



The Hooper Ranch Pueblo, looking north; unexcavated Great Kiva in foreground. (Photo, Fieldiana Anthropology, 1959.)

Hooper Ranch Pueblo

The Hooper Ranch Pueblo is located on the east bank of the Little Colorado River, in the western section of the Wenima Village master plan. According to a 1962 publication produced by the Chicago Natural History Museum, the pueblo dates back as early as 1100 AD and consists of approximately fifty to sixty rooms in the habitation level.

The Fieldiana Anthropology group headed by Dr. Paul Martin, Chief Curator, Department of Anthropology, Chicago Natural History Museum excavated the site in the late 1950's. Approximately 1,200 baked clay, stone, bone and shell artifacts were recovered. All items are presently on display or in storage at the Chicago Museum.

The pueblo has about 65 ground rooms and was two stories in some places. It was constructed of sandstone and set in mud mortar. Three kivas were discovered, including a rectangular Great Kiva. It is estimated that the pueblo was occupied from A.D. 1230 to 1300. The layout of the Village was 'Plaza Type' that is, rooms clustered about the kivas to form an enclosed courtyard or plaza. Several periods of construction were noted. Doorways were rectangular and most had been sealed. Roofs consisted of several beams, with the ends resting on the tops of the walls. Layers of poles, splints and adobe were placed on top of the beams.

Most of the rooms contained fire-pits and some contained storage bins and ventilators. Some rooms still had remains of charred corn, vegetable remains and miscellaneous stone and bone tools.

The kivas had striking similarities to contemporary Hopi and Zuni kivas, featuring a ventilator, firepit, ash pit, vault, niches and rectangular shape.

Over 13,000 pottery shards were recovered from the Hooper Ranch Pueblo and 16 restorable vessels - various potteries: bowls, canteens and pitchers. The pottery recovered was black on white, polychrome, brown indented corrugated and brown plain corrugated. Some red-slipped shards were also found.

Archeologists suggest that the ancestry of the Ancient peoples of Wenima Village were primarily Mongollon. On August 11, 1960, Dr. Paul Martin announced one of the most, "Important discoveries of the twentieth century in Southwestern Archeology." In a secret crypt at the Wenima Village Pueblo, an image believed to be a kachina was unearthed. It was nine inches high, carved from sandstone and painted with vertical stripes of orange, green, blue and black and its right arm was missing. It was later identified by Hopi Elders to be the image of Panaiyoikyasi.





Symbol of the Hopi Water Clan inscribed on wall stone at Hooper Ranch Pueblo.

Hooper Ranch Pueblo (con't)

Researchers have since classified this figure as either a cult deity or perhaps a very early proto-Kachina figure. In present day Zuni and Hopi society, Kachinas are representations of supernatural beings who are associated with bringing well being to the pueblo. However, it is possible that the figure represents a deity other than a Kachina, a Wu'ya. It has been suggested that the Wu'ya represents the underworld and is symbolic of a sacred entrance. More specifically, it may be identified as representing a female cult deity, belonging to a group that is concerned with childbirth, reproduction and fertility.

Markings of pictographs depicting the Hopi Water Clan were also present at Wenima Village Pueblo. Traditionally, four large waves of water indicate the four migration routes to be completed by the Hopi Water Clan.

In 1994, the Archaeological Conservancy, acquired the Hooper Ranch Pueblo and approximately five acres surrounding the archeological site. The Archaeological Conservancy is a non-profit organization that identifies, acquires and preserves the most significant archaeological sites in the United States. Their offices are located in Albuquerque, NM.



(Left) Black and White canteen found at the Hooper Ranch Pueblo. (Next) A depiction of the the Wu'ya, found in the underground crypt at the pueblo.



(Above) Painted pipe of baked clay. (Right) Pottery shards found at the Hooper Ranch Pueblo in 1959.

