



# HOW DO WE REACH MORE?

Sharing Cultural and Archaeological  
Research with Others

Edited by Darby C. Stapp and Julia G. Longenecker

Design and Production by Victoria M. Boozer

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### **3. Pacific Northwest Archaeological Society (PNWAS): Reaching the Northwest Advocational Public for 36 Years**

Dale R. Croes

As originally stated in our founding in 1985, PNWAS is a membership organization that “offers a means for individuals and organizations to declare their support for the preservation of the rich archaeological resources in our region and help to bring public archaeology programs to people of the Pacific Northwest. Benefits of membership include timely information on Northwest archaeological research, a bi-monthly lecture series, and opportunity to participate in professionally supervised research in the Northwest.” PNWAS was incorporated at that time as a non-profit organization in the State of Washington and has remained true to these original objectives. I have been the Executive Director throughout these 36 years, with a President, Vice-President, and other Officers on our Board.

The Washington Archeological Society (WAS) was the first public/professional program, mostly in Western Washington, developed in 1957, and often conducting their own archaeological projects—most notably the Snoqualmie River/Biderbost wet/dry site (45SN100)—and produced *The Washington Archeologist* newsbulletin, Volumes 1–25 from 1957 through their closing twenty-five years later in 1982. The WAS often prided itself in producing professional reports from the fieldwork they conducted.

Shortly before WAS curtailed operations, a new group was forming as a non-profit, the Association for Washington Archaeology (AWA) founded in 1981. It provided a non-university affiliation of archaeologists, especially with the rise of contract archaeology companies in our state, to continue many of the goals of WAS, including the publication of peer reviewed articles and reports in the *Archaeology in Washington* series (Vol. 1, 1989–Vol. 20, 2021). The AWA also provides a rapid communication service to archaeologists through their newsletters.

A different direction taken by PNWAS, as mostly non-professionals, was to **not** allow conducting their own archaeological field projects, but, instead, provide a forum for professional archaeologists to present their work in the Northwest and promote volunteer work with professionally run and supervised archaeological field projects to help often under-staffed student and professional crews. PNWAS also sponsored workshops in lithic, bone, and basketry technologies and field trips to visit professional excavations in B.C., Oregon, and Washington (Figure 3-1).

To begin a non-profit organization, local advocates met and formed the PNWAS Board, which began the work of becoming incorporated and developing educational programs. Gerald Fritts, the original President, stated in a newspaper article, “we formed the society because there was no public forum for people interested in the past humanity of this area, which is a shame, because so much of it is so close by.” Gerald had recently moved from eastern to western Washington and had enjoyed being involved in the *Columbia Basin Archaeological Society*, and initiated efforts to develop a new west-side program. He tracked me down (at the time I was Director of the Washington Archaeological Research Center (WARC, based at Washington State University (WSU)), proposed the idea, and we worked together with a group of advocates to initiate PNWAS. Barbara McGee, who had become vice president of PNWAS, argued for including some Northwest archaeology to be taught in elementary schools; unfortunately, curricula were already crammed with more subjects than teachers have time to teach. This reflects one of the educational bents of the newly forming PNWAS. In the original development, as stated in our 1985 goals above, a focus was on involving the interested public and not an attempt to conduct any of our own fieldwork or professional publications. We felt the archaeological professionals had several outlets to get their work published and would appreciate a west-side forum to present their work to the interested public. This remains the objective of the PNWAS program.

I was known to have tried to develop a public forum and volunteer group to support my ongoing fieldwork on the northwest tip of the Olympic Peninsula at the Hoko River wet/dry and rockshelter sites through a membership program and newsletter: *Hoko Archaeological Project News* (1981–1983: <https://www.academia.edu/40506139/>



**Figure 3-1.** PNWAS member Brandy Rinck with her recently completed cedar bark basket; member Kerrie Murphy working on her's in the background. This 2015 PNWAS Cedar Bark Basketmaking Workshop was taught by master weavers and members Jan Smith and Kay Harradine with assistant Dale Croes.

