In 2009 the Pima County Department of Transportation (PCDOT) sponsored archaeological excavations by EcoPlan Associates, Inc., at the Continental prehistoric 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 several prehistoric dwellings and numerous artifacts. It also led to a re-evaluation of archaeological excavations that had been conducted at the Continental archaeological site since 1986.

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s "Third Thursday Food for Thought" presentation this month 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. Historic features also have been found there.

This month’s presenter, 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, Mr. Dart has been a recipient of the Arizona Governor’s Award in Public Archaeology for his efforts to bring archaeology to the public.

Please contact Old Pueblo to make your reservation for dinner and the presentation, which will be held at Mimi’s Café, 120 S. Wilmot Rd., Tucson. Those attending may select and purchase their own dinners from the restaurant’s general menu. Reservations are due by 3 p.m. Wednesday October 20. There is no entry fee but donations will be requested to benefit Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s educational efforts. Contact Old Pueblo at 520-798-1201 or info@oldpueblo.org for reservations or more information.