
ALBUQUERQUE-AREA Archaeology



Sites and Stories





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TRC TRC Mariah Associates Inc.
Howard C. Higgins, Ph.D., Vice President.
4221-B Balloon Park Road N.E.
Albuquerque, NM 87109
www.trcmariah.com

Text, planning, and project management:
Richard D. Holmes, Ph.D.
Graphic Design/Art Production: Mina Yamashita
email: mbear@mbear.com
world-wide web: www.mbear.com/mbear
Cartography: William B. Hudspeth
Additional research and text: Toni R. Goar
Web site: Scott W. Walker
Review: John C. Acklen and Rita Garrett

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Paleoindian Period / 9500 - 5500 B. C.

Archaic Period / 5500 B.C. - A. D. 400

Focus: Archaic Pithouses on the West Side

Focus: Sandy Point Site (LA 100420)

Ancestral Pueblo Period / A. D. 400 - 1540

Focus: Petroglyphs

Focus: Airport Hamlet Site (LA 100419)

Focus: Tijeras Pueblo Site (LA 581)

Classic Pueblos & Spanish Settlement / A.D. 1540 - 1706

Focus: Piedras Marcadas Pueblo Site (LA 290)

Focus: Kuaua Pueblo Site (LA 187)

Spanish & Mexican Periods / A.D. 1706 - 1821, A.D. 1821 - 1846

Focus: Los Ranchos Plaza Site (LA 46638)

Territorial Period / A.D. 1846 - 1912

Focus: Coyote Springs Sites

Conclusion

*Glossary**

Bibliography & Sources for Further Information

Photography and Drawing Credits

Words in **bold face on the following pages appear in the glossary.*



Introduction

New Mexico is one of the world's richest areas for archaeological resources, and Albuquerque is the state's largest city and the center of a growing metropolis. Albuquerque-area archaeology, however, is little recognized, despite its variety and importance.

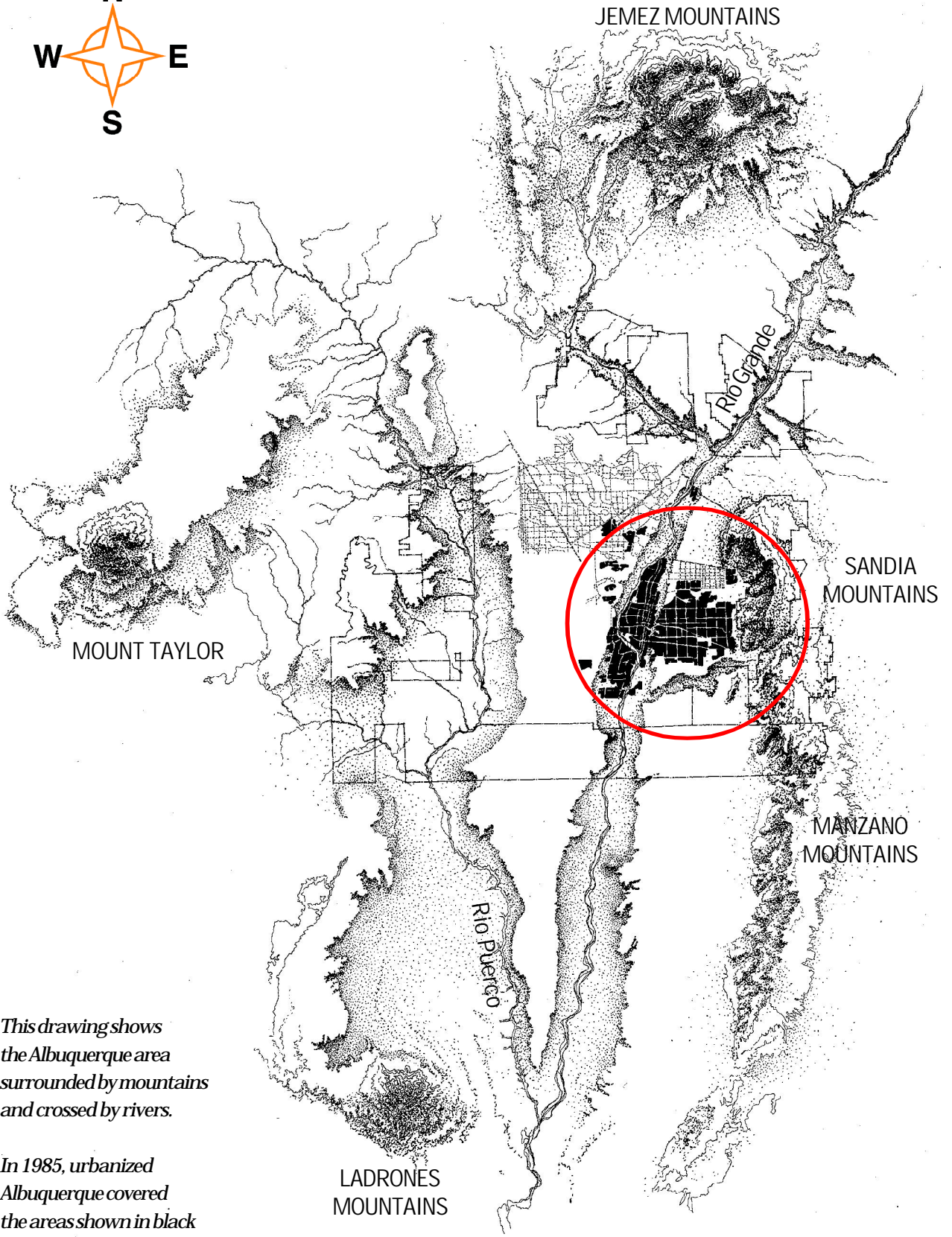
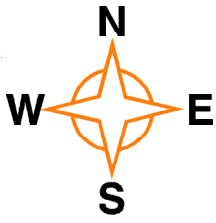
Albuquerque-Area Archaeology: Sites and Stories presents information about the people that flourished here at various times in the last 11,000 years or more. In it are maps, pictures, and text. Instead of in-depth coverage of any part of Albuquerque's long cultural history, this atlas discusses major culture periods, adds a timeline of important events, and includes maps showing known archaeological sites in and around Albuquerque. Of the important local archaeological sites featured here, some have been destroyed by construction or are threatened by future development, and a few are preserved for the public to visit.

To talk about cultural history and cultural periods, it's important to define "culture." One definition is *the ideas and values that a group of people has in common*, and includes how a group thinks of itself, other groups, and the environment. *Material culture* refers to the things people make or use, like tools, shelters, furnishings, kinds of transportation, food, and toys. Archaeologists study material culture to learn how people lived and affected their environment.

Why conduct archaeological research or even read about it? The reasons include learning:

- n how ancient and not-so-ancient residents lived and affected the geographical area
- n how our own lives fit into larger cultural, historical, and environmental contexts
- n that it can be fun to discover the connections between us and the people of the past.

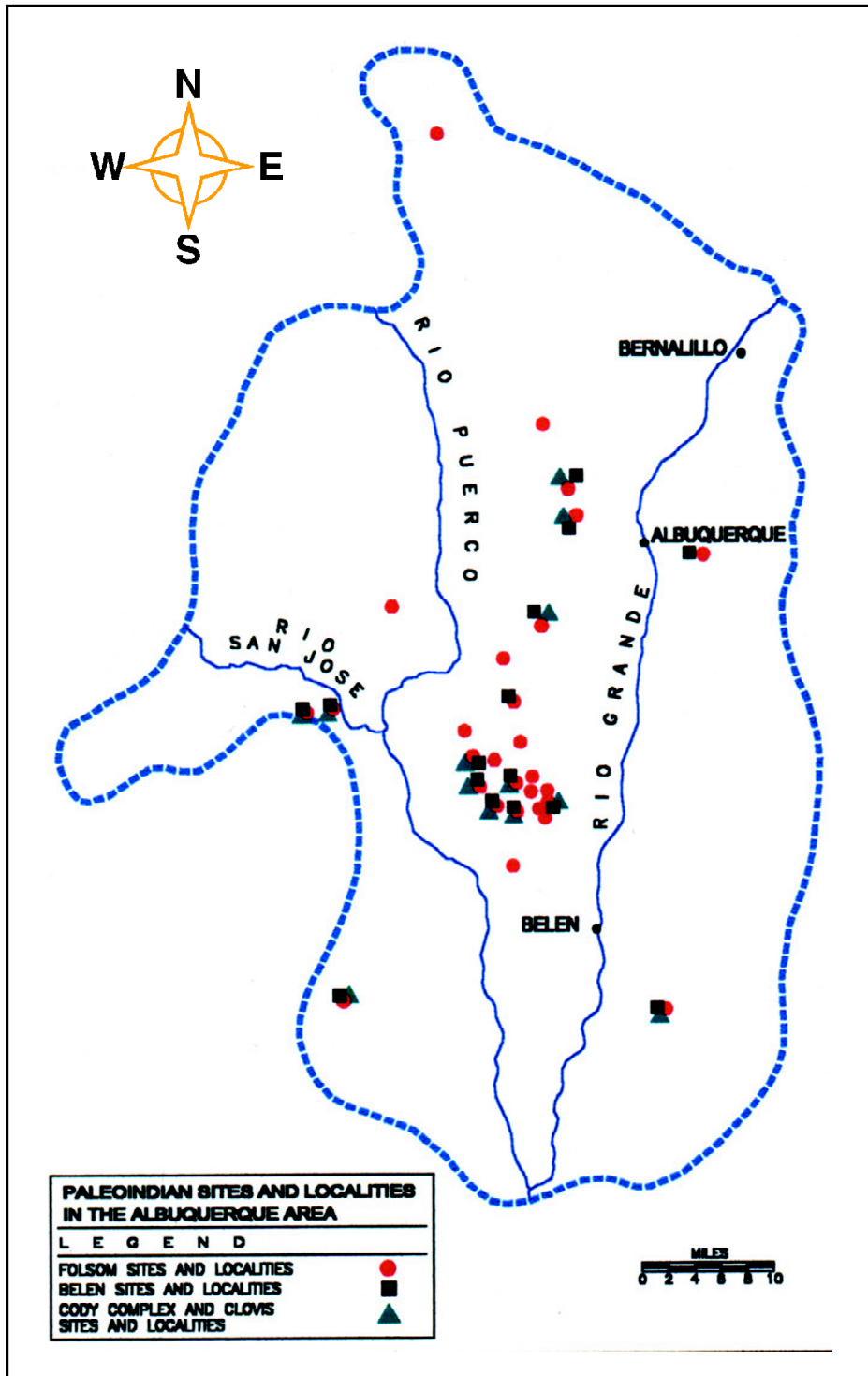
This publication is intended to help its readers better understand and appreciate the archaeology of the Albuquerque area, where the past is always present. n



This drawing shows the Albuquerque area surrounded by mountains and crossed by rivers.

In 1985, urbanized Albuquerque covered the areas shown in black at center right.

Paleoindian Period (9500-5500 B.C.)



Who were the first people to see the Albuquerque area? This question is part of the larger issue of when people arrived in the Americas. Many Native American traditions say that people were created here, or that they emerged from other worlds below this one. **Archaeologists** have a different view. They think that fully modern human beings came to the Americas, probably from northern Asia.

Most archaeologists think that the first people in the Albuquerque area were here as early as 9500 B.C. Researchers call these people the **Paleoindians**, but what they called themselves is unknown.

Discoveries of early sites in New Mexico contribute to our understanding about the earliest Americans. Many archaeologists once thought that **Sandia Cave**, in the Sandia Mountains, was the site of a very early human occupation; the data from this Paleoindian site, however, have been reevaluated, and the current consensus among archaeologists is that the site is not as old as previously thought.

9500 B.C.	9000 B.C.	8000 B.C.	5500 B.C.
Clovis Points	Folsom Points	Plano Points	Belen and Cody points

A typical Paleoindian site is scattered with debris from the manufacture of **artifacts** such as stone spear points, or it may be a place where animals were hunted and butchered. The spear points themselves are the characteristic marker of the **Paleoindian period** (9500-5500 B.C.). These points have distinctive channels on their sides, made by removing a few flakes of stone; these channels made it easier to attach the spear point to a shaft. Names of several types of these **fluted points** refer to places, many in New Mexico, where they were first identified. Their names are also applied to the prehistoric cultures that used these points.

The earliest types of points, called **Clovis** points, have been dated by the age of the mammoth and other animal bones found with them to the years between 9500 and 9000 B.C. **Folsom** points are sometimes discovered with the bones of an extinct form of bison. They date later than Clovis but earlier than 8000 B.C. Two other Paleoindian point types are sometimes grouped together in a category called **Plano**, dating from 8000-5500 B.C.; they can, however, be distinguished from each other as **Belen and Cody Complex** points.

The climate during the Paleoindian period was wetter than today's. Summer temperatures were lower than they are now, but winter temperatures probably were not colder. Here in the Southwest were grasslands similar to those in today's Great Plains. Paleoindians hunted herds of large grazing animals. Smaller game and wild plants were major sources of food for the Paleoindians. After about 6000 B.C., many of the species the Paleoindians hunted had become extinct, but the people continued their hunting and gathering lifestyle. Scavenging also contributed to their diet.

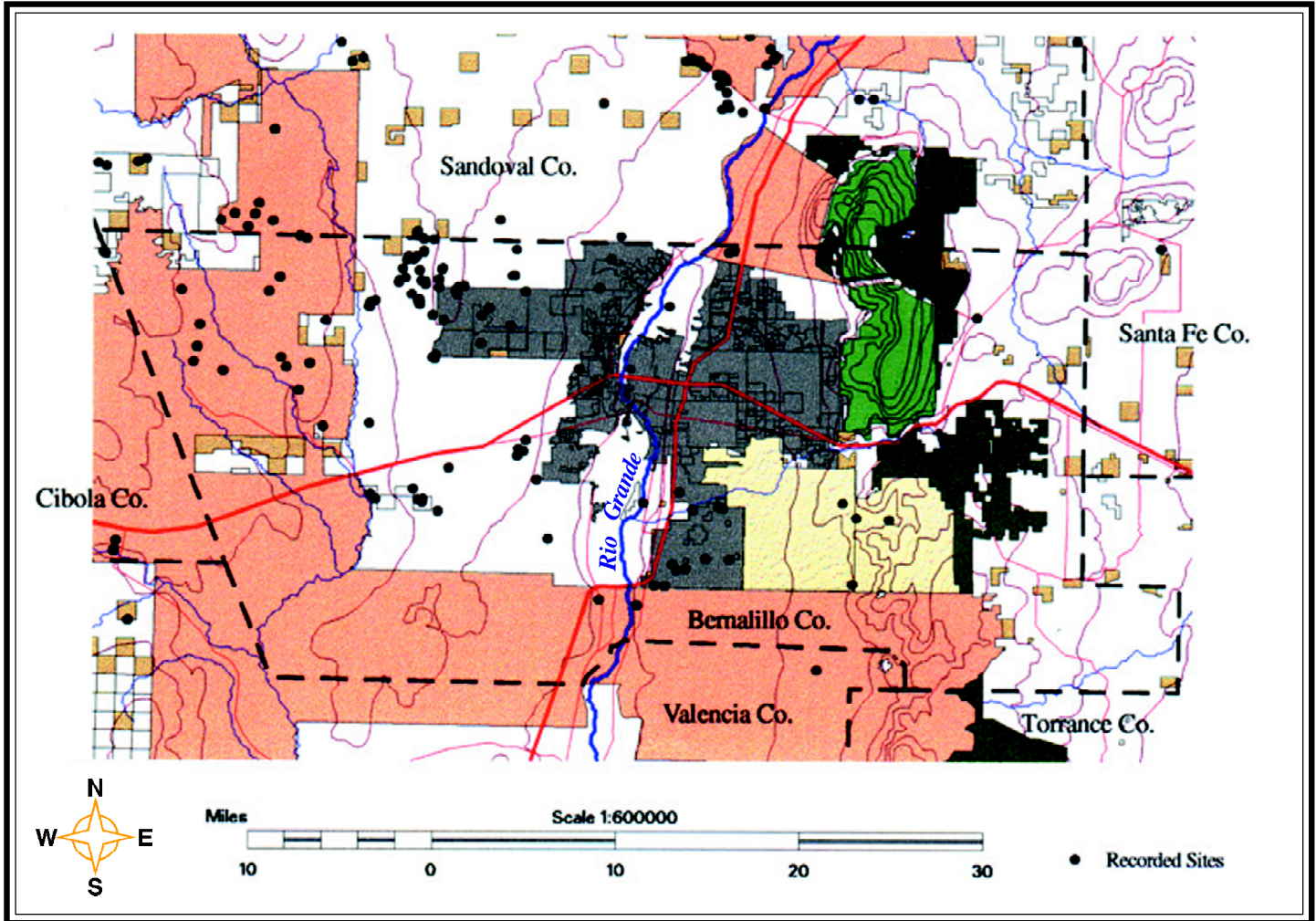
Like most hunting people, the Paleoindians were mobile, traveling over the landscape in search of game. They did not farm or live in settled villages but camped near water sources where they could spot their prey. Small groups of relatives probably formed the basis of their society.

