

## Test Trench Summary, Housepit 6

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### **Housepit Location and Description**

Of the eight housepits mapped, HP 6 (Vol. III, Preface, **Fig.1**) is unique in that its southern rim is broken as if it were an entrance to the dwelling, but was likely breached by flooding as this pit is partially filled with slopewash material and lies along the course of an ephemeral channel. This housepit has a circular, shallow, concave floor and a moderately, but not steeply, pronounced rim. It is about 13 m in diameter. Several anomalous large angular boulders were found on the surface near the center of the housepit. The test trench lies just to the east of the side entrance and the strata, except for a small area of pot hunters' backdirt, does not appear to be disturbed.

It is felt that this housepit was initially occupied in the Plateau horizon; stratigraphic evidence indicates two major cycles of house occupation and collapse occurred (**Fig. 1**), the first during the Plateau horizon, the last during the Kamloops horizon. After these occupational cycles, the housepit was used as a brief camping area.

Two diagnostic artifacts were found in HP 6. One, a small corner-notched point is late Plateau horizon (ca. 1,400-1,200 BP), was found in roof fill (Stratum III). The other, a side-notched Kamloops horizon point (ca. 1,200-200 BP) was found in the floor deposits (Stratum IV). It is possible that this housepit was excavated approximately 1,500 years ago, although living floor deposits from this time period were largely removed by Kamloops horizon residents and dumped on the rim.

### **Test Trench Excavation Results**

Detailed characteristics of the strata are noted in the Stratum Legend accompanying the Test Trench profile sketch. Stratum relationships will be discussed here.

Strata I (and II?) are post occupational and are attributed to aeolian and slopewash processes. The housepit was periodically flooded and partially filled with slopewash as a result.

The roof fill (Stratum III) is continuous through the entire test trench, but is cut into by a burn event (Stratum V) that is associated with Pit Feature 2. The reddened lens (Stratum V) contains an unusual amount of bone. It grades into a charcoal lens towards the south and dips below the house roof fill and the house floor on the north side of Pit Feature 2. The occupation represented by the burned and charcoal strata (V) and Feature 2, probably represents a brief, Kamloops horizon camp in the abandoned housepit depression. It is possible that the material underlying this hearth, in the remainder of Feature 2 was excavated to its maximum depth during the Plateau or Kamloops horizon occupations since deposits in the base of Feature 2 resemble floor deposits, especially Stratum VIII, a yellow gravel.

Pit Feature 1 is overlain by a floor (Stratum IV). Based on abundant, articulated salmon remains occurring throughout a loam layer below the floor (Stratum IV), it was probably used as a storage pit for salmon. Feature 1 was later modified along its south wall for use as a post hole as evidenced by an *in situ* vertical beam. Brown sterile soil was used as a packing material around the post. The north half of the feature may have continued to be used for storage.

The Kamloops horizon occupation may have been slightly smaller than the Plateau horizon occupation since an earlier floor remnant (Stratum III) appears to extend beneath rim spoil (Stratum VII) associated with the floor of the main Kamloops horizon occupation. This floor material (Stratum IV) forms the packing for the rocks that act as a retaining wall at the edge of this rim spoil.

### **Excavation Summary and Conclusions**

Housepit 6 was first occupied in the late Plateau horizon. Later Kamloops horizon occupants removed most of the floor and roof deposits of this early occupation and deposited them on the rim. A short duration camping event occurred on its collapsed roof, and the housepit has recently been pot hunted.

## Figures

Figure 1: Housepit 6 east wall profile and floor plan.

### Figure 1: Stratum Legend for Housepit 6

- I Duff layer with Potter's backdirt in Square A; light brown (10 YR 3/2)
- II Clayey wedge thickening towards pithouse center, probably slope wash/aeolian resultant; contains charcoal flecks throughout. Black (5 Y 2.5/1)–high organic content.
- III Roof fill–pea gravel in a clayey matrix. Contained concentrations of fire cracked rock, scattered charcoal and a biface fragment. Possible textural lensing in south near/over rim spoil. black (5 Y 2.5/1).
- IV Floor–gravelly throughout. Truncated by post holes and a pit; charred wood, bone and two horizontal flakes found on its surface; charcoal, one piece, 5 cm in diameter and 10 cm long, was found at its base. A Kamloops point and bone pendant came from within this strata or surface of VIII. Dark brown (2.5 YR 3/2).
- V Fire reddened earth grading to charcoal lens towards Feature 2. Cobble in Feature 2 confuses stratigraphy, but lens seems to continue to south side of Feature 2; an arbitrary dotted line has been drawn from this point to intersect with Stratum I. Burnt bone was found on surface of this layer. Red-brown (10 YR 3/4).
- VI Feature fill–few lithics; charcoal lense at contact between VI and VIII. Brown (10 YR 3/2).

- VII Rim spoil—loose gravelly matrix, dry and full of root hairs, ashy near base along south wall. Contained primary flakes and tip of a horn. Olive brown (5 Y 2.5/2).
- VIII Floor—surface defined by a thin, but compact layer; gravelly matrix. Charcoal, fire-cracked rock, awl, and shell were found on its surface and possibly the Kamloops point, and pendant mentioned in IV. Deeply weathered bone found along south wall beneath rim spoil. Light brown (10 YR 3/3).
- IX Pit fill with the same characteristics as VIII.

Figure 1. Housepit 6 east wall profile and floor plan.

