



Figure 1

ADDING A PIECE TO THE PUZZLE: ONGOING EXCAVATIONS AT THE FINGERHUT TRACT



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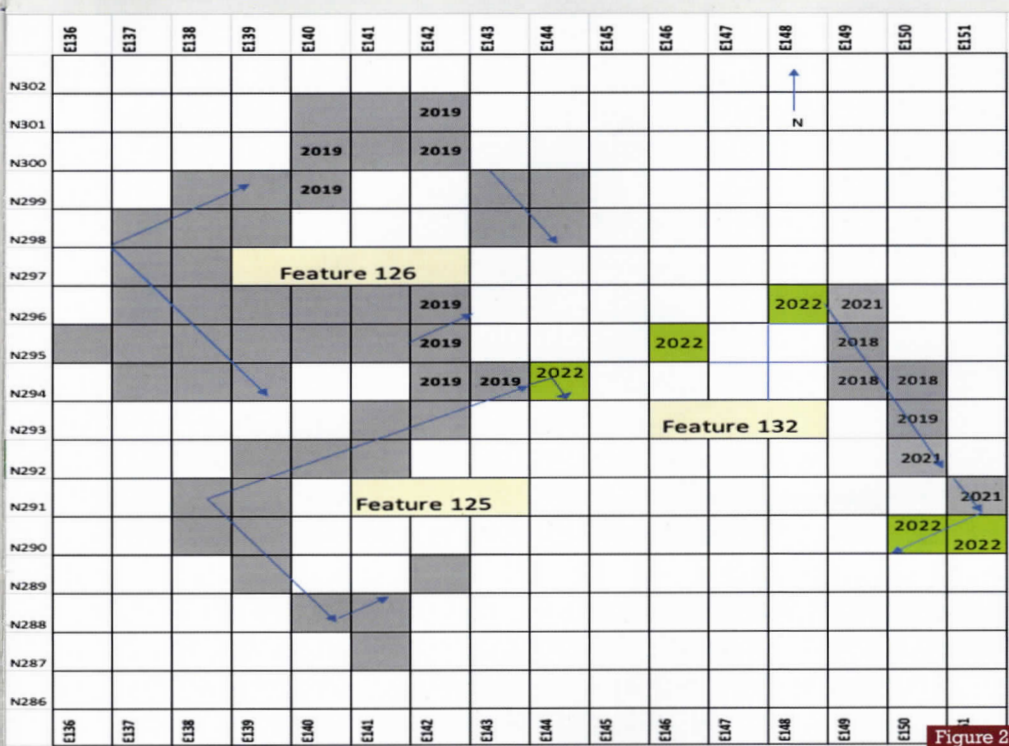


Figure 2

units were excavated with varying results. Three 1x1m units were set along a diagonal line in a northeast direction from a known basin edge of Feature 125 (Figure 2). Visible in the plow zone of each of these units was a clay lens that was initially detected during previous excavations moving east from the E140 line in units attributed to Feature 125. The hypothesis is that this clay lens may represent the area of a historic livestock pond. In fact, the layer of clay concealed the eastward extension of Feature 125 on the resistivity survey conducted by Jarrod Burks, and apparently, continues to impact the three units under discussion.

Excavations at the Fingerhut Tract under the direction of Dr. Mary Vermilion have taken place every summer since 2011 (except for the 2020 season due to COVID-19) adding more pieces to an archaeological puzzle (Figure 1). We have been fortunate to accumulate new information about this intriguing aspect of Cahokia each year and, typical of most long-term archaeological studies, our growing knowl-

edge generates new questions. This season was no exception.

One of the goals for this season was to continue to trace the basin walls of a putative structure designated as Feature 132 given its apparent proximity to another structure designated Feature 125, to determine whether one feature superimposed the other, or whether their walls connect (Figure 2). To that end, five

Due to time constraints and dangerous heat indices this summer, these three units were excavated to a depth of 37.0-38.0cmbd. Although it appeared that N296 E148 and N295 E146 were floored by subsoil at this depth, soil probes indicate 4-8cm of basin fill in areas beneath the clay lens. These two units are believed to belong to Feature 132 and warrant further excavation



Figure 3



Figure 4

next season. Unit N294 E144 did provide a possible answer to the size and shape of Feature 125. Although not sharply defined, it appears that the northeast corner of this feature can be documented in this unit and a soil probe revealed 11cm of basin fill beneath this vague corner shape (Figure 3). Although it now appears that Feature 125 and Feature 132 do not connect, further work will need to be done next season to learn whether one superimposes the other.

The other two units excavated proved to be both informative and perplexing. In the northwest

corner of N290 E151, the basin edge of Feature 132 was captured as it turned to the southeast (Figures 2 and 4) and at 36.0cmbd, a soil probe in the basin revealed approximately 35cm of apparent basin fill. The decision was made to excavate the adjoining unit to the west (N290 E150) where we were able to follow and confirm the basin. However, an intrusive area of light tan, poorly compacted, very soft fine silt was revealed (Figure 5). Nothing like this had been encountered during previous excavations and clearly requires further investigation next summer.

Thanks to an enthusiastic volunteer crew and despite the constraints of weather, we were able to determine the extent of Feature 125 and further define the location of Feature 132. However, the question of the relationship of Features 125 and 132 remains unresolved as does the soft, fine silt intrusion in N290 E150 (Figure 6). In addition, it is hoped that further excavation beneath the clay lens in N296 E148 and N295 E146 will reveal continuity of the basin fill of Feature 132. Clearly, new research questions have been defined by the work completed in 2022 and we look forward to our investigations in 2023.



Figure 5



Figure 6

Acknowledgements

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