

Results of the Small Housepit Test Excavation Program

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During the 1989 field season at the Keatley Creek site, a total of seven selected small cultural depressions, some presumed to be small house depressions, were examined during a brief testing program. The purpose of this study was to:

- (1) determine their function;
- (2) reveal their stratigraphic structure and cultural content;
- (3) attempt to provide relative age(s) for their occupational episode(s),
and;
- (4) assess their suitability for further inquiry with respect to testing the hypothesis that small houses were inhabited by families less economically well-off than groups living in larger houses at the site.

The seven depressions were selected on the basis of two important considerations. First, they had to have diameters between 5.0 and 8.0 m. Second, small depressions on the periphery of the village were preferred, as it was reasoned that they would be less structurally complex than those in the interior of the site because they would likely have been occupied less intensively than those within the village core area. The housepits included in the study are HP's 12, 90, 101, 107, 108, 110, and 111 (Vol. III, Preface, **Fig. 1**).

Standard excavation techniques were employed with trowels, dustpans, pails, etc., although square nosed shovels were occasionally used to remove deposits containing very little or no cultural information (e.g., post-abandonment fluvial silt infilling). All matrices were passed through a

1/4 inch (6 mm) mesh screen. Where possible, each stratigraphic layer was removed separately. The positioning of the observed strata and certain temporally diagnostic or unique artifacts are presented on profile drawings accompanying the reports. All stratigraphic depths and artifact proveniences were taken using either below ground surface (BS) or below temporary datum (BTD) measurements. Specific details concerning excavation methodology, results, and interpretations for each housepit depression are provided in the chapter sections to come.

Other, larger housepits were tested in other years and are also described in the subchapters that follow.