More of Green Valley’s Torres Blancas Village Hohokam Site Will Be Preserved and More Will Be Excavated This Summer

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center Members Get to Participate in Excavations

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center is coordinating an Arizona property developer’s effort to donate another large section of Torres Blancas Village, an important Hohokam Classic period archaeological site in Green Valley, Arizona, to the Archaeological Conservancy. Netwest Development Corporation, which sponsored volunteer-assisted archaeological research excavations in the northern portion of the site last December (see December 1997 and March 1998 issues of Old Pueblo Archaeology), has an option to purchase another 7-acre property containing a large part of Torres Blancas Village. As part of this impending purchase, Netwest hopes to donate more than one acre of the site — nearly one-fourth of the still-undeveloped portion of it — to the Conservancy, which already owns a 0.62-acre portion of it. The new area to be donated contains at least 29 prehistoric pithouses and many associated outdoor cultural features.

Responsible Planning. Netwest’s donation would preserve more of Torres Blancas for future scientific research, and is a vital part of the company’s environmentally responsible plan to construct new housing in the remaining portion of the site.

To preserve prehistoric cultural information still contained in portions of Torres Blancas Village where construction is planned, Netwest hopes to contract Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, a not-for-profit corporation, to conduct scientific excavations in the area where construction is planned, to recover and interpret archaeological data before construction begins. Within the data recovery area, 40 pithouses or possible pithouses have been identified in test trenches. Continued on page 2

Clay-plastered fire pit excavated at the Sabino Canyon Ruin

This superbly preserved hearth was discovered in a Hohokam pithouse, Feature 1009, during Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s excavations in December 1996. On April 18, 1998, the University of Arizona collected samples of its burned plaster for archaeomagnetic dating. See story on page 4. Photo by Sara Chavarría.
Torres Blancas Village
Continued from page 1

that were excavated by Old Pueblo in 1994 and in March 1998.

The 1994 test excavations at Torres Blancas Village revealed 46 buried prehispanic archaeological features in the portion of the site extending southward from the center of a proposed new road named El Camino Encanto. These 46 features are believed to include 24 pithouses (partly subterranean houses) or possible pithouses, plus 18 outdoor pits, 2 large trash disposal areas, and 2 human cremation burials.

Additional test excavations in this area earlier this year revealed remnants of an additional 48 pithouses or possible pithouses, 35 outdoor pits, 1 trash disposal area, 1 dog burial, and 3 more human cremation burials. The human remains and several directly associated pottery vessels and other grave objects uncovered in the 1998 tests were excavated and repatriated to the Tohono O'odham Nation shortly after their discovery in accordance with state law.

Opportunities for Volunteers.
Members of Old Pueblo Archaeology Center's Archaeology Opportunities program, other avocational archaeologists who have a Field Crew Member certificate issued by the Arizona Archaeological Society, and professional archaeologists are invited to join in the fieldwork for the upcoming Torres Blancas Village excavation project as volunteers. The volunteer-assisted dig is expected to begin in June and continue into July, and the work schedule will probably be four days per week, Thursdays through Sundays.

Current Old Pueblo Archaeology Center members are also welcome to help wash, label, process, and reconstruct the recovered Torres Blancas Village project archaeological materials (and other educational program artifact collections) in Old Pueblo's Tucson office.

TO VOLUNTEER
for the Torres Blancas dig or lab you must call Old Pueblo Archaeology Center at (520) 798-1201!

The Archaeological Conservancy...

is a nationally recognized not-for-profit organization that was established to acquire and preserve significant archaeological sites for future research.

When he learned that Netwest Development intended to donate another large portion of the Torres Blancas Village site to the Archaeological Conservancy, its Southwestern Regional Director, Jim Walker, said: “The Conservancy accepted the donation of a .62 acre tract of land located within a golf course in 1996 from the developers of the Torres Blancas Golf Course in Green Valley. The property contains the remains of pithouses associated with the Torres Blancas Village site, AZ EE:1:194 (ASM).

