When Tucson was named the first U.S. UNESCO City of Gastronomy, many people thought that might have to do with our great Mexican food. But that word “gastronomy,” as defined by UNESCO, isn’t about fancy restaurants, but rather it refers to a region’s entire food system. Veteran food writer Carolyn Niethammer, draws on thousands of years of food history to explain the UNESCO designation. The book traces the influences of Native American, Mexican, mission-era Mediterranean, and ranch-style cowboy traditions. It is a food pilgrimage, full of stories and recipes stretching back to the earliest residents of the Santa Cruz Valley. You’ll read how the earliest farmers first learned to grow corn beginning in 2100 BC when the Hohokam built their elaborate irrigation canals and how the arrival of the Spanish changed everything.

Carolyn Niethammer has been writing about the food and people of the Southwest since she got out of college in books and newspaper and magazine articles. Four of her ten books are cookbooks, three are books about Native American women, one is a travel book, and one is a novel that features a famous cook from Arizona history. Her work has been translated into German, French, and Korean. Her latest book “A Desert Feast: Celebrating Tucson’s Culinary History,” is a look at Tucson’s food history over the last 8,000 years and is an answer to why our city was named a UNESCO City of Gastronomy

Register at azpathfindersahs@gmail.com

AZ Pathfinders will hold their annual meeting after Ms. Niethammer’s talk.