



WMS/LSS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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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 with the speaker (and available via Zoom) September 12th** at the North Port Community United Church, 3450 S. Biscayne Blvd., the building on the right (left side door), **and October 10th (We will meet as well, but the speaker will present via Zoom only)**. Join us for dinner at 5:00 PM at the Tarpon Point Grill & Marina on the Myakka River prior to the meeting. The September meeting will also be held via Zoom if you cannot attend in person; both meetings can be accessed by the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89602229117?pwd=SUVRZUW4MjB6ZlJMa0NVN1BDQm1GQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 0222 9117, Passcode: 118234; mobile connect with ID and passcode, 1 (305) 224-1968

THE HISTORY OF FLORIDA MULLET; TOPIC OF THE SEPTEMBER 12 MEETING BY DR. JOSHUA GOODMAN, MANAGER OF SARASOTA COUNTY HISTORY CENTER.

We are excited to welcome, in person, the manager of Sarasota County Division of Historical Resources, Dr. Joshua Goodman to our September 12 meeting; his topic, "The History of Florida Mullet."

At first blush, most folks would not think of mullet as a very interesting fish. Some may not even be aware that a mullet is a fish and not just a hairstyle! Kidding aside, this peculiar jumping fish has a fascinating history in Florida. From the days of the mighty Calusa Indians of Charlotte Harbor and Tocobaga of Tampa Bay, up through our own era, mullet resurface again and again to play a role in some of the most fascinating and unusual stories in our state's past. Join us at the September meeting for a REAL fishing story about this unique Florida mainstay, and there may be a recipe or two offered for any mullet lovers out there. Seriously, it's all true! (Continued, September 12 p. 2)



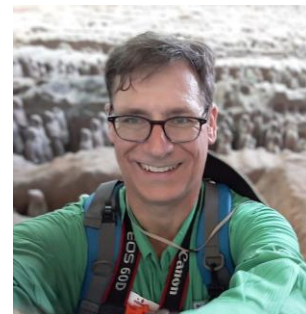
September 12 speaker, Dr. Joshua Goodman

DR. RYAN WHEELER WILL BE THE SPEAKER OUR OCTOBER 10 MEETING WITH A PRESENTATION ON THE ROBERT S. PEABODY INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

"What the Heck is the Robert S. Peabody Institute of Archaeology and What Does It Have to Do with Florida?" will be the topic of the October 10 WMS/LSSAS meeting by Dr. Ryan Wheeler.

The Peabody name is synonymous with outstanding museums, but has created some confusion. There are, in fact, four "Peabody" museums. The larger institutions—like Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, or Yale's Peabody Museum of Natural History—have long connections to Florida archaeology. Both Irving Rouse and John M. Goggin were affiliated with Yale's Peabody, and Jeffries Wyman made some of the Harvard Peabody's earliest collections in Florida.

The Robert S. Peabody Institute of Archaeology is not part of either Yale or Harvard, but was founded in 1901 at Phillips Academy, a private high school in Andover, Massachusetts.



October 10 speaker, Dr. Ryan Wheeler

Known historically by a variety of names, including the Department of Archaeology and the Robert S. Peabody Foundation for Archaeology, this smallest Peabody also has connections to Florida. Ripley and Adelaide Bullen began their archaeological careers here in the 1940s before moving to Florida. Clarence Bloomfield Moore, renowned in the Southeast for his antiquarian digging, made a large gift of Florida items early in the Peabody's history, including many pottery vessels not illustrated in his publications. The Peabody houses other Florida collections, including those made by Fred Luce, Howard Torrey, and James Hardy Ropes. Today the Peabody is engaged in educational programming and repatriation, and recently completed inventory of its extensive collection, which spans much of the Americas and includes items, and photographic and archival materials of archaeologists like Alfred V. Kidder and Richard "Scotty" MacNeish.

