

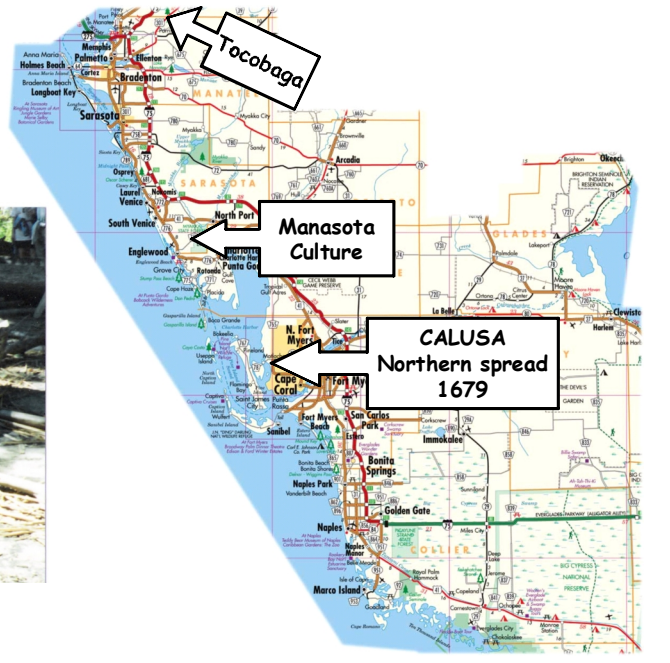
NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURES IN LEMON BAY

2000 BC

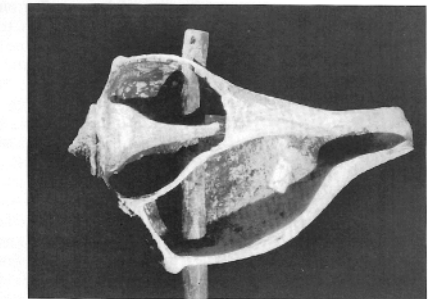
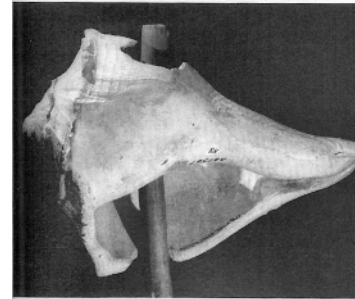
Formation of Lemon Bay

The dynamics of the bay caused points to develop from which Native Americans could live and land and launch their dugout canoes

In the 1960s, amateur archaeologists found artifacts at Englewood sites dating to 2000 BC. The sites were destroyed by the dredging of the Intercoastal waterway.

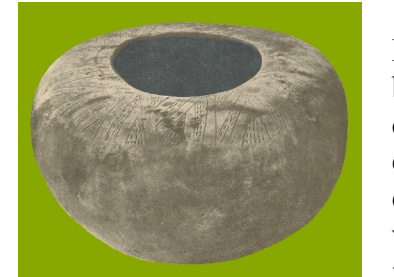


Today the archaeological community recognizes the work of George Luer in the acknowledgement of a “Manasota Culture” for the Native Americans in the Lemon Bay area. Until very late in the Native American time period, the Lemon Bay area residents seem to have functioned as small, independent tribes. (The ‘Switzerland’ of the area.)

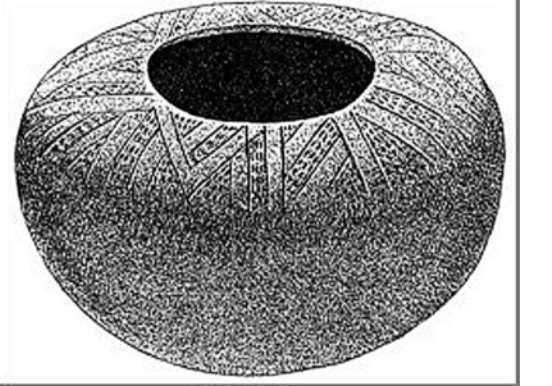
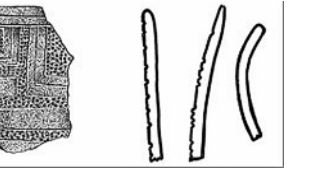


1000 BC - 900 AD

Excavations in the 1980s of the Mystery River site indicate occupancy by Native Americans during a time period overlapping the other sites in the area. At this site there was a fresh water source and ideal conditions for oysters. The study showed that the individuals at this site were involved in meat processing, wood working, plant processing and ceramic production.



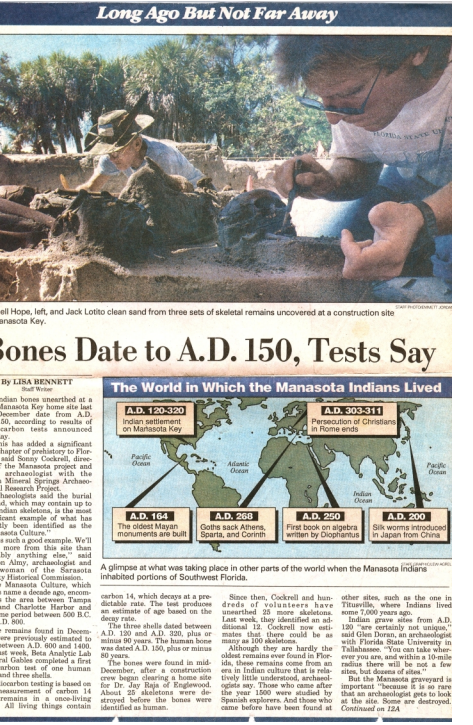
Pottery artifacts from the Englewood area bear distinct markings and other characteristics. Pottery seems to have evolved from a plain style to a more elaborate style over time. The earliest pottery was made with clay tempered with vegetable fiber, hand molded, with no decoration. Later, potters used quartz sand for tempering and coiled construction. Decorations were primarily designs pressed or rolled into the pot’s surface. Plain “red” pottery sherds (broken pottery pieces) were found at the Manasota Cemetery burials.



