

News and Noteworthy ...

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Grace, Barbara Hill, Elizabeth Jordan, Robert Rigaux, Roxie Smith, Lucille Sphuler, and Dr. Irvin Winsboro. The committee is chaired by Fran Myers.

The Estero Island Site Peaks Local Interest

FGCU archaeologists and The Mound House co-directors, Corbett Torrence and Theresa Schober have integrated The Mound House with community organizations by hosting special tours on the property and giving evening presentations on the results of last year's archaeology excavations.

To date, the directors have made presentations to the Estero Historical Society, Estero Island Historic Society, J. N. Ding Darling, Lee County Science Teachers, Manatee Park, Riverwoods Yacht Club, the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Organization, and Southwest Florida Archaeological Society. In addition, Corbett Torrence represented The Mound House in a syndicated education program at MOTE Marine's field station at Pineland. This program, sponsored by the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program (CHNEP), was filmed live and reached over 100,000 school children. Corbett discussed the importance of estuaries to Native American inhabitants of southwest Florida.

Archaeology Volunteers Reunited at Director's Talk

Prior to the February 19th presentation by the Directors to the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society, a reception was held for the volunteers that contributed to the 2002 archaeology project. A total of 115 visitors and residents contributed during the excavations. During the reception, a series of images from the excavations were projected on a large screen and experimental archaeology



Photo by Christina Gerwitz

Vice-mayor Terry Cain (left) shares memories of the excavations with CELCAB member Helen Caldwell (center) and archaeology volunteer Kelly Leary (right).

projects by FGCU students including a Calusa dip-net and carving of the Calusa cat uncovered at Key Marco were exhibited. Members of CELCAB and the Town Council and Staff were invited. The reception was hosted by the Cultural Resource Management Program at FGCU with assistance from the university Foundation.



Photo by Jim Sernovitz



Photo by Jim Sernovitz

Carved bone fish effigy and Russian blue bead recovered from the 2002 excavations representing the Calusa and Cuban fisherfolk time periods. Photos by Jim Sernovitz.

Group walks through "Window to the Past"

CELCAB members and volunteers toured the exhibits at Historic Spanish Point in Osprey, Florida. At Spanish Point, visitors can walk into a Calusa shell mound that dates to the same

time period as the deposits at The Mound House. CELCAB and the Town has contemplated making a similar exhibit where the swimming pool is now.

Where is She Now?

Many of you came to know Rebecca Harris during her tenure as Director of The Mound House from her archaeological programs at the Beach school, special tours during the 2002 excavations, or through her extensive historical research in the area. Although Rebecca is now working as an archaeologist for the United States Forest Service at the Ouachita National Forest and serving as the zone archeologist for the Caddo/Womble Ranger Districts, she keeps in touch with The Mound House. On top of her job at the Forest Service, Rebecca teaches General Anthropology at Garland County Community College located in Hot Springs National Park where she and her husband Todd Ogle live. Rebecca continues to work on her Ph.D. dissertation, a study of prehistoric life in the northern part of the Ouachita Mountains. We wish her all the best.

Continued from Page 1 Site Maintenance & Development

This ceiling area has been left exposed for visitors to see.

✓ In February, the house was fumigated for dry wood termites by Orkin® Pest Control. We have entered into a 5-year service agreement to check for and treat any re-infestation.

If you have not been lately, come see what's happening at
The Mound House
289 Connecticut Street
765-0865
MoundHouse@fmbeach.org

The Mound House

Volume 1 Number 1 Spring 2003

Happenings



The Mound House announces community logo contest

The Mound House announces a contest to design a new and exciting logo for our facility. The Mound House is a cultural museum and environmental learning center that presents 2,000 years of history on Estero Island to the public through tours, educational programs, and



research opportunities such as volunteering in our archaeology lab. Purchased by the Town of Fort Myers Beach with Florida Communities Trust grant funds, The Mound House mission is to inform and educate Florida residents and visitors about Florida prehistory, the Calusa Indians, early pioneer settlement, and life on Estero Island as it relates to the William H. Case House. In addition, our aim is to teach people about the sensitive marine/estuarine environment upon which past cultures and present inhabitants of south Florida have always depended.