Ryan Wheeler is the eighth director of the Robert S. Peabody Institute of Archaeology, at Phillips Academy, Andover MA. At the Peabody, he has advanced a strategic vision focused on collections, education, and repatriation. In 2017, Ryan co-founded the *Journal of Archaeology & Education*, the only academic journal devoted to the intersection of these two fields. Prior to moving to Massachusetts, Ryan was Florida's State Archaeologist and a past editor of *The Florida Anthropologist*. Happily, he has maintained a connection to Florida archaeology, recently co-editing *Iconography and Wetsite Archaeology of Florida's Watery Realms*. Ryan lives with his family in Medford, MA.

Editors note: This is a rare opportunity to hear from a long-time Florida academic researcher and publisher of numerous articles on Florida archaeology that you won't want to miss!

SEPTEMBER 12 (Continue from page 1)

There is also a lot of exciting news to share regarding Sarasota County Historical Resources and the History Center, which house the Sarasota County archives and collections; the temporary relocation to the Osprey Public Library at the historic Osprey School; the construction of a new Sarasota County History Center to be built next to the Fruitville Public Library, scheduled to open in 2025; and the historic archives available to the public. The Osprey School was built between 1926-1928 and served the community until 1976. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.

Dr. Goodman is a sixth generation Floridian from Taylor County, who recently wrote his first book, *Forest Capital: A History of Taylor County, Florida*, the first of many he has planned. Prior to coming to Sarasota County, Josh was an Archives Historian at the Florida Department of State, Division of Library and Information Services, State Archives of Florida, Tallahassee (2018-2022). Josh came to the Sarasota County Division of Libraries and Historical Resources in February 2022. He received his B.A. (2008) and M.A. (2010) in history from Florida State University and Ph.D. from Tulane University, New Orleans, LA (2017). His education and background are well suited for his position.

Come to the September meeting and learn about Sarasota County Historical Resources and tales of the mullet and its

importance to the Florida economy; then visit Historic Spanish Point in Osprey, FL, on Saturday September 16!

VISIT SARASOTA COUNTY HISTORY CENTER AT OSPREY PUBLIC LIBRARY SEPTEMBER 16!

On Saturday, September 16, 2023 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, join the fun for a tour and programming at the SC History Center, located at the Osprey Public Library, a historic 1927 building, once the Osprey School. The building is located at 337 N. Tamiami Trail, Osprey (at the entrance to Historic Spanish Point, which you can visit afterwards if you like!).

Visit <https://www.scgov.net/government/historical-resources> for more information on Sarasota County Historic Preservation initiatives and historical research opportunities.

MAY 6TH PRESENTATION ON FLORIDA FOSSILS BY DR. ROBERT SINIBALDI

Judi and John Crescenzo

On May 9, 2023, Dr. Robert Sinibaldi presented "Pleistocene Survivors," wherein he explained that many megafauna (large animals) that went extinct during the last Ice Age are recognizable, while the survivors have been mostly ignored. The topic was taken from a chapter in his new book *Ice Age Florida: In Story and Art*, illustrated by paleo-artist Hermann Trappman. Sinibaldi is a past president of the Tampa Bay Fossil Club and recipient of the Howard Converse Award from the University of Florida for his contributions to paleontology. Sinibaldi authored two additional books: *Fossil Diving in Florida's Waters* and *What Your Fossils Can Tell You*. Each of his books was available for purchase at the meeting.

Megafauna are defined as animals weighing more than 97 pounds. Numerous megafauna survived the Ice Age, including white-tailed deer. Many survivors that were extinguished elsewhere survived in Africa, which lost only 15% of megafauna. Columbian mammoths once lived in Florida, but they didn't have thick fur like those to the north. North America lost 75% of its megafauna by 12,700 years ago.



Dr. Robert Sinibaldi receives our famous tee-shirt from president Kathy Gerace, holding one of his books *What Your Fossils Can Tell You*, *Vertebrate Morphology, Pathology, and Cultural Modification*.