“The Archaeological Conservancy supports and encourages archaeological site preservation within development areas. We hope that the actions of these creative thinking Green Valley developers will encourage others to embrace archaeological site preservation as a solution to land planning problems rather than viewing archaeology as an obstacle to progress.”

Intriguing Archaeology at Torres Blancas Village

When Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s staff and volunteers conducted the archaeological dig in December 1997 within the portion of Torres Blancas Village immediately north of where this summer’s excavations will be conducted, only 2 of the 7 archaeological features that were at first thought to be possible Hohokam pithouses were confirmed as ancient structures. Many turned out to be simply lenses of artifacts in ashy dirt disturbed by historical plowing, or concentrations of charcoal left in the ground after standing trees had burned. Other archaeological features excavated included rock-lined or rock-filled roasting pits, plus one other pit that was unburned.

Artifact densities were quite a bit lower than we expected in these excavated features, and surprisingly, only about a dozen of the nearly 500 pottery sherds that were recovered had painted designs or solid-color surfaces. The only painted pottery identified was Tanque Verde Red-on-brown, a Tucson-area type made from 1150 to 1450.

Though decorated sherds were sparse, the proportionally large number of well polished pieces, plus a sherd with a folded rim and some other attributes of the pottery, suggest that at least the northern part of Torres Blancas Village was inhabited between 1300 and 1450, an era for which relatively few Santa Cruz Valley habitation sites are known.

The 1998 data recovery excavations at Torres Blancas will build on information already gathered from the site to define the age of its cultural features more accurately, to identify why the Hohokam established such a large village (over 70 houses) in the Santa Cruz River’s floodplain, and to interpret what kinds of relationships the Torres Blancas Village Hohokam maintained with contemporaneous peoples of the surrounding regions.

TIME TO RENEW?
If you received this issue in one of our mass-mailings, the 8-digit number on the top line of your address label indicates the year, month, and day your Old Pueblo Archaeology subscription will expire. If your label month is the same as the month of this bulletin issue you need to renew your subscription or membership (see back page) in order to receive more issues.
New Internship Program Helps Boy & Girl Scouts Earn Their Archaeology Merit Badges

Late last year Old Pueblo Archaeology Center began planning and developing an exciting new program to extend our educational outreach efforts: a special internship that enables Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of America to complete all of the requirements they need for earning Scouting’s prestigious new Archaeology Merit Badge.

Designed by professional archaeologists, the Archaeology Merit Badge program is surprisingly thorough in teaching Scouts ages 12 to 18 about archaeology.

Old Pueblo is the first archaeology education organization in Arizona to offer an Archaeology Merit Badge program registered with the State Historic Preservation Office. In April 1998 we enrolled our first Boy Scouts in our Archaeology Merit Badge program.

In order to qualify for the Archaeology Merit Badge through Old Pueblo, a Scout participates in archaeological fieldwork at the Sabino Canyon Ruin and spends time in our archaeological laboratory helping prepare artifacts for analysis, storage, or display. Most importantly, most of the 50 hands-on internship hours are spent on activities other than archaeological fieldwork, so the Scout gains a broader perspective on what archaeology is all about.

With Old Pueblo, Scouts must do research on four archaeological sites in the U.S. (one of which is the Sabino Canyon Ruin). They also read up on Arizona’s historical Tohono O’odham Indians so that they can form ideas about the kinds of artifacts and cultural features that would likely be found if one were to excavate a Tohono O’odham archaeological site.

Old Pueblo also teaches the Scouts why it is important to protect archaeological sites and instructs them in hands-on techniques for conducting archaeological fieldwork as well as artifact identification and examination. They learn about archaeological dating techniques, the importance of archaeological research questions to guide excavations, and archaeological collection and recording ethics, and how archaeological information is interpreted, preserved, and shared with the public.

