

PEACE CAMP CHRONICLE

The Future For Archaeology in Broward County

By Wilma B. Williams

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In the late 1800's several well known antiquarians were at work in Florida demolishing Indian burial sites. Their reports tell us how many days and weeks it took to totally level specific mounds. Skeletal material and artifacts were boxed and sent out of the state to museums such as the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia or the Smithsonian in Washington. All this data was recorded with little or no reference to excavation levels or association.

A prime example of total destruction in the name of science was the Broward Mound in Duval County. In 1895 Napoleon Bonaparte Broward, future Governor of Florida, gave his "courteous permission" to Clarence B. Moore to demolish the mound on his property in its entirety. Bulldozers had not yet been invented.

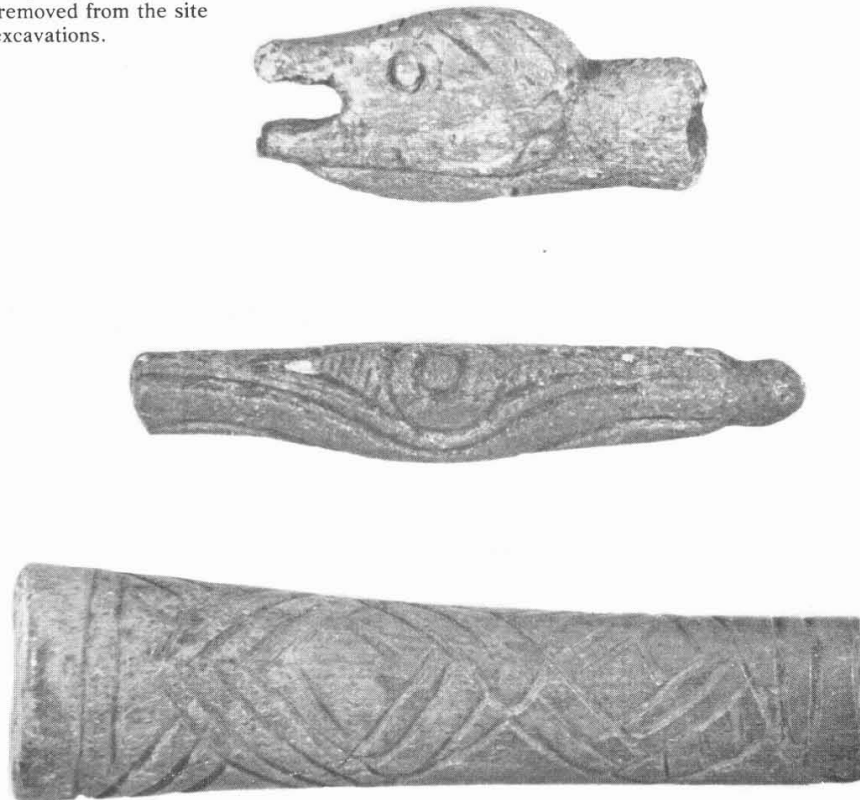
The first law enacted for the preservation of sites was the *Antiquities Act* and was passed by the Congress on June 8, 1906, for the Department of the Interior of the United States. Since then, several states have passed similar statutes. In Florida the law is Chapter 267, commonly called the *Florida Archives and History Act of 1971*. This law is the "umbrella" that covers and protects the antiquities of Florida for the people of Florida. This was the law invoked by the Broward County Archaeological Society when the Peace Camp site was threatened by the planned construction of Interstate 75 in 1977.



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Peace Camp is a Tequesta village site which may date back to 1100 B.C. Hully Stirling, the present landowner, has cooperated in every way possible to insure the west Broward site's survival.

These bone ornaments were carved with shark tooth knives by the former inhabitants of Peace Camp. They are just a few of the thousands of artifacts removed from the site during three years of excavations.



