

THE TEXAS FOUNDATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL RESEARCH

TFAHR

**Discovering the past. Making history.
Preparing independent thinkers for tomorrow's challenges.**

The Texas Foundation for Archaeological & Historical Research, a non-profit organization, was incorporated in 1985, and has been a tax-exempt organization under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code since 1988.

TFAHR was founded in 1985 by a small group of Texans with a passion for archaeology and a desire to promote and enliven the study of history in Texas classrooms. To enable teachers and students to expand their historical, archaeological and scientific knowledge, TFAHR provided for more than 100 trips for excavations and study tours in Europe and the Middle East from 1985 - 2006.

Since 2007, TFAHR has expanded its summer program into an International Field School, open to participants of all nationalities. The 2007 to 2011 TFAHR International Field Schools in Macedonia have provided 142 places for teachers, students and volunteers from 21 countries.

Through the generosity of numerous individuals and organizations, TFAHR has been able to sponsor digs in Israel, Bulgaria, the Republic of Macedonia, and France. TFAHR has prepared publications for all excavated sites, which feature photos, site plans and pottery drawings; participants involved in the projects have contributed articles and drawings to these publications, some of which are now being used as archaeology texts in the countries where we have worked. Important finds from the sites are on display in local and national museums.

TFAHR has always made the development of teachers a top priority. Having gained invaluable experiences on TFAHR projects, many of the participating teachers bring ideas back to their classrooms to make history and science come alive.

But no matter what careers TFAHR International Field School students ultimately pursue, their experiences with TFAHR help strengthen skills vital to success in their studies, their work and their communities.

At the TFAHR website, www.tfahr.org :

- ◆ History of TFAHR
- ◆ Current and past projects
- ◆ TFAHR publications
- ◆ Photo Albums of TFAHR excavations
- ◆ Slide shows on archaeological and historical topics
- ◆ The Bylazora Project — photos and reports on TFAHR's on-going excavations

Coming in January 2012: TFAHR will post information and applications for the 2012 excavation season at Bylazora.



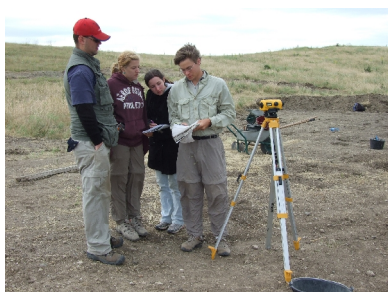
The 2011 excavation team at work on the acropolis of Bylazora.

Thank you again for the opportunity you gave me to dig with you again at Bylazora. This year was a really rewarding experience. The excavation itself is such a learning curve for me, but also the opportunity to meet people from so many diverse backgrounds and hear what they are studying and thinking is invaluable. I think your field school creates a great atmosphere of shared learning and interaction - so a big thank you to you both and to the Foundation!!

Rose O., Bylazora 2008 & 2009



Discovering the Past: The TFAHR Bylazora Project



In January of 2008 TFAHR received an invitation from the People's Museum of Sveti Nikole to bring the TFAHR International Field School to Sveti Nikole, Republic of Macedonia. The project was to be a long-term co-operative effort in excavating the site many believe to be the legendary Paionian city of Bylazora.

The Paionians were the inhabitants of ancient Macedonia before the conquest of this region by the Macedonians in the sixth and fifth centuries BC.

Small soundings had been made at the site near Sveti Nikole in the 1980s and 1990s. A large scale excavation ensued with the invitation to TFAHR in 2008; these excavations have continued every summer since.

For the 2011 expedition to Bylazora TFAHR sponsored 32 teachers, students, archaeologists, and volunteers from nine different countries (USA, Australia, China, England, France, Poland, Scotland, Serbia and Spain). At the site we worked alongside colleagues from the People's Museum of Sveti Nikole, volunteers from Sveti Nikole and the United States Peace Corps, and workers from Sveti Nikole and the village of Knezje.

Not only have the four seasons of TFAHR expeditions to Bylazora

been great archaeological successes, but they also went far in promoting international co-operation and introducing many to the cultural heritage of the Republic of Macedonia and the legacy of ancient Paionia.



The Excavations at Bylazora

In the four seasons of excavations at Bylazora, TFAHR teams excavated several areas on the acropolis of Bylazora, uncovering a formidable defensive wall and a propylon, a grand paved ramp flanked by public buildings. These structures date from the fifth to the third centuries BC.

