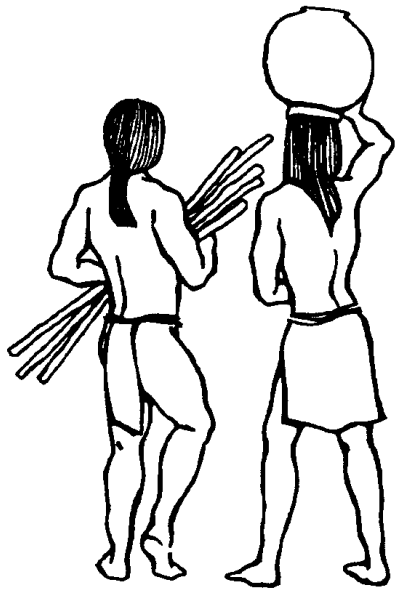


Shoofly Village

Shoofly Village was built and occupied between A.D. 1000 and 1280 by people who had close ties to the Hohokam and Salado people then living in the deserts and mountains to the south. By the time the village was established, however, they had developed their own distinctive culture. Recent research by archaeologists from Arizona State University has told us much about the site and the lives of its builders. As a result, the site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

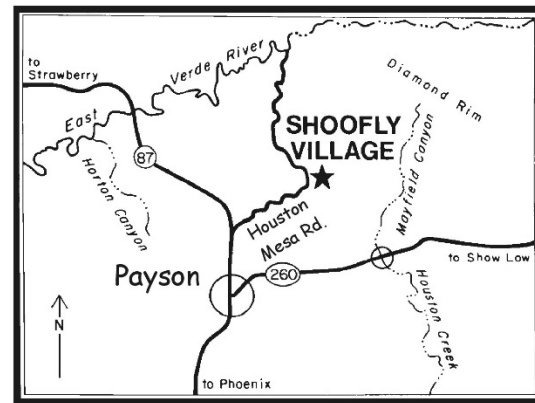
The village contains 87 rooms and many courtyards, all surrounded by a compound wall that encloses about four acres. It is arranged into three groups of rooms that were constructed at different times during the history of the site. The single unit oval shaped rooms are the earliest, with the rectangular rooms, particularly those clustered into the large block at the center of the site, built later. Many of the rooms appear to have been occupied at the same time. The walled courtyards suggest that families or other small social groups maintained separate identities within the village.



Getting There

Shoofly Village is located five miles northeast of Payson, Arizona, at an elevation of 5240 ft. Take State Highway 87 north from Payson to the Houston Mesa Road and turn east. The parking lot is just off the paved road a short distance past Mesa del Caballo subdivision. Facilities at the site include a handicapped-accessible self-guided interpretive trail with exhibits. Visit Shoofly Village to see how people lived in central Arizona 800 years ago.

Come discover Arizona's ancient past at Shoofly Village!



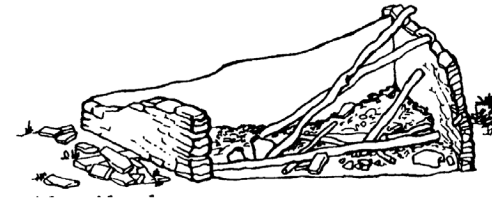
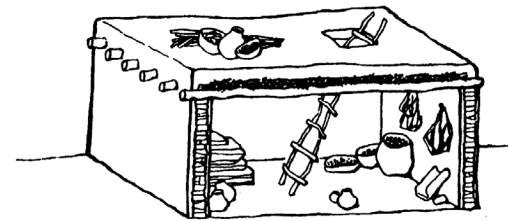
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Shoofly Village: A Look into the Past

Tonto National Forest



Living in the Shadow of The Mogollon Rim

People have lived in the shadow of the Mogollon Rim in the Payson area for over 8,000 years. The Rim is a massive geological feature that divides Arizona roughly in half. With pine forests at the higher elevations and pinyon-juniper woodlands below, the area under the Rim contains a wide variety of plants and animals. Pinyon nuts, acorns, agave, yucca, and other plant foods are abundant as are deer, elk, bear, rabbit, turkey, and quail.

The technology of the prehistoric people who lived here was rich and varied. Spears and bows and arrows were used for hunting. Native farmers grew corn, beans, and squash along the many small streams in the area and built stone terraces across hillslopes and on the mesa tops to catch rainfall and create additional pockets of soil for planting. Stone tools were made of the abundant local chert and chalcedony for processing meat, hides, agave, wood, and bone. Other local and imported stone was used to make tools for grinding corn and acorns into flour.

Clothing was made of buckskin and cotton, sometimes woven with feathers or strips of rabbit fur. The cotton itself was obtained by trade with the folks living in Tonto Basin. Argillite, a soft red stone, was also obtained from Tonto Basin and used to make beads and other jewelry. Ancient trade and travel routes also led south into the Sonoran Desert and north onto the Colorado plateau, bringing in new ideas and even more exotic trade items such as obsidian, decorated pottery, and carved shell jewelry.