Wilma Williams/Broward County Archaeological Society

THE PROBLEM OF PEACE CAMP

Peace Camp is an important aboriginal Indian site in Broward County. The results of tests made in August 1970 by Radiocarbon LTD indicated that the camp was in existence approximately 3050 years ago — 1100 B.C. — thus establishing that human habitation in this area occurred earlier than archaeologists had once believed. It is, apparently, one of the oldest sites in southeast Florida.

In 1967 Hully Stirling requested that the Broward County Archaeological Society excavate this site which is located on his property in western Davie. Three years of work ensued, during which time many unusual artifacts were found, including shell and bone tools and weapons, 26,000 potsherds, and outstanding zoomorphic bone carvings.

When Mr. Stirling advised the Broward County Archaeological Society that Peace Camp was to be destroyed by the construction of Interstate 75, a decision was made by the Society to fight the projected road alignment.

The first step taken confirmed the alignment with the Department of Transportation. Not only did the design destroy the southern and western parts of Peace Camp, but the projected erection of the West 36th Street overpass required pilings to be placed at specific

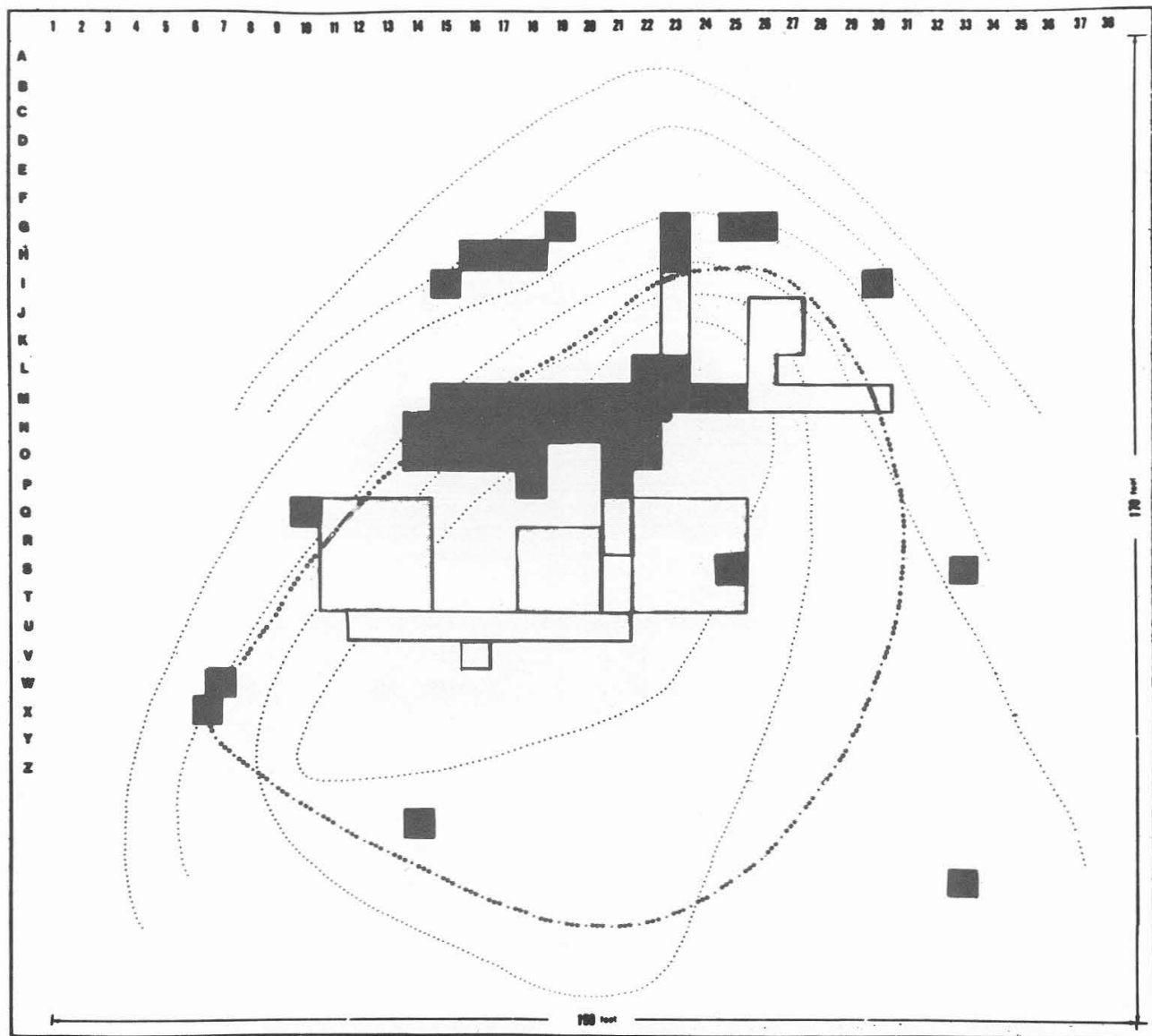
intervals which, except for four trees on the northern boundary, would destroy the remaining part of the mound.

The Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management was contacted. L. Ross Morrell, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, asserted that everything possible would be done to prevent destruction of the site. On July 1, 1977, a meeting was arranged between personnel from the Division of Archives and from the Department of Transportation. Archives refused to accept the proposed compromise offered by the Department of Transportation.

Coordinated Opposition

All material necessary to authenticate the value of Peace Camp were assembled. Affidavits from each of the parties involved in the discovery of burials in the early 1950s were taken. Statements from those working on the site during the excavation period were added to the package. Finally, a two page chronology of events culminating in the present situation, as well as a copy of the published Peace Camp report, were included in a package supporting the preservation of the site.

Copies were sent to Robert Williams, then Director of the Division of Archives, History and Records Management; Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Morrell; Tom Webb, Jr., Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOT); and William Laufman, design engineer for District Four of DOT.



The excavation of the Peace Camp site was carefully planned and mapped. The dark area in the center depicts the deepest explorations through the oldest portion of the site. The dotted lines represent the contouring.

The President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Joan E. Lynn of the Broward County Archaeological Society, and Mr. Stirling also received copies of support package.

In July 1977, State Archaeologist Calvin Jones came from Tallahassee to reevaluate the site. His report was given at another meeting of Archives and DOT personnel. Again, the compromise proposed by DOT was rejected as entirely unacceptable. Only then did the Department of Transportation agree to move the alignment of Interstate 75 two hundred and fifty feet to the west and West 36th Street six hundred and fifty feet to the north. Peace Camp was saved. One site, one victory.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR THE PAST?

We have come a long way from 1906 and the first of the protective laws. The antiquarian of yesterday

who dug for personal glory is the nonprofessional of today who has sublimated the larceny in his soul to the interests of science. The serious amateur works with the ethics and accuracy of the professional and is always cognizant of the laws that govern him. Since there are not enough professionals to go around, he performs a surrogate duty and is the link between the state officials and the people in any given area. Most nonprofessionals work in organized state-chartered groups which are chapters of the Florida Anthropological Society.

Broward County has a high density of prehistoric sites. What will happen to them? From the 1974 survey conducted in Broward County under the joint auspices of the Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management and the Broward County Historical Commission, it is known that thirty percent of the known sites have recently been destroyed and twenty

percent of all assessed sites are endangered. Nine sites alone were lost to private developers in a three year period.

It goes without saying that they all cannot be saved. Recognizing this reality, there are two methods that can help "preserve" the site for posterity. The first method is to record each site in the State Master File. This can be done by the minimal survey developed for small sites which consists of a survey, contour readings, and a two by two meter test pit. The artifacts are collected by level and recorded, and recommendations can be made if the site should have more extensive excavation. Most developers will allow enough time for such a survey to be done.

Why Not Preservation Parks?

