

National Geographic Channel "Diggers" Program Update

Dear Registrants:

As many of you will recall, there was a great deal of concern within the archaeological community this spring about two cable channel television shows that appeared to glorify the looting of archaeological sites for fun and profit. The major archaeological organizations, including the Register of Professional Archaeologists, have been working with the National Geographic Society, the National Geographic Channel, and the production company that developed the "**Diggers**" show on the NG Channel in an attempt to address this situation.

In early May, there was a day-long workshop in Washington DC entitled "**Archeological Preservation, Avocational Metal Detecting, and the Ethics of Archeology**," which explored ways of finding common ground on these issues. Former RPA President Ian Burrow represented the Register at this workshop. [Please click here to read a summary of the workshop proceedings.](#)

Since that time, our sponsor organizations, and especially SAA and SHA, have been working with National Geographic, the NG channel, and the production company to come up with a plan for the "Diggers" show that will attract the demographic that the TV channel needs to reach, provide an entertaining show, and take a responsible approach to the protection of our archaeological heritage. Last week, SAA President Fred Limp posted an update on progress with this effort on the SAA website. [Please click here to see Dr. Limp's summary.](#)

I must admit that this is a much more positive outcome than I would have imagined possible when all this controversy first began. I would encourage all RPAs to respond to any outreach efforts by National Geographic and to engage with them in efforts to make "**Diggers**" a program that advances our interests and promotes best practices and sound ethics in archaeology.

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