

## Friends of the Randell Research Center

June 2015 • Vol. 14, No. 2

### Two Mounds Added to Randell Research Center

*Sear Family Foundation and Calusa Land Trust provide funds for purchase of five acres*

by William Marquardt

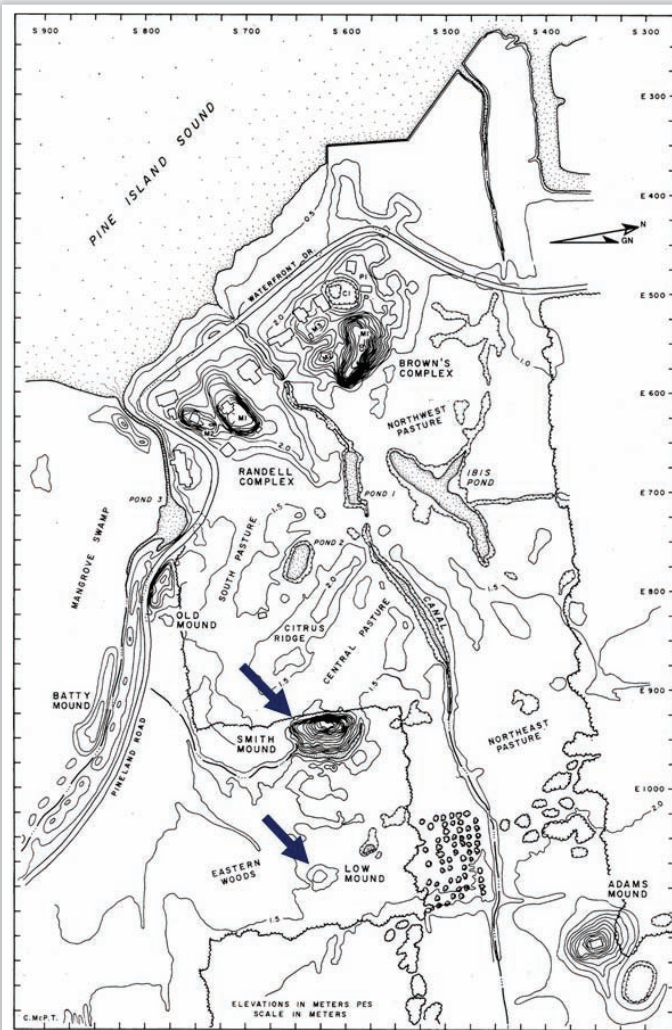
**The Randell Research Center** has grown by five acres with the addition of property containing two Calusa Indian mounds. Thanks to a gift of \$150,000 from Tim and Judith Sear and \$50,000 allocated by the Calusa Land Trust, a dream has become reality. Land managed by the Randell Research Center now includes about 67 acres.

John Kendall, president of the Calusa Land Trust, said "CLT's \$50,000 donation towards the acquisition of the Smith Mound was its largest gift ever to an outside entity. However, CLT's Board of Directors deemed this parcel 'priceless' and part of our mission. CLT continues to seek partnerships with like-minded charitable organizations that also wish to help preserve in perpetuity this precious piece of paradise named Pine Island." Judith Sear said, "When we heard that there was an opportunity to preserve the Smith Mound and the Low Mound, the opportunity was too good to miss. We are delighted that our Sear Family Foundation funds augmented money already raised and set aside by local residents through the Calusa Land Trust."

#### Smith Mound

Smith Mound is not a shell mound. It is made of sand, and is a place of burial, first used by the Calusa about 1000 years ago. It was at least 30 feet high and about 300 feet long. Until 1992, the Smith Mound was just called the "Pineland Burial Mound." In that year it was renamed in honor of John Smith (son of Capt. John Smith the elder) at the suggestion of Donald Randell.

