

# Friends of the Randell Research Center

Vol. 2, No. 2

June 2003

## RRC Breaks Ground for New Teaching Complex

by Bill Marquardt

**On Thursday**, April 3, the Randell Research Center held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new teaching facility to be built at the Pineland archaeological site. As more than 80 people looked on, Steve Stans, representing the Stans Foundation, which granted \$105,000 toward the project, plunged a shell digging tool into the dirt, symbolically breaking ground for the facility that he helped fund. It was probably the first time in over 300 years that such a tool has been used there. Joining Steve in the groundbreaking were Warren Miller, representing the Maple Hill Foundation; Stuart Brown, Chair of the RRC Advisory Board; John Worth, RRC Coordinator; and Bill Marquardt, RRC Director.

Before the groundbreaking, Bill gave a brief history of the Southwest Florida Project and previous research and education at Pineland, John spoke about the programs of the RRC today, and Florida Museum of Natural History director Doug Jones talked about our vision for the future. Comments were then made by Ray Judah, Chair of the Lee County Board of County Commissioners; D. T. Minich, Lee Island Coast Visitor and Convention Bureau; Sally Tapager, Greater Pine Island Chamber of Commerce; Paul Miller, Maple Hill Foundation; and Steve Stans, The Stans Foundation.

Enough money is now in hand to build the parking area, handicapped-accessible restrooms, an activity deck, and an interpreted walking trail. The trail project is supported by a grant from the

**Left to right: Steve Stans, John Worth, Warren Miller, Stuart Brown, and Bill Marquardt formally break ground for the new teaching complex at Pineland.**  
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(Photo by Karen Walker)

Florida Department of State. Additional funds of \$222,403 are needed to complete the project, which will include a classroom seating 50 people, a book and gift shop, and storage space for equipment and teaching materials. "When the pavilion is finished, we will be able to teach classes, show videos, and give public programs on archaeology and ecology," said Bill Marquardt. "We've done research in this area for 20 years, and now we will have a comfortable, accessible place to teach people what we have learned."

"The ample deck and classroom will give a whole new dimension to our programs for students, local residents, and tourists, and make it possible for us to reach many more people," said John Worth. "Now we'll have a safe, comfortable place out of the sun for our programs. And visitors will be able to walk the site on their own, to learn about the past or just to enjoy a pleasant outdoor experience."

Bill added that "none of this would have happened without community support and funding from both private and public sources. In addition to the Stans Foundation, the Maple Hill Foundation, other gifts, and the state matching funds, many people have

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**A group of more than 80 listens as Bill Marquardt talks about our first 20 years of research and education in southwest Florida.** (Photo by Karen Walker)



donated their time and professional services. Lee County bought property that provides our office and lab space. And the University of Florida funds a position for John Worth, our coordinator. Today's groundbreaking ceremony gives us an opportunity to thank everyone for their help."

### Teaching Pavilion and Interpreted Walking Trail

#### **Made Possible by Funds Provided by:**

The Stans Foundation (\$105,000)  
The Maple Hill Foundation (\$25,000)  
Michael Hansinger (\$10,000)  
William Marquardt (\$1,000)  
State of Florida Matching Gifts Trust Fund (\$141,000)  
Florida Department of State,  
Division of Historical Resources (\$300,000)  
Friends of the Randell Research Center (\$26,000)

#### **Major Professional Services Donated by:**

Keene Engineering, Inc. (\$24,670)  
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Forestry Resources, Inc. (\$21,000)  
Coastplan, Inc. (\$3,825)  
Mariner Properties Development Inc. -  
Little Pine Island Mitigation Bank (\$9,510)  
Volunteers of the Randell Research Center (\$11,716)

#### **Still Needed:**

To complete classroom and book shop (\$222,403)

**Please contact** John Worth (239-283-2062) or Bill Marquardt (352-392-1721, ext. 492) for information on naming opportunities at levels ranging from \$2,500 to \$100,000.

# Report of the Coordinator

by John Worth

**The RRC staff** and volunteers are beginning to breathe a sigh of relief after a record year of public visitation and near constant activity. During June 2002-May 2003, 1,901 visitors toured the Pineland site. This included 24 tours to public, private, and home-school groups (775 students and teachers), 75 tours to other groups or to the general public (942 visitors), and 184 registered visitors who took the new self-guided tour based at the Tarpon Lodge. During this same period, more than 3,000 hours of volunteer time were logged.