The most recent excavations in the 2011 season unearthed the earliest remains yet at Bylazora, from the Iron Age (7th-6th centuries BC), and brought to light a stoa (a covered portico). In the 2012 season we hope to learn more about the Iron Age occupation of Bylazora, and completely uncover the stoa and surrounding buildings.

Making History, Preparing Independent Thinkers:

The TFAHR International Field School

TFAHR was originally founded to provide opportunities for Texas teachers and students to extend their knowledge of history through participation in archaeological excavations abroad. But In 2007 we were presented with an extraordinary opportunity to open our program to a much larger audience.

In 2007 TFAHR was invited to join our Macedonian colleagues on a large-scale project, the excavations at Gevgelija, Republic of Macedonia. To meet the demands of this project TFAHR established for the first time the TFAHR International Field School. By posting a request for applications on the internet, we were able to bring together teachers, students, archaeologists, and volunteers from Texas and all over the world to work together on an excavation project. That year TFAHR sponsored 31 people from nine different countries.

The International Field School has continued to operate at the TFAHR excavations at Bylazora.

The primary objective of the TFAHR International Field School is ambitious: we are preparing our students literally "to make history." We enable participants to gain hands-on experience in the manner in which historical evidence is uncovered, interpreted, and ultimately incorporated into historical accounts. To that end we involve everyone in as many aspects of the excavation as

possible. Everyone participates in all digging tasks, from the heavy drudgery to the fine detail work. All participants work on the preparation of the official documentation of the site. Most importantly, the participants have the unique opportunity to study the pottery and other finds from the dig. Participants share their ideas and interpretations of the finds, constantly challenging one another to make sure conclusions follow from the evidence.

The TFAHR International Field School is a collaborative venture in which participants from many walks of life are encouraged to share knowledge and experience with one another. Veterans from our earlier digs serve as trench supervisors and are given the responsibility to train new members. Team members have given presentations on other projects on which they have worked, and conducted workshops in pottery analysis, field documentation, pottery drawing, and site measurement and drawing. TFAHR International Field School members also have contributed articles to the TFAHR annual reports on the excavation work. We make it possible for students and teachers to further their careers by publishing the results of TFAHR's work in professional journals, or using it for term papers or advanced degrees. Many receive college credit from their own universities for the work on our digs.



A pottery restoration workshop for the TFAHR International Field School.

What is emerging from this energetic collaboration over four seasons is this: the TFAHR International Field School team is quite literally writing the history of Bylazora stone by stone, while participants are developing critical thinking skills - the ability to evaluate and interpret hard evidence first hand. At the same time they hone communication skills and practice working as part of self-directing teams, skills that will serve them in any career they ultimately choose to follow.

The directors and team members treated each other with respect, encouraged one another, and imparted knowledge to their fellow co-workers.

Deborah H., Bylazora 2010 & 2011

What strengthens (TFAHR's) results is that they are training the next generation of archaeologists by including them in the decision making process, the leadership pyramid, responsibility for maintaining a professional attitude on site, the research/publishing of finds and other pertinent data from the season, academic presentations by members of the team, and pottery reading/evaluation.

Padraic E., Bylazora 2008-2011



What Makes the TFAHR International Field School Unique

All too often dig participants are, unfortunately, required to pay exorbitant fees to participate in an archaeological excavation and are often seen as nothing more than a source of unpaid labor or as a source of funds for a university program. We have heard from our students of their experiences paying large fees but getting very little in the way of archaeological experience, their activities being confined mainly to pushing wheelbarrows or clearing brush.

The TFAHR International Field School is different. All participants pay for their own travel to Macedonia; TFAHR then pays for their room, board, and equipment. TFAHR also pays for the transportation on weekend field trips to other sites of historical interest; participants pay their own room and board on such trips. There are no fees, tuition, or registration costs to participate in a TFAHR dig.

It costs TFAHR approximately \$175 per week per participant.

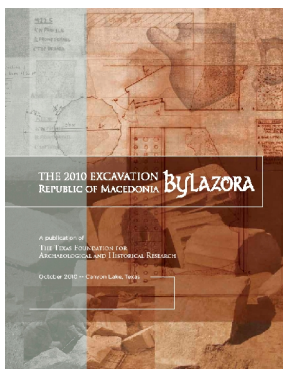


International Field School trip to Kokino.



Daily pottery washing.

TFAHR 2010 Report on the Bylazora Excavations



The TFAHR 2010 Report on the Bylazora Excavations is now available online at the TFAHR website. Go to www.tfahr.org and click the PUBLICATIONS button to access a PDF version of the report.

How You Can Contribute

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