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Florida Humanities Council.

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ARCHAEOLOGY
Digging Into Florida’s Past
ON THE COVER:
Archaeologists excavate at Mission San Luis, in Tallahassee (top), where Apalachees lived centuries ago. The Apalachees are portrayed during a ceremony in this painting (bottom) by Edward Jonas, commissioned by the Division of Historical Resources.
Florida Places
From dunes to malls, where is your favorite place?
By Gary R. Mormino

Introduction
Finding Clues that Shape History
A tarnished button, a stone, an ancient bone—these dusty remnants can hold historical significance when seen through the eyes of an archaeologist. By James J. Miller

Florida’s Treasures
Archaeologists unearth nuggets of history

Rescuing Miami’s Legacy By Bob Carr
What Ancient Stones Reveal By Robert J. Austin
Spain’s Frontier Missions By Bonnie G. McEwan
Your Map to the Past
A visitor’s guide to Florida’s archaeological sites.

A Disastrous Venture By Roger C. Smith
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‘Seeing’ Native Americans
Indian artifacts are imbued with different cultures.
By Daniel T. Penton

Archaeology as an Avocation
Hobbyists are seen as partners in the profession.
By Juli Cragg Hilliard

A Passion for the Past
A renowned hobbyist brings history to life.

Schools Digging into History
Archaeologists are influencing curriculum.
By Jerald T. Milanich

Book Briefs
A newspaper columnist provokes and impresses.

We would like to thank State Archaeologist Jim Miller, chief of the Bureau of Archaeological Research, for helping us to develop and edit this issue of FORUM. For a list of books and websites on Florida archaeology, visit our website at www.flzthunn.org.
AS A HISTORIAN, I love researching the past. But as the director of the Florida Humanities Council, it is the "living history" that captures my attention: using the lessons of the past to help us in the present, using heritage to preserve a sense of place and to help shape the future. Archaeology, as this issue of FORUM demonstrates, combines both worlds, putting us in touch with the past in a way that keeps us firmly grounded in the present. Florida’s State Archaeologist Jim Miller puts it best in his introductory article: "Sometimes archaeology is much more about the present than it is about the past."

That is why people who love Florida will find this issue of special interest. It places our state in the long history of time, raises thoughtful questions and gives us new perspectives. And best of all, it brings us up-to-date on what’s happening here in Florida in the exciting field of archaeology. We learn that new discoveries are leading to new interpretations of the interplay between environment and people over time. We learn that diversity is not a new phenomenon in our state—that our Native American, Hispanic, African-American and Anglo heritage has extraordinarily deep roots that persist into the present. We learn that many archaeological sites—those "fragile messengers from the past"—are right here in our own backyard. These sites tell the story of Florida and, in the process, help to strengthen our communities in the present.

With this issue of FORUM, we are happy to announce a new partnership with Gulfshore Media, publisher of Sarasota Magazine and Gulfshore Life. Gulfshore Media brings years of successful magazine publishing experience to this partnership, and it brings a strong commitment to the communities it serves. While we will maintain editorial control of FORUM, Gulfshore Media will help us market, promote and expand our advertising. To the subscribers of Sarasota Magazine and Gulfshore Life, we say welcome to FORUM—the magazine for people who love Florida. We are confident that our magazine will enrich and expand your knowledge and appreciation of this fascinating state of ours.
From the Perdido River to Flamingo Bay, from Blountstown to No Name Island, from the St. Mary’s River to Cape Sable, Florida evokes breathtaking and breathless images. What combination of earth, of water and air, or of wood, tile and glass stirs your soul? Where is your favorite place in Florida? The windswept dunes and vistas of Amelia Island and Cayo Costa? The rugged terrain and unvarnished beauty of Annutteliga Hammock and Tate’s Hell? The zip code exclusivity and chic of South Beach and Jupiter Island?

What place stills a hurried life and swells your senses? Our late Gov. LeRoy Collins cherished the solitude of Dog Island, but held a special affection for old Pisgah, a country church in Wakulla County where his grandfather preached. Collins reflected, “In the raucous, violent world of today that too often disdains virtue and values, Pisgah whispers slowly. Slow down, take some time to see the old and beautiful, to remember and to cherish what deserves to be loved and honored from the noble past.”

Creek, Seminole and Miccosukee Indians endowed Florida with a multitude of mellifluous place names. Okahumpka, Ochlockonee and Withlacoochee may have sounded exotic, but one 19th-Century observer thought Florida was “the poorest country two peoples ever quarreled over.” Taken prisoner during the Second Seminole War (1835-42), Coacoochee (Wildcat) mourned soulfully for places he would never see again. He told his captors, “I am a child of Florida. Florida is my home. My father told me that my body is made of her sand. Through all the battles on her soil, I have always hoped, above all else, my body might lie in the sands of Florida.” Coacoochee died in Mexico in 1857.

A sense of place derives from the intersection of space, time and memory. On Chokoloskee Island, from the vantage point of the Ted Smallwood store looking over to the Ten Thousand Islands, one can appreciate the unfolding of Florida’s history as one would open a road map: ancient Calusa mounds and a Seminole refuge; the domain of Fontaneda and a paradise and hell for plumers, bootleggers, stonecrushers, moonshiners and drug smugglers. “We call this God’s country,” quipped one pioneer, “because He could not give it away to anybody.”

“If man had invented the earth,” an environmentalist asserted, “it would look like Cape Coral.” So much of modern Florida lacks a sense of place. Climate-controlled shopping malls and housing developments bear names dissociated with their place. Eagle Lake displaced the eagles and the sawgrass disappeared when they developed Sawgrass Mills.

Critics decry Florida as a soulless state overrun with tacky tourist attractions, strip plazas and ballot-chasing lawyers. A dreary uniformity pervades cityscape, roadway and market. Every place is no place on Planet Starbucks. Even Key West, the last bastion of Sunshine State quirkiness, is under siege from the forces of commodified cultural convergence.

To the despair of island anarchists, Hooters, Hard Rock Cafe and the Banana Republic have invaded the archipelago. Sunbelt skylines blend together in an indistinguishable labyrinth of glass, steel and stone. Like Banquo’s ghost, Frank Lloyd Wright torments modern architects. In November 1955, the 88-year-old Wright scolded a Miami audience: “[Your buildings] have no feelings, no richness, no sense of region. You can’t tell whether they’re hotels or office buildings or something in a cemetery.” The irascible architect challenged his hosts: “Why don’t you do something down here that belongs?”

Should you need evidence of Florida’s placelessness, consider Orlando’s great postcard mystery. For years, gift shops had been selling postcards of a gleaming Orlando skyline. Except it wasn’t Orlando’s! And no one noticed or cared enough to point out the error. When the Sentinel invited readers to identify the mysterious skyline, it became apparent that a lot of North American cities look alike. The urban panorama belonged to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Orlando, once known as the City Beautiful, had become the City Indistinguishable.

Whether a twelfth-generation floridano or a snowbird transplant, we are interested in hearing about your feelings and ideas about Florida places. The Florida Humanities Council is planning a special volume of essays, Florida Places. Please send us an essay (or even a paragraph or sentence). Please write to: Gary R. Mormino, Florida Humanities Council, 599 Second St. South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701-5005.

Gary R. Mormino is the Frank E. Duckwall Professor of History at the University of South Florida.

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Winter 2001 Florida Humanities Council Forum 5
A Call for Community Dialogue

The horrifying terrorist attacks of 9/11 have shaken the very foundations of our lives, creating a civic challenge without parallel. We can sense tremendous changes coming to Florida as to the nation, though we are not sure what they may be. We are warned daily about a long war against terrorism, economic hard times and measures to ensure what we now call homeland security. We are challenged to understand diverse ethnic traditions and religious beliefs. Our safety nets seem to have been pulled out from under us. The need to come together in community, to gain knowledge and perspective on the complex issues of the day, has never been greater.

In keeping with its mission of bringing together humanities scholars and Floridians to focus on issues of public interest and concern, the Florida Humanities Council (FHC) is offering a special edition of its Speakers Bureau and Grants Program to encourage community dialogue about the impact and ramifications of the transformational events of 9/11.

More than 100 years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville, in Democracy in America, marveled at the young nation's capacity to respond to civic challenge with civic engagement. Today we are challenged as never before to confront the question of what it means to live in a democracy. Can we find unity in diversity? What is the balance between liberty and security? How do we learn about people who are different from us, about people with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds? What do Americans need to know about the history of Middle Eastern countries and relations? About Islam? How have we, as a nation, responded to crises in the past and what, if any, lessons may be learned?

Under a new Community Dialogue initiative, the Humanities Council is identifying scholars from around the state who can address these and related issues and who will be available to community organizations for public discussions through our Speakers Bureau. Please contact David Reddy, director, at dreddy@flahum.org for information if you want to book a speaker. The FHC has also set aside $20,000 for mini-grants of up to $1,500 for panel discussions, reading and discussion programs or other community-initiated conversations focused on the events of 9/11. To apply for these grants, your organization must team with at least one other organization in your community—for example a library with a temple, mosque or church; or a historical society with a community center or nonprofit social services agency. All programs must be led by a humanities scholar or panel of scholars experienced in moderating public programs and must be open to and welcome diverse points of view. Contact Joan Bragginton, grants administrator, at jbragginton@flahum.org for applications and guidelines or check our website at www.flahum.org.

In addition, a weblog (a listing of relevant websites) and a bibliography will soon be posted on our website for people who want to explore a variety of sources on their own. These will be amended periodically as we receive new information.

Parallel Lives' Tours Florida

"Parallel Lives", FHC's provocative program that explores the segregated world of 1950s Florida, continues to travel through the state. The program brings together two noted writers, one black and one white, to talk about growing up in Florida at a time when severely restrictive Jim Crow laws governed race relations. The program features St. Petersburg Times columnist Bill Maxwell and novelist Beverly Coyle. Both grew up in Northeast Florida. Their deeply personal exchanges recount an age of racial isolation and tension. The program was developed from essays that Maxwell and Coyle wrote for the Summer, 1999, issue of FORUM.

Dates and locations of future programs are as follows:

Jan. 19, 7 p.m. Unitarian Church, Clearwater
Jan. 20, 7 p.m. Hyde Park United Methodist Church, Tampa
Jan. 21, 7 p.m. First United Methodist Church, Sarasota
Jan. 22, 7 p.m. Manatee Community College, Bradenton

For more information about "Parallel Lives", contact Janine Farver at (727) 553-3813 or email jfarver@flahum.org

We Thank Contributors to Florida Center for Teachers

Thanks to the generous contributions of corporations, foundations and individuals, teachers from across Florida were able to attend seminars sponsored by the Florida Center for Teachers this year. Our thanks go out to the following contributors for helping us reward and retain Florida's best teachers:

Kirbo Charitable Trust – $10,000
Bank of America – $10,000
St. Petersburg Times – $2,000
Polk Education Foundation – $2,000
Alachua County Public Schools Foundation, Inc. – $1,500
Clay County School District – $1,500
Margaret Bates – $1,000
Gary Mormino – $1,000
Brevard Schools Foundations, Inc. – $500
Columbia Public Schools Foundation, Inc. – $500
Education Foundation of Lake County – $500
Leon County Public Schools Foundation – $500
St. John’s County Education Foundation – $500
St. Lucie Foundation – $500

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St. John’s County Education Foundation – $500
St. Lucie Foundation – $500
Comings and Goings...

**FHC Elects New Board Members**

Six new members were recently elected to the FHC board. They are Cary Hardie, attorney from Madison; Jack Crocker, Assistant to the President and Dean of Graduate Studies at Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers; Nancy Decker, professor of German, Rollins College, Winter Park; Kevin Knotson, Budget and Strategic Planning Manager, City of Coral Springs; Robert Levine, professor of history and director, Center for Latin American Studies, Miami; and Henry Thomas, associate professor and chair, department of political science & public administration, University of North Florida, Jacksonville.

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The Florida Center for Teachers provides content-rich, intellectually challenging humanities seminars to K-12 teachers.

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**FHC Striving to Keep Teachers Center Alive**

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ince 1993, thousands of Florida’s finest teachers have come to the Florida Center for Teachers to recharge themselves intellectually and to rediscover the joy of learning. Most leave saying it was the best professional development experience they have ever had.

FHC is committed to continuing this enrichment opportunity for teachers and has been soliciting additional private donations since last spring when state funds for the program were eliminated by gubernatorial veto.

“Which can we stand by and do nothing,” asked FHC executive director Fran Cary, “when outstanding teachers from across the state tell us that this program rekindled their love of teaching and kept them in the classroom?”

