



JANUARY - 2024

PRESERVATION ♦ EDUCATION ♦ RESEARCH ♦ INSPIRE

Dear Member:

Something Special this month ... In addition to the lecture we have a book signing on the 17th. (See below).

The reports from our Student Grant Winners are on pages 2 & 3. They both had positive experiences and learned important skills at the schools.

Don't forget that your 2024 dues are due in January. We have two ways that you can pay: Via paypal on the webpage or mail a check to Time Sifters, Inc., PO Box 5283, Sarasota, FL. 34277.

The webpage has old newsletters and videos of most of the past lectures. We also have the lectures on our YouTube channel.

Darwin "Smitty" Smith, President
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Chichen Itza, Mexico—1892—2023

January 17 - at 5:45 PM at the Selby Library in downtown Sarasota

The Nine Lives of Florida's Famous Key Marco Cat

Austin Bell,
Curator of Collections, Marco Island Historical Society
Consulting Scholar, Penn Museum



discovered in pristine condition due to its oxygen-free environment, the Cat has since traveled more than 12,000 miles and has been viewed by millions of people. In this presentation, Bell explores nine periods in the life of the small wooden carving, beginning with how it was sculpted, what it may have represented to the ancient Calusa, and clues to the Cat's mysterious origins that have emerged in its

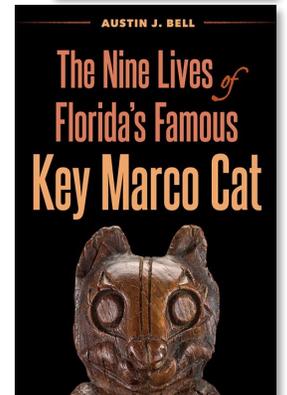
Excavated from a waterlogged archaeological site on the shores of subtropical Florida by legendary anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing in 1896, *the Key Marco Cat* has become a modern icon of heritage, history, and local identity. Preserved in the muck for centuries on Marco Island and

later lives.

Austin Bell is the Curator of Collections for the Marco Island Historical Society and a Consulting Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

He is the author of four books, including *The Nine Lives of Florida's Famous Key Marco Cat*, which won a 2021 Florida Book Award and a 2022 Meritorious Achievement Award from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation. Bell currently serves on the Florida Anthropological Society's Board of Directors and is the Chair of the Collier County Historic Archaeological Preservation Board. He holds a B.A. in Anthropology and M.A. in Museum Studies from the University of Florida and is an alumnus of the Smithsonian Institution's Summer Institute in Museum Anthropology. A Florida native, Bell lives on Marco Island with his wife Erin and daughter Chloe.

Book Signing 100!



Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Research Grant Field School in Patakfalva, Romania.

By Madison Clark, Grant Winner

My experience with the field school was incredible. The site that we were working on was called "*Patakfalva*" and it was located in Szekelyudvarhely, Romania. The site has been active for almost a decade, and the team I was working with has been collaborating very closely with the local museum, the "*Haáz Rezső*," during all that time. All three of my field directors had worked the site before and were there doing research on the medieval period in Transylvania.

We spent the first few days of the field school at our B&B, where they taught us how to properly use our equipment, sharpen our trowels, and assigned us partners before we set out to the dig site. From that point on, we spent every weekday possible excavating from 8:30 in the morning until 4:30 in the afternoon.

The site itself was part of a modern cemetery that is still in use today. It rested on the hillside of the Transylvanian countryside and was surrounded by lush green fields and a gorgeous view of everything below us. The community there was very invested and interested in the work that we were doing and they often came by to watch us as we worked. Sometimes they brought us cold drinks during really hot days.

During those four weeks I learned how to use an E-Staff, map a trench to scale, properly use a trowel, pedestal archaeological materials, assign grave numbers, and so much more. I even was able to conduct my own research project on an individual with very interesting pathologies on their skeleton.