[Hoko Archaeological Project News 1981 1983](#)). I knew we could transfer this interested public group into the initial membership of PNWAS as it formed in 1985 (some of these Hoko members are still active members in PNWAS today!).

As part of the new PNWAS public orientation, our first presentation was by popular novelist Jean M. Auel, author of best-selling books *The Clan of the Cave Bear*, *The Valley of Horses*, and her 1985 book *The Mammoth Hunter*. Jean and husband Ray had been supporters of the Hoko River project since the beginning and continue to this day supporting PNWAS as members. Seattle newspapers headlined that Jean Auel would launch the archaeological society, giving us access to a wide audience of potential members.

Our next popular public talk was *The Scientific Evidence of Sasquatch*, by Dr. Grover Krantz, WSU at the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) auditorium, followed by talks on Marmes Rockshelter by Drs. Carl Gustafson and David Rice. In 1986 we also discussed plans to conduct the *Circum-Pacific Prehistory Conference* for our Washington State 1989 Centennial; PNWAS would be the backbone staff volunteers for this large international conference,



held at the Seattle Center, making it possible (see the description of this 1989 international conference and a link to its program in Attachment 3-A, below).

The best way to view the overall history of PNWAS activities is to review our spreadsheets and 150 PNWAS News Bulletins scanned and compiled in this link: <https://wsu.academia.edu/DaleCroes/Talks>. The spreadsheets are sorted by year, event type, and lead speaker. I summarize highlights of PNWAS programs and efforts over 36 years in Attachment 3-A.

In addition to regular presentations, PNWAS has played a role as public activists for Washington archaeology. The East Wenatchee Clovis debacle is one noteworthy effort undertaken by PNWAS. Our members visited the East Wenatchee Clovis site in 1990. At that time, the site was being re-opened by a crew under Dr. Michael Gramly, after having been backfilled to protect it by WSU excavators. We also began a relationship and had speakers from the Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation (CCT), whose traditional territory contains the Clovis site, largely because the controversial project seemed to sidestep this important recognition. We sent the CCT a draft document stating how the Colville Tribe and PNWAS would work together on any archaeological project. The signed agreement caught international attention and was published as *Shared Principles* in the foremost archaeological journal, *Antiquity* [65(249), December 1991], in Cambridge England: [https://www.academia.edu/40393246/Shared Principles a cooperation agreement between a Native American group and archaeologists](https://www.academia.edu/40393246/Shared_Principles_a_cooperation_agreement_between_a_Native_American_group_and_archaeologists) (Figures 3-2 and 3-3).

In 1991 we initiated a fundraiser for the acquisition of the site and Clovis-period artifacts and began a series of talks across the state discussing the importance of acquisition and repatriation of the site/artifacts to affected Tribes. Instead, Washington State unilaterally passed legislation to purchase the East Wenatchee Clovis artifacts at the tax-payer's cost of \$250,000, to be paid to the private property owner. PNWAS President, Jeff Mangel, spearheaded the PNWAS Board response, and we published a society *Position Statement* (March 9, 1992), in line with archaeological concerns throughout the country, concerning this unilateral action by our state:

HOW DO WE REACH MORE?

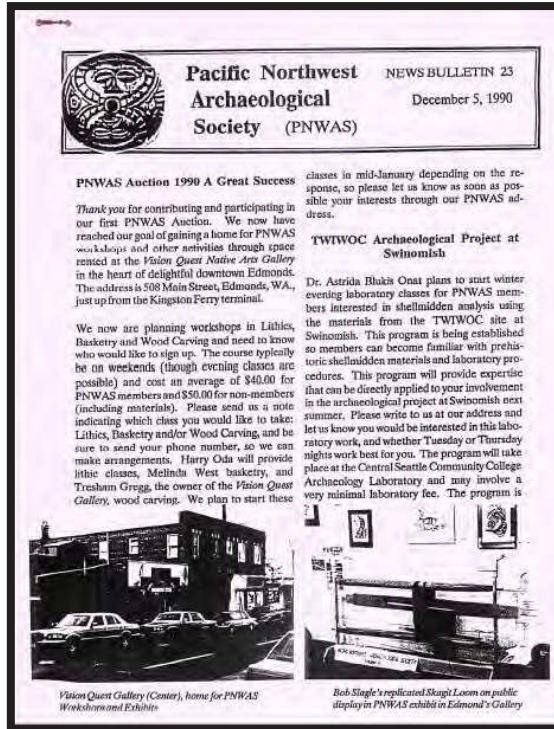


Figure 3-2. PNWAS Newsletter for December 5, 1990.



