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Archaeology Southwest

Volume 14, Number 4

Center for Desert Archaeology

Fall 2000

Homol'ovi: An Ancestral Hopi Place

E. Charles Adams, Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona



THE HOMOL'OVI VILLAGES include at least eight ancient Hopi communities occupied from about A.D. 1250 to 1400 along the Little Colorado River near modern Winslow, Arizona. "Homol'ovi" is derived from a Hopi word translated literally as "be mounded up" and refers to Winslow and the many small buttes that dot the area. These villages play prominent roles in many Hopi oral traditions and are important points of migration for numerous Hopi clans still occupying villages on the Hopi Mesas.

The Homol'ovi Research Program (HRP) of the Arizona State Museum was created as part of a legislative budget package awarded to the University of Arizona in 1984. This package created a research program focused on state lands. The first priority was to conduct research on the Homol'ovi villages. Beginning in the late 1970s, archaeologists and Hopi people, including tribal Vice Chairman Stanley Honanie, became alarmed at the toll vandalism was exacting on these unique treasures of Arizona heritage and Hopi history. Not only was hand-excavation by amateur pothunters occurring, but in the 1970s professionals

Above: This mural, recovered from a kiva (an underground ceremonial structure) at Awat'ovi, is similar to wall paintings found in kivas at Homol'ovi I and Homol'ovi II. Plate E from Watson Smith, Kiva Mural Decorations at Awatovi and Kawaika-a with a Survey of Other Wall Paintings in the Pueblo Southwest, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Vol. 37. Reprinted courtesy of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University. Right: Katsinam, Hopi ancestral spirits, are sometimes depicted on the fourteenth-century pottery of the Hopi Mesas. This Sikyatki Polychrome bowl was found at Homol'ovi II. Photo courtesy of Richard W. Lord.



Reprinting of this issue was made possible by a gift from the Homolovi Chapter of the Arizona Archaeological Society.

Issue Editor: Patrick D. Lyons

Archaeology Southwest is a Quarterly Publication of the Center for Desert Archaeology





This picture of the park environs features one of the many small buttes for which Homol'ovi is named. Photograph courtesy of Patrick D. Lyons.

began using heavy equipment on the *Homol'ovi* villages. The very existence of the villages was threatened. Then-Governor Bruce Babbitt assembled an advisory team to make recommendations for preserving these crucial elements of Arizona history. Their solution was the creation of Homolovi Ruins State Park, which came into being in 1986.

I took over direction of the research at *Homol'ovi* in 1985. My goals in those early years were to: 1) forge strong relationships with the Hopi government and Cultural Preservation Office (CPO) to encourage their involvement in all aspects of the research program; 2) evaluate the condition of the large ruins in terms of preservation, interpretation, and research value; 3) work with Arizona State Parks to develop a viable park and interpretive program; 4) conduct a systematic survey of potential park land to determine the location, nature, and condition of cultural resources; 5) develop long-range goals for research in the major pueblos including mapping, excavation, and publication; and 6) enhance opportunities for participation by the public in archaeological research.

Our initial research goals were to develop a better understanding of the chronology of the area and the individual villages and to understand how and why villages grew in size so quickly in the *Homol'ovi* area and throughout the Southwest at this time. To this end, we focused on small villages and conducted an extensive archaeological survey of the area. We also expanded our volunteer program by partnering with Earthwatch Institute. Over the course of our eleven-year association with Earthwatch, nearly 400 volunteers have participated in the program. An early insight was that, although the villages have been substantially vandalized, all still contain information pertinent to learning about the people who built and occupied them.

Over time our research interests have been refined. We also moved to the large villages, Homol'ovi I and II, which had more than 1,000 rooms each. Substantial contributors

to our knowledge base have been the dozens of students from the University of Arizona and elsewhere who have used *Homol'ovi* research as a springboard to honors papers, Master's theses, and doctoral dissertations. To date, nearly twenty theses and dissertations have been completed or are nearing completion.

Our research made it clear that no more than six of the eight villages were occupied at any one time. Through excavations and extensive mapping, we estimate that nearly 2,500 people lived in at least five villages in the late 1300s. We now know that cotton became a major crop at *Homol'ovi*, more so as the villages increased in size. In fact, much of it was almost certainly grown for exchange with surrounding communities, particularly Hopi where most of the occupants of *Homol'ovi* originated.

We have also made significant strides in identifying ritual behavior in the archaeological record and tying it to increasing village size. We have recognized how ritual diversification and intensification were apparently successful means of coping with the stress caused by the large size of the villages. The best-known example is *katsina* ritual, which spread into the *Homol'ovi* area about 1350 in conjunction with the construction of large, enclosed plazas at all villages.

Our understanding of the role of the environment and the river has increased enormously. A conceptual leap occurred with the enormous floods along the Little Colorado in January and March 1993. These floods left enormous piles of driftwood. It seems the people of *Homol'ovi* used driftwood as their primary source of wood for fuel and construction. Tree-ring dates recovered from modern driftwood piles matched historic floods. Likewise, prehistoric dates from the ruins suggest a major flood between 1276 and 1290, just when tree-ring-dated pottery suggests the major influx of population occurred at *Homol'ovi*. Our belief is that the driftwood-bringing flood encouraged large populations of people to move to the *Homol'ovi* area and enabled them to sustain their occupation there. Without driftwood, there would have been virtually no construction timber or fuel within twenty miles of *Homol'ovi* except for a few cottonwoods in the floodplain.

But resource availability may not be the only reason for occupation of the *Homol'ovi* area in the late 1200s. The entire Four Corners region was "abandoned" by Pueblo people in the late 1200s. The *Homol'ovi* area would have been prime real estate for these migrant populations, yet it was Hopi people who settled the *Homol'ovi* area. It is my belief that these settlements were partly strategic—to en-

able the Hopi to continue to control this area vital to sustaining the developing Hopi culture, an area where cotton could be produced, turtles could be acquired, and migratory birds could be captured.

