

Northwest and North Central Region Quarterly Report

October/November/December 2023

Barbara Clark, RPA, Director
Nicole Grinnan, RPA, Public Archaeologist
Tristan Harrenstein, RPA, Public Archaeologist
Bria Brooks, Public Archaeology Assistant
Ellie Minette, Public Archaeology Assistant
Kate Schreiber, Public Archaeology Assistant
Pax Johnson, Milton High School Special Project Assistant

As the weather cools off, things start to get busy for both regions, especially concerning outdoor events, and this year was no exception. Between festivals, workshops, and other programs we were all very busy. One festival worth highlighting is the Pioneer Day Festival, which was held at Rocky Bayou State Park in November. Staff from both regions attended and were surprised at how well attended the festival was, with close to 500 people visiting our booth in a matter of 5 hours. Kate Schreiber and Ellie Minette also attended the UWF Maker Faire, partnering with the UWF Departments of Anthropology and History to host a “combined” booth that showcased both our incredible local archaeology and the ongoing research happening at UWF. The Maker Faire also drew large crowds to downtown Pensacola and was an important event in terms of supporting the university’s visibility in the local community. Nicole Grinnan continued the popular “Archaeology After School!” and “Archaeology Storytime!” programs with Mike Thomin, hosting 20 young learners each month to discover topics like “Introduction to Archaeology,” Native American Heritage Month, and “Ancient Hunting Tech.” These early education programs are conducted on an RSVP basis and regularly fill up within a day of being posted; there is very clearly a high demand for these types of programs in the Northwest Region. Additional presentations for other local groups in the Northwest Region included those for the Gulf Coast Friends, UWF Leisure Learning, Okaloosa County, the UF/IFAS Escambia County Extension Office and the Bay County Historical Society. At the Bay County Historical Society meeting, over 100 participants and [the local press](#) showed up to the Bay County Library on a Monday night to hear about Northwest Florida’s fascinating shipwreck sites.

As previously mentioned, Tallahassee is celebrating its bicentennial in 2024. The North Central Region joined the “History Taskforce,” a committee focused on history and heritage education for the year-long commemoration. We have several upcoming events that will take place throughout the year, along with many other organizations, including two tours of Old City Cemetery in partnership with the City of Tallahassee and Archaeology Storytimes in partnership with Maclay Gardens State Park. Barbara realized there was a need for interpretive training among other organizations that are also part of the “History Taskforce”, so Tristan developed an interpretation workshop which was a huge success. After the initial program, we have had several follow up communications with workshop attendees to assist them in developing their own interpretive programs. This workshop was such a success and seems to have met a need within our community, so we will continue to offer it to organizations on an as needed basis.

Back in Pensacola, Nicole Grinnan and Mike Thomin worked with the City of Pensacola throughout this quarter to plan an outreach event related to the remote sensing investigations of Pensacola's Miraflores Park in December. The survey was initiated by the City of Pensacola with funding support from the National Park Service in response to the discovery of archaeological human remains from two individuals in the Park in June 2021. TerraXplorations, Inc. conducted the survey and is analyzing data on behalf of the City. As a result of preliminary determinations made during the survey, the City of Pensacola held a press release during the outreach event in December. The City's Mayor D.C. Reeves and Historic Preservation Planner Adrienne Walker made the announcement that several lines of evidence now suggest that there is indeed an historic burial ground under portions of Miraflores Park. These conclusions are preliminary, however, and more details will be released as survey data is reviewed and analyzed. FPAN staff will continue to partner with the City and with the Miraflores Park Advisory Committee to assist with public outreach and interpretation efforts.

We have tried to make social media more of a priority and the utilization of Buffer has definitely helped with that. Both regions continue to see a growth in both Instagram and Facebook followers. Our YouTube channel remains a resource for the public and we continue to update content there as well. Interestingly, a video lecture on turpentine that Barbara gave during the pandemic saw a dramatic increase in views this quarter. We assume that another organization or individual reposted it, but the analytics do not allow for that type of insight. However, we see this as proof that our virtual content has value in that it does continue to reach an audience long after it has initially been posted. We have also used those YouTube lecture links as a way to provide the lecture to individuals interested but unable to attend a lecture in person, so we see value in it increasing accessibility as well. This quarter, channel content has gained an additional 17,800 views with a total watch time of 1,200 hours. The podcast, "Archaeology Books for Fun" continues to grow in popularity, with 16 episodes and over 1200 listens!