The Center provides content-rich, intellectually challenging humanities seminars to K-12 teachers. Inspired by teacher renewal programs around the country, and responding to requests from teachers for more information and resources about Florida’s history and heritage, these residential seminars bring together teachers from all grade levels, disciplines and regions of the state. Led by university scholars, seminars explore interdisciplinary topics such as the folklore of Florida and the relationship many great writers have had with Florida places.

“For five glorious days, I soaked up knowledge and understanding and, somewhere along the way, I rediscovered how much I love to teach,” said Tampa English teacher Yvonne Meadows, who attended a seminar that explored archaeology in Florida. Meadows said that in addition to expanding her knowledge of Florida’s history and culture, the seminar also enabled her to share ideas and information with fellow teachers from around the state. “I found myself part of a statewide network of teachers who come from different disciplines, grade levels and demographics, yet who share the same frustrations and triumphs as I do.”

Each seminar is designed to investigate a compelling topic through readings, small group discussions, field experiences, and films. Teachers at a recent seminar, “Taking Humor Seriously,” examined the work of Florida writers Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, scrutinized editorial cartoons with a political cartoonist and learned about the history of clowning from a Ringling Brothers clown.

The Center recently began to offer county-wide seminars sponsored by individual school districts. At a weekend seminar held in conjunction with the Historical Museum of Southern Florida and the Miami/Dade school district, social studies teachers explored the Miami Circle, a prehistoric archaeological site discovered in downtown Miami. They toured the site with an archaeologist and investigated artifacts with museum curators; they wrestled with their preconceived notions of “who owns history”; and they discussed the legal, moral and ethical questions arising from discovery of the site. As one participant wrote on her seminar evaluation, “Miami’s past came alive for me today; I can’t wait to share this with my students.”

In the past, the $275,000 appropriation from the Florida Department of Education accounted for a major portion of this program’s budget. That money was supplemented by private contributions. Grants from such corporations as Bank of America, the St. Petersburg Times and BankAtlantic have provided individual scholarships for teachers. County education foundations have provided scholarships for their Teachers of the Year.

“We believe that teachers are the key to educational excellence,” said Frank Nelson, FHC board chairman.

“Rewarding and renewing our experienced teachers—keeping the best and brightest in the classroom—is one of the smartest investments we can make.” He said that FHC is launching a campaign to save the Florida Center for Teachers. Alumni of the seminars have already acted by making personal contributions to continue the program. “We hope Florida’s corporations and foundations that value the role of teachers will join this campaign.”

For more information about the Florida Center for Teachers, contact Susan Lockwood at (727) 553-3807 or email slstockwood @flahum.org.
INTRODUCTION

Lessons from the past

By James J. Miller

FROM PENSACOLA TO THE FLORIDA KEYS, from 13,000 years ago to the present, from Native Americans to British Colonists, generations of Floridians have left their imprints on our landscape. The story of how Florida came to be what it is today lies not only in historical documents and oral traditions, but also below the ground and under the sea. There lie buried the clues to past lives:

- Wooden posts and pottery sherds unearthed near St. Augustine have led us to the site of the country's first free African-American town, established by runaway slaves nearly 300 years ago.
- A brass button uncovered near Floral City has sparked insights into a strategy for psychological warfare possibly used by Seminole Indians in 1835.
- A pattern of holes found when condos were being constructed in downtown Miami has led to the discovery of an ancient ceremonial site of the Tequesta Indians.
- Oyster-encrusted ballast stones recovered from Pensacola Bay have revealed where eight ships went down in a hurricane nearly 450 years ago, sinking efforts to establish what would have become the first Spanish colony in La Florida.

These and many other such archaeological discoveries described in this issue of FORUM have enabled us to learn about Florida's past in ways that were not yet written into history.

Modern archaeology is helping us to develop a more complete understanding of what came before us—what happened to those who walked the same ground we walk and sailed the same seas. By literally digging into the past, we are gaining a better perspective on how and why our modern culture has developed in certain directions.

For more than 30 years it has been my good fortune to learn and teach about Florida’s past in ways that were not yet written into history. Modern archaeology is helping us to develop a more complete understanding of what came before us—what happened to those who walked the same ground we walk and sailed the same seas. By literally digging into the past, we are gaining a better perspective on how and why our modern culture has developed in certain directions.

The picture of archaeology presented by television documentaries and glossy magazines bears only slight resemblance to the daily work of practicing archaeologists in Florida and across the country. Every few years in Florida an exciting discovery will be made (usually preceded by years of unexciting hard work and preparation) that will capture the public’s attention and imagination.

Some newly discovered sites have significantly changed our understanding of what Florida was like hundreds and even thousands of years ago. These include Windover, a 7,000-year-old peat bog cemetery; the 1539-40 de Soto winter encampment in downtown Tallahassee; the salvage excavation of Mound 3 at Lake Jackson; and most recently, the Miami Circle.

Each of these, however, is the exception rather than the rule, as represented by the mundane but vital routine tasks of the hundred or so Florida archaeologists who work year after year on archaeological identification, evaluation and conservation.

Beginning in the late 1960s and early ’70s, American archaeologists realized that the archaeological record—the sum total of sites that contain the evidence of past lives—was

BY LOOKING BACK IN TIME, FLORIDA’S ARCHAEOLOGISTS ARE GIVING US A NEW VIEW OF HISTORY AND OF OURSELVES
been expanded to include all undertakings with federal procedures that are significantly more difficult, and more partly responsible for the extinction of these species. From this for food, hides, hone, ivory, fat and other products, and were Submerged cultural resources require special archaeological Spring and relict river channels in the Gulf of Mexico are pro-
ed by the limestone or karst sinkholes, springs and rivers. vitally dependent on the isolated sources of fresh water afford

now-submerged continental shelf, was twice its current size

involvement.

Currently in Florida, the Division of Historical Resources in the Florida Department of State reviews some 10,000 projects each year to assess whether they will have an adverse impact on significant archaeological sites. Developers, government agencies and non-profit organizations sometimes hire archaeologists in private practice to provide the necessary information. In fact, more archaeologists are privately employed now than work in universities, museums and government agencies. This is a big change from 30 years ago when the only job opportunities for archaeologists were in academia. Today it is not uncommon for even local governments to have an archaeologist on staff.

Public knowledge of and concern for sites, those fragile messengers from the past, is growing rapidly, as is the need for a new generation of archaeologists who understand government, business, public relations and public service, as well as prehistory. * * *

People have lived in Florida for at least 13,000 years, a relatively short time compared to the millions of years of hominid history in Europe, Asia and Africa, where the human species developed. At the arrival of the first people in Florida, the earth's climate was so much colder that much of the sea water was locked up in glaciers; and sea level was about 300 feet lower than now. The Florida peninsula, including the now-submerged continental shelf, was twice its current size and dry like an African savanna. Paleoindian people were vitally dependent on the isolated sources of fresh water afforded by the limestone or karst sinkholes, springs and rivers. Locations such as Half Mile Rise, Aucilla River, Little Salt Spring and relict river channels in the Gulf of Mexico are providing new information about environment and people at the end of the Ice Age in Florida. The most productive research about the Paleoindian period in Florida is occurring under water where people and animals congregated at water sources. Submerged cultural resources require special archaeological procedures that are significantly more difficult, and more expensive; but they offer the possibility of preserved organic deposits almost always absent from land sites.

Paleoindian people relied, although not exclusively, on the giant late Pleistocene mammals like mammoth and mastodon for food, hides, bone, ivory, fat and other products, and were partly responsible for the extinction of these species. From this early time to the present, people and the environment have been inextricably related. In fact, archaeology reveals that every culture is shaped by the environment at the same time that the environment is modified by people. The two realms cannot be separated.

About 10,000 years ago the Wisconsin Ice Age came to a close, and climate became warmer and wetter. By about 6,000 years ago the rising sea reached its present level, more or less, and the grassy, open landscapes were replaced by hardwood and pine forests. This period of rapidly changing environment and more modern conditions is known as the Archaic. Native Floridians of this time developed or adopted innovations like a more varied stone-tool kit, pottery and reliance on new food sources like shellfish.

Dr. Robert Austin's article in this issue reflects his long interest in lithic technology and demonstrates what can be learned from in-depth analysis of chipped stone, often the only material remaining in Archaic sites. As is true for any archaeological deposit, not everything made or modified by people is preserved over thousands of years; and in fact, most archaeological interpretations are limited to what can be learned from the non-organic component of material culture. Look around your house or office and imagine what would be left if all items of wood, paper, leather, fiber, and so on were removed. Take away plastic and all the metal except copper, and use what remains to recreate your technology, family structure, economy and religion: That is the challenge of archaeological interpretation.

A very current and exciting archaeological project that has captured world-wide attention is the Miami Circle at the mouth of the Miami River. Robert Carr's article is about people who lived at this powerful point of land between 2,000 and 500 years ago, and also about the complicated and controversial effort to save an archaeological site on land valued today at tens of millions of dollars.

There is no better example in the United States of the conflict between protecting a significant archaeological site and the intense pressures to develop prime urban real estate. This case also illustrates the strong public desire to preserve something of the past in our modern cities.

As if its prime location were not trouble enough, the Miami Circle has been interpreted as a ceremonial site of the now-extinct Tequesta Indians of South Florida. During the intense and emotional debate over preservation, its sacred status was compared to the public to Stonehenge, Teotihuacan and the Pyramids of Egypt. Government officials were inundated by email and letters from around the world to "Save the Miami Circle."

Sometimes archaeology is much more about the present than about the past. Its wonderful value is that it connects us directly to those who were here long before us and forces us to recognize our universal humanity.

As we contemplate our own relation to the American past, we struggle to reconcile somehow the confusing and unsettling reality of Native Americans, the people who lived here for 95 percent of the length of human existence on our continent, whose populations and cultures became virtually extinct due to disease and slavery, and who now seek their rightful place in modern society—and not only in society, but also in archaeology.
What is the proper role of living native people in the study of their ancestors by a foreign culture? Are the subjects of archaeological study, the dead and the extinct people of the past, scientific specimens or are they part of the native cultures that exist today, ancestors in an unbroken line of descent, language, belief, culture and kin? And who decides? Do non-native archaeologists from a dominant science-based culture impose a false understanding of the past on native ancestors? The question goes to the very foundation of archaeology as a science: Is the scientific method the proper or even the only way of revealing the unwritten past?

There are no easy or permanent answers but there are certain key points of view. What about archaeologists who are trained in the scientific context of modern archaeology, but who are of Native American descent and traditional lifestyle? It is a pleasure to include an article by Dan Penton, an archaeologist whom I have known for more than 30 years, and who is of Creek, Yuchi and Cherokee descent. Dan explores these important questions from a uniquely informed perspective, and his observations have great value for both archaeologists and the native people who judge them.

With a few exceptions, the field of archaeology restricted itself for many years to Native American sites. But within the memory of nearly all of our authors, archaeology was extended to include the period after European contact in Florida. Now the tools of archaeology also are applied to sites of colonial history. Florida archaeologists, including Dr. Charles Fairbanks and Dr. Kathleen Deagan, helped develop the special relationship between archaeological excavations and historical documents that is the hallmark of what is called “historic archaeology.”

In this issue, three articles represent the excitement and broad range of historic archaeology in Florida:

- Dr. Roger Smith of the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research in cooperation with the University of West Florida has discovered and excavated in Pensacola Bay one of the principal vessels of the 1559 fleet of Tristan de Luna. The voyage represented Spain’s first serious attempt to establish a permanent colony in La Florida, or the Southeast was called. In contrast to prehistoric underwater research in springs and sinkholes, this underwater project concerned the architecture, fittings, cargo, and equipment in a mid-16th-Century galleon out of city in Mexico. Decades of search have failed to uncover the land site of Luna’s failed colony, but that part of the fleet destroyed by a hurricane is now confirmed to be at the bottom of Pensacola Bay.

- After the first permanent settlement in Florida was established, at St. Augustine in 1565, Spain controlled the peninsula, although tenuously, for almost 200 years. Indeed, Florida has been under the flag of Spain longer than it has been an American territory and state. The system of Spanish colonization depended on military subjugation followed by establishment of Catholic missions in or near native settlements for purposes of acculturation, religious conversion and agricultural production. At Mission San Luis in Tallahassee the State of Florida has spent almost 20 years on archaeological and historical research and reconstruction of the principal 17th-Century buildings. Dr. Bonnie McEwan, director of archaeology at San Luis, has led this unparalleled project for more than a decade, and presents a summary here of the best known mission in Florida’s chain of more than 100 missions that once stretched from St. Augustine to Tallahassee and beyond.

