In 2009 the Pima County Department of Transportation (PCDOT) sponsored an archaeological excavation project by EcoPlan Associates, Inc., at the Continental prehistoric archaeological site along Whitehouse Canyon Road, where the county planned to develop paved multi-use paths between Continental Road and the Continental Elementary and Middle School. Funded by the Regional Transportation Authority and the Federal Highway Administration, this project discovered the remnants of several dwellings and numerous artifacts. It also led to a re-evaluation of all archaeological excavations that have been conducted at the Continental archaeological site since 1986.

This presentation at the Santa Cruz Valley Chapter, Arizona Archaeological Society monthly meeting will illustrate and discuss all of the archaeological investigations that have been conducted at the Continental prehistoric site. Despite the toll that historic and modern developments have taken on this site, more than 100 intact archaeological features have been found still buried there, and 44 of those features have been excavated. Seven of the site’s 95 excavated prehistoric features apparently date between 410 B.C. and A.D. 650, another three or four were in use between A.D. 1000 and 1150, and evidently the rest date between A.D. 1150 and 1300.

Our guest speaker, archaeologist Allen Dart, served as principal investigator on the PCDOT-sponsored 2009 Continental site project and on most of the previous excavations conducted at this important site. Mr. Dart has worked and volunteered as a professional archaeologist in New Mexico and Arizona since 1975, for government, private companies, and nonprofit organizations. He is a full-time principal investigator in the Tucson office of EcoPlan Associates, Inc., an environmental and cultural resources consulting firm, and volunteers his time as executive director of Tucson’s nonprofit Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, which he founded in 1993 to provide educational and scientific programs in archaeology and culture. A Registered Professional Archaeologist, he has been a recipient of the Arizona Governor’s Award in Public Archaeology for his efforts to bring archaeology and history to the public.

The Santa Cruz Valley AAS Chapter meets the second Thursday of each month. In addition to hosting programs featuring experts in the history and archaeology of the Santa Cruz River Valley, the chapter offers its members opportunities to assist archaeologists with excavating area sites, and sponsors hikes and tours to archaeologically and historically significant locations. The chapter’s educational and advocacy programs help preserve and protect the region’s unique cultural resources and draw upon and partner with other organizations with heritage-based goals and objectives. Santa Cruz Valley AAS Chapter members also have the opportunity to participate in many educational, stewardship and excavation activities of the statewide organization’s other local chapters.

For more information about the Santa Cruz Valley AAS Chapter and its activities contact Alan Sorkowitz in Tucson at 520-207-7151 or at asorko@cox.net. The Arizona Archaeological Society web site, www.AzArchSoc.org, offers information about the Santa Cruz Valley Chapter and others throughout the state, as well as activities and benefits of membership in the statewide organization.