

Excavation Summary for Extra-Housepit Excavation 34

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Extra-Housepit Excavation 34 (EHPE 34) is a small shallow depression, with a diameter of 1.25 m, and a depth of approximately 35 cm. It is located on the terrace slope, 45 m south of HP 108 (This Volume, Preface, Fig. 1), and has been dated to 120 BP.

Two Subsquares (4 and 8) were excavated through the center of the small circular depression, uncovering four clearly defined strata:

- Stratum I: Surface - tan coloured gravelly loam with modern organics;
- Stratum II: Orange/brown gravelly loam with charcoal flecks. One basalt flake fragment was also recovered at this level;
- Stratum III: Black charcoal rich layer with some carbon stained gravelly loam. A great deal of FCR ranging in size from gravel to large cobbles;
- Stratum IV: Orange/brown gravelly loam with occasional charcoal flecks.

The feature is clearly a roasting pit consisting of several large cobbles resting on fire-reddened ash and till. Above the large cobbles is a layer of smaller FCR and carbon. Above this is a deposit of fire-reddened loam with charcoal flecks. The west wall of Subsquares 4 and 8 appears to be over the center of the feature.

Conclusions

EHPE 34 appears to be the result of a single roasting "event". A shallow pit was dug (ca. 30-40cm deep x 1.0-1.5 m in diameter). Several large cobble/small boulders were placed in the center of the pit, possibly with small amounts of wood beneath them. A fire was kindled above them, and additional rocks (smaller cobbles) were placed around, in, or on top of the fire. Presumably something was placed in the pit to be roasted, once the rocks were hot. What this would have been is unknown. The pit may then have been covered with earth, or alternatively a large fire may have been built on top of the pit full of rocks. Ultimately, it appears that whatever was cooked was removed from the pit, possibly disturbing many of the smaller rocks but without disturbing the larger cobbles/boulders. This is inferred on the basis of the circular arrangement of the large cobbles and the multitude of large chunks of charcoal found immediately above them, and between them, but not under them.