



WMS/LSS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 33, No. 1, January/February 2022

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. With the current uncertainty of Covid, we plan to meet via Zoom for our January 11 and February 8 meetings (Please see article on page two for Zoom Meeting links and a separate announcement will be sent)

A 2022 MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

I want to take this opportunity to wish all the WMS/LSS Archaeological Society Members and friends a very Happy New Year. We had hoped to begin meeting in person in January, but the onset of the Omicron variant has delayed that effort until at least March, when we will consider hybrid meetings (combination live and Zoom meetings). We thank our Board of Directors for their perseverance over the last two years, and who continue to provide excellent support in guiding the organization. And, a tremendous thanks to our supporting members, the backbone of the organization. We do what we do for you, and couldn't do it without you. I foresee only good things for us in 2022! Kind regards, Kathy Gerace, President.

UTILIZATION AND SOURCING OF WHELK ARTIFACTS IN NORTH AMERICA TOPIC OF JANUARY 11 ZOOM MEETING

Utilization and sourcing of whelk artifacts will be the topic of our January 11 meeting by Michelle Calhoun. Michelle is a 2021 graduate of New College of Florida, who presented her undergraduate thesis research on the gastropod and columella tools from Snake Island, Florida, at our September 2020 meeting. She is now an independent researcher and has expanded her interests to studying the extent of whelk shell utilization throughout North America prior to Contact, and the sourcing of whelk artifact types. (Cont. page 2.)

A PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT SITES ON SAN SALVADOR ISLAND, BAHAMAS TOPIC OF FEBRUARY 8 ZOOM MEETING

With funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), a heritage tourism development project originally scheduled for 2020, was put on hold due to Covid. However, with the possibility of funding being withdrawn, six students from the University of The Bahamas rushed to San Salvador in early January of 2022 to undertake recording as many buildings as possible on two plantation sites on the island. Students from the



Buffalo Mask from the Buffalo Prehistoric Site in Putnam County, WV



Participating students from the University of the Bahamas

University of the Bahamas involved in the photo documentation project on San Salvador (Lucayan Guanahani) include (from left to right above), Sanchin Lewis, UB Student, Durnique Bostwick, UB Student; Savanna Dean- Architect with Antiquity Museums & Monuments Corp.; Ebyan Munroe, UB Student; Natecia Taylor, UB Student; Ayoka Seymour, UB Student; and Didacus Uba, UB Student.

These plantations were studied by Kathy Gerace in the 1970's, but over the last 50 years, most of the buildings have deteriorated further, and a detailed record of what is there presently was desperately needed to plan for future tourism development on this historically significant island. Besides being the landfall site of Columbus's 1492 voyage, the island is the site of several large cotton-growing plantations developed by British Loyalists from the southern states after the American Revolution.

With the IDB funding, the clearing of nearly 50 years of overgrowth was undertaken, allowing access to two of these plantations, and the ability to obtain a photographic record of the buildings as they are today.

The Bahamian students, who resided at the Gerace Research Centre during their stay, will present the result of their one-week work, with photographs of all the buildings, some with video, and others with 3D images. The presentation will also include their suggestions on how these sites can become major heritage attractions for visitors to the island in the future.

WHELK UTILIZATION AND SOURCING (cont. from p.1)

The lightning whelk is a sinistral (left)-coiling mollusk which can be found along the North American continental shelf from Cape Cod to the Yucatan peninsula. Whelk have morphological differences in their shells depending on their region of origin: Yucatan, the western Gulf of Mexico, the Florida Gulf coast, and the Atlantic. These differences and their implications on sourcing methods will be discussed.

Pre-Contact cultures utilized and traded the whelk's shells throughout the eastern 2/3 of the United States, Mexico, and southern Canada. The whelk's sinistral coils held a spiritual significance for many of these cultures, as movement to the left is seen as bringing the world into balance. Background provided on Mississippian iconography and ceremonialism is based on the work of David Dye, Megan Kassabaum, and Johann Sawyer, among others.

Her sourcing research is based on the 2017 findings of Laura Kozuch, Karen Walker, and William Marquardt in their paper, 'Lightning Whelk Natural History and a New Sourcing Method.' Their work was based on the genetic research of John Wise, M.G. Harasewych, and R.T. Dillon, Jr., in their 2004 paper, 'Population Divergence in the Sinistral Whelks of North America, with Special References to the East Florida Ecotone.' Kozuch et al. discovered that whelks which retained their spires in the archaeological record could be measured with a goniometer to determine from which region they had originated based on the spire's angle.