Around Albuquerque, Paleoindian archaeological sites are located on hills west of the Rio Grande, from Bernalillo to Belen. Other Paleoindian sites have been reported near the foothills of the Manzano Mountains, in the Sandias, on Kirtland Air Force Base, and at Mesa del Sol. Since many sites have been found in eroded areas, it is likely that additional sites remain buried; some of these sites may be discovered in the future. n

Projectile points, used for spears by Paleoindian people. The types shown are, from left to right: Sandia, Clovis, Folsom, and Hell's Gap (a Late Paleoindian point type).



Archaic Period (5500 B.C. - A.D. 400)



Known Archaic sites in Albuquerque area. Dark-gray section shows Albuquerque city limits (ca. 1998).

Archaeologists call the cultural stage after the Paleoindian the **Archaic period**. Between the Paleoindian and Archaic periods there may have been few or no people in the Albuquerque area. Paleoindian hunters may have withdrawn to the north and east, where grassy plains still supported herds of grazing animals.

According to this view, new immigrants from the west were the next inhabitants of the Albuquerque area. Not all archaeologists agree with this theory, and some think that the Paleoindian people developed the subsequent Archaic lifestyle. Different materials used by the Paleoindians and the Archaic people reflect adaptations to climate and environment.

During the Archaic period people invented new tools and became increasingly less mobile but still foraged for small animals and wild plants.

5500 B.C.	4800 B.C.	3200 B.C.	1800 B.C.	800 B.C.	A.D. 400
n	n	n	n	n	
Jay Points	Bajada Points	San Jose Points	Armijo Points	En Medio Points	

Later in the Archaic period, people cultivated wild corn and other plants for food. The term **Desert Archaic** has been used to describe specialized adaptation of the people of this period to the arid western portion of North America. Tools found at Archaic sites suggest a wide range of food sources, and the presence of **ground-stone tools**, such as **manos and metates**, indicates greater use of plants.

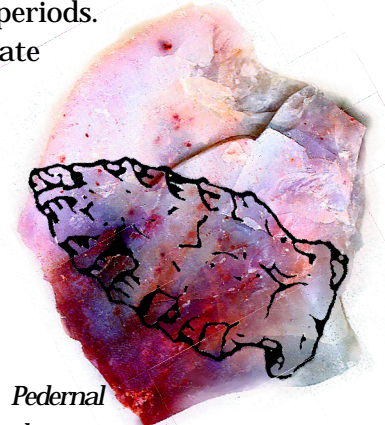
Archaeologists have divided the Archaic period into smaller units, such as the **Oshara** cultural tradition of north-central New Mexico. Within this cultural tradition, there are several phases, characterized by distinctive types of projectile points used for darts: **Jay** (5500-4800 B.C.), **Bajada** (4800-3200 B.C.), **San Jose** (3200-1800 B.C.), **Armijo** (1800-800 B.C.), and **En Medio** (800 B.C.-A.D. 400). There is a continuity in the culture between the Archaic and later cultural periods.

Why did the inhabitants of the Southwest begin to raise plants in the Late Archaic period? After all, plant cultivation takes more work than hunting and gathering food. It may be that as the population of the region increased, available natural resources decreased, and people had to find a new way to obtain food. Cultivated crops supplemented wild plants and animals as food sources. Perhaps, during the Late Archaic period, food sources were abundant rather than decreasing. This would have allowed human populations to grow. Increased population density led to greater competition between groups and to the establishment of territorial boundaries. These boundaries, in turn, hampered the foraging way of life. Plant cultivation allowed people to continue foraging while having a reliable source of food. Even though evidence of corn cultivation has been found in Archaic sites in the Southwest, there is little to suggest dependence on corn during this time. By the end of the Archaic period, however, people had come to rely more on plant cultivation and live in more permanent settlements.

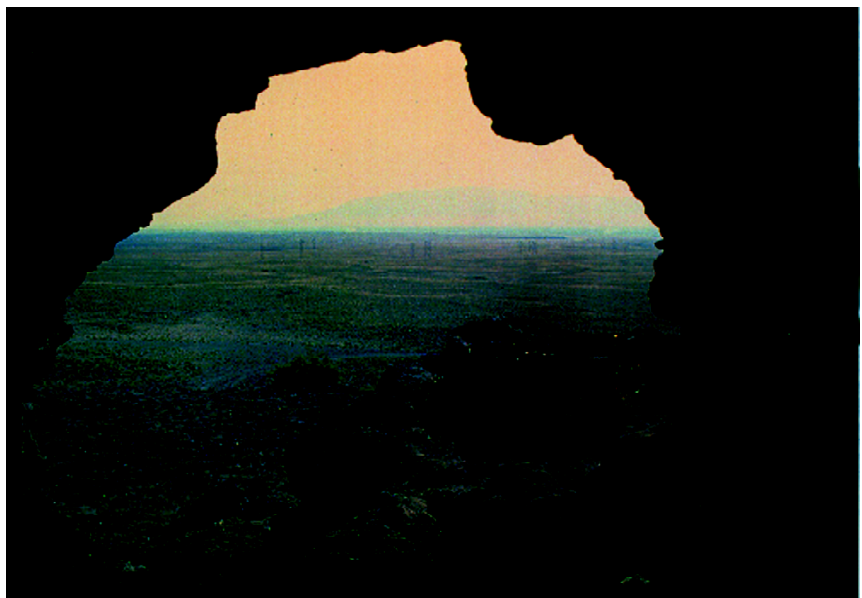
Most sites found so far are above and away from the Rio Grande floodplain, although an Archaic site has been reported near the river. Other Archaic sites may have been buried or washed away by rivers, or inhabitants may simply have preferred locations that gave them access to a wide range of environments. Archaeologists have investigated Archaic sites on the West Mesa, including the (LA 46431) cave site pictured below, as well as sites in Corrales, Tijeras Canyon, at Mesa del Sol, and on Kirtland Air Force Base.

Most Archaic sites are scattered with stone tools, remains of fire hearths, and food storage pits. They may have been camps, places occupied repeatedly or at particular seasons. Around Albuquerque, Archaic **pithouses** are roughly circular with floors slightly below the ground level outside.

This cave site overlooks Albuquerque from the west.



Pedernal chert was a favored material for stone tools. The outline drawing shows a Late Archaic point.



FOCUS Archaic Pithouses on the West Side

During the late 1960s, several Archaic pithouses were excavated in the dunes of the West Mesa. These pithouses were occupied between 1000 and 1 B.C., what is sometimes called the Late Archaic period.

Excavations at Archaic sites have revealed shallow pithouses. Some features such as hearths and toolmaking areas were located outside pithouses. Archaeologists suspect that these areas were used during warmer months when cooking, making tools, and preparing hides would be easier to do outside. Of course, during the colder months, some of these activities had to be performed inside.

Within the pithouses, hearths, storage pits, and postholes were found. The hearth fires were probably more for warmth and light than for cooking. Dried plants and seeds were stored in the pits. Postholes held posts that supported roof beams.

Evidence at these Archaic sites suggests that plant cultivation was occurring in the Albuquerque area at this time. People were not farming but were tending wild plants. This practice allowed for a more settled and permanent habitation.

Since the late 1960s, several more Late Archaic pithouse sites have been recorded. These sites are very important for learning more about permanent settlements, the introduction of corn (or **maize**) **horticulture**, and the invention of technologies like pottery.

Excavation of Archaic-period pithouse site on Albuquerque's west side.



FOCUS Sandy Point Site (LA 100420)

When work on runway expansion began at the Albuquerque International Sunport in 1995, two archaeological sites were discovered. To learn about these sites, the City of Albuquerque hired archaeologists to conduct fieldwork and laboratory analysis of physical remains. The older site, called the **Sandy Point site**, was designated LA 100420. **LA** stands for *Laboratory of Anthropology*, the New Mexico state agency that keeps records of archaeological sites. The Sandy Point site is Late Archaic. Finding a site east of the Rio Grande similar to those on the West Mesa was an important discovery.

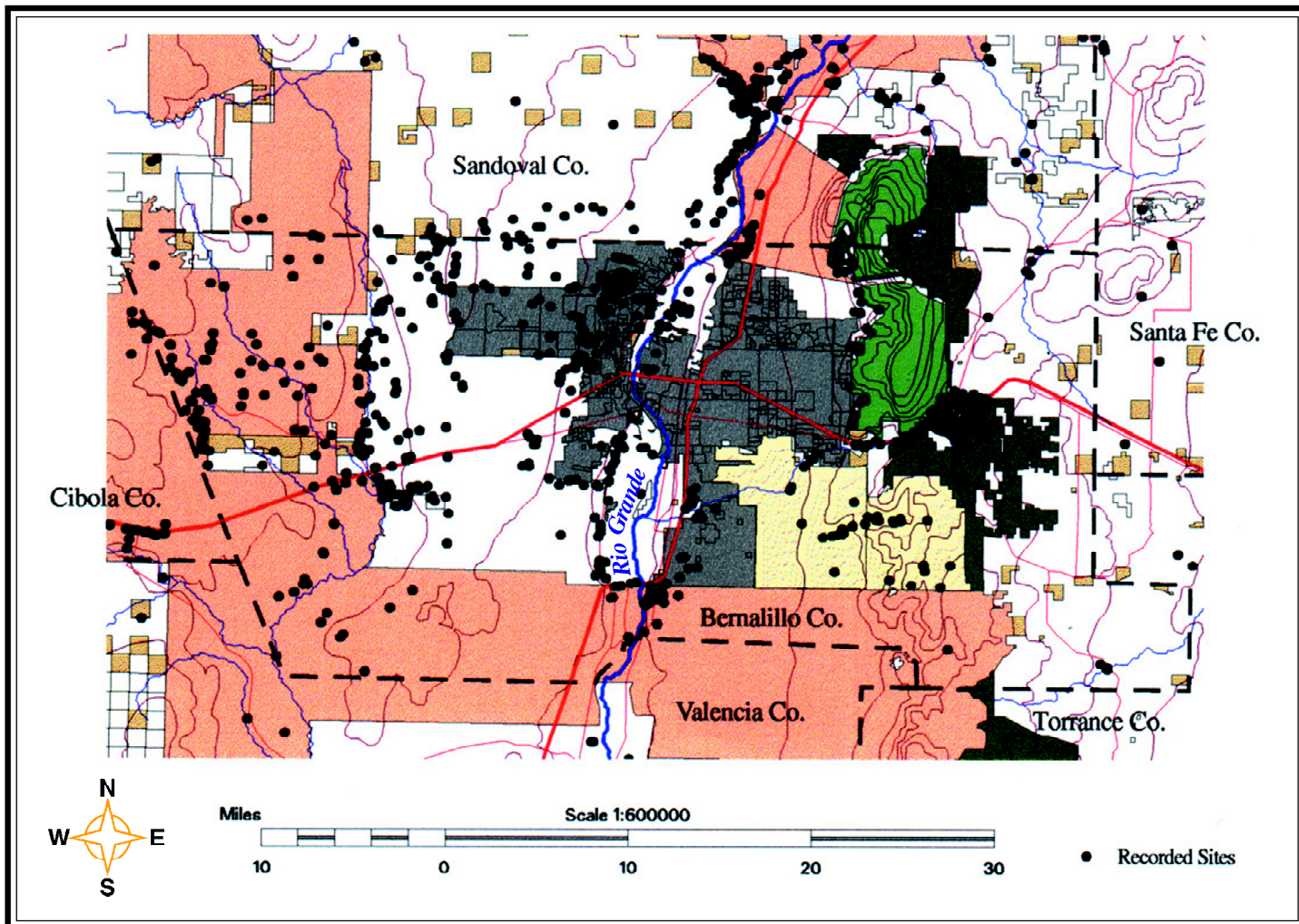
The Sandy Point site consists of two areas with **features**. One of these areas contains a poorly defined structure made of brush, and the other area has evidence of a structure and fire hearths. The differences in these features tell us that the site was occupied two separate times. **Radiocarbon dating** of charcoal found at the site gave archaeologists an idea of when: between 800 and 150 B.C.

Because the site is located on the edge of a bluff and overlooks an arroyo, it would have been ideal for scouting game animals and gathering plants nearby. Artifacts recovered from this site include projectile points and the stone waste flakes left from the sharpening of stone tools. Few ground-stone tools, however, were recovered, which would suggest that corn and seeds had been important in the diet of the occupants. Evidently, the Sandy Point site was a camp used by hunters. Today, planes take off and land where those hunters once lived.

Archaeologists screening soil to recover artifacts at the Sandy Point site.



Ancestral Pueblo Period (A.D. 400 - 1540)



Known Ancestral Pueblo sites in the Albuquerque area. Dark-gray section shows Albuquerque city limits (ca. 1998).

The term **Anasazi** has been used for the culture and people occupying our region from A.D. 400 to the time of Spanish explorations in the 1500s. Many archaeologists now call this culture **Ancestral Pueblo** instead of Anasazi.

One reason for changing terms is that *Anasazi* is a Navajo word meaning *ancient strangers or enemies*, and the Navajo came to the Southwest long after the early Pueblo people had built villages here.

Another reason to use the term Ancestral Pueblo is that it associates the ancient inhabitants of this area with historic as well as today's Pueblo people. In the past, some writers thought that the Anasazi had *vanished*. This is not so. Today's Pueblo people are descendants of the people who lived here many centuries ago.

A.D. 400

A.D. 900

A.D. 1200

A.D. 1325

A.D. 1540

Early Developmental

Late Developmental

Coalition Period

Classic Period

Spanish Exploration begins in what is now New Mexico.