Originally, the Smith Mound was twice as wide as it is today, and was surrounded by an artificial lake. The western half was



Arrows point to newly acquired mounds.

taken down in 1916 and used to fill in part of the lake. Ten years later, Graham Wilson owned the property next to the mound, and wanted to tear down the remaining half to use as fill. But John Smith (the younger) prevented the mound from being taken down. At the time, the dividing line between the Smith and Wilson properties ran along the mound cut, the Smiths owning the remaining eastern section of the mound. This property line still marks the eastern boundary of the Randell Research Center, but with the new acquisition, that boundary has been dissolved and the Smith Mound has been reunited with the Pineland Site Complex. The remaining part of the mound is today over 25 feet high and 230 feet long. On the eastern side, part of the surrounding lake dug by the Calusa still exists.



Artist's conception of Calusa ritual near Smith Mound.  
(Art by Merald Clark.)

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## Low Mound

The other mound is called Low Mound. It is smaller, just 10 feet high and 100 feet across. It is made up of sand, charred wood, shells, and animal bones, the remains of meals consumed by the Calusa some 1700 years ago, about the time of the Roman Empire. So it is much older than the Smith Mound. The Low Mound was built up when the shoreline was much farther east than it is today.

The Low Mound was described and sketched by Frank Cushing during his visits to Pineland in May and June of 1895. There was a small pond on the southeastern side, and the entire mound was surrounded by a moat-like feature, similar to Smith Mound.

## Significance

These mounds are important to us for a number of reasons. The Low Mound is of both cultural and environmental significance because it represents an occupation during a warm and stormy climatic episode of interest both to archaeologists and climatologists. Acquisition of the Smith Mound restores the sacred precinct to the site complex. The spiritual life and beliefs of the Calusa Indians are of interest to our visitors. The Calusa people lived at Pineland for many centuries. It is appropriate and fitting that we honor their memory by preserving their place of burial.

## What's next?

Once the invasive vegetation has been



Members of the Randell family at Smith Mound, March 16, 2015. From left to right: Crandon Randell, Gayle Allegro, Ricky Randell, Debbie Randell, Bill Marquardt (Director, RRC), and John Kendall (President, Calusa Land Trust). (Photo by Nancy Glickman.)

cleared away and the fence extended, we can plan additional public interpretation of these components of the site. We need \$7,500 for the vegetation clearing, but we already have \$5,000 thanks to generous gifts from Bill and Norma Pretsch, John and Gretchen Coyle, and Karl and Kathy Schroeder, so just \$2,500 more is needed to get started. Then we must raise \$16,500 to extend the fence, then additional funds to design and install new interpre-

tive and wayfinding signs. We need sponsors for these projects. If you are as excited as we are and want to help, please contact Cindy Bear at Pineland (239-283-6168) or Marie Emmerson in Gainesville (352-273-2087) to find out how you can donate and earmark funds toward this important new addition to the RRC. When we are done, the educational value of the Calusa Heritage Trail will be greatly enhanced. 🐼

## New and Renewing Friends of the RRC

February 16, 2015 to May 15, 2015

(Please let us know of any errors or omissions. Thank you for your support.)

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# A Tour of the Islands of Pine Island Sound: A Geological, Archaeological, and Historical Perspective

