

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ARCHAEOLOGISTS DATE ANCIENT CANAL IN NAPLES, FLORIDA**

Naples Backyard History a 501(c)3 organization working with renowned Archaeologist Bob Carr and Marine Engineer Todd Turrell has been endeavoring to discover the age of the Indian Canal that crosses the Old Naples Peninsula. Native Americans, dominated by the Calusas, created an engineering marvel when they dug the canal from the Gulf at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to a point on the Bay just south of the Naples City Docks (about 1 mile long). The canal is believed to have been up to 25 feet deep and almost 50 feet wide. Unfortunately, most of the canal was covered over in the 1920's.

In 2011 Naples Backyard History and Todd Turrell engaged Bob Carr to take advantage of a City of Naples new storm sewer project along Gulfshore Blvd. Bob and his team had just 20 minutes to scurry down 8 feet to retrieve soil and wood samples. The sample dated to **A.D.1670**, but because it was recovered from the top of the canal it was believed that the canal was likely to be hundreds of years older.

With major backing provided by the Ernest and Sandra Schaub Fund, (they are Bonita Springs residents), ground penetrating radar was brought in to verify the canal's location in January of this year. On February 14, 2014 archaeologists from the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy under the direction of Bob Carr completed extensive excavation of a segment of the Naples Canal. Five soil and plant samples were recovered from a site on Gulfshore Blvd. in Naples. The samples were submitted to Beta Analytic in Miami, Florida for radiocarbon dating.

The samples provided a range of dates, from as early as **A.D. 780** near the bottom of the canal to **A.D. 1660** at the top. The later date likely represents a time after the canal had been abandoned.

We hope to work with the City of Naples to erect historical markers illustrating not only the route but also updated canal facts. Additionally, when funding is obtained we plan to do at least 1 more excavation to fully reveal a cross section of the canal.

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Enclosures: Canal map, canal north wall profile