Michelle hypothesized that the morphological differences of the outer whorl, often used to manufacture gorgets and masks,

may also offer a similar opportunity for low-tech sourcing. She will provide an overview of the habitat of the whelk, the morphological shell differences that occur throughout its range, the time periods and cultures of those who utilized and traded marine shell, and examples of some of the artifacts and art which were created from this medium by prehistoric Native Americans.

JANUARY 11 AND FEBRUARY 8 WMS/LSSAS ZOOM MEETING LINKS

Please attend our January 11 and February 8 Zoom meetings by copying and pasting the links below!

Tuesday, Jan 11, 2022 7pm – 8pm Eastern Time, link at, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85409887979?pwd=R1NhSGpEOGHFQzI1QU00THFaSGszQT09> (map)

Meeting ID: 854 0988 7979

Pass code: 545792

Join with Google Meet: meet.google.com/fjp-buzt-aaaf

Tuesday, February 8, 2022 7 pm – 8 pm Eastern Time, link at, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81870529129?pwd=ZXEya29STzdrTERTTmJjdzh0TDVrQT09> (map)

Meeting ID: 818 7052 9129

Pass code: 553753

Join with Google Meet: meet.google.com/bng-jkxg-emg

KEY MARCO ATLATLS TOPIC OF NOVEMBER 09 ZOOM MEETING

By Judi and John Crescenzo

On November 9, 2021, Archaeologist John C. Whittaker gave a Zoom presentation titled *Frank Cushing and the Key Marco Atlatls*. Dr. Whittaker is a professor of anthropology and archaeology at Grinnell College in Iowa, where he organized and leads the Grinnell College Raging Cows, "the world's first collegiate atlatl team."

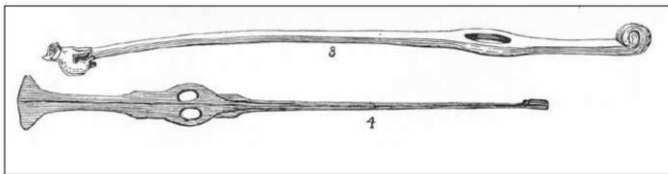
Archaeologist Frank Hamilton Cushing's theories about the reconstruction of past technology included atlatls. Atlatls have been used successfully for hunting for 30,000 years, and provide a view into prehistoric life. They are recorded through symbols in the Southwest, and are used in Australia, where there is no bow and arrow. Africans also probably used atlatls.

An atlatl is a lever for throwing, not a spring for shooting like a bow with an arrow. The atlatl dart flexes with the snap of the wrist, which makes it travel faster and harder. Experimentation in design, ballistics/mechanics, and capabilities has been conducted on this technology. Testing of flight and penetration using a Southwest tip show that it could kill bison.

Cushing began to collect artifacts while attending Cornell University, and was sent to the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition to curate Indian artifacts. Cushing later lived in a Zuni pueblo in New Mexico where he experienced the culture, learned the language, cared about the people, and became their spokesperson. Cushing's experimental reproduction included working with atlatls, stone tools, flint-making, and pottery. His reproduced artifacts are considered less important than his theories. After viewing Florida artifacts in the National Museum

in Washington, D.C., Cushing moved to Florida. Key Marco was a farming area attracting tourists when he arrived. He was accompanied by Wells Sawyer, an expedition artist who painted watercolors for journals. Sawyer hired a sponging schooner, *Silver Spray*, for their travels. Cushing's excavations were supported by the University of PA, and funded by the philanthropists William Pepper and Phoebe Hearst.

Digging was done by hand while standing in muck and water under the tropical sun and heat amidst mosquito and sand fly swarms. Cushing built wooden troughs for bailing out water, and revealed a man-made water court built of wood and shell. He divided the area into squares, so he could identify the location of artifacts. In 1896, he discovered wooden atlatls and bows, along with adzes made of antler and shell. Some items were decorated, such as a painted alligator figurine. He also found a painted shell with a fine-line carving of a masked dancer and the Key Marco panther god.