Another interesting aspect of the ancient Hopi occupation of this area is that multiple villages were involved, just as at Hopi today. How did these villages get along? Did they trade? Was there a governing body above the level of the village? Certainly the *Homol'ovi* communities interacted. They may have even provided security to each other in case of external threat. If we use a modern Hopi model, we suspect the villages were primarily independent with occasional intermarriage, sporadic disputes, and probably only a weak governing body above the level of the village, if one existed at all. Future research by the Homol'ovi Research Program will explore these issues.

We have also explored use and occupation of the area prior to the founding of the large, late villages. Small groups evidently began using the area to grow corn as early as 2,800 years ago. The area was used regularly by small-scale farmers beginning in the A.D. 600s, but occupations always seemed small and short-term, probably due to regional climatic conditions and whether the river was more or less prone to flood.

Much of our research has been published and all of this information is shared with the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office. Each summer we meet with visitors from the Hopi CPO and their Advisory Team of traditional leaders from the Hopi villages. Invariably, they reveal new information about Hopi relationships with *Homol'ovi*, past and present. We work with Arizona State Parks personnel to develop our research into exhibits at Homolovi Ruins State Park. An important aspect of communicating with the public has been the stabilization and interpretation of rooms and a large kiva at Homol'ovi II, at 1,200 rooms, the largest of the *Homol'ovi* villages. A popular book intended for the visitor has been written about *Homol'ovi* and Winslow.

Other vital aspects of the research program have been public involvement and a broad perspective on education. In addition to having fifty or more volunteers working on the project each summer, we conduct daily guided tours of the

ongoing excavations for visitors. At the end of each field season, we have an open house for people from all over the world to tour the open excavation areas and to share our summer's discoveries.

When the field season concludes, we fill in all our excavation units. Visitors think we are crazy. Why go to the trouble? First and foremost is the issue of preservation. If the areas are left open, they will erode and deteriorate, damaging what has been excavated and surrounding areas that have not been investigated. Second, the areas are deep, unstable, and unsafe.

Finally, HRP provides the essential training ground for future students of archaeology. Field methods are part art, part technique, and part science. The best way a student can learn how to properly excavate and record information is through hands-on experience. Each summer, about fifteen students—five graduate and ten undergraduate—participate in the excavations or survey. Many of these students return year after year. They manage the excavations, supervise the volunteers, and record information about their particular areas. They then write summaries of the summer's work. This enables HRP to advance knowledge, to accomplish the difficult task of getting all of the artifacts and information analyzed and published, and to help launch the careers of many exceptional young archaeologists.

From our humble beginnings over fifteen years ago, HRP has now excavated in six of the eight major *Homol'ovi* villages as well as a major community, occupied sporadically from A.D. 600-1225, adjacent to the park's visitor center. A systematic survey of thirty square miles recorded over 300 sites. The Homol'ovi Research Program laboratory and offices are located in the Arizona State Museum just inside

the west entrance to the University of Arizona. During the school year, ten to fifteen students intern, do analyses for credit, theses, or dissertations, or simply volunteer in the lab to gain experience. We always welcome visitors and can arrange for tours of our research lab by large groups.



Each of the hundreds of crater-like features evident in this photograph of Homol'ovi II is a hole left by vandals. Some of this damage was created using heavy equipment. These scars are still visible from the air despite backfilling and stabilization efforts. Photograph courtesy of Terrence Moore.

The Hero of Homol'ovi

Raymond H. Thompson, Retired
Director, Arizona State Museum

IN 1986, the Arizona Legislature created Homolovi Ruins State Park, ninety years after Jesse Walter Fewkes of the Smithsonian Institution carried out the first archaeological explorations in those ruins. Located near the city of Winslow in a dramatic natural setting on the banks of the Little Colorado River, these ruins are identified in the oral history of several Hopi clans as the final gathering place prior to the migration to the present Hopi villages. These large, late prehistoric ruins, a rich storehouse of knowledge about the Hopi past, have attracted the attention of curiosity seekers, professional archaeologists, and pothunters, as well as the people of Winslow whose leaders have long recognized the tourist potential.

One is tempted to wonder why it took so long to preserve these sites as Arizona's first archaeological state park, except that the record shows it *always* takes a long time to get from the recognition of preservation potential to the establishment of a public preserve. For example, when President Clinton proclaimed Grand Staircase-Escalante a national monument in 1996, he was acting on proposals that had been around for more than sixty years.

By the mid-1960s, archaeologists and concerned citizens in northern Arizona, alarmed by the extent of the vandalism at *Homol'ovi* and other sites, began a limited but effective program of public education. This campaign to alert both the public and responsible authorities to the desecration of the past culminated in the production of the PBS documentary *Thieves of Time*. Public concern about the *Homol'ovi* sites became a demand for some form of protection and preservation. However, the sincere efforts of many dedicated people do not always result in preservation, for effective preservation depends on a high level of leadership clout.

Fortunately, Bruce Babbitt became governor of Arizona in 1978 and provided the necessary leadership. A native of northern Arizona, trained as both a geologist and a lawyer, he has a strong personal conservation ethic. A student of Arizona's past and a friend of the Hopi people, he had the ability to sense the potential of the situation and the vision to conceive of a way to realize that potential. He began consulting within the archaeological community, and measuring the depth of public concern.

Accompanied by Museum of Northern Arizona archaeologists and Hopi leaders, Babbitt inspected the damage at *Homol'ovi* in September 1980 and at *Awat'ovi* and



Left: Groundbreaking at Homolovi Ruins State Park visitor center in 1989. From left to right, former Governor Bruce Babbitt, former Arizona State Senator Bill Hardt, and then-Governor Rose Mofford. Photograph by Mike Russo, courtesy of The Winslow Mail. Right: Earthwatch volunteers gather for a walk down an interpretive trail near Homol'ovi II. Photograph courtesy of Patrick D. Lyons.