During the Ice Age, glaciers took up much of the Earth's water, and glacial cliffs rose two miles straight up. The Earth is still rebounding today, and that process has been accelerated by global warming trends. At one time, 90% of Florida's land extended into the Gulf of Mexico. Florida was a huge refugia, an area that supports an isolated or relict population where animals survived. Extinctions occurred because of number of factors and hypotheses, rapid and severe climate change, spread of disease, extraterrestrial impact, and potential over hunting.

Florida had huge herds of horses during the Ice Age. Over hunting may have selectively killed the more vulnerable babies. Men, dogs, and bison moved in both directions between North and South America. With arrival of early European explorers in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, so did diseases unknown to the New World, which took a tremendous toll on native populations. A 12,700-year-old impact site was found, so an asteroid may have also affected North America. The extraterrestrial impact theory is gaining in popularity.

Most survivors were not large or exotic and are still alive today, so they have been overlooked in studying the Ice Age. Humans today are affecting the planet like never before. The dodo was the first modern extinction, due to overkill by humans. Fossil hunters have found deer and alligator remains in rivers, and it is difficult to know if they are fossilized or not. Fossilization can take 10,000 or more years.

Black bear, alligators, Florida panthers, and manatees all survived the Ice Age in Florida. Alligator fossils are easy to find. Raised alligator scutes act like solar panels that store heat from the sun so alligators can spend time under water. Mammals have only baby and adult teeth, while reptiles and sharks produce new teeth all their lives. Manatee teeth erupt in the back and move to the front. Because they are plentiful, these teeth are often found in springs. The Florida panther is not as easy to find, and fossil cats in Florida were misnamed. For example, the saber tooth tiger was really a lion. The genus and species names do not match common names for these animals.

There were only local extinctions for some species. Horses were extinct in North America but moved to Asia and became zebras in Africa and Europe. Horses were later re-released into North America by the Europeans. Tapirs became extinct in North America, but survived in Asia and South America, and tapirs everywhere have striped babies. Camels and llamas became extinct in North America, but camels survived in North Africa and Asia while llamas survived in South America.

Small rodents evolve faster than large mammals, aiding in their survival. The coyote, Virginia opossum, bobcat, nine-banded armadillo, river otter, and beaver survived. Skunks today are struggling because they are nocturnal and often killed on roads. Rabbits, raccoons, and foxes survived because they are massive breeders and eat a wide variety of foods. Birds like the wood ibis and eagles, as well as turtles, snakes, and bats have survived. Bats are smaller today and some live off blood, able to spread disease but not catch it. As the sea levels rose, many bat caves were flooded and destroyed but they survived. Numerous fish also survived the Ice Age, along with offshore and marine animals that have been overlooked, such as amphibians and insects. Humans are the ultimate survivors. It is

not known if the first paleo-people went extinct, advanced culturally, or assimilated into other cultures. Survivors faced hunting pressure when animals were hunted nearly to extinction, which occurred even with some marine life.

Why did some animals survive? Generalists ate a wide variety of foods. They were omnivorous or scavengers that lived across large areas. Survivors also reproduced quickly and had slower metabolisms that required less food. Cold-blooded animals survive catastrophes better. Humans survived because they eat everything, have large brains, can think, and adapt.

Three of four of the large survivors needed help to stay alive, such as the American black bear and manatees. Manatees are endangered and their future is doubtful because of environmental degradation and boat traffic. The future of the Florida panther is also doubtful, but the alligator has made a huge comeback because it was included on the endangered species list.

Dr Sinibaldi provided an excellent overview of the Pleistocene extinction and the Florida fossil record as we enter a period when many animals of the world once again are threatened by extinction, more so than ever, propelled by human action over the last 100 years.

HISTORY DAY AT THE PARK, HELD MAY MARCH 25, 2023 AT PHILLIPPI ESTATE PARK, WELL ATTENDED

The WMS/LSSAS set up an educational exhibit tent at History Day at the Park at Phillippi Estate Park on March 25, 2023 that included interpretive display items to commemorate Florida's rich history from its earliest known beginnings, representing more than 12,000 years, from the Paleoindian, Archaic, regional Manasota and Safety Harbor periods, into the Florida Seminole residence.

