

THE POTTERY MOUND MONITORING PROGRAM, 2008

By

David A. Phillips, Jr.
Jean H. Ballagh



Maxwell Museum Technical Series No. 11

Permit Nos. NM-08-202-S (survey and inventory),
-M (monitoring), and -T (test excavation) and ABE-08-202
NMCRIS Activity No. 112618

Maxwell Museum of Anthropology
MSC01, 1050, 1 University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131-0001
www.unm.edu/~maxwell

Copyright 2009
by the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology,
University of New Mexico

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction.....	1
Background to the Current Permit Activity.....	1
Fieldwork Under the 2008 Monitoring Permit, and Other Activities During the Permit Period.....	2
Discussion.....	4
References Cited.....	5
Appendix A. 2008 Accessions from Pottery Mound.....	7
Appendix B. Two Maps of Pottery Mound.....	8

FIGURES

1. Project location.....	2
2. Re-rendering of the Benjamin map of Pottery Mound, as annotated by Hibben.....	9
3. Plan of Pottery Mound, showing projected locations of features on Benjamin map.....	10

Note: Figures 2 and 3 (both in Appendix B) contain sensitive information and do not appear in copies intended for unrestricted distribution.

Introduction

In December 2007 the Cultural Properties Review Committee, State of New Mexico, issued permits for archaeological monitoring and related activities at LA 416, Pottery Mound, to David Phillips, Curator of Archaeology, Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico (UNM), Albuquerque. The permit period extended through the end of 2008. This report summarizes permit-related activities in 2008, as well as related developments. The permits allowed survey and inventory, monitoring, test excavations, and excavation of unmarked burials, but the work actually done included only monitoring. The permit numbers are NM-08-202-S (survey and inventory), -M (monitoring), and -T (test excavation), and ABE-08-202 (unmarked burials). The NMCRIS activity number is 112618.

UNM owns Pottery Mound; the parcel is surrounded by Pueblo of Isleta land. The monitoring work was performed by the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology for the University. The goals and methods of the monitoring program are described in a monitoring plan (Phillips 2007). This report refers to the portions of the plan relevant to the work actually done. Figure 1 shows the general location of the site. As this report will be distributed without restrictions, detailed location data are not included. The updated site form submitted with this report provides a site location map and details.

The site perches on a sheer bank of the Rio Puerco and is actively eroding. The most basic goal of the monitoring program is to document the erosion and, in time, to carry out measures to slow the erosion. The erosion periodically exposes human remains. Pursuant to guidance from Isleta Pueblo, the Maxwell Museum has begun rescuing and documenting the remains and reburying them in the site (to date, this work has been done by Heather Edgar, Curator of Osteology, under a separate permit). Other goals of the monitoring program include (1) periodic assessment of the site's research potential, (2) monitoring for vandalism, and (3) gathering information that will aid the interpretation of existing notes and collections.

Background to the Current Permit Activity

Except for a 1979 testing project by Linda Cordell and a few other (very minor) exceptions, all of the early work at Pottery Mound was done by Dr. Frank Hibben, a professor at UNM. Hibben's formal fieldwork included field schools in 1954, 1955, 1957, and 1958 and an NSF-funded project in 1960–1961. Hibben continued to lead volunteer-based informal digs at the site through the 1980s. His primary publication on the site focused on the kiva murals (Hibben 1975). A more comprehensive introduction to the site is now available (Schaafsma 2007).

Beginning in 2004, the Maxwell Museum has sought to publish additional information on the site, and to conduct archaeological fieldwork as needed to monitor its condition and improve our ability to interpret existing collections and records. Readers are referred to two prior reports (Phillips and Ballagh 2007, 2008) for a summary of monitoring activities before 2008.