- On the East Coast, St. Augustine was the center of Spanish control and occupation through 1763 and then again from 1784 to 1821. In contrast to British and later American practice, Spain did not recognize the ownership of slaves, and the Spanish settlement included many Africans. The black community known as Fort Mose, just north of the Castillo, has long been known from historical documents; but its archaeological remains could not be found until the 1980s. Subsequent excavations led by Dr. Kathleen Deagan of the Florida Museum of Natural History, revealed the architecture of the fort as well as the lifeways of America’s first free black settlement. Her article presents archaeology of an African-American community in great contrast to 18th- and 19th-Century plantation slavery.

* * *

By the middle of the 18th Century there were few traces of the once populous tribes of Florida who met the Spanish explorers. The Apalachee, Timucua, Tocobaga, Tequesta, and Calusa tribes or chiefdoms had all been reduced or exterminated by warfare, disease and slave raids. Into the depopulated peninsula came Lower Creeks from Georgia and Alabama, people who were not lineal descendants of the Florida Indians, but who shared with them a southeastern native culture that stretched back more than 500 years.

Dr. Brent Weisman’s article explores the archaeology and ethnology of the Seminole and Miccosukee people who are now represented by Florida’s best-known modern tribes. Although much remains unknown, the complicated patterns of resistance and migration into South Florida are slowly being uncovered by a sophisticated study of archaeological remains, historical accounts and oral tradition.

As you can see, archaeology in Florida is a continuing source of new discoveries that lead us to reassess our understanding of the past. At the same time, it presents modern problems and solutions that give us great faith in the public interest and the public will to protect what is left of the past. And, at long last, archaeology has forced us to come to terms with living representatives of archaeological cultures, such as Native Americans and African Americans. By using the past as a mirror to examine our present, we are led inexorably to the realization that all cultures, past and present, deserve our respect.

James J. Miller is State Archaeologist and chief of the Bureau of Archaeological Research.

WINTER 2001 | FLORIDA HUMANITIES COUNCIL FORUM
FROM MIAMI TO PENSACOLA, FLORIDA'S LAND AND WATERS ARE RICH WITH FRAGMENTS OF THE PAST—SUNKEN SHIPS, FORGOTTEN TOWNS, BATTLEFIELD DREAMS OF GLORY, PLACES OF HOPE AND WORSHIP
An Ancient Legacy is Rescued Among the Skyscrapers

BY BOB CARR

I grew up in the Miami of the 1950s in a different city than today's Miami—a city without air conditioning and without the South Beach glitz. When the hot, steamy summer days lingered through the night with little relief from the heat, I would sleep pressed against the window screen trying to feel even the slightest molecule of breeze. The bus rides were insufferable, filled with dead air and diesel fumes, but yet everyone lived that way and no one believed that it ever could be different.

It was a city defined by the thick Southern drawl of Georgia crackers, "rebels" as my Yankee father would call them, and the accents of post-war New Yorkers who resettled Miami's South Side. Spanish was rarely heard; it was five years before Castro's revolution would send the first waves of Cuban refugees to Miami. It seemed to me that Miami was a city of the moment, without a discernible history; it was a tropical dreamland for thousands of visitors and residents. My father was one of the dreamers, an ex-GI who brought his young family to a city of Northeast Miami.

As a boy, I was curious about Miami's past, curious about the Indians who might have lived there, curious about any physical link that could reveal anything about the unspoken stream of life that had preceded me. I asked my elementary and middle-school teachers many questions about this, but they had few answers. Some spoke of the Seminoles, and I was directed to the several books in the school and public libraries about the "unconquered" Seminoles. Only Marjorie Stoneman Douglas' Everglades: River of Grass described an earlier presence—the Tequesta Indians who had predated the Seminoles.

It wasn't until the seventh grade at Ada Merritt Junior High School that I realized Miami had an untold story about its history—a story apparently unknown to most residents. This insight occurred when a fellow student, Mark Greene, stood in front of the class and showed pieces of pottery, shell tools and a small beautiful basaltic celt that he had found on the banks of the Miami River.

That was when I discovered archaeology. The summer of 1960, Mark and I haunted the river, gathering and sketching artifacts and writing reports. Eighteen years later, after I completed my graduate work in archaeology at Florida State University, I was thrilled to return to Miami as its first archaeologist, working for the Dade County Historic Survey.

My job was to document the archaeological sites in the urban and suburban areas of the county. This would lead to the creation a few years later, in 1981, of the county's first historic preservation ordinance.

Prior to that time, there had been only random acts of historic preservation in Miami—and some dramatic acts of destruction. After the city was founded in 1898, for example, a developer leveled a 10-foot-high Indian mound, Miami's largest, and used it as topsoil for a luxury hotel's gardens. The city's first preservation battle was not until 29 years later when two women's groups saved a U.S. Army barracks that had been used during the Seminole Indian Wars.

In doing our project, we documented more than 100 archaeological sites in various stages of preservation across the county. The 1981 ordinance provided us the legal leverage to conduct reviews and assessments of development proposed in designated archaeological conservation areas. This has enabled archaeologists to monitor some 35 development projects and make many exciting discoveries.

One of the most stunning was the 1985 discovery of artifacts and human bones thought to be at least 10,000 years old. They were found mixed with fossil dire wolf, camels and jaguars in a sinkhole near Cutler Ridge. The notion of Paleoindians stalking ancient mammoths in a pre-Everglades Miami electrified some scholars and the media. The site was slated for housing...
development, but after political wrangling, the state purchased it along with 30 acres of pristine pinewoods and hammock for $18 million and added the land to the Charles Deering Estate Park.

Bit by bit, the missing pieces of the city's past began to come together, creating a long tapestry of thousands of objects and much information. This was done without a single work stoppage or incident or lawsuit regarding the county's archaeological actions. But all of that tranquility was about to end.

One day in May, 1998, when I was driving over the Brickell Bridge, I noticed that a demolition crew was tearing down an apartment complex on the south side of the Miami River. The action concerned me because it was taking place in one of the most archaeologically sensitive areas of the city, which meant that a monitoring archaeologist needed to be there as an observer. After I made a few telephone calls and sent a letter, the developer willingly agreed to retain a monitor on what seemed to be one more routine project.

It seemed unlikely that six multi-story apartment buildings erected in 1950 could harbor any secrets, but it soon became apparent that beneath the crushed-rock-fill foundation was a rich loamy black soil generally associated with prehistoric sites.

As the 2-acre site was being cleared, pottery sherds, animal bones and shell refuse—all indicating prehistoric subsistence and village life—were being uncovered. Although it was a surprise that these remains survived the modern apartment construction, no one was alarmed. The discovery meant collecting as much information as possible before the scheduled bulldozing of the parcel.

The County's Historic Preservation Division led the effort to mobilize available archaeologists and volunteers to excavate the site under the field direction of John Ricisak. It was decided that the buildings' footer trenches, already excavated, would be one of the first areas examined since they exposed the full depth of the midden deposit in profile. As the sediments were removed from the bottom of one of the trenches where the first unit was to be excavated, numerous holes were observed in the limestone bedrock beneath the soil.

I had seen similar holes in other sites and was certain that they were intentionally made. John Ricisak thought they were natural. Our discussions and debate continued for weeks, until Ted Riggs, a surveyor who was assisting us with the project, noticed that one set of holes represented a deliberate pattern, an arc. He hypothesized that the arc was part of a circle and calculated, based on the arc's full circumference, that the circle would be 38 feet in diameter.

In September, with a deadline of only weeks given to us by the developer, we secured a backhoe and dug away the soil along the red line painted by Ted to outline the projected circle. We dug the lowest level of soil by hand and, within hours, we began to uncover large holes and basins cut into the rock. Ted was right. A perfect circle, created by 24 cut basins, appeared in the rock. Each basin was roughly leaf-shaped, 2 to 3 feet in length and about 1 1/2 feet deep. Limestone rubble, animal bones, shell, and artifacts filled each of the holes.

We had discovered a feature unlike anything any archaeologist in Florida had ever seen before and—as we soon would discover—unlike any feature seen by anyone in North America.

We were at a loss to interpret it. Ted was quick to note that three of the holes associated with the circle lay exactly in line with the directions of north, south and east. I was particularly drawn to the eastern hole since it was carved in the shape of an eye with a large rock pushed into it. As we pondered the mystery, we decided to maintain secrecy about our discovery to keep it from being overrun by visitors. We focused our energy on how to maximize the excavation's scope, considering our limited resources and the imminent deadline. Each day there were from two to a dozen volunteers working with John Ricisak and a few professional archaeologists provided by the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy.

In October the unexpected happened. The deadline for the bulldozing was delayed pending the approval of a permit. As we gained time new treasures began to emerge—first, a completely articulated 6-foot shark skeleton apparently placed as an offering within the circle's eastern side. The shark was aligned
Hundreds of people converged on the site the day the news broke, and the police moved in to disperse the crowds. Fortunately, damage to the site was minimal since most people simply wanted to see it, but there were a few who wanted to gather souvenirs. The developer quickly constructed a perimeter fence and hired security guards.

As the Circle’s imminent destruction became the principal focus of attention and relentless media coverage, demonstrations began. Some people blocked parts of the Brickell Bridge. Others held signs. Some chanted.

The developer offered to cut the Circle out of the ground and relocate it to a city park. The county pressured him to redesign his building so that the circle could be preserved in place. But a new design meant obtaining new permits. Considering the political climate favoring preservation, the developer didn’t think new permits would be granted. He gave us three days to finish our work.

On our last day, Superbowl Sunday, Jan. 31, 1999, we were surprised to unearth a huge sea turtle carapace, also aligned east to west, and also found in the circle’s eastern half. As we worked on removing the turtle intact in a large block of soil weighing several hundred pounds, we received news of a judge’s order for an emergency hearing. Dade Heritage Trust had filed for an emergency injunction to stop the bulldozing of the site. At the hearing, held at the judge’s house, the developer voluntarily offered to extend the time deadline.

The crowds of observers at the site grew and now included Native Americans. The developer moved ahead with his plan to cut out and move the circle. He hired a stonemason to do the job. The night before the removal work was to begin, a Seminole named Bobby C. Billie pleaded with the stonemason not to desecrate the site. The stonemason backed out of the job. His announcement hit like a bombshell. The developer scrambled to find a replacement rock cutter. The new rock cutter brought in a backhoe, and that act roused the crowd to fever pitch.

As that was happening, the Dade County Commission was meeting to discuss the circle. The meeting ended in a unanimous vote to save the circle by eminent domain. This was only the second time in U.S. history that an unwilling property owner was subject to eminent domain proceedings so that the public could secure an archaeological site. That afternoon a judge issued an injunction stopping all development as well as all further archaeological investigations.

After months of negotiating, the county agreed to pay the developer $26.75 million for the site. This was more than the $18 million the county originally offered and less than the $50 million requested by the developer.

In purchasing the Miami Circle, local citizens demonstrated the political will to preserve an important vestige of the city’s heritage. They made room among the city’s skyscrapers to preserve a monument of the Tequesta who preceded all of those who now claim Miami as their home. They saved a 2,000-year-old legacy that was almost completely erased.

BOB CARR is Executive Director of the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy in Miami.
State Road 53 begins at the Florida-Georgia border in Madison County and winds its way south through rural North Florida, eventually ending in Lafayette County about a mile south of the Suwannee River. Take a drive along this two-lane highway and you will see mixed oak and pine forests interspersed with pine plantations, cattle pastures and the occasional house, but not much else. There is little to suggest that this pastoral setting was once home to some of Florida's earliest inhabitants. Yet 9,000 to 10,000 years ago, during the Early Archaic period, small bands of Native Americans hunted and gathered along the region's freshwater streams and in its surrounding flood plains and forests.

We know this from the stone tools and debris they left behind at their campsites. After so many years, there is rarely anything else that has survived. Florida's acidic soils and abundant rainfall are death to bone, wood and shell. Yet through careful recovery and analysis of stone artifacts, which are nearly indestructible, archaeologists are able to piece together a picture of what life may have been like for these early Floridians.

Although not the first inhabitants of Florida (Paleoindians hold that distinction, entering Florida about 12,000 years ago near the end of the Pleistocene, or Ice Age) Early Archaic groups were the first people to confront a more modern environment. The Holocene, as the modern era is called, differed from the Pleistocene in several significant ways. First, sea levels were beginning to rise from the Ice Age low of about 130 feet below modern levels. This, in combination with increasing rainfall, resulted in surface water becoming more abundant. Other changes included more pronounced temperature variation between the seasons, new vegetation patterns and the extinction of several animal species, including mastodon, ground sloth, dire wolf and the giant armadillo.

The climatic changes were gradual, taking several millennia to occur, and were not steadily progressive. Periods of relative climatic aridity alternated with periods of abundant rainfall; and the climate, vegetation and water sources achieved their modern character only about 5,000 years ago. The Early Archaic period is thus viewed as one of climatic transition, from glacial to interglacial; and it is in this chang-
Native Floridians of the Early Archaic period hunted deer while camouflaged in deer skins, (above) and made tools such as adzes (left) and knives (right). Numerous Bolen points (far right) have been found at the site.

ing environment that the people who occupied North Florida at this time lived.

