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## Florida's oldest inhabited community

Hampton Dunn

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# Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



## FLORIDA'S OLDEST INHABITED COMMUNITY

By HAMPTON DUNN

CRYSTAL RIVER --The archaeologists just love Crystal River! So do fishermen, hunters, tourists and others. The are is attractive today, just as it was --- now hear this --- 10,000 to 13,000 years ago!

The digging fraternity started in 1902 trying to dig up the ancient history obviously planted here for centuries. They have come up with enough now for the State of Florida to erect a beautiful museum and to develop a State Park on land furnished by George Dyer, who besides being a lawyer and real estate man is some sort of a history bug.

The evidence is in that ancient Indian tribes romped on the shores of Crystal River as far back as 11,000 B.C., that's right, Before Christ. They've found arrowheads here of the Suwannee variety used by the Paleo Indians around .10,000 B.C. The Crystal River site, as it is properly identified, is regarded as the second most important archaeological site in the whole of North and South America, the first most important being located in Peru.

The museum is located just off U.S. 19-98 immediately north of the town of Crystal River near the Gulf of Mexico. There are interesting burial mounds on the site, and the middens where the Indians buried their refuse, and, of course, there are temple mounds.

Among the highly unusual mementoes of the past here are two stelae---stone slabs used for commemorative purposes. These are the only known stone stelae in the U. S., and ties us back in history to Mexico.