The Mound House encourages any individual and/or group to submit a logo design that incorporates the major elements of our mission statement. We view history as a dynamic process that

encompasses many aspects of life on Fort Myers Beach and the relationship of local events to broader regional and global contexts.

Call us at 765-0865 or e-mail MoundHouse@fmbeach.org for more information.

Competition Rules:

1. Your design must include the name "The Mound House."
2. Your design must incorporate all major elements of our mission statement.
3. Your design can be rendered in color (up to 4), but should also be suitable for a monochrome version.
4. Your design should not have been used previously in public.

✖ Entries can be submitted in hard copy on a single letter size sheet of paper (please do not fold) or as a BMP, JPG, or TIFF file with a resolution of at least 300dpi. If sending your entry via e-mail, please limit the volume of the attached file to under 1.5MB.

✖ Please include your full name, mailing address, telephone number and email address with your entry

✖ Entries will not be returned.

✖ Copyright of the winning entry will belong to The Town of Fort Myers Beach and The Mound House.

✖ The selected design may be reworked by professional designers to prepare it for use.

✖ Deadline for entries is May 15, 2003.

Site Maintenance & Development

✓ 635 people have visited us for tours and programs this season!

✓ The site's dock was refurbished in January and is now available for fishing! A railing for the dock will be installed soon.

✓ The Mound House is a noted site on Lee Island's Coast's Great Calusa Blueway Kayak Trail. To facilitate kayak access, we are planning a small landing on the northern edge of the property. Construction of the landing area will involve rearranging riprap and sloping the fill area towards the bay. We are currently investigating permitting and grant fund options.

✓ The Mound House welcomes Audré Inglis and the Treasures of the Sea Program on Tuesdays for a mini-tour that focuses on how the past inhabitants of the island utilized the local environment.

✓ The house's electricity will be upgraded to allow for evening programming and to support the installation of new equipment for a lecture series. The site has contracted with Anchor Engineering to design specs for this upgrade. Anchor is consulting with architect Bob Sanford of Ferrell Sanford Studios Inc. to ensure the electrical installation is consistent with the historical preservation of the structure.

✓ Removal of water damaged cardboard ceiling tiles in the first-floor Florida Room uncovered the ca. 1906 roofline of the small Tudor structure built by William and Milia Case. Although the roof line was later lowered to facilitate upstairs bedroom windows, some of the rafters and trusses are original wood and are hand-hewn.

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Dolores Yost - five years and counting!

By Amber Wynn

Dolores Yost has been volunteering her time at The Mound House since the Town of Fort Myers Beach first leased the property from the estate of Florence Long. Like many of her neighbors, Dolores felt the Mound House should be preserved and turned into a museum. In 1998, a grant from Florida Communities Trust provided sufficient funds and The Mound House became the property of the people of Fort Myers Beach. For Dolores the chance to contribute to the Mound House becoming a learning center where the community and visitors could explore the site and the island's long history was very rewarding.

Dolores has lived on Fort Myers Beach since 1985 and knew the previous owner of The Mound House, Florence Long, who



Dolores Yost enthusiastically guides guests of the Mound House.

purchased the house with her husband in 1951. Dolores used to enjoy watching eagles, swimming, and visiting with Mrs. Long when it was her home. Today, Dolores knows well the history of the site, which spans over two thousand years, and she spends two days a week giving energetic tours to visitors. "I like meeting people and I volunteer

because it is fun for me," she says when asked about working at the site.

Through her five years at The Mound House Dolores has witnessed many changes and the constant effort to make the home something the public can utilize and enjoy. "I see the improvements and the way the goals for the site are being met and I like the changes," she says of the site. Dolores is glad to see the site become an educational center that emphasizes the presence of the Calusa Indians as well as the unique home that sits upon it. Although there are many activities for volunteers to engage in at The Mound House, Dolores enjoys giving tours and says, "I will help here for as long as I continue to have so much fun."