Words cannot describe how much I was able to learn on that

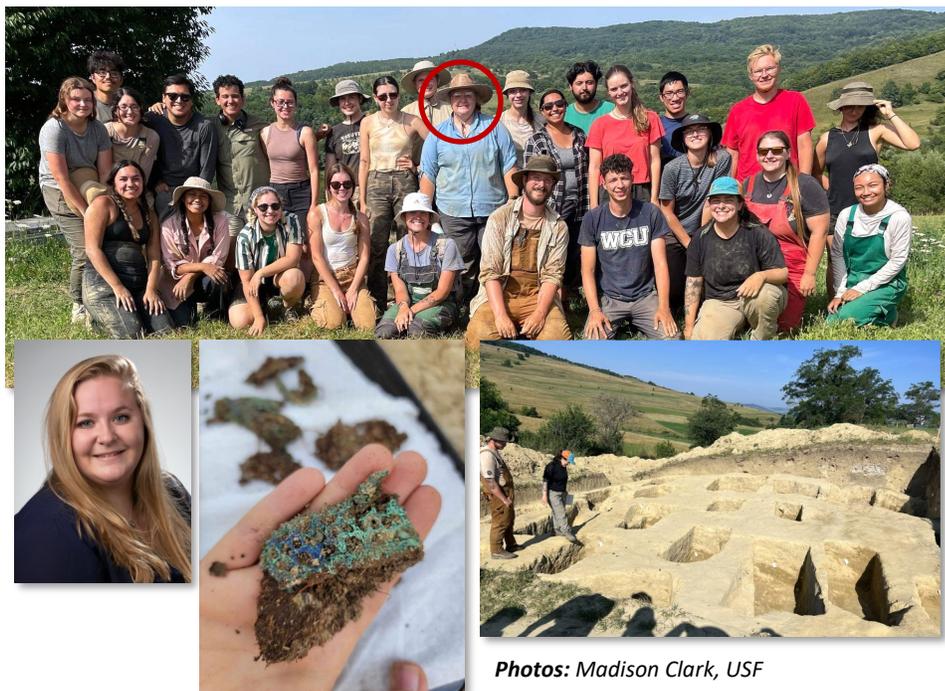
field crew. I gained lifelong friends and mentors that I continue to keep in contact with and inspire me everyday. I feel confident in what I learned there and the skills that I am continuing to develop now with local fieldwork opportunities near my university.

My field experience there was amazing, but the time that I spent immersed in Transylvanian culture was arguably an even more amazing experience. We were staying in Romania, but Transylvania is primarily home to people of Hungarian descent. The people in Szekelyudvarhely speak Hungarian, enjoy Hungarian meals, and practice Hungarian traditions.

While we were in Romania, we stayed with this wonderful family in a bed and breakfast called the *Hinto Panzio*. This family treated us with the greatest care and introduced us to Hungarian cuisine and culture every day with all-you-can-eat breakfast and a three course dinner. We learned a lot about their day to day lives and

spent time with their young children. We even watched cartoon versions of their folk stories and learned Hungarian phrases to communicate with them. I am so grateful to them for all that they did for us while we were there and from what I was able to learn from them.

My time in Romania was about so much more than just a field school. It was my first time off of American soil, exposed to a brand new culture and community, and a real learning experience for me in every way possible. We took weekend trips to some of the region's most amazing sites and cities. I loved every single moment of it and I am so grateful to *Time Sifters* for helping me take this opportunity. My time abroad has inspired me to seek out more field schools this upcoming summer and explore fieldwork in other settings and countries. I want to be the best that I can be at this work and serve the communities that I am working in as best as I can, and this field school was my first step in that direction.



Photos: Madison Clark, USF

Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Research Grant Field School in Rabat, Malta.

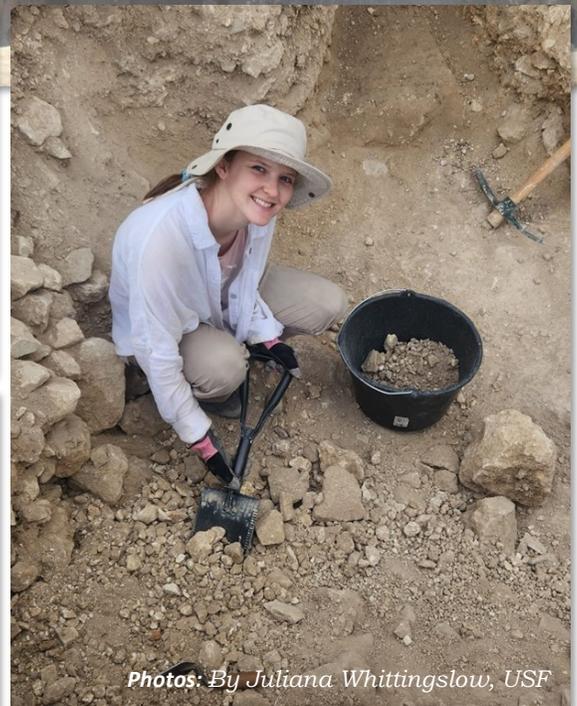
By Juliana Whittingslow, Grant Winner

This summer, I spent three weeks attending *the Melite Civitas Romana excavation on Malta* from June 12th to June 30th, 2023. I chose lodging in the local town called *Rabat* which was around a two-minute walk to the dig site. I chose to attend this field school because the main focus is the excavation of a Roman domus or house which was occupied around the 1st century CE. I have always been interested in Greek and Roman history and even chose to study Latin for three years in high school which truly introduced me to Roman culture.

After choosing Anthropology as the focus of my undergraduate degree, I became deeply interested in archaeology and how humans lived in the past and the traces they left behind. This was my second year attending the field school. It only runs for three weeks at a time and I hungered for more and decided to return this year.

