal Echevarria, Tom Wagner, Ryan Czaja, Laren Freeman, and Michael Sistrunk. Surface volunteers



LSS crew week one

included Nattalie Roepke and George Guy. Quite the flurry of activity and mama gator was not sure what was going on. She was out every day to check us out.

Daily dives by Gifford and Koski were on surface air supply with surface-to-diver communications; four of the divers—Gomez, Coy, Terrell, and Echevarria—were on closed-circuit rebreathers; and the rest of the divers used doubles, weighing over 100 pounds. With the exception of the rebreather divers, all were on tri-mix, a blend of helium, enriched air, and reduced nitrogen mixed on site, which helped the divers spend more time deep with minimal decompression. The average dive was 60 minutes, but some were as long as 90 minutes; 90 for 90, quite tiring, yet invigorating: exposing an extinct creature in sediments that have not seen the light of day in more than 12,000 years!

While analysis is still in progress, we have gained a better understanding of the depositional history of the ledge and water levels during the late Pleistocene/early Holocene, and the research has helped to evaluate



LSS crew week two



Koski and Dr. Gifford ready to dive the 27 m ledge on surface air supply to excavate units 27/34 B and C (photo by George Guy)

potential human utilization of the ledge when water level was near the 90-foot ledge. Numerous items have been recovered for radiocarbon dating and those that have been dated range from 9,000 to 12,300 radiocarbon years before present. In addition to the suspected artifact found in July 2009, three other tapered-wood items were identified and recovered this year that appear to have been worked. While the “smoking gun” in terms of human presence on the ledge has yet to be found, evidence is encouraging and the Pleistocene fauna, deposits that suggest that the ledge was once dry, and the abundant paleoenvironmental data are invaluable to reconstructing the past at Little Salt Spring.

Several WMS/LSSAS members also helped fine screen some of the sediment recovered from the ledge, looking for artifacts and collecting small bones, pieces of wood, and other items of interest.

Below, Dr. Gifford and Lauren Freeman prepare to descend



Koski recovers a wood specimen from the 27 m ledge while Dave Grenda assists (photo by Mike Echevarria).

Dr. Gifford will be here in January with his underwater archaeology class and will be the speaker at the January 12 meeting to give an update on the current research on the 27 m ledge. Another program you won't want to miss.



Mama gator, our 6-foot mascot keeps an eye out. She plays an important role in the ecosystem at LSS and we're lucky to have her around (I think).

As the season ended and all returned to their normal lives in Tampa and Miami, so, too, did the occupants of LSS, returning to the primordial tranquility of past millennia that the sanctuary provides.



WMS/LSSAS members secretary Hilda Boron, vice President Judith Ribarik, and Mary Williams assist screening sediment recovered from the 27 m ledge.

DISCOVER SARASOTA COUNTY

There are many great attractions and places to explore in Sarasota County, and September is the time to do so! The "30 Days of Discovery" promotion is offering 2-for-1 admission to participating attractions in Sarasota County during the entire month—for everyone! It's easy. Simply let the admissions representative at the attraction know that you would like the 2-for-1 admission special. To learn more about each participating attraction, click the logos below. Start discovering all that Sarasota has to offer beyond the beaches. Enjoy!

Places offering the 2 for 1 discounts include:

SARASOTA CLASSIC CAR MUSEUM

www.sarasotacarmuseum.org
5500 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota FL 34243, 941-355-6228.
Museum Hours: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Daily Admission: Adult \$8.50, Senior \$7.50, Child \$6.50, 5 & Under Free.

THE GWIZ SCIENCE MUSEUM www.gwiz.org
1001 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota, FL 34236, 941-309-4949. Hours of Operation: Closed Mondays (except for no-school days in Sarasota and Manatee Counties), Tuesday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Sunday 12 p.m. – 5 p.m. Admission: Adults 19 and up \$10; Children 3–16 \$9; Children under 3 \$7; Seniors, Students, Military \$9; G.WIZ Members are Free and \$1 off for Florida Residents.

HISTORIC SPANISH POINT

www.historicspanishpoint.org
337 North Tamiami Trail, Osprey, FL 34229, 941-966-5214.

Hours: Monday – Saturday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Sundays 12 noon – 5 p.m. Admission: Adults \$10, Seniors and Sarasota County residents \$9, Children age 5–12 \$5, Under 5 and members Free.

MOTE AQUARIUM www.mote.org

1600 Ken Thompson Pkwy, Sarasota, FL 34236, 941-388-4441. Hours: Open 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily. Admission: Adults (over 12) \$17, Seniors (over 65) \$16, Youth (4–12) \$12, Children (under 4) & Mote Members Free.

THE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART www.ringling.org

5401 Bay Shore Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34243. Hours: The Ringling estate is open 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., seven days a week except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Admission: Adults \$25, Seniors \$20, Active US Military \$10, Students and Florida Teachers w/ID \$10, Children 6–17 \$10, Children under 6 years and Members No Charge.

SELBY BOTNICAL GARDENS www.selby.org

811 South Palm Ave., Sarasota, FL 34236, 941-366-5731. Hours: Open Daily 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., except Christmas. Admission: Adults \$17, Children 6–11 \$6, Children under 5 and Selby Gardens Members Free.

SOUTH FLORIDA MUSEUM www.southfloridamuseum.org

201 10th Street West, Bradenton, FL 34205, 941-746-4131. Hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10 – 5 p.m., Sundays Noon – 5 p.m. Admission: \$15.95 Adults, \$13.95 Seniors (60 & Older), \$11.95 Children 4–12 years of age, Children Under 4 Free.

WARM MINERAL SPRINGS www.warmmineralspring

12200 San Servando Ave., North Port, FL 34287, 941-426-1692. Hours: Monday – Sunday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission: Adult \$20, Student \$14, Children 12 & Under \$8.

This year area restaurants are offering specials during the month of September, too!

MATTISON'S www.mattisons.com

Mattison's Forty-One, 7275, South Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34231, 941-921-3400
Mattison's City Grille, 1 North Lemon Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236, 941-330-0440.



Um Dive Safety Officer Rick Gomez prepares to dive the ledge while son Trey poses for photo with dad.



Florida Aquarium Dive Safety Officer Casey Coy swims along the cavernous ledge at LSS on a rebreather 85-feet below the surface (look ma, no bubbles).

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