Figure 3-3. “Five PNWAS groups purchases visits to see the Clovis Dig from our Auction” [photograph and caption taken from December 5, 1990 News Bulletin]. PNWAS attendees include President Gerry Fritts, Vice President Larry Tradlender, Director Dr. Dale Croes, Board Member Vic Kucera, Board Member Senator Nat Washington, Dr. Alex Krieger (UW; who helped originally define Clovis after the 1920s discovery), Dr. David Rice (COE), and Seattle Times Science Writer, Hill Williams.

1. "A price tag of \$250,000.00 for the artifacts alone is exorbitant and unprecedented. If unaccompanied by the balance of the package plan, it could... destroy the guidelines under which archaeologists have been able to operate with landowners and private individuals in the past.
2. The State should not put itself in the position of buying artifacts from landowners and 'entrepreneurs.' To do so would be to condone conduct which could, in some cases, be unethical or even illegal.
3. Many archaeologists who have contacted PNWAS have indicated their belief that the 1990 excavation was, at best, substandard in terms of scientific investigation....
4. State employees have argued that the price is not exorbitant because the artifacts are unique; in fact, they are far from it.... What's unique is the site; it is the first undisturbed Clovis site to be discovered in North America.... This is why remaining portions of the site are so important; the cultural and environmental knowledge that could be gained are potentially incalculable....
5. The State has already set another dangerous precedent by allowing the landowner to dictate the terms of past and future archaeology on his property. To quote one archaeologist quite simply, 'The landowner can own the land, but he can't own the science.'
6. In this age of repatriation... and recognition of Native American rights in relation to ancestral sites, any step backward would be totally counterproductive. Washington State has traditionally taken the lead in this area; with such positive alternatives, there is no need to backslide now.

...The scientific, ethical, and cultural issues involved... are of primary importance in our view and must take precedence over the unilateral acquisition of 11,000-year-old art objects for a centerpiece in the new Washington State Historical Society Museum. Nonetheless, we still believe that, by again entering into a spirit of cooperation, each of the principals can achieve its goals while affirming and furthering the goals of all the others...." (*PNWAS News Bulletin* No. 30, November 9,

1992 with the expanded overview in the News Bulletins link:  
[https://www.academia.edu/50287270/PNWAS\\_NEWS\\_BULLETIN\\_30\\_1992](https://www.academia.edu/50287270/PNWAS_NEWS_BULLETIN_30_1992) )

Following this, the State opted not to buy the artifacts for \$250,000, and the property owner donated them to the State, and instead was paid \$250,000 for excavation rights to the site. The property owner further stipulated that excavations could not take place for 15 years, which the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation accepted, and they continue to hold the rights to excavation.

### **Concluding the First 36 Years of PNWAS**

In reaching the interested advocational public, we have shown that such an engaged audience exists through the Pacific Northwest Archaeological Society, and we can provide a creative public platform to advocate for the region's archaeological resources and to help support ongoing presentation and research. We believe the interested public does not want to (because of their time constraints) or need to become too engaged professionally in producing an in-house journal such as attempted by WAS and continues through AWA and especially the able work of this *JONA* platform (recognizing these professional publication avenues already exist). PNWAS instead provides a platform for archaeologists and Tribes to present their current works (now through Zoom) and provide volunteer opportunities for members with professionals. We believe this effort will continue well into the future as long as the goals provide the interested and advocational public a way to stay involved—some of our most active members have been with us since 1985, and new members should continue the support into the future of our region's unique human past.