In 1996, archaeologists from Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc. (SEARCH), spent two months excavating at one of these early archaeological sites along the side of State Road 53 where it crosses the confluence of Bethel Creek with Mill Creek. Here, at a site called Jeanie’s Better Back (named in honor of a friend of ours who was recovering from a back operation), small groups of Early Archaic people camped on a sandy bluff between the two creeks. The bluff was a perfect spot for a campsite. Situated on high ground overlooking a spring, and about halfway between the Suwannee River and San Pedro Bay (a low-lying, perched-water swamp), the site provided access to a productive mix of microenvironments from which to hunt animals, gather plants and collect chert (a flint-like stone common to Florida) for tool making.

SEARCH discovered this site while doing an archaeological survey for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), which planned to reconstruct the bridge across Mill Creek. Since the highway approach to the new bridge would be widened, SEARCH dug on both sides of the road to determine if the construction would have an impact on any archaeological sites. The investigators discovered waste flakes from the manufacture and repair of stone tools, indicating the presence of a prehistoric site. In addition, a Bolen side-notched projectile point (named after an area near Florida’s Payne’s Prairie where this type of point was originally found), dated elsewhere at 9,000 to 10,000 years old, was recovered along with several other tool fragments and more flakes. Because so few intact Early Archaic sites have been studied in Florida, a salvage excavation was recommended and approved by FDOT.

Hundreds of survey and excavation projects are carried out every year in Florida, a result of federal, state and local laws that require such studies to be undertaken prior to ground-disturbing activities that might damage or destroy significant archaeological sites. This type of archaeology, done under contract to an agency or private company, is a major source of employment for archaeologists as well as a significant source of new information about Florida’s past.

But these increased opportunities for knowledge come with a price. Contract archaeologists often operate under constraints not encountered by their academic counterparts. For example, even though testing indicated that the Jeanie’s Better Back site extended well to the east of State Road 53, the extent of the excavation was restricted by the width of the FDOT right-of-way, which was about 65 feet. This limited the kinds of information that were obtainable from the site. Time constraints often are severe and, with construction deadlines looming, opportunities to return to a site to gather additional information usually are nonexistent.

Such limitations force contract archaeologists to develop excavation plans that focus on specific questions that can be addressed by the artifacts and other data they expect to encounter. At Jeanie’s Better Back, archaeologists chose to focus on understanding Early Archaic settlement and mobility strategies.

The excavation recovered more than 4,000 Early Archaic artifacts, including nearly 50 Bolen points, many broken or worn down by constant resharpening. The large number of discarded projectile points indicates that people were spending a fair amount of time repairing their tool kits in anticipation of moving to locations where chert was not as plentiful. These and other stone tools retain characteristic damage or abrasion marks on their edges providing clues to how they were used. These show that many of the points were actually used as knives rather than projectiles. Large adzes and steep-angled scrapers were used in heavy-duty wood-working tasks. Smaller oval and triangular scrapers were used to scrape hides,
wood and bone, while more delicate side scrapers were used for a variety of cutting, sawing, shaving and scraping tasks on all types of materials. Many of the tools have abrasion marks on their basal edges and interior surfaces caused by friction with a hafting device. The tools were fitted into wooden shafts, bone foreshafts or antler handles, then wrapped with sinew to facilitate handling and allow for greater leverage and exertion of force during use. The manufacture of hafting devices involves a high investment of time and materials and indicates that the tools were "curated," or carried from site to site as part of an individual's personal gear.

Other tools include sharp-edged flakes that were struck from cores or picked up from the accumulating waste debris that lay scattered around the site. Some flakes were resharpened to make them last longer, and others had small projections flaked along their margins that were used to engrave wood and bone. But most flakes were used a few times and then discarded without resharpening. These "expedient" tools are common at archaeological sites where chert is abundant.

Although the excavated area covered only 71 square meters, the distribution of different tool forms hints that the people who lived here organized their living space by reserving special areas for specific tasks, such as making and repairing their tools, scraping hides and working wood. This kind of task segregation is what one would expect at a habitation site rather than a short-term campsite. The range and diversity of tools also are indicative of a living site. Analysis of the sources of the stone used to make the discarded tools indicates that most were made from local Suwannee Limestone chert. Thus, we can infer that the people who camped at Jeanie's Better Back did not travel over extremely great distances, since no non-local stone is present.

Based on these kinds of information, in combination with data derived from complementary disciplines, we can begin to reconstruct the way that people adapted to the early Holocene environment. Like other Early Archaic sites in North Florida, Jeanie's Better Back is located near a spring, implying that water was critical.

Here people lived, perhaps for a season, and replenished their tool kits before moving to a new location. The heavy-duty woodworking tools suggest that structures may have been present, and while no bone or plant materials were recovered, data from other Archaic sites indicate that deer, bear, squirrel, rabbit, raccoon, fox, gopher tortoise, turtle and snake were probably consumed. Plant foods may have included prickly pear cactus, hickory nuts, acorns, persimmon, palmetto berries and gopher apple.

Given the small size of this and other Early Archaic base camps, it is likely that the social groups who inhabited them also were small, numbering no more than 50 or so people, and probably consisting of several extended families. Studies of modern hunter-gatherers, along with historic accounts of native peoples in the Southeast during the 16th and 17th Centuries, suggest that men did most of the hunting and heavy woodworking, while women gathered plants, cooked, tended to the children, dressed hides for clothes, and wove baskets and mats. Individual groups probably came together once or twice a year to socialize, feast and exchange mates.

Sites like Jeanie's Better Back demonstrate that contract archaeology, an applied discipline, can contribute to an overall understanding of the past. That their discovery and ultimate study is a result of development decisions unrelated to archaeological research is a benefit that cannot be ignored. It insures that sites that might otherwise be passed over or ignored altogether are discovered and receive attention. This is critical because no one site, no matter how big or exciting, can provide all the answers. Contract archaeology by its very nature enables archaeologists to expand the range of human behaviors that can be studied, and so contributes to a more complete and accurate reconstruction of Florida's past.

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Excavating the site along State Road 53 in Lafayette County.
During the 16th and 17th Centuries there were more than 100 missions and outstations with churches in Spanish Florida. They were scattered along our state's colonial El Camino Real (royal road), which ran roughly parallel to U.S. 90 from St. Augustine to west of Marianna. Although early attempts had been made to convert the Indians of South Florida, the missionaries found these fisher-hunter-gatherers to be completely unreceptive to the Spaniards' religious message.

The successful missions were confined to the relatively sedentary agricultural chiefdoms of North Florida and southern Georgia. Colonizing Spaniards used these missions to spread the word of God, establish strategic footholds and native allies in hinterland territories, and obtain native laborers and provisions through a tribute system known as repartimiento.

The Apalachee chiefs, whose villages were spread across the highlands of Leon and Jefferson counties, first requested friars in 1607, and subsequently accepted Spanish sovereignty on behalf of their people. But it was not until 1633 that Franciscan efforts in this region began in earnest. By the 1670s Apalachee Province was described as thoroughly Christianized, and the fertile area known today as the Tallahassee Red Hills was a breadbasket to all of Spanish Florida. The province also provided ideal conditions for the establishment of Spanish ranching, farming and shipping enterprises, which led to the development of a highly prosperous frontier community.

Most of the missions were pre-existing native villages with principal chiefs and a resident friar (doctrinas); others were subordinate outstations visited by a nearby missionary (visitas).

Mission San Luis, or San Luis de Talimali, was different from the others. Its location was selected for strategic purposes by Spanish authorities in 1656, who decided to build their western capital on one of the area's highest ridgetops. One of the Apalachees' most powerful chiefs then moved his village to the Spaniards' western capital. San Luis was one of the largest and most important missions in Spanish Florida. It became the only settlement beyond St. Augustine with a significant Spanish population—including a deputy governor, soldiers, friars and civilians. By 1675, both San Luis and St. Augustine had populations of more than 1,400, although unlike St. Augustine, San Luis' residents were primarily Apalachee Indians.

Life at the mission was social and religious and built around church activities, farming and other manual labor, daily chores and family life. A summer morning at Mission San Luis probably began around 6 o'clock with the sound of bells. This marked the beginning of a new day, lifted spirits and gave a sense of community to natives in nearby farmsteads and hamlets. Most of the Apalachees living under the jurisdiction of Mission San Luis resided near their fields in the low-lying areas around...
The Apalachee chief's house and council house have been reconstructed at Mission San Luis (right). This quartz crystal cross, found in the mission church (below), is believed to have been made by a native artisan.

The town center. They would have been able to hear the church bells and see the hilltop town with its magnificent public buildings at a distance.

Many Spaniards, along with some Apalachees living close to the church, probably attended Mass at about 7 or 8 a.m. everyday. Although the Franciscans took vows of poverty, this did not extend to the House of God, on which they spared no expense. The Franciscan church at Mission San Luis was awe-inspiring by any measure. At 50-by-110 feet, its elegant configuration was informed by a European proportional system and was comparable in size to St. Augustine's main church. The nave and sanctuary were adorned with paintings, statuary and church furnishings supplied primarily from Mexico.

Although the church was European in its overall appearance, in many respects it was the domain of the Apalachees. Not only did they build the church, the Apalachees observed the Christian calendar, provided native-made furnishings (such as candlesticks), sang Latin hymns in the church choir and had at least one cofradía (religious brotherhood) dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. They also chose to be buried in the consecrated cemetery beneath the church floor where they would continue to hear Mass after death. All evidence indicates that the Apalachees' religious conversion was voluntary and sincere.

Following the morning Mass, most Apalachee men went to work in the fields and tended their maize, pumpkin, squash and sunflower crops. Others were employed on Spanish ranches, served on work details such as construction crews responsible for the mission's public buildings and performed military duties at the San Luis fort.

Apalachee women spent their days taking care of their small children, laboring on their farms, gathering nuts, berries and greens to supplement their field crops, making pottery and cooking. Some native women went to the village on the hilltop where they worked as domestic servants in Spanish homes, sold fresh produce on the town plaza, or served the friars by cooking, washing clothes, and cleaning the church friary (convento) and kitchen (cocina). Others may have married Spaniards as a means of upward social mobility for them and their children who, as mestizos, would be exempt from manual labor. The important role of native women in the lives of Spaniards at San Luis is underscored by the thousands of fragments of Apalachee-made pottery found throughout Spanish areas of the site.

Apalachee leaders met in the council house every morning to discuss community affairs including planting schedules, military expeditions and grievances. Their meetings always included the brewing and drinking of caca, a native tea made from Ilex vomitoria or yaupon holly. In the broadest sense, the council house symbolized the bond of community, a beacon that was visible for miles around. At over 120 feet in diameter, the imposing Apalachee council house at Mission San Luis is the largest known colonial-era Indian structure in the Southeast and an architectural marvel. It was maintained by Apalachee widows and elderly or disabled men who were no longer able to work in the fields. They swept the council house and central plaza every day and also ensured that there was plenty of firewood for the huge hearth that burned continu-
ously in the center of the building.

In keeping with their belief that civilized people lived in fixed, orderly communities, Spaniards at San Luis clustered their houses on the hilltop near the town center. Their village at the mission was described by one European traveler as having the appearance of a Spanish city. Most of the men were soldiers and maintained around-the-clock shifts in the fort or as sentries. Others were ship owners and traders who spent their days organizing agricultural exports from the surrounding countryside, preparing shipping manifests, inspecting incoming shipments and selling their exotic goods, which included an impressive array of luxury items from around the world.

Spanish wives were primarily responsible for raising the children and keeping their homes well tended with the help of Apalachee women. On most mornings they probably went to local stores or markets to buy fresh bread, meat and other supplies for the day’s meals. While Spaniards living in St. Augustine were eating mainly fish, turtles, deer and other local foods, those living at San Luis enjoyed beef and pork from nearby ranches.

Both Spanish and Apalachee school-aged children probably attended catechism in the church or friary classroom, after which they helped with chores and played. Clay figurines (jugetes), marbles, small rings and tiny protective amulets (higas) recovered from San Luis once belonged to the mission’s youngest residents.

Following the evening bell (at about 6 p.m.), the workday ended except for those on military duty through the night. Most Spaniards enjoyed their evening meal at home, but the Apalachees spent most evenings together. Every night they served meals and held dances in the council house, and visitors to the mission lodged there.

Remains from the building suggest that the Apalachees continued traditional activities such as flint knapping, hide preparation and cacina brewing, and that the European presence had little influence on the architecture or functioning of the native council house. In general, the same can be said of Apalachee social and political life at San Luis, which remained intact throughout the mission period. Although their religious conversion was lasting, the Apalachees managed to maintain many pre-contact traditions even after three generations of mission life.