## Part 11: Burgess Island/Little Bokeelia Island Historic Era

by Denége Patterson

### Burgess/Little Bokeelia Island

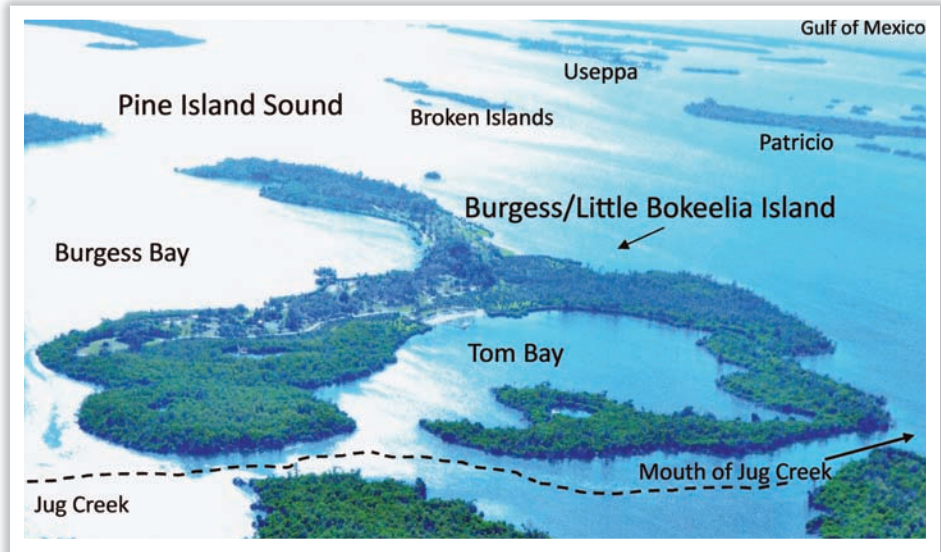
rises just off northwestern Pine Island where Jug Creek enters the Sound. It has about 29 acres of uplands with ancient sand dunes topped by shallow, aboriginal shell mounds, in addition to acres of mangroves partially enclosing two bays, Burgess Bay and Tom Bay. Its original name was Little Bokeelia Island. The word "Bokeelia" is from the Spanish word *boquilla*, meaning "little mouth," referring to the mouth of Jug Creek, which borders the island.



C.F. Burgess about 1900. (Reprinted from A. McQueen, *A Romance in Research*, Pittsburgh, 1951, page 53.)

In 1924 when Charles Frederick Burgess and his wife, Ida May Jackson, purchased Little Bokeelia Island, Dr. Burgess was already one of the most respected scientists in America. Burgess began his career as a professor of Applied Electrochemistry at the University of Wisconsin (UW). He achieved international recognition not only through his inventions and his business success, but through his presidency of the American Electrochemical Society. It was a position, he stated years later, that allowed him to rub shoulders with Thomas Alva Edison, Nikola Tesla, Edward Goodrich Acheson, E.F. Northrup, and more.

Burgess's future wife, Ida May Jackson, was appointed a State Factory Inspector by the governor of Wisconsin, Robert M. LaFollette, a reformer who happened to have married the first female graduate of the UW law school. Ida May was described as a bright young woman with a good sense of humor. Burgess's opinion of her was, "This is the first girl I ever met that I could look up to intellectually." The Burgesses married in 1902 and had two children, Betty and



(Photo by J. Hopkins.)

Jack, whose playmates included a future famous author, Thornton Wilder.

Working in the lab, Burgess received patents for a type of dry cell battery first used in small flashlights and telephones. Through his private research company as well as through his manufacturing company, he achieved success, opening several plants in the Midwest and in Canada, focusing on specialized products for military-industrial purposes during World War I. Other manufacturers of small products used his battery patents with his permission including the battery company that later became Ray-O-Vac. Burgess proved to be a very practical businessman, producing high quality products at the lowest possible cost. He recycled materials from old batteries and turned industrial and forest by-products into useful applications.

Burgess was the first to devise a convenient means for converting alternating current into direct current for small installations as in a car or a boat. Among his inventions were different types and sizes of dry-cell

batteries; a process for purifying electrolytic iron; an electrochemical sterilizer used successfully in hospitals; a battery-powered water sterilizer small enough for camping; an engraver for metal, glass, and wood; an electrical method for hardening heat-setting adhesives such as resins; the Micro-switch for which a division of Honeywell was named; the Burgess Multiple Outlet; acoustic insulating materials and tiles; and pulsation snubbers to reduce factory noises. He also developed the type of insulation used in Charles Lindbergh's airplane, *The Spirit of St. Louis*.

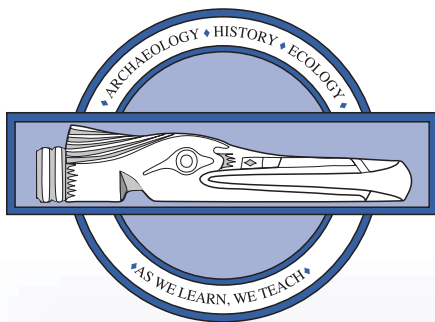
In 1924 Burgess bought Little Bokeelia Island from his friend, De Witt Clinton Harris, a seasonal resident of Pineland, who was the owner of a typewriter factory in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Harris had built the Harris Cottage at Pineland on Brown's Complex Mound 5, across from the Tarpon Lodge. He held several patents on various mechanisms for typewriters. (An original "Harris Visible" typewriter is on display in the RRC offices at the Ruby Gill House.)