**ATTACHMENT 3-A.** Highlights of PNWAS programs and efforts over 36 years.

**PNWAS conducts the 1989 *Circum-Pacific Prehistory Conference, Bringing a Million Years of Human Heritage to Washington State, held at the Seattle Center April 1–6, 1989.*** PNWAS was the infra-structural group for this international conference held as part of our Washington State 1989 Centennial Celebrations. The conference brought together 800 attendees to hear 225 presenters from August 1–6, 1989 (from 18 different countries outlining human evolution and archaeology in 40 countries from around and within the Pacific Basin). We also had a 5-day session on Indigenous People’s perspectives of their own origins from throughout the Pacific—all organized and conducted by Native Peoples. PNWAS members conducted conference registration, coordinated the distribution of travel funds, set up slide projection equipment (donated by U.S. West), monitored sessions, and assisted with the field trips and banquets. Without the PNWAS public organization, this Seattle-based conference would not have been possible. To best recognize the conference complexity, programs, public events, and abstracts, please view: [https://www.academia.edu/45109693/1989\\_Circum\\_Pacific\\_Prehistory\\_Conference\\_Program\\_and\\_Abstracts](https://www.academia.edu/45109693/1989_Circum_Pacific_Prehistory_Conference_Program_and_Abstracts).

**PNWAS testing Hypotheses.** In 1995 Director Croes got an Exceptional Faculty grant from his college South Puget Sound Community College (SPSCC) to begin testing what was called the Chehalis River Hypothesis (CRH) proposing that First Peoples coming down the glaciated coast would have found first access into the entire American Continent up the Chehalis River drainage. This PNWAS involved field testing and pondering through public presentations of the first Americans continues to this day (see final entry, below).

**1998 public program with Seattle Society for American Archaeology (SAA) meeting.** PNWAS programs moved to the Seattle R.E.I. Auditorium. That year the national SAA planned their large national meeting in Seattle. We initiated a panel discussion of experts on mammoth extinction at the spacious R.E.I. auditorium (in walking distance from the conference) which was lead off by Dr. Peter Ward and his new book *The Call of Distant Mammoths, Why the Ice Age Mammals Disappeared*.

**PNWAS provides 10 years of summer volunteers (2000–2009) at the SPSCC field school excavations of the Mud Bay/*Qwu?gwes* shellmidden and wet site with the Squaxin Island Tribe.** Director Croes and the Squaxin Island Tribe Cultural Resources Department welcomed PNWAS volunteers to help screen and excavate with professional supervision at the ongoing summer archaeological excavations.

**PNWAS helps host its second international conference at SPSCC in 2003.** Director Croes was asked by the England-based Wetland Archaeology Research Project (WARP) to host their tenth international conference in Olympia, Washington ([https://www.academia.edu/45113880/Wet\\_Site\\_Connections\\_WARP10\\_Conference\\_2003\\_Program\\_and\\_Abstracts](https://www.academia.edu/45113880/Wet_Site_Connections_WARP10_Conference_2003_Program_and_Abstracts)). PNWAS again provided the volunteers with students at South Puget Sound Community College. The international attendees visited the Mudbay/*Qwu?gwes* wet site and visited the projects co-sponsor's newly opened Squaxin Island Tribe Museum Library and Research Center, featuring the ancient nets, baskets, woodworking and other artifacts from the ongoing wet site investigations.

**PNWAS hosts Lower Elwha Tribe presentations at R.E.I. Seattle for their perspective on the controversial *Tse-whit-zen* site excavations from 2005–2007.** The Washington Department of Transportation began excavating a graving yard in Port Angeles to build pontons for their floating bridge projects. Soon they encountered a Lower Elwha Tribe ancient village, *Tse-whit-zen*, and large cemetery. Efforts to mitigate the impact on this site and cemetery were initiated, but the problem continued to expand. PNWAS hosted three presentations by the Lower Elwha leadership to give them a Seattle platform to express their own concerns, through the final stopping of the project and State settlement to the Tribe.

