

Time Sifters

November 2014



A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society

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NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, November 19, 2014, 6:00 PM

Selby Library, Downtown Sarasota

Hermann Trappman

A Different Point of View



The Caciqua Antonia © Neily Trappman Studio. All rights Reserved.

For the original inhabitants, living along Florida's West Coast, this was paradise. Forests were populated with deer, turkey, and quail. The bays and bayous were filled with shellfish, crabs, and fish. Mullet and mackerel flooded the coastal zones annually. Ducks and geese flew in by the millions, over wintering.

Groves of slash pine provided fabulous building material. Sabal palms provided thatching for roofs. Mulberry, oak, ironwood, and hickory provided handles, tools, and hunting equipment. Sparkling freshwater seeped up in springs and flowed along rivers and creeks.

When the Spanish came, they only saw a wasteland. It had no gold. The Spanish and the other Europeans had the arrogance of self-pride. They measured their wealth in gold and the power that fear could bring.

In 1566 there was a meeting between Pedro Menendez de Aviles and Carlos, the Honored Man of the Calusa. Gonzalo Solis de Meras gives us the Spanish point of view. Is there another perspective? Hermann Trappman will offer an artists point of view of the Calusa and the Tocobaga.

Having attended the Florida Anthropological Society annual meetings for over 30 years and working as an interpretative park ranger for 28 years, Hermann Trappman has devoted his adult life to the study of Florida's first natives. His artwork is based on hands-on experience - making and reconstructing the tools and weapons, researching the scientific data related to early geological and historical records, and years of meticulous study. Hermann's goal is to build our understanding of America's past and, in particular, Florida's original natives and their unique and distinct culture from the beginning. Read more about Hermann Trappman on page 3.



Elizabeth Neily and Hermann Trappman use art and living history to share their passion for Florida, its natural environs, its native people, and its long and twisting history. Together they create exhibitions, books, lectures, and videos and collaborate with musicians, storytellers, historians, archaeologists, paleontologists, environmentalists and museums to bring Florida's story to life.

Notes from a Time Sifter



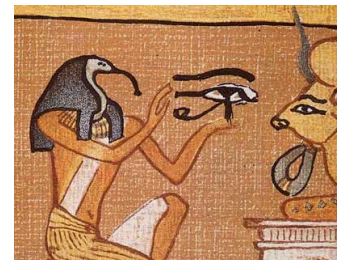
The harvest has been celebrated since the Agricultural Revolution about 10,000 years ago; after that came the “dead” period between the harvest and the time to replant. It was the time of long nights that gave evil spirits more time to lurk in the dark, unseen by the living but available to be blamed for any mischief or bad luck. Lilith, the strangler of babies (Talmud) waited in the dark to make you sick. Babylonian Shutu and Pazuzu could frighten you to death. This belief in evil spirits lurking to harm the living probably dates back to the beginning of human consciousness, but substantial written and archaeological evidence comes from the Sumerians from about 3000 B.C.E. when some of those evil spirits were believed to be ancestors. Ancient Sumerians often buried their dead family members under the floor of the house (Roux, Ancient Iraq) so graves were understood to be dark, dusty places. These are described well in the Epic of Gilgamesh when Enkidu tells what existence was like for the dead in the underworld, “dirt is their drink, their food is of clay” (Tablet 7.179), and so ancestral spirits demanded offerings to keep them content in this unhappy place.



These beliefs continued through time. Many cultures made special offerings to placate angry ancestral spirits, and historians believe that these were the origins of the tradition of Halloween. Some historians trace Halloween back to the Roman festival Parentalia, a day to honor your dead parents by placing wine and milk at their graves (histmyst.org/festivals.html). The pagan Celts appeased the angry spirits after the harvest festivals that took place at the end of October (halloweenhistory.org). Many historians believe our American celebration of Halloween began with Irish immigrants who brought the Celtic tradition with them, but the tradition is universal, and the root words for the holy evening before the spirits began to prowl are of Old English Christian origin: all hallows’ eve, hallow evening, halloe’ en.

The belief in pacifying spirits is still practiced all over the world. Modern Mexicans celebrate Dia de Muertos, a tradition that dates back to pre-Columbian Aztec rituals symbolizing death and rebirth. In Peru, the Incas still celebrate Ayamarca when food is offered to the dead, Hindus of India honor their dead in a ceremony called Pitru Paksha, a sixteen day period of food offerings to the ancestors, and the Chinese Buddhists have a festival called “Hungry Ghost” to make sure that ancestors are not neglected; all trying to keep the nasty spirits from harming the living.

If the spirits were kept friendly, they could do favors for you, like cause problems for your adversaries. Hammurabi prayed that kings of the world who did not heed his words would have “their kingdoms overthrown, their people scattered, and their very existence forgotten” (“Hammurabi’s Code,” Dr. Stan Rummel, trans.). The Egyptians wrote curses on potsherds and threw them down a well where the spirits could find them (The Execration Texts). Usually, curses were just to make trouble for your enemies, like making their cattle infertile or inflicting some malady. The Israelites cursed the Philistines with boils (or hemorrhoids, depending on the translation) when they captured the Ark of the Covenant (1 Sam). The only thing your enemies could do was hope that their spirits were pacified and stronger than yours. If offerings didn’t pacify the spirits, talismans or amulets might protect you. Hopefully, this year your Halloween offerings (treats) were enough to keep the ghosts and goblins from doing mischief (tricks). If not, get an Eye of Ra, a Hamsa, or a trusty old rabbit’s foot.