As with the earlier Archaic period, the Ancestral Pueblo period is divided into smaller units. The terms **Basketmaker III, Pueblo I, Pueblo II**, and the like have been commonly used in Southwestern archaeology. These terms were devised in the 1920s and 1930s by archaeologists to describe cultural phases. Here in the Albuquerque area, however, these terms do not adequately describe what has been found in the archaeological record. So a different conceptual framework for understanding cultural history has been devised for our area, and this booklet uses the revised framework.

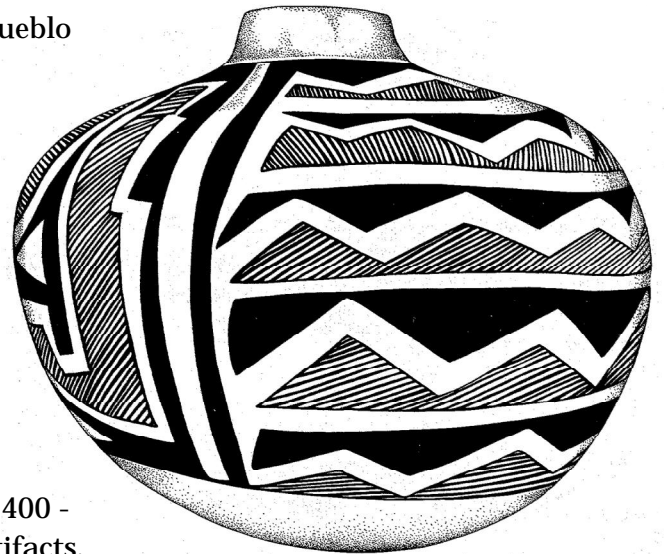
During the **Early Developmental** period (A.D. 400 - 900) there was great variety in architecture and artifacts. Sites with pithouses are generally more abundant near Albuquerque than in parts of the northern Rio Grande Valley, where a transition to above-ground architecture occurred more completely. People adopted a settled way of life based on growing corn, beans, and squash. More food was stored, pithouses became larger and were occupied for a longer time each year, and pottery vessels came into use. Among the pottery styles were gray and black-on-white varieties. Pottery and other goods found in sites suggest that inhabitants of the Albuquerque area traded with people who lived in other parts of the Southwest.

Not much is known about the Early Developmental period in the Albuquerque area. Although there are some accurately dated sites, most wood found at Early Developmental sites is cottonwood, which is not suitable for **dendrochronology**.

Early Developmental sites have been recorded near Corrales, near **Sandia Pueblo**, in Tijeras Canyon, and at Kirtland Air Force Base. Pottery fragments found on the surface at Kirtland Air Force Base that date from this period indicate Early Developmental occupations. Early Developmental sites may have been obscured by later occupations or recent activities.

Following the Early Developmental period came the **Late Developmental** period (A.D. 900 - 1200). In northwestern New Mexico's San Juan Basin, major construction occurred at **Chaco Canyon**.

At sites in Chaco Canyon, artifacts have been found that suggest indirect trading with settlements in northern Mexico and the formation of a complex society. In the Albuquerque area, however, there are no signs that society was as complex, and no structures were built that compare to the buildings at Chaco Canyon.



Drawing of a typical Socorro-phase Black-on-white ceramic vessel.



Stone hoe found at the Airport Hamlet site measures approximately 11 centimeters long.



Pottery sherds and groundstone objects found at the Airport Hamlet site. These artifacts indicate that the people who lived at this site cultivated plants and traded with settlements to the west of Albuquerque.

Above-ground structures were common in the **Coalition** period (A.D. 1200 -1325) and usually consisted of linear or L-shaped **roomblocks** of two to 200 rooms. Pueblos of about 30 rooms were the most common. Pithouses still were constructed during this period, but their role in daily life may have begun to change; perhaps they were used more for ceremonial purposes than as houses.

Another occurrence during the Coalition period was the shift from using minerals in pottery paints to using carbon-based paints. Why the shift to carbon-based paint took place is unknown.

The **Classic** period (A.D. 1325 -1540) was important in the Albuquerque area because significant developments took place, and there are some prominent sites remaining from the Classic period. This period started around 1325 and ended when the first Spanish explorers came to the Middle Rio Grande Valley between 1540 and the 1590s.

At the start of this period, people began using a lead-glaze as paint on pottery. This pottery style is called **Glazeware**. Produced in a variety of colors and rim forms, the pottery was widely traded throughout the Southwest, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

Most Classic-period residential sites in the Albuquerque area, such as **Kuaua**, **Alameda**, and **Santiago Pueblos**, are next to the Rio Grande floodplain. They were large multi-storied structures. Away from the Rio Grande, there are other sites from this period, but they were not permanent habitations. Most were temporary camps or places where some specialized activity, such as plant gathering and processing, was conducted. These sites are found at higher elevations, such as near the headwaters of Arroyo del Coyote on Kirtland Air Force Base and in the Manzano Mountains. The sites were probably related to the large villages along the Rio Grande flood plain.

Despite large settlements in the Albuquerque area and areas to the north (such as the Hagan Basin, the Santo Domingo Basin, the Santa Fe Plateau, and the Galisteo Basin), the beginning of the Late Classic period (A.D. 1425 - 1540) was marked by an abandonment of the large pueblos in the East Mountain area. There are, however, many small sites in Tijeras Canyon dating from this time. Most were **fieldhouses** or scatters of artifacts, and some may have been occupied by Hispanics or Apaches in historic times.

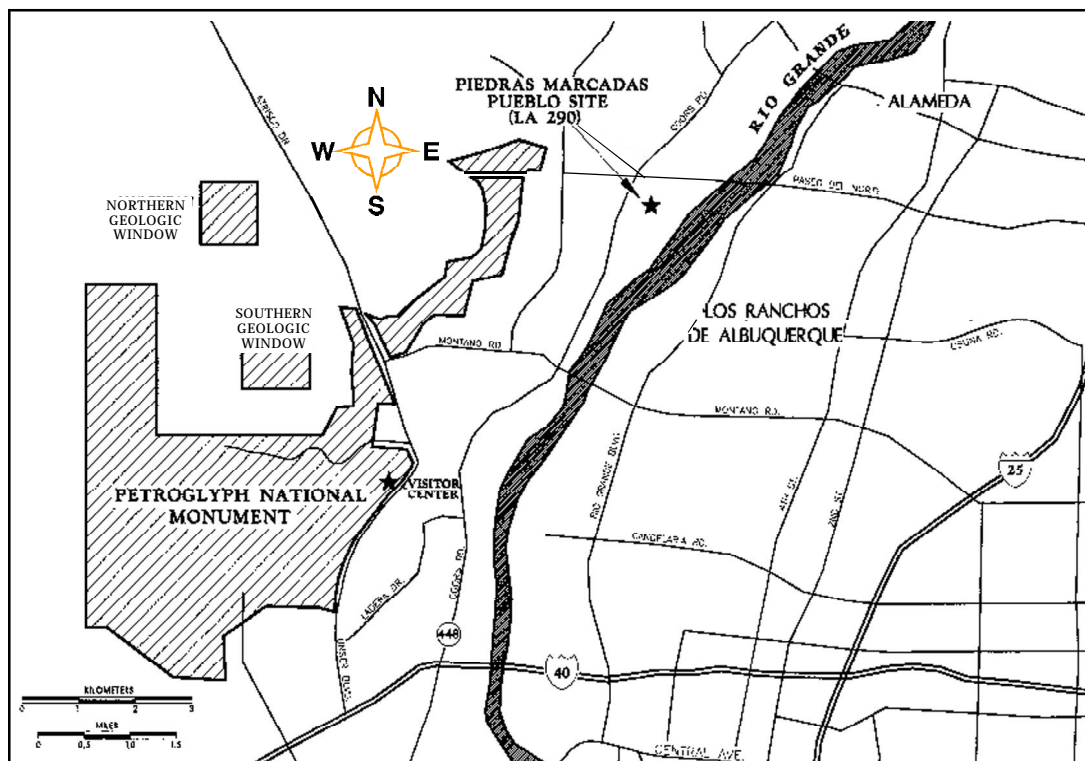
FOCUS Petroglyphs



On lava rocks in the Albuquerque area are many **petroglyphs**, symbolic images pecked or carved in rock. Anthropologists call them *rock art*, but these are regarded by many Pueblo people as religious symbols depicted in a sacred place. Most of these petroglyphs were created during the Ancestral Puebloan and historic times.

Some symbols found in petroglyphs were also used for decorating pottery, which helps archaeologists date the petroglyphs. Another key for determining the age of petroglyphs is weathering. The more weathered the surface of the petroglyph, the older the image.

On the West Mesa is an important concentration of more than 15,000 petroglyphs, many within **Petroglyph National Monument**.

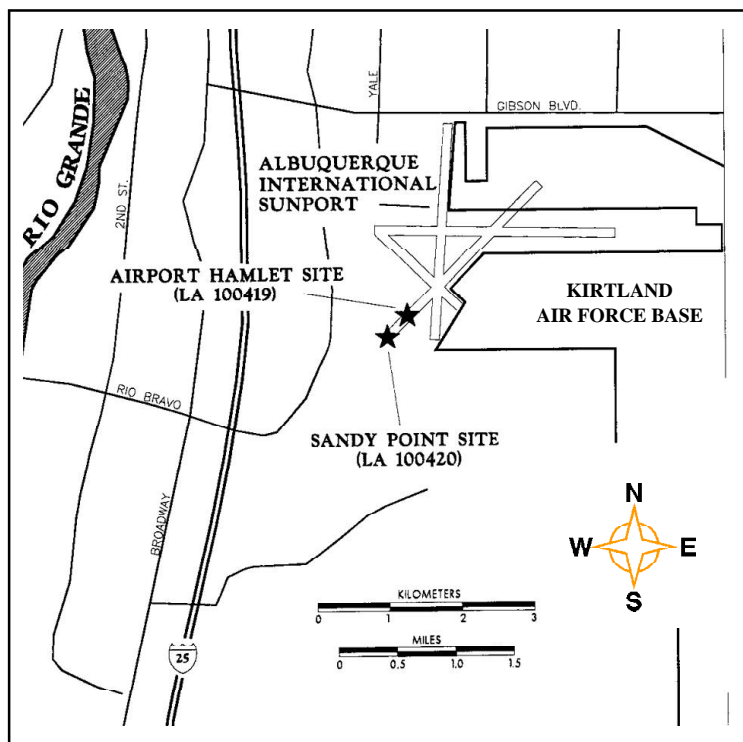


FOCUS Airport Hamlet Site (LA 100419)



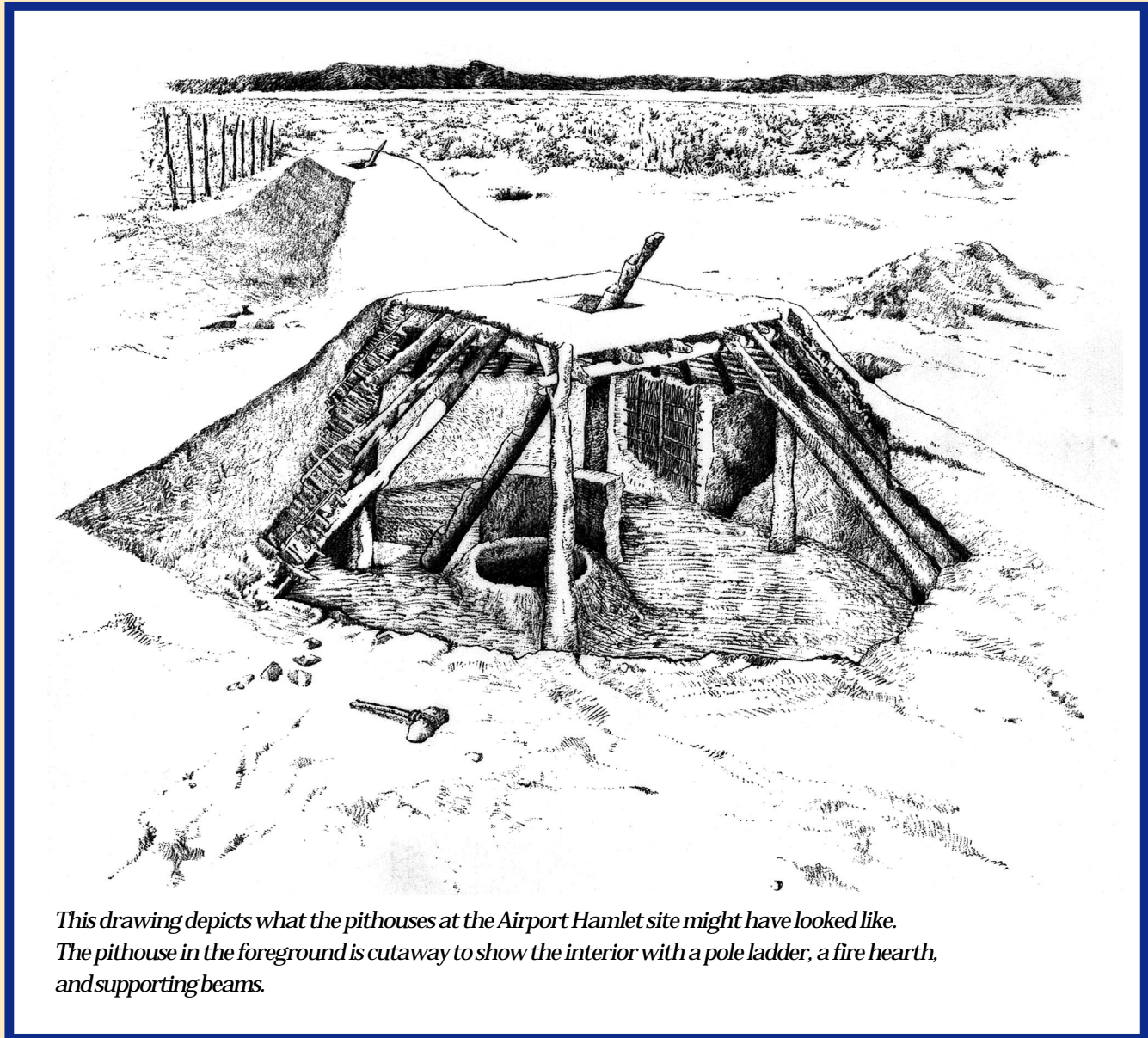
Pithouse after it was excavated. In the floor are holes for storage pits, a fire hearth, and posts that held up the roof. Along the sides of the pithouse are holes which held wooden sticks; these sticks were covered with adobe mud and formed the walls.

The **Airport Hamlet site** (LA 100419) is the second of the two sites excavated during runway expansion at the Albuquerque International Sunport. This site is a Late Developmental period, **Socorro-phase** (A.D. 1050 - 1200) settlement. Two pithouses, activity areas, storage features, a hearth, possible **ramadas**, and many postholes were found.