The end of Mission San Luis came suddenly. The outbreak of Queen Anne’s War in 1701 prompted open English hostility against Spanish Florida, and ultimately led to the end of the missions. On July 31, 1704, just two days before an Anglo-Creek strike force arrived at Mission San Luis, the Spaniards and remaining Apalachees burned and abandoned the site. The Apalachees from San Luis moved to Mobile at the invitation of French authorities, and in 1763 resettled in the Red River area of Louisiana. Mission San Luis was never repopulated by Spanish colonists or the Apalachee Indians, who had lived in the region for centuries.

Today, Mission San Luis is a spectacular symbol of Florida’s unique culture and history. The State of Florida purchased Mission San Luis in 1983 because of its archaeological and historical significance, and is in the process of reconstructing the site, based on nearly two decades of painstaking research. The Florida Department of State’s Division of Historical Resources manages the site, which is open to the public.

The educational programming available at today’s Mission San Luis communicates the importance of Florida’s Native American and Spanish heritage—both past and present—to people of all ages in a very tangible way. Visitors to the site not only develop an appreciation of Florida’s colonial past, but they also gain an understanding of how and why archaeological and historical research is done.

Mission San Luis is located at 2020 Mission Road in Tallahassee. The site is open to the public Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am. to 4 p.m. Mission San Luis is closed on Mondays, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Admission is free. For more information, please call (850) 487-3711 or visit the San Luis website at http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/bar/sanluis/

RONNIE G. McEWAN is the director of archaeology at Mission San Luis in Tallahassee.
Take a journey through Florida's early history with this guide to the most accessible archaeological sites in the state.
Florida's First' Settlers See
Hopes Shatter in Storm

BY ROGER C. SMITH

They came by sea. After a two-month voyage across the
Gulf of Mexico, the first modern immigrants to reach
Florida entered the sheltered waters of Pensacola Bay and
thanked God for the safe passage that had brought them to
their new home. The date was August 15, 1559. As more
than 1,500 people prepared to come ashore with their
belongings, few realized that the ambitious scheme on
which they had embarked would end in calamity, confu-
sion, starvation and mutiny.

By the middle of the 16th Century, Spanish mariners
were quite familiar with the coasts of Florida. There had
been two explorations by Ponce de Leon and the foraging
expeditions of Panfilo de Narvaez and Hernando de Soto.
But despite all of this, the northern frontier of Spanish America
remained unconquered.

Determined to gain control of
La Florida, a territory on the map
that stretched from modern-day
Texas to the North Atlantic
seaboard, King Philip II ordered
the Viceroy of Mexico, Luis de
Velasco, to carry out the estab-
lishment of fortified settlements,
one on the Gulf and one on the
Atlantic coast. Velasco already
had chosen a favorite, Don
Tristan de Luna y Arellano, to
lead the project. Luna had first
come to New Spain in company
with the famous conqueror Hernan Cortes in 1530. As a
captain in the cavalry, Luna was second in command and
maestre de campo to Francisco Vasquez de Coronado on the
march for Cibola. He was personal friend of Velasco, who
kept Luna's son in his viceroy household.

Velasco gave Luna detailed instructions to construct reg-
ular Spanish towns in La Florida, the first of which at
Ochuse (modern Pensacola) was to have a fortress large
enough to contain 100 settlers and to include inns, store-
houses, jails and slaughterhouses. Preparations for the colo-
nial enterprise took months as people and supplies were
assembled at the port of Veracrue.

Eleven ships were loaded with supplies of corn, hardtack
biscuit, bacon, dried beef, cheese, oil, vinegar, wine and live
cattle, as well as arms, armor, and tools for construction and
agriculture. When the armada departed for Florida on June
11, 1559, it carried 540 soldiers, 240 horses and more than
1,000 colonists, including women and children, servants,
Aztec mercenaries and Tlazcalan farmers. Compared to
those who embarked before them on the ships of Leon,
Narvaez and Soto, Tristan de Luna and his people left with
certain knowledge of where they were going and what they
were supposed to do.

After a lengthy voyage, the fleet finally anchored in
Pensacola Bay, and the colonists went ashore to pick a suit-
able place to build a town. Luna ordered scouting parties
inland to search for food, since the fleet's supplies were cal-
culated to last only 80 days. The remainder of the settlers
began to unload the ships. On September 19th, a hurricane
struck the armada, sinking all but three ships, some of
which still contained their cargoes. Many people lost their
lives, and supplies on shore were damaged by heavy rains.
Although four relief voyages were attempted from Mexico
What remains of the ship has been well documented and diagramed (top), and many artifacts have been recovered, such as this small carving (bottom). A Spanish vessel, like the one that now rests on the bottom off Emanuel Point, is shown in an artist’s rendering (opposite page).

and Cuba, the disaster doomed the fledgling colony. Luna fell ill, and discontent among the hungry immigrants bordered on mutiny. Although the viceroy replaced Luna with another governor, Angel de Villafane, the enterprise was beyond salvation, and its survivors eventually trickled back to Mexico.

Until recently, the Luna expedition was a forgotten chapter in Florida’s history, overshadowed by the successful occupation of St. Augustine a few years later by Pedro Menendez de Aviles. But the discovery in 1992 of a small mound of oyster-encrusted ballast stones lying on a sandbar in a shallow portion of Pensacola’s bay has rekindled the story of Luna’s lost colony and opened a new chapter in shipwreck archaeology.

Located during a submerged cultural resource survey conducted by the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research, the site has gradually revealed an astonishingly well-preserved assortment of materials that accompanied Luna to Florida, but were left behind in the broken remains of one of his principal ships. Situated off Emanuel Point, close to the busy commuter bridge into Pensacola, the site also has demonstrated the remarkable role that public interest, support and involvement can play in shipwreck research and management.

As we began to investigate the Emanuel Point Ship, we were surprised by the preservation of its lower wooden hull and contents, lying in only 12 feet of water exposed to waves and currents. Over time, the ballast stones had provided a substratum for generations of oysters, clams and mussels that lived and died on the remains of the ship, leaving countless shells bound in compacted silt and sand that formed a cap protecting the site for centuries from erosion and dispersal. Below the ballast and shells, we began to find fragments of tanned leather shoes, butchered animal bones, bits of rope and persimmon-wood packing lying among articulated ship timbers. As Spanish olive jar sherds turned up, we received our first clues to the antiquity of the wreck site.

To pursue further investigations, we devised a strategy of cooperative partnerships for the development and management of the site toward academic research and public benefit. We decided to invite the University of West Florida to become a partner in the project, not only for the shipwreck’s obvious research potential for students, but also due to UWF’s record of public-oriented archaeology in Pensacola.

This arrangement was seen as a mechanism by which the university could increase its academic capabilities in marine as well as terrestrial archaeology. The ensuing partnership resulted in both undergraduate and graduate courses, field schools, internships for students from other universities and several master’s theses focused on the shipwreck. UWF now has one of the few maritime archaeology programs to specialize in this kind of research.

The Historic Pensacola Preservation Board, situated in the waterfront historic district, also became a partner in the Emanuel Point project. Given its public mission and central role in historic preservation and interpretation, the board hosted the establishment of a conservation laboratory for waterlogged artifacts in the T. T. Wentworth State Museum. The board also assembled a unique museum exhibit for the shipwreck in the Earl J. Bowden Building. Both the laboratory and exhibit soon became popular destinations for hundreds of visitors and school children.

We discovered that the port side of the ship had broken apart, evidence of having gone down in a violent storm. Heavy pounding on the sand bar had separated its timbers and dispersed inner and outer hull planking. The rudder had become detached; we found it nearby, surrounded by remnants of lead sheathing torn from the hull. Ships built in the 16th Century rarely lasted more than a dozen years, especially if they fre-
quented tropical waters where shipworms infested and ate their wooden hulls. To keep the marine mollusks at bay, planking below the waterline often was covered with lead strips.

Repairs to the hull and lead patching reflected this ship's years of service delivering goods and products to the Spanish colonies; she must have been a veteran of the transatlantic trade. During one voyage, she apparently carried a cargo of mercury, some of which escaped into the bilge. We collected more than seven pounds of the liquid, which had been exported to Mexico under royal monopoly from 1556 onward for the amalgamation of silver from ore. On another voyage, the ship carried New World products back to Spain, possibly cowhides from the growing number of cattle farms. Accompanying the shipment were hungry hide beetles that fed on stored leather goods; we found their wing covers deep in the bilge.

The small volume of ballast in relation to the original size of the ship (estimated to have been more than 100 feet long, with a cargo capacity of more than 400 tons) suggests that the vessel was heavily laden on her last voyage. However, the lack of primary cargo items, such as expedition stores, tools and artillery on the shipwreck site, suggests that the ship probably was salvaged soon after the hurricane. Yet, what we have recovered thus far provides tantalizing clues to the material culture of Florida's first Spanish colonial immigrants.

Evidence of their shipboard diet turned up with the discovery of butchered bones of domestic pig, cow, and sheep or goat. Traditional Mediterranean foods, such as olives, plums or prunes, cherries and hazelnuts, also are represented. Other fruits, such as papaya and sapote, and nuts such as coconut, hickory and acorn, reflect foods available in the Caribbean tropics and the Gulf of Mexico. In the ship's forward galley space, we found the utensils that were used to prepare meals at sea: a large copper cauldron, a metal pitcher for heating water and wine, a skillet, a saucepan, a copper funnel, and a bronze mortar and pestle. Fibrous matting, woven in a crisscrossed fashion, also was recovered from the galley; it may have served as packing material for provisions.

Recovery of stone cannonballs, along with smaller lead and iron ammunition, indicates that the ship probably carried batteries of heavy and light artillery for defense at sea and for fortification of the new colony. Discovery of an iron breastplate near the rudder and copper crossbow bolt-heads suggests that the settlers were prepared for close combat.

Unwelcome stowaways also came to La Florida aboard the ship. Cockroach eggs, perhaps borne in hampers of sea biscuits, would have hatched in the darkness of the bread locker below deck. The insects multiplied in the dim and humid recesses of the hold, probably taking over the galley at night after the cookstove was extinguished. We found their egg cases and body parts among other organic deposits in the bilge.

Archaeology at Home: A Partnership in Pensacola

By Judith A. Bense

Our community archaeology program took root in Pensacola at a time when the city's leadership was unknowingly destroying the heart of one of the most significant archaeological areas in Florida. In the late 1970s, bulldozers began demolishing blocks of deteriorated buildings in the city center as part of an urban renewal project. In the process, they destroyed significant archaeological deposits from the Indian, Colonial and Early American occupations of Pensacola. The urban renewal area was precisely where Spanish colonists had established a military settlement in 1698.

A group of archaeologists and a citizen advocacy group decided to do something to stop the destruction. We formed a partnership and decided to fight for archaeological preservation by using the same tactics so successfully employed by the environmental movement: public pressure, negotiation, whistle blowing and persistence.

The members of this preservation partnership worked within the system to develop and implement local legislation. They successfully championed a city resolution to protect archaeological sites on city-owned property, in rights-of-way and on city-sponsored projects. While not comprehensive, this resolution at least protected sites in the urban renewal area. The policy was adopted directly from federal procedures developed for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

With the adoption of the resolution, the city governance itself...
Repairs to the hull and lead patching reflected this ship’s years of service delivering goods and products to the Spanish colonies; she must have been a veteran of the transatlantic trade.
First Fortress for Freedom

BY KATHLEEN DEAGAN

Fort Mose—or Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose—was the first legally sanctioned free black town in the United States, built near St. Augustine in 1738 by once-enslaved Africans and their Spanish allies. The fight for freedom embodied in the history of Mose highlights a facet of the African-American colonial experience that is dramatically different from the more familiar story of slavery, oppression, and passivity.

Until the site of Fort Mose (pronounced Mo-ZAY) was unearthed through a controversial archaeological project that began in 1985, few Floridians—and even fewer people outside of Florida—had ever heard of the free African-American colonial town. Several distinguished historians, including Luis Arana, Irene Wright and John Tepaske, had written scholarly articles about Mose, but it remained a quaint footnote to Florida history. For most people the story of Mose was buried as deeply as the physical remnants of the site itself.

I first became aware of Fort Mose in 1971 as a first-year graduate student at the University of Florida. That was when F.E. “Jack” Williams, a longtime resident of St. Augustine, contacted the late Charles Fairbanks, a professor of archaeology, to do a test project on a piece of Williams’ property that he believed to be the site of Fort Mose. Fairbanks and his students (including me) tested the site and uncovered 18th-Century artifacts that could very likely have been left there by the residents of Fort Mose.

