

GHOST RANCH



Welcome

Ghost Ranch Archaeological Dig

with Charles Haecker, M.A. and Maisie Morris

G2307311

July 16-22, 2023

Welcome to the 2023 Ghost Ranch Field Excavation Class.

Excavations will continue at a rockshelter that contains over 4,000 years of human occupation. The site was often used as a seasonal hunting camp during this time. As such, you will be uncovering deposits that contain an array of artifacts such as arrow points, the by-products of manufacturing stone tools, broken pottery and the remains of ancient meals including bones and plants. Sometimes we also unearth the fire hearths used to cook these meals. This year's excavation strategy will be to continue excavation in the lower levels of the shelter which date during the first millennium B.C. We also want to clean a profile across the excavations from the back to the front of the shelter to clearly delineate the separate layers of occupation in the shelter. In addition, class members will have the opportunity to spend a day in the laboratory cataloguing the artifacts they have recovered from the excavations. Lastly, there will be nightly lectures on the archaeology of the Southwest and the Chama Valley.

Our current research indicates that there are three occupation zones in the shelter. The first (lower) zone contains evidence of the initial use of the shelter by hunter-gatherers for over 2,000 years until the A.D. 1200s period. The second (middle) occupation is when the site witnesses its most intense use during the A.D. 1300 to 1500s. We think this relates to periodic hunting trips made by people living in nearby farming villages like the ancient pueblo at Sapawe. The third zone (upper) represents the declining use of the shelter for hunting during the 1600 to 1700s. Again, by people living at nearby pueblos like Okay Owinge which is still a living community. The final occupation dates to the late 1700s from the posts found in a masonry walled enclosure built within the shelter. The village of Abiquiu was founded in the 1700s. So, this masonry enclosure may be associated with the Hispanic villagers or the people from Okay Owinge. Jicarilla Apaches did move into the area during the 1800s; however, we currently have no evidence that they used the shelter.

For All—What to bring:

- Water bottle
- Wide brimmed hat
- Sturdy shoes for short hikes
- Walking shoes or "tennies" (softer, more forgiving soles) for wearing on dig site.
- Field clothes (sun protection) for getting dirty.
- Archaeology digging tools if you wish to use your own, otherwise we can supply everything you need.
- Sun protection: sunscreen SPF 30+, sunglasses
- Insect repellent
- Rain cover (poncho, slicker, garbage bag, etc. light weight)

Day (back)pack to carry all the above and your daily lunch.

We look forward to meeting you, and hope you enjoy a wonderful learning experience at Ghost Ranch.

Charles Haecker, M.A. (Project Director), Maisie Morris (Laboratory Director)

EDUCATION AND RETREAT CENTER

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