Volunteering at The Mound House

By Theresa Schober

The Mound House is a community treasure that welcomes everyone who would like to participate in our activities. Currently, volunteers conduct tours, help with special events, provide clerical support, assist in the upkeep of the house and grounds, work in the archaeology laboratory, and help with exhibit production. Tour guides are trained in the history of the house, Estero Island, and the Calusa Indians at information sessions on Fridays at 10.

background information and to gain familiarity with other area resources. The Mound House has taken the lead on training in archaeology, the indigenous people of southwest Florida, and the environment on which they relied. To date, volunteers from J. N. Ding Darling, Manatee Park, and the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Organization have visited The Mound House. The Sanibel Historic Village and Koreshan State Park have also expressed interest in the network.



Volunteers from Manatee Park explore a tray of shells and fish bones with Corbett Torrence.

Volunteer Training Exchange

The Mound House has initiated a community network of historical and environmental facilities whose missions to educate and engage the public are supported by volunteers. As part of the network, each organization provides training workshops for other facilities' volunteers free of charge. The goal is for volunteers to gain accurate

The Directors want to extend our sincere appreciation to the 38 volunteers that have and are contributing to The Mound House programs this season. This facility belongs to the residents of Fort Myers Beach and we are proud to have you participate. Thank you Warren Babcock; A.J. Bassett; Lowell & B.J. Bingham; Judy Bousquet; Jenn Brown; Ann Compton; Doris Cook; Barbara, Andrea, & Kira Dobbs; Trudi Edelman; Alisha Fisher; Steve Graebner; Bill & Darlene Hartley; Audré Inglis; John & Sharon Inskip; Bets Jordan; Winfield King; Joanne Kuypers; Kelly Leary; Lora Barbara Lemmon; Pat Mabury; Cindy Mestas; Peter Patchin; Tylar Samuels; Mary Ann Scott; Bridget Shaidnagle; Betty Smith; Lucille Sphuler; Donna Varneke; Brooke Wamsley; Tom Winter; Marianne Worden; Dolores & Roy Yost.

From the Directors

This past year at The Mound House has been productive and enlightening. Since taking over directorship of the facility last June, we have focused our energies on developing educational programs and a solid volunteer base. This inaugural newsletter, which will be appearing biannually, highlights many of the programs and activities currently taking place at the house and the many people who make it possible.

This type of programming is just one aspect of our role at the house. We have also been working with the advisory board and the Town of Fort Myers Beach to make an attainable long-term plan for maintenance, renovations, and exhibits that draw on the site's significant archaeological, historical, and ecological assets.

If you have any questions about the house or our programs, please drop by or give us a call. We look forward to meeting you.



Co-Directors Corbett Torrence and Theresa Schober.

The Mound House Happenings

EDITORS: Theresa Schober & Trudi Edelman

CONTRIBUTORS: Regan McBride, Theresa

Schober, Corbett Torrence, Amber Wynn

News and Noteworthy ...

The Mound House

Welcomes New Interns

The Mound House and Florida Gulf Coast University have teamed up to create unique internships that meet the interests and needs of a variety of students. Diane Wakeman completed the first internship at The Mound House in December after she worked for five months in helping develop a volunteer training packet, organizing visitation records, and giving tours of the site.

This semester three more students are benefitting from The Mound House's new internship program by using their skills to gain first-hand work experience. Natalie Doyle, a Communications major, is helping to develop a marketing plan for The Mound House; Amber Wynn, an English major, acts as a correspondent to the local newspapers on behalf of the site; and Regan McBride, an Anthropology major, gives tours of the site to visitors, helps supervise the living archaeology lab, and has organized our 'Survivor Calusa' kids camp in conjunction with the State of Florida's Archaeology Awareness Month.



Interns Amber Wynn (left) and Natalie Doyle (right) assist Susan Fohs, Administrative Assistant at FGCU, during a recent event.