The event was sponsored by Sarasota County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources and the Historic Preservation Coalition of Sarasota County. Many of their organization affiliates, like the Sarasota County History Center, WMS/LSS Archaeological Society, Time Sifters Archaeological Society, and many more were there to participate. There was something for everyone, including speakers and exhibits in the historic Keith Mansion, food, and historic period vendors, viewing of the historic farmhouse, and more.



History Day at the Park WMS/LSSAS participants with the WMS/LSSAS display included Amy Dwyer, Steve Koski, and Michelle Calhoun (pictured) Marion Pierce and her daughter Jessica (not pictured).

The exterior of the 1916 farmhouse has been restored and Sarasota Parks is on a fund raising campaign to restore the interior for interpretive displays.

Over 1,000 people attended the event and all seemed to enjoy History Day at Phillippi Estate Park.

FLORIDA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELD MAY 12-14, 2023, IN ST. AUGUSTINE

Another great annual FAS conference was held at Flagler College, hosted by the St. Augustine Archaeological Association. The WMS/LSSAS is one of 17 Chapters of the Florida Anthropological Society. The WMS/LSSAS hosted the 2014 Annual Conference in Punta Gorda with overwhelming success, and field trips were held to both Warm Mineral Springs and Little Salt Spring with attendees from all over the state (see the October 2014 WMS/LSSAS Newsletter at wmslss.org, click publications, 2014)

The Friday opening reception was held at the St. Augustine Light House, hosted by the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program (LAMP), where attendees had the opportunity to visit the museum and maritime exhibits, and climb the lighthouse steps for a spectacular panoramic view of St. Augustine Inlet, lagoon, buildings, and harbor. St. Augustine is reported to be the oldest continually occupied European city in the United States, founded by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés in 1565. The beautiful grounds, lighthouse, exhibit buildings were an exceptional location for the receptions and a must see place to visit when in St. Augustine, as is the Castillo de San Marcos.



St. Augustine Lighthouse

The banquet and awards ceremony were held at the Ringhaver Student Center at Flagler College, with Keynote speaker Dr. Lori Lee, Professor of Anthropology at Flagler College, with a presentation titled, "Decolonizing Archaeology in Colonial St. Augustine."

For additional information soon to be uploaded on the May meeting, go to www.fasweb.org and click Annual Conference.

DR. JOHN A. GIFFORD DIRECTED RESEARCH AT LSS FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES

By Steve Koski

It is with great sadness to inform those who knew him or knew of him, that Dr. John Allen Gifford passed peacefully at a rehabilitation facility in Palm Harbor, Florida, Wednesday, June 14, at 2:30 AM. Born on February 16, 1947, he was 76 years old.

John retired from the University of Miami, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science in 2013 after a 27-year teaching career at UM, first in the Anthropology Department, then at the Rosenstiel School. While he taught a variety of classes in his career, his research focus was Little Salt Spring, a ca. 112-acre property owned by the University of Miami in the city of North Port, Sarasota County, Florida, where he brought his students annually since 1992 to participate in underwater archaeological research. His last "Techniques in Underwater Archaeology" class concluded at LSS for a two-week field session in January 2013 with a focus on a small area on the 12 m sloping basin. I had the pleasure of assisting him during the four-month 1992 field session sponsored by a Florida Division of Historical Resources special category grant, continued intermittently through the 90's and early 2000's assisting with classes, and during each annual field session from 2004-2013. Those were exciting years.

In September 1965, John entered the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1969. In September 1969, he enrolled at the University of Miami, Coral Gables campus, and went on to earn a Master of Science degree in 1973. His thesis was titled, "A Description of the Geology of the Bimini Islands." While his main interest was in geology, his research helped to refute a hypothesis regarding a submerged feature, "A series of beach rock deposits on the outer terrace west of North Bimini mark successive shoreline positions during the Holocene transgression, and are not man-made structures as had been hypothesized." Hence, his introduction to the emerging field of geoarchaeology. University of Miami committee members included, Mahlon Ball (Chair), Cesare Emiliani, and Enrico Bonatti, professors of Marine Geology; and John Hall, Associate Professor of Archaeology.

