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The 1541 O'odham Annihilation of Vázquez de Coronado's Southern Arizona Townsite and Other New Coronado-Era Discoveries

**Free Zoom Presentation
by Archaeologist
Deni Seymour**

The Arizona Coronado Project
continues to astound, as sites of the expedition
are found in improbable valleys, as evidence reveals
encounters with unexpected Native groups, as artifacts are
uncovered in Arizona that are unknown from other Coronado sites,
and as excavated archaeological features demonstrate the beginnings
of a European settlement that was intended to be permanent.

**Thursday August 17, 2023
7-8:30 pm Mountain
Standard Time/
Pacific
Daylight
Time**

There is now clear evidence of the battle, described in documents, that annihilated the region's first Spanish townsite and contributed to the termination of the 1539-1542 Coronado expedition as a whole.

In this presentation archaeologist Dr. Deni J. Seymour will discuss archaeological sites of the Coronado expedition she has identified in four southern Arizona river valleys, and her excavations at the earliest Spanish townsite in the US, which was annihilated in the first successful Native American revolt against the Spanish.

See the following pages for more information.

At Dr. Seymour's request, Old Pueblo will not post or distribute a recording of this presentation.

To register for the Zoom program go to

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wwC9iKfWROOXPM6e-OWYg.

For more information contact Old Pueblo at [520-798-1201](tel:520-798-1201) or info@oldpueblo.org.

The 1541 O’odham Annihilation of Coronado’s Townsite . . .

Dr. Deni Seymour’s recent research in southern Arizona makes it clear that the Coronado expedition’s route and eventual supply trail passed through southern Arizona much farther west than most scholars of the expedition have surmised. She has identified several previously unrecognized Coronado-era archaeological sites along this newly recognized path and has directed excavations at one of them – the Spanish *villa*, or townsite, of San Geronimo III, also known by the Native American name Suya – that was established to supply and support Coronado’s exploration. Discoveries in the *villa* excavations are among the most important ones ever made in Arizona because:

- This is the first archaeological settlement site of the Coronado expedition ever to be firmly identified in the US.
- The *villa* is not located in Sonora where historians had thought San Geronimo III was supposed to be, even though no Sonoran archaeological site matching the archival descriptions of San Geronimo III has ever been found.
- The townsite has produced firm evidence of a battle between Spaniards and Indians including a large, adobe building that burned and in which a 40-inch-long bronze Spanish wall gun (basically a small cannon) was abandoned on the floor; many Spanish crossbow bolts (“arrows”) and tips damaged from impacts (probably when they missed their targets and hit building walls, rocks, or hard ground); and numerous broken stone arrow points of a style used historically by southern Arizona O’odham groups.
- Archaeological evidence of the battle is consistent with documentary records that say local Indians, after having been badly mistreated by San Geronimo III’s Spanish occupants, attacked the *villa* and killed up to 100 Spanish men, servants, slaves, and Mexican Indian allies. Therefore, this is the location where the earliest-known successful Indian revolt in the United States took place, nearly 140 years before the famed 1680 Pueblo Revolt.
- San Geronimo III is in the historical lands of the Sobaipuri O’odham who occupied southern Arizona’s San Pedro and Santa Cruz valleys. That the Indian attackers were O’odham sheds a whole new light on the history of the Sobaipuri O’odham and Tohono O’odham (formerly called Papago) and Akimel O’odham (formerly known as Pima), who long have long considered among the most docile Indigenous groups subjugated by the Spanish in what is now the United States. Dr. Seymour’s research provides evidence that the Sobaipuri O’odham of the 1500s were among the fiercest and most successful Indigenous warriors of the Greater Southwest.



Above: Bronze “wall gun” barrel found on floor of Spanish building

Right & below: Other artifacts from San Geronimo III excavations

Iron and copper crossbow-bolt tips



Green-glazed Spanish ceramics



Caret-head nail



Spanish chain mail

Third Thursday presenter **Deni J. Seymour, PhD**, is a professional archaeologist and award-winning author who has published seven books and over 110 articles. She is known for her ability to interweave data from multiple sources to find locations of historical interest as she investigates places, people, and events mentioned in historical documents.



Among these places she has found are the site where Apache Chief Juh ambushed US Army Lt. Howard B. Cushing in 1871, the original Sobaipuri O’odham settlement of Chukshon (the namesake of Tucson), Anza Trail encampments, dozens of Sobaipuri O’odham settlements visited by Father Kino, and now five archaeological sites of the Coronado expedition on four stream drainages.

Not afraid to question conventional wisdom, her cutting-edge research is for those who are interested in the advance of knowledge through careful consideration of the archaeological and historical data.