Like most people who first hear the story of Fort Mose, I was captivated and intrigued, returning to the site again in 1976 (this time as an assistant professor at Florida State University) with another group of students. The results of that project convinced us that the Williams site was, in fact, Fort Mose. Over the next few years I wrote several proposals to grant agencies for funds to carry out more thorough investigations. None of my proposals was funded (although a number of other proposals for work at Spanish sites in St. Augustine were).

It was not until 1985 that our ongoing efforts to secure support for the excavation of Fort Mose were successful. In that year Florida State Rep. Bill Clark of Fort Lauderdale visited the site and was both moved and impressed by its importance.
to African-American history. Clark introduced a bill in the Florida Legislature that provided funds for the historical and scientific study of Fort Mose, as well as for the dissemination of that information to the general public.

We devoted the first six months of the project to documentary research in Spanish archives since, like most historical archaeologists, we did not want to destroy any part of our site by excavation in order to learn things that could be found less destructively in documents. Historian Jane Landers, then a doctoral student in history at the University of Florida and now a professor of history at Vanderbilt University spent countless hours in the Archive of the Indies in Seville doing her own kind of historical "excavation."

Most researchers had assumed that there would be little direct information about the people of Fort Mose in the documents since it was thought that they were both non-literate and non-elite. Landers, however, by combining her own skill and enthusiasm with the questions asked of her by archaeologists, unearthed an unexpectedly rich record of both the people and the site of Mose.

Fort Mose came into being as a consequence of extended Anglo-Spanish conflict over the "debatable lands" between St. Augustine and the Carolinas, provoked by the establishment of Charleston in 1670. African-Americans figured in these conflicts from the beginning as they escaped from slavery on Carolina plantations, allied themselves with the Yamassee Indians and moved not infrequently across the borders of Spanish- and English-claimed territories.

In 1687 a group of fugitives, including eight men, two women and a small child, arrived in St. Augustine. There they were given sanctuary and protection from extradition on the basis of their religious conversion. By 1693 the Spanish Crown decreed that all such escaped fugitives would be given sanctuary and, eventually, freedom in Spanish Florida as long as they converted to Catholicism. Enslaved Africans in the English colonies moved swiftly to take advantage of this opportunity, and increasing numbers successfully made the dangerous and difficult journey to Florida through the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

The Spanish sanctuary policy—not entirely altruistic—dealt an economic and psychological blow to the English as it enhanced the economic and defensive resources of the Spanish colony. The refugees had valuable skills and trades to offer, and many of the Africans proved to be fierce and effective fighters.

By 1738 more than 100 refugees had arrived in St. Augustine, and in that year the town and fort of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose was formally established about two miles north of the Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine. Thirty-eight men, most of them married, formed the Fort Mose militia and lived at the fort. They were expected to farm their new lands as well as man their fort.

In 1740, the English-South Carolinian forces of Gen. James Oglethorpe laid siege to St. Augustine—largely in response to the successful Spanish-aided African resistance to enslavement. Oglethorpe's troops captured Fort Mose; African, Indian and Spanish forces soon recaptured the fort. But Mose was so badly damaged during the battle that its residents moved to St. Augustine where they lived until 1752, when Fort Mose was re-established and a second, larger fort was rebuilt close to the location of the first.

In 1759 there were 22 households and 67 residents at this second site of Fort Mose, including 37 men, 15 women and 15 children. The community represented a diverse ethnic-linguistic group. The residents of Mose included Congos, Carabalis, Minas, Gambas, Lecumis, Sambas, Gangas, Araras and Guineans. Many of them had lived among the English and Yamassee. Mose must have been a remarkably polyglot community, incorporating a wide variety of cultural traditions.

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We began our excavation of Fort Mose in 1986, armed with
Landers’ information, and eager to uncover the details of the cultural practices of the Mose residents. Working with descriptions of the site, historical maps and NASA multispectral imagery, we were able to demonstrate conclusively that the Williams property was, beyond doubt, the site of the second Fort Mose. The first fort was nearby, submerged in the marsh mud but still visible to the NASA sensors.

Today, the site of the second fort and town is an isolated marsh island of about three acres, surrounded by tidal-flooded mud flats. The fort, located on the site of a long-occupied Indian shell midden, has escaped flooding but still is threatened both by rising sea levels and modern construction. The development of highways and other projects over the years has filled in many of the creeks that formerly drained the marsh, provoking excessive inundation of the immediate area around Mose.

The site on which the people of Mose built their second settlement was occupied almost continuously from about 1,000 B.C. through the end of the colonial era in 1821. The 11-year Mose occupation is represented by a thin layer of soil and shell (between 5 and 15 centimeters thick) embedded within a 1.5 meter (about 4 feet) deep shell midden. Isolating the precious Mose deposits was thus a slow and painstaking process, requiring the excavation of shell layers in individual 5-centimeter increments, so as not inadvertently to mix the materials from Mose with those from earlier or later occupations.

Excavations revealed construction details of the moat, the earthwork curtain (walls of the fort) and the posts from large and small interior wood-post structures. A small circular wood and thatch structure, some 12 feet in diameter, was thought to be one of Mose’s domestic residences and is very similar in form and probable construction to both Florida Indian and African prototypes. Both the documentary and archaeological evidence indicate that the Mose residents lived within the walls of the fort.

The lives of the people who lived at Mose are reflected in sherds of English, Indian and Spanish pottery, lead shot and musket balls, a pewter buckle and metal button, pottery shards and a hand-made St. Christopher medal. Like the plants, many of the Mose residents’ possessions were undoubtedly made of such perishable materials as wood, basketry, gourds and cloth, and have not survived in the earth. Others—relegated to the trash heaps—were probably thrown into the creek adjacent to the site. One of the most evocative artifacts from Mose—a small, handmade silver medallion—came from the creek. It depicts St. Christopher on one side and bears a design on the other side that is reminiscent of the mariner’s compass rose.

We know that conversion to Catholicism was a condition of freedom for the Mose residents, and some of the glass beads may have been used in rosaries. Although no items directly suggesting African influence have yet been recovered from the excavation, it is quite likely that some of the European or Indian items could have been used in ways that combined African and Catholic traditions in the manner of so many Afro-Caribbean traditions today. We, as archaeologists, have simply not yet learned how to recognize these in the mute material record.

Only a small portion of the Mose site was excavated in the two years of fieldwork carried out there. One reason for this was the difficult logistical challenges posed by the site itself. Both the conditions of access and the delicacy of isolating the short Mose occupation required slower-than-usual excavation strategies.

Other reasons were political. Some segments of the St. Augustine community claimed that this site was not Fort Mose. They maintained that the fort was located elsewhere and charged that the project was misusing grant funds to create a “revisionist history.” This challenge made it imperative to demonstrate beyond a doubt that this site was, in fact, the Fort Mose shown in maps and described in documents. Because of this, our work concentrated on uncovering the structural features of the fort more intensively than we might otherwise have done. In addition, the excavations at the site were suspended sooner than expected because of local legal challenges to the purchase of the site by the state of Florida.

However, the primary and most important reason for not excavating more of Fort Mose was—and still remains—that it is a unique and priceless site and should be zealously preserved and protected (even from archaeologists) until specific ques-
tions about Mose really need answers.

The most important message about Fort Mose today is the actuality of its existence, and the most important contribution of archaeology to that message has been to provide it with a tangible, accessible physical identity. The Florida Museum of Natural History, with the support of the Florida Legislature, developed a 2,000-square-foot exhibit on Mose that toured the United States from 1989 until 1999. This was the longest tour in the history of the Florida Museum, and more than 7 million people learned about Mose and its message. Curriculum materials, articles and videos on Mose have been incorporated into public school lessons on Florida history.

In 1994, through vigorous lobbying by the African-American community in St. Augustine and the efforts of Rep. Bill Clark, the site of Mose was purchased by the state of Florida and became part of the Florida Park System. In 1996, it was designated a National Historic Landmark.

The consequences of these events for the St. Augustine community have been dramatic. The Fort Mose Historical Society was formed in 1995 and is a vitally active organization of more than 200 members. It has brought black and white residents of St. Augustine together in a common cause—protecting, promoting and interpreting this remarkable site and its story. Such an alliance would have been difficult to envision in St. Augustine—a community with a troubled history of race relations—even 20 years ago when knowledge of Fort Mose existed only in the pages of scholarly journals.

Most archaeologists hope that their excavations will produce new theoretical principles about culture or new insights into obscure scientific questions of change. I count myself among them, but I also feel that the archaeology at Fort Mose has produced far more important results. It provides a tangible symbol of free African-American history, self-determination and participation in colonial American life that is just as real as the story of slavery.

The work at Fort Mose is a testament to the results that can be obtained when historians and archaeologists work together in what is called historic archaeology. The narrative of Fort Mose, told through both artifacts and documents, has reached thousands and has generated a kind of public fascination and governmental commitment that is rarely achieved when a story is told with words alone.

KATHLEEN DEAGAN is Distinguished Research Curator of Archaeology at the Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida.
Indiana Jones once told his students "X never, ever, marks the spot." I was hoping he was wrong. For an entire summer I had read, studied, analyzed and read again the penciled notes and field sketches contained in the journal of an Army lieutenant who had swept through this area, known as the Cove of the Withlacoochee, in the campaigns of 1836 and 1837 directed at the center of the Seminole resistance. He carefully recorded his progress through the swamp forests and prairies of the Cove, noting by compass bearing and time of travel the distance and direction between points.

Among the places described were several abandoned Seminole villages. X did mark the spot. After comparing the officer's notes to aerial photographs and plotting his course across the modern landscape, I was now standing in an orange grove on the slopes above Lake Tsala Apopka, southeast of present-day Floral City. If my calculations were correct, one end of the village would have been here, in this grove, the other a quarter of a mile away across the gently rolling hills and backyards of a small rural neighborhood. The grove owner was clearing the land of trees killed in the freeze of the winter before, and was happy to give permission for our search. Broken pottery of the "brushed" style known to have been used by the Seminoles was soon discovered in a close inspection of the loose surface sands by teams of volunteers.

Small excavation units laid out on a grid system produced more pottery, a stem and bowl of a clay smoking pipe, lead shot of the size fired from a musket and rusted scraps of iron. Then there was the button. And another, this one coming from an area at the opposite end of the site where the Seminoles had a cooking fire in or near one of their houses. Here, in an area of dark stained soil, we found the burned timbers and boards of a collapsed Seminole house buried less than one foot below the soil. We learned from the lieutenant's account and from other soldiers' written reminiscences that these were not the familiar open-air, pole-and-palmetto-thatch "chickees" of the recent Seminoles, but were more like cabins, with pine-bark roofs and walls of split chestnut boards.

Unlike Florida's prehistoric native peoples, the Seminoles built no mounds for their dead, nor did they construct the large earthen or shell mounds for their temples or houses of their chiefs. But the ancestors of the Seminoles did build mounds and live in farming hamlets and palisaded villages. These were spread across the river valleys of the lower Southeast, in the region now covered by the Flint and Chattahoochee River drainage of Georgia, the Coosa and Tallapoosa valleys of Alabama, and the Red Hills of South Georgia and the Florida Panhandle. Within these regions, chiefs from the ruling families oversaw the planting and harvesting of corn, made peace or waged war with their neighbors, traded with them for decorated shells and copper ornaments, and kept the spirits of earth, sky and the dead on the side of the living.

Around A.D. 1000 or so, some of the larger mound centers appeared, villages with several mounds and a public plaza for ceremonies. In the 500 years before the first European contact, mound centers would be abandoned and new ones established as the power of individual chiefdoms peaked and ebbed. Most of the people lived in dispersed hamlets and farmsteads up and down the river terraces. Life for them may have been relatively unaffected by the rise and fall of ruling dynasties.

But the diseases and disruptions brought by the first European conquistadors early in the 16th Century did have major consequences for the native peoples of the Southeast. In societies where both power and knowledge are passed down from the elders of one generation to the next, population losses due to epidemic disease can have devastating impacts on cultural survival. In the wake of the European presence, new native groups formed throughout the Southeast, still with strong cultural ties to their mound-building ancestors, but also adapted to the new circumstances of life in the European colonies. They became adept traders, swapping deerskins for firearms, glass beads, cloth shirts and saddles. Already farmers, as their ancestors had been, they now became herders, managing free-range cattle brought over by the Europeans.

The English traders called these people "Creeks," and took great pains to establish commercial ties with them beginning in the late 17th Century. The Spanish in Florida took notice of them too, and hoped to entice them to settle in the old mission fields of North Florida, abandoned by 1704 when the last of the British raids on Franciscan missions caused their final demise. The loss of the missions sounded the death knell for many of Florida's native peoples. Many not already buried in mission cemeteries were captured and forced into slavery. The rest fled to remote swamps deeper into the peninsula. By 1716, when Spanish emissaries were sent among the Creeks, the Florida natives numbered far fewer than they had 200 years earlier.
What if Seminole warriors had gone into combat during the Second Seminole War dressed in captured U.S. Army uniforms?

