

Northwest and North Central Regions Quarterly Report

April/May/June 2022

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As the spring semester drew to a close, FPAN Northwest Region wrapped up several ongoing projects and looks forward to some exciting, new opportunities!

Megan Ashbrook wrapped up her tenure as Manager of the Public Archaeology Lab, having guided volunteers in sorting and coding a precontact permanent loan collection at the University of West Florida with assistance from graduate student volunteer Emily Talbert since August 2021. In total this year, Megan worked with volunteers who donated just over 1,300 hours of time since then. We are incredibly grateful for Megan's amazing work over the last three years as Public Archaeology Assistant! Megan has helped staff events, run programs, monitor archaeological sites, and complete significant projects while she worked to complete her Master's degree at the University of West Florida. It is always a bit bittersweet for us to say goodbye to our Assistants after their three-year assistantship has ended, but we know they are always off to do incredible things!

This quarter also included the beginning of our summer presentation season, when demand for adult and children's programs typically increases. Talks included an "Introduction to Archaeology and Careers" series for all 5th graders at Sims Elementary School in Pace, an overview of the history of *San Pablo* for the 3rd Coast Divers group at Dive Pros in Pensacola, and a talk on local underwater archaeology for a seniors' luncheon held at First United Methodist Church of Pensacola. Beginning in June, staff also visited several local summer camp groups who were excited to learn more about what being an archaeologist really means through engaging, hands-on activities!

Although FPAN Northwest did not hold its typical history and archaeology summer camp in conjunction with UWF Historic Trust and UWF Explore Summer Camps due to a staffing change at UWF Historic Trust, FPAN more than made up for it by getting involved with library summer reading programs. In June (and into July), Northwest staff visited all libraries in the three-county area of Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa to provide a program (presentation and hands-on activity) that fit within Florida libraries' "Oceans of Opportunities" summer theme. Through these summer reading programs, over 400 children in FPAN's Northwest Region were exposed to archaeology, career opportunities, the University of West Florida, and anthropological concepts and themes.

In early May, Associate Director Dr. Della Scott-Ireton and Nicole Grinnan traveled to south Florida to attend the annual Florida Anthropological Society meeting and to host the first in-person Heritage Awareness Diving Seminar (HADS) since May 2019. HADS was held in

partnership with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research, and the amazing staff of FPAN's Southeast and West Central Regions. Though 12 people attended HADS in person (a great number in its own regard), we also opened the workshop up to include those who wished to join the group virtually. With 20 people choosing to join via Zoom, attendance for this HADS made for our best yet and we believe that continuing to offer the course with a virtual option will be incredibly beneficial going forward in terms of accessibility for participants and cost savings for FPAN.

Also in May, FPAN Public Archaeology Assistant Bria Brooks was offered the opportunity to work with the Alabama Historical Commission and SEARCH, Inc. to assist with the excavation and recovery of cultural material from the *Clotilda* shipwreck in nearby Mobile, Alabama. This shipwreck is what remains of the last known vessel to carry captive Africans to the United States. With their activities taking place well after the import of enslaved people was outlawed, the crew of *Clotilda* burned the ship and any evidence of their activities in 1859. The vessel was eventually rediscovered during surveys of the Mobile River in recent years. Given her desire to work on African American maritime heritage sites and with descendant communities here in the United States, Bria's participation in this project was an excellent opportunity to explore her academic interests and to be involved in one of the most unique maritime archaeological projects happening at the moment.

Most of our highlight activities this quarter revolved around the celebration of the Juneteenth holiday in partnership with the City of Pensacola. Between May 20 and June 19, the City of Pensacola held a month-long celebration of Juneteenth to coincide with the anniversaries of when enslaved people first learned about their emancipation in Florida (May 20) and then in Texas (June 19). To support this effort, FPAN Northwest held a dedicated "Archaeology After School!" program, offered a mini-Cemetery Resource Protection Training (CRPT) workshop in the African American section of Whitmire Cemetery, and held a kayak tour with the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program highlighting the fascinating history of Bruce Beach as it relates to the city's Black and Creole communities along the Pensacola waterfront.

Other projects included the hosting of the University of West Florida Luna settlement site field lab at the FPAN Public Archaeology Lab in early June; a new partnership with the Friends of *Governor Stone* group to produce 3D models of the ship before and after restoration; Nicole's participation in the "Valor in the Atlantic" telepresence project with NOAA's Monitor National Marine Sanctuary to explore shipwrecks spanning the Civil War to the Second World War in the Atlantic Ocean off North Carolina; and, Nicole and Mike Thomin's presentation of two papers related to Northwest Florida's maritime history at the North American Society for Oceanic History conference.

Current projects in-progress:

- Jeffery Robinson continues analyze 3D scan data for both his Master's thesis and for the Heritage Monitoring Scouts Grant.
- Caroline Peacock continues to work with students in Milton High School's anthropology class to excavate several units on their school grounds. Caroline will also staff the Destination Archaeology Resource Center during Summer 2022.

- Megan Ashbrook is creating a GIS map of heritage sites to visit in the Northwest Florida region.
- Nicole is working with private land managers and Northwest Florida Water Management to record and secure stewardship for the African American section of Old Muscogee Cemetery in Muscogee, Florida (Escambia County).
- Nicole is overseeing the development of a new FPAN-managed “Museums in the Sea” website for Florida’s Underwater Archaeological Preserves.
- Nicole is in discussion with St. Andrews University to continue her Ph.D. work after her supervisors at the University of Birmingham retired.
- Nicole is continuing to oversee updates to the FPAN and Destination Archaeology Resource Center websites as resources and time allow.



Kayakers tour the Pensacola waterfront around an area known as Bruce Beach. With an incredible history spanning the precontact, colonial, industrial, and modern periods, our Juneteenth-themed tour of this area focused on the Black and Creole community living nearby. Our program partners, the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program, assisted us in talking about the ecological significance of the area to modern communities.



In-person participants and facilitators for the May 2022 Heritage Awareness Diving Seminar (HADS) held in Marathon, Florida.



FPAN Associate Director Dr. Della Scott-Iretton poses with a site plan of the "Mystery Wreck" in the Florida Keys during the May 2022 HADS training. Ballast from the wreck site is visible in the background.