**Ongoing Partnership Projects and Future Projects of the**

**Taos Archaeological Society**

**Project Description #1**

**(TAS in partnership with Picuris Pueblo and SMU in Taos)**

**Precis of Picuris Ceramic Analysis Project**

In 1960 with the express permission of Picuris Pueblo, Dr. Herb Dick, archeologist at Fort Burgwin Research Center started conducting excavations in support of a “… multidisciplinary research program to assist the reconstruction of history through archaeological research [Adler and Dick 1999:6-7.” It took more than 30 years for the report of analysis of artifacts and report of excavations to be published (Adler, Michael A., and Herbert W. Dick. 1999. Picuris Pueblo through time: eight centuries of change in a northern Rio Grande pueblo. [Dallas]: William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies, Southern Methodist University. https://digitalcollections.smu.edu/digital/collection/sit/id/27). In 2016 a reanalysis of the Picuris ceramics, upgrading curation and preparation of a digital database was initiated concurrently with supporting dissertation research on a portion of the ceramic collections by Valerie Bondura of Columbia University. Mike Adler requested assistance of volunteers with the “Picuris Ceramic Analysis Project” after they finished assisting with repackaging and digitizing ceramics from Pot Creek Pueblo. Since the summer of 2017 volunteers primarily recruited through the Taos Archaeological Society have completed initial repackaging of all ceramics from the 1960’s“Picuris Research Program” and also had sorted and coded log sheets for a computer database of numbers, weights and wares by excavation provenience of more than 70 of the approximately 140 bankers boxes of sherds in the collections from Picuris currently housed at SMU-in-Taos. Since March of 2020 when volunteer lab operations were suspended, TAS volunteers have been working with SMU-in-Taos and Picuris Pueblo officials to restore project operations as soon as health and safety conditions allow to complete the Picuris Project.

**Project Description #2**

**(TAS in partnership with Picuris Pueblo and SMU in Taos)**

**Helen G. Blumenschein Artifact Collection Inventory Project**

In 1953, Helen G. Blumenschein, daughter of Taos Art Society founder Ernest Blumenschein, began recording the locations of archaeological sites in the Taos Valley. She collected artifacts from many (all?) of them. She also excavated at several—we don't know how many, yet. Her interests turned from archaeology to history in the mid 1960s and it appears she didn't do any more survey or collecting after that. In the 1980s, Helen gave her artifact collection, or some of it at any rate, to Fort Burgwin. The artifact collection, consisting of artifacts from an as–yet unknown number of sites stored in over 60 boxes, collected dust in the Fort repository until summer 2019 when Mark Henderson showed them to Jeff Boyer. Beginning in the later summer, Jeff initiated a project to inventory Helen's collection at the Fort. With the assistance of several volunteer “sherders” from the Picuris Ceramic Analysis Project, including Becky Quintana, who took leave of her senses and volunteered to be the in-the-lab crew director, protocols were developed for inventory recording and distinguishing pottery types, and work began by volunteers who became known as “Blumers.” Artifacts from each site are sorted, identified, recorded, bagged for curation, and photographed. To date, Martin Gutosky has been in charge of artifact photography.

In addition to the artifacts, we are searching for photographs, site cards, and other documents from Helen’s survey and excavations. Rumor has it that, although Helen gave the artifacts to Fort Burgwin, she gave documents to other institutions. Possible locations include the Southwest Research Center at UNM–Taos, Taos Historic Museums, and Adams State University. Goals for the project are two-fold. First, Fort Burgwin, a curation repository, needs an accurate inventory of the collection, which includes potsherds, stone and bone debris and tools, and other artifacts. The project will result in a digital artifact inventory from each site identified by collection location (“provenience”), linked to artifact photographs.

Second, we want to assess the state of the collection for its potential to provide information on sites that Helen visited. Many of those sites are no longer accessible or, in some cases, even in existence, the expansive development in the valley being what it has become. Toward this end, we plan to link the inventory log and photographs to site locations in a GIS database. This will allow us to compare locations of sites from different time periods recorded by different researchers. In turn, this will enhance our knowledge of, for instance, static conditions and dynamic processes of population mobility and settlement, access to and use of local and regional resources, relationships between native communities that finally aggregated at Taos and Picuris Pueblos, and relationships between native and Euroamerican communities. Additionally, and this will be of particular interest to the TAS, Helen Blumenschein was the founder, in the 1950s, of the Taos Archaeological Association. The Taos Archaeological Association, which she also called the Taos Archaeological Group, was a precursor to the Taos Archaeological Society. Working toward a more complete history of her collection and her efforts will fill in the earliest history of the society of which we are all members.