When the Spaniards first arrived. By the 1740s, Creek bands from towns in lower Georgia moved into the fertile lands around Lake Miccosukee, east of what is now Tallahassee, along the banks of the middle Suwannee River in the vicinity of what is now Old Town, and on the rim of the great Alachua Savanna, now known as Paynes Prairie. Here, Ahaya, or "Cowkeeper," settled with his people. They brought with them a farming way of life and soon built neat, square-ground towns, in keeping with their Creek traditions.

By the 1770s, Cowkeeper's Alachua band and soon the others became increasingly known as Seminoles, a corruption of the Spanish cimarron, meaning "wild ones" or "runaways." The political and social separation from their Creek relatives was well underway for the newly established Florida Indians.

But when did the Seminoles begin to see themselves as a people apart, as a people bonded together by its own distinct shared identity? How did Seminoles define this group identity? What did it mean to them to be "Seminole"? I looked down at the brass button and knew that I held in my hand one small part of the answer.

What if Seminole warriors had gone into combat during the Second Seminole War dressed in captured U.S. Army uniforms? If so, were the uniforms worn as symbols of defiance, dramatic visual trophies from earlier kills? Were they removed from the dead of Dade's command for example, or from those killed when Gen. Duncan Clinch briefly fought on the Withlacoochee's banks in January, 1836? Or did they serve a tactical function to confuse an already bewildered foe? Or both?

Here was a deliberate attempt to send a message with no hidden meaning: Do you know whom you are dealing with? We are the Seminoles! We wear your suits into battle! Eyewitness military accounts provide historical confirmation of Seminole warriors dressed in Army blues. The brass buttons found in an old Seminole village in the hills above Lake Tsala Apopka help tell the story.

Today the Florida Seminoles proudly call themselves the "unconquered people." They never gave up. They successfully resisted every attempt to remove them, including a third war fought between 1855-1858. By that time their numbers had been reduced to fewer than 200, down from an 1821 estimate of 5,000. Now they number in the thousands again.

How can archaeology help us understand what it means to be Seminole?

Written accounts of the Seminole people were most often created by soldiers, politicians, traders, travelers and bureaucrats, each with his own special interest and point of view. From each we can learn as much about the observer as about the observed. Oral histories and legends passed down by the Seminoles are valuable sources of information, but there is no way to tell how much of this traditional knowledge has been lost.

Through the study of artifacts, the small things left behind, archaeology can tell us what people did, how they acted, how they used the material world around them to respond to changes in their way of life.

On a sandy ridge above a central Florida lake more than 160 years ago, a person whose name history has long forgotten stood gazing out across the tops of the tall pines shrouding the ridge top, lost in thought, perhaps pondering an uncertain future, as the setting orange sun dissolved into the slate-gray waters of the lake. This person might have been a warrior, recently returned from battle, a sky-blue army coat draped across his shoulders. We will never know for sure. Nameless, yes. Invisible, no. Archaeology says that this person was a Seminole.

BRENT R. WEISMAN is an associate professor of anthropology at the University of South Florida.
Cultural Prisms Distort

To find truths, archaeologists must understand Native American world views

By Daniel T. Penton

I am a Native American. Because of this, I view the world and my role as an archaeologist differently than those who were nurtured solely on European-based traditions.

My family background is Creek, Yuchi and Cherokee as well as Scottish, English and Dutch. My parents are of Native American ancestry and were raised with traditional beliefs and practices. There were ceremonial leaders and medicine people in both families. My great-great-grandfather lived in Northwest Florida when America took possession from Spain, and other relatives are documented in the American State Papers for that period. Some lived in southern Alabama or Georgia, along the Chattahoochee River. Some were pro-American and some were Red Stick supporters.

My family is part of a continuum that stretches back to pre-Columbian times. From this perspective, what can I offer those interested in Native American sites? Perhaps I can share some thoughts that can help us get past years of media and academic stereotyping and help rid us of political and social bias.

One of the first things to understand about Native Americans is that they are a diverse group. There is no single American Indian belief system or religion, nor is there a single American Indian language. Upon the arrival of Europeans, there were hundreds, if not thousands, of distinct languages in North and South America. There were many times that number of tribal towns and communities, and each group had its own world view. The Muscogee, or Creek Confederacy, had more than 50 tribal towns, each with its own political and ceremonial leaders. Ceremonies differed from town to town, but there was commonality across the confederacy. This principle applies to Native American communities and tribes across this continent. In the face of great tribal differences, there were also clear similarities.

Another important point to make is that the underlying belief system of Native Americans is different from that of mainstream Americans. The definition of “power” differs greatly. As a basic part of their belief system, many native peoples think of power as an impersonal force that permeates all of creation. This force is present in both natural and cultural communities and phenomena and is often represented as circles or spirals. These symbols represent observations of natural phenomena—the spiraling of birds in flight, rising smoke or the effects of wind upon clouds and water. Maintaining a proper balance of power was, and is, important in the daily lives and ritual actions of many native peoples.

Power is geographically specific. Natural and cultural expressions of power shift from one geographic locale to another, and past human activities are related to specific ecological factors. In this belief system, the observation and understanding of how elements of nature interact within a specific region, is important. Humans, like
Ritual specialists use this knowledge to manipulate and balance power for specific purposes. Power of place is a belief that certain natural areas, including deep springs, sinkholes, waterfalls, river rapids and caves, contain extraordinary power. These places were either sought out or avoided, depending on the nature of the power present.

It’s also important to know the pervasiveness of stereotypes and false impressions that mainstream Americans have of Native Americans.

The physical appearance of today’s Native Americans is an area where stereotypes are common. “You don’t look Indian” is my personal favorite. It might help if we all wore Creek ribbon shirts or long braids. By “not looking Indian,” some of us have seen and heard things that are hurtful, but this factor also helped our ancestors to stay in the East. An anthropology professor told my daughter’s class that all Native Americans abhorred being around human remains. This comment didn’t sit well with her. She informed her class that this might be true for some groups, but not for others, including her own. Her people had been digging up and ritually tending the remains of certain dead for generations. She closed by sharing how, during a trip home, she had visited a ceremonial elder who was cleaning and ritually preparing the skull of a long-dead relative in his kitchen sink. She didn’t bother to tell her classmates of her mother’s insistence that we remove the human remains stored in our dining room before guests arrived for my daughter’s wedding reception.

At times the cultural traditions of Native Americans block a true understanding of Native American family structure. The role of women and the matrilineal/matrilocal structure is usually given lip service in our profession, but is substantively ignored. This is a cardinal error! Creek and Hitchiti peoples could have coined the expression, “If momma ain’t happy, ain’t nobody happy.”

A "status" burial excavated by Calvin Jones at Lake Jackson illustrates this point. This burial was covered by the largest copper breastplate excavated in North America. It was embossed with the figure of a stylized “birdman” or “falcon dancer.” Early reports raced through the professional grapevine, eliciting excited comments of a great warrior king. These reports quietly subsided when it became known that the breastplate covered a woman in her mid-40s. My traditional friends were not surprised. The matriarch was, and is, the real power in most Southeastern groups.

Unfortunately, the European ideal of male rulers, controlling power through military and economic resources, is still in vogue. It’s time we examine the role of traditional matriarch, whose power comes from her control of natural forces, ensuring a bountiful and sustained crop for her group. Her powers were, and are, as real as her European counterparts, but the symbols of her position are represented metaphorically, not physically.

Mainstream Americans may ask how a Native American can be an archaeologist. Don’t American Indians oppose archaeology?

It’s true that some tribal groups are opposed to archaeological research, but most are not. What all tribal groups are opposed to is insensitive archaeologists and their work, not the archaeological process. Proper archaeology augments our stories and traditions, and gives them credibility. Indian peoples also benefit from an expanded understanding of how and where their ancestors lived. For these reasons, archaeology is frequently used to further tribal recognition efforts.

I have recruited and employed Creek, Choctaw and Cherokee people on many projects and I regularly seek advice from Creek and Seminole elders, especially on women’s matters. Sometimes they share information not available anywhere else. These folks often have as much interest in my projects as I do.

The Seminole research projects of archaeologists Bob Carr and Brent Weisman have been well received by many traditional people. Their insights, sensitivity and general humanity are apparent in their work. Creating an inclusive project environment, where folks with a stake in the outcome are encouraged to have their say, goes a long way toward rehabilitating their views of archaeology.

I have presented my views on what I consider to be important issues. But this is only a start. Much remains to be done. Archaeologists can begin by reaching out to descendants of those we study and beginning the reconciliation of world views. Traditional people are helpful, if given the chance, and their role is important. The prize is a better and more accurate picture of our shared past, which benefits us all. A good heart is all that’s needed.

DANIEL T. PENTON is senior archaeologist with Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan, Inc., National Council member of the Muscogee Nation of Florida and ceremonial elder of Ekev Hoke Tribal Town.

It’s true that some tribal groups are opposed to archaeological research, but most are not. What all tribal groups are opposed to is insensitive archaeologists and their work, not the archaeological process.
A path leads through the woods to a round lake hugged by tall vegetation. It is quiet except for the bubbles of an alligator or soft-shell turtle. A dock snakes across this spring-fed sinkhole, and wooden stakes around the perimeter mark every 10 degrees of the compass. This is the place where some of the oldest artifacts have been found in Florida. One of them, the shell of an extinct species of land tortoise pierced by a pointed piece of wood, is thought to be more than 12,000 years old.

Surrounded by the rapidly growing city of North Port, on Florida's Southwest coast, Little Salt Springs remains, in appearance, the oasis it was for people thousands of years ago. But now it's an archaeological and ecological preserve owned by the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, which sends students to conduct underwater research.

During field season, members of two avocational archaeology groups—the Time Sifters Archaeology Society in Sarasota and the Warm Mineral Springs Archaeological Society in North Port—help process specimens. Objects are videotaped, weighed and documented in place, then brought to the field lab to be measured, weighed, described, digitally photographed and sealed in plastic bags filled with distilled water. This methodical work requires more patience than many people can sustain.

“If we can get you interested in archaeology and say you can be in a dig—man, you’re in your blue jeans,” said Jack Thompson, president of the clubs’ parent organization, the Florida Anthropological Society (FAS). “The quickest way to lose a member is to have you count oyster shells.”

Avocational archaeologists are “critical to the lifeblood of the profession,” said Jim Miller, chief of Florida’s Bureau of Archaeological Research. Avocational clubs serve on the local level as eyes, ears and activists for protecting historic sites, and they provide volunteer labor.

Archaeologist Bill Marquardt, a University of Florida professor and curator at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville, has worked alongside many avocational archeologists, almost always with positive results. “They’re helping to stretch our time and our money, so who could turn that down?” he asked. “Besides, they become friends after a while, more than just somebody to help out.”

Cornelia Futor, a retiree living in Sarasota, was 12 when she read a children’s book about prominent archeological discoveries such as King Tut’s tomb. “I was just entranced by it, and I got the bug,” she said. “And I’ve had it ever since.”

Futor said she loves learning about the way humans lived long ago: It’s an adventure—always exciting and certainly not dead. “These people become real to you through the study of archeology.”

Futor first went on a couple of digs in India, where she worked in administration for the Foreign Service in the 1950s. But afterwards, she found little opportunity for hands-on experience until the Time Sifters formed in 1986. Since then, she has been on several professionally directed excavations.

As Futor and other serious avocational archaeologists know, working outdoors in Florida means sun, sweat and mosquitoes. But some people who join them at digs have romantic visions from films like “Indiana Jones” or “The Mummy.” “And they last about a day,”
Physician Specializes in Early Florida People

If there was one event that spurred Robin Brown to write about early life in Florida, perhaps it was the time a 3 million-year-old whale skeleton turned up in his backyard.

The 40-foot-long skeleton was discovered in 1983 in the swimming hole behind his weekend cabin some 20 miles inland from the Gulf coast. Intrigued about how the whale wound up in a tributary of the Caloosahatchee River, Brown discovered through research that the location would have been under a shallow sea, maybe 20 feet deep, during the whale’s era.

That whetted his appetite for more information, and he did further research that developed into his first book, Florida’s Fossils, now considered a classic. The paleontologists who excavated the whale skeleton and the archaeologists he met while doing research, led the Fort Myers physician to write a second book, Florida’s First People. It focuses on the state’s human inhabitants from 12,000 years ago through the arrival of Europeans in the 1500s — and on the crafts, tools and skills they developed for survival.

