

Friends of the Randell Research Center

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Curation Project Enters Final Phase

*NEH-sponsored work improves
Pineland collections*

by Bill Marquardt

In the December, 2007 Friends newsletter (www.flmnh.ufl.edu/RRC/RRC_Vol6_No4.pdf), we announced that a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities would fund a three-year project to improve the archaeological collections from Pineland in order to make them accessible for long-term study and exhibition. Now moving into its third and final year, the project has already made significant improvements. These photos show some of the recent activities. 🐼



*Ryan VanDyke records information
on zooarchaeological collections
from Pineland.*



*Donna Ruhl reorganizes dry
archaeobotanical samples for
final proofing.*



*Elise LeCompte and Karen
Walker archive large-format
maps, stratigraphic profiles,
artwork, and other drawings
related to Pineland.*



*Ann Cordell inserts
archival tag in pro-
tective bag holding
specially analyzed
pot sherds.*



*Melissa Ayvaz cleans
waterlogged plant
remains from Pineland's
deepest levels.*



*Austin Bell enters
information into
Pineland database.*



*Gypsy Price catalogues
sediment samples
and specimens from
Pineland's two site-
wide auger surveys.*

Recent History of the Pineland Community

Part 3 in a series

by Bill Marquardt

A recent inquiry to our web site asked for information on the history of the Pineland community. Here is the third installment. (Note: BC refers to the Brown's Complex of mounds and features on the north side of the Pine Island Canal, RC to the Randell Complex of mounds and other features on the south side of the canal. Hence, BCM3 = Brown's Complex Mound 3; RCM1 = Randell Complex Mound 1; and so on.)

In the December issue, I discussed Graham Wilson extensively because his decisions and actions had such a profound influence on the Pineland community as we know it today. Graham Wilson died in 1937, and in 1945 Mary Wilson sold the residence and many acres of Pineland property to Norris and Eileen Heckle. They converted the Wilsons' GraMar Villa into a lodge, and hosted seasonal visitors. The Heckles sold the lodge and property to Robert and Marie Mitchell in 1948, and the Mitchells sold it to I. B. and Mary Hunt Jones in 1951, who operated it as the "Pine-Aire Lodge."

Ted Smith remembered that Eileen Heckle had the Wilson foreman's house cut in half, moving half to one of the "mounds next to the road." It is uncertain on which mound this structure was re-located. RCM1 is a possibility, but the phrase "next to the road" argues for a location close to Waterfront Drive. John L. Lewis's house appears in a 1950s Pine-Aire Lodge pamphlet photo and the 1953 aerial photo. Its footprint appears on our early maps because it was still present on BCM3 during our fieldwork in the early 1990s. At least the core of this house may once have been part of the foreman's house. The cottage on BCM3 was occupied seasonally for many years by labor leader John L. Lewis, and later by his brother Raymond until the late 1970s. The cottage was moved

away in 1991 and is now located in Bokeelia, at the northern end of Pine Island, across the street from the post office. The cottage on top of RCM1 was lived in for many years by the Clagget Dorsey family, and became known locally as the Dorsey Cottage.

The 1950s brought renewed disturbance to the Randell Complex. Sharp cuts into RCM1 resulted from at least two episodes. A comparison of the 1944 and 1953 aerial photographs shows that cuts on the northwest and northeast sides had occurred by 1953. It is not clear who owned that parcel at the time, but the Heckles, Joneses, and a man named Inches are the most likely candidates. Apparently much of what we call the Old Mound was torn down between 1953 and 1958. The workers' quarters building was dismantled prior to 1953, according to G. W. Hyatt.

Also in the 1950s, mosquito-control ditches were dug around the eastern side of Smith Mound, enlarging and deepening the remains of the surrounding lake described by Cushing in 1895. About the same time (ca. 1950-1955), Mr. Inches removed additional material from the mound, but was stopped before doing major damage to the remaining half.

A Fort Myers land surveyor, Carl E. Johnson, wrote in 1961 that a "one-story frame structure...is built on concrete posts above the shell mound," referring to BCM1. This building, along with the smaller "summer house" appear on the 1953, 1958, and 1970 aerial photos. In addition, both are shown in the Pine-Aire Lodge pamphlet.

When G. W. Hyatt came to Pineland in 1955, he first bought the house/lot on the western foot of RCM2 (the Wilson sisters' home) from Norris Heckle. From this building, he operated until 1968 a retreat of the American Bible College.



The Dorsey Cottage was demolished on July 12, 1994. (photo by Karen Walker).

Hyatt acquired more property in 1957, which included the area where RCM3 had once stood and extending over to the sloping deposits of RCM1. About 1957-1958, using a bulldozer, he cut into and pushed RCM1's then-sloping deposits to the northwest toward the canal for the purpose of leveling off the area to make an air strip.

