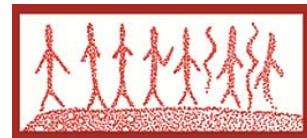


Verde Valley Archaeology Quarterly



Protecting the Ancient Cultural Heritage of the Verde Valley

Summer 2011

Center Grand Opening a Great Success

The Center held its Grand Opening on May 6 and continued the celebration through the weekend. The opening ceremonies were attended by over 200 visitors.



We have been training volunteers to staff the Center but can use several more. If you can spare an afternoon or morning, please stop by to find out how you can sign up. Our regular hours on Thursdays and Fridays are 9:30 to 4:00 and are staffed by the Ceramic Project team. On Saturdays we are open from 9:30 to 4:00 and on Sundays from Noon to 4:00.

Center Hosts Archaeology Students

The Center has developed a relationship with the Anthropology Department of Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin. Beloit College was founded in 1846, when Wisconsin was still a territory. The college's academic facilities include the internationally recognized Logan Museum of Anthropology.



For the summer we will host two students to orient them to Southwestern archaeology and to help with various Center projects. We have also arranged for them to work a week with the Forest Service archaeologist and a week with the Park Service archaeologist. They will also assist visitors when the Center is open.

Eric Koenig graduated last month with a degree in anthropology. His fieldwork includes time in Belize and Chile. Renee Bartlett-Webber also graduated last month and has worked at the American Museum of Natural History and has also done fieldwork in Chile. If you meet them at the Center please give them a warm welcome!

Ceramic Identification Project Moves

Our use of classrooms at the Camp Verde Campus of Yavapai College ended the first week of June. We moved the project artifacts and computers to the Center. The project team meets on Thursdays and Fridays at the Center from 9:30 to 4:00. If you are interested in learning about the project or just interested in finding out more about prehistoric pottery, stop by and talk to a member of the group.

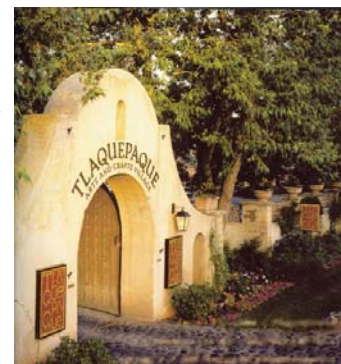


Festival of Native American Culture Announced



The Festival of Native American Culture is the primary annual fundraising event for the Center. The 2011 Festival will be the 3rd Annual event. The previous two Festivals were sponsored by the Arizona Archaeological Society Verde Valley Chapter with the purpose of developing sufficient funds to start the Center. Those first two events allowed us to start the Center. This and future events will be sponsored by the Center.

If you attended the first two events you will notice two major changes. First, the dates have been changed to the Fall and second, the primary location is the Tlaquepaque Arts & Crafts Village in Sedona.



The Festival will start with an evening event on Friday, September 30. The Invitational Arts and Crafts show will be held at Tlaquepaque on October 1 and 2 with two stages of entertainment. Presentations will be held in the ballroom on Hopi and Navajo culture, and the Yavapai-Apache Nation will again present their storyteller video project. There will be a special evening benefit event of food and wine in the upper Terrace on October 1.

Unique archaeological hikes are being planned for October 3 and 4. The Festival will end with an evening of film in cooperation with the Sedona International Film Festival on Tuesday, October 4 at the Harkins Theater. Visit the Festival website at www.nafestival.org for full details.



President's Report

by Dr. James Graceffa

Plan A Implemented

Our last newsletter explained how we went from Plan B back to Plan A, starting small and growing. Since then we opened our new facility on May 6, 2011. The grand opening was a huge success. On the opening night we had over 200 people attend. The Yavapai-Apache dancers entertained and we served light refreshments. I was pleased at all the positive comments we received and the interest shown by the community. It was truly a team effort to open our doors and I would like to thank all involved. The Center will now be open from Thursday through Sunday and soon we hope to add Monday's also.

Our time at Yavapai College came to an end on June 3rd and with the help of many of our members we were able to get all the artifacts and materials moved to the new Center location. The new space is limited and we will miss the convenience of Yavapai College, but thank them for their most gracious generosity that included two classrooms complete with computers and printer. Our work for Peter Pilles and the Coconino National Forest to accession some of their materials to the Museum of Northern Arizona goes on in the new facility.

The contacts with the Archaeological Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy have paid dividends. We are now being allowed visitation to their sites and will be starting tours for our members in the fall.

A planned survey project in the Red Rock area of Sedona will be put on hold until the Fall with cooler weather. On the other hand, we have been invited by Dave Dove of the Colorado Archaeology Society to attend a field school at a Great Kiva site in Southwest Colorado. Excavation dates are July 14-18 and August 25-29. We hope to make the field school an annual event for the Center. This is an exciting advantage for our members.

As we move forward through the summer, we plan to add regular programs that will take place at the Center. We are now actively preparing for the Festival of Native American Culture in October. Our goal is to make the festival an event that will be anticipated each year.

Our next meeting will be held on October 18, 2011 in Sedona. Dr. Carla Van West will be speaking. Dr. Van West had worked many years in the Verde Valley and will be telling us about her studies of the Sedona and Verde Valley area. She was one of the archaeologists that participated in the Highway 89A widening project between Cottonwood and Sedona. Many members of the Verde Valley Chapter of the Arizona Archaeology Society assisted in the excavation. Mark your calendar now, this lecture is one you do not want to miss.

Again I want to thank all those people who have supported the Center, both in time and resources. The board continues in our endeavor to make the Center the "go-to-organization" for archaeology of the Verde Valley.