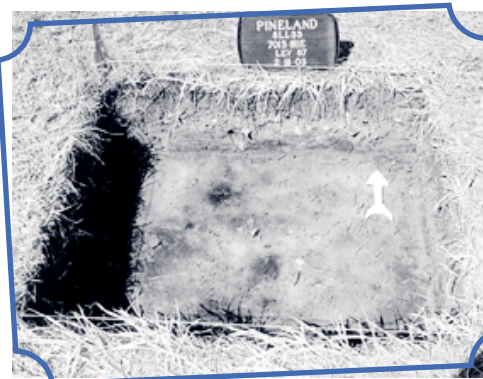
The spring also witnessed quite a bit of archaeological fieldwork. One highlight was a March

excavation near the highest point of Useppa Island. With the permission of landowners Peter and Sally Bergsten and Bill and Sherry Welch, RRC volunteers under my direction opened several 1-x-1-meter test pits along the level summit of Calusa Ridge, not far below the sites of previous excavations by Florida Museum of Natural History teams. The initial goal of the excavations was to determine if there were any architectural features associated with 1850s-era Fort Casey, but when late 18th-century British ceramics began to appear in the sifters, the fieldwork expanded to include the possibility of an early Cuban fishing camp at this elevated location on the island. Artifact analysis is still ongoing.

Other spring fieldwork focused on Pineland, in the South Pasture excavations that we began in January. We now have a 5-x-1-meter trench open near the summit of a long sandy elevation called Surf Clam Ridge, and are gradually removing a layer of shell to expose a black sandy layer that may be a prehistoric occupation floor. Posthole traces are present just below this floor layer, and seem to be concentrated at the summit of the ridge. Samples of pottery found in the floor appear to



Volunteers Gary Edwards and Gloria Andrews at work in the second test pit of Operation L at Pineland's Surf Clam Ridge. (Photo by Diane Maher)



Postholes at base of occupational layer in first test pit at summit of Surf Clam Ridge, Pineland. (Photo by John Worth)

fall within the Caloosahatchee I period (500 B.C.-A.D. 500), and sherds from the overlying shell layer may date to the earliest years of the Caloosahatchee IIA period (A.D. 500-800). A radiocarbon date on a quahog clamshell anvil fragment sealed within the black sand layer above the postholes fell within the range A.D. 480-560. The prehistoric occupation floor thus appears to date very close to the boundary between these two periods at A.D. 500, making it all the more important to obtain larger samples of pottery and other refuse. With persistence and a little luck, we hope to explore and document a 1500-year-old house-floor here over the next months.

## New and Renewing Friends of the RRC as of June 15, 2003

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# The Write Stuff

by *Lana Swearingen,*  
RRC Volunteer Coordinator

**Imagine** the opportunity to step into the life of your favorite author. And imagine that he shares with you his writing techniques and life experiences. Hard to imagine? Not if the author is Randy Wayne White and you are one of the 20 aspiring and published writers who attended his writer's workshop in March. When John Worth approached Randy about conducting a workshop to benefit the RRC, he immediately agreed. Randy set the broad parameters of the event, and let the RRC volunteers run with it. Lana Swearingen set about the task of organizing the event and coordinating volunteer help. Because it would be held at Randy's house, registration was limited to 20 people. In no time, registration was closed, and a waiting list of hopefuls was started in case someone cancelled. No one did. Randy graciously donated the entire registration fee of \$250.00 per person to the RRC.

Randy's old Florida cracker-style house with its screened wrap-around porch overlooking Pine Island Sound was the perfect setting to stimulate creativity. To kick off the workshop and establish a relaxed atmosphere, the first evening centered around a sunset gathering. After everyone was introduced and mingled while enjoying refreshments, Randy led the way to the water's edge for all to watch the setting sun. His first assignment was to write about a personal interaction with nature. Later the group would describe the sunset, which was as spectacular as their descriptions were diverse and original.

The next two days were filled with moments of intense silence as the group tackled the writing assignments, bursts of energetic conversation as stories were shared, and always, Randy's advice,



On Sunday, the last day of the workshop, the RRC volunteers donated their time and cooking skills to prepare and serve a brunch for the writers. John Worth explained what the Randell Research Center is all

**Randy White and RRC volunteers at the Pineland headquarters; Left to right: Lana Swearingen, Randy White, Barb Thomas, Pat Blackwell.** (Photo by John Worth.)



