



National Park Service
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Aztec Ruins National Monument
Chaco Culture National Historical Park
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New Perspectives: Excavations of a Small Basketmaker III Site at Chaco Canyon Aztec Ruins Lecture Series

During the construction of a new lift station in the maintenance yard at Chaco Canyon, an unrecorded site was encountered. The Basketmaker III habitation site was partially excavated in order for the planned construction to continue. Multiple features were found including habitations, storage pits and thermal features.

While many of the artifacts suggested a typical seasonal habitation, there were several items that indicated additional activities were the focus of site use. Most prominent were multiple lines of evidence for the manufacture of ceramics. More than one hundred unfired ceramic sherds were found as well as tools with adhering clay, lumps of mixed clay, minerals and a probable firing area. The materials discovered suggest plain jars were being made to replace those worn out along with one type of relatively rare ceramic.

Corn cobs used as fuel provided a date that fits the time frame known as an early florescence of culture within the canyon. The ceramics and lithic sources point to southern origins or interaction and reflect on the early formation of the phenomena we now know as Chaco.

On Friday, Sept. 14, at 7:00 pm in the Aztec Ruins Visitor Center, the presentation is offered by Vern and Kathy Hensler. Both are currently employees at Aztec Ruins NM and Chaco Culture NHP respectively and have long histories of working as archeologists and researchers in the Southwest. Don't miss this look into an opportunity to explore the research and new ideas on this pre-Chacoan site!

For more information on this and other events, call Aztec Ruins Visitor Center at 505.334.6174, see the website link <https://www.nps.gov/azru/planyourvisit/calendar.htm>, or find us at www.facebook.com/AztecRuinsNM/.

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