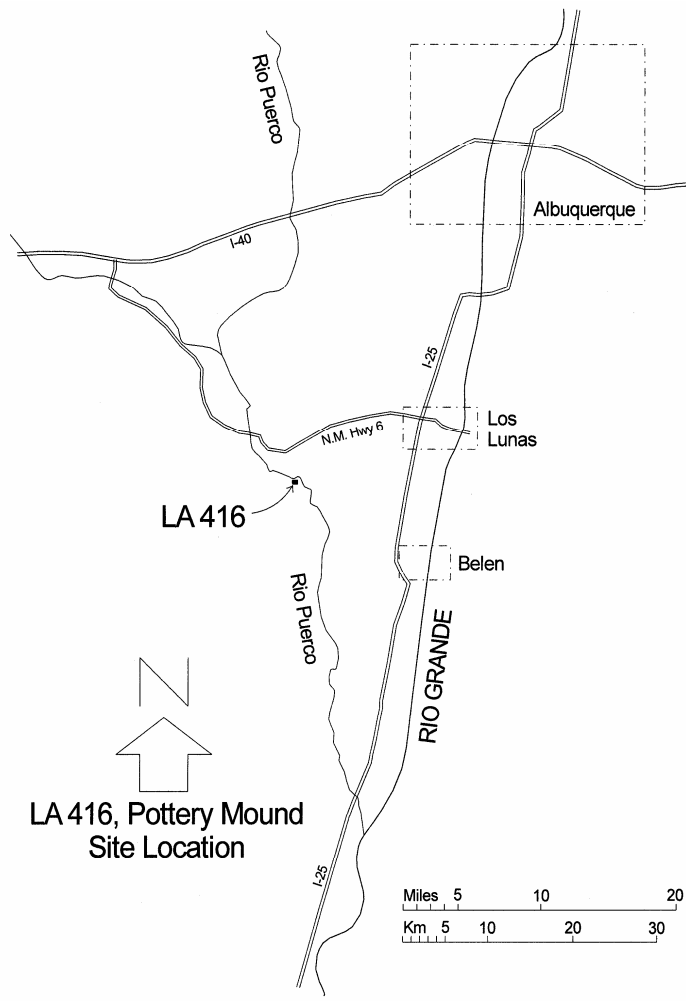


Figure 1. Project location.

**Fieldwork under the 2008 Monitoring Permit,
and Other Activities During the Permit Period**

Field visits to Pottery Mound generally take place during the spring and fall dry seasons. In the winter and summer, heavy rains often make the access road impassable or nearly so.

On March 11, David Phillips and Hayward Franklin drove to Pottery Mound to check on access and site condition. During the visit, Phillips and Franklin walked out to the portion of the Rio Puerco bluff overlooking the east end of the protective dike built by the Corps of Engineers in 1981. (This area is within a UNM easement.) A badly eroded site is present on the bluff at that location; Glaze A and C rims and a few Glaze D rims are present so the site is contemporary with (and may have lasted slightly longer than) Pottery Mound. Phillips subsequently notified the BIA Albuquerque Area Office archaeologists of this site but because it is within an easement on land owned by the Pueblo of Isleta, and lacking permission to conduct archaeology on the

Pueblo's land, Phillips did not record the site. To prevent the site from falling through the cracks, it has been assigned a number, LA 161791, pending formal recording.

On March 22, Phillips led a tour of the site for the Santa Fe Archaeological Society.

On April 1, Phillips and Jean Ballagh resumed total station mapping of the site.

On April 8, Phillips, Ballagh, Franklin, and David Love visited the site. Love, a geomorphologist from N.M. Tech, provided a quick tour of the local geomorphology. He noted that at the time Pottery Mound was occupied, LA 161791 may have been across the Rio Puerco from the main village. Love also examined the ongoing erosion of Pottery Mound but was unable to suggest specific approaches to prevent further erosion. Ballagh and Phillips did limited site mapping. On the April 8 trip, signs of an unauthorized site visit included small collectors' piles.

On April 22, Phillips and Ballagh did further site mapping. On this occasion, vandalism was noted. Some individual had dug up the south mapping monument, and had used an improvised tool to dig in the East Push Pile and Southeast Arroyo. The disturbance was shallow and minor.

On May 2, Phillips and Ballagh led a tour of the site for the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture.

On June 18, at the request of the USDI Bureau of Land Management, Phillips, Franklin, and Ballagh led a tour of the site for BLM volunteers (who then led a tour of sites they have recorded north and west of Pottery Mound). During the visit, the group observed further shallow disturbance to the East Push Pile.