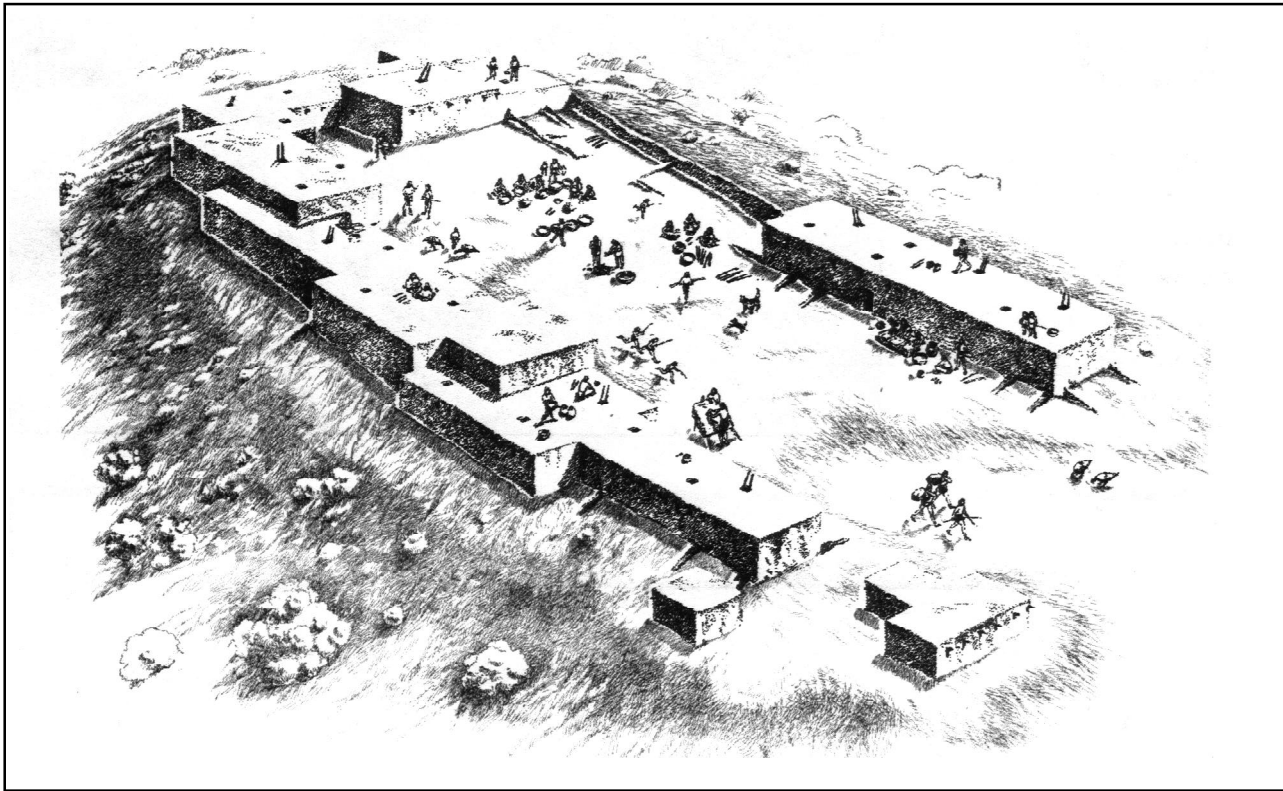
Trenches were excavated with a backhoe to expose the remains of pithouses and other structures.

There is evidence that the Airport Hamlet site was not continuously inhabited, but it was occupied more than once. The large pithouse was remodeled after deteriorating severely, presumably while abandoned. At first the smaller pithouse was for storage, but it was remodeled for residential use.



This drawing depicts what the pithouses at the Airport Hamlet site might have looked like. The pithouse in the foreground is cutaway to show the interior with a pole ladder, a fire hearth, and supporting beams.

FOCUS Tijeras Pueblo (LA 581) & Canyon Sites



Artist's conception of Tijeras Pueblo during second occupation.

Tijeras Canyon and the East Mountain area contain many archaeological sites. Archaeologists are interested in these sites because they may suggest a relationship between the people who lived in these areas and those who lived closer to the Rio Grande. Among the sites are habitations and places for gathering stone for tools. The sites include large villages such as **Tijeras Pueblo** (LA 581), **San Antonio de Padua** (LA 24), and **Paa-ko** (LA 162). Most of the habitation sites were occupied during the Early Classic period (after A.D. 1325), until around A.D. 1425.

The prehistoric environment of Tijeras Canyon was similar to that of today — a piñon-juniper woodland with various grasses and cacti. This environment was rich in wild plants used for food and medicine and for making baskets and sandals. A variety of plants also attracted game animals to the area. Generally, soils were not suitable for growing crops, except next to Tijeras Creek and on level areas near springs.

The area's population appears to have increased around A.D. 1325, and large pueblos were built. **Fieldhouses**, built next to cultivated areas, were used as seasonal habitations during planting and harvesting. Some fieldhouses were distant from pueblo dwellings.

Tijeras Pueblo was a multi-story structure with 200 rooms around a plaza. The roomblocks were made of adobe, stone, and **jacal**. In the late 1300s, part of Tijeras Pueblo was abandoned, and the remainder was remodeled into a smaller pueblo. By 1425, Tijeras Pueblo was completely abandoned. Some archaeologists have suggested that the abandonment was a reaction to a drought that made plant cultivation less productive and decreased the availability of native plants and animals.

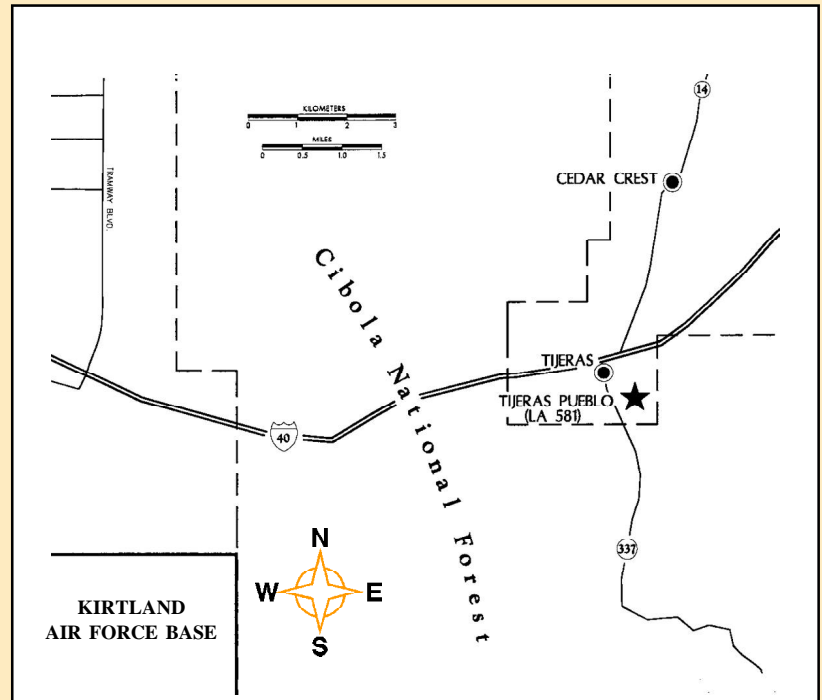
San Antonio de Padua (LA 24) was another large pueblo inhabited in the 1300s north of Tijeras Pueblo. This pueblo had approximately 100 rooms made of adobe, stone, and jacal. It was later abandoned around 1425. Later, a Spanish settlement was established on the site. Still further north was another prominent pueblo, Paa-ko (LA 162). A neighboring residential development is named after the pueblo.

Archaeologists have different theories to explain why Tijeras Canyon was densely settled from the 1300s to 1425. One theory is that the large pueblos were *gateway communities* that engaged in trading between the people of the Albuquerque area and those inhabiting the plains to the east. Corn, bison meat, and hides were among the goods traded. Bison bones have been uncovered in Rio Grande pueblos, and Pueblo goods have been found in sites on the plains. Another theory explaining the settlement of Tijeras Canyon is that Pueblo people moved into areas where animals and wild plants were abundant. At the time Tijeras Canyon was being settled, people were leaving the San Juan Basin, in northwestern New Mexico, for unknown reasons, and these people may have moved into the Albuquerque area and then into Tijeras Canyon.

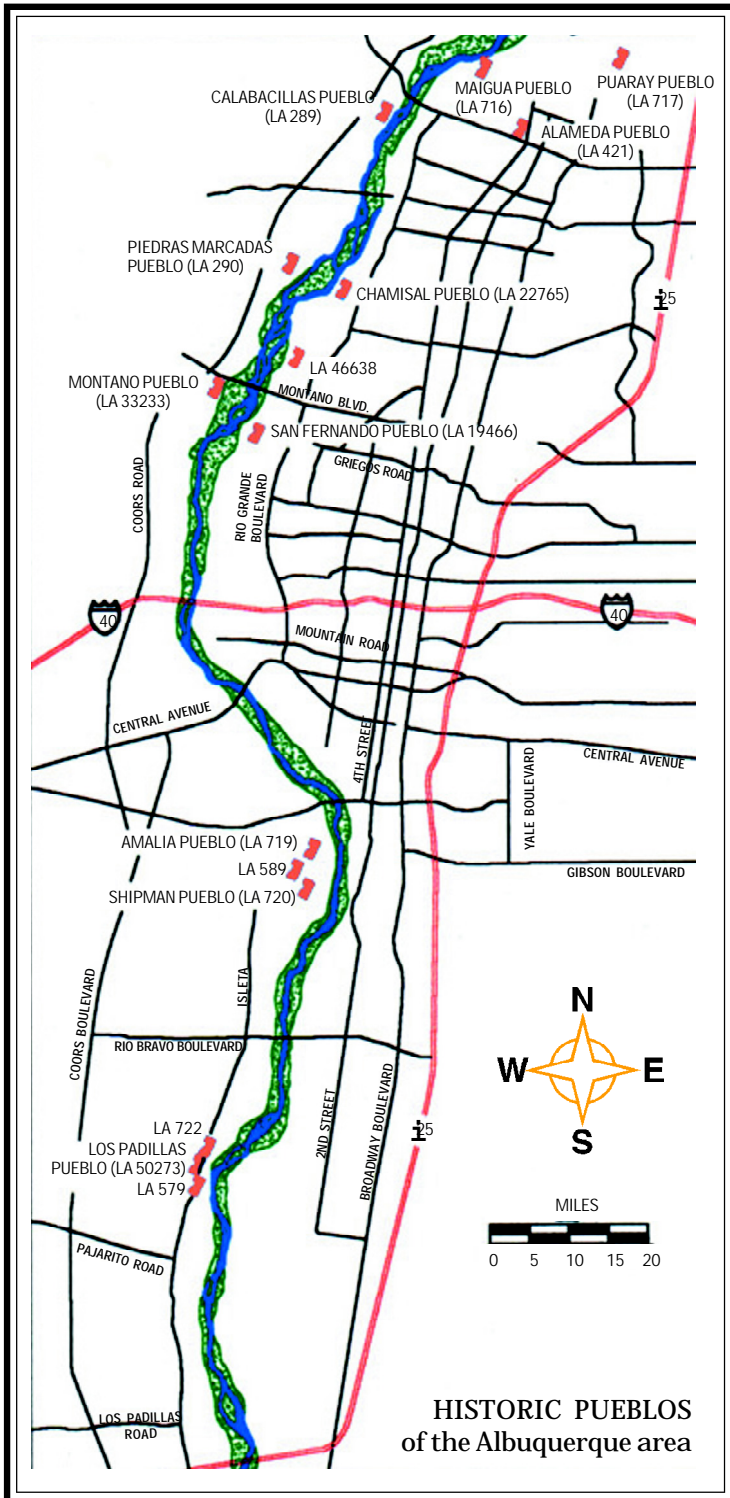
After A.D. 1425, Tijeras Canyon was most likely used by Pueblo people for wood collecting, plant gathering, and hunting, but it was not permanently reinhabited until the 1700s, when Spanish settlers moved there.



A tabletop model of the main pueblo. The actual site is visible beyond the model. The Sandia Mountains rise in the background. (View looking west)



Classic Pueblos & Spanish Settlement (A.D. 1540 - 1706)



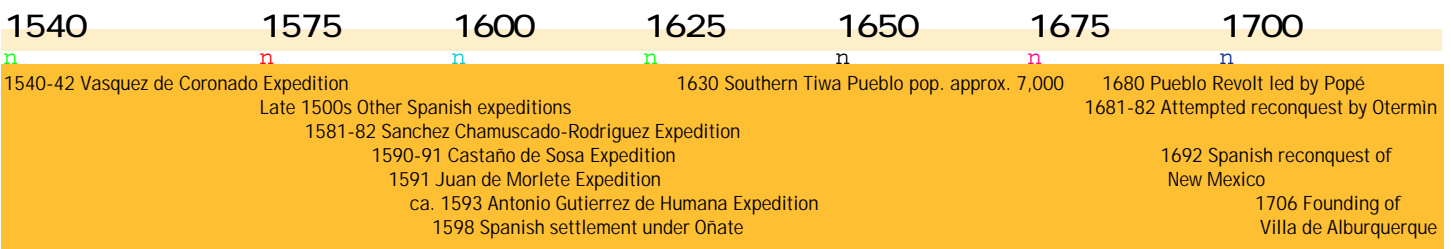
The transition from the Classic period to the **Historic period** occurred after the arrival of Europeans in the Albuquerque area.

At the time of Spanish Contact, Pueblo communities could be distinguished according to the languages spoken by the inhabitants. The language groups were **Tiwa, Tewa, Towa, Piro, Keresan, Zuni, and Hopi**. Pueblos in the Albuquerque area were in the **Southern Tiwa** group. Spanish explorers described 12 pueblos here, in what they called the **Tiguex Province**.

In the summer of 1540, **Francisco Vásquez de Coronado** and his expedition reached the land west of the Albuquerque area. One of his officers, **Hernando de Alvarado**, led a group to explore the valley. Local Pueblo people received the Spanish explorers graciously, supplying them with food and other needed goods. Soon after Alvarado's arrival, the rest of Coronado's men made their winter camp at **Alcanfor Pueblo**, which was located near present-day Bernalillo and south of Kuaua Pueblo (LA 187), now in **Coronado State Monument**.

Some archaeologists have identified Alcanfor Pueblo with a site recorded as LA 326, but others think that LA 326 is another pueblo noted in historic documents, such as **Santiago Pueblo**, near Rio Rancho and Bernalillo. An interesting puzzle regarding the history of Spanish Contact in the Albuquerque area is correlating archaeological sites with these early descriptions of pueblos as written by Europeans.

Spanish demands on the Pueblo people created tension between the two groups and confrontations soon erupted. A Spanish force laid seige to the nearby pueblos of **Arenal** and





Late prehistoric
Glazeware pottery

Moho. Many Pueblo people were killed, the survivors abandoning the area until the Spanish left to explore the southern Great Plains. In late 1541-1542, the Spanish briefly returned but were not welcomed by the Pueblo people.

Not until 1581 did the Spanish again venture into the Tiguex Province in an expedition led by **Rodriguez and Chamuscado**. When the explorers left the area, two friars remained at **Puaray Pueblo** (generally considered to be site LA 717, on the east bank of the Rio Grande, south of Sandia Pueblo). The following year, **Antonio de Espejo** led a small expedition into the province and learned the

friars had been killed. Espejo returned to Puaray and attacked and burned the pueblo.

During the early years of **Spanish Contact**, the pueblo population was drastically reduced. Besides deaths caused by warfare, European diseases such as smallpox, measles, and influenza took a great toll because the Native American population had no natural immunity to these diseases.