The Mound House Joins "Trail of the Lost Tribes"

The Mound House has been accepted as a member of the "Trail of the Lost Tribes". The Trail is a not for profit network of organizations, historical sites, and museums that share a commitment to promoting awareness, responsible visitation, and preservation of the remaining cultural sites of the Florida Gulf Coast.

Each spring, the Trail offers a free archaeology speaker series to educate

the public about indigenous populations of southwest Florida and archaeology. The current program includes presentations at Crystal River Archaeological State Park, Historic Spanish Point, Weeden Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center, the Pineland Site, and DeSoto National Memorial. The Mound House may be selected to offer a speaker series event in 2004 that will involve lectures at the house and other family activities at the site.

CELCAB Welcomes A New Board Member

CELCAB, the Cultural and Environmental Learning Center Advisory Board, welcomes Ted Reckwerdt to the board! Ted brings a wealth of local historical knowledge and personal experience with The Mound House to the board.

CELCAB is comprised of 12 community members that advise the Directors and Town Council in the management and promotion of cultural, historical, and environmental aspects of The Mound House. CELCAB members include Penny Brown, Vice-mayor Terry Cain, Helen Caldwell, Bill

The Many Masks of The Mound House

Peeling back layers of time

By Amber Wynn

The Mound House, portions of which date back to 1906, contains numerous clues of its long history that rest masked behind its modern ceilings, wall panels, paint, and rugs. Through careful exploration of the house's structure and archaeological clues in the shell mound beneath it, new historical information about the site is slowly being exposed. Unveiling the masks reveals old faces of the lives and times of past residents of the house.

Constructing a complete and accurate history of The Mound House has been the central focus of directors, Theresa Schober and Corbett Torrence, and their dedicated volunteers and interns. This group has developed new tours, programs and activities and a greater number of people than ever are visiting and enjoying the site and its history.

A plan to upgrade the electrical system has offered new insight into the history of the home. Like a disguise being pulled away, damaged cardboard ceiling tiles were carefully removed to reveal a hidden beadboard ceiling beneath. This beadboard, a popular decorative material in the early 1900s, offers a view into the past condition and appearance of the home. Through the efforts of volunteers, the remainder of the cardboard tiles will be removed to restore the ceiling to its former condition.

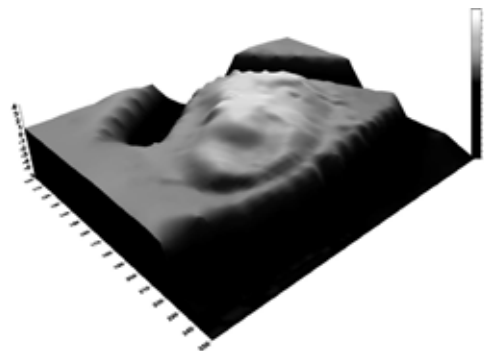
Bob Sanford, an architect that has worked with many historic buildings, has helped to reveal structural changes the house has undergone through its ninety years as a private-residence. Parts of the 1906 Tudor-style cottage are still visible today and a close look at the aged rafters has revealed the original dimensions of the structure. The roof of the home once angled up steeply, supported by hand-hewn rafters, which may have



A brick bungalow was added to the Tudor cottage ca. 1909. Photo courtesy of Bill Grace.

been milled at the Koreshan mill that once operated on the south end of the island. This original high peaked roof, viewable in photos taken at the time, was altered to provide for second story windows.

The house itself is not the only structure at the site that still has secrets to be revealed. Excavations and topographic mapping of the shell mound have revealed the past dimensions and great size of the mound. Research with aerial photographs taken in 1944, 1953, and 1958 has determined the mound, now roughly 2.77 acres, was once the southern portion of an undulating shell ridge that extended almost one-half of a mile along Estero Bay. Much of this ridge area was bulldozed away and used or sold as fill by the owner, William Long, in the 1950s. This unfortunate alteration to the mound has



Tudor cottage ca. 1906. Photo courtesy of Bill Grace.

prevented a well-rounded understanding of the mound's function and structure. However, excavations have offered some insight into the lives of the Calusa that lived atop the mound and those that later used the outskirts of the mound for fishing purposes. Further excavations are being planned in the next few years and these digs may reveal the historical and archaeological secrets the site has kept so well hidden for over 1,400 years.