Kawàyka'a in November. Late in 1981 he formed the Governor's Archaeology Advisory Group (now the Arizona Archaeology Advisory Commission). Under Babbitt's leadership, private, local, state, and federal groups worked together to produce assessments of damage, monitoring of sites, stabilization of the ruins, exploratory excavations, interpretive trails, land exchanges, planning and management committees, and a master plan.

The State Historic Preservation Office and the State Land Department played key roles in the comprehensive and cooperative effort that Governor Babbitt put in place. Only his constant pressure and persuasion kept the effort on track. For example, during a tour of some preliminary Arizona State Museum excavations at *Homol'ovi* in May 1984, the governor, looking pointedly in my direction, ended his speech with the comment that it would be interesting to see what the University of Arizona would do to further the effort. This challenge inspired me to request special funding from the State for long-term research at *Homol'ovi* to help provide the information necessary for the interpretive program at the park. These funds were provided to the Arizona State Museum, making possible innovative and productive research at *Homol'ovi* in partnership with the Hopi people, avocational archaeologists, and the general public.

The *Homol'ovi* experience demonstrates that, although deep concern, hard work, cooperative activity, dedicated effort, and total commitment are needed, they often fail or take forever to succeed without the dynamic and informed leadership of someone at the top. The people of Arizona and the archaeological profession are fortunate that Bruce Babbitt was present and willing at the right time.

Of Parks, People, and Perceptions

Karen Berggren, Park Manager, Homolovi Ruins State Park

I FIRST HEARD ABOUT HOMOLOVI in 1980. A small article in an Arizona paper told of an ancient pueblo ruin being destroyed by illegal collectors. I remember thinking how sad it was that a few people could damage such an important part of our cultural heritage. Little did I realize that the damage to *Homolovi* would affect me even more directly, resulting in my hiring as Park Manager.

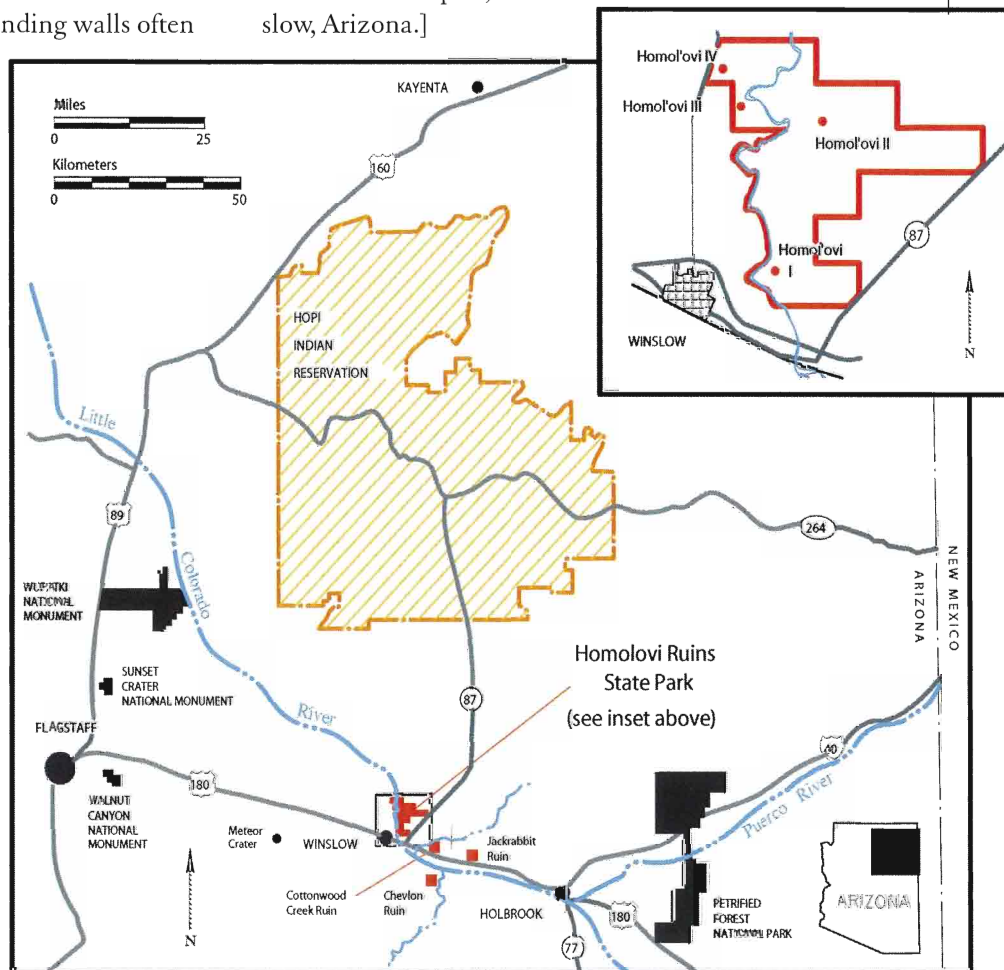
The intense interest in the park has created a rather unique situation at *Homolovi*. Representatives of the Hopi people and of the people of Winslow have been involved in all stages of planning and development of the park. The Hopi review research plans, development plans, and educational materials. Because the park encompasses sites sacred to the Hopi people, I feel fortunate that the Hopi have been willing to work with park staff to develop an accurate presentation of sacred sites and shrines. One interesting result of this cooperation has been the large percentage of Native Americans who visit the park and who participate in our workshops.