Finally, they apply their knowledge by helping Old Pueblo’s archaeologists teach children about archaeology in sessions at our OPEN1 mock archaeological dig site, helping construct archaeology exhibits, and making a presentation to their troop, school, or another group.

Rancho Esperero Site Excavation Project Nearing Completion

Last August and September, Old Pueblo Archaeology Center conducted scientific excavations for A.F. Sterling Home Builders, Ltd., at a portion of archaeological site AZ BB:9:316 (ASM) that was going to be damaged by construction of a new sewer line associated with the new Rancho Esperero development property near Tanque Verde and Sabino Canyon roads. In this project, four Hohokam pithouses, two outdoor pits, and two ancient trash disposal areas were investigated.

Analyses of artifacts and samples recovered from the investigated portion of the archaeological site suggest it was a small farming village occupied year-round during the Early and Middle Rincon phases, between A.D. 950 and 1100. Our studies have shown that its Hohokam residents grew corn and cotton along the nearby Tanque Verde Wash and utilized quite a few different edible wild plants.

These photos of the site’s pottery were taken by volunteers Richard and Florence Lord of Prescott Valley, Arizona. They will be included with others in Old Pueblo’s upcoming final report on the project, Archaeological Excavations at the Rancho Esperero Site near Sabino and Tanque Verde Creeks in Tucson: Hohokam Rillito and Rincon Phase Features at AZ BB 9:316 (ASM) Within the Paseo Rancho Esperanza Sewer Alignment, by Jeffrey T. Jones.

The unusual star-like design on this bowl from the Rancho Esperero site may represent an agave or similar plant used by the Hohokam. However, because the pottery is of a type made between A.D. 1000 and 1100, it has been suggested that it depicts a supernova explosion that was visible throughout the northern hemisphere skies in the year 1054. Photo by Dick & Flo Lord.

Similarities in temper, line work, and motifs of two partial Rincon Red-on-brown vessels from a Rancho Esperero pithouse (photo at right) led ceramist Linda Gregonis to suggest they were part of a vessel "set" made at the same time by one potter. Or, these particular motifs may have been symbolically important to the Hohokam. Photo by Dick & Flo Lord.
Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society Provides Grant for Archaeomagnetic Dating at the Sabino Canyon Ruin

In March 1998 the Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society, an affiliate of the Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona, awarded a $500 research grant to Old Pueblo Archaeology Center for scientific dating of archaeological features at the Sabino Canyon Ruin.

The AAHS grant will fund the first absolute dating study of Hohokam structures at the Sabino Canyon Ruin, specifically, an archaeomagnetic dating analysis of clay-plastered hearths found in two of the site’s ancient pithouses. During this past April and May, Barbara Murphy, an archaeologist employed by the Department of Geosciences’ paleomagnetism laboratory at the University of Arizona, visited the Sabino Canyon Ruin twice to collect the archaeomagnetic samples.

One of the hearths was found in House 14, also known as the “Torgerson House,” which is south of the ruin’s southernmost pueblo-like housing compound. House 14 was excavated in 1978 under the direction of John Torgerson and Richard Vetter, who were teachers at the nearby Fenster School of Southern Arizona (owner of the property where Old Pueblo is conducting excavations).

Archaeologist Richard Goddard was hired to teach at the Fenster School in 1979. Recognizing the House 14 hearth’s great potential for archaeomagnetic dating, he covered it with a protective layer of dirt, which preserved it until Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s volunteer members re-excavated it this past April 18.

Pithouse Feature 1009 was excavated by Old Pueblo’s students and members in 1996 and 1997. Located underneath the southern row of rooms in Enclosure A, another of the Sabino Canyon Ruin’s above-ground housing compounds, this pithouse had a nearly complete Tanque Verde Red-on-brown bowl and an unbroken plainware bowl on its floor. Its hearth was still in a superb state of preservation when Ms. Murphy collected the archaeomagnetic sample from it on May 2.

Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society Programs

AAHS sponsors a free public presentation every month except August, as well as low-cost field trips nearly every month. The Society’s upcoming events include:

Pioneers of the Santa Catalina Mountains. Archaeologist Connie Allen-Bacon will show slides and describe her investigations on early Historic period pioneers of the Tucson area at 7:30 p.m. on June 15, 1998. Information on an AAHS field trip to historic ranches in the Santa Catalina Mountains will be made available during the presentation.

Excavations at Old Town, a Mimbres Culture Archaeological Site. University of Texas at Austin archaeologist Darrell Creel will discuss his excavations at this Mimbres ruin near Silver City, New Mexico, at 7:30 p.m. on July 20, 1998. Information about an AAHS trip to the Old Town site on the weekend of July 25 and 26 will also be presented.

Both presentations will be at the University Medical Center’s Duval Auditorium, 1501 North Campbell Avenue, in Tucson. For more information on AAHS events contact Lee Fratt at (520) 881-0526 or by e-mail at leefratt@worldnet.att.net.

Barbara Murphy, an archaeologist with the Department of Geosciences, University of Arizona, collected archaeomagnetic samples from the Sabino Canyon Ruin on April 18 and May 2, 1998. Photo by Sara Chavarria.
Q-Ranch Archaeological Field School Programs Coming Up near Young, Arizona

The AAS Summer Field School July 12-24, 1998

The annual Arizona Archaeological Society (AAS) field school at Q-Ranch Pueblo, an ancient Mogollon/Western Pueblo ruin in Arizona’s White Mountains, will be offered again this summer in two 1-week sessions, from Sunday July 12 through Friday July 24.

Participants in this year’s school can get certified in the AAS’s Field Crew Member and Prehistory of the Southwest courses or in a new course, Ceramic Analysis of the Q-Ranch Area.

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s Executive Director, Allen Dart, will be one of the archaeologists volunteering—teaching at Q-Ranch this year, during the second week. (See article on 1997 Q-Ranch field school in September 1997 Old Pueblo Archaeology.)

Other professionals participating in the program will include Cynthia Bettison, Dennis Gilpin, Kelly Hayes-Gilpin, Sharon Urban, John Welch, J. Scott Wood, and John Hohmann (of course!), the principal investigator for the Q-Ranch program.

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s 113 current individual and household memberships include 128 persons. About 70 of them volunteered to help with our programs during the past year.


On the middle weekend (July 18-19) there will be a field trip to the Forestdale archaeological site. Persons not enrolled in the field school can attend the trip for $35 each.

Field school accommodations include the Q Ranch Lodge, a comfortable two-story ranch house, and the AAS campground, both located within a few hundred feet of the ruin. Q-Ranch is 150 miles northeast of Phoenix and is accessible to passenger cars and via White Mountain Passenger Lines coaches running between Phoenix and Show Low. For reservations or more information call Joyce Eyman at (602) 955-2885.

Q-Ranch “Gourmet Archaeology” Offered on Labor Day Weekend

On September 5, 6, and 7, 1998, the Arizona Archaeological Society and Old Pueblo Archaeology Center will again offer a special 3-day-weekend dig led by Tucson archaeologist Allen Dart at Q-Ranch Pueblo. This program includes nine delicious meals prepared by renowned chef Jonathan Rogers and accommodations at the Q Ranch Lodge.

Besides experiencing some of the finest southwestern cuisine, participants can relax in the warmth of the lodge’s great fireplace in the autumn evenings to reminisce about the day’s discoveries and learn about the region’s prehistory and history.

A fee of $465 covers all lodging and meals (beginning Friday evening and ending Monday afternoon; final meal is Monday lunch), dig equipment, and Arizona Archaeological Society membership. Single-occupancy rooms are available. Registration deadline is Friday August 21. For details and a map call Allen Dart at Old Pueblo Archaeology, (520) 798-1201.