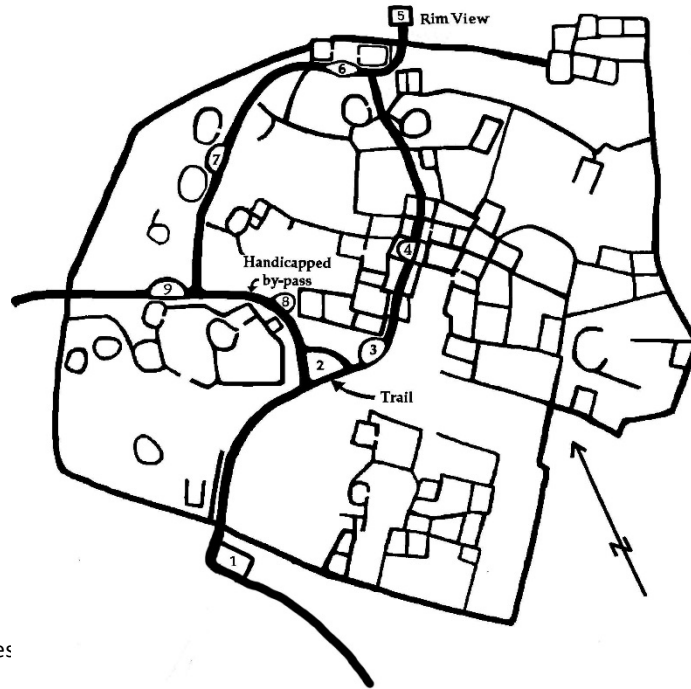


The Village

The compound wall was built during the late period of construction. The boulders of dark basalt used in the wall contrast against the red sandstone used in most of the rooms. The wall was at least three feet high and may have been higher. The fact that no houses are found outside the wall suggests that it was built for protection.

The discovery of a lot of corn in the rooms along with many grinding stones indicates that agriculture was important to the village's economy. Nearby springs supplied water for domestic use. Forty other sites have been located within three miles of Shoofly Village. Agricultural features such as terraces and check dams at these sites suggest that some of them may have been used by Shoofly villagers during the farming season.

Little is known about the religious or social customs of Shoofly Village. Ceremonies and dances were probably conducted in the open courtyards, since no ceremonial structures have been found.



To Trailhead from parking lot

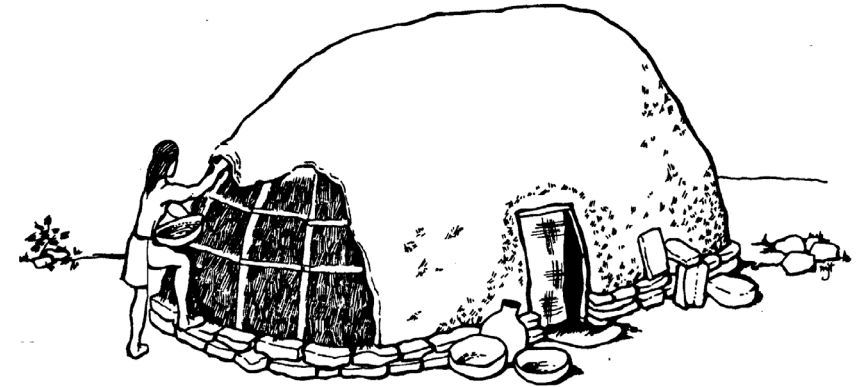


Changes Through Time

The earliest people in the Payson area did not have permanent settlements. They moved around to where wild foods were most readily available in any given season. They adopted agriculture sometime around 300 A.D. This new technology, though more productive, tied the people to specific places. A fast growing and settled population soon began to put increasing pressure on those areas best suited for farming, hunting, and gathering. This led to even greater emphasis on agriculture, often expanding into marginal areas, and may have resulted in conflicts between local groups. All these things combined to increase the level of complexity in prehistoric Payson society.

Up until about 1000 A.D., most of the people of the Payson area lived in small settlements made up of only a few families each, though there were several larger villages in the area. As the need to share labor for farming and defense grew, villages like Shoofly developed. Rapid changes in social organization marked the 11th and 12th centuries under the Rim. The range of architectural types at Shoofly mirrors these changes. The oval houses, the separate rectangular buildings, the courtyard walls, the large room block, and the outer compound wall each represent different developments in social and economic arrangements.

The abandonment of Shoofly village was a relatively rapid process that began and ended around 1280 A.D. when the entire Payson area was likewise abandoned. The primary reason was probably the Great Drought of 1275-1300 A.D. and the social unrest that came along with it. Large parts of central Arizona were abandoned at this time. It is not known where all of the people of Shoofly and the other Payson area settlements went. Perhaps some of them moved west to the uplands along the East Verde River. Many went south to join the Salado communities in Tonto Basin – which were themselves abandoned just over a century later. Others may have moved north and east to join the ancestors of today's Hopi and Zuni. Archaeologists are still working to solve this puzzle.



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