I am quite fascinated by the reactions of visitors to *Homolovi*. Accustomed to seeing the standing walls often found in national parks, a few visitors look at our collapsed ruins and see only rocks and weeds. Most visitors, however, become fascinated with the story of *Homolovi* and the hints these ruins give us of the lives and culture of the people who lived here. *Homolovi* provides an important link between earlier residents of the area and the Hopi people of today. By studying the *Homolovi* sites using proper archaeological techniques, we can better understand the interrelationships of people with the land and the enduring ties of the Hopi with their ancestral sites. The archaeological excavations at *Homolovi* have, to an amazing extent, supported the oral traditions of the Hopi concerning their migration routes and history. With a land so steeped in history, it is sometimes difficult to un-

derstand how people fail to appreciate the importance of protecting and preserving prehistoric sites such as *Homolovi*.

In historic times, *Homolovi* has experienced a wide range of interactions with people, from the religious visits of the Hopi people to the visits of non-Indians wanting to learn about the history of this land; from the depredations of illegal collectors interested only in a showy piece of pottery to the archaeologist excited over ancient grains of pollen that can reveal information about the environment and crops of ancient people. Visitors to *Homolovi* have many different interactions with the land. Some have only a quick surface relationship with a glance at a ruin before heading down the road. Others develop a far deeper relationship leading to respect and appreciation for a land and a people who have much to tell us about living in the proper way.

[Editor's Note: This article is adapted from the preface to *Homolovi: A Cultural Crossroads*, by William H. Walker, published by the Arizona Archaeological Society, Homolovi Chapter, Winslow, Arizona.]



Map of northeastern Arizona showing the location of Homolovi Ruins State Park relative to the Hopi Reservation and other landmarks.

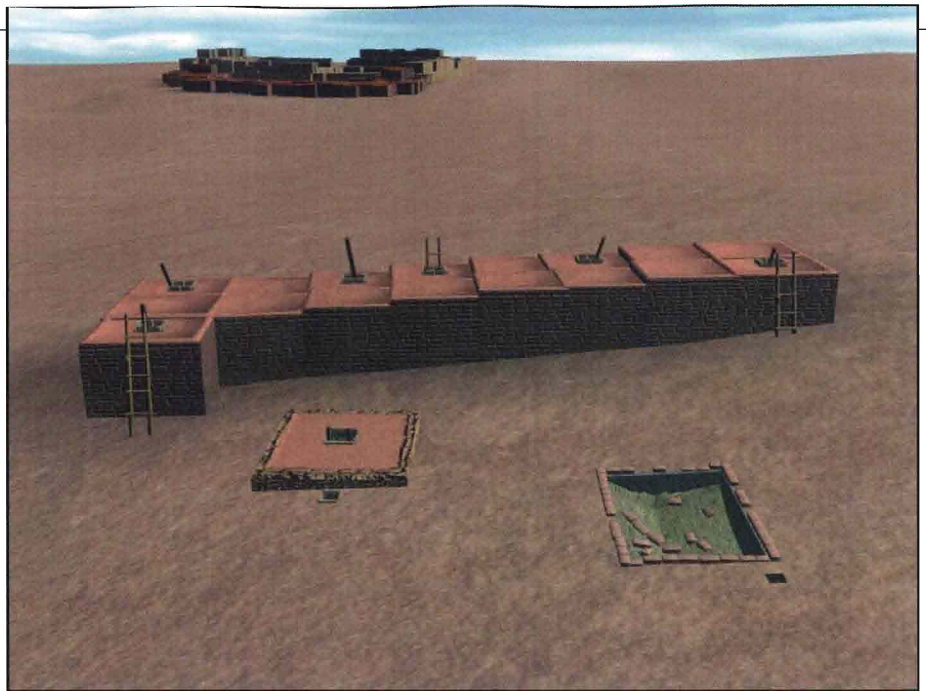
Archaeological Interpretation for the Public at *Homol'ovi*

Douglas W. Gann,

Center for Desert Archaeology

ONE OF THE BEST things about studying anthropology at the University of Arizona has been the opportunity to participate in a long-term research program. For me, this has meant eleven summers at *Homol'ovi*. During this time, I've had the opportunity to see the benefits of archaeology that involves the public (including descendant groups) in research and engages them with creative interpretation. Much of my research and interpretive work would have been impossible without the contributions of the Earthwatch Research Corps, Arizona State Parks, and the Hopi Tribe.

Conducting public archaeology during the dawn of the digital age has been exhilarating. Just as revolutions in computer science have spurred tremendous leaps in the capabilities of databases and analytical systems, developments in new media technologies have allowed us to communicate our findings to the public in ways we never thought possible.



My first attempt at using these new media tools involved architectural data from Homol'ovi IV. I wanted to use computer software to create a visualization of the village as it would have appeared some 700 years earlier. Just as we completed mapping the site, a new set of three-dimensional digital modeling tools was released. We bought a graphics package that plugged into our mapping software, and began modeling the village. The first rendering of Homol'ovi IV was created, in 1990, on a DOS 386 system with eight megabytes of memory. It took the computer five hours to generate the image from the data we provided! Today, thanks to the rapidly increasing power and speed of computers, it takes only five *seconds* to render this model.

The images created by 3-D modeling packages offered the possibility of filling an interpretive void at Homolovi Ruins State Park. Many visitors brought with them their own mental images based on the standing architecture of Chaco Canyon or Mesa Verde. Upon viewing the heavily vandalized ruins of *Homol'ovi*, some visitors stated that all they could see were low mounds of rubble. We re-



Digital reconstruction of the interior of a kiva, structure 901 at Homol'ovi I. The kivas of Homol'ovi are strikingly similar to those used by the Hopi today. This image, based on excavation data generated by HRP archaeologists, was produced by high school students participating in a learning program sponsored by Earthwatch, and became a component of web-based interpretive materials.

For more information on the Homol'ovi Research Program and the archaeology of

Computer-generated reconstructions (left, of the Adobe Pueblo site around) and Homol'ovi I (background). This image is based on data collected by the Homol'ovi Research Program and was produced for the interactive kiosk installed at Homolovi State Park. Visitors using this program can "walk" through the rooms of Adobe Pueblo and view the artifact features found by project archaeologists. Right: Three-dimensional computer model of Homol'ovi IV. Initially developed for use in the park's interactive kiosk, this image is actually a still from an animation that allows visitors to see the site from many perspectives.