In 1598, **Don Juan de Oñate** led a contingent of soldiers and 200 settlers from Mexico. He established headquarters at **San Gabriel**, across the Rio Grande from **San Juan Pueblo**, but the seat of the provincial government was moved to Santa Fe in 1610. Between 1610 and 1620, Spanish missions were established at **Isleta**, Sandia, Puaray, Alameda, and **San Pedro del Cuchillo Pueblos**. Ranchers and soldiers were rewarded with land. During Oñate's rule in New Mexico, **El Camino Real** was opened; this *Royal Road* followed the ancient trail along the Rio Grande to Mexico. Traces of the road remain today; a probable segment is Edith Boulevard, north of Osuna Road.

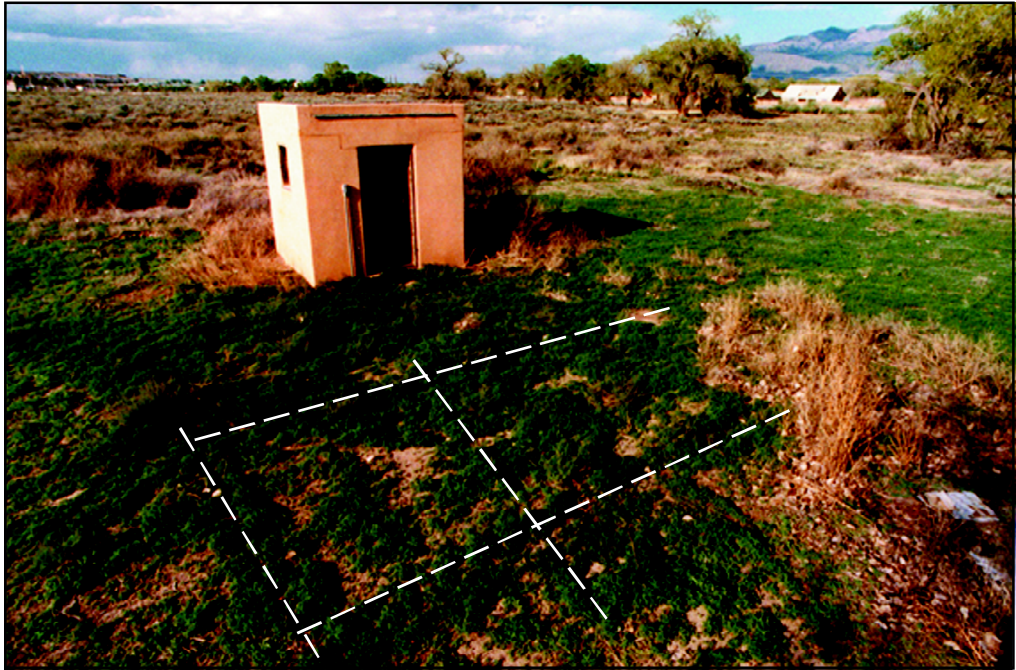
Not all Pueblo people accepted Spanish rule, and many who objected to demands for labor or conversion to Christianity, revolted under the leadership of **Popé**. Of the four pueblos remaining in the Albuquerque area in 1680, three — Alameda, Sandia, and Puaray — actively participated in the **Pueblo Revolt** that began that year, and Isleta Pueblo housed several Spanish refugees fleeing to Mexico. The Spanish took many Isleta Pueblo people to El Paso, and they were resettled at **Ysleta del Sur**. During the Pueblo Revolt, the Albuquerque area was virtually depopulated.

In 1692, after several Spanish attempts had failed, **Don Diego de Vargas** took New Mexico for Spain. Communities such as **Bernalillo** and **Atrisco** were soon founded, and a new pattern of land ownership was established. Land grants by the King of Spain provided property to settlers who owned land individually and had access to tracts of land in common. This is the origin of the land grants in existence today. Later, the Spanish government forbade landowners to force the Pueblo people to work for them or pay tribute.



El Camino Real connected New Mexico to the outside world during the Spanish Colonial period, and likely followed this part of Edith Boulevard, north of Albuquerque.

At first glance, the site appears to be a natural hill, but if one looks carefully at the patterns in the vegetation, it is possible to see wall outlines that indicate the remains of structures. A small modern structure stands on part of the Piedras Marcadas site.



Piedras Marcadas Pueblo site (LA 290), formerly known as the Zuris-Mann site, is the largest Tiguex Province pueblo. Built of **puddled adobe**, this pueblo is on the west side of the Rio Grande and was occupied from the late Coalition period (around A.D. 1325), through the Classic period, to about A.D. 1650. The site, located on a low terrace near the Rio Grande floodplain, consists of three major structural mounds grouped around two or three plaza areas. Several pithouses have been recorded. A fourth, and smaller, structural mound is approximately 80 meters north of the main area. Extensive middens (trash deposits) surround the main area.

Archaeologists suspect that there are approximately 1,000 ground-level rooms at this pueblo, and when it was inhabited it was probably two or three stories high. Fields were irrigated by ditches, but there is no archaeological evidence of intensive irrigation.

Pottery with lead-glaze decoration was locally manufactured, but some pottery was acquired through trade with other communities, such as San Marcos Pueblo in the **Galisteo Basin**. Other Classic-period sites also contain trade goods that came from locations in what is now northern Mexico, and it is likely that the people who lived at Piedras Marcadas Pueblo were also part of this trade network.

Artifacts suggest the pueblo was still occupied at the beginning of the sixteenth century but had been abandoned by the time of early Spanish settlement (1580-1620). Historians and archaeologists think that this site was **Santa Catalina Pueblo** or perhaps **Los Guajolotes Pueblo**, but the Spanish records are ambiguous.

From the 1930s to the 1950s, high school students from Albuquerque excavated parts of LA 290, but the artifacts and field notes have been lost. Today, regulations and guidelines are strictly enforced to prevent the loss of such valuable information. The site is protected as City property, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Cultural Properties; it is also part of Petroglyph National Monument.

FOCUS Kuaua Pueblo Site (LA 187)

Coronado State Monument contains the site of Kuaua Pueblo (LA 187). This pueblo was a large, multi-storied structure with approximately 1,200 rooms around three plazas. Dating from the Classic period, Kuaua Pueblo was occupied from about A.D. 1300 until well into the Historic period. Ditch irrigation of fields at this settlement may have begun early in the Classic period.

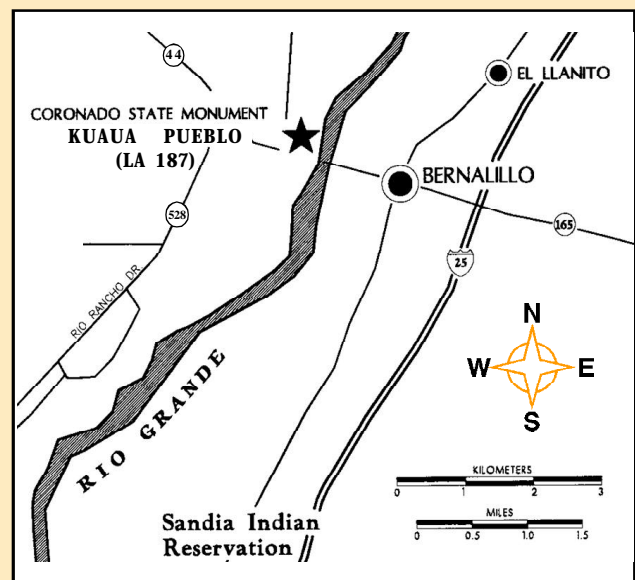
Kuaua is similar to other pueblo sites in the Albuquerque area in that it was on the edge of the floodplain. It was one of the principal settlements of what the Spanish called the Tiguex Province, which was composed of villages whose residents spoke Southern Tiwa languages.

Coronado's expedition may have visited at Kuaua Pueblo. Despite brief visits by Spanish explorers, the pueblos of the Albuquerque area remained stable communities. After Oñate's settlement of New Mexico in 1598, however, intensive change came to the region. At Kuaua Pueblo, there is evidence of interaction between the two cultures; hammered copper and Spanish **Majolica** pottery have been found. Missions were established between 1610 and 1612. Kuaua apparently was abandoned by the mid-1600s. Spanish settlers occupied the area along the Rio Grande from Kuaua Pueblo to Isleta Pueblo. Before the Pueblo Revolt, forced labor of native people was practiced. This was no longer the case after the reconquest by de Vargas in 1692.

Most of what has been published about Kuaua Pueblo concerns art and architecture. Of particular interest are murals. Several layers of fresco paintings were found. The paintings depict figures dressed for ceremonial dances. A museum at the monument displays the paintings.

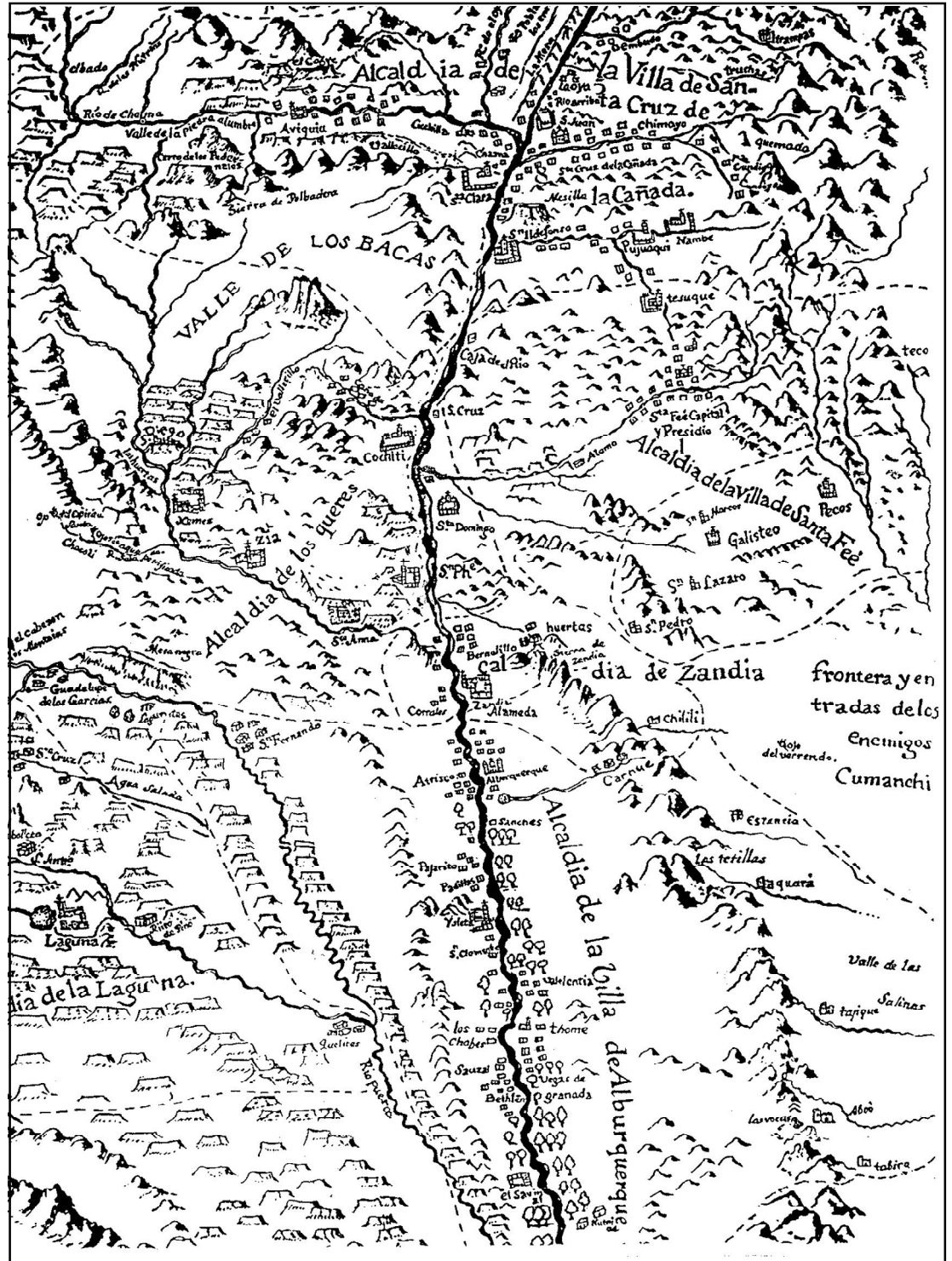


Adobe brick walls have been stabilized and reconstructed at Kuaua Pueblo. Beyond the ruins, to the left, is a 1930s visitors' center. The Sandia Mountains rise in the distance.



Spanish & Mexican Periods (A.D. 1706 - 1846, 1821 - 1846)

1779 map of the Middle Rio Grande Valley by Don Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco. Many of the communities shown on this map still exist, including Bernalillo, Alameda, Corrales, Atrisco, Pajarito, Los Padillas, and Ysleta (now spelled Isleta).



1706 1725 1750 1775 1800 1825 1850

1706 founding of the Villa de Albuquerque

1770s Escalante-Dominguez Expedition

1776 U.S. gains independence from Britain

1821 Mexico gains independence from Spain

1846 Mexican-American War

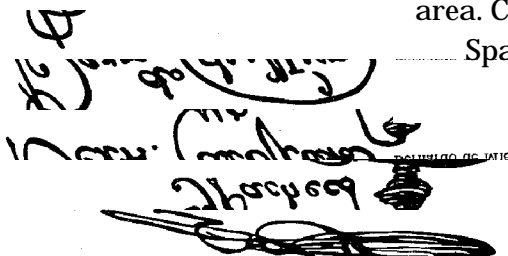


Churches were the center of Spanish settlements in New Mexico. The present building of San Felipe de Neri, on the plaza in Old Town, dates from 1793.

After the Spanish reconquest **Albuquerque** (named for the Duke of Albuquerque and then spelled with the additional “r”) was established in 1706. Founding the settlement was the idea of **Francisco Cuervo y Valdes**, who chose the location for its good land, water, pasture, and wood. It was a **villa** (a settlement with a governing council) of New Spain.

What is now Old Town was the heart of the settlement. Other villages centered on **plazas** were established along the Rio Grande; these included Alameda, Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, and **Los Griegos**, to name a few. These areas started out as separate settlements and have grown into the Albuquerque of today. Outlying **buffer communities**, such as **Carnuel** or Carnue near Tijeras Canyon, were established by the Spanish to protect settlements along the Rio Grande from raiding nomadic Indians. The Navajos, and Apaches had entered this area shortly before the Spanish, and the Comanches and Utes arrived around 1750.

Farming and ranching were major activities. Agricultural products were tobacco, grapes, corn, wheat, chile, cotton, sheep, and cattle. A favored area for agriculture was the floodplain of the Rio Grande, where water could be diverted to irrigate fields; the East Mesa (or, more appropriately, **la bajada**) of Albuquerque was used for livestock grazing. Two other economic activities were textile production and mining. Weaving was an important cottage industry in the Albuquerque area. Copper, silver, turquoise, and lead were mined during the Spanish occupation of New Mexico.



