



## Archaeology Southwest

*Thank you to Pima Community College  
and to our cosponsors:*



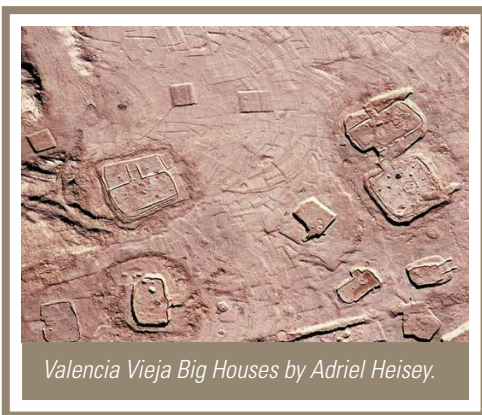
# 2014 Annual MEMBERS' GATHERING & WALKING TOUR at the Valencia site



*Bill Doelle, Linda Mayro, and their daughter Sarah in 1983 at the Valencia site, the location of the Institute for American Research's first research project in Tucson.*

The Valencia site, a significant and well-preserved Hohokam settlement, is a Preservation Archaeology success story. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the National level of significance in 1985, this site receives protection from Pima County and Pima Community College, and its future on the landscape is well secured.

This site comprises two settlements that span hundreds of years of human history. People settled at the earlier of the two settlements, Valencia Vieja, sometime during the Early Agua Caliente phase, ca. A.D. 50–450, and continued to live here through the Tortolita phase, A.D. 450–650/700. Archaeologists trace the rich cultural tradition we know as Hohokam to this critical juncture, when it became advantageous for people to come together and establish roots, rather than remain separate and mobile. In the late 600s, residents relocated south from Valencia Vieja to what is now known as the Valencia site. People lived and flourished in this village until about 1150.



*Valencia Vieja Big Houses by Adriel Heisey.*

We are fortunate that these sites have been relatively undisturbed; because they are so intact, they have yielded insights into how early villagers lived on this landscape. Surface mapping, sample surface collection, and excavations prior to construction projects have provided important insights about these sites. For example, Valencia Vieja is a village oriented around a plaza, and Valencia has two plazas and a ballcourt. These plazas are significant discoveries, because they tell us that the people who lived here valued public spaces and communal gatherings. As we gather today, we can imagine others doing so centuries ago.

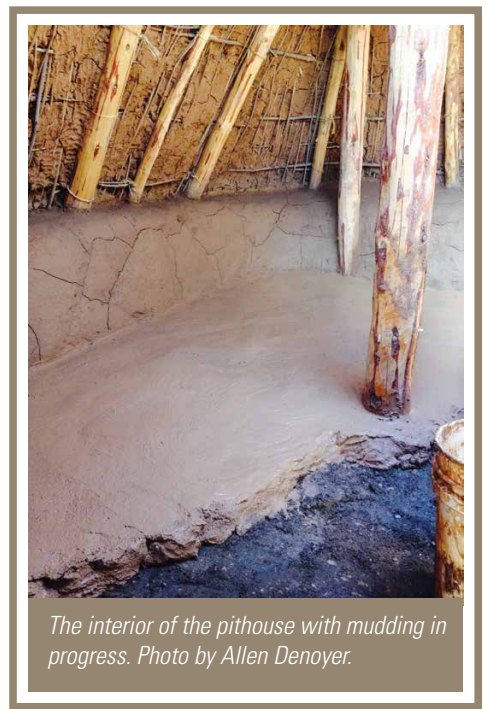


## Our Pilot Pithouse Is Almost Complete!

Over the past several months, ancient technologies expert Allen Denoyer and a team of volunteers have been busy making a replica of a typical Hohokam dwelling from about 900 years ago. This “pilot pithouse” is the first of many projects to come from our new experimental archaeology program, Hands-On Archaeology. Hands-On Archaeology promises to give children and adults opportunities to connect with the past and meaningfully contribute to the archaeological knowledge base.

Using the same tools, techniques, and materials that the Hohokam used long ago, we can develop a deeper understanding of the skills and labor involved in the process of building a pithouse. Besides physically building the structure, Allen and his team have also been busy collecting the right materials (seep willow, driftwood, and the perfect, adobe-ready dirt) and making the necessary tools (axes, digging sticks, basalt knives, and looms) to help bring this pithouse to life. After digging out the foundation with digging sticks, they built the basic frame from wood collected in the area. They then wove the seep willows into stringers on the loom before adding them to the structure for additional support. Over the past few weeks, they began making and applying the mud adobe walls, and now they are almost finished mudding the interior of the structure, as well. Thank you to the many donors who invested in our Hands-On Archaeology program to help make it—and this pithouse—a reality.

Join us at the Arizona Archaeology Expo on **Saturday, March 29, 2014**, to see this pithouse in person. Archaeology Southwest will have activities at Catalina State Park (11570 N. Oracle Rd.) and Steam Pump Ranch from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Join our staff at Catalina State Park for tours through the Romero Ruin site, and join Allen Denoyer and others across the way at Steam Pump Ranch to see the latest progress on the pithouse as it nears completion.



The interior of the pithouse with mudding in progress. Photo by Allen Denoyer.



Recent photo of the pithouse's progress with the adobe walls almost finished. Photo by Allen Denoyer.