

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED MAR 25 1976  
DATE ENTERED NOV 28 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC *Ms*  
Warm Mineral Springs  
AND/OR COMMON  
Warm Salt Springs

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
About 12 miles southeast of Venice on U.S. 41 NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CITY, TOWN *Venice, Fla.* CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Warm Mineral Springs VICINITY OF Seventh  
STATE CODE COUNTY CODE  
Florida 12 Sarasota 115

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Warm Mineral Springs, Inc., c/o Mr. George H. Wheeler, Jr.  
STREET & NUMBER  
San Servando Avenue  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
Warm Mineral Springs VICINITY OF Florida

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Sarasota County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
Sarasota Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Florida Archaeological Survey  
DATE  
1960 FEDERAL  STATE COUNTY LOCAL  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
Div. of Archives, Dept. of State, The Capitol  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
Tallahassee Florida

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Warm Mineral Springs is a large, free-flowing mineral water-fed collapsed cave. The surface configuration of the spring is nearly circular, having an approximate diameter of 275 feet. The average daily water flow of the spring is between 7 and 9 million gallons (Ferguson, et al., p. 149). The surface outlet located on the southwestern edge of the spring forms Salt Creek, which empties into the Myakka River some two miles to the southwest. The year-round surface water temperature is 86°F. which distinguishes it from other Florida springs. The high percentage of dissolved minerals has stimulated the commercial development of the spring. Warm Mineral Springs is presently operated as a tourist-oriented health spa.

The environment of the area immediately surrounding the springs was substantially altered in the early twentieth century to accommodate commercial exploitation of the lumber and turpentine industry. The original vegetation consisted of pine, oak, palmetto palm, mangrove, and rush; however most of this has been removed. A few isolated pines, palmetto palms, and ornamental shrubbery presently comprise the extant vegetation.

The subsurface features of Warm Mineral Springs have only been partially explored. The main body of the springs is an hourglass-shaped sinkhole, with a maximum depth of 220 feet. Between 35 and 80 feet from the surface are a number of small ledges which encircle the basin. Near the bottom of the north side of the springs a tunnel complex opens. Much of this tunnel network is unexplored; however, it is known that two water sources, one cool and the other hot, merge in the main tunnel. The warm water source is the most likely vehicle for the dissolved minerals, and is probably derived from very old geologic beds (Ferguson, et al., pp. 10-11).

A number of the ledges around the basin contain a series of shallow caves, which exhibit huge columnar stalactites and stalagmites. These formations occurred at a time when the water level was a great deal lower than present (Royal and Clark, p. 285). It is also postulated that these ledges and caves were well suited for, and indeed were used as, burial sites for Early Man.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 10,200 B.P.

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Warm Mineral Springs first came to the attention of professional archaeologists in 1960, when divers began to retrieve human skeletal materials from the ledges (Goggin, p. 80). In the same year William Royal and Eugenie Clark published an article detailing additional skeletal and cultural material recovered (p. 285). They recovered enough human bones to account for seven individuals. Artifacts included "two long bone needles, an antler shaft wrench or atlatl weight, a bone pestal, marked deer bones and antlers, and part of a fossil shark's tooth with a chipped edge" (Royal and Clark, p. 285). All these remains were recovered from a depth of 35-40 feet, along the ledges or in the shallow caves. Also recovered was a fragment of charred red mulberry wood, which was dated by Carbon-14 at 8,000 B.C.  $\pm 200$  years (Royal and Clark, p. 286).

Further testing and excavation were sponsored by the Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management. Early in 1972, Carl Clausen, Marine Archaeologist, conducted preliminary investigations. In the stratified deposits of the shallow caves, Clausen excavated fragments of human bone, charred wood, and organic leaf deposits. Nine Carbon-14 samples produced dates ranging from 8920  $\pm 190$  to 10,630  $\pm 210$  B.P. (Kigoshi).

In February 1973, W. A. Cockrell, Florida State Underwater Archaeologist, recovered human skeletal material, including portions of a skull, from stratified deposits in a cave 45 feet below the surface of the water. Also found in the underwater cave site were small animal bones as well as completely preserved oak and hickory nuts, and leaves. The remarkable preservation of the deposits has been attributed to the lack of dissolved oxygen in the water (Cockrell, 1973, p. 3). Eighteen conclusive Carbon-14 samples taken from leaf deposits surrounding the skull under tightly controlled conditions clustered at 10,200  $\pm 145$  B.P.

While collecting pollen samples in October 1973, Cockrell found an extremely well worked marine shell spear-thrower spur, with adhesive still attached. The location of the spear-thrower was 30 cm. to the interior of the cave from where the human skeletal material was removed (Cockrell, 1974).



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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

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"The presence of Man in Florida in excess of 10,000 years is now generally accepted, based both upon comparative studies of artifacts and more recently upon the radiocarbon determinations of skeletal material from Warm Mineral Springs" (Griffin, p. 343).

The research has indicated that Warm Mineral Springs is one of the most significant discoveries in Florida, containing an abundance of information about Early Man.

The oxygen-free mineral waters have preserved not only the oldest verified human remains and associated hunting tool recovered in Eastern North America, but also animal and plant remains of a previously little-known era.

Warm Mineral Springs offers a unique opportunity to continue a multi-disciplinary approach in the discovery and retrieval of information previously unavailable on man and his interaction with his environment in early Florida.

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ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Cockrell, W. A. "Remains of Early Man Recovered from Spring Cave." Archives & History News, Vol. 4, No. 2 (March-April 1973). Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Florida Department of State.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Need for Awareness of the Existence of Offshore Cultural Resources; and Florida's Underwater Archaeological Research Program, 1973." Paper presented to the Florida Anthropological Society Annual Meeting, Jacksonville, Florida, March, 1974.

Ferguson, G. E., C. W. Lingham, S. K. Love, and R. O. Vernon. "Springs of Florida." Florida Geological Survey Bulletin 31. Tallahassee, Florida, 1947.

Goggin, John M. "Recent Developments in Underwater Archaeology." Newsletter of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference. Vol. 8 (1962), pp. 77-88.

Griffin, John W. "Archaeology and Environment in South Florida." In Environments of South Florida: Present and Past. Memoir 2, Miami Geological Society, Patrick J. Gleason, Editor. pp. 342, 346.

Kigoshi, Kunihiro K. (Gakushuin University, Tokyo) to Curtiss E. Peterson, July 28, 1972. This letter informed Mr. Peterson of the results of the radiocarbon assay on samples from Warm Mineral Springs. Located in files of Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Florida Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida.

Royal, William, and Eugenie Clark. "Natural Preservation of Human Brain, Warm Mineral Springs, Florida." American Antiquity, Vol. 26, 1960, pp. 285-287.

Royal, William. Personal Interview (by Dan Penton), February 22, 1972. The conversation concerned the geology and archaeology of Warm Mineral Springs. William Royal is a retired Air Force Colonel and Sarasota County resident who has been credited with locating and reporting the prehistoric remains at Warm Mineral Springs and who has taken part in numerous diving expeditions at the site.