Old Pueblo’s WISH LIST:
Old Pueblo Archaeology Center needs the following items, new or used, for our OPEN! children’s education program:

- $20 sponsorship per child
- 25 dust pans
- 30 toothbrushes (used OK)
- 10 clipboards
- 10 10-quart plastic buckets
- 5 plastic dish tubs
- 3 dirt-sifting screens with 1/4” hardware cloth mesh
- 10 mason’s line levels
- 5 mason’s pointing trowels with 5” or 6” blades
- 10 3 or 5 m (10 or 16 ft) tape measures
- 6 12” rulers
- 300 sheets of colored 8½X11” construction paper

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, so all donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law. If you can help, please call Allen Dart at 798-1201.
Coming Events
Summer Programs and Craft Demonstrations/Markets at the Culture Center, Fort Apache, Arizona

Tus and Tats’aa: Apache Basketry Through Time. This exhibit is an exploration of the historic and modern roles of baskets in the lives of the White Mountain Apache people. Historically, Apaches used baskets for many practical purposes. Baskets continue to be important in the ceremonial life of the White Mountain Apache, serving as a traditional link to an earlier way of life.

The exhibit features more than 50 historic and modern Western Apache baskets on loan from the Arizona State Museum, plus audio recordings of Apache stories, songs and an interview. Apache concepts of space were used to inform the layout of the exhibit, which is color coded to the four directions (east is associated with black, south with green, west with yellow, north with white).

Michael Lacapa, Artist/Illustrator. An exhibition of illustrations from Michael Lacapa’s winning children’s books. The artist’s Apache, Tewa and Hopi heritage is a source of inspiration for his artistry. Lacapa’s beautiful illustrations, which draw on cultural images, serve to illuminate the Native American folktales that he preserves through his children’s books. Illustrations from three books will be on exhibit along with sketches showing the artistic process of book illustration.

The Burbank Apaches: Portraits from the Hubbell Collection. Drawings from the Hubbell Trading Post collection feature portraits by E. A. Burbank of prominent Apache figures at the turn of the last century, including Geronimo and chiefs Chiquito and Baillish of Cibecue. After studying art in Munich, E. A. Burbank traveled throughout the West, painting the portraits of Native American tribal leaders and other important figures. His “redhead drawings,” so named for color of the images, are recognized for their detail and accuracy in portraying the subjects as individuals, and not just as the usual cultural caricatures.

Traditional Apache Crafts. Don’t miss this opportunity to talk with the artists! Funded by the Arizona Commission on the Arts, Apache artists will provide free-to-the-public demonstrations of basket-weaving, beading, and cradleboard- and moccasin-making through June. Demonstrations are scheduled for Saturday mornings and

Archaeology for All!
Everyone Can Participate in Old Pueblo’s Public Programs

THE OPEN DIG: Kids age 7 and up (and adults) can dig to discover pottery and other artifacts buried in a realistic, full-size model of a prehistoric Indian pit-house village ruin constructed at Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, 1000 E Fort Lowell Road, Tucson. Sessions include outdoor archaeological excavations and indoor Native American craft activities.

OPENI Summer Program:
May 26-29 June 9-12 June 23-26
10:00-11:30 a.m. daily $24 for all 4 days in a 1-week program

SABINO CANYON RUIN EXCAVATIONS: Public archaeological field school sessions are offered at a prehistoric Hohokam village site inhabited between A.D. 1000 and 1350. With guidance from archaeologists, participants learn to identify Pre-Columbian artifacts, architectural features, and other evidence of prehistoric occupations.

Sabino Canyon Ruin Summer Program:
May 30 & June 13 July 7 & July 10
7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. each day $50 for each 2-day session*
* Regular rate is $69/person for 5-hour session.
Advance reservations are required for all sessions. Other dates are available for groups. Call 798-1201 for details or reservations.

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center Schedules Another Flintknapping Course for June 27

Archaeologist Allen Denoyer’s flintknapping (arrowhead-making) workshops have proved so popular over the past several months that we continue to offer them.