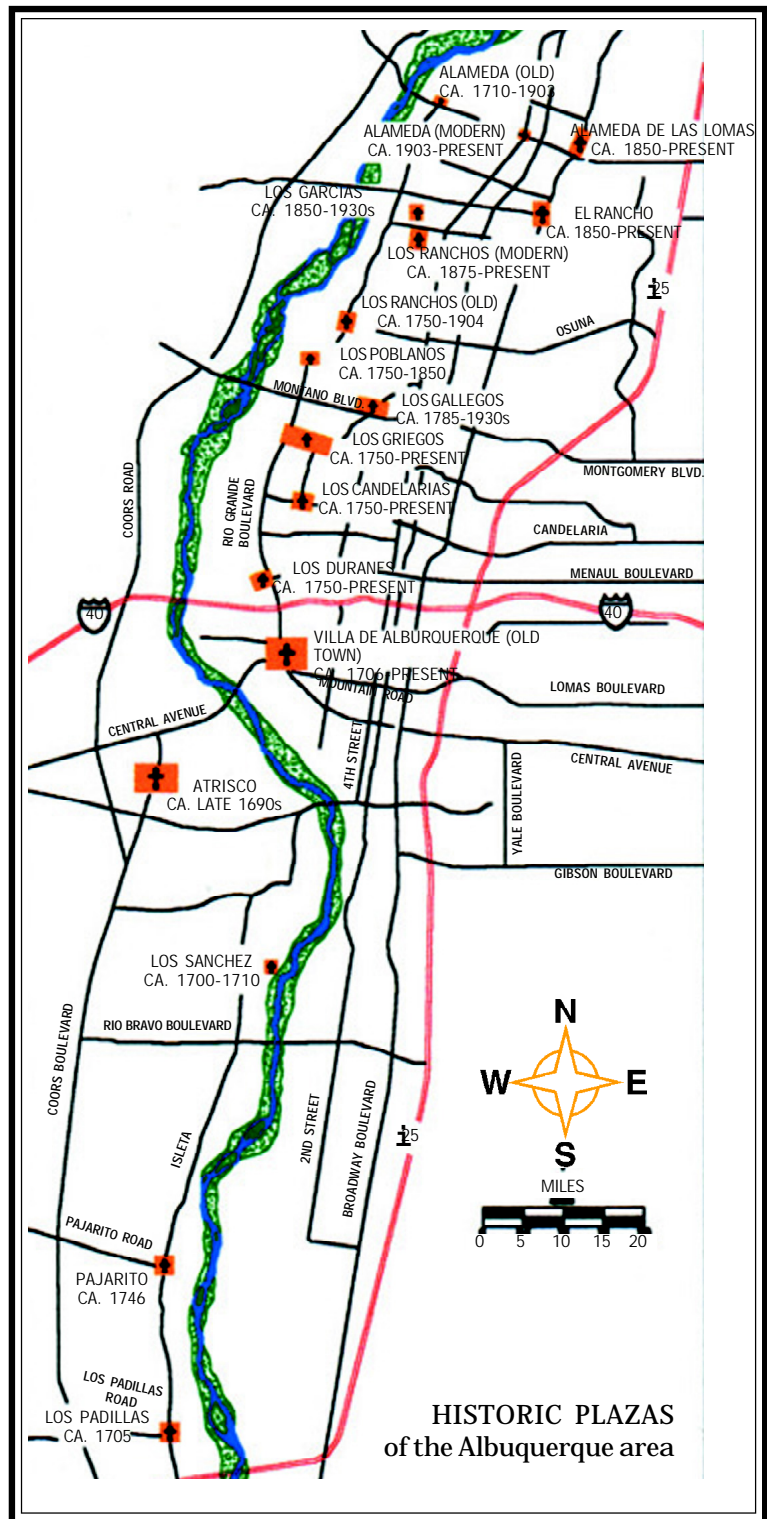
The signature of prominent New Mexico mapmaker, Don Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco.

In 1776, the Spanish government reorganized the administration of its territories by taking the northern provinces, including New Mexico, from the viceroy's jurisdiction and putting them under the control of a military official based in Chihuahua. This new system had little effect on Albuquerque, since it was isolated from the rest of Mexico, and the Spanish did not allow New Mexicans to trade with any foreign government, including the United States or France. The only contact with the outside world was by way of Mexico.

In 1821, Mexico won independence from Spain, and New Mexico became a province of the new republic. Residents of New Mexico were made administrators of the province, a departure from the former Spanish system of government. This new system produced wealthy, powerful New Mexican families.

Another important change under the Mexican government was the legalization of foreign trade, which led to the opening of the **Santa Fe Trail** in 1821 and established commercial trade between Mexico and the United States. Soon, American and British manufactured goods were being transported along the Santa Fe Trail and were also being carried through Albuquerque to Mexico.

An archaeological site survey of **Los Ranchos de Albuquerque**, in the North Valley, identified 30 sites and three plazas. The sites contained prehistoric and historic (eighteenth- to twentieth-century) occupations. Because of abundant water people took advantage of these areas over many centuries.





Excavation in progress at the Los Ranchos Plaza Site.

Among the plaza sites was the location of the **Plaza de Señor San Jose de Los Ranchos** (LA 46638). This plaza was established around 1750 and was destroyed by a flood in 1904. By 1814, census records indicate that there were 65 families in Los Ranchos, a total of 331 inhabitants. It was the largest plaza in the North Valley. After Mexico achieved independence in 1821, the plaza became the seat of government for an area that extended as far as Tijeras Canyon to the east and more than 100 miles to the west. After New Mexico became a territory of the United States, Los Ranchos was the county seat of Bernalillo County from 1851 to 1854.

The Los Ranchos Plaza site is 2.5 acres and was once the property of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Jenkins. In 1931, there were several mounds of collapsed and eroded adobe structures on the site and next to it. Under the surface was an intact cobblestone pavement measuring 60 x 70 feet. North of the pavement was a large mound approximately 6 feet high and 200 feet long. The adobe mounds were removed by county road construction crews and used as ballast in the construction of Rio Grande Boulevard. Mr. Jenkins sold his land to the Village of Los Ranchos in 1989.

The Village considered using the site for construction of a community center in 1996. Archaeologists conducted an investigation to determine the nature, extent, and quality of remains beneath the surface. Several areas were investigated by digging.

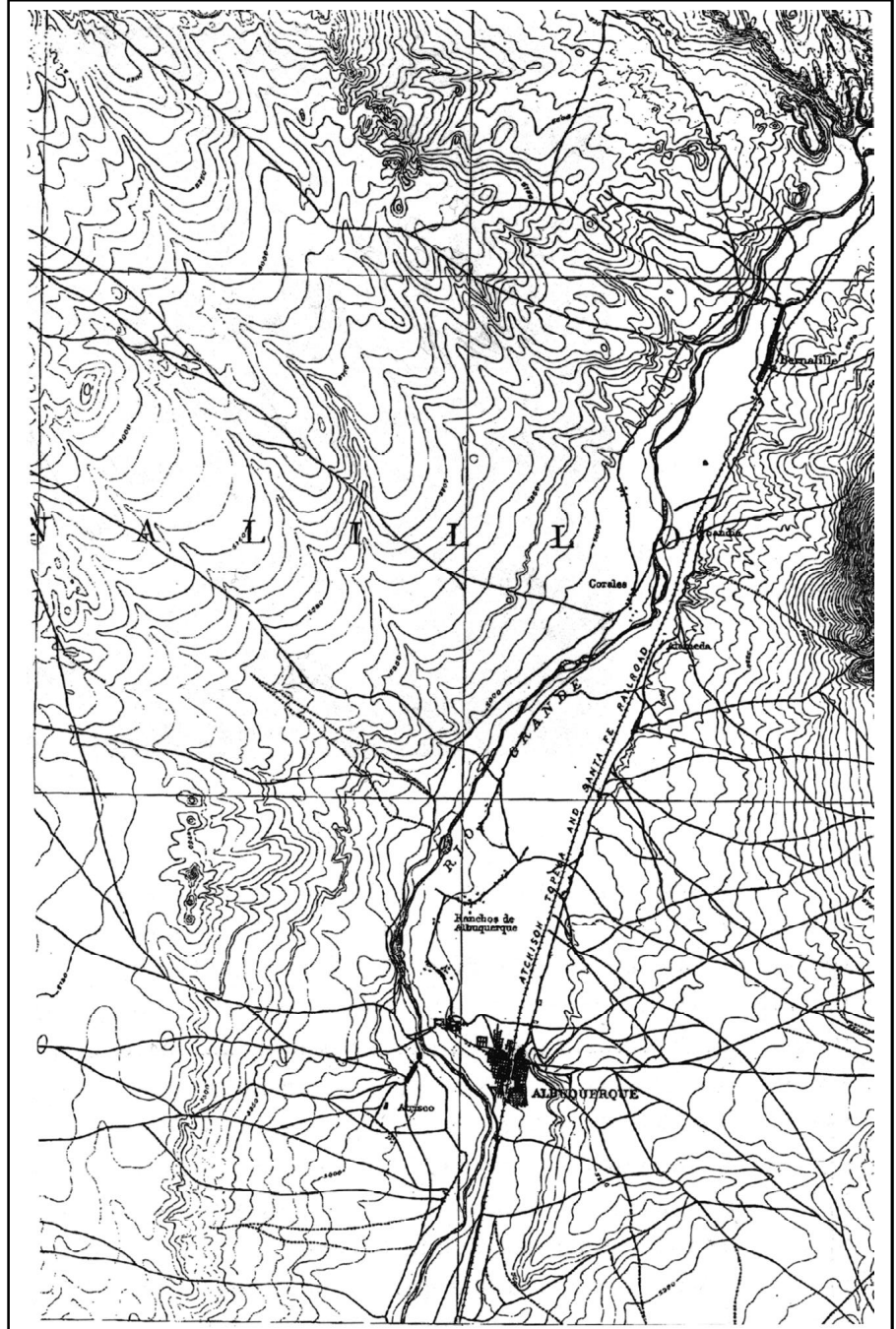
Excavation revealed adobe footings, floors and the lower parts of walls in a room complex. This complex is very likely the remains of a 200-foot long adobe structure. There are building remains in other parts of the site as well. Archaeologists found a forge workplace, two corner fireplaces, and adobe-mixing pits. Almost 10,000 historic Pueblo pottery sherds were collected in addition to 6,000 fragments of animal bones, and a large collection of glass, metal, and non-Pueblo pottery.

Territorial Period (A.D. 1846-1912)

In 1846, the United States claimed New Mexico during the **Mexican-American War**. The **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo** (1848), by which Mexico ceded the territory to the United States, guaranteed the rights of the people already living in New Mexico. Hispanic culture and Catholicism remained strong, as did the traditional Pueblo lifeways.

After New Mexico became a U.S. territory, roads and stagecoach lines were established, including a route from Albuquerque to California. With the establishment of stagecoach lines and wagon trails across Apache and Navajo territories, forts were built to protect these trails. During the Civil War, Albuquerque was occupied by Confederate troops from Texas on their way to the Colorado gold mines. Following their defeat at the battle of **Glorieta Pass**, east of Santa Fe, the Confederates retreated back to Albuquerque. In April 1862, Union troops took Albuquerque, but there were no casualties.

The railroad reached Albuquerque in 1880, bringing with it many changes. When the railroad line was built a short distance east of Old Town, a new community, appropriately called New Town or New Albuquerque, was created.



1888 United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographical map of the Albuquerque area

1846

1846 Mexican American War
1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
1850 Territory of New Mexico organized
1860-65 Civil War

1875

1880 Railroad reaches Albuquerque

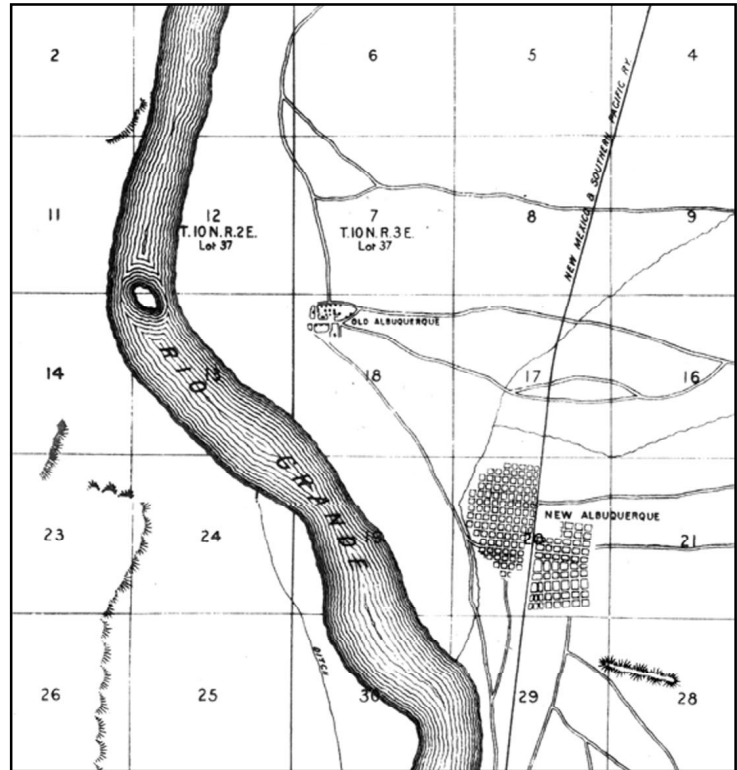
1900

1891 Albuquerque (New Town) becomes a city.

1925

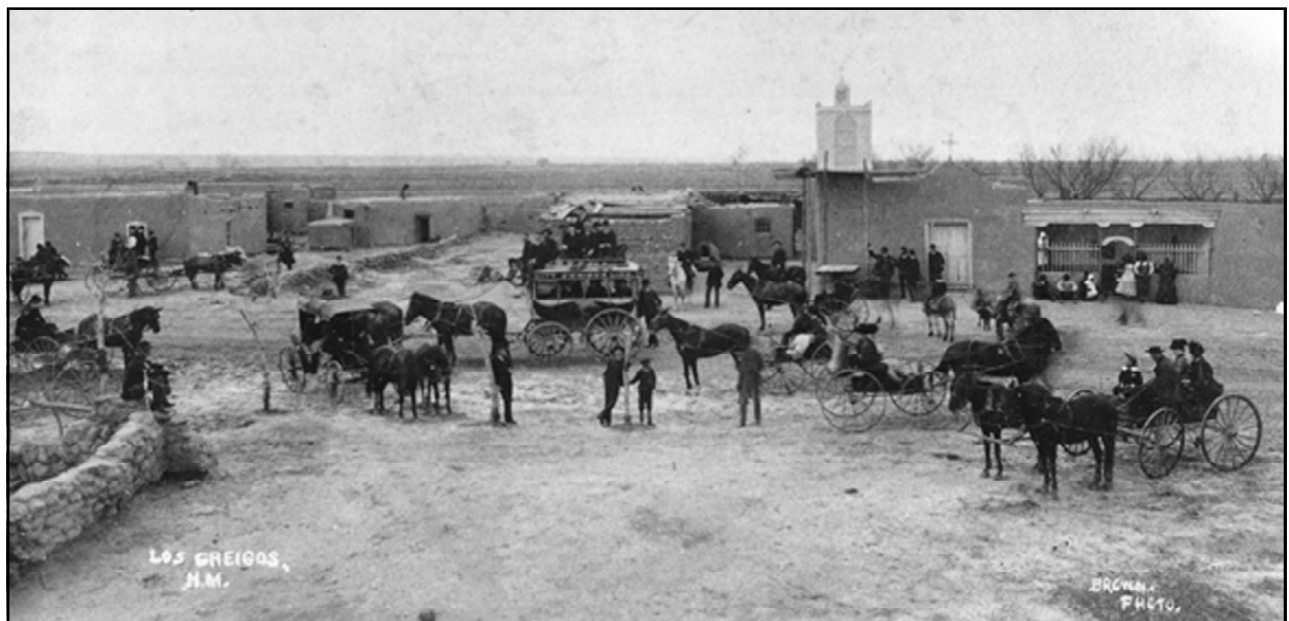
1912 New Mexico becomes the 47th state.