For the Northwest Region, November was dominated by scientific diving and submerged heritage preservation. Nicole Grinnan attended the American Academy of Underwater Science (AAUS) fall Board of Directors meeting and then transitioned straight into the annual Diving Equipment and Marketing Association (DEMA) Show in New Orleans. The FPAN team did an incredible job of revitalizing the organizational DEMA booth for this year, designing a new backdrop and rethinking outreach approaches at the show. Over the course of four days, Nicole, Grinnan, Mike Thomin, Bria Brooks, Sara Ayers-Rigsby (FPAN Southeast/Southwest Regions), and Rachael Kangas (FPAN West Central/Central Regions) worked hard to engage dive leaders from across the world! The effort was a huge success, translating into high numbers of visitation at the show and nearly 40 participants in our fall virtual Heritage Awareness Diving Seminar (HADS). Also at DEMA this year, Nicole was invited to speak about HADS and FPAN's submerged heritage preservation efforts during a National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI) seminar. This was an important invitation for securing our ongoing partnership with NAUI, especially as FPAN advocates for cultural resources preservation standards in open water diving courses with NAUI and the many other dive training agencies.

In an effort to foster better relationships with our partners, the North Central Region has established criteria for school visits that include an "ask" from the teacher requesting a school program. This "ask" includes a request to meet with administrators and educators during a staff or department meeting to discuss with them the resources that FPAN offers, including both

online and in person content. This method of reaching educators is still in the beginning stages, but we are hoping that it will be a more successful way to work with educators since we have not had huge success with the traditional teacher workshops. We have been working with a teacher at Swift Creek Middle School, named after a site on school property, who has been very accommodating to our requests. This effort to make partnerships with schools more equitable and beneficial to the teachers and students seems to be working so far, at least in this instance. We are hoping to continue this model for all future school program requests.

Barbara attended and presented at the Partnership for National Trails Conference in Orlando. She had the opportunity to sit on a panel to discuss climate change initiatives and some of the programs we offer, specifically HMS but also others. She also conducted a workshop on how to improve interpretation and public engagement along trails highlighting the value of Asset Based Community Development. Both programs were very successful and had positive feedback from attendees. This was a great opportunity to network with potential partners as well. Since the conference she has been able to assist several trail organizations by connecting them with various resources and partners.

Finally, the Northwest Region began the important task of implementing its two current grants. The “People of the Apalachicola System: Exploring Cultural Heritage to Support Ecosystem Planning, Management, and Adaptation” project funded by the NOAA National Estuarine Research Reserve System Science Collaborative and led by Nicole Grinnan with Mike Thomin and Bria Brooks is moving forward! Nicole worked with NOAA to consult with several tribes, including the Seminole Tribe of Florida, during this quarter and received final concurrence for the project in December. At the same time, the University of West Florida executed the grant contract with NOAA and gave final approval. Fieldwork is scheduled to begin in January 2024! The second grant, a Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program (PPBEP) Community Grant, also began in December as a collaboration among Nicole Grinnan, Mike Thomin, and Destination Archaeology Resource Center graduate assistant Taylor Brown. The grant will fund the development and creation of an updated exhibit in the Destination Archaeology Resource Center that focuses on human habitation within local estuarine systems.

In December, Barbara and Tristan were invited to assist Maclay Gardens State Park with their annual assessment of cultural resources located within the park boundaries. They worked with the park’s Cultural Resource Specialist in monitoring approximately 15 sites, including historic structures. This was a great opportunity for FPAN staff to gain a better understanding of the cultural resources located at their host property, which served as a foundation for a “heritage hike” in January. We hope to continue to assist the park in monitoring cultural sites and working with them on upcoming public interpretive projects to help showcase a more diverse history of the park, including the African American Overstreet Community that once existed in the area.

In Progress/Ongoing:

- Barbara Clark continues to serve as Chair of the Tallahassee Trust for Historic Preservation, as well as Chair of the Rural Acquisition Committee of the National Forests in Florida.
- Tristan continues to serve as a board member of the Florida Trail of Indian Heritage and chairs their marketing committee.

- Nicole continues to serve as webmaster for the FPAN, Destination Archaeology Resource Center, and Florida Archaeology Month websites.
- Nicole continues to serve as Website Editor for the Society for Historical Archaeology as of January 2023.
- Nicole continues to serve as Membership Chair and Appointed Director for the American Academy of Underwater Sciences.
- Nicole continues to serve as Events Chair and Director for the St. Michael's Cemetery Foundation, Inc.
- Nicole serving on UWF Anthropology graduate student thesis committees for: Chrissy Perl, Bria Brooks, Nolan Swaim, and Kaitlin Decker
- Barbara continues to serve as a member of the Tallahassee/Leon County joint government Advisory Committee for Quality Growth.