The Native Americans established a culture that relied extensively on the resources provided by the creatures of the bay and the wetlands. Edible animals on the mainland were hunted, and some gardening of gourds, tobacco and trees which produced useable materials was done.

150 – 350 AD

In December of 1988 a burial site was discovered on Manasota Key. 120 individuals were recovered from the site. Very few artifacts were found. The method of burial indicates the Native Americans of Lemon Bay had an egalitarian culture – individuals were buried with equal consideration and no one received more honors than another. Analysis of the non-human remains from this site is ongoing. Carbon dating puts these individuals in the Lemon Bay area around 200 AD. This was strictly a cemetery-style burial site. The tribe would have lived on the mainland, but it is not known where.



Reconstruction using Russian ‘scientific’ method from Manasota Key Cemetery body recovery.



In 1934 the Englewood Mound was excavated and leveled to the ground. This Burial Mound was located near the bay, south of Indian Mound Park. At the time of excavation it was 110 feet wide and 13 feet tall. This burial site yielded 263 numbered burials and a great many artifacts – but almost all were pottery fragments. Less than 1000 of these were taken to be studied, the rest were discarded at the site. Because of the type of burial, archaeologists believe the Native Americans of Lemon Bay at this time had a social structure which identified important individuals – such as chiefs or priests – and accorded them enhanced burial ceremonies. The artifacts found in the Englewood Mound indicate the Lemon Bay population had some contact with other Native American Groups in the area, but no European trade goods. The Englewood Mound excavation has been dated between 900 – 1100 AD.

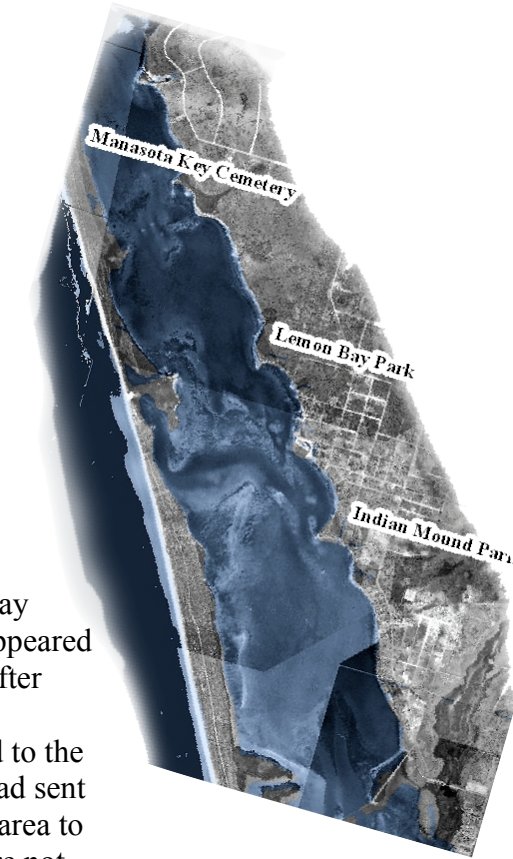
900 – 1100 AD

500 BC - 1350 AD

Indian Mound Park was originally known as Paulsen Point Midden. What is left today is only a part of the original structure. Originally it extended down Lemon Bay, possibly to where the Englewood Burial Mound stood and reflected a long time occupation by the Native Americans of the area. It is believed that the tribe’s village was located between Indian Mound Park and the Englewood Burial Mound location. Dredging by developers and the Intercoastal Waterway has destroyed all but the small piece that is left. Human burials were uncovered in the 1950s and early 1960s. Test sites dug by archaeologists in the mid 1960s showed no burials, but artifacts dating from ~500 BC to 1350 AD were identified.

1700 AD (??)

Sometime around 1700 the Lemon Bay Native Americans seem to have disappeared from this area. This was, of course, after “contact” with the Spanish and other Europeans. Diseases had been passed to the Native populations, and the British had sent Creek Indians from Georgia into the area to capture the Florida Natives (who were not Creek) as slaves. A burial site unearthed on the road to Englewood Beach during construction in 1926 yielded over 100 skeletons. Two skulls were taken to the Smithsonian where the decision was that they were Native Americans and suffering from syphilis. (Cortes: *The History of Early Englewood*, pp. 118, 121) The site was looted by local people. A true scientific study was not done, and how carefully anyone examined the skulls is unsure, so this dating is questionable. (Currently attempting to get information from the Smithsonian.)



LEMON BAY 1948

Timeline based on material in “Maritime Archaeology of Lemon Bay,” a Florida Anthropological Society Publication and other Florida Anthropological Publications. This is a work in progress for informational purposes only.