Learn from the best! Allen Denoyer, master flintknapper, will demonstrate one of the most ancient of arts, stone toolmaking, and teach participants how to make arrowheads out of obsidian and other stone just like prehistoric peoples did. So come absorb some of Allen’s knowledge and skills to help you understand more about prehistoric people as you experience their methods.

The next workshop is set for Saturday June 27, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. If the June 27 class fills (maximum enrollment is 11 students) a second workshop may be offered on Sunday June 28.

June 30 (Tuesday), 9:00-11:00 a.m.: Archaeologist-guided tour of Sabino Canyon Ruin for Golden Age II program. Belinda Rodriguez, Pima County Parks & Recreation, 578-0922.

More Coming Events
Other Upcoming Programs of Interest

Archaeology Opportunities: Old Pueblo Archaeology Center's membership program . . . is for people who wish to participate in archaeological excavations and other aspects of scientific cultural research, or for those who simply wish to support archaeology education programs. By taking part in field research, members get to discover ancient artifacts and cultural features, learn proper archaeological record-keeping and sketching methods, and participate in postfieldwork analyses, artifact processing and cataloging, and database utilization.

Membership benefits include opportunities to participate in Old Pueblo Archaeology Center's excavations, field surveys, and other research programs; 20% discounts on Old Pueblo's publications, other items, and course offerings; subscription to the Old Pueblo Archaeology quarterly bulletin; and invitations and discounts for field trips and other archaeology events.

Persons who complete a basic three-day Sabino Canyon Ruin field school program automatically become Archaeology Opportunities members for a full year. A yearly fee option for enrollment and membership renewal is also available as indicated here. The back cover of this issue includes an enrollment form.

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Publications Available from Old Pueblo Archaeology Center

Archaeology Opportunities members get a 20% discount on these paperback publications from Old Pueblo Archaeology Center -- the member discount price is shown in parentheses. The books are available for pick-up at 1000 E. Fort Lowell Road in Tucson. Shipping fees are charged for mail orders -- call (520) 798-1201 for details and ordering.

- The Hohokam, Ancient People of the Desert, ed. by David Grant Noble. Leading southwestern scholars present the best summary available about the ancient desert-dwelling Hohokam: their environment, crafts, rock art, religion, and the history of archaeological studies $12.95 ($10.36)
- The Archaeology of Ancient Arizona by Jefferson Reid and Stephanie Whittlesey. The most current summary of Arizona prehistory, easily readable $17.95 ($14.36)
- Field Methods in Archaeology, 7th edition by Thomas Hester, Harry Shafer, and Kenneth Feder. A current, comprehensive field methods manual for professionals and serious avocational archaeologists $41.95 ($33.56)
- Hopi Quilling: Stitched Traditions from an Ancient Community, by Carolyn Davis. Quilling has been woven into all facets of Hopi life in the past century $19.95 ($15.96)
- Treasured Earth: Hattie Cosgrove’s Mimbres Archaeology in the American Southwest, by Carolyn Davis. This book is a treasure in itself for its 421 reproductions of Cosgrove’s hand-linked Mimbres bowl drawings $24.95 ($19.96)

Archaeology Reports Published by Old Pueblo Archaeology Center
- Archaeological Data Recovery at the Rock Hard Site
- Archaeological Excavations at the Continental Site in Green Valley
- Archaeological Excavations at the Silverbell Coachline SW Site
- Archaeological Excavations at the Rancho Esperero Site
- Archaeological Excavations at the Tuck Room Site and Other Sites
- Archaeological Excavations at the Whispering Wings Site
- Archaeological Investigations at the Summit at Alverson Site
- Purposes and Plan for the Archaeological Program at the Sabino Canyon Ruin
The partial Tanque Verde Red-on-brown bowl and whole plainware pottery bowl shown here were found in place on the floor of Feature 1009, a Hohokam pithouse at the Sabino Canyon Ruin. The fireplace in this house has been selected for archaeomagnetic dating analysis. Story on page 4. Photo by Richard and Florence Lord.