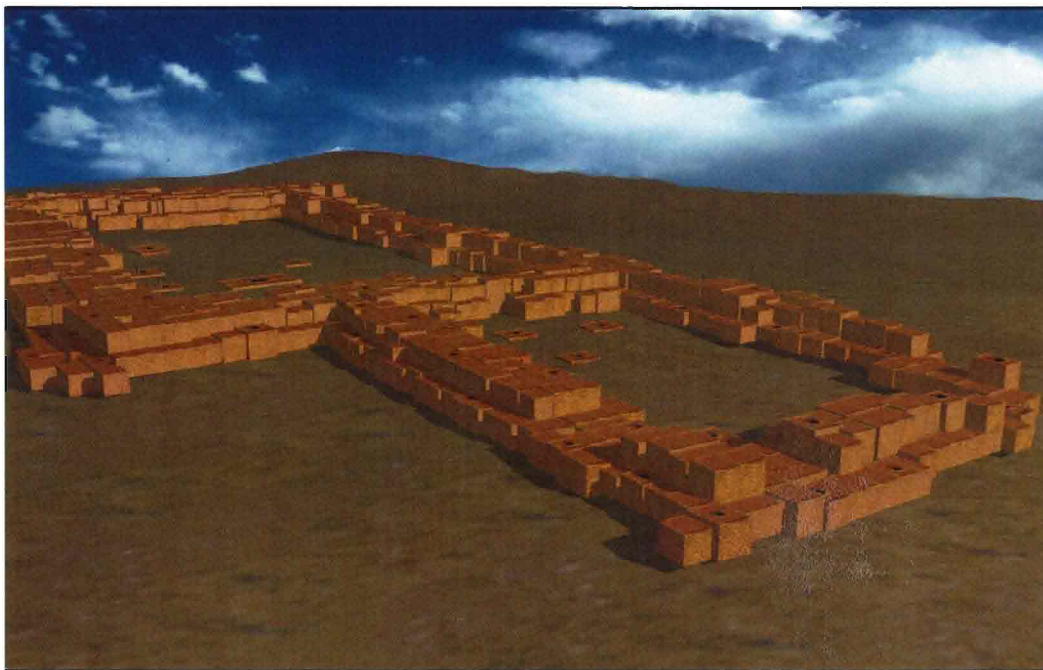
Realized that computer models could be a means of showing people exactly how those "low mounds of rubble" relate to villages built by ancestral Hopi people. To this end, the Homol'ovi Research Program (HRP) developed an interactive kiosk for the park's visitor center.

The interactive exhibit was installed in 1994, and initially was intended to focus on research conducted at the Adobe Pueblo site. We soon saw the interactive kiosk as a

way to interpret some aspects of the *Homol'ovi* villages. Although the interactive exhibit is starting to show its age, it is still used by 20,000 park visitors each year, and members of the park staff are certain that the 3-D models help visitors see the "village within the rubble."

Now the next wave of interpretive revolution is upon us. The World Wide Web allows us to present our research to a much wider audience than ever before. Just as important,

however, is our ability to use the Internet directly to involve the public in archaeological research and preservation. If our goals include sharing and protecting our cultural heritage, we should continue to use every tool available to us to reach a wider audience.



A virtual aerial view of the west and central plazas of Homol'ovi II as they may have looked when the village was occupied, circa A.D. 1330-1390. Like the image above, this is a single frame from a computer-generated three-dimensional model allowing visitors to "fly over" the site and view it from many different angles. All images on these pages courtesy of Homol'ovi Research Program and Arizona State Museum.

For more information on Homol'ovi, see the Arizona State Museum webpage <www.statemuseum.arizona.edu>

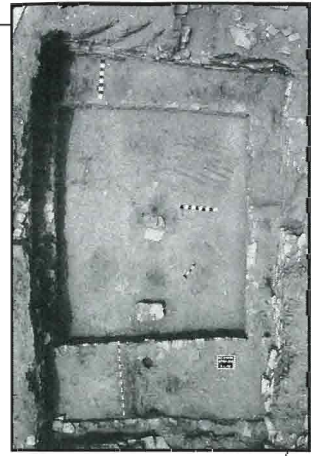
Ancient Ritual

William H. Walker, New Mexico State University

THE DEPOSITS FOUND in kivas and other ceremonial rooms at Homol'ovi II, the primary focus of my doctoral field research, were different from those in habitation and storage structures. Many ritual structures were burned and yielded unique artifacts from their floors as well as from higher strata. In two cases, anomalous human remains were recovered.

To begin explaining the archaeological evidence at Homol'ovi, I explored ethnographic data from traditional Southwestern societies as well as contemporary Tucson religious denominations. My study led me to recognize that ritual artifacts and architecture eventually wear out or, due to changing social circumstances, become obsolete. Traditionally, Piman-speakers, Apaches, and Yuman-speakers burned houses, personal artifacts, and livestock during funerals to transmit the spiritual essences of artifacts into the afterlife. Jewish congregations discard anything with the name of God on it in a ceremonial pit in a cemetery. Catholics pour unused holy water down a drain that leads into holy ground rather than the municipal wastewater system. The ritual uses and importance of certain objects leads them to distinctive disposal contexts which I call "ceremonial trash."

This ceremonially closed kiva at Homol'ovi II was damaged by looters who used a backhoe to excavate it. Marks made by the teeth of the backhoe bucket are evident in the floor of the structure. Photograph courtesy of Richard W. Lord.



Several of the Homol'ovi kivas and the artifacts found within them appear to represent this practice. At their "abandonment," they were ceremonially closed. Artifacts and faunal remains were placed in their hearths, ventilators, and other features. These features were then sealed and the structures were burned. Subsequently, other objects were ritually discarded in these already sacred places.