He continued his academic pursuits at the Center for Ancient Studies, University of Minnesota, and graduated in 1976 with a Doctor of Philosophy degree, his dissertation was titled "Paleogeography of Archaeological Sites of the Larnaca Lowlands, Southeastern Cyprus." In 1985, Cesare Emiliani, one of Gifford's UM committee members approached John to return and apply for an assistant professor position at the University of Miami. Emiliani worked at Little Salt Spring during the mid 1970s because of its geological, archaeological, and paleontological associations. He worked with Carl Clausen, an underwater archaeologist hired by the owners, General Development Corporation (GDC) to conducted research for GDC in the mid 1970s and early 1980s.



John A Gifford at LSS during his last underwater archaeology techniques class January 2013 (photo by S. Koski).

Clausen was hired to investigate the site and gain an understanding of the findings with the intention of eventually developing the surrounding property.

Based on the national significance of the findings, there was a movement to have a portion of the property preserved. Working with principles from GDC, Emiliani convinced GDC to donate the spring and surrounding 110 acres to the University of Miami. He then convinced UM to accept the geological, archaeological, and paleontological rich feature, which they did in 1982.

The site has a long and fascinating research history of archaeological and paleontological discoveries that represent the activities of the people who visited the site and the changing environments at a little known time, the late Pleistocene, early Holocene transition during the late Paleoindian and Early- to-Middle Archaic periods. That was the focus of Dr. Gifford's research at Little Salt Spring.

The spring is a 76- meter deep by 80 m wide ceiling-collapsed sinkhole. Its importance was first realized in the late 1950's when scuba diving explorers found artifacts and human remains in an exceptional state of preservation. During initial research in the early 1970s, the sinkhole was found to contained evidence of Paleoindian visitation on the 27 m ledge dating to approximately 13,500 to 10,500 cal. years before present, an Early Archaic period visitation component dating to c. 10,500 to 9,000 cal. years before present) in the 12 m basin, and a Middle Archaic upland habitation component and mortuary pond dating to 7,900 to 6,400 cal. years before present in the upper basin of the spring and adjacent slough.

The significance of the site is unprecedented and it likely did not take much to convince Gifford to return to UM, his alma mater, to start a lifelong career in underwater archaeology.

That appointment led to a 27-year teaching career while conducting limited research in the 12 m basin and 27 m ledge that started with deep cores on the bottom of the spring in 1990 to gain an understanding of its late Pleistocene, Holocene early depositional history after the collapse of the ceiling. Since those years to present, the University of Miami has been dedicated to protecting the site and its surrounding landscape, and most importantly, the human remains, while conducting multi-disciplinary limited research on the archaeology, hydrology, geology, and ecology of the site.

John was a humble local celebrity when he and his classes were at LSS. Local newspaper reporters wrote articles, TV and cable broadcasters ran stories, and in 2009 two Gulf Coast Journal programs narrated by Jack Perkins were produced by WEDU at LSS, one on the significance of the spring and its findings, another on the significance of the surrounding upland and slough and its potential as a world class multi-disciplinary research and education center. Several video documentaries and an oral history are also known to have been produced about the site. In 2008 – 2011, National Geographic provided funds for research on the 27 m ledge under Gifford's direction with UM staff and former students, assisted by research staff and funds from the Florida Aquarium, Tampa. That research focused in an area where, in 1975 a giant extinct tortoise was found on the 27- m ledge with a wood stake lodged between the plastron and carapace, believed to be impaled by a Paleoindian hunter 13,500 years ago. That discovery and others from the site made the cover of *Science* magazine in 1979, putting LSS on the international stage. A research summary on the 27 m ledge work was published in *Archaeology of Caves*, edited by Peter Campbell (2017), Chapter 4, titled, "Little Salt Spring: Excavations on the 27-Meter Ledge 2008 – 2011" (John A. Gifford, Steven H. Koski, Lee A. Newsom. Lauren Milideo). Gifford also co-authored numerous publications on LSS and was working on articles with me before he was unable to proceed, which are still planned to be published.