Vertically exaggerated computer generated 3-D image of the Estero Island Site today, showing a single mound area with canals on two sides and Estero Bay on a third.

Exhibiting the Past

Revealing the Life and Times of the First Floridians

By Corbett Torrence

Plans for a Calusa exhibit are underway at The Mound House! In November, the Cultural and Environmental Learning Center Advisory Board (CELCAB) approved the Director's request to explore the transformation of one upstairs bedroom into a Calusa exhibit space and we are currently in the design phase.

The design of the Calusa room and subsequent exhibits will reflect the current house tour theme: *A Walk Through Time*. The fact that this small, 2.77-acre parcel has witnessed and can evidence every major historic period over the last two thousands years in Florida, is remarkable. At The Mound House visitors pass from one room to another experiencing a virtual walk through time, as each room will eventually depict a particular time period. The first floor is already used in this fashion as the tours guide one through the house's architectural history and relate local happenings with broader regional and historical events.



Drawing by Merald Clark

The Calusa room will have exhibits and displays depicting major cultural periods in Florida before the founding of the United States. These include the Paleo Period (ca. 10,000 to 7500 B.C.), the Archaic Period (ca. 7500-1000 B.C.), the Formative Period (ca. 1000 B.C.-A.D. 1500), and the Contact Period (ca. A.D. 1500-1700s).



Potentially, the exhibit may also have a panorama of Calusa engaged in daily life.



Volunteer Betty Smith (left) and FGCU Student Intern Regan McBride (right) refit pieces of a vessel recovered at The Mound House in 2002.

For each time period, panels and cases with maps, diagrams, models, artifacts, and explanatory text will describe the life of Florida's first peoples. What were the politics and social rules of village life? What kinds of structures did they build? What did they eat and what were their tools like? What did they believe? How did changes in Florida's environment effect these ways of life? What were the cultural and environmental factors that stimulated the cultural changes that occurred over this 12,000 year history?

In preparation for the exhibits, many of The Mound House's volunteers are actively involved in our archaeology lab on Tuesdays and

Saturdays where they are reconstructing a nearly complete Calusa pot from hundreds of sherds (broken pottery fragments) recovered from our excavation of the site last spring.

At the same time, on The Mound House grounds overlooking Estero Bay, other volunteers have been twining yards of cord made from natural fibers they have collected from the sabal palm. Their goal is to reconstruct a Calusa net and affix the nearly 200 net-weights recovered from a single excavation test unit near the shore last spring to the base of the net. Both the net and the reconstructed bowl will be displayed in the Calusa room.

Archaeological and Historical Tours of The Mound House are offered every Wednesday and Saturday between 10 and 2. The Archaeology Laboratory is open on Tuesdays from 10 to 2 and Saturdays from 11 to 3. Cordage Workshops are held every Saturday at 10.

Experience The Past!



Join us in making cord for a Calusa fishing net at the Saturday workshops. From left to right: Co-Director Corbett Torrence, FGCU Intern Regan McBride, and volunteers Ben Johnson and Trudi Edelman.

Special Events at The Mound House

Open House Features Old-Time Holiday

In December The Mound House, beautifully decorated for the season, held two holiday open houses for the community. The old-time theme of the evenings was introduced to visitors as they approached the home to see restored vehicles from the early 1900s gracing the front lawn. The open houses featured the play "Sentimental Journey", written and performed by Patricia Clopton and John Brothers. The play, set in the 1940s, was reminiscent of old radio talk shows. On exhibit were experimental archaeology projects of FGCU students and paintings of the house by the The Fort Myers Beach Art Association. A work displayed by Joan Handel went on to win first place at the winter juried art show. The evenings were made even more enjoyable by the smell of Lucille Sphuler's fresh baked cookies coming from the oven and, on one night, the sound of chamber music played by musicians from Cypress Lake School for the Arts. These enchanted evenings turned The Mound House into a warm and cheerful center for socializing among the community.