On October 21, Phillips led an orientation tour of the site for local members of the N.M. SiteWatch program, who had agreed to add Pottery Mound to their list of sites to be monitored. Although SiteWatch and UNM have not yet entered into a formal agreement, informal monitoring visits took place on November 22 and December 6, 2008.

On October 25 and 31, respectively, Phillips led tours of the site for the Los Lunas Museum and the Friends of the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center.

The limited collections are described in Appendix A. Other developments, not part of the permitted activity, are worth mentioning.

- The Maxwell Museum published reports on the 1955 field school at the site (Ballagh and Phillips 2008) and on three recently obtained accelerator dates (Franklin 2008).
- The volunteer-based reorganization of boxed artifacts continues and is about halfway to completion. When the project is finished, all of the Pottery Mound collections at the Maxwell Museum will be housed in appropriate archival materials, and catalogued down to at least the bag level.

Discussion

The limited additional mapping done in 2008 did not alter our notions of site layout as shown in the report on the 2007 monitoring (Phillips and Ballagh 2008, Figure 2). With continued exposure to the site and documents, however, we can make the first attempt to tie our own maps to one prepared by Mr. Ben Benjamin for Frank Hibben. Benjamin, who was one of Hibben's volunteers, prepared his map in 1985 but did preparatory work for the map as far back as the 1970s. The map was annotated (in 1986?) by Hibben. Versions of the map are on file at the Maxwell Museum.

The southern portion of the Benjamin map is taken from Hibben's (1975) published map of the site; only the portion along the Rio Puerco scarp represents new information. Benjamin's map, and our map with his named site features, are provided in Appendix B. As those maps contain burial location information, Appendix B is not included in copies intended for unrestricted distribution. Copies of Appendix B will be provided to qualified researchers and agencies upon request.

The scarp-edge features shown by Benjamin appear to be confined to the east half of the fenced portion of UNM's property.

- The "North Refuse Area" correlates roughly with an artificial notch still visible in the Rio Puerco scarp.
- In the recent volume on Pottery Mound (Schaafsma 2007), the Duck Unit is shown north and west of the "A" rooms excavated in 1954 (except the "sub" rooms; see Ballagh and Phillips 2006 for more information on work in that year). We now believe that the Duck Unit was an eastward extension of the room block sampled in 1954, and is mostly or entirely gone today. (It is also possible that the Duck Unit "salvage" work by Hibben partly overlapped with the 1954 work, and that certain rooms were inadvertently re-excavated.)
- Hibben's (1975) published map of Pottery Mound shows Kiva 17 north of the main group of rooms excavated in 1954. Based on versions of that map on file at the Maxwell Museum, Kiva 17 was added after the rest of the map had been rendered. Kiva 17's location on the published map appears to be an educated guess, and probably an incorrect one. Instead, we should probably rely on Benjamin's placement of Kiva 17 in a gully east of the 1954 excavations. This appears to be the same gully currently visible just north and west of the East Push Pile.
- The Swan Unit was a series of rooms exposed by a gully, which we place just north and east of the East Push Pile.

Not discussed in this summary, but shown in Appendix B, are Two Burial Gully, the Big Man Burial Area, and Macaw Burial Gully.

Also, the 1978 surveyor's plat of the UNM parcel shows a 2 inch pipe datum that was used by Frank Hibben and appears to be the "master datum" on Cordell's 1979 map of the site. The datum subsequently rusted out and was found lying on the ground when the current round of work began. We are now able to provide an estimated grid value for the pipe datum: E 630.86, N 523.33. (The surveyor also placed a cap within the site in 1978; it was, we believe, at the high point of the West Push Pile and was subsequently removed by vandals.) As a final mapping note, our current best estimate of grid orientation is that the grid is rotated 48 minutes east of true north (clockwise).

In 2008 we saw the first independent dates from Pottery Mound in many years (Franklin 2008). Three maize samples from the upper levels of Linda Cordell's 1979 stratigraphic test were submitted for accelerator dating and yielded raw dates of site occupation well into the 1400s. This corroborates our sense, based on the presence of small amounts of Glaze D pottery, that Pottery Mound was occupied until at least 1490.