The local Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Spring Archaeological Society and Friends of Little Salt Spring supported his efforts and small groups visited the site on occasion when he was at LSS with his students, some volunteering their assistance and he spoke several times at their local meetings. We co-presented at several annual Florida Anthropology Society conferences. When the WMS/LSSAS hosted the 2014 Annual Florida Anthropological Society Conference in Punta Gorda, he was the keynote speaker on his 1992-2013 research years at LSS and received special recognition for his contributions to Florida archaeology.

After his retirement in 2013, he moved to a nice condominium on Tampa Bay, just over the Skyway Bridge and I would visit him every couple of months. A couple years later, he moved to a smaller condo nearby. He brought his mother from Colorado in 2014 and moved her to a nearby assisted living facility in St Petersburg when she began having memory issues. He visited her daily until she passed. Around 2019, he called and said he was having memory issues and had a person coming in a couple hours a day from a care management

agency. In early 2020, he moved into an assisted living apartment in Largo, then in 2021, a memory care unit in Tarpon Springs, then back to Largo to another memory care unit. I visited him in February 2023, and invited his first UM graduate student, brought lunch, and we talked about old times.

With every call and visit, John would get LSS updates and relive stories from his research years and classes at LSS. Generally, he seemed fine, same intellectual discussions with a dry-wit sense of humor and comebacks.

In late May, I was contacted about his failing condition after a fall the previous month; he was in the hospital a few days, recovered to a degree, went back to the faculty, fell again, back to the hospital, then to a rehab unit and hospice. I went to see him the week before he passed. He was somewhat alert, knew me, and he could engage in conversation. I showed him recent cell phone photos of the spring, and he had something to eat. I was somewhat encouraged about a comeback.

On the morning of June 12, I got a text from a caregiver that he may not have much longer, and received another on June 14, Tuesday morning, that he had passed at 2:30 AM.

John was a good man and mentor, a good professor and researcher who was well liked by his students and colleagues. He was a serious and dedicated professor, and his classes were not known to be easy, but you learned a lot if you enrolled. The most enjoyable classes for he and his students were those that included two weeks at Little Salt Spring in his underwater archaeology classes, where students participated in all aspects of underwater archaeological research, data collection, documentation, recovery, and specimen processing when on site. No more than 15 cm in a 2x2 m unit were ever excavated in a season, so going was slow. Student excitement was overwhelming and I recall more than one student saying Dr. Gifford's underwater archaeology class was the most exciting and memorable class they had at UM. I could relate. He provided them with real adventure and problem solving techniques under scientific principles that would last a lifetime. I was proud to know him and considered him a good friend and colleague.



Dr. Gifford (lower left) with his last Underwater Archaeology Techniques class at Little Salt Spring in January 2013 before his retirement.

LSS CHICKEE THATCH FUNDRAISING CONTINUES!

In the March/April 2023 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 \$700 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. If you would like to assist with this endeavor, please make a tax-deductible donation to the WMS/LSSAS to P.O. Box 7797 North Port, Florida 34290, and reference "Tiki Hut repair." Steve indicated that a 16 oz jar of LSS "Old Shed," pure, raw honey will be offered to those who donate \$100 or more. This is still coming to those who have donated and he plans to extract honey from the LSS hive in September (he and a bee keeper moved the hive from the lawnmower shed in 2022).

To those who have already donated, thank you so much for your support! We are most grateful and look forward to seeing this effort come to fruition.

PRESIDENTS NOTE: I would like to welcome everyone to our Society for the 2023/2024 year. Your Board of Directors has compiled a year of exciting and educational speakers, and we hope to include several field trips to museums and archaeological sites for your enjoyment and further knowledge about the past of Southwest Florida. Kathy Gerace, President.

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