In the 1970s, the Joneses sold a 33-acre parcel to Rocky Meo, who resided in the Harris Cottage with his family. Meo dismantled the citrus packing barn and salvaged lumber from it. Meo contemplated a cluster-house development for the property. A restaurant was planned for the area next to Brown's Complex Mound 1, with the top of BCM1 to be used as a terrace bar. Neither idea came to fruition.

By 1981, the one-story frame structure had been removed from BCM1, as reported by a surveyor. By 1984, a 12-x-12-foot gazebo had been built on the mound summit. At the time of our 1990s excavations, the gazebo was still present on BCM1 at the top of the concrete steps, although by then it was badly deteriorated. In 1991, the Lewis house



was moved away from Pineland and replaced with a modern house built by new owners, the Tidwells. The house on the adjacent lot (owned by the Fritz family during our fieldwork) was renovated by new owners, the Allens, but on August 13, 2004 it was destroyed beyond repair by Hurricane Charley. The Allen property was bought by the Bundschus, who built a new house there in 2006–2007. The Williams house, adjacent to the canal, has for some decades remained unchanged. Across Waterfront Drive from BCM5, a modern house owned for many years by Stanford Nickerson was located. The property upon which Nickerson's house was built was probably a combination of midden from the Brown's Complex and dredge spoil deposited in the Wilson era (1920s). Upon Nickerson's death, the property was bought by Mote Marine Laboratories for use as a headquarters and bunk house for its marine ecology research personnel working in Pine Island Sound. The house was severely

damaged by Hurricane Charley and was dismantled in 2005.

When Donald and Patricia Randell first came to live at Pineland in 1968, they bought and lived in the Wilson sisters' house at the foot of RCM2. The Randells soon bought more properties including most of the RC. In 1982, the Randells built a new home in the place where RCM3 had stood, and where Hyatt had augmented and leveled the ground. The Randell house still stands today.

In 1968, the Wilson home came into the hands of the American Bible College, but in 1980 it was sold again, this time to the Medical Management Institute. In 1986, a 3,440-square-foot dormitory building was constructed west of the former Wilson home. For more than a decade the Wilson home and the associated dormitory were operated by the American Hospital Corporation as "The Cloisters," a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center. It closed in January, 1996, but in 2000 Robert A. Wells, Jr. purchased the property and renovated the main

building and dormitory as a restaurant and hotel, re-named the "Tarpon Lodge." It opened for business in June, 2001.

During our early-1990s field seasons, the Dorsey Cottage on RCM1 was owned by Robert and Joyce James. The structure was demolished in July, 1994 by a new owner, Michigan physician Iqbal Jan (see photo). Jan also leveled the top of RCM1 by having approximately 18 inches of the mound graded off and dumped down the southern flank of the mound. In order to build a new house to post-Hurricane-Andrew (i.e., post-1992) standards, 29 holes about 3 feet square and 3 feet deep were dug into the top of the mound for the placement of concrete footers. Before the footers were placed, however, construction was put on hold and the property was purchased by a combination of funds from the State of Florida's Emergency Archaeological Acquisition Trust Fund, The Archaeological Conservancy, and Lee County.

(To be continued in the next issue: Part 4 : A History of Archaeology at Pineland.)



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Recent Activities at the Randell Research Center



On February 5, Karen Walker (second from left) gave a site tour to visitors Shelley and Wes Cowan; at left is RRC's Michael Wylde. (Photo by Bill Marquardt.)



Bill Marquardt watches as UF graduate student Andrea Palmiotto excavates in Mound 5. (Photo by Karen Walker.)



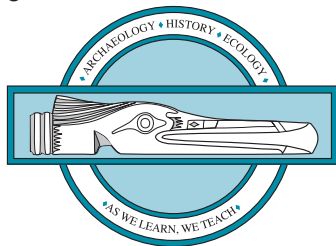
Excavations proceeded in Brown's Complex Mound 5, supervised by Michael Wylde (right). In excavation are volunteers Pat Townsend and Ed Fialkosky. (Photo by Carol Hoyem.)



Blues band "Deb and the Dynamics" rocks the crowd at Music at the Mounds, January 30 at the site. (Photo by Bill Marquardt.)

Volunteers Joseph Imbruglia, Jack Stapler, David Figa, Amanda Rodriguez, and Devin Rachles screen for artifacts at the Mound 5 excavation at Pineland. (Photo by Bill Marquardt.)





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at Pineland**

March 13, 2010

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Editor: William Marquardt
Writer: William Marquardt
Production: GBS Productions
Gift Shop & Tour Information:
(239) 283-2157



Send questions or comments to:

Randell Research Center
PO Box 608
Pineland, FL 33945-0608
Telephone: (239) 283-2062
Fax: (239) 283-2080
Email: randellcenter@comcast.net
Website: www.flmnh.ufl.edu/RRC/

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