Center Begins Film Project

With the backdrop of music by R. Carlos Nakai, the Center has begun a project to create an educational video tracing the evolution of the Native American cultures that occupied the Sedona/Verde Valley area. We have secured the assistance of three archaeologists: Chris Coder, Yavapai-Apache Nation; Matt Guebard, National Park Service; and, Lyle Balenquah, Hopi. It is our intention to premier the video on October 4 at the Harkins Theater. To assist with the funding of this project, the Center has submitted the project to www.kickstarter.com, the largest funding platform for creative projects in the world. If you would like to be a part of this exciting project, visit the Kickstarter website and search with the word "archaeology" to find our project.



The mission of the Verde Valley Archaeology Center is to preserve archaeological sites and collections of the Sedona/Verde Valley area, and to promote their educational, scientific and cultural use

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The Archaeological Conservancy, established in 1980, is the only national non-profit organization dedicated to acquiring and preserving the best of our nation's remaining archaeological sites. Based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Conservancy currently owns over 300 throughout the United States, including 30 sites in Arizona. Four sites are located in the Verde Valley with another located just outside the area to the south.

The Verde Valley Archaeology Center is developing working relationship with the Conservancy with the goal of conserving additional archaeological properties in the area. Toward this end, the Conservancy has granted the Center exclusive rights to lead hikes to two of their properties.

Sugarloaf Pueblo

Sugarloaf Pueblo is situated 500 feet atop a steep mesa overlooking the meandering Oak Creek. In early 1990, the owner began work on the site, planning to clear off the ruin to build a house. But when a backhoe cut into a burial, local residents and tribal representatives protested. The controversy that ensued helped lead to the passage of Arizona legislation protecting burials, and also led to the Conservancy's involvement. By March of 1991, the Conservancy was able to purchase the site thanks to the generosity and support of the owners, Margaret and Robert Cristall.

The Tuzigoot Phase (A.D. 1300 to 1425) was a period of significant change in the Verde Valley. The valley population reached its peak and the Sinagua grouped into about forty major pueblos. Each pueblo was surrounded by smaller satellite pueblos, extensive farming areas and field houses. The pueblos were likely to have had similar populations and territories. They were often multi-storied and located along river valleys spaced at two mile intervals. There is speculation that the spacing among the pueblos may be indicative of a system of regional political order.

Sugarloaf Pueblo was occupied during this phase and is unusual because it is estimated to have 54 ground rooms organized around a central plaza. It is the largest pueblo in the Oak Creek chain. The pueblo walls were constructed of native limestone cobbles and some wall segments still stand over a meter high. Its size and hilltop location suggest that it was the dominant political and trading center for the Oak Creek drainage. Although there is no evidence of warfare during this period, all of the major pueblos of the Tuzigoot Phase are located in defensive positions on hilltops or along bluffs.

Peter Pilles has called the Sugarloaf site one of the most important

Tuzigoot Phase sites in the valley. When the site was acquired by the Conservancy it was dedicated as a permanent archaeological preserve and is managed under a 100-year management plan developed with the assistance of archaeologists, Native Americans and local citizens.

Oak Creek Pueblo

The Oak Creek Pueblo is also a Tuzigoot Phase dwelling. At one time, as many as 40 Tuzigoot Phase pueblos were known in the valley. Today most have been destroyed by looters. The Oak Creek pueblo, with its dramatic eight foot high standing wall segment, represents one of the best remaining examples of this phase of the Sinagua.

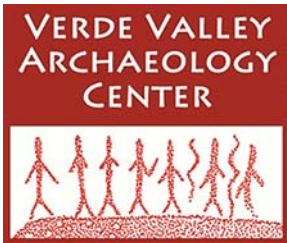
As mentioned earlier, the Oak Creek ruin is distinguished by an eight foot high standing masonry wall segment. In addition to 35 masonry room outlines visible on the surface, a community room has been identified along with a large circular depression which may have been a kiva or perhaps a water storage reservoir. Carved into a thick sandstone layer located just below the edge of the bluff overlooking Oak Creek are as many as 15 interconnected caves which may have served as habitation or food storage rooms.

This property was acquired by the Conservancy in 1984. As with all such properties, a 100-year management plan was developed. Conservancy sites are fenced and posted with volunteer caretakers from the archaeological community in the area designated to watch them regularly. Ruins such as Oak Creek are stabilized and backfilled where necessary to preserve scientific information *in situ*. Scientific research is permitted at all of its preserves by qualified institutions under controlled conditions.

At both sites the Sinagua utilized irrigation agriculture to cultivate large lowland areas. They were also dry farming along the foothills of the Mogollon Rim. Crops included corn, beans and squash, as well as native plant foods and perhaps cotton. The Sinagua were actively trading with the Ancestral Pueblo communities to the north and east, as well as with the Hohokam to the south. For reasons still largely unknown, the entire valley valley was largely abandoned by A.D. 1425. The inhabitants moved east and north into the Chavez Pass and Winslow areas. It has been determined that the Sinagua who left the valley in the 1400's is most closely affiliated to the Hopi and were among the ancestors of the Hopi people.

“Why did a culture that lived in the valley for over 500 years cease to exist? All the answers to what became of the Sinagua are locked within the handful of Tuzigoot Phase ruins that still remain intact and unexcavated,” Pilles said.

For more information on the Archaeological Conservancy, visit their website at www.americanarchaeology.com.



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Visit our website for more information.

VERY IMPORTANT

Members frequently receive information about archaeological sites that are considered sensitive and protected. By submitting this application, you agree to adhere to all objectives of the Center and the Antiquity Laws of Arizona and the United States especially the objective that discourages "exploitation of archaeological resources" particularly for direct or indirect personal gain or recognition.



Please mail your application and check to:

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P. O. Box 3474
Camp Verde, AZ 86322

or visit www.verdevalleyarchaeology.org to join online

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Thank you!