The newly discovered site near Pottery Mound, LA 161791, is of interest in part because of the following quotation by Hibben:

Although Glaze III and later types of sherds were almost completely absent at Pottery Mound itself, late glazes were found at a small pueblo of twenty-four rooms which formerly lay on the brink of the Rio Puerco cutbank just north of Pottery Mound. This outlying pueblo was completely obliterated by the floods of 1956 and 1957, but was fortunately tested before its demise. It was in this vicinity that Bruce Ellis of the Museum of New Mexico, during an earlier reconnaissance, recovered a fragment of chain mail assumed to be of Spanish origin [Hibben 1975:2-4].

This is at odds with Bruce Ellis's description of the chain mail find, however, as having been made "on the north-east slope of the mound, in an area now semi-enclosed but not disturbed by the University of New Mexico field crew trenching of the summer of 1954" (Ellis 1955:181). Ellis's remark suggests that the find was made at LA 416, not at LA 161792. Nonetheless, LA 161792 may be the "small pueblo" described by Frank Hibben. If so, it was not obliterated but survives in very poor condition.

References Cited

- Ballagh, Jean H., and David A. Phillips, Jr.
2006 *Pottery Mound: The 1954 Field Season*. Maxwell Museum Technical Series No. 2. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.
- 2008 *Pottery Mound: The 1955 Field Season*. Maxwell Museum Technical Series No. 8. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.
- Ellis, Bruce T.
1955 A Possible Chain Mail Fragment from Pottery Mound. *El Palacio* 62:181-184.

Franklin, Hayward H.

2008 *New Dates from Pottery Mound*. Maxwell Museum Technical Series No. 7. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Hibben, Frank C.

1975 *Kiva Art of the Anasazi at Pottery Mound*. KC Publications, Las Vegas.

Phillips, David A., Jr.

2007 *Archaeological Monitoring Plan for LA 416, Pottery Mound, Valencia County, New Mexico, Calendar Year 2008*. Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Phillips, David A., Jr., and Jean H. Ballagh

2007 *The Pottery Mound Monitoring Program, 2006*. Maxwell Museum Technical Series No. 3. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

2008 *The Pottery Mound Monitoring Program, 2007*. Maxwell Museum Technical Series No. 6. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Schaafsma, Polly (editor)

2007 *New Perspectives on Pottery Mound Pueblo*. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Appendix A

2008 ACCESSIONS FROM POTTERY MOUND

Maxwell

Accn. No.	Description
-----------	-------------

Collections from 2008 site monitoring program. “Z” is elevation reading (increasing with height).

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 2008.21.1 | Charred maize and beans from surface of “Burned Room 2”; E 613.79–615.07, N 525.02–527.10, Z 98.86–99.03. |
| 2008.21.2 | Projectile point from general site surface; E 598.79, N 496.35, Z 97.97. |
| 2008.21.3 | Tuff cobble with incised cross. Found out of context on Hill 99.40 (backdirt), which is south of E 575, N 500 |
| 2008.21.4 | Three Agua Fria Glaze-on-red sherds for site-specific type collection. Found out of context in NW Arroyo. |
| 2008.21.5 | Sherd for site-specific type collection; Pottery Mound Glaze Polychrome with white slip exterior, C rim. Found out of context on surface of the backfilled 1979 stratigraphic unit. |

Other 2008 accessions of interest

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 2008.1.34 | Gabe, Carolyn Marie, 2007, Gender Imagery in the American Southwest: A Case Study of Pueblo IV Kiva Murals. Student paper. |
| 2008.1.35 | Gabe, Carolyn Marie, 2007, Comparing Stylistic Elements at Pottery Mound, NM. Student paper. |
| 2008.1.37 | Ford, Richard I., 1974, untitled letter to Betty Garrett on macrobotanical remains from LA 416, Pottery Mound. |

Appendix B

TWO MAPS OF POTTERY MOUND

The remainder of this appendix does not appear in copies intended for unrestricted distribution.