Ida May Jackson Burgess with Betty and Jack, 1908. (Reprinted from A. McQueen, *A Romance in Research*, Pittsburgh, 1951, page 103.)

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## Friends of the Randell Research Center

Pineland, Florida • June 2015

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*Dear Friend,*

You are cordially invited to join, or renew your membership in, the RRC's support society, *Friends of the Randell Research Center*. All Friends of the RRC receive a quarterly newsletter and free admission to the Calusa Heritage Trail at Pineland. Supporters at higher levels are entitled to discounts on our books and merchandise, advance notice of programs, and special recognition. Your continuing support is vital to our mission. It means more research, more education, and continued site improvements at the Randell Research Center. Thank you.

Sincerely,

William H. Marquardt  
Director  
Randell Research Center



***Please check the membership level you prefer, and send this form with your check payable to U. F. Foundation, to:***

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Photo by A. Bell





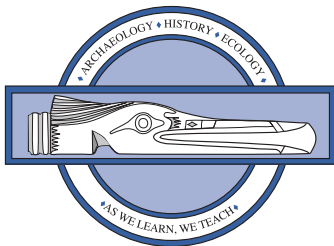
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View of Burgess Home, ca. 1930s.  
(Reprinted from A. McQueen, *A Romance in Research*, Pittsburgh, 1951, page 306.)

In 1926 a severe hurricane destroyed all but a small cottage used for battery storage. Within two years a Spanish-style mansion was constructed to a design drawn by architect C. Sedgewick Moss of St. Petersburg. Burgess researched and installed a type of balsam-wool home insulation for his Florida home where it remained until Hurricane Charley in 2004, when it received a direct hit and was removed soaking wet. The subsequent renovation embraced modern materials while retaining the old Spanish-style charm with a tiled roof, courtyard, and arched breezeway.

In 1930 Burgess established his winter laboratory and office in one of three small buildings constructed on the highest elevation on the island. Two guest cottages were built in the Florida Cracker-style which includes covered porches and airy coolness at night. He hired a leader in American shortwave radio to set up a radio station on Burgess Isle using a wrecked sailboat mast as an antenna so that communication with the Burgess Battery

Company in Wisconsin could be accomplished "without the annoying ring of a telephone," said Burgess. The short-wave-radio Burgess Batteries were the same as those used by polar explorers in the 1930s, MacMillan, Byrd, and others, who were quoted in *The National Geographic Magazine* of October 1935 praising the batteries for their longevity.

The Burgess guest book recorded visits by Thomas Edison and his wife Mina, as well as Mr. and Mrs. J.N. "Ding" Darling. In 1933 during the Great Depression, Burgess addressed the Rotary Club with this uncanny statement: "We are praying for some new revelation of nature's secrets which will create new industries, just as the radio, the automobile, the phonograph, the airplane were created. It may come through television, through a pocket device by which each individual can at all times be kept in touch with events the world around, or through the smashing of the atom, thus releasing the vast store of mythical energy which the atom is supposed to possess."

In the 1940s, Burgess continued to

discover new ways to use everyday materials such as a floating material for Navy lifejackets called typha, found in cattails, to replace kapok, the supply of which had been cut off during World War II. The material was also useful for absorbing oil slicks. On Burgess Isle he experimented with new methods of boat propulsion using vibrations. Burgess died in February 1945 before the war ended, leaving a legacy of invention and vision. 🏠

**Sources for this article:** the Burgess biography entitled *A Romance in Research* by Alexander McQueen, 1951, a walking tour narrated by owner Tom Munz on 11-28-98, and a walking tour narrated by caretakers Bonny and Mike Lewis on 01-24-09.



This 1916 red bar-and-shield logo on black and white vertical stripes was selected by Burgess because it highlighted the company name whether or not it was printed in color. (Pen-and-ink illustration by D. Patterson.)

### RRC News

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