Kivas containing anomalous human remains required additional explanations, and I again turned to the ethnographic record. Native Southwestern peoples have traditionally persecuted witches. Indeed, the persecution of witches is worldwide, in societies of comparable scale, and should have a strong archaeological signature. The association between kivas and these anomalous human remains led me to hypothesize that the Homol'ovi remains, like others previously ascribed to warfare or accident, actually represent victims of ritual violence similar to witchcraft persecution.



Ritual fauna assemblage recovered from the floor, features, and bench of a kiva, Structure 901 at Homol'ovi I. The items pictured include a raven skull, sandhill crane wing bones, a bobcat maxilla, and cranial elements belonging to a dog or coyote. Photograph courtesy of Richard W. Lord.

Ritual Use of Fauna

Jennifer G. Strand, Independent Consultant

ANIMAL REMAINS recovered from four of the Homol'ovi villages provide environmental, subsistence, and social information. Besides providing food, animals yielded skins and feathers for clothing, bags, and decoration, and bones for tools, jewelry, and musical instruments. Some animals were acquired for ceremonial uses and their placement in ritual contexts created a robust archaeological pattern. Examples of animal parts used for ritual include bird wing fans; carnivore skins used as parts of costumes; skins, bones, and feathers used in medicine bundles or as fetishes; and turtle shells used as rattles. Whole animals used include raptors and rabbits.

At Homol'ovi, I identified changes in ritual animal use through time. At the earlier sites, taxa such as turtles, raptors, canids, large game, and turkey had ceremonial uses. In the later sites, macaw, owl, bobcat, and fox were added. There is also evidence for the ritual use of rabbits and rodents, and an increased use of sandhill crane. In fact, the locally available sandhill crane replaced turkey as a source of ritual artifacts such as fans and standards.

These changes in ceremonial uses of fauna, beginning circa A.D. 1350, were probably related to the introduction of the *katsina* religion. At this time, the "abandonment" of ritual spaces became more formalized. At the larger, aggregated sites, ritual fauna were deposited with other ceremonial objects prior to and during the filling of kivas, shrines, and portions of a plaza.

Ancient Hopi Migrations

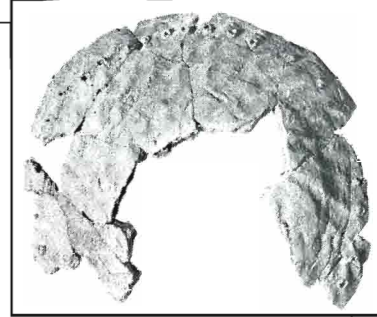
Patrick D. Lyons, Center for Desert Archaeology

HOMOL'ovi has traditionally been viewed by Hopis and by archaeologists as an ancestral Hopi place. According to oral tradition, the migration routes of many Hopi clans pass through *Homol'ovi*. Hopi people continue to procure plants, animals, and other resources from *Homol'ovi* and maintain ancient shrines in the area. Archaeological research on *Homol'ovi*-Hopi connections has primarily focused on the exchange of cotton grown at *Homol'ovi* for Jeddito Yellow Ware pottery made on the Hopi Mesas, the introduction of the *katsina* religion to *Homol'ovi*, and the movement of people from the Winslow area to the Hopi Mesas, circa A.D. 1400.

My dissertation research centers on the origins of the people of *Homol'ovi*, and my results suggest most of the ancient inhabitants of the Winslow area were immigrants from the north. The evidence includes locally produced versions of Kayenta and Hopi (Tusayan) pottery types and vessel forms (such as perforated plates, colanders, and babe-

in-cradle ladles), and the close similarity between ceremonial structures found at the *Homol'ovi* villages and northern sites. Local production was established through neutron activation analysis, a chemical sourcing technique.

Homol'ovi is one of many places in the Southwest that harbored Kayenta and/or Tusayan immigrants. Sites along the Mogollon rim, at Point of Pines, in the Grasshopper area, and along the San Pedro River, among others, have yielded the same signs of northern peoples. The number of people involved in these migrations and the long list of their destinations has been underestimated in the past. Data on the distribution of perforated plates, sourcing studies of early Salado polychromes, and comparative stylistic research strongly suggest that the ceramic component of the Salado phenomenon is attributable in large measure to immigrant potters from northern Arizona.



Above: Based on contextual clues, perforated plates were apparently used as bases or molds within which pottery vessels were made. Figure 52 from James C. Gifford and Watson Smith, *Gray Corrugated Pottery from Awatovi and Other Jeddito Sites in Northeastern Arizona. Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology*, Vol. 69. Copyright 1978 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

The Pithouse-to-pueblo Transition from the *Homol'ovi* Perspective

Lisa C. Young, Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan

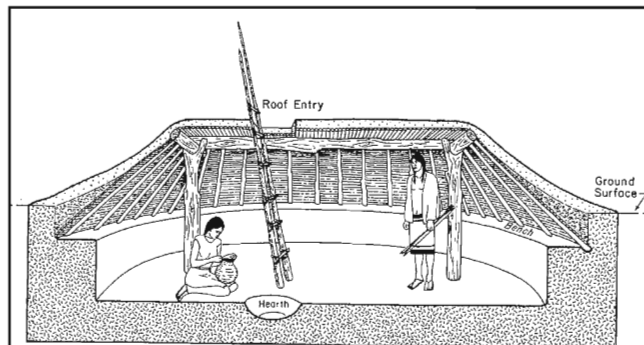
ARCHAEOLOGISTS working in the American Southwest have long argued that the shift from semi-subterranean pithouses to above-ground pueblos was a major turning point in prehistory because it was accompanied by numerous changes in economy and social organization. However, we still do not understand the factors that caused this transition or why it occurred at different times in neighboring areas.