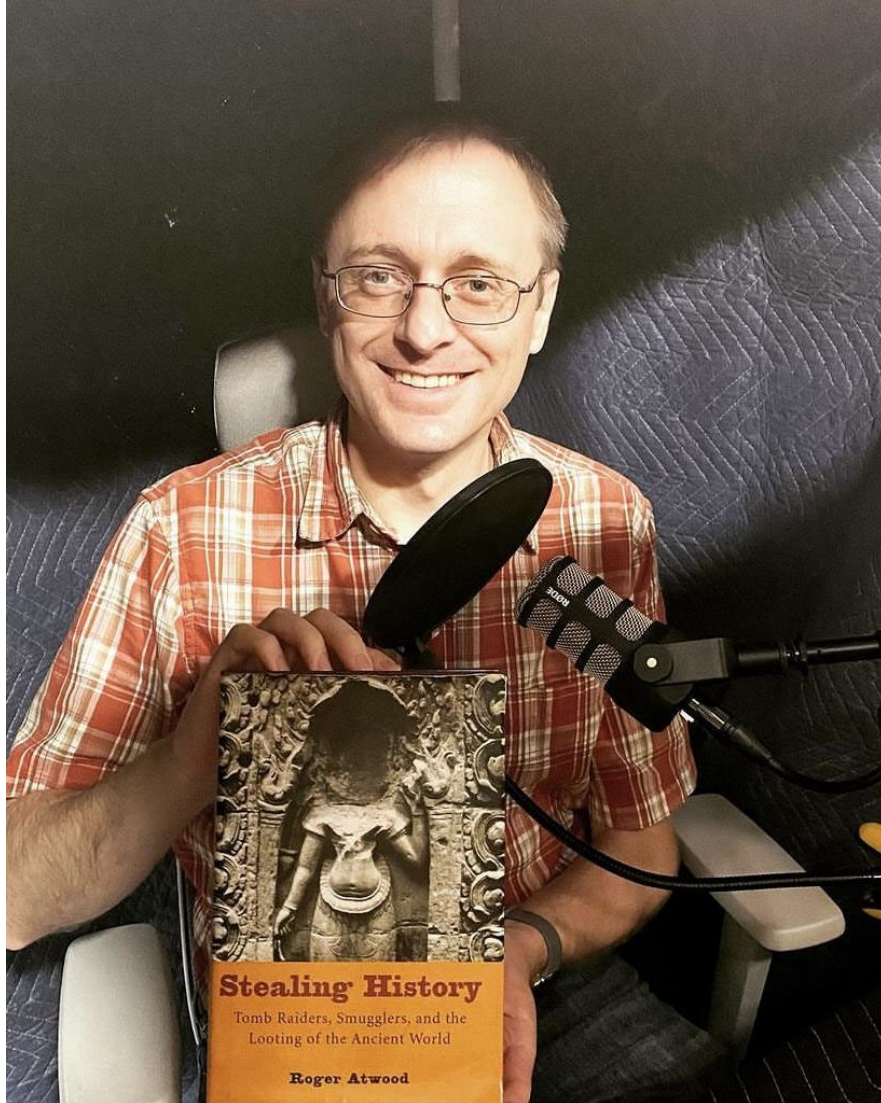
Mike Thomin, Bria Brooks, Sara Ayers-Rigsby, and Nicole Grinnan (left to right) support underwater heritage preservation and heritage tourism at the 2023 Diving Equipment and Marketing Association (DEMA) Show in New Orleans.



Nicole Grinnan discusses archaeology along Thompson’s Bayou on the UWF campus with a group of kayakers for the “Panhandle Outdoors Live!” program with partners from the UF/IFAS Escambia County Extension Office and the UWF Department of Anthropology.



Tristan and Cultural Resource Specialist, Kyle Teel, hike along a path at Maclay Gardens State Park. Barbara and Tristan assisted him in monitoring cultural sites within park boundaries, which provided a great opportunity to collaborate with park staff and get to know the park's history better.



The “Archaeology Books for Fun” podcast continues to attract new listeners. This quarter Tristan and Barbara read and discussed “Stealing History: Tomb Raiders, Smugglers, and the Looting of the Ancient World” by Roger Atwood. This book was a four part podcast series and was a great opportunity to dive deep into the issues relating to illegal looting and the black market sale of artifacts.