On the Time Sifters website this week:
Archaeology helps recover the lives of children in Roman Egypt

OUR WEBMASTER POSTS THE MOST INTERESTING ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS FROM
AROUND THE WORLD

"It's like putting together a jigsaw puzzle. By examining papyri, pottery fragments with writing on, toys and other objects, we are trying to form a picture of how children lived in Roman Egypt," explains social historian and historian of ideas Ville Vuolanto, University of Oslo. What she and Dr April Pudsey of the University of Newcastle have found is evidence from Roman Egypt that shows that 14-year-old boys were enrolled in a youth organization in order to learn to be good citizens.

The research is part of the University of Oslo project 'Tiny Voices from the Past: New Perspectives on Childhood in Early Europe'. The documentary evidence comes from 7,500 ancient documents written on papyrus that originate from Oxyrhynchos in Egypt, which in the first five hundred years CE was a large town of more than 25,000 inhabitants. Oxyrhynchos had Egypt's most important weaving industry, and was also the Roman administrative centre for the area. Researchers possess a great deal of documentation precisely from this area because archaeologists digging one hundred years ago discovered thousands of papyri in what had once been the town's rubbish dumps.

Link to the full story here: www.timesifters.org

Hermann Trappman - continued

Born in Rochester, New York, to a German immigrant family - he moved to St. Petersburg, Florida when he was eight years old. Curiosity and a taste for discovery naturally evolved into an fascination with nature and the world around him. Growing up in the Tampa Bay area and exploring the once-pristine landscape, finding unusual fossils and shell mounds that are so common in this area naturally led into a deep curiosity of his new home's past and about the people who once lived and thrived here.

As a self-taught artist, Hermann was naturally drawn to the old masters by their drama and their wonderful ability to tell a story. Over time he became attracted to artists who painted or sculpted stories with hidden or multiple meanings. In the late 1960's, he was fortunate to be able to study under and learn from the insights and experiences of artist New York-trained artist Henry Fink. In 1978, he traveled to Germany to visit family, and had the great fortune to study in the House of Art (House de Kunst) in Munich.

"I believe that I have discovered a genuine Native American high culture here in Florida, a society which rivaled the Maya of Central America or the Inca of Peru," he explains. "The west coast of Florida and Tampa Bay was one of the world's most plentiful estuaries at the time of discovery. The Native People would never have known hunger. Freshwater filled local ponds and streams. Generous forests grew into good building materials. The remains of Mound Key and the artifacts hauled out of Key Marco, by Frank Hamilton Cushing, are evidence of something far greater than our present interpretation of the Calusa and by inference, the Tocobaga. I feel that our Native People were a complex culture based on wonderful wood construction."

Through his art, he attempts to reconstruct some aspects of Native American life and culture, what it might have been like, and more importantly - what lessons might be learned from it. He was awarded two Individual Artist Grants from Pinellas County Cultural Affairs Department. He was commissioned to do the artwork for the DeSoto National Memorial in Bradenton, who also arranged a show and book signing at the South Florida Museum. His work can currently be seen in the traveling exhibit, ArtCalusa, currently at the Captiva Community Center through December 13. For more information about Hermann's work, visit www.floridafrontier.com.



2014 - 2015 MEETING CALENDAR

October 15, 6pm: Dr. John Kantner, *Chaco Canyon: From the Outside Looking In*

November 19, 6pm: Hermann Trappman, *A Different Point of View*

December 10, Holiday Party at the home of Marion Almy

January 21, 6pm: Darwin "Smitty" Smith, *The Archaeological Year in Review*

February 18, 6pm: Dr. David Overstreet, *Northern Limits of Maize Cultivation as Evidenced from Menominee Indian Reservation Remains*

March 18, 6pm: Dr. Birgitta Wallace, *Vikings in North America*

April 15, 6pm: Student grant winners

May 20, 6pm: Dr. Gabrielle Vail

May 28-31: Florida Anthropological Society Conference, hosted by Time Sifters
Meetings are at Selby Library: downtown Sarasota, Central Ave and 2nd Street

FAS CONFERENCE PREVIEW

Time Sifters is excited to announce that our Banquet speaker for FAS 2015 will be Dr. Jerald Milanich. In 1969, Milanich (still in his doctoral program) led the excavation of the Yellow Bluffs Mound in Sarasota so it is fitting that he return here to talk about his 50 years in Florida archaeology. For our Friday night reception, New College and the New College Public Archaeology Lab have graciously agreed to host us so we will be enjoying our drinks and hors d'oeuvres on the exquisite Sarasota bay front. Field trips will include archaeology-focused guided tours of Historic Spanish Point, Gamble Plantation, Pine Level, and an underwater tour - a dive on the wreck Narcissus.

For more information about Time Sifters, email ssvekis@gmail.com

Membership

Individual:	\$20
Family:	\$30
Sustaining:	\$50
Student:	\$10

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