

Northwest and North Central Region Quarterly Report

January/February/March 2025

Barbara Clark, RPA, Director
Bria Brooks, Public Archaeologist
Tristan Harrenstein, RPA, Public Archaeologist
Ellie Minette, Public Archaeology Assistant
Kate Schreiber, Public Archaeology Assistant
Elizabeth White, Public Archaeology Assistant

2025 started off strong with staff from both regions attending and presenting at the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference, which was held in New Orleans this year. Additionally, Barbara and Tristan participated in the Public Day, which was held at the Jazz Museum. All staff also participated in the annual FPAN staff retreat, held in Stuart this year. It was a successful and very productive meeting. Bria Brooks stayed in South Florida after the meeting to conduct some proficiency dives with other FPAN underwater archaeologists. Barbara and Tristan met up with a resident of Deland to transport an artifact he recovered to the DHR Conservation Lab in Tallahassee on their way home.

In 2026, the North Central Region will be hosting the CRPT Conference. Barbara has started the planning process and is working on booking the venue in Monticello in an effort to stimulate the local economy of this small, rural panhandle community. One of the goals of the 2026 conference will be to highlight the Cemetery Program, focusing on the assistance they can provide, including grants. It is early in the planning process, but there will be more to report at a later date.

Both regions have been continuing their work to reach out to new potential partners, as well as rekindle partnerships that may have dwindled during the pandemic. Bria in the Northwest Region had a robust lineup of Black History Month programs in the Northwest Region during February, including numerous lectures, Black History Month Bingo, Archaeology Untapped, and media interviews. Tristan, likewise, has been hard at work reaching out to numerous partners, one of which has been the Riley House, an African History Museum in Tallahassee. As part of his initiative to set up a 3D printing program, the Riley House acted as his first test client. He was able to make multiple prints for them to use at public events. The feedback he has received has been very positive and he hopes to continue to offer this service to other local and regional museums as well in the near future.

The [“Archaeology Books for Fun” podcast](#) continues. Tristan and Barbara, the podcast hosts, have seen steady growth and interest. The latest book, “The Lost City of the Monkey God”, written by Douglas Preston, has provided them with lots of opportunities to discuss concepts relating to archaeological ethics, colonialism, and indigenous erasure. In March, to kick off Florida Archaeology Month they started reading “The Nine Lives of Florida’s Famous Key Marco Cat”, by Austin J. Bell. This book was chosen because of its Florida focus. The podcast has seen steady growth both on traditional podcast apps, such as Spotify and iTunes, but interestingly, the most growth has come from YouTube. Barbara and Tristan plan to create a more concrete marketing

plan for the podcast in the coming months to see growth continue. The goal is to have the podcast become a steady funding stream for FPAN in the future.

In addition to the podcast, Florida Archaeology Month has kept staff and Graduate Assistants busy, as usual. This year the Florida legislature session coincided with FAM. Barbara and Tristan, in partnership with DHR, were able to get back to the capital! We had a joint booth in the rotund with DHR staff. It was a huge success, and we all enjoyed getting back in front of our lawmakers. We were able to distribute the one pagers that staff had designed, as well as brochures and other information about our programs. We tabled and went to visit various legislator's offices. Additionally, it was Rural Counties Days at the capital, and we were able to make acquaintances with several counties that we have struggled with. We have already started communicating with and assisting several of them, including Lafayette and Dixie counties. Next year Barbara plans on looking at the capitol events calendar and attending other similar events that may be beneficial for FPAN.

Bria was also able to attend the Back to Angola festival in Bradenton. This event was originally scheduled for this past summer but was delayed due to hurricane damage. Bria has been working hard on making connections with maroon communities and descendants throughout Florida and the Caribbean. We have been discussing ways to continue this work into the summer.

Our Graduate Assistants have been hard at work this quarter as well. They assist in running the DARC museum and the volunteer lab, providing them with valuable experience going into their professional careers. The Milton High School project also continues to be a solid premier FPAN program for students. The annual Milton High media day was a huge success. Numerous local officials, including the mayor, attended. It is always a delight to meet the students. Jess and Ethan have brainstormed ideas to improve upon this program, and we are excited to see them put into action next school year. GAs have also been assisting us with some website updates, such as checking links to ensure they are still active. Additionally, they have been doing social media posts, assisting staff at events, and providing much needed support for programs and administrative tasks. They have also been a huge help with Heritage Monitoring Scouts and have been working on becoming trained Scouts themselves.

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 and is current President of the organization.
- Barbara continues to serve as a member of the Tallahassee/Leon County joint government Advisory Committee for Quality Growth.
- Barbara continues to serve as the Secretary for the Maritime Landscape Alliance for Preservation and work towards the goal of establishing the Florida Panhandle as a National Heritage Area.
- Bria has been making campus visits and is planning on pursuing her PhD in the coming year!

- Both regions are busy setting up summer programs, including camps and summer reading events with local libraries.



Barbara and DHR staff at the 2025 Legislative Day.



Milton High School students spent time with local officials and the media showing what they have learned during the annual media day event.