This year, we expanded our trench that our area, area 3, had started the year prior. We continued to find amazing Roman and medieval artifacts such as pottery sherds, glass, pieces of marble, bones, pieces of mosaic and fresco. Not only did the field school allow us to learn how to excavate and sift for artifacts, but there is a lab that we would attend afterwards to help clean and process the finds for further analysis. From there, we could clearly see inscriptions or decorations in the pottery, the types of glass, and truly see each piece as it was last used before being discarded hundreds of years ago.

We would also have visitors from the surrounding areas walk by and were deeply interested in the process and the site in which we could engage in some public



Photos: By Juliana Whittingslow, USF

history as well. Another great aspect of this trip was staying in the local town of Rabat. We would often shop at the same small grocery stores that the locals would and I was also introduced by a local student who also attended the excavation to the Mediterranean diet. He showed us local cheese,

sandwiches, great beaches and I even discovered that I enjoyed eating dates.

Overall, I had an amazing experience in Malta for the three weeks and I had so much fun, I am planning on attending again next year in 2024

In the News

19th-century ship discovered during downtown St. Augustine road project

By Smitty, Time Sifters Board Member. Sources: The Guardian, CNN, and News 6 Orlando.

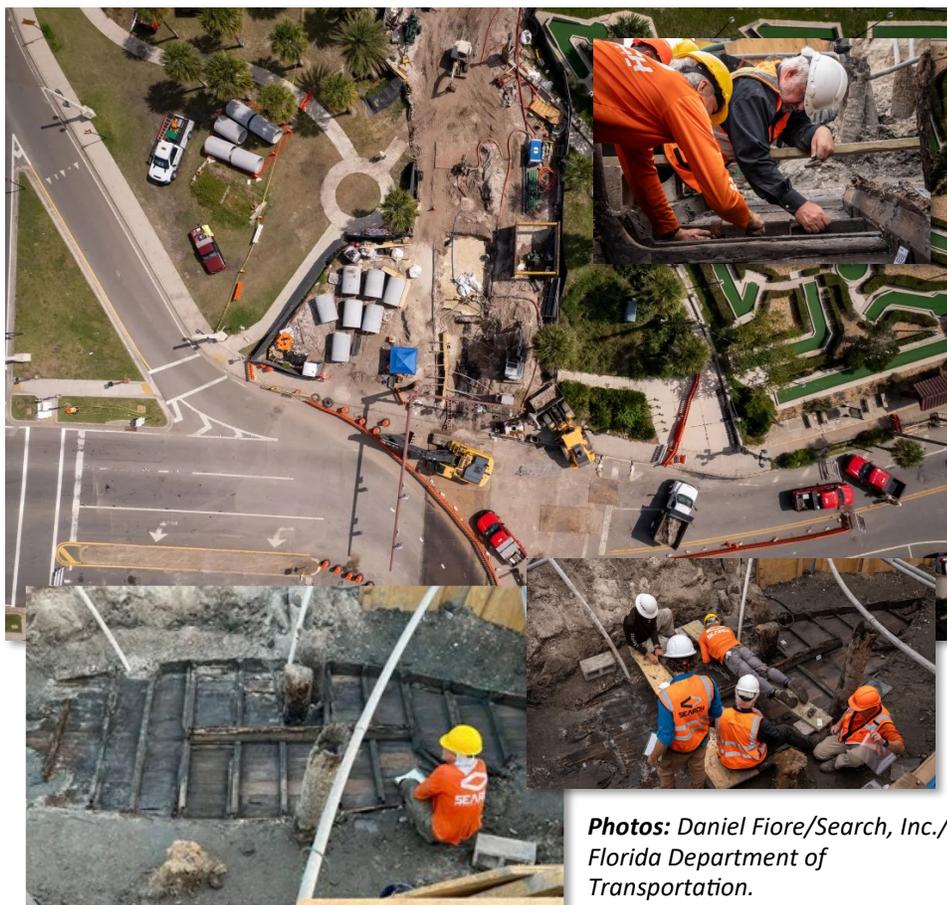
On October 5, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Two with the help of Southeastern Archaeological Research Inc. (Search) uncovered the remains of a 28-foot, 19th century fishing boat in St. Augustine. FDOT crews are currently working on an \$42m drainage improvement project in downtown St. Augustine on State Road A1A near the Bridge of Lions. They have uncovered the ship's lower hull indicating that the boat's bottom part was once approximately between 24 and 28 feet in length. Crews managed to recover the 19 feet of the vessel that still remained. They also found other artifacts with the boat, including the base of a

kerosene lamp as well as two coconut shells that were probably used as drinking cups. Also a pair of leather shoes, probably belonging to a crew member, and some coins from the 19th-century.

The ship was buried eight feet below street level. The crew worked for five days using water with controlled pressure to remove the mud covering the vessel. The boat was fully

removed and is in wet storage where the wreckage will be stabilized before being relocated to a permanent home.

The recovered ship was a "small single-masted, shallow-draft" sailboat used "to extract fish and shellfish from coastal waterways and directly offshore", said James Delgado, Search's senior vice-president, in a statement.



Photos: Daniel Fiore/Search, Inc./ Florida Department of Transportation.

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