This 1883 map shows Old Albuquerque and New Albuquerque (or New Town), which was built along the railroad route. Note that New Town's streets are on rectilinear grids, unlike the curving roads outside of town. The numbers on the map refer to 640-acre land sections surveyed by the General Land Office (GLO) whose function is now performed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Later development of the city was influenced by land survey boundaries, so major streets in eastern Albuquerque are on section lines.

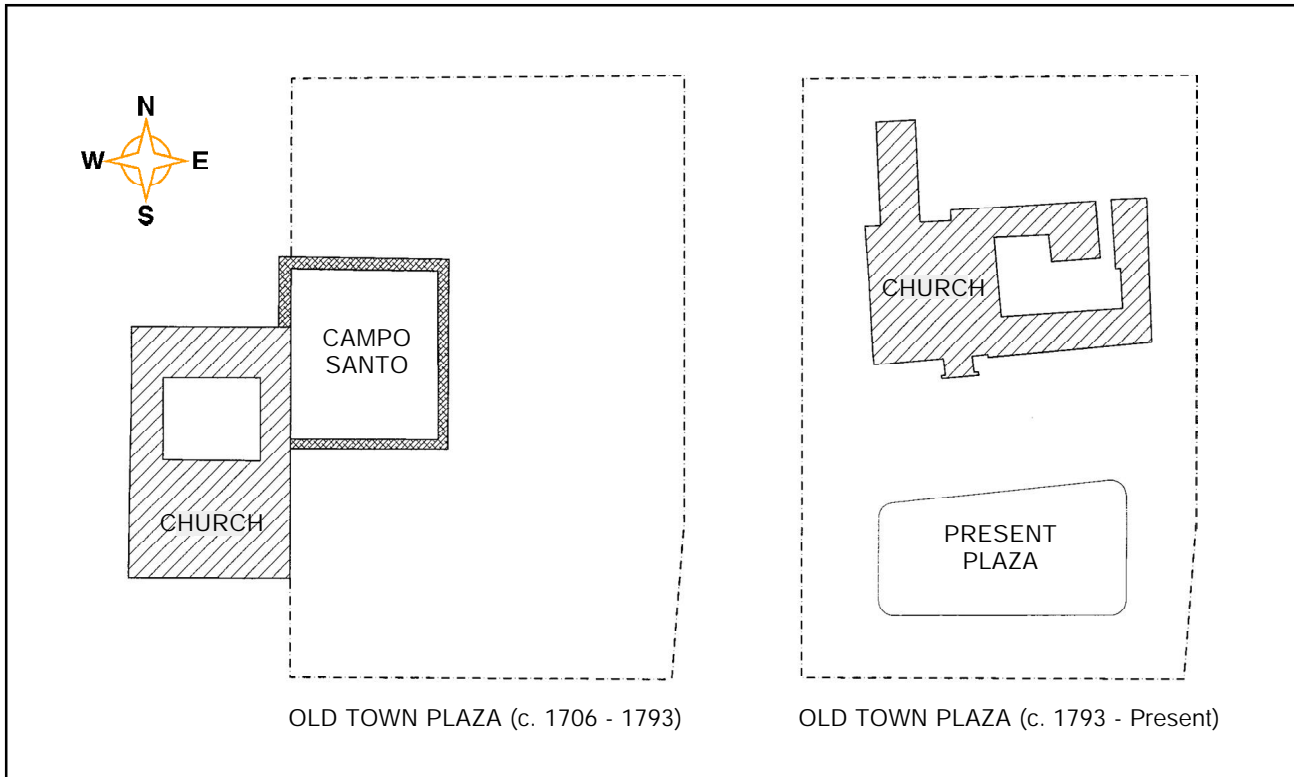


New Town was located in what is today downtown, near Central Avenue. Most mail, supplies, and people came on the trains, instead of by stagecoach or wagon. The population of Albuquerque grew and many businesses were started. New ethnic groups — Irish, Italian, German, African-American, and others — arrived in Albuquerque, bringing new traditions. Tuberculosis sanitariums were established, and the warm, dry climate of Albuquerque attracted many patients.

An important regional industry was sheep raising, and big wool warehouses and wool mills were built in Albuquerque near the railroad. Lumber was another major industry, with large sawmills north of Old Town. With the railroad, cattle also became important to the economy. Areas around Old Town, the North Valley, and South Valley remained agricultural.



Los Griegos, New Mexico, 1880s. Photo courtesy The Albuquerque Museum.



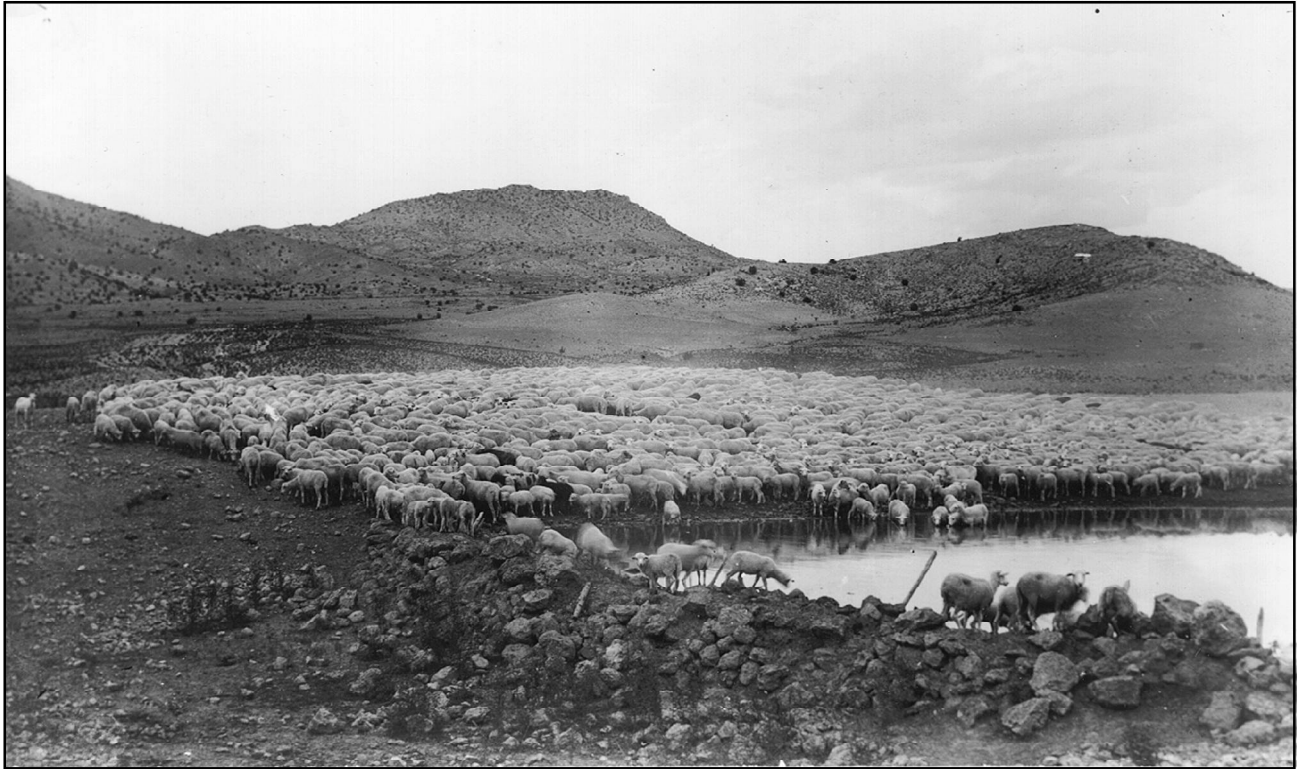
*This is an **acequia** (or ditch) in the South Valley. Controlling and distributing water was essential for farming in the Albuquerque area. Communities worked together to construct and maintain acequias, and agreed on how much water families could use.*

When Albuquerque was first settled, the original church of San Felipe de Neri was on the west side of the plaza. The present building is now on the north side. Compare these maps with the drawing of Old Town (ca. 1890) found on the fold-out page.

In 1891, Albuquerque became a city, but it did not include the original settlement of Albuquerque at Old Town. The University of New Mexico was established at its present location in 1892. After the railroad opened, Albuquerque built a public library, schools, an opera house and other improvements. The civic and business focus was on the downtown area (New Town), and Old Town and the North and South Valleys maintained separate political and cultural identities. Residential areas had spread east to Huning Highland, just west of Interstate-25 today, but there was little development beyond the University of New Mexico's campus.

In time, the attitude of visitors to and residents of Albuquerque regarding the Pueblo and Hispanic heritage of the region changed. Tourists came specifically to see the unique cultural attractions as much as for the beautiful landscape and scenery.

FOCUS Coyote Springs Sites



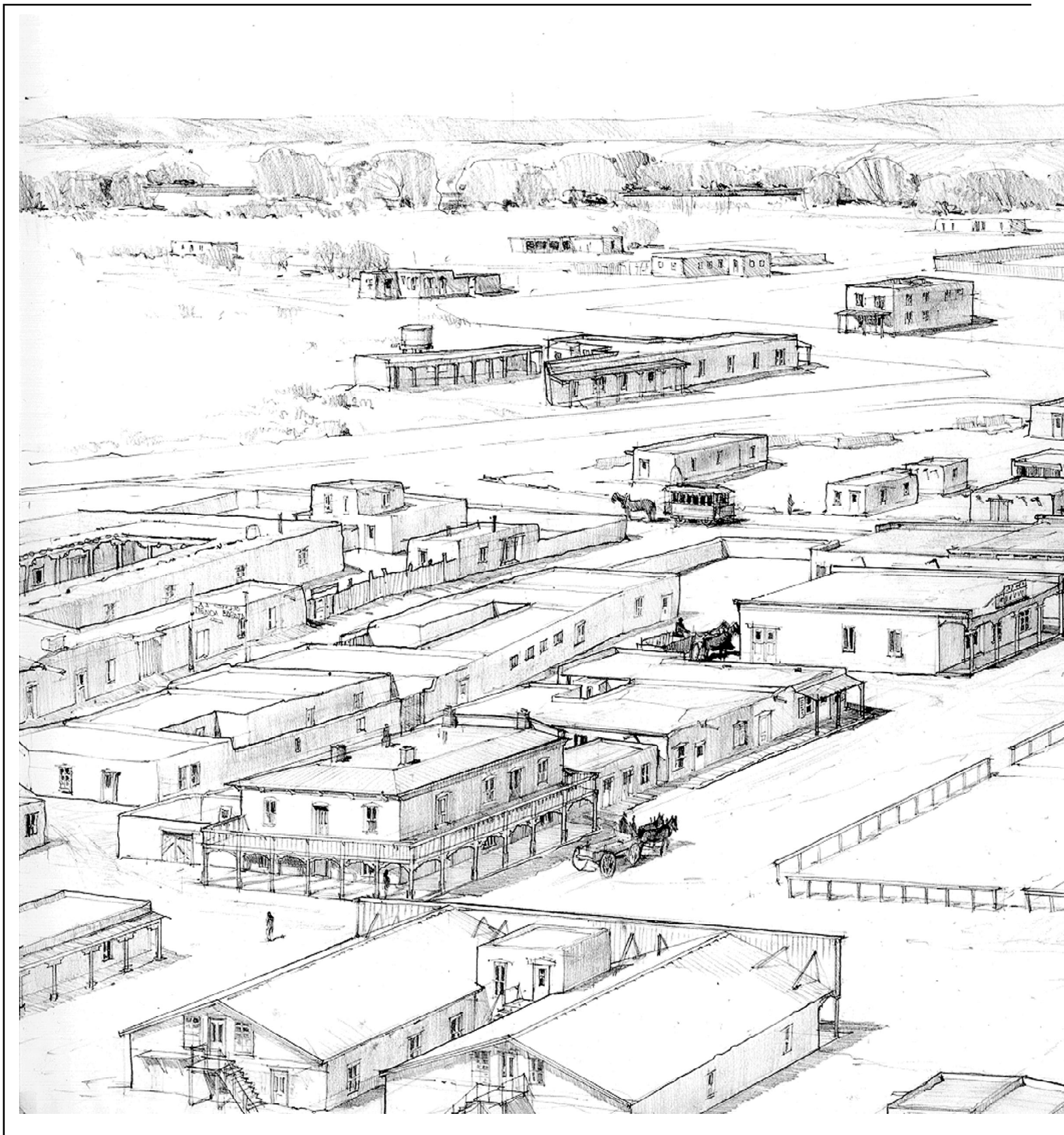
This photograph was taken near Coyote Springs around 1910. This area is now part of Kirtland Air Force Base. Photograph courtesy The Albuquerque Museum.

Many people in the late 1880s through the early 1900s took advantage of the Federal Homestead Act, a federal law that allowed individuals to acquire public land if they would live on it and improve it for farming or ranching. The land that is now Kirtland Air Force Base had several homestead claims. Homesteaders in this area grew crops, especially pinto beans, and they raised livestock. Several mining claims in the nearby Manzano and Sandia Mountains were recorded. Unable to make a living on small land holdings, many homesteaders also sought employment in Albuquerque.

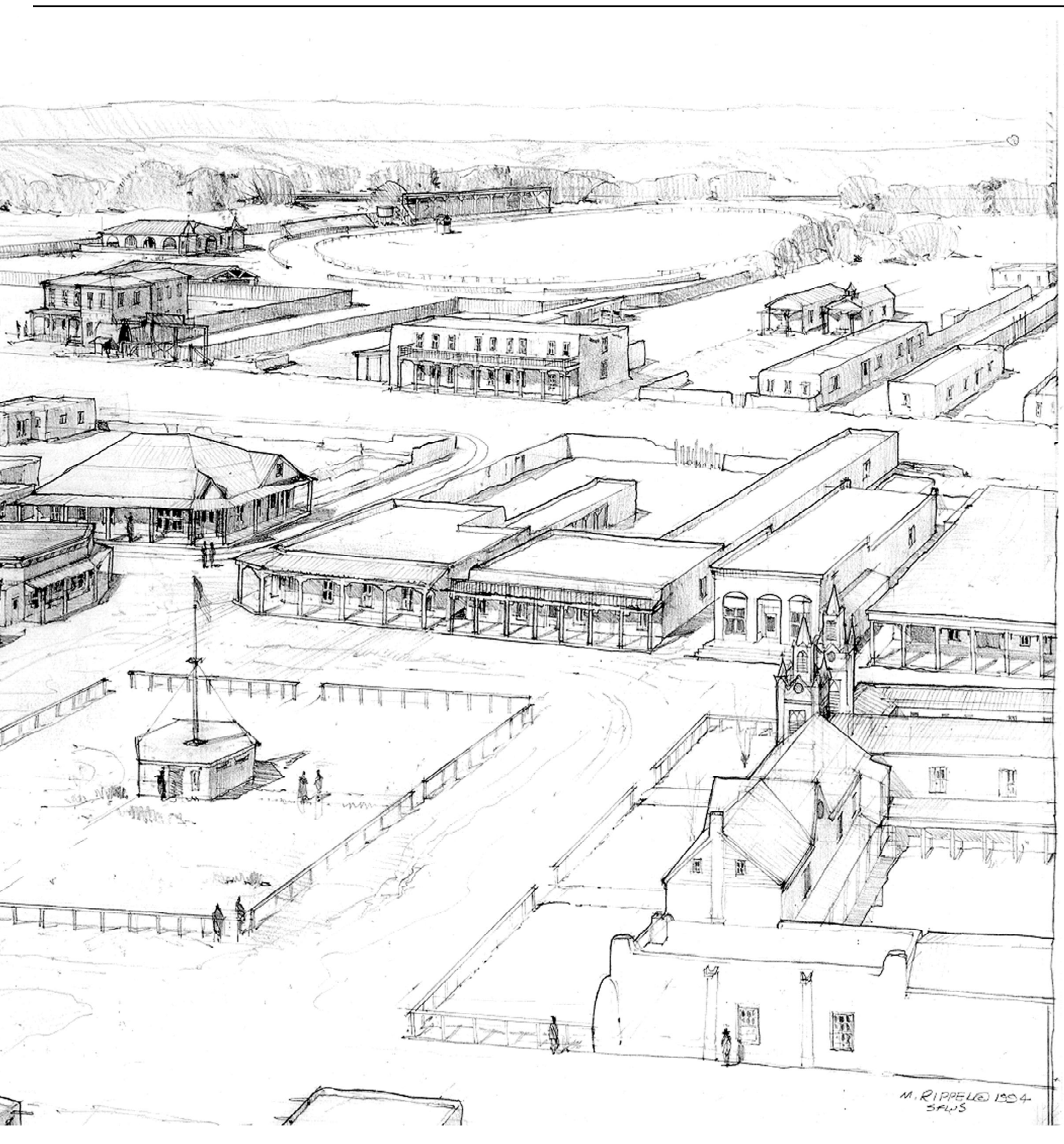
A little village, called **Coyote Springs**, was established. A company bottled the spring water and sold it in Albuquerque. Residents of Albuquerque could spend a day at the springs, swimming or having a picnic. Coyote Springs also had a saloon and small hotel, and there was a one-room schoolhouse.