Because of his books, his extensive knowledge of ancient Florida and his legendary hands-on research, Brown is one of the most highly regarded avocational archaeologists in the state. “I think everybody is really glad that he has filled the niche of bringing archaeology to the general public,” said Jim Miller, chief of Florida’s Bureau of Archaeological Research in Tallahassee. “Any archaeologist would be proud to write the books he’s written.”

Brown, 67 and now retired, wrote both books while working full-time as an ear-nose-throat specialist. He and his wife, Jan, who organizes and edits his books, also raised three sons and a daughter. Ask him how he found the time to pursue his avocation, and Brown says: “I never watch television. Ever.”

He also involved his family in the research for his books. The Browns made and shot bows and arrows, formed and fired pottery, designed and built dugout canoes, and made many other tools used by people in the past.

“Most of my life I’ve been interested in primitive crafts,” Brown said. But when he set out to write about the techniques used by early societies, he found little information available. So he went about learning and replicating each craft. He found that some — making rope, for example — were surprisingly easy. “I’m sure that the people who made them worked faster than I, but I could make maybe 3 or 4 inches a minute,” he said. This task, so essential to the coastal dwellers, is done by twisting together plant fibers.

The most difficult task, Brown said, was firing pottery. The fire had to be brought up slowly, so the pots wouldn’t crack. Then they had to cool slowly. If it rained, they would cool too quickly, and “we would get up in the morning and there would be a pile of pot shards there,” he said.

Brown, whose interest in early people goes back to the days he hunted for arrowheads as a boy growing up in Tampa, is now writing a children’s book called How to Be an Indian. It will teach such primitive skills as how to make cord and rope, coil and fire pottery, craft and throw spears, and weave baskets.

After he’s done with that, well, Brown is becoming interested in underwater archaeology. He wants to delve into the research of “drowned rivers,” parts of rivers that are now under the Gulf of Mexico because of a rise in sea levels. “The deeper you get into the water,” he said, “the further you go back in time.”
Trail of the Lost Tribes
Speakers Series

The Time Sifters Archaeology Society, with funding from the Florida Humanities Council and VISIT FLORIDA, will produce a free archaeological speakers series in early 2002. Call (941) 794-8773 for reservations and more information.

Feb. 2 – Bill Burger, “The Natives of Tampa Bay at the Time of First Contact.” 6:30 p.m. at Heritage of the Ancient Ones’ School of the 16th Century, Camp Bayou Nature Preserve, Ruskin.

March 6 – Dr. Brent Weisman, “Raiders of Lost Florida: The Strange Saga of Florida’s Lost Cultural Treasures,” and Gary Ellis, “From the Old Frontier to the New: The Evolution of Archaeology of the West Central Gulf Coast.” 7 p.m. at Coast Library, Crystal River.

March 10 – Archaeology Fair. noon to 6 p.m. at Museum of the Islands and Randell Research Center, Pine Island.

March 11 – Dr. Bill Marquardt, Dr. Karen J. Walker and Dr. John E. Worth, “Two Thousand Years on Pine Island.” 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church, Pine Island Center.

March 20 – Dr. Jerald T. Milanich, “Charnel Knowledge: Weeden Island Sixty Years After Willey and Woodbury.” 7 p.m. during Time Sifters meeting, Sarasota.

April 13, 14 – Dr. Jeffrey Mitchem, “Tocobaga and Menendez: The Archaeology and History of Safety Harbor,” 2 p.m. at Safety Harbor Museum of Regional History, followed by tour of Safety Harbor Mound at Phillippi Park, Safety Harbor.

Mike Stewart, vice president of the Warm Mineral Springs chapter, and his wife, Pat, both retirees from a General Motors factory, helped two years ago with a survey of 30 or more mounds around Charlotte Harbour. “We’re strictly novices who are just learning about the ancient cultures of Florida,” he said.

Earl Lewis of Port Charlotte, a former manufacturing engineer and WMS member who also is involved with the Southwest Florida Fossil Club, said he likes measuring, weighing and recording artifacts and reassembling pottery. What he gets out of it: “Just the seeking of knowledge.”

That’s what the pros want to hear in an era of sampling and conserving archaeological sites rather than deconstructing them. The professionals say that sites should be left alone unless there is a compelling reason for disturbing them.

Amateurs educated in proper technique generally will take a responsible approach to their activities and be less likely to remove artifacts, said underwater archaeologist Steve Koski, a board member of the Warm Mineral Springs group. “We’re not here to collect stuff. We’re here to understand people.”

Juli Craig Hilliard is a freelance writer who lives in Manatee County.
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Schools Delve Into History

Once neglected, Florida's Indian and Spanish-colonial cultures now get top billing in K-12 texts

By Jerald T. Milanich

My email regularly brings queries from students for information about pre-Columbian and colonial Florida. Their questions often stem from something they have read in one or another of the popular books my colleagues and I wrote in the mid-1990s: How did Indians store corn? What wood was used to make dugout canoes? Did Indians use cast nets?

The hunger for information has not gone unnoticed by Florida education officials or book publishers. The state's education department mandates that social studies courses emphasize Florida history in the fourth and eighth grades. Statewide standards require student understanding of "early Spanish settlements," "early Spanish missions" and "loss of Native American homelands." They are required to know "people and events related to the early exploration of Florida" and "significant events in the colonial period." They also are expected to know "aspects of the cultural, social and political features of Native American tribes in the history of Florida."

Educators in the state take this charge seriously, and classroom teachers work hard to find appropriate material they can pass on to their students. Some collaborated with archaeologists to prepare curricula and lesson plans. See, for example, web pages for E. Dale Joyner Nature Preserve at Pelotes Island, Florida, at pelotes.jea.com and the Florida Division of Historical Resources at dhr.dos.state.fl.us/bhp/fhp/.

Just how much archaeologists are influencing what is taught in Florida's schools hit home two years ago, when I began working with editors from Harcourt School Publishers to develop a Florida social-science text for fourth graders. I was pleasantly surprised to discover that they wanted to use the latest information on the Indians of Florida and Spanish colonization.

That information comes from popular books that recount the results of both pre-Columbian and historical archaeological investigations. In the 1990s, Kathleen Deagan and Darcie MacMahon, both colleagues at the Florida Museum of Natural History, collaborated on Fort Mose: Colonial America's Black Fortress of Freedom; and Robin C. Brown, an author and avocational archaeologist, wrote a beautifully produced book: Florida's First People. My word processor and I wrote Florida Indians from Ancient Times to the Present, along with books on the Timucua Indians and the Spanish missions. Other archaeologists contributed books about the Apalachee and Seminole Indians and on the archaeology of South Florida.

In March of this year, when I received a copy of the Harcourt textbook on which I had worked, I sat down and read chapters two through four. "The Earliest Floridians" is followed by "Exploration and Early Settlement" and "Colonial Florida." Changing climatic conditions at the end of the Ice Age are there along with the state's first inhabitants, the Paleoindians. Windover, the famed Early Archaic period peat bog site with preserved 7,000-year-old human tissue near Cocoa, is also covered, as are shell middens, Timucua Indians and native chiefs. This was the first K-12 textbook that incorporated information on many Florida Indians, especially groups in South and Central Florida. Centuries before the Seminoles, there were the Tocobaga, Utina, Jororo and Matecumbe Indians, as well as the Calusa and Tequesta. The Spanish missions, many of which I excavated in the 1990s, also received their due.
Textbook writing has convinced me that archaeology has gone from being an insular discipline appealing to a small but ardent group of supporters to being mainstream.

During my own public school years (1950-1963) in Orlando, nobody even talked about the Spanish period in the Southeast. On the classroom wall, there would be a giant map showing important colonial locations, and the whole southern part of the United States would be blank! Pre-Columbian inhabitants of the state and the Spanish missions merited but a few sentences.

Twenty-four years later, my daughter would read of De Soto the Conquistador but little of the fact that for some 300 years Spain made a major effort to settle, conquer and hold the Southeast. In some texts, there was more about the horses the Spaniards brought to America than about the Spaniards who brought them.

But times have changed and archaeologists have awakened. Textbook writing has convinced me that archaeology has gone from being an insular discipline appealing to a small but ardent group of supporters to being mainstream.

Teachers, publishers and archaeologists all are working successfully to bring the past to the present by incorporating information gleaned from archaeology into school coursework.

Florida's experience is not unique. The Society for American Archaeology, an organization that has lobbied hard for curricular reform, reports a growing awareness among educators nationwide of the need to incorporate such information in the standard curricula. Knowing about our Native American heritage is now as important as being able to name the U.S. presidents.

I’ll bet when King Juan Carlos and Queen Sophia of Spain walked through the streets of St. Augustine last April, the students lining their route knew a lot more about their colonial city and the Spanish colonization of Florida than they would have a decade and a half ago. Imagine the questions they’ll be emailing next year.

JERALD T. MILANICH is Curator of Archaeology at the Florida Museum of Natural History. This is an excerpt from an article in the July-August, 2001, issue of Archaeology magazine.
Maximum Insight
By Bill Maxwell.

Reviewed by Robert Dardenne

If there’s one thing guaranteed to be more provocative, entertaining and just generally impressive than a column by Bill Maxwell, it’s this book: a collection of the twice-weekly columns he writes for the St. Petersburg Times.

Cutting through the bull, something Maxwell practices on every page, the book is personal, eclectic, emotional, intelligent, but most of all, honest.

The 55-year-old columnist writes extensively about his native state of Florida, but his themes, issues and subjects—race, education, sports, AIDS, travel, children, migrant workers, development, environment, nature, politics, justice, manners and more—are often universal. He’s about the most non-local, local writer you’ll ever read, which might explain why his columns are syndicated in 200 newspapers worldwide.

The columns not only reflect his reading of contemporary and classical writings, but also his travels through the city and around the state and the world. Not all of them are personal, but they reflect insight gained through his childhood as part of a family of migrant workers, his struggle to educate himself, his university experiences as student and professor, his work as a journalist, and, most of all, his ability to communicate his life and experiences as a black man in a white world.

It’s not predictable communication. Maxwell would never make it in traditional India, because the cow wouldn’t stand a chance. Nothing much is sacred. That’s one thing that makes his columns and, therefore, this book, uncommon. For example, here are arguments he makes in some of his columns on race:

- One reason Colin Powell, who has become "an honorary white person," is so popular with whites is because he has light skin and came out of a Jamaican immigrant family rather than the Mississippi Delta. Liberals can feel good about supporting a black man and bigots can point to him as an example of what all black men should be. White people accept light-skinned blacks more readily than those with dark skins.
- The word “nigger” should remain in the dictionary. Even though it is the worst of the many dehumanizing racial slurs, it has a legitimate and telling history.
- St. Petersburg authorities ought not apologize to an African-American dissident who was arrested, tried, convicted and imprisoned 30 years ago for tearing down a racially offensive mural at city hall.
- To many of these and other columns about members of his own race, many white readers shout “Bravo!” “That Bill Maxwell,” they say. “He knows what’s what and he tells it like it is.” Then they read:
  - Not “a single living soul” in the United States has gotten beyond race and class. The United States is defined by race and is mired in racism.
  - Just because some white people share some problems with black people doesn’t mean that black people’s problems aren’t defined by race. They are. The situation black people face every day and the situation white people never face is that black people’s skins are black and that black skin shapes who they are and how they are seen by whites.
  - Denying the effects of slavery is another way of forgetting. And no one should ever forget, because to forget dooms people forever to social and racial problems.

Of a letter writer, Maxwell writes: “He loves me to tell blacks to take responsibility, but he hates for me to remind whites that white racism still exists.”

Seeking and telling truth, Maxwell says, requires the courage to be condemned by readers. And he often is. This throwing people off is what makes Maxwell’s columns and his book so valuable. Most people can’t seem to get comfortable with him. Just when you start to settle in and relax a little, he pours a cupful of vinegar into your morning coffee. He performs, in other words, exactly as a good columnist should. He’s a thorn in the side of contentment, and he doesn’t much care whose contentment gets pierced.

Born and reared in the South, he discusses whether as a black man he can be a “Southern,” but he never questions the meaning of being black. His blackness, he says, is more than a reflection of his soul; it is his soul.

Yet, while his writings interpret the world through the perspective of a black man, they do more than that. He shares some of his own and Florida’s history, including both the joys and sorrows of growing up in the 1940s and 1950s in rural Florida. He revels in the state’s natural bounty by sharing impressions he has while paddling his yellow kayak; he advocates for better conditions for farm workers and at the same time provides us with glimpses of their lives; and he often chastises the powers-that-be for what singer Joni Mitchell called “paving paradise.”

In all, this book will be unpopular with those who have rigid ideas about the way things are or about the way things ought to be. It may not be a book you can sit back and enjoy with a cup of coffee.

ROBERT DARDEENNE is an associate professor of mass communications at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg.
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