Decorations and decorators were graciously provided by the Estero Island Historic Society, Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce and Chamber Foundation, the Fort Myers Beach Lions Club, and the Fort Myers Beach Chapter of the Pilot Club. Cypress Lake School of the Arts and music director David Eccles helped to coordinate musicians Nicole Wendl, Paul Engler, and Tim Foley. We extend a special thank you to Roger Barnes for displaying his Model A and Model T Ford trucks on December 14th and for coordinating a display of other local period vehicles on December 18th.



Photo by Roy Yost

Period vehicles add to the historic ambience.



Photo by Roy Yost

John Brothers and Patricia Clopton portray Albert and Abby in 'Sentimental Journey'.



Photo by Roy Yost

Nicole Wendl, Paul Engler, and Tim Foley (left to right) make beautiful music.



Photo by Roy Yost

Lucille Sphuler and Fran Myers display their decorating handiwork. Both women are members of the CELC advisory board.



Adventures in Space

On February 15th FGCU astronomy professor Michael Fauerbach conducted an exciting program that included a naked-eye tour of constellations and planets visible in the evening sky and telescopic views of Jupiter, the moon, and the M42 nebula. A second astronomy program will be offered on April 12th beginning at 7:15 p.m. when Mercury will be viewable by naked eye at twilight and the International Space Station will pass into view for approximately three minutes.

Solstice and Equinox Kayak Trips to Mound Key

In the spirit of the Calusa, a people whose lives were in tune with the seasons, The Mound House and GAEA Guides hosted kayak trips to celebrate the winter solstice and the vernal (spring) equinox. The solstice is marked by the sun reaching its most southern point on the horizon, making the day the shortest of the year. The equinox occurs when day and night are equal in length.

In the year 1567, a Jesuit priest by the name of Juan Rogel wrote a letter from his mission on Mound Key noting that the Calusa recognized three chiefs, the most important of which controlled the movements of the stars, heavens, and other universal things. We can infer that major celestial events such as winter and summer solstice and the vernal and autumnal equinox would have been important events for the Calusa.

Tribes to the north who were in contact with the Calusa are known to have constructed mounds for sun worship and it is likely that the Calusa did also. Calusa cosmology may have incorporated such concepts as a female underworld symbolized by darkness (shadow) and a male upper world symbolized by light (reflection).

Certainly, the most productive times of the year would have been when the forces of light and dark, and female and male, were in balance such as when days and nights are of near equal length during the spring and fall. Thus controlling the movement of the



View of Estero Bay from the newly reconstructed dock.

sun on the horizon through worship, may have been an important aspect of Calusa ceremony. In this view, the solstices represent a symbolic saving of the world. If the sun continues in one direction, days would perpetually lengthen or shorten and the Earth would fall into complete darkness or lightness. The balance of the world would be thrown off. Our own symbols of the holidays such as evergreen trees, holly, and mistle-toe represent the existence of life in an otherwise dark and dead world.

While our culture mediates the seasons with temperature-controlled housing or trade and food preservation to offset the seasonality of fruits and vegetables, it was only a few hundred years ago that peoples lives throughout the world were in concert with the changing seasons.



The month of March is marked by the return of warm sunny days as well as a return of the past as the state celebrates Florida Archaeology Month. Each year in March archaeological sites and foundations host activities all over the state that engage and teach the public about Florida's amazing and unique history.

This year The Mound House is honoring its archaeological ties to the Calusa with a series of Saturday camps for children aged 7 to 12. The camp is designed to teach kids about the site's history and the Calusa through hands-on activities and exploratory learning projects including making clay pots, jewelry, and masks like the Calusa Indians did for thousands of years.

Camp-goers will learn how to harvest golden fibers from cabbage palm to make nets and cord and use tree-sap to create natural dyes. These activities centering around local estuaries, native plants, and natural resources will shed light on the Calusa's relationship to the Southwest Florida environment. The final camp includes a Calusa feast to be prepared for parents!

The camps are held from 10 to 4 on Saturdays from March 8th to April 5th.