Preservation problems arose with masks and other items found in the muck. Sawyer completed watercolors of them before the wood decayed, warped, split, and shrunk. Twenty-five percent were destroyed in the search, and “no more than half retained their original forms.” Cushing tried various preservation methods to keep the artifacts intact, but he had no knowledge of artifact conservation. Unfortunately, with land development and water level changes over time, another site like this will probably not be found in Florida.

Cushing's published images of atlatls are engravings, not photos. They are not to scale and have engraving errors. Interpretations by Cushing and his engraver mean the atlatls may not be how they looked when found, but may show what Cushing thought they looked like when in use. In 1928, a publication from the University of PA Museum showed artifacts that don't look as good as when Sawyer saw them, and since that time, have warped and split further. The atlatls on display at the university today have shrunk, warped, twisted, and cracked, so reconstruction is needed.

Replications include making corrections to prehistoric evidence. Simulation involves appearance only, and reconstruction adds interpretations. In the end, what is more correct? How much did the wood shrink? Should modern or prehistoric tools be used in the process? Cushing stated that sticks with shark teeth in mastic were originally used, and his experiments showed that this could be done if whittled slowly. He used modern tools in his reproductions, which probably did not affect the function and allowed him to analyze how atlatls worked. Cushing also tested long and short atlatls with light and heavy darts. Data shows that aluminum and wood with a long atlatl went the farthest. Results would vary according to the skill of the thrower, so was this a fair test?

Other issues, such as correct reconstruction, and the type

of darts used, is unknown because darts did not preserve well. Cushing knew only about the appearance of his replications, how they worked, and if they were functional. Questions remain, such as what length atlatl is better and why some were shorter. Were various types of darts used? More experiments and archaeology are needed to answer these questions.

For further information on the World Atlatl Association, Inc., and the atlatl team at Grinnell College, visit <https://worldatlatl.org/>.

THE STORY OF THE CABBAGE PALM TOPIC OF DECEMBER 14 MEETING

By Judi and John Crescenzo

On December 14, 2021, Jono Miller, natural historian and retired Director of the Environmental Studies Program at New College, gave a fascinating Zoom presentation on our state tree, “The History and Use of the Cabbage Palm.” Studies of the cabbage palm led to his publication of, ‘The Palmetto Book: Histories and Mysteries of the Cabbage Palm.’

The cabbage palm has a haystack spherical canopy, is inconspicuous, and lives on the coast or inland from Texas to the coasts of the Southeast. The *sabal etonia* (scrub palmetto) has no true trunk and the *sabal minor* (dwarf palmetto) is a swamp palmetto. Bootjacks, named for their use in removing boots, are bases of leaves that appear as spikes on the trunk. The spikes do not line up and spiral outward. Cabbage palms are slow-growing and long-lived, and early photographs can depict their antiquity. They produce lots of shade when close together, as in Myakka State Park.

The palms are wind-resistant and can survive even a strong hurricane when most other trees will snap. While it was once recommended not to remove fronds from below the horizontal plane, in 2017, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) recommended pruning to remove green fronds only if they touch a house, car, etc. Palms are often over trimmed, but unpruned palms are more wind-resistant, so the Institute of Foods and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida (IFAS) recommends that fronds should fall off naturally instead of pruning them. Bootjacks burn, and trunks are charred in fire, but most trees survive. They are flood-tolerant and live along the Myakka River, which overflows in summer. Per the book *Stormscaping*, by Pamela Crawford, 93% of cabbage palms survived Hurricane Andrew. Cabbage palms are more wind resistant than live oaks. They are also cold-tolerant and can grow as far north as the North Carolina coast.

Cabbage palms provide food (berries) and habitat to many wildlife species, such as woodpeckers, owls, and a variety of local and migratory birds, squirrels, raccoons, rodents, frogs, anoles, and more. The palms attract pollinators, such as bees and wasps. Pollen is not wind-borne, so it does not cause allergies. The trees are native and provide considerable shade when not trimmed and are good at producing oxygen.

Cabbage palms have a place in Florida's history too. At Little Salt Spring, charred cabbage palm leaves dating to almost 14,000 years ago were found on the 27-meter ledge. In 1539, DeSoto described palm leaves used for roofing and was likely from the cabbage palm. This could have extended back in time

for centuries, if not millennia. The Seminole made extensive use of the tree; for building, thatching their chickees, burning the logs, making fiber, and as a food source. Early settlers also used cabbage palm fronds to waterproof walls and roofs. In 1822, when orange groves were brought to Florida by the Spanish, the presence of cabbage palms was noted. Swamp cabbage has been eaten only in the last 500 years when the Spanish introduced axes that could cut the palms.