Even though there were some homesteads in the area during the late 1800s, Albuquerque had the greatest number of homestead claims filed much later, in the 1920s and 1930s. Some of the homesteaders in the 1920s had suffered from the economic setbacks that hit Albuquerque after World War I. Most who came in the 1930s had left Oklahoma, Texas, and elsewhere, seeking relief from the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl.

As World War II began, the U.S. government acquired land for Kirtland Air Force Base. Homesteading in what would become the base ended, and Coyote Springs became uninhabited. Remains of homesteads are left today at Kirtland Air Force Base.



OLD TOWN OF 1894 is even better shown in the artist's full-color painting on display at the Albuquerque Museum



Constructed by an artist using maps and many period photographs of Old Town (ca. 1894), this “bird’s-eye view” shows places we know today — San Felipe de Neri Church at right, building with three arches beyond the church, the plaza, and several other buildings. Also shown are places and things long-gone from Old Town, including the old guardhouse with flagpole at the plaza’s center, a horse-drawn trolley at center-left, the Territorial Fairgrounds with race track at upper right. The drawing combines archaeological research and artistry to reveal part of Old Town’s past.

Conclusion

What value do archaeological sites have? For one thing, they can provide information about the way life was in the past. Not everything was recorded by writing, and people lived in Albuquerque long before there were any written records. Even after documents were being written, many aspects of life were ignored. Sometimes archaeology can answer questions that cannot be addressed by historians.


Also, archaeological sites help modern visitors experience the past. Seeing the remains of a pueblo, a Spanish hacienda, or a homesteader's ranch can convey not only information but also a sense of how things used to be. It is not accidental that many tourists come to New Mexico because of its archaeological sites. These visitors find it worthwhile to see for themselves the remnants of the past.

Why don't archaeologists dig every site they find? One reason is that future generations will have more questions to ask and advanced techniques to use. If all archaeological sites are destroyed, by either scientific research or vandalism, then there will be no chance for archaeologists to conduct new research. Archaeologists try to find and protect sites, considering them nonrenewable resources. They know that even the best field research is destructive, and they are careful to retain the opportunity to learn about the past.

Federal and state governments have enacted laws to protect archaeological sites and other historic properties. When federal money, land, or permits are involved in a proposed project, archaeological sites must be taken into account. It is important to remember that a project need not be stopped because archaeological sites may be affected. The historic preservation process provides several options for carrying out a project while protecting or investigating an archaeological site.

Laws also protect archaeological sites on federal, state, municipal, and tribal lands. Archaeological resources should not be removed, and sites should not be disturbed. Even on private land, it is a mistake to dig without good reason. Doing archaeological fieldwork is like tearing out the pages of a book as you read it. There is no second chance to excavate a site. It should be done with clear research objectives in mind, and with careful recording of data.

Whether you live in Albuquerque or are just visiting, please protect our archaeological heritage and enjoy learning more about the past cultures of the Albuquerque area. [n](#)



Glossary

- Acequia** - Irrigation ditch built and maintained by a community.
- Airport Hamlet site** - Ancestral Pueblo site excavated during runway expansion at the Albuquerque International Sunport.
- Alameda** - North Valley pueblo occupied before and during era of Spanish exploration.
- Albuquerque** - Original name of Spanish settlement, taken from the title of a Spanish duke; note the additional "r".
- Alcanfor Pueblo** - Spanish name of the pueblo where some of Coronado's men camped.
- Alvarado, Hernando de** - An officer in Coronado's expedition.
- Anasazi** - Name used for prehistoric people who lived in the northern Southwest; equivalent to **Ancestral Pueblo**.
- Archaeologists** - Researchers who study the past using physical remains, such as objects and structures.
- Archaic period** - Cultural period following the Paleoindian period, 5500 B.C. - A.D. 400.
- Arenal** - Pueblo in the Tiguex Province.
- Armijo** - Cultural unit of the Archaic period in New Mexico, 1800-800 B.C.
- Artifacts** - Objects made, modified, or used by people.
- Atrisco** - Spanish settlement established after the Pueblo Revolt.
- Bajada** - Cultural unit of the Archaic period in New Mexico, 4800-3200 B.C.
- Belen and Cody Complex** - Two types of spear points that represent Plano cultural material, from the Paleoindian period, 8000-5000 B.C.
- Bernalillo** - Spanish settlement established after the Pueblo Revolt.
- Basketmaker III** - (BM III), one name for an Ancestral Pueblo cultural unit, like **PI**, that is included in the Early Developmental period.
- Buffer communities** - Settlements that were established to protect the frontier.
- Cañon de Carnue** - Spanish name for Tijeras Canyon.
- Carnuel** - Spanish community in Tijeras Canyon settled to protect villages on the Rio Grande.
- Chaco Canyon** - Complex of Ancestral Pueblo sites in northwestern New Mexico.

Glossary

- Classic** - Ancestral Pueblo cultural period, A.D. 1325-1540; important developments took place in the Albuquerque area during this period.
- Clovis** - Earliest cultural unit of the Paleoindian period, 9500-9000 B.C.; it is named for a distinctive style of spear point first found at a site near Clovis, New Mexico.
- Coalition** - Ancestral Pueblo cultural period, A.D. 1200-1325; a period of population growth in the Middle Rio Grande Valley.
- Coronado, Francisco Vásquez de** - Spanish explorer who led the first expedition into the Albuquerque area.
- Coronado State Monument** - State monument near present day Bernalillo, New Mexico, that includes the ruins of Kuaua Pueblo.
- Coyote Springs** - The community, once located on land that is now the site of Kirtland Air Force Base.
- Cuervo y Valdes, Francisco** - Spanish official who founded Albuquerque, 1706.
- Dendrochronology** - Method of dating wood by counting annual tree rings; it is a valuable tool for archaeologists, especially in the Southwest.
- Desert Archaic** - Term used for the culture of the people who adapted to the arid western portion of North America during the Archaic period.
- Early Developmental** - Ancestral Pueblo cultural period, A.D. 400-900; during this period ceramics were first used in the Middle Rio Grande Valley.
- El Camino Real** - Trail along the Rio Grande into Mexico, portions of which are below contemporary roads; it was the only trade route between New Mexico and the outside world until the opening of the Santa Fe Trail.
- En Medio** - Cultural unit of the Archaic period in New Mexico, 800 B.C. - A.D. 400.
- Espejo, Antonio de** - Spanish leader of sixteenth-century expedition.
- Features** - A modification to the landscape that is cultural; examples are hearths, storage pits, and pithouses.
- Fieldhouses** - Small houses situated near planting fields and used seasonally rather than year-round.
- Fluted points** - Stone spear points that have a groove on each side for attaching it to a wooden shaft.
- Folsom** - Paleoindian cultural unit later than Clovis, 9000-8000 B.C.; the first Folsom point was discovered near Folsom New Mexico, and is smaller than the Clovis point.
- Galisteo Basin** - Area north of Albuquerque that was heavily populated in prehistory.
- Glazeware** - Late prehistoric and early historic ceramic decorated with paint containing lead.
- Glorieta Pass** - Mountain pass east of Santa Fe, site of a New Mexico Civil War battle.
- Ground-stone tools** - Stone tools made by grinding rather than chipping; used for plant processing, such as grinding seeds and grains; examples are **manos and metates**.
- Historic periods** - Cultural units after the introduction of written records; in New Mexico, historic refers to the time after 1540.
- Horticulture** - Cultivation of plants
- Isleta** - Pueblo south of Albuquerque that is still occupied by speakers of a Southern Tiwa language.
- Jacal** - (pronounced "ha kal") A structure or construction technique using mud plaster on brush or poles; also refers to the building material.
- Jay** - Cultural unit of the Archaic in New Mexico, 5500 - 4800 B.C.
- Kuaua** - Large pueblo occupied before and after Coronado's expedition; it had over 1,200 rooms and was inhabited for about 300 years; it is now part of Coronado State Monument.
- LA** - The "Laboratory of Anthropology" is the New Mexico agency that keeps archaeological and other types of site records; recorded sites are referred to by "LA numbers".
- La bajada** - Sloping land surface (sp. descent)
- Late Developmental** - Ancestral Pueblo cultural period, A.D. 900-1200; a period of major construction in northwestern New Mexico.
- Los Griegos** - Spanish village on the Rio Grande that is now part of Albuquerque.
- Los Guajolotes Pueblo** - A pueblo noted by the Spanish that is possibly Piedras Marcadas Pueblo.
- Los Ranchos de Albuquerque** - Spanish village along the Rio Grande, in the North Valley.
- Maize horticulture** - Corn (i.e., maize) cultivation that started by taking care of wild corn and slowly progressed into corn domestication.
- Majolica** - Type of pottery, a tin-glazed earthenware, made by the Spanish.
- Manos** - Stone tools that are hand-held and rubbed over metates to grind seeds.
- Metates** - Stone basins or platforms on which seeds are ground
- Mexican - American War** - A war fought between the United States and Mexico. In 1846, when the war started, New Mexico became a territory of the U.S..
- Moho** - Pueblo in the Tiguex Province.

Glossary

- Oñate, Don Juan de** - Spanish explorer who led the first settlers into New Mexico in 1598.
- Oshara** - A name for an Archaic cultural tradition.
- Paa-ko** - One name for a large Ancestral Puebloan village in East Sandia Mountains.
- Paleoindians** - Earliest inhabitants of the New World, followed a hunting and gathering lifestyle.
- Paleoindian period** - Earliest cultural period known in North America
- Petroglyph National Monument** - National Park Service unit preserving many petroglyphs, located on the west side of Albuquerque.
- Petroglyphs** - Carvings pecked into rocks
- Pueblo I, Pueblo II** - (PI and PII) are cultural units of the Pecos Cultural Classification System for the Southwest; they are included in other cultural periods discussed in this booklet.
- Piedras Marcadas Pueblo site** - Largest Tiguex Province pueblo, now owned by the City of Albuquerque, which is developing it for public access.
- Pithouses** - Partially underground structures that were used, in some instances, as houses in prehistory.
- Plano** - Group of Paleoindian spear point types, 8000 - 5500 B.C.
- Plaza** - A Spanish community settled around a central space (which is also called a plaza)
- Plaza de Señor San Jose de Los Ranchos** - Plaza in Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, now an archaeological site.
- Popé** - Pueblo Indian who was later the leader of the Pueblo Revolt in 1680
- Projectile points** - Type of artifact, includes spear, dart, and arrow points.
- Puaray Pueblo** - Pueblo on the east bank of the Rio Grande.
- Puddled adobe** - Construction technique by which layers of adobe mud are poured on top of each other, rather than being formed into bricks.
- Pueblo Revolt** - The first successful revolt by native people against a European power in North America; in 1680 pueblos united and led by their leader Popé forced the Spanish out of New Mexico until 1692.
- Radiocarbon dating** - Method of dating sites using organic material, such as charcoal.
- Ramada** - Structure with brush roofing.
- Rodriguez and Chamuscado** - Spanish leaders of an expedition into the Albuquerque area.
- Roomblocks** - Above ground structures found at pueblos.
- San Antonio de Padua** - Large Ancestral Puebloan village in Tijeras Canyon, later occupied by Spanish.
- San Gabriel** - First capital of New Mexico founded by Oñate; in 1610, the capital was moved to Santa Fe by Pedro de Peralta.
- San Jose** - Cultural unit of the Archaic period in New Mexico, 3200-1800 B.C.
- San Juan Pueblo** - Pueblo that is still inhabited today, and is across the Rio Grande from the ruin of San Gabriel.
- San Pedro del Cuchillo Pueblo** - One of the first pueblos to have a Spanish mission.
- Sandia Cave** - A site in the Sandia Mountains interpreted as one of the earliest Paleoindian sites; the date of the site, however, is in question.
- Sandia Pueblo** - Pueblo that is still occupied, north of Albuquerque; another Southern Tiwa pueblo.
- Sandy Point site** - Archaic site with pithouses excavated during runway expansion at Albuquerque International Sunport.
- Santa Catalina Pueblo** - A pueblo noted by the Spanish that may be Piedras Marcadas Pueblo.
- Santa Fe Trail** - Trail that opened in 1821, running from St. Louis to Santa Fe; it permitted increased immigration from the U.S. and trade in goods from the East.
- Santiago Pueblo** - Large pueblo that was occupied during Spanish Contact.
- Socorro phase** - Cultural unit of Late Developmental period, characterized by a distinctive Black-on-white pottery.
- Southern Tiwa** - Language family including the languages spoken at Isleta and Sandia Pueblos.
- Spanish Contact** - The first interaction between Spanish and Native American cultures and societies; more properly called Spanish-Native American Contact.
- Tiguex Province** - Name the Spanish gave to the group of pueblos they encountered in the Middle Rio Grande Valley during their explorations.
- Tijeras Pueblo** - Large Ancestral Puebloan village in Tijeras Canyon; it is part of Cibola National Forest and can be visited by the public.
- Tiwa, Tewa, Towa, Piro, Keresan, Zuni and Hopi** - Language groups of the pueblos.
- Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo** - 1848 treaty ending the Mexican-American War; guarantees rights of residents of New Mexico.
- Vargas, Don Diego de** - Spanish military commander who retook New Mexico for Spain in 1692.
- Villa** - A Spanish settlement with a governing council.
- Ysleta del Sur** - A settlement near El Paso, Texas, originally occupied by Pueblo people who accompanied the Spanish during the Pueblo Revolt.

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