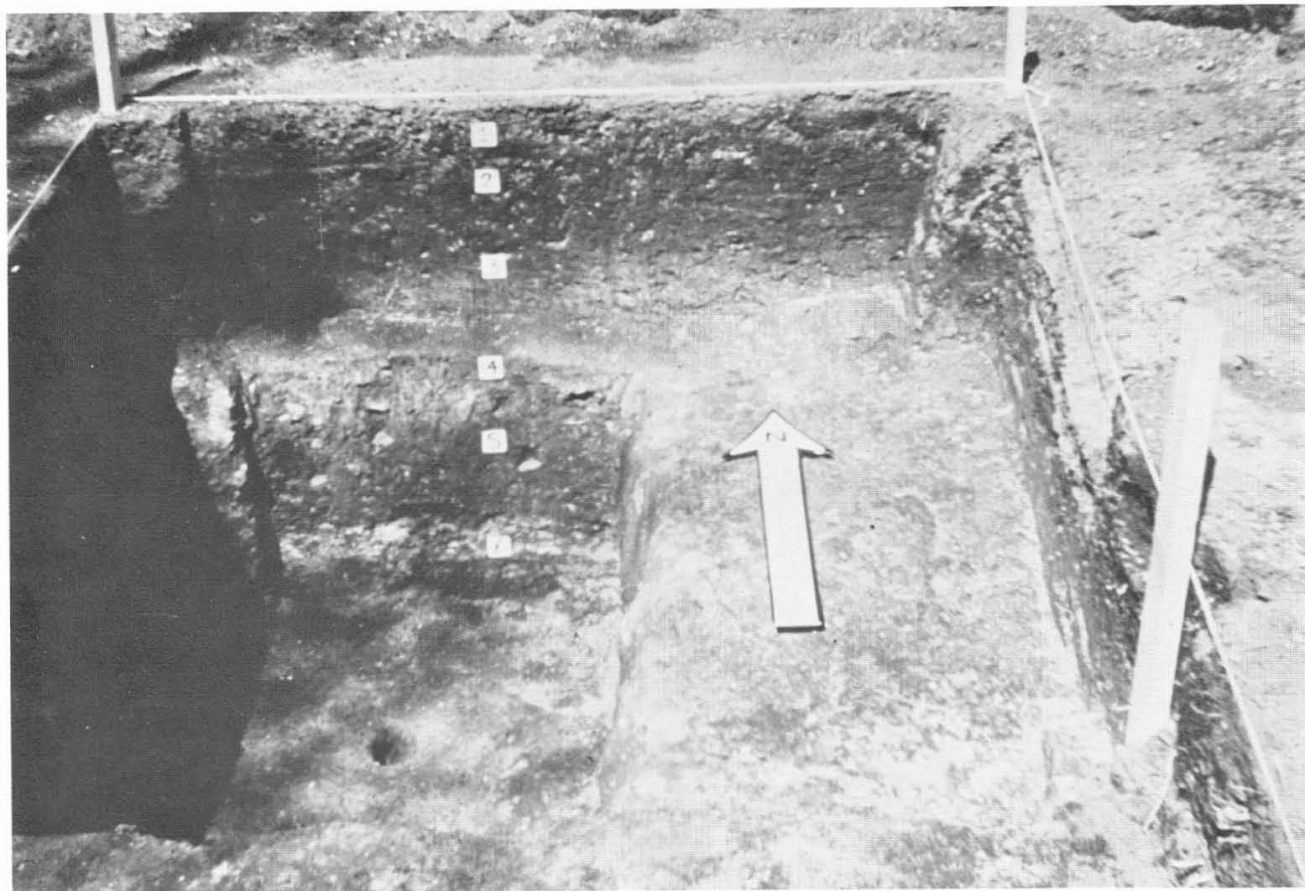
The second method is to preserve the sites as park space or "green belt" in any commercial project. One large Broward County developer, Coral Ridge Properties, has encouraged excavations on all the sites on their property and has preserved each of them as a green spot within the development.

Thus, the community benefits from the open space, while the prehistoric sites are recorded and preserved. As in the case of Peace Camp, preservation is the most important part of the excavation.

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The control pits at Peace Camp were thoroughly documented. Photographs such as this one were taken to record the various levels of association, as well as to establish for future reference the spatial orientation of each pit.



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