For further information on cabbage palms and Miller's book, visit palmstobook.blog.

FIELD TRIP TO SARASOTA COUNTY HISTORICAL RESOURCES SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 21, 2022

A field trip to the Sarasota County Historical Resources is scheduled for Friday, January 21, 2022, at 10:30 AM. Come visit the archives where Sarasota County historical and archaeological collections are curated and protected; an accumulation of more than 70 years of donations representing hundreds and thousands of years of history. The tour will be provided by Historical Resources manager, Rob Bendus, and county archaeologist Steve Koski.

Historical Resources is located off Cattleman Road and Bahia Vista at 6062 Porter Road, and will begin at 10:30. Due to space and safety protocol, there will be a limit of eight participants, with social distancing and masks highly encouraged and recommended. For reservations, please email administrative assistant Dorothy Dekmar at (861)681-6888, or email her at ddekmar@scgov.net.

33rd ANNUAL MONDAY LECTURE SERIES—2022: ECOLOGY, HISTORY AND PRESERVATION OF MANASOTA KEY & GULF COAST

In honor of 61 years of the Buffum Family's Manasota Beach Club and Area Environmental and Historic Preservation, they present:

Jan 10---Eva Furner, Lemon Bay Conservancy, "Habitat Restoration at Lemon Creek Wildflower Preserve." Major elements, benefits, & ongoing challenges with the \$2M restoration in Grove City. Join Eva again on Thur., Jan 13, at 10AM for a Walk in the new preserve.

Jan 17--Kim Cool, Author and Feature Editor, Venice Gondolier Sun, "Why Venice?: Mecca for Circus Performers and Fans"...with update on the new Ringling Circus Museum Railroad Car at the Historic Venice Station."--book sale & signing to follow talk.

Jan 24--Meg Lowman, PhD., Ecologist, Executive Director of TREE Foundation, "Saving Trees Through Mission Green." A partner in the creation of the canopy walkway at Myakka State Park, Meg recently founded TREE's new initiative, Mission GREEN, to stop global deforestation. She is the author of "The Arbornaut."--book sale and signing to follow talk.

Jan 31--John McCarthy, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens VP for Historic Spanish Point Campus, "Marie Selby Botanical Gardens Historic Spanish Point Campus---An Update & Invitation."

Feb 7---Steve Avdakov, Historical Architectural Associates, "Architectural History of MBC," and Sydney Crampton, "MBC History and Development since 1960."

Feb 14--John Lutz, PhD, "John Burroughs: Learning to Write, Naturally." Burroughs was an early 20th Century Naturalist & Conservationist; John Lutz is Burroughs's great-grand nephew.

Feb 21--Ryan Duggins, PhD., Underwater Archaeology Supervisor at Florida Bureau of Archeology Research, "Update on Manasota Archaeological Underwater Study."

Feb 28--Jon Thaxton, Director, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, former Sarasota County Commissioner, "Florida Scrub-Jay Stories (and Maybe Our Next State Bird?)."

Manasota Beach Club, 7660 Manasota Key Rd., hosts the luncheon talks, Mondays noon-1:30pm. Cost is \$25+ taxes/gratuity. Reservations required due to limited seating. Presentations will be outside. Masks are required, except for eating. For reservations, contact MBC at 941-474-2614. www.manasotabeachclub.com

2022 FAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN MIAMI MAY 6-8

Please go to fasweb.org for current information. Details will be included in the March/April WMS/LSSAS Newsletter!

JANUARY 2022 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IS ON!

Steve Koski, WMS/LSSAS VP

A very special thank you in appreciation to all our 2020 and 2021 members who helped us survive financially over the past two years of Zoom presentations! We hope you have enjoyed our WMS/LSSAS newsletter and have been able to join us for some Zoom meetings, which have been spectacular. You can continue to support the organization (now in its 32st year), through continued membership. We couldn't have done it without you! We look forward to meeting in person again, and hope to begin hybrid live/Zoom meetings in March, the Covid climate willing.

Please fill out the enclosed form to renew your membership and return. All new members welcome! We hope to have the ability to join on line by the March/April Newsletter. Thank you!

2022 WMS/LSSAS OFFICERS

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