

## The Archaeology Site at Confluence Park (Sand Point)

DAS members were given a tour of an archaeology site that is just south of Confluence Park in St. George by archaeologist Greg Woodall.

The site sits above the confluence of the Virgin and Santa Clara rivers and is bounded by I-15 and the Exit 5 interchange. The active site is on the hilltop on either side of the bill board. However Greg believes that there are more potential sites in the flat plain around the hill. Figure 1 is view from Confluence Park while Figure 2 is a view of an exploratory trench being dug in the flat plain.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Greg explained that the site was an extension of Main Street. At the hill, the road forked right to go to the current Tonaquint area and curved left around the hill to go to Bloomington (Figure 3).



Figure 3



Figure 4

There are a number of active trenches at the top of the hill, Figure 4 through 7. The day before we visited the crew buried a number of trenches where explorations have been completed.



Figure 5



Figure 6

Greg explained that the site originally extended into the area that is now I-15 and beyond into a region that is now occupied by apartments. He told stories of locals telling him that during the I-15 excavations, large numbers of artifacts were unearthed. This was before the time when archaeology surveys were needed to be done prior to road construction.

Greg explained the methodology of exploring a site and summarized some of the team's findings:

- At least 5 pit houses
- Numerous storage rooms
- Stone tools
- Pottery shards including gray ware and black on white – but significantly no corrugated shards
- Obsidian flakes
- Turquoise and other rare stones
- Burnt corn kernels

Greg estimates that the store rooms would date to 500 to 1000 AD. Greg did say that no carbon dating of the site has been performed. In one area, the archaeologists found evidence of 4 store rooms that had been built on top of each other, all with 40 cm of depth- indicating reuse of the area over time.

South of the “village” Greg showed us numerous grinding holes in the solid rock, Figure 8, and cupules, Figure 9, which were either small grinding holes or areas to grind pigment for paint used in ceremony.





Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

There was one petroglyph on the site, Figure 10. Greg explained that he and other rock art experts believe that this is a solstice marker. The glyph is located on a flat rock lying below the top surface of the hill. The markings are very worn, with only a spiral or concentric circles being one of the only recognizable images.

Greg explained that he thought that the village they are excavating would resemble the pit house village reconstruction seen at the Lost City Museum in Overton Nevada, Figure 11 and 12, since the habitation periods seem to be similar.

Greg explained that his vision would be for this site to be incorporated in the St. George park system as a working archaeology site along with appropriate interactive signage and displays, all connected through the internet.



Figure 10



Figure 11

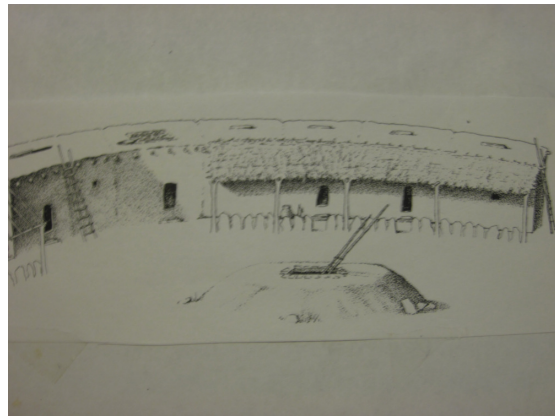


Figure 12

A story about an adjacent site excavated prior to the construction of the Exit 5 interchange in 2010 appeared The Spectrum, the St. George paper. The article can be found at <http://www.thespectrum.com/article/20140222/NEWS/302220012/UDOT-makes-archaeological-discoveries-Tonaquint>.

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