Research at *Homol'ovi* offers a new perspective. In this area, pithouses were used during two time periods. The pithouses from the early period, Basketmaker III (A.D. 600-850), were circular and similar to those found throughout

the northern Southwest at this time. These early pithouse dwellers were farmers, but also made seasonal migrations to the mountains to hunt and collect wild plants.

During the Pueblo III (A.D. 1100-1225) period, most groups in the northern Southwest lived in above-ground rooms, but the *Homol'ovi* people continued to live in small, square pithouses. The late pithouse inhabitants built specialized ritual structures, called kivas, and were less nomadic and more dependent on agriculture—characteristics that have been assumed to be unique to groups living in pueblos. These differences suggest that we need to refocus our questions about the pithouse-to-pueblo transition.

In particular, we need to ask why pueblo people felt the need to place their houses next to one another and to build houses that would last for generations, instead of only a decade or two, the estimated longevity of a pithouse. The answers to these questions will help us understand why people chose to build different types of houses and the causes and consequences of these choices.



Artist's interpretation of a Basketmaker III pithouse excavated at HP-36, a site near the visitor center at Homolovi Ruins State Park. Drawing by Ronald J. Beckwith.

Homol'ovi Revisited

Micah Loma'omvaya, Songoopavi Village

AS A YOUNG BOY, I remember seeing a local Hopi calendar produced by the *Qua'toqti* newspaper and laughing at the cartoons of *Koyaalam* (clowns) as they mimicked Hopi teachings and *Pahaana* (Anglo) ways. Some of them dealt with teachings, such as the fact that Hopi men would someday look pregnant (obese). Another satirized the archaeology of the *Homol'ovi* area, depicting two *Pahaana* archaeologists, with uncanny resemblances to actual project archaeologists, standing next to pueblo ruins that have signs posted on them: Homol'ovi I, II, and III. The archaeologists stand in front of these ruins, with quizzical looks as they examine pottery sherds. In the bushes, *Koyaalam* are waving and hollering, "Here we are!" Yes, "Here we are!" a shout to archaeologists about the enduring nature of the "vanished ones" who we remember as our ancient ancestors or *Hisat.sinom*. Is there a real connection between the past and present cultures? Have the "Anasazi" essentially vanished, or have the Hopi been simply disassociated with prehistory?

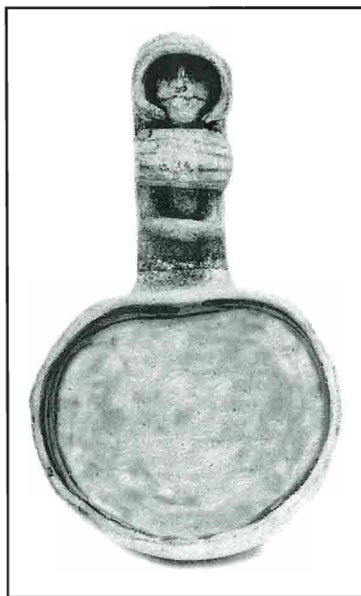
I learned many stories and teachings from my grandparents as I was growing up. I heard of the past occupation of *Homol'ovi* in the migration traditions of my grandfather's clan, *Qalngyam*, the Sun's Forehead clan. They were one of the last clans to merge into Hopi society, and I remembered that their occupation of *Homol'ovi* and their eagle collection areas retraced a southern route to the Hopi Mesas. It was with this cultural background that I joined the Homol'ovi Research Program in 1995 and experienced life on the banks of *Paayu*, the Little Colorado River.

Was I then to be involved in reconstructing the past lives of another culture or the predecessors of Hopi culture, as I had known it in my twenty-one years? I would

have to experience how archaeology would answer my own questions and learn whether it offered a "valid" interpretation of the past. This opportunity was made possible by Chuck and Jenny Adams, who had been longtime friends of my mother, Loretta Secakuku Jenkins, as she had known them during their excavation of Walpi some twenty years earlier. Now, as an "anthropology" student, I had a chance to explore what it meant to excavate and contemplate the



Above: Petroglyph panels in the park, like this one near Homol'ovi II, exhibit figures interpreted by the Hopi as clan symbols marking the migrations of their ancestors. Photograph courtesy of Sally J. Cole. Below: Excavated from Homol'ovi I, this vessel is one of two complete babe-in-cradle ladles recovered to date. Portions of similar vessels have been found at Kayenta and Hopi sites. Photograph courtesy of the Field Museum, negative number A93713, catalog number 72318.



complexities of archaeological excavation. But was it right for a Hopi to exhume the remains of an ancestral village? Did I then have to validate my participation? Perhaps the idea that data were recovered before looting or flood damage was enough to validate my involvement—or was it? Beyond all this, I think the main reason I went to *Homol'ovi* that summer was the desire to look into the past and examine how my people had changed over time and to see if evidence of our current cultural systems existed in earlier times. Then again, it was convenient as I would be able to go home to *So'o* (Grandmother's) cooking every weekend!

I had expected to learn archaeology from scholars who were bent on solving the mystery of the Anasazi, like "Indiana Jones" characters who simply plunged in with shovels in search of Spanish gold. Well, rather than moving loads of dirt, I quickly learned how to move centimeters of earth with a trowel. Other skills I acquired, including setting up a site grid and mapping, brought home the importance of understanding horizontal relationships. I also learned that the drawing and study of profiles allowed site formation processes to be discerned. But how did this contribute to a reconstruction of past lives? Well, this is where *tuma* (*piiki* stones), *mata* (metates), and kivas came into the picture.

I was asked left and right about exciting discoveries and was sometimes unsure, myself, about how a feature or artifact functioned. Going home on the weekends allowed me to recount for my grandparents and other relatives our weekly discoveries. Many parallels between *Homol'ovi* and

Hopi were found, and my learning expanded, not only in archaeology, but in my own culture as well. It seems that as Hopi have progressed along our cultural continuum, we have tended to lose focus of the true meanings behind our behavior. Participating in *Homol'ovi* research launched me into the study of "ethnoarchaeology," as Fewkes referred to it, uncovering motivations behind past behaviors.