**Workshop participants gather on Randy White's porch overlooking Pine Island Sound.**  
(Photo by Lana Swearingen)

encouragement, and tips on how to be a better writer. Some were novices, others published writers, but all were fans of Randy's long before they heard about the workshop. Randy's success as a *New York Times* best-selling author, his world adventures, and his charismatic personality make him a natural teacher. His porch became the focal point for discussion, but everyone was encouraged to grab their notebooks and pens, seek a spot that would stir the imagination, and write.

On Saturday, Randy invited Kevin Lollar of the *Fort Myers News-Press* to share his thoughts with the group. Kevin referred to an old Doobie Brothers song "Listen to the Music," as he encouraged everyone to listen, and be part of the environment. He also told the group to "Do what Shakespeare does – take an old metaphor and make it new."



**Sunset over Pine Island Sound.**  
(Photo by Lana Swearingen)

about. The group was fascinated by the RRC's programs, and the Calusa culture. Lana Swearingen conducted a tour of the Pineland site at the close of the workshop.

A special thanks goes to all the volunteers who helped make the workshop a resounding success, especially Barb Thomas, Diane Maher, Sydney Cosselman, Dave Hurst, Marty Kendall, Pat Blackwell, Gloria Andrews, Denege Patterson, and Gary Edwards. In addition, sincere thanks go to a number of local businesses that donated merchandise, including the Tarpon Lodge, Winn-Dixie, Publix, Sun Harvest Fruit Company, Bert's Bar, Pine Bay Marina, Tropical Island Wear, and Pine Island Book Store.

# FLMNH Scientists Converge on Pineland Dig

by John Worth

**On June 2** and 3, the RRC at Pineland hosted a visit by a remarkable array of specialists in archaeological sciences, all members of the RRC Research and Collections Committee, and all employed by or affiliated with the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. Led by Committee Chair Dr. Karen Walker and RRC Director Dr. Bill Marquardt, the team spent a whirlwind 24 hours in Pineland, reviewing previous archaeological work at the site over the past 15 years, examining the open excavations and artifacts being recovered this spring, and meeting and interacting with local Advisory Board members and RRC volunteers. In addition to Drs. Walker and Marquardt, the visiting scientists included Ann Cordell, archaeological ceramic technology specialist; Dr. Kitty Emery, environmental archaeologist; Elise

LeCompte, museum registrar and specialist in artifact conservation; George Luer, archaeologist and long-time investigator of Pineland; Irv Quitmyer, collections manager and specialist in zooarchaeology; Donna Ruhl, collections manager and specialist in archaeobotany; Sylvia Scudder, collections manager and specialist in archaeological soil science. A focus of the team's efforts was to get a first-hand look at the Surf Clam Ridge excavations being conducted by RRC Coordinator Dr. John Worth, and discuss various strategies and ideas about the fieldwork. Discussions centered on develop-



Members of the RRC Research and Collections Committee and staff discuss the ongoing excavations at Pineland. (Photo by Kitty Emery)

ing a sampling strategy that will permit simultaneous examination of questions regarding plant and animal remains, soils and sediments, and other important facets of the excavation. Following this visit, individual consultations with each scientist will be much easier and more productive.

This was the first opportunity for the Research and Collections Committee to become directly involved in the ongoing progress of renewed archaeological fieldwork at Pineland, and if the results of this visit are any guide, the process is working just as originally conceived. Pineland has always been a model of interdisciplinary collaboration in archaeology, and the June visit marks the successful continuation of that strategy.

**RRC**  
news

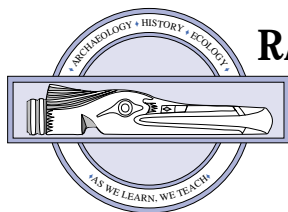
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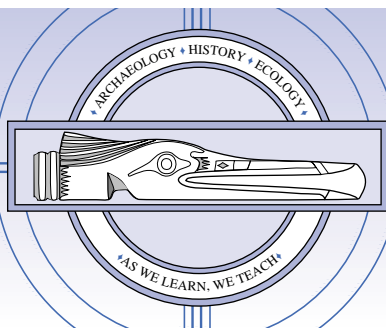


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# Friends of the Randell Research Center

Pineland, Florida • June, 2003

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Sincerely,

John E. Worth, Ph.D.  
Coordinator of Research Programs and Services  
Randell Research Center

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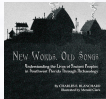
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