**PNWAS continues to promote a theme of presentations on the Chehalis River Hypothesis (CRH) and the First Americans.** Director Croes and founding member Vic Kucera published a paper on the CRH in *The Journal of Northwest Anthropology (JONA)* ([https://www.academia.edu/40393271/Entering\\_the\\_American\\_Continent\\_The\\_Chehalis\\_River\\_Hypothesis](https://www.academia.edu/40393271/Entering_the_American_Continent_The_Chehalis_River_Hypothesis)) and Kucera created a video on the hypothesis that was featured at a meeting and later at a Zoom virtual meeting following the stop of in-person meetings with the COVID-19 pandemic.

**In retirement in 2013, Director Croes coordinates with Ed Carriere, Suquamish Elder and Master Basketmaker in replicating 2,000-year-old wet site basketry from the Snoqualmie River/Biderbost site (45SN100; excavated by WAS).** Carriere and Croes presented a series of talk on this distinct synergy of Culture and Science, which included their international travel to England to attend a WARP Conference and a visit to northern Japan to work with Ainu basketmakers. This work culminated in the production of a publication of this work in 2018 and a book release and signing at a PNWAS program ([https://www.academia.edu/40402883/ReAwakening\\_Ancient\\_Salish\\_Sea\\_Basketry\\_Table\\_of\\_Contents\\_and\\_Prefaces\\_available\\_on\\_Amazon](https://www.academia.edu/40402883/ReAwakening_Ancient_Salish_Sea_Basketry_Table_of_Contents_and_Prefaces_available_on_Amazon) ).

**After 35 years of PNWAS in-person meetings, the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic required a transition into virtual meetings through the Zoom platform.** Sadly, we had to curtail our in-person gatherings and summer Makah Days campouts and try to establish virtual presentations and gatherings through the Zoom platform and recorded programs on a PNWAS YouTube Channel website (greatly facilitated by our current President, Matt Barclay, M.A. Computer Science). With our on-going Chehalis River Hypothesis testing theme, presentations by regional geologist and archaeologists continued and remain popular with a robust membership. We initiated, with interns from the Evergreen State College, exploration of megafauna at regional west-side museums to see what the post-glacial environments were experienced by First Peoples. To initiate this part of the research we got an initial grant from the Squaxin Island Tribe 1% Charitable Fund to obtain C14 dates from interesting megafauna examples. This effort continues, with membership donations through a Date-a-Mammoth fund raiser, with our first date of 18,300 years old from a mammoth ulna found in Kelso, Washington ([https://www.academia.edu/45629317/Dating\\_a\\_Mammoth\\_with\\_help\\_from\\_Squaxin\\_Island\\_Tribe\\_1\\_Charitable\\_Fund](https://www.academia.edu/45629317/Dating_a_Mammoth_with_help_from_Squaxin_Island_Tribe_1_Charitable_Fund)).

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Dale R. Croes** received his B.A. in anthropology from the University of Washington (UW), specializing in archaeology. He did his Ph.D. dissertation research on basketry and cordage artifacts from the Ozette Village archaeological wet site (Croes 2019, 2021: see these and other references below at: [https://wsu.academia.edu/DaleCroes?from\\_navbar=true](https://wsu.academia.edu/DaleCroes?from_navbar=true)); conducted post-doctoral research with the Makah Tribal Nation at the Hoko River wet site (Croes 1995) and Hoko Rockshelter shell midden (Croes 2005); at Hoko he started a public program with a membership newsletter—*The Hoko Archaeological Project News* (see link to Hoko newsletters above)—and this membership program became the core group in starting The Pacific Northwest Archaeological Society (PNWAS) in 1985. Since the Hoko Archaeological Project continued until the summer of 1989, Society members had an opportunity to visit and participate at Hoko with professional supervision. Other projects Croes directed include excavations of the *Qwu?gweš* wet and dry site with the Squaxin Island Tribe from 1999 to 2009; Society members visited and participated in 11 years of summer excavations and screening at that project (Croes et al. 2013). Croes involved PNWAS members in the first-ever archaeological excavations at the National Historic Landmark wet site of Sunken Village, Portland, Oregon, from 2006–2007 (Croes et al. 2009). All these projects were featured in annual update presentations at PNWAS meetings in Seattle. Dale currently is an Adjunct Professor of Anthropology at Washington State University and continues as the Director of the Pacific Northwest Archaeological Society, now for 36 years.

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