As I have continued my education in anthropology and archaeology, I appreciate how integral my initial experience at *Homol'ovi* was. It taught me that questions about prehistoric occupation could be answered by examining parallels found within contemporary cultures. In Hopi culture, we understand that ancestral places were marked with footprints (ruins, artifacts, and burials), monuments to our prehistoric occupation, that would be attributed to us one day. Now we must participate in retracing those

steps leading to Hopi society and be willing to acknowledge the fact that we have a history to share. The work of the Adames, Rich Lange, and all the researchers involved in the reconstruction of the *Homol'ovi* villages may help refresh Hopi memories of life in the past—some of which we can still "dig" for in our oral, clan, and ceremonial traditions. This fusion of past and present supports our ability to pass on a legacy to the next generation of Hopis and to find ways in which we can share our complex history with others. I want to personally thank those involved in the *Homol'ovi* Research Program for preserving our history and for integrating applicable Hopi knowledge into their research. This unique research project has not focused on the disappearance of the Anasazi, but rather on the ancestral Hopi occupation of *Homol'ovi*.

"There they are!" *Kwaqwháy!*

A Volunteer's Perspective

Roberta Foster

IT'S ALL MY FRIEND BERYL'S FAULT. She talked me into going to *Homol'ovi* in the summer of 1992, and I was hooked! The program was so well organized, we didn't have time to be bored, and I learned a lot from the evening talks given by the graduate student crew chiefs. Sometimes we were so tired from daytime digging that it was hard to stay awake, but the lectures, which covered topics ranging from flintknapping to correct social behavior at a ceremonial dance on the Hopi Mesas, were always interesting. The weekend trips to the Hopi Mesas and to neighboring archaeological parks and sites were a terrific bonus. There was so much history to see, much more than a first-time visitor to Arizona expected. That first field season was so fascinating that the project eventually claimed seven of my summers.

Archaeological excavation turned out to be fun. Of course, I've always liked to dig in the dirt—mud pies and holes to China, and so on. It is truly amazing how much dirt can be moved with a mason's trowel—literally mountains! When the little paintbrushes and dental picks came out, the process became as painstaking as most people expect. One of the highlights for me was troweling the fill off a flat stone on a room floor and then finding that it was the lid to a buried storage pot. The feeling of excitement when it came time to lift the lid was breathtaking. The idea that this object had been covered up for more than 600 years and I was the next person to let in the light of day was almost too much. It seemed like a personal connection across time.

As we dug through the adobe and sand, I would try to imagine the lives of the people who lived in these enormous pueblos. Many questions would come up during the day—the function of an artifact, how to tell a plaza surface from just plain dirt, why pueblo roofs were so thick, and how a particular room was used. Over the summers, the answers to questions such as these began to give me a good picture of the history of this amazing place. Visiting the Hopi Mesas and listening to invited Hopi speakers also helped me understand the importance of the sites that the park protects. It is surprising to a novice that there is so much information to be decoded from the little left behind. My most frustrating experience at *Homol'ovi* was coming upon "pot holes" and wondering what clues had been destroyed by vandals.

Over the years, many wonderful people have come to dig at *Homol'ovi*. For many, the "dig" is just the start of a good friendship. I count quite a few of those people as my good friends—friends with whom I go on weekend trips, spend time with at La Posada chatting and putting pennies on the track, sit and watch an afternoon thunderstorm, or take a walk to view one of Arizona's spectacular sunsets.



Kiva 901 at Homol'ovi I, which was excavated with the help of students and Earthwatch volunteers, yielded a mural and evidence of ritual closure. Photograph courtesy of Stanley L. Cook.

Back Sight

LARGE-SCALE DESTRUCTION of archaeological sites (page 3) has a “shock value” that can motivate people to action. The creative response at *Homol’ovi* halted the major devastation there, but too often there is no action.

Stopping “minor devastation” can be even more difficult. The intentional obliteration of Hopi *katsina* glyphs within Homolovi Ruins State Park (see photos at right) is relatively recent. The aesthetic impact of this vandalism is obvious, but how can we measure the cultural impact of this destruction to the Hopi Tribe?

To stop such destruction, we must change people’s values. The petroglyph destroyed thoughtlessly, or the archaeological site ransacked by vandals, is gone forever. Neither can be restored. Even some endangered species can be brought back through an effective recovery plan. Not so with archaeological sites. They are simply gone. Forever. Their diverse values are lost utterly. This is the essential premise from which “preservation archaeology” derives.

Homol’ovi offers many lessons for preservation archaeology. It has become an “institution” that affects people’s values. Committed and effective leaders were of particular importance in building this institution. From Bruce Babbitt (then Arizona’s Governor) to Raymond Thompson (then Director of the Arizona State Museum) to Chuck Adams (Director of the *Homol’ovi* program) to traditional and political leaders from the Hopi Tribe, *Homol’ovi* has benefitted from multiple “heroes.”

Homol’ovi created alliances with “communities” that share its research and preservation goals. The involvement of the Hopi Tribe, the people of Winslow, student researchers, and the general public have all been critical to *Homol’ovi*’s success. Most importantly, the *Homol’ovi* program has expanded those communities by giving many people a direct encounter with archaeology, an experience that often changes their values. *Homol’ovi* is an encouraging success story about people and institutions working to preserve the rich past of the Greater Southwest.

William F. Doelle



Top: Hopi katsina petroglyph recorded in 1969. It was “chalked” to facilitate photography, a practice no longer used because it is destructive. Bottom: Recently, vandals nearly obliterated this design. Photograph courtesy of Sally J. Cole.

See the Center for Desert Archaeology website for more information: <http://www.cdarc.org>

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Center for Desert Archaeology
Archaeology Southwest
300 E. University Blvd., Suite 230
Tucson, AZ 85705

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