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PRESS RELEASE

February 2012

Contact: Linda Massey 426-7229

What: Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Spring Archaeological Society February meeting

When: Tuesday, February 14, 2012, 7:00 PM

Where: North Port Community United Church of Christ
3450 South Biscayne Boulevard - Decker Hall

Speaker: Dr. Robin Brown

The Incredible Preservation of Florida Wetsites



Dr. Robin Brown will be the speaker at our February 14 Valentine's Day program. What better place to bring your wife, husband, or date on Valentine's Day than one of our meetings; or just come alone or with a friend! I think the photo Dr. Brown sent indicated that he likes the idea of speaking on Valentine's Day, or at least he is making the best of it.

His topic, "Incredible Preservation of Florida Wet Sites." The importance of Florida's phenomenal wet-site preservation to the understanding of aboriginal Florida people cannot be overestimated. Objects of enduring stone represent only a small fraction of the artifacts produced by Florida cultures. Ceramic objects last well, but pottery in Florida appeared only 4,000 years ago. Most of the ceremonial and utilitarian things used by prehistoric Floridians over the past 12,000 years were made of wood, hide, fiber, and bone, all of which perish rapidly in Florida's warm, wet environment. So we often wind up studying a culture by the surviving artifacts that represent less than 10% of the things they made for subsistence, personal adornment, and sacred purposes.

Sites such as Warm Mineral Springs, Little Salt Spring, Republic Groves, Bay West, Windover, Key Marco, Hontoon Island, Page Ladson, Lake Monroe, and many more, all possess conditions that facilitate the preservation of material remains from past human activities: continual inundation or saturation in a neutral, anaerobic environment in peat or sand.

Dr. Brown is a medical doctor by profession, having graduated from Tulane Medical School in 1959. Prior to his retirement, Dr. Brown began pursuing his other interests, including his love of Florida's natural and cultural history. He is author of three books (all in the WMS/LSSAS library): *Florida's Fossils* (1988), *Florida's First People* (1994), and *The Crafts of Florida's First People* (2002).

The Warm Mineral Springs/Little Salt Spring Archaeological Society meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm at the North Port Community United Church of Christ, located at 3450 Biscayne Drive, North Port, north of US 41 before the Jockey Club entrance. Please join us for another interesting look into Florida's past and in protecting our historical, cultural and scientific heritage. For more information call Hilda Boron at 426-1719. Please visit <http://www.wmslssas.org/>