**Project Description #2B**

**(TAS in partnership with Picuris Pueblo and SMU in Taos)**

**Blumenschein SMU sherd photography project progress report by Martin Gutoski**

The purpose of this project is outlined in the task description conducted at Fort Burgwin, to photograph sherds from the Blumenschein collection held by Southern Methodist University/Taos (SMU-in-Taos). This is conducted per the research partnership agreement with Taos Archaeology Society (TAS) executed DATED , 2021

The procedure under which this was begun in 2020 has been as a test run using various cameras and settings. Equipment was used on a trial basis to determine the best methodology for safe and efficient operations to obtain adequate archival documentation of the collection.

**Project Description #3**

**(TAS partnership with BLM, US Forest Service, Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project and the State of New Mexico)**

**SiteWatch**

Site Watch trains citizen volunteers to assist land-management agencies and their preservation partners in protecting New Mexico's cultural resources.

SiteWatch is a network of trained volunteers who monitor prehistoric and historic resources on public, private and tribal lands in their communities. Archaeological sites, historic buildings and places, trails, neon signs, bridges and structures are adopted by site stewards who routinely monitor them for signs of erosion, wear and tear, vandalism, and looting.

**Project Description #4**

**Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project**

**(TAS partnership with Mesa Rrieta Petroglyph Project))**

The **mission** of the **Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project** is to record, preserve and educate. Our volunteers record **petroglyphs**, train to become tour docents, and participate in our extensive education programs. The **Project** offers tours of the Wells **Petroglyph** Preserve, located midway between Santa Fe and Taos.

**Project Description #5**

**(TAS partnership with Dr. Albert Gonzalez, Cal State East Bay and UC-Berkeley)**

**Mexican Whiskey: An Archaeology of Industry and Inter-Ethnic Dynamics in Old New Mexico**

Overview: TMAP is a study of industry, historical ecology, inequality, and rebellion that aims to investigate the cultural factors that led to the destruction of Anglo-held Turley’s Mill at the hands of Mexican and Indian insurgents in 1847. The project will pair students at Cal State East Bay and UC-Berkeley with Northern New Mexican elders and high school students in archaeological experimentation, survey, excavation, and historical research aimed to answer questions as to the potential social and ecological impacts of the construction and day-to-day operation of Turley’s Mill (Figure 1) on the local community and its resources. The project builds upon theoretical work in industrial archaeology carried out in relation to the American Northeast and American Southwest, evaluating modes of industrial resource use, human as much as natural, as a possible locus of community or regional violences. We plan to partner with descendant and community stakeholders in every step of the process, from preliminary documentary research and excavation to laboratory analysis, interpretation, and publication. Working alongside our community partners, we expect to produce several substantial contributions to the historical archaeological literature as it pertains to the cultural impact of industrial colonization in the nineteenth-century American West.When we can get back to doing field archaeology there will be opportunities to help with mapping and some excavation on this project.

**Project Description #6**

**(TAS partnership with SMU in Taos and Picuris Pueblo)**

**Picuris Museum Project**

The project to conceptualize and create exhibits for the newly remodeled Picuris Museum at the Picuris Pueblo is just beginning, We will notify TAS members when opportunities present themselves to engage with this project.

**Project Description #7**

**(TAS partnership with Dr. Catrina Whiley and North Texas Archaeological Society)**

**The Baahku Archeological Project**

The Baahku site is located in the Sangre de Cristo mountains near the town of Arroyo Seco, NM, on private land.  Original maps of the site and fencing on the property identified the area of known Ancestral Puebloan occupation to a certain section of their property.  After carefully building their house and outbuildings well away from the fenced area, the landowners encountered archaeological deposits in an area outside the known site during regular use of their property.  They made a connection with Catrina Banks Whitley, Ph.D., RPA, through the Taos campus of Southern Methodist University (SMU) to investigate the extent of the site on their property. Stratified random sampling of the site resulted in the identification of several artifact depositions outside the known site boundaries.  Both Dr. Whitley and the landowners decided studying the site would provide much needed information about the northern portion of the Taos Valley since most of the few excavations carried out were done prior to the late 1980s.

Volunteers who are passionate about archaeology and have extensive excavation experience began studying the BaahKu site in 2011 and have continued every summer since. Dr. Whitley and Lia Tsesmeli, Ph.D., RPA have co-directed the site since 2012 and excavations have occurred with the Co-Directors and members of the [North Texas Archeological Society](http://www.tarrantarch.org/home.html) and members of the [